



Former IAS officers named Election Commissioners

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

The decks are cleared for the announcement of Lok Sabha elections schedule after former IAS officers Gyanesh Kumar and Sukhbir Singh Sandhu were on Thursday appointed as Election Commissioners completing the quorum of the election watchdog which was necessitated due to the sudden resignation of Arun Goel as the lone EC last week. The Nirvachan Sadan was left with only Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Rajiv Kumar while one was already vacant and with the two appointments, now the body is complete to take the call to announce the poll schedule. Sources said general elections can be announced on Friday following which the model code of conduct will come into effect. The Legislative Department of the Ministry of Law and Justice issued a notification announcing the appointments. "In exercise of powers conferred by section 4 of the Chief Election Commissioner and other Election Commissioners (Appointment, Conditions of Service and Term of Office) Act, 2023 (Act No. 49 of 2023), the President is pleased to appoint Gyanesh Kumar, IAS (Retd) and Dr Sukhbir Singh Sandhu, IAS(Retd) as Election



Former IAS officers Gyanesh Kumar and Sukhbir Singh Sandhu

Commissioners in the Election Commission of India, with effect from the date they assume charge of their office," the Ministry of Law and Justice said in the notification. Kumar and Sandhu are 1988-batch officers of the Indian Administrative Service and belonged to the Kerala and Uttarakhand cadres, respectively. A high-level panel headed by

Prime Minister Narendra Modi picked retired IAS officers Kumar and Sandhu as the new Election Commissioners. Interestingly before the official notification, Leader of the Opposition in Lok Sabha and senior Congress leader Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury disclosed the names of both the new appointees. Sandhu served as the Chief

Secretary of Uttarakhand while Kumar a 1988-batch Kerala cadre IAS officer, retired as Union Secretary for Cooperation, a Ministry headed by Union Home Minister Amit Shah. He also served in the Union Home Ministry, where he handled the abrogation of Article 370 in Jammu and Kashmir as well as the implementation of the Supreme Court's Ayodhya verdict. In 2014, as the Resident Commissioner of Kerala in

Delhi, he was deputed by the State Government to evacuate 46 nurses stuck in Erbil in war-torn Iraq. The operation was successful with the evacuation of 183 Indians, 70 from Kerala, from Iraq. Kumar, an IIT-Kanpur graduate, is a postgraduate in economics from the Harvard University. Goel had abruptly resigned from his position last week and the reasons for his resignation remain unknown. Another Election Commissioners, Anup Pandey, retired on February 15. Addressing reporters at his residence soon after the meeting ended, Chowdhury said, "I was just called for formality. The names had already been decided." The Congress leader further said six names came up before the panel for the selection of the two ECs and the names of Sandhu and Kumar were finalised by a majority of members of the high-powered panel. He, however, said the Chief Justice of India should have been part of the selection panel and there was no clarity on how six names were shortlisted from 212 candidates that are said to have come before the search committee headed by the Law Minister.



Ram Nath Kovind, chairman of the High-Level Committee (HLC) on 'One Nation, One Election', presents the report to President Droupadi Murmu, in New Delhi, on Thursday. Union Ministers Amit Shah and Arjun Ram Meghwal, DPAP leader Ghulam Nabi Azad are also seen PTI

Kovind panel bats for simultaneous polls

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Former President Ram Nath Kovind led high-level 'One Nation, One Election' poll panel on Thursday recommended simultaneous elections for the Lok Sabha and State Assemblies as the first step followed by synchronised local body polls within 100 days. The 18,000-page report submitted to President Droupadi Murmu by Kovind and committee members said simultaneous polls will spur development and social cohesion, deepen "foundations of democratic rubric" and help realise the aspirations of "India that is Bharat". Kovind was accompanied by other panel members, including Home Minister Amit Shah, former Finance

Commission chairman NK Singh, former Lok Sabha secretary general Subhash Kashyap, former leader of Opposition in Rajya Sabha Ghulam Nabi Azad and Law Minister Arjun Ram Meghwal, when he went to submit the report to the president at Rashtrapati Bhavan. Shah termed the recommendation of the committee as "a historic day" for the country's democratic system. The report is an outcome of extensive consultations with stakeholders, experts and research work of 191 days, since its constitution on September 2, 2023, a statement said. The committee recommended that fresh elections could be held to constitute a new Lok Sabha in the event of a hung House or a no-confidence motion, or any such event.



Maharashtra to build guest house in Srinagar

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

In the first-ever initiative taken after the President's 2019 order abrogating Article 370 of the Constitution that gave special status to Jammu and Kashmir, the Maharashtra Government has approved a proposal to construct a State guest house on a 2.5 acre plot of land in Ichgam taluka of Badgam district near Srinagar airport in the Union Territory. At its weekly meeting presided over by Chief Minister Eknath Shinde, the State Cabinet approved a proposal to purchase 20 kanals (2.5 acres) worth ₹8.16 crore identified by the Union Territory administration's Revenue department for the construction of a State guest in Ichgam taluka near Srinagar Airport. The Union Territory administration on Thursday accorded sanction for the allotment of the identified 2.5 acres to the Maharashtra Government after the State Government on Wednesday go-ahead to a proposal to purchase land for the purpose from the Union Territory administration. Confirming the allocation for the allotment of land, the Jammu and Kashmir Revenue



department said on Thursday, "Sanction is hereby accorded to the transfer of Shamlat Deh (Mehfooz Kahcharie) land measuring 20 kanals under Survey No 576 min situated at estate Ichgam, Budgam, in favour of Maharashtra state in terms of Rule 310 of General Financial Rules, 2017, on payment of transfer value of ₹8.16 crore, which is ₹40.80 lakh per kanal for construction of Maharashtra Bhavan." It may be recalled that in June last year, Shinde had urged the administration of Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir to provide a plot of land for the construction of a 'Maharashtra Bhavan' to boost ties between the people

of his State and UT. Shinde, while on a tour of Kashmir during the first week of June 2023, had called on Lt Governor Manoj Sinha and made a formal proposal. In his letter, Shinde had told the Lt Governor that in view of the growing tourism and cultural exchanges, plus enhancing economic and social ties, such an institution will be beneficial to people on both sides. He had also said the Maharashtra Bhavan in Srinagar will not only provide accommodation facilities to tourists from this state, but provide a glimpse of the state, its rich arts, culture and cuisine for the people of Jammu & Kashmir.

Electoral bonds data uploaded

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

A day after the State Bank of India (SBI) filed compliance affidavit in the Supreme Court, saying it has furnished details of electoral bonds to Election Commission of India (EC), the Election Commission on Thursday disclosed the details on their website in two parts as 'Disclosure of Electoral Bonds submitted by SBI'. The poll body has uploaded electoral bonds data as shared by the SBI, on its website "as is where is basis". According to the data uploaded by the poll panel, the buyers of electoral bonds include Grasim Industries, Megha Engineering, Piramal Enterprises Torrent Power,

Bharti Airtel, DLF Commercial Developers, Vedanta Ltd, Apollo Tyres, Lakshmi Mittal, Edelweiss, PVR, Keventer, Sula Wine, Welspun, Sun Pharma are among donors to parties using electoral bonds. The other donors include A B C India Limited, Acropolis Maintenance Services Private Limited, Arihant Enterprises, Essel Mining and Inds Ltd, Highstreet Cruises and Entertainment Pvt Ltd, Innocent Merchant Pvt Ltd, Megha Engineering and Infrastructures Ltd, Merlin Recreation Pvt Ltd, Muthoot Finance, PHL Finvest, Piramal Capital and Housing Finance, Renuka Investment and Finance, Skyworld Developers LLP, Bellway International Co, Gujarat



Fluoro Chemical Ltd, Cavalier Transporters, Keventer Food Park Infra, Keystone Realtors and others. There was no record of Adani Group or Reliance Industries — the two major business conglomerates. According to the EC's data, the

political parties that redeemed electoral bonds include the BJP, Congress, AIADMK, BRS, Shiv Sena, TDP, YSR Congress, DMK, JDS, NCP, Trinamool Congress, JDU, RJD, AAP, JDU, RJD, AAP, SP, J & K National Conference, BJD, Goa Forward Party,

Maharashtrawadi Gomantak Party and the Samajwadi Party. The data showed Sikkim Krantikari Morcha, JMM, Sikkim Democratic Front, Jana Sena Party were also among recipients of electoral bonds. The data pertains to purchases of bonds of three denominations — ₹1 lakh, ₹10 lakh and ₹1 crore — dating back to April 12, 2019 and reveals purchases by companies as well as individuals. Details about electoral bonds purchased from April 12, 2019 to January 11 have been made public. The polling body has uploaded details of denominations of electoral bonds encashed between April 12, 2019 and January 24. Continued on Page 2

23 ferocious dog breeds banned amid spike in attacks

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

Amid rising instances of fatal or serious pet dog attacks, at least 23 breeds of 'ferocious' dogs, including Pitbull, Rottweiler, Terrier, Wolf Dog, and Mastiff, have been shortlisted by the Centre for a complete ban on their sale, import and breeding as pets. This means that the general public is now barred from keeping these ferocious dogs. The list of banned dog breeds includes — Pitbull Terrier, Tosa Inu, American

Staffordshire Terrier, Fila Brasileiro, Dogo Argentino, American bulldog, Boerboel, Kangal, Central Asian Shepherd Dog, Caucasian Shepherd Dog, South Russian Shepherd, Tornjak, Sarplaninac, Japanese Tosa and Akita, Mastiffs, Rottweiler, Rhodesian



Ridgeback, Wolf dogs, Canario, Akbash dog, Moscow Guard dog, Cane Corso, and every dog of the type commonly known as a 'Ban Dog'. "...The above dog breeds, including crossbreeds, shall be prohibited for import, breedings, selling as pet dogs and other purposes,"

said a letter dated March 12 written by the Union Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying to Chief Secretaries of all States and UTs while directing them to sterilise these breeds of dogs, which have already been kept as pets, to prevent further breeding. The department said it has received representations from citizens, citizen forums, and Animal Welfare Organisations (AWOs) to ban some of the breeds of dogs from being kept as pets and other purposes.

Sheep missing mystery solved, leopards cleared of charges

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

An attempt by certain vested interests in Kasaragod district to portray leopards and tigers as the culprits behind sheep and goat disappearance falls flat, as it has been proven that domesticated animals are actually stolen by humans. Images from CCTV cameras have confirmed that men lure goats with biscuits, and the unsuspecting animals fall prey to this trap. Brothers Abbas and Abdul Hameed of Kumbala village in Kasaragod were in for a shock as they lost 14 goats which they sent for grazing in the periphery of a neighbouring forest. The goats disappeared over a

period of four months and their complaint to Kumbala police evoked no response other than the routine reply that the matter was being probed. But the brothers, whose livelihood depended on the income from selling goat milk and slaughterhouses, took it as a challenge and pursued the matter. Villagers were of the opinion that the goats were flicked away by the leopards from the forest. But there were no pug marks to establish the complicity of the wild animals in the robbery. Abbas and Hameed checked all the video images they could collect from the CCTVs in the region and they came across a boy feeding one of their goats with biscuits and leading it away from the group.



The brothers sent these images to the WhatsApp groups which were picked up by Muneer, a sheep owner from Uppala village. He informed the brothers that a boy

resembling the one in the CCTV image had tried to steal his sheep and he overpowered him and handed over to the local police. The Uppala Police had details of

the boy's mother who had submitted her Aadhaar and phone number to get the boy released from the police station. She had told the police that the boy had a soft corner for goats and that's why he was seen feeding the animal with biscuits. Abbas, Hameed, and Muneer, along with the Uppala Police, surrounded the residence of the boy in Karnataka's Brahmapur village. From there, they arrested the boy, his mother, and Zakka Fullah, a partner in the crime. They also took into custody 70 goats from the residence, all of which were kidnapped using biscuits as bait. Rafeek, the kingpin of the crime is missing and a hunt is on to nab him.

"Blaming wild animals like leopards and tigers for the disappearance of domesticated animals has become a routine affair in this region. This time we could prove that the wild animals had no role in this crime because there was no evidence linking them to the kidnapping of goats," said Sukumaran Periyachoor, a former principal of Government higher secondary school and a wildlife enthusiast. But the 14 goats taken away by the boy remain a mystery as none of the animals seized from Brahmapur village belonged to the stable of the brothers. The landscape and the modus operandi remind one of the cowboy films of the 1960s sans the sheriff and bounty killers.

NEWS BREAK

Petrol, diesel prices cut by ₹2

NEW DELHI: Petrol and diesel prices were cut by ₹2 per litre each as state-owned oil companies ended a nearly two-year-long hiatus in rate revision, just hours before the general election schedule was announced. See Page 10

Setback to Sisodia

NEW DELHI: In another setback to AAP leader Manish Sisodia, the Supreme Court on Thursday rejected his curative petition challenging the apex court's decision rejecting his bail plea in the Delhi excise policy scam case.

Classifieds

PUBLIC NOTICE

We, Dilshad S/o Sh. Sadik & Israt W/o Sh. Dilshad R/o # 2011-C, Small Flats, Chandigarh. Declare that our son Aash Mohammad is out of our control. So, we disown him from all our immovable/ immovable properties. anybody deals with him at their own risk.

I, Dharambir S/o Sh. Umrav Singh R/o 223, Barauli, Sonipat, Haryana has disowned my son Sachin & his wife Manisha from my all movable-immovable property as they are out of my control. In future, if anybody deals with them, he/she will do at their own risk.

I, Akhila S spouse of Jagadeesh Kumar V R/o 16 Engr Br Regt (PMS), Chandimandir Cantt, Panchkula, Haryana have changed my name from Akhila Jagadeesh to Akhila S vide Affidavit dated 12 Mar 2024 before Krishan Chander Sahu, Advocate, Executive Magistrate, Panchkula, Haryana.

I, Kulwant Singh S/o Ujagar Singh R/o 1432/14 Sector29-B Chandigarh hereby disown my real son Harminder Singh & his wife Diksha Bhardwaj (daughter in law) from my all moveable/immovable properties. They are out of my control. If anybody deals with them will do so at own risk and responsibility. I shall not be responsible for their any deeds.

I, Rajbir s/o Maai Ram r/o h.no 297 village Mohali rajakheri distt panipat declare that my son sandeep is out of my control so I disown him from my all movable and immovable property and relationships.

I, Army No. JC480794P Subedar Major Gopinath Ghosh S/o Ganapati Ghosh R/o Ichhapur, Bardhaman, West Bengal presently residing RRC Fatehgarh declare that in my service record my mother's name entered as Rasar Sri Ghosh and date of birth entered as 07.07.1945., which is wrong. My mother's correct name is Rasheshwari Ghosh and correct date of birth is 01.01.1950. Vide affidavit No. 90AE773237 on dated 14.03.2024 before Notary, Fatehgarh- Farrukhabad.

I Shubham Rawat S/o Harsh Bardhan Singh Rawat, House No. 315 A, Near Shiv Mandir, Sector 19 Panchkula Haryana inform that my father's name is erroneously recorded as Harshvardhan Singh Rawat in my PAN Card & School/ College Certificates. Whereas my father's correct name is Harsh Bardhan Singh Rawat.

I, Rajesh S/o jai Kishan R/o H No 213, Gali No. 03-C, R. K Puram Panchik, my Daughter Kirti are out of control. i disown Daughter Kirti from all my moveable & immovable properties. Anybody deals with them deals at own risk and responsibilities.

I, Sawaran Kour Legally Spouse Of Jc-261705m, Rank: Sub, Name: Baljit Singh (Retd), Residing Of Vill- Chandsamand, Po- Dabkoli Kalan, Tehsil Indri, Distt Karnal (Haryana) 132041 Have Changed My Name From Sawaran Kour To Sawaran Kaur Vide Affidavit/Self Declaration Dated 13 March 2024.

I, Kanta Devi Widow of S/o Sh. Shish Ram R/o VPO Nara PS Sadar Distt. Hoshiarpur Punjab declare that my son Karamjit and Lashkar Dass and my daughter Meena Kumari is out of my control. I so disown all of them from our Moveable and Immoveable Properties anybody dealing with them his/ her own risk Concerned Note.

I, Fula Devi W/o Shiv Charan R/o Kirti Nagar Thanesar Kurukshetra, have disown my daughter Anjali from all my movable immovable properties. As she is out of my control. Anybody dealing with her at their own risk.

I, Jagjit Singh Multani S/o Tara Singh R/o Guru Nanak Colony Tehsil Pehowa distt.Kurukshetra my son Manmeet Singh And His Wife Mandeep Kaur are out of my control. I, disown them from all my moveable and immoveable properties. If anybody deals with them at their own risk.

I, Parkash Kaur W/o Makhan Singh R/o Guru Nanak Colony Pehowa distt.Kurukshetra my son Rajinder Pal Singh and his wife Sukhwinder Kaur & my son Manjeet Singh & his wife Balwinder Kaur are out of my control. I, disown them from all my moveable and immoveable properties. If anybody deals with them at their own risk.

We, Rughbir @ Raghubir s/o Sh. Pala Ram & Bimla Devi W/o Sh. Rughbir @ Raghubir r/o Nathusari Kalan, Distt. Sirsa declare that our daughter Aarti is out of control. We disown her from all our moveable/ Immoveable properties. We have no social, financial & any type of relation with her.

I, Mamta Arora W/o Mohinder Kohli R/o 02, Shastri Colony, Yamuna Nagar have changed my name from Mamta Arora to Mamta Kohli.

I, Reema Chandra D/o Pardeep Kumar Rikhi R/o Flat No. 1232 H Block, Esccon Arena, Ambala Highway, Ghazipur, Zirakpur, SAS Nagar (Mohali) Punjab 140603, Have changed my name from Reema Chandra to Reema Rikhi.

It Is For General Information That I, Aarti Aggarwal W/O Prabhat Aggarwal Residing At H.No.1653, Sector-13, Huda, Bhiwani, Haryana-127021 Declare That The Name Of Mine Has Been Wrongly Written As Aarti In My Minor Son Hardik Aggarwal Aged 16 Years In His CBSE Class 10th Educational Documents, The Actual Name Of Mine Is Aarti Aggarwal Which May Be Amended Accordingly.

I, No 13763872K Ex Hav Sonil Kumar S/o Shri Krishan Lal R/o VPO Bhanowal Tehsil Dasuya Distt. Hoshiarpur Punjab have changed the name of my mother from Parmila Devi to Parmla Devi and her date of birth from 11-11-1961 to 22-1-1956.

I, Praveen Kumar S/o Shri Jagdish R/o Gudha tehsil Gharonda district Karnal. I Have Changed My Name From Parveen Battan to Parveen Kumar For All Future Purposes.

I, Sandhya Chohan D/o Satpal Chohan W/o Joji Bhatia R/o 508/A, Guru Ravi Dass Marg, East Mohan Nagar, Amritsar, Punjab have changed my name after marriage from Sandhya Chohan to Sandhya.

I, Ranjit Kaur W/o Inder Singh R/o VPO Kalsian Kalan, Tehsil Patti, Distt. Tarn Taran, Punjab-143401 have changed my name from Ranjit Kaur to Ranjeet Kaur.

I, Vinay Gupta S/o Somdutt Gupta R/o H.No.691, Behind Shopping center, Huda sec-12 face 2, Panipat declare that I have changed my name from Vinay Gupta to Viney Gupta. In future I should be known as Viney Gupta.

I, Rakesh Kumar S/o Bhale Ram R/o H.No.31-32, Uttam Nagar, Panipat declare that Anubhav is my son name changed his name Anubhav to Anubhav Phougat. In future he should be known as Anubhav Phougat.

I, Rakesh Kumar S/o Bhale Ram R/o H.No.31-32, Uttam Nagar, Panipat declare that Mannat is my Daughter name changed her name Mannat to Mannat Phougat. In future she should be known as Mannat Phougat.

I, Omwati Devi Panchal w/o Jai Pal Panchal r/o #774-10/12, Gali No. 8, Ram Nagar Colony, Thanesar, Distt. Kurukshetra have changed my name from Omwati Devi Panchal to Omwati Devi.

I, Seeta Devi w/o Sultan r/o Village Prem Khera, Sub Tehsil Nissing, Distt. Karnal have changed my name from Sita Devi to Seeta Devi. In future I should be known as Seeta Devi.

I, Madhu Kaur W/o Gurnam Singh, Village Bakshiwal, Pinjore, District Panchkula declare that my old name was Madhu Kaur now i have changed my name to Sushma Devi in future.

I, Deepaka Kumar Shrivastava Alias Deepak Kumar Shrivastava S/o Bajrang Lal R/o H No 1477-A, Sector 41-B, Chandigarh have changed my name from Deepaka Kumar Shrivastava to Deepak Kumar Shrivastava. In future I will be known as Deepak Kumar Shrivastava.

I, Parmjeet Kaur W/o Kaka Singh R/o Village Jeoli, SAS Nagar Mohali have changed my name from Parmjeet Kaur to Paramjeet Kaur.

I, Jyotsna Gupta W/o Ritesh Gupta R/o H No 737, Street No. 7, Gurbax Colony, Patiala have changed my name from Jyotsna Gupta to Jyotsna Bansal.

I Anju W/o Sh.Sunil Kumar R/o H.No. 20, Sector - 13, Extension, Urban Estate, Karnal have changed my name from Anju Chhabra to Anju.

I Sunil Kumar S/o Sh.Ram Chand R/o H.No. 20, Sector - 13, Extension, Urban Estate, Karnal have changed my name from Sunil Chhabra to Sunil Kumar.

I, Aarti W/o Varinder Pal Sahni R/o Flat No.602, Tower-3, 6th Floor, Bollywood Heights-1, Peer Mucchalla, Near D-Mart, Dhakauli, Distt.SAS Nagar (Mohali) Punjab have changed my name from Aarti to Aarti Sahni.

I, Jasbir Singh S/o Hawa Singh R/o Juliana, Tehsil Juliana district Jind (Haryana) declared that I have changed my name from Jasbir Singh Chahal to Jasbir Singh for all purpose.

I, Suman Lata W/o Jasbir Singh R/o Juliana, Tehsil Juliana district Jind (Haryana) declared that I have changed my name from Suman to Suman Lata for all purpose.

I, Gurinder Singh S/o Ranjit Singh R/o 307, Harbans Pura Colony, Jagadhri, Distt Yamuna Nagar have changed my name from Gurinder Singh to Gurender Singh.

I, Om Parkash S/O Sh. Mange Ram R/O Village Naya Gaon, Barkatabad (63), Jhajjar, Haryana, Have Changed My Name From Om Parkash To Om Parkash Dalal.

I, Puran Singh Chhina S/O Fagga Singh R/O Khuh Ber Vala, Ward No.13, Raja Sansi, Po Raja Sansi, District Amritsar Have Changed My Name From Puran Singh Chhina To Puran Singh

I Kuldip Singh Son Of Balwant Singh Resident Of Patti Sultan Di ,Sultanwind Amritsar, District Amritsar Have Changed My Name From Kuldeep Singh To Kuldip Singh

I, Raj Kaur Alias Raji Wife Of Joginder Singh Resident Of 3335/15, Gali No. 9, Maqboolpura, Mehta Road, Amritsar, Punjab, Declared That I Have Changed My Name From Raj Kaur Alias Raji To Raj Kaur.

I Baint Kaur W/O Harbhajan Singh R/O Vpo Santnagar Teh.Rania Dist. Sirsa (Haryana) Have Changed My Name Baint Kaur To Beyant Kaur.

I, No. 15626983f Rank L/Nk Name Surender R/O Village - Dinokhari, Po - Sidhrawali, Tehsil - Manesar, District-Gurgaon, State- Haryana-122413, In My Army Service Record My Mother (Geeta) Date Of Birth Wrongly Mentioned As 20/02/1974 While Her Correct Date Of Birth Is 01/01/1971 As Per Her Aadhar Card. Now I Am Going To Make It Correct As 01/01/1971 In My Army Service Record Vide Affidavit 14.03.2024 Before Notary Public Hisar.

I, No. 3206420h Rank Nk Name Narveer Singh R/O Vpo - Sangatpura, Tehsil & District - Jind, State - Haryana - 126102, In My Army Service Record My Mother (Santosh) Date Of Birth Wrongly Mentioned As 23/09/1967 While Her Correct Date Of Birth Is 23/04/1967 As Per Her Aadhar Card. Now I Am Going To Make It Correct As 23/04/1967 In My Army Service Record Vide Affidavit 14.03.2024 Before Notary Public Hisar.

I, No. 3204136n Rank L/Hav Name Kulbir Singh R/O Vpo Sangatpura, Tehsil & Disttt - Jind, State - Haryana-126102, In My Army Service Record My Father's Name Wrongly Mentioned As Satyawhan Singh While His Correct Name Is Satyawhan As Per His All Government Documents. Now I Am Going To Make It Correct As Satyawhan In My Army Service Record Vide Affidavit 14.03.2024 Before Notary Public Hisar.

I, Arushi D/o Arvind Kumar R/o H.No- 100 Sector-1, Jail Land, Ambala City 134003 Haryana Have changed my name to Arushi Singla.

I Sandip Kumar Kansal S/o Sh. Subhash Chander R/o Village Ismailabad, District Kurukshetra have changed my name from Sandeep Kansal to Sandip Kumar Kansal.

I, Kamalpreet Singh Dhami S/o Amarjit Singh, H.No. 1738, Street No. 2, Surjit Singh Barnala Residence, Shakti Nagar, Barnala, have changed my name to Kamalpreet Singh.

I, Davinder Singh S/o Daulat Singh, Flat No. 611, 6th Floor, Tower No. 6, Alpine Residency, Zirakpur, Distt. SAS Nagar, have changed my name to Devinder Majotra.

I, Rupinder Kaur W/o Devinder Majotra, Flat No. 611, 6th Floor, Tower No. 6, Alpine Residency, Zirakpur, Distt. SAS Nagar, have changed my name to Rupinder Majotra.

It, Hitherto Known As Shamsher Singh Josan Son Of Gurnam Singh Residing At Village Chak Patti Balu Bahadur Tehsil Sultanpur Lodhi, District Kapurthala-144626 Punjab Have Changed My Name And Shall Hereafter Be Known As Shamsher Singh.

I Kulbir Singh S/O Gurnam Singh R/O Vill.Bharathwal Po Riali Kalan Tehsil Batala Gurdaspur Have Changed The Name Of My Minor Son From Adarshpal Singh To Adrshpal Singh

I, Sarbjit Kaur Gill W/O Jatinder Singh R/O H.No.4168/33, Gali No.5, Kot Baba Deep Singh Amritsar Have Changed My Name From Sarbjit Kaur Gill To Sarabjeet Kaur.

I, Amita Kaur Batra D/O Gurdeep Singh Batra W/O Harpreet Singh R/O H.No.670-A, Gali Ahdwayjan, Bazar Chur Beri, Chowk Chintpurni Amritsar Have Changed My Name To Amita Kaur After Marriage

I, Sukhwinder Jit Singh Sansoa S/O Piara Singh R/O H.No.62, Backside Gurdwara, New Ranjitpura, Chheharta, Amritsar Have Changed My Name From Sukhwinder Jit Singh Sansoa To Sukhwinderjit Singh

I, Sawinder Singh S/O Kartar Singh R/O Village Uthian Amritsar Now At H.No.26, Opp Focal Point, Maqboolpura, Mehta Road, Amritsar Have Changed My Name To Sawinder Pal Singh

I, Jagpreet Singh S/O Arvinder Singh R/O Vpo. Ghoman, Teh Batala, Gurdaspur (Batala) Has Declared That Singh Is My Surname And Jagpreet Is My Given Name.

I Sharanjeet Kaur W/O Gurbinder Singh R/O Hno 16 Rani Ka Bagh Opp Deprt Nursing Home Park Lane Amritsar Have Changed My Name From Sharanjeet Kaur To Sharanjit Kaur

I, Sarabpreet Kaur D/O Gurbachan Singh R/O 180-A, East Mohan Nagar Sultanwind Road, Amritsar Have Changed My Daughter's Name From Sarvika To Sarvika Kaur

I, Jc 301530a Ex Naib Subedar Nirmal Singh S/O Bawa Singh Residence Of H No 633 Pioneer Colony, Alewala Tehsil And Distt Ferozepur, Punjab. I Want To Change The Name Of My Wife From Kuldp Kaur To Kuldeep Kaur And Her Date Of Birth From 30 Nov 1967 To 26 Jun 1969 In My Service Records. Vide Affidavit No In-Pb94966933995688w Dated 14 Mar 2024.

I, Jc 301530a Ex Naib Subedar Nirmal Singh S/O Bawa Singh Residence Of H No 633 Pioneer Colony, Alewala Tehsil And Distt Ferozepur, Punjab. I Want To Change The Name Of My Wife From Kuldp Kaur To Kuldeep Kaur And Her Date Of Birth From 30 Nov 1967 To 26 Jun 1969 In My Service Records. Vide Affidavit No In-Pb94966933995688w Dated 14 Mar 2024.

I, Parasnath Pal Is Father Of No. 15802617h, Nk, Suvansh Kumar Pal Presently Unit 408 Gun Msl Regt C/O 56 Apo Residing At Village. Baghamnwa P.O. Bishrampur Tehsil Medinainagar District. Palamu State Jharkhand Pin 822124 Declare That My Name Parsh Nath Pal And My Date Of Birth 01.01.1966 Wrongly Written In My Son Army Service Records But My Correct Name Parasnath Pal Date Of Birth 01/01/1951.

I, Sulekha Devi Is Spouse Of No. 15781536m Hav Deepak Kumar Presently Unit 408 Gun Msl Regt C/O 56 Apo Residing At Village + Post Office Fatehpur District Patna State Bihar Pin 803206 Have Change My Name In All Documents From Sulekha Kumari To Sulekha Devi Vide Affidavit Dated 21 February 2024 Before At Notray Ferozepur.

I, Suman Rani @ Suman W/o Ramphal R/o Village Bhana, Tehsil Pundri, Distt. Kaithal (Haryana) declares that I am known with two names Suman Rani and Suman. My both names are correct and used for the same one lady. All concerned please note.

I, Vishant Kumar S/o Narendar Kumar R/o Village Mohna, Tehsil Pundri, Distt. Kaithal (Haryana) declares that I have changed my name from Vishant Kumar to Vishant. In future, I will be known by the name of Vishant. All concerned please note.

I, Lagani Devi Is Mother Of No. 15802617h, Nk, Suvansh Kumar Pal Presently Unit 408 Gun Msl Regt C/O 56 Apo Residing At Village. Baghamnwa P.O. Bishrampur Tehsil Medinainagar District. Palamu State Jharkhand Pin 822124 Declare That My Name Lagni Devi And My Date Of Birth 01/01/1969 Wrangly Written In My Son Army Service Records But My Correct Name Lagani Devi Date Of Birth 01/01/1954.

I, Sunita Choudhary, Mother Of Mr. Karan Choudhary Of Armd Forces, Residing At House No.305, W.No.17, Shiv Sunder Nagar, P.O. Pathankot Tehsil And District Pathankot State Punjab Pin 145001 Have Changed My Name From Sunita Kumari To Sunita Choudhary Vide Affidavit Dated 14 March 2024 Before At Notray Ferozepur.

I, Laxmi W/o Pradeep Kumar Saini R/o # 153/6, Saraswati Sugar Mill Colony, Distt Yamunanagar I have changed my name from Laxmi Saini to Laxmi. All concerned note.

I, Surmukh Singh S/o Late Sh. Mahinder Singh R/o Vill Ghautaur, Allahpur Tehsil Kharar, Mohali declare that Surmukh Singh and Surmakh Singh is one and the same person.

I Manjinder Jit Kaur W/O Harkirat Singh R/O #33, Sector-5, Chandigarh Have Changed My Minor Son Name From Harjot Singh To Harjot Singh Jhaji.

I, Gurcharn Singh S/o Balbir Singh R/o Village Achalpur, PO. Bhawanipur, Tehsil Garhshankar (Hoshiarpur) have changed the spelling of my name as Gurcharan Singh.

I, Gurdalay Singh S/o Jalla Ram R/o H.No. 70/1, Ward No. 5A, Bhagwan Nagar Colony Pipli, District Kurukshetra, have changed the spelling of my name to Gurdial Singh.

I, Pooja W/o Surender Kaushik R/o 518, Sector 30, Urban Estate, Kurukshetra, have changed my name to Pooja Surender Kaushik.

I, Parmeet Kaur Thabal W/o Jagtar Singh R/o Sheikhpur Majra Chammu, Postoffice Ajrawar, District Kurukshetra, have changed my name to Parmeet Kaur.

I, Sahab Singh S/o Jangir Singh R/o Daulatpura Niwan District Moga (Punjab), have changed my name to Sahib Singh.

I, Santosh Kumari W/o Surinder Kumar R/o H.No. 3280/1, Shyam Colony, Thanesar Kurukshetra, have changed my name from Santosh Kumari to Santosh Rani.

I, Pinki W/o Narinder Kumar R/O H.No. 2, Guru Nanak Nagar, Tripuri Road, Patiala, (Punjab) Have Changed My Name From Pinki Rani To Pinki.

I, Shrivati Is Legally Mother Of Service No. 15334795w Rank: Hav Name: Sanjiv Kumar Residing At Village Jwala Ki Maraiyan Post Kharkauli, Taluk Etawah, Distt. Etawah (State) Uttar Pradesh Pin Code-206253, Have Changed My Name From Shreevatee To Shrivati.

I, No. 13692049L Rank Ex.- Hav Name Sher Singh R/O Village Ghanour, Po. Sanour Tehsil & Distt. Patiala-147103 Declare That In My Service Record My Daughter's Name And Dob Is Mentioned As Navjot & Dob: 06 Dec 99 But Her Actual Name Is Dimple Kaur & Dob: 10-12-1999.

I, Manjit Kaur Wife No 3353627h Ex Hav (Late) Mohinder Singh S/O Jagir Singh Residence Of H No 178 Village Kaillash Po Wara Bhai Ka Tehsil And Distt Ferozepur, Punjab, Have Change My Date Of Birth From 14 Apr 1965 To 01 Jan 1950 For My Husband Army Service Record, Vide Affidavit No. In-Pb95722431076148w Dated 14 Mar 2024.

I, Ganinder S/o Kuldeep Singh residents of V.P.O.Kandola Kalan, Tehsil Phillaur, Distt. Jalandhar, Punjab have changed my name from Ganinder to Ganinder Singh.

I, hitherto Known as Tamanna Sharma D/o Preenam Kumar W/o Dinesh Chhabra R/o H.No. N.K-241-D, Charanjit Pura, Jalandhar-144001, Punjab have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as Tamanna Chhabra.

I, Dhawinder Singh S/o Balwinder Singh R/o Teh. Dera Baba Nank, Chaura Bajwa, P.O. Dera Baba Nanak, Distt. Gurdaspur, Punjab-143604 have changed my name as Dhanvinder Singh.

I, Manjit Kaur Wife No 3353627h Ex Hav (Late) Mohinder Singh S/O Jagir Singh Residence Of H No 178 Village Kaillash Po Wara Bhai Ka Tehsil And Distt Ferozepur, Punjab, Have Change My Date Of Birth From 14 Apr 1965 To 01 Jan 1950 For My Husband Army Service Record, Vide Affidavit No. In-Pb95722431076148w Dated 14 Mar 2024.

I, Madan Lal S/O Paras Ram R/O Village Mehmoopur Gadrian P.O Kangna Bet Tehsil Balachaur District S.B.S. Nagar, Punjab Have Changed My Name From Madan Lal To Madan Gopal.

I Daljit Kaur W/O Lalpat Rai R/O Village Bohani, Tehsil Phagwara, District Kapurthala Have Changed My Minor Daughter's Name From Simran To Simran Kaur.

CONTINUITY PG NO. 11

Constituency	Candidate
Sangrur, a constituency the	

In a strategic move ahead of

Despite being constituents of the national opposition alliance, AAP and the Congress

Health Minister Dr Balbir, a seasoned politician and a notable eye surgeon, is set to represent AAP in Patiala, a constituency historically dominated by former Chief

Bhullar, the incumbent MLA representing the Patti segment, has emerged as a prominent figure in Punjab's political arena. Rising from humble beginnings as AAP volunteer, Bhullar's political journey has been marked by determination and grassroots support. Notably, he secured victory in Patti by defeating Badal's son-in-law Adesh Partap Singh Kairon, and Congress former MLA

Harmander Singh Gill ity have garnered attention

Having actively supported AAP in previous Lok Sabha elections, Anmol's comedic flair and widespread popular-

Hayer, a two-time MLA from Barnala, brings a wealth of experience and expertise to the table, overseeing crucial portfolios including education, sports, youth services, and science and technology in just two years of AAP Government. AAP's decision to field Hayer underscores their determination to reclaim

On March 11, the party launched its slogans "Sanskrit Vich vi Bhagwant Mann, Khushal Punjab Te Badhegi Shaan" and "Punjab Banega Hero, Is baar 13 – Zero". The party seeks to be recognized for its "pro-poor policies", including initiatives like free electricity, alongside reforms in government schools and healthcare. Despite previous general elections in 2014 and 2019 where Punjab elected four and one AAP MPs to Parliament respectively, the state remains the sole region where the party holds representation in the lower house, indicating AAP's continued relevance and appeal in the region.

ily members of employees,

According to the notification, income-tax payers, women monks permanently staying in monasteries, fam-

Providing Rs 1,500 monthly to women was one of the 10 "guarantees" given by the ruling Congress in Himachal Pradesh ahead of the Assembly polls.

The development came days after Sukhdev Singh Dhindsa merged his Shiromani Akali Dal (Sanyukt) with the Sukhbir Singh Badal-led Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD). Badal and other senior leaders including Daljit Singh Cheema, Adesh Partap Singh Kairon, Sharanjit Singh Dhillon and

Kaur, a former minister, was the president of the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC) in 1999, 2004 and 2020.

Talking to Journalists at Haryana Bhawan in New Delhi, Saini said that he had a courtesy meeting with the Prime Minister and had discussion on many contemporary issues. The ideology of Prime Minister Modi is to take everyone along and move the country forward. The double-engine government has done significant work in the past ten years and Haryana has



When asked about the expansion of the cabinet, he said that he has had discussions on this matter, and a decision will be taken soon. In response to a question about former Home Minister Anil Viji, Chief Minister said, "Viji Sahab is our senior leader,

In response to another question, the Chief Minister said that candidates have been announced by BJP for the six Lok Sabha seats in the state, and remaining four will be announced soon. Asked about the breaking of alliance with the Jananayak Janata Party, the Chief Minister said that keeping the sentiments of the people in mind, a decision in this regard has been taken at a higher level.

Chandigarh: Congress' "under suspension" MP from Patiala Preneet Kaur on Thursday officially joined the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), marking a significant shift in her political allegiance. Amidst speculations that Preneet will be the BJP candidate for Patiala, the former Union Minister maintained a cautious stance on contesting in the upcoming Lok Sabha polls, emphasizing that her decision would ultimately be guided by the directives of the party.

Preneet, a seasoned politician and four-time MP from Patiala, expressed her admiration for the Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership and the accomplishments of his government over the past decade. Her decision to switch parties came over a year after her husband, Punjab's former Chief Minister Capt Amarinder Singh and their daughter Jai Inder Kaur and son Raninder Singh, defected to the BJP — a move that led to her suspension from the Congress party the previous year.



The Himachal Pradesh government on Thursday appointed Information and Public Relations department Additional Director Aarti Gupta as the new department director, making her the first woman from the department to be appointed to the post. IPR department officials welcomed the government's decision to appoint a person from the department as its director, a statement said. Gupta has served in the department for the last 33 years when she joined as assistant public relations officer in 1991. She became an information officer at the department after passing the commission exams in 1992. Gupta was promoted as deputy director in 1998 and as

Aarti Gupta takes over as Director IPR

Aarti Gupta, who has been the additional director at the IPR department since 2021, has been appointed as the joint director in 2023. She has been the additional director at the IPR department since 2021.



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Amount for Winners **₹1 CRORE**
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PRIZE AMOUNT FOR SELLER	PRIZE AMOUNT FOR SUB-STOCKIST
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TOTAL PRIZE AMOUNT ₹ 1.15 CRORES	

3rd Prize

Amount for Winners **₹50 LAKHS**
(₹ 5 Lakhs x 10 Prizes)

PRIZE AMOUNT FOR SELLER	PRIZE AMOUNT FOR SUB-STOCKIST
₹ 50,000*	₹ 20,000*
TOTAL PRIZE AMOUNT ₹ 57 LAKHS	

Rank	Prize Amount for Winner	Prize Amount for Sellers	Prize Amount for Sub-Stockist
1	2,50,00,000	20,00,000	5,00,000
2	10,00,000	1,00,000	50,000
3	5,00,000	50,000	20,000
4	2,00,000	20,000	-
5	5,000	500	-
6	2,000	200	-

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Please be informed that the said notice is also under section 13(1)(f) informing the borrowers/guarantors/ mortgagors that the said mortgaged property should not be sold/leased/transferred.

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Synchronising polls

The Kovind panel report will spur governance and deepen the democratic rubric

The submission of a much-awaited report on the feasibility and practicality of simultaneous elections across the nation has reignited discussions across the political spectrum. The 18,626-page report, finalised by a committee under the chairpersonship of former President Ram Nath Kovind, has recommended simultaneous polls to the Lok Sabha and State Assemblies, followed within 100 days by concurrent local body elections. To this end, at least five Articles of the Constitution would need amendment. While simultaneous elections offer potential benefits, several considerations and challenges merit attention. The main proposals make it clear that in cases of a hung House or no-confidence motion sailing through, fresh polls may be held for the remainder of the five-year term. The first simultaneous polls would entail Assembly tenures aligning with the Lok Sabha elections, and the Election Commission would create a unified electoral roll and voter ID cards in collaboration with State Election Commissions for all polls. The concept of ‘One Nation, One Election’ has been a subject of debate for quite some time now. Its backers feel it is necessary to reduce the frequency of polls, and that it will spawn several other advantages, including enhanced and continued governance, decreased expenditure, minimal life disruptions and social cohesion, besides providing stability.



By aligning the electoral cycles, the Governments can focus more on policymaking and implementation rather than perpetually being in campaign mode. However, the opponents are concerned about logistical challenges, constitutional implications and potential dilution of regional issues in electoral discourse. Addressing concerns related to federalism and democratic principles while ensuring the synchronisation of electoral cycles poses a formidable challenge. Even if the recommendations are accepted, it would be a long road to actualisation of ‘One Nation, One Election.’ Besides, simultaneous elections might dilute the regional narrative, leading to a focus primarily on national issues. The Kovind panel’s report provides insights into mitigating this risk and preserving the essence of federalism within the framework of simultaneous elections. Also, elections incur substantial costs for the exchequer; simultaneous elections could potentially reduce this financial burden. However, the initial investment required for synchronisation, including infrastructure development and voter education, needs careful consideration. The analysis of financial implications will influence the decision regarding the feasibility of this reform. It would indeed be a good idea to reach a political consensus as every party is a stakeholder. The implications of this report extend beyond administrative efficiency to encompass constitutional, political and financial dimensions. As stakeholders await the findings and recommendations, it is imperative to engage in constructive dialogue to address concerns and chart a path forward that upholds the democratic ethos while enhancing the effectiveness of governance.

PICTALK



Members of Toda tribal community during the celebrations of temple festival at Mallikorai Mund, in Ooty

PTI

Scientists play key role in a nation’s progress

In times of crisis, society instinctively turns its gaze towards the scientific community, seeking solace and solutions amid turmoil

The public always looks at the scientific community whenever they are in dire straits. Farmers seek help from agriculture scientists when serious pests affect their crops, or there is a drastic decline in productivity. Similarly, the public looks to medical scientists for help whenever a pathogen attacks humans. During the COVID-19 pandemic, we have seen how, every day, the ordinary person eagerly looked at research work from various labs. Covid-19 reinstated the common man’s confidence in scientists. The current generation that has overcome the COVID-19 catastrophe is deeply indebted to scientists for their lives. Even though there are hundreds of scientific fields, agriculture and health care are close to the day-to-day affairs of ordinary people, and hence, scientists working in these areas need to communicate directly to the public. Scientists working in other fields like communication engineering, space research, civil engineering etc, though highly relevant to the day-to-day life of commoners, never come in direct contact with



them. Whenever humanity is in disarray, scientists bring glee and a ray of hope through their discoveries. In many parts of the world, scientists also create confusion because of conflicts of interest and interference from policymakers. It’s an open secret that most of the food products available in our market are adulterated, and in some cases, they contain toxic substances. Even scientists working in industries will secretly admit it, but they are not allowed to publish the results or speak publicly. Most of the scientific work related to pesticides, drugs etc is linked with industry, and none of the industries will support a genuine scientist. Industries may influence the design of research studies to ensure outcomes align with their objectives. There is always a conflict between proponents of mod-

ern medicine and traditional systems of medicine. Many scientists blatantly state that Ayurvedic or Homeopathic drugs have side effects, forgetting the fact that all modern medicines have severe side effects. Scientists should strive to be impartial in pursuing knowledge and understanding of the natural world. This dedication to objectivity is fundamental to the scientific method, which relies on systematic observation, experimentation, and analysis to uncover truths about the universe. However, scientists, like all humans, are susceptible to personal beliefs and biases that may subtly influence their work. These biases can affect everything from the questions scientists choose to investigate to the interpretation of their findings. Furthermore, external factors such as funding sources, societal pressures, and political climates can also influence scientific research. Research funding, in particular, plays a significant role in shaping the scientific agenda, as scientists often rely on grants from government agencies, private foundations, or industry sponsors

to support their work. The priorities of these funding sources may align with particular agendas or interests, potentially influencing the direction and focus of research. Societal pressures and political influence can also distort scientific results. Despite these challenges, the scientific community is committed to upholding certain principles of objectivity, transparency, and peer review to ensure the integrity of scientific research. While scientists may not always be entirely free from bias, these principles help to minimise the impact of personal beliefs and external influences on the scientific process. The scientific community can maintain public trust and credibility by upholding these standards. Moreover, scientists should proactively engage with societal concerns, prioritising research that tackles urgent issues like public health, and social inequality. If scientists lose public trust, society will be in disarray.

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



BIJU DHARMAPALAN

the fact is that neither of the two is seen as genuine representative of the realm. While Biden has routinely invoked the Military Service of his late son, Beau Biden, to burnish his militaristic association, it remains an artful contextualization as Beau’s service was that of Judge Advocate General in Iraq for a year – later, Beau had died owing to brain cancer. Many Veterans have questioned Biden’s sincerity like the incident of the Air Force Veteran accosting Biden at an event, “I’m an Air Force veteran. I’m here with an Army veteran. We are just wondering why we should vote for someone who voted for a war and enabled a war that killed thousands of our brothers and sisters, countless Iraqi civilians.” However, even though Republicans always enjoyed a historical bias in terms of Veteran traction, given its conservative and overtly ‘nationalistic’ moorings, Trump is not exactly in the mould of Dwight Eisenhower, Ronald Reagan, George HW Bush etc., Trump’s Republicanism is more anchored in the commercial sensibilities of its affluent elites, as opposed to martial traditions of Military families that breed reserves of selfless character. Therefore, Trump has had to appropriate the apolitical institution of the Armed Forces with his misplaced

Presidential choices make veterans rueful

The United States finds itself in a peculiar predicament where the choice between Biden and Trump feels more like picking the ‘less bad’ option

The United States of America has a strange conundrum of choosing the ‘less bad’ Presidential option amongst geriatrics in Democrat Joe Biden and Republican Donald Trump. One concerned set of constituents is the fraternity of retired service personnel (from US Armed Forces) or simply, Veterans. Given the size and scale of the standing US Armed Forces and the accompanying global deployments, it is unsurprising that the Veterans community is over 18 million strong. As the US has had a consistent history of ongoing combat duties, Veterans evoke an emotional and hallowed position in the American consciousness. The longstanding American norm of walking up and shaking the hands of a Veteran by saying, “Thank you for your services” is a sacred culture that exemplifies the hallowed position afforded to Veterans, across the partisan and societal divide.

Of the 46 US Presidents to date, an unprecedented 31 had done military service testifying to the image of the ‘Uniform’, in public reverence. At one time, ‘Uniform’ was considered a political millstone for prospective Presidency. Sadly, it is a normalcy on the decline. Today neither of the two Presidential candidates i.e., Trump or Biden, fit the bill on this score. On the contrary, Biden does himself no good by defending his five-student draft deferments, whereas Donald Trump is infamous for his five conscription deferments, during the Vietnam War. In recent times, even the likes of Bill Clinton and George W Bush (with his specious service with the Air National Guard) were criticised for lack of experience. The implicit fear was that as the Commander-in-Chief of the US Armed Forces, a President bereft of Military Service would be unversed and unempathetic to the institutional realities and Veteran concerns. George H.W. Bush was the last US President to serve in combat. While the campaign spiel and competitive claims by both the contesting candidates towards Veterans in the 2024 Presidential Elections will bear prominence,



commentary of ‘My Generals, walk at Lafayette Square etc., and suchlike unwarranted usurpations. Ironically, he has even pooh-poohed the Veterans with utter disdain whenever his instincts have taken over. Trump’s former Chief of Staff, John Kelley, has confirmed Trump’s apathy, “A person that thinks those who defend their country in uniform, or are shot down or seriously wounded in combat, or spend years being tortured as POWs are all ‘suckers’ because ‘there is nothing in it for them.’ A person who did not want to be seen in the presence of military amputees because ‘It doesn’t look good for me’.” Even Trump’s contempt for ‘Gold Star’ Military families owing to their faith or dislike for rivals like the revered Senator John McCain (distinguished Veteran) or even his purported query about a wounded Army Captain at an event with a query, “Why do you bring people like that here?” and added for the measure, “No one wants to see that, the wounded” reflects the real amorality of Trump. Even Trump’s Defence Secretary and legendary warrior, General James Mattis who was eventually, ‘the last adult in the room’, testified to the inadvertent bluster that was postured as faux ‘muscularity’ in Trump’s drumming

“
AMERICA’S FUTURE AS A SUPERPOWER IS PREDICATED ON ITS COMMITMENT TO THE ‘ARMED FORCES’ AND THEIR ASSOCIATED DOMAIN OF VETERAN AFFAIRS, YET NEITHER OF THE CONTESTANTS DEMONSTRATES A FAMILIAL OR TOPICAL URGENCY TOWARDS THE VETERANS

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

BIDEN AND TRUMP FACE OFF

Sir — This is concerning the article “The US presidential race intensifies” (March 13, 2024). The process of presidential elections in America in November has progressed to the point where it is almost clear that President Joe Biden and former President Donald Trump will face off again. The Super Tuesday results showed them to be far ahead of their opponents, and the next day, Nikki Haley eliminated all questions by stating that she was postponing the campaign to become the Republican nominee. The US presidential elections will feature only the same candidates for the second time in a row, a first since 1956. Second, both candidates are elderly. Two-thirds of those polled in February believed Biden was no longer old enough to work for the government. Nearly half of the respondents expressed the same way about Trump. The serious allegations against former President Trump are also making these elections unique. It is unclear when the court will rule on these charges. Everyone’s attention is focused on what will happen if the court rules against Trump before the election. These claims are also fueling intense resentment on both sides during a presidential race. While Biden has branded Trump as a threat to America’s very survival, Trump continues to claim victory in the 2020 elections. Leaving aside these internal challenges, neither candidate’s victory would result in a significant shift in America’s foreign policy. Aside from modest efforts to balance the Ukraine and Israel-Hamas wars, America now has few options. On the other hand, America’s future posture will be heavily influenced by the desire to contain China’s growing aggression.

Abhijit Roy | Jamshedpur

PROTECTING RIVERS

Sir — Though rivers are national assets, there is little awareness among the people about ways to preserve their purity and utility. Besides being indispensable for day-to-day use, including agricultural purposes, they serve as a great inland mode of trans-



China’s hollow claims

China’s protest against PM Narendra Modi’s visit to Arunachal Pradesh is a continuation of its desperate attempts to lay illegal claim on Arunachal Pradesh, the integral and inalienable part of India. China can’t stomach Modi’s inauguration of strategically significant Sela Tunnel

portation that can bolster trade and commerce. Biodiversity would have been a thing of the past but for the rivers. The river system, of course, is Earth’s highest biological diversity zone. International Day of Action for Rivers aims at spreading awareness through campaigns on the importance of rivers and their protection. Only about ten per cent of the river basins in the world are protected. Dams, encroachments and deforestation have threatened their very existence. Therefore, saving and celebrating rivers cannot be overstated. Campaign against the construction of dams is an integral part of “saving rivers” because preserving free-flowing rivers is the key. It is indisputable that “water is for all.” That said, it is every citizen’s responsibility to keep the nation’s rivers clean and pollution-free devoid of dump and industrial wastage. A country’s rivers cannot be allowed to become sites for garbage and sewage disposal. River management, river pollution and river conservation are three areas that have seized the attention of experts. More than thirty countries come together on the International Day of Action for Rivers to take stock of the international rivers, and ways to upkeep them.

Ganapathi Bhat | Akola

which will provide all-weather connectivity to Tawang in India’s territory. The world’s longest twin-lane tunnel will ease pressure on the existing infrastructure, specifically the Balipara-Chariduar-Tawang road, which faces issues from landslides, snow, and heavy rainfall. The road link is expected to help India shore up defence along the nuclear-armed neighbours’ 3,500-kilometer Line of Actual Control (LAC). India and China have also been locked in a border standoff in the eastern Ladakh region since 2020 when a deadly hand-to-hand clash broke out. China’s tactic of laying illegal claims on the territories of its neighbours is a well-known fact. Thus, objections raised by it are hollow as long as India develops the regions well within its boundaries.

N Sadhasiva Reddy | Bengaluru

ENFORCE LAWS ON PLASTIC MISUSE

Sir — Despite knowing the harmful effects of plastic, the government is not serious about enforcing laws against its rampant use. People also turn a blind eye to the plastic menace. They have become accustomed to the use-and-throw culture, and don’t bother to carry shopping bags. Users don’t even think twice before throwing a plastic bag perhaps because it comes cheap. Do we ever think about how thick the plastic bag given to us in shopping malls is? About 15 per cent of all garbage is plastic; only 50 per cent of it is recycled. Despite being long-lasting, plastic bags are thrown away after a single use. Plastic remains in the earth for a long time, cutting air and water supply to the soil, and tremendously affecting the growth of plants. It reduces the water-retaining capacity of the soil. In the monsoon, plastic gets collected in drains and blocks the passage of water which causes waterlogging and floods, which in turn give rise to water-borne diseases.

Dorai Ramani Suresh | Ghaziabad

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

FIRST COLUMN

TEPA DEAL IS A MAJOR BREAKTHROUGH

Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement is a game changer



India signing a low-hanging trade agreement with four European countries, earlier this week, marks a new chapter in the policy outlook going forward. For starters the Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement (TEPA), India managed to close with European Free Trade Association (EFTA) member countries (comprising of Switzerland, Iceland, Norway and Liechtenstein) is a first of its kind with developed countries from the Western world.

It would be worth mentioning that India has been trying to sign trade agreements (FTAs) with the Western world, particularly the larger European Union, the UK and in the long run with the US for several years. However, all of these negotiations, which tend to get extremely complex, when dealing with Western nations, due to divergences in priorities, failed to fructify into something meaningful, in decades. India's external economic policy outlook, for a very long, including the early years of PM Narendra Modi's government, prioritised the domestic sector, over a more integrated new world trade-based economy. This had also raised concerns about the current government's priorities being too protectionist, which in plain English meant providing artificial government shield to, often, inefficient domestic manufacturing, leading to high-cost, low-quality products and services for the domestic market.

India had also walked out of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership agreement (one of the largest multilateral trade agreements among ASEAN members and Australia, China, Japan, South Korea etc) after multiple rounds of negotiations, citing a disproportionate advantage to China in the agreement. This left little room for the Indian economy to grow and get more investments, create fresh employment and provide the necessary fillip to exports, however, things began to change during the second term of PM Modi beginning in 2019.



At a time when the global chorus started shifting to being more protectionist, i.e. trying to save their domestic industry, as a result of the Covid Pandemic, the Ukraine war and tensions in West Asia, India managed to sign two early harvest trade agreements with UAE and Australia in record time. This was a signal to the world that India is willing to negotiate at the trade table (being the fifth largest economy serves as a good bait) and get further integrated with the global economy, of course, on terms that are mutually beneficial for all participating partners. India is currently in deep negotiations with the UK for signing an FTA, whose final signing was being tuned up as another feather in the current government's economic successes, however, it will have to wait longer for eco-political reasons.

The UAE trade agreement had also opened doors for India to negotiate a similar deal with the Gulf Cooperation Council (where UAE is also an influential member) but the West Asian crisis may delay the negotiations. It may be mentioned here, that, the Oman FTA has a definite stellar output record from the commerce ministry. Coming back to the TEPA, commerce minister Piyush Goyal during the announcement underscored "The agreement will give a boost to Make in India and provide opportunities to young & talented workforce. The FTA will provide a window to Indian exporters to access large European and global markets."

TEPA heavily relies on a nearly \$100 billion investment commitment from the EFTA members in a fifteen-year window, which could serve as an important benchmark and a template for signing similar deals with other developed nations. India and the EU have taken several steps to arrive at some sort of a free trade agreement, albeit, negotiating with 27 member countries' union may be slightly more complex. The message from India, which has tasted high growth years, despite several setbacks from global headwinds, is clear, the domestic market is open for business and Indian exporters are confident to win the world.

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

India, Mauritius forge strategic ties

The joint inauguration of India-assisted projects on the Agalega island of Mauritius marks a significant milestone in the strategic partnership between the nations



The joint inauguration of India-assisted projects such as an airstrip, community development projects and a jetty in the Agalega island of Mauritius shows the increasing concern over the need to change the existing — and also evolve a new — strategic approach to not only enhance economic and commercial cooperation but also ensure strategic surveillance and security of Indian Ocean Area. The virtual Conference between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Mauritius PM Pravind Jugnauth is a new cornerstone in building up close cooperation through multiple projects such as the India-assisted Aushadhi scheme (providing high-quality medicines) commercial and economic cooperation, humanitarian relief assistance and joint patrolling. This also fulfils the main thrust of the Indian Foreign Policy principle: "Neighbourhood First Policy" and Mauritius's multiple needs in health, security and economic areas. The Indo-Mauritius coordination is a step forward to add a new country to India's new strategic vision of SAGAR (Security and Growth for All in Region) Besides, it also brings an important fact to light that India and Mauritius need to diversify their strategies to counter the challenges both face from Pakistan and China.

The war between Russia and Ukraine, the spreading tentacles of transnational terrorism and the over-ambitious mission of Chinese dominance across the globe have created serious problems for international security. While the world is still grappling with the deadly spikes of war and terror, the issue of sea security is taking the forefront of global politics. The Leading Realist in IR John Mearsheimer once conceded that states always seek to maximise their power and prowess to achieve security. Realism also contends that states prioritise maintaining their security and status quo power over aggressive expansion, focusing on balancing against threats rather than seeking dominance. It provides a theoretical rationale for comprehending the complex rigmarole in the fluid power equations and how the changing dynamics of Asia particularly around IOA shape India's defence strategies. There is an increasing tendency of actors in International relations to cluster around the powerful one in the system. China's expansionist mission has vindicated Raymond Aron's observation correctly. Aron once conceded that "The two most typical models are called multipolar and bipolar: either the chief actors, whose forces are not too unequal, are relatively numerous, or, on the contrary, two actors dominate their rivals to such a degree that both become the centre of a coalition and the secondary actors are obliged to situate themselves about the two "blobs", thus joining one or another, unless they have the opportunity to abstain. Intermediary models are possible, depending on the number of chief actors and the degree of equality or inequality of forces among the chief actors". These are changing times and many changes have occurred in International relations recently. Sharing and working on a common strategic vision and a combined approach to ensure mutual economic prosperity and approaching through a multi-layered and multilateral strategy if the situation demands is going to dominate the world order in the coming days. What is required is to develop a fresh perspective for a more mature reliance on international cooperation between nations to



enunciate a new strategy of retaliation, threatening a severe response to any attempt to destabilise the order.

In this direction To counter the increasing tentacles of Chinese aggressiveness endangering India's Maritime Security through the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), deployment of Naval bases in the IOC areas, Naval base in Djibouti, construction of Gwadar Port to help Pakistan, its policy of Strings of Pearls through which China is encircling India by enhancing strategic partnerships with IOR countries India has reached out to its neighbouring countries such as Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Maldives, Seychelles and Mauritius and had a defence strategy of developing coastal Radar System between these countries. Besides, it has already started a Fusion system to provide information related to the security of the Indian Ocean Region. The recent procurement of an India-Russia Joint Venture BrahMos Supersonic Cruise Missile for the Indian Navy and aero-engine for MIG-29 Jets for the Indian Air Force are major initiatives to enhance India's defence capabilities.

India has also developed a Necklace of Diamonds Strategy and is establishing a Changi naval service Base in SINGAPORE, CHABAHAR PORT IN IRAN AND PORTS IN MYANMAR AND OMAN

ty and protecting economic interests. The increasing support and agreement about limiting climate change issues and opening up gateways for renewable energy and development in technological know-how along with channelising the sources of power generation and creating a mechanism to withstand any sudden threat posed by BRI (Belt and Road Initiatives) augur well for peace and prosperity of all the member countries. There has always been a series of extremely good relationships between India and its neighbouring countries about trade share having crossed a decent landmark during the last half a decade which was way more than expected. The recent efforts by India to protect IOA's security through cooperation with Mauritius would further boost and cement their ties and create a genuine environment for stabilising economic growth, (along with ensuring the free flow of goods and services) strategic security, prosperity, stability and combating sudden challenges arising due to climate change and maritime and border threat. Further, the panel discussion focusing on "The Quad Squad: Power and Purpose of the Polygon," during early 2023 provided another step towards solving the expansionist plans. The member countries showed their commitment to support Pacific Island countries with regional institutions through cooperation in several areas along with the terror such as climate change, resilient infrastructure, and maritime security to strengthen the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA). The role of India's leadership in finalising the IORA in India-Pacific areas was greatly appreciated and became even more important due to its impeccable reputation. Further negotiation may lead to the creation of a strategic mechanism to provide a shield against maritime security,

piracy, drug trafficking, armed robbery, terrorism, international crime, smuggling and cyber threats unleashed by any non-state actor as well. This may also accelerate maritime-friendly ties and bolster security around the Indian Ocean and Indo-Pacific areas which have lately become areas of concern. Hence, a collaborative partnership among the nations around the Indian Ocean Area through equity and access to those who are in need at the time of unprecedented crisis may show the level of insight in empowering and motivating people across the board towards extending a helping hand and saving lives. Besides, the pursuit towards the promotion of their well-being would lead to tremendous effort towards enhancement of the overall development scenario in India and neighbouring countries. The sum and substance of the idea is to ensure that the New structural Thinking and orientation changes through a fresh perspective and a framework for key demands while maintaining a synergy among various stakeholders to negotiate even on the issues of different perspectives.

Since then, cooperation among Quad Group countries has set a new road map through diplomatic endeavours towards building a new apparatus for the management of terrorism. Foreign relations are operated through efficient diplomacy and diplomacy is all about the right gestures cooperation and coordination at times of crisis. India is indeed a leading partner in this regard. India is a mature democracy and its leaders are capable of cashing in on any opportunity and strategy that's a combination of tactful strength and resilience.

(The author, a recipient of the Bharat Gaurav award, is a professor and an expert on strategic affairs; views are personal)

Remembering Johan Galtung: A pioneer in peace research

A visionary thinker and dedicated peace activist, Galtung has left an indelible mark on our understanding of conflict resolution

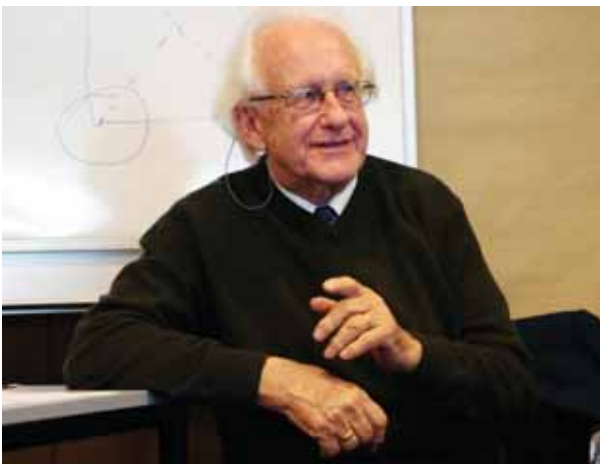
The world of peace research and conflict resolution mourns the loss of one of its most influential figures, Johan Galtung, who passed away on February 17, 2024. Johan Galtung, born in Oslo, Norway, in 1930, was not just a visionary thinker but also a prolific writer and dedicated peace activist whose legacy continues to reverberate within the field today. Growing up amidst the turmoil of World War II, Galtung's experiences deeply influenced his worldview and spurred his lifelong dedication to understanding and resolving conflicts. He devoted his career to exploring innovative approaches to peacebuilding, drawing from



diverse disciplines such as sociology, psychology, political science, and economics. Galtung's pivotal contributions to peace research led to the establishment of the International Peace Research Institute in Oslo (PRIO) in 1959. PRIO served as a pioneering interdisciplinary hub, fostering collaborative research endeavours aimed at comprehensively understanding conflict origins and

developing effective strategies for conflict resolution and peacebuilding. His leadership at PRIO facilitated the exchange of methodologies and ideas among scholars globally, nurturing a vibrant intellectual community dedicated to advancing peace. Initiatives like the Transcend Network for Peace, Development, and Environment exemplified Galtung's commitment to fostering dialogue and cooperation among scholars, policymakers, and grassroots activists worldwide. Throughout history, leaders and activists have emphasised the transformative power of collaborative efforts in promoting peace and non-violence. Mahatma Gandhi's philosophy of non-

violent resistance mobilised millions during India's independence movement, showcasing the potential for collective action to bring about profound social and political change. Similarly, Nelson Mandela's emphasis on reconciliation and collaboration across racial divides in South Africa led to initiatives like the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, aimed at healing past wounds through dialogue and understanding. Archbishop Desmond Tutu's advocacy for the African philosophy of Ubuntu further emphasised the importance of recognising our shared humanity in promoting peace and justice. More recently, figures like Malala Yousafzai have cham-



pioned education as a tool for peace, inspiring a global movement to ensure every child's right to education and opportunity. One of Galtung's enduring

contributions is his concept of "structural violence," which highlights the underlying structural causes of violence such as poverty, inequality, and discrimina-

tion embedded within societal structures. This concept remains relevant today, as issues like racism and global economic disparities continue to fuel conflicts worldwide. Galtung's advocacy for non-violent conflict resolution continues to inspire peacebuilders and activists worldwide. His emphasis on dialogue, empathy, and cooperation offers practical tools for building sustainable peace in today's conflicted world. Contemporary movements for social justice and human rights, such as Black Lives Matter, draw inspiration from Galtung's ideas about the power of non-violent resistance and grassroots mobilisation to challenge

systemic injustice. In reflecting on Galtung's legacy, we must draw upon his teachings to develop innovative approaches that promote peace, justice, and human dignity for all. His profound impact on education and social transformation persists beyond his passing, serving as a guiding light for future endeavours in the pursuit of a more peaceful and just world. As Galtung himself said, "Peace is not a fixed state, but a process that requires constant attention and effort." It is up to each of us to contribute to this ongoing work.

(The writer is programme executive, Gandhi Smriti and Darshan Sansthan, views are personal)

US soil being used for terrorist activities against India: Community leaders tell DOJ and FBI

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

A group of eminent Indian Americans in Silicon Valley has held a special meeting with senior officials of the Department of Justice, FBI and police and told that the US soil is being used for terrorist activities against India. The group held the meeting with senior officials of the Department of Justice, FBI and local police this week on increasing hate crimes against Hindus in California. During the meeting, Indian Americans expressed their displeasure and dissatisfaction that the law enforcement agencies in the US have not been able to take any action against those who are espousing terrorism activities in India, according to multiple persons present in the meeting. The meeting to address the challenging issue of the rise in

hate crimes against Hindu and Jain places of worship was held at the initiative of community leader Ajai Jain Bhutoria. It was attended by about two dozen eminent Indian Americans. Vincent Plair and Harpreet Singh Mokha from the Department of Justice's Community Relations Service along with FBI officials and those from the police departments of San Francisco, Milpitas, Fremont and Newark attended the meeting. The sudden increase in hate crimes against Indian Americans in general and the Hindus in particular is causing a lot of fear and anxiety in the community, said the Indian Americans after the meeting which was closed to the press. There is a fear in the community right now. The Khalistan people park trucks outside schools, and Indian grocery stores and intimidate young

Indian Americans. Several community members expressed their anger that the law enforcement agencies have not been able to take any action against those people, including those who tried to burn the Indian consulate in San Francisco, and are openly threatening Indian diplomats and giving open calls for terrorist incidents in India. Some of the members present in the meeting told PTI that senior law enforcement officials said that they were not aware of the Khalistan movement in the US and wanted the Indian Americans to help them raise awareness about these terrorist groups in the US. They also said that they have not been able to take action because of a lack of resources and funds and that they have other top priorities. This meeting was a crucial moment as we united to con-

front the recent surge in hate crimes targeting Hindu places of worship. I brought together Indian community leaders, DOJ, FBI, and law enforcement officials from Milpitas, SF, Fremont, and Newark. In the last four months, over 11 temples in the Bay Area alone have been attacked, vandalised, and defaced with hateful graffiti. The fear in our community is palpable, but our collective resolve is stronger than ever," Bhutoria said. "We delved into safeguarding places of worship and tackling hate crimes, notably those involving Sikhs for Justice (SFJ) Khalistani supporters targeting Hindu Temples, displaying disturbing banners in front of schools and corporate establishments. In our discourse, we explored the prospect of organising a Protecting all Places of Worship Forum (PPOW) with the DOJ," said Sikh leader

Sukhi Chahal. Chahal said he personally underscored the significance of addressing the provocative and threatening video messages from SFJ pro-Khalistan separatist Gurbatwant Singh Pannu. "I urged FBI and DOJ officials to earnestly consider the potential repercussions of Mr Pannu's statements on peace, harmony, and India-US relations. It is paramount that we collectively work to mitigate the impact of such hateful messages, which have the potential to disturb societal tranquility and radicalise the youth," he said. Following the meeting, it was agreed that a working group will be formed under the guidance of the US Department of Justice that will actively pursue safety measures at places of worship and systemic reporting of any unwanted act. The working group would have

representations from various sections of the Indian community. The community leaders expressed concerns that the police were not of much help to them in either addressing this increasing fear or stopping terror activities from the US against India. When pressed on the issue of Khalistan, the law enforcement officials said that they don't understand the context and they need to be educated on this matter. One of the Indian Americans told the FBI that the Khalistan leaders are openly threatening to blow up Air India planes and they openly carry messages around targeting Hindus. Another Indian American said that the FBI is not contradicting the claims by some of the Khalistan leaders that the FBI is supporting them, one of the participants said.

Hinduphobia on the rise in the US, says Congressman

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

The US of late has seen a rise in Hinduphobia which needs to be fought because there is no place for hatred in this country, Indian-American Congressman Shri Thanedar has said, as he joined a group of Hindu leaders and organisations seeking to fight this growing hate crime against the community. Representatives of various Indian American groups met on Wednesday at the US Capitol during a meeting organised by HinduAction. "We see a lot of Hindu phobia. We see California SB403 (the bill banning caste discrimination), and that's just the beginning. The attacks on our temples and attacks on Hindus all over the world. That is one of the reasons why I decided to form the Hindu Caucus," Thanedar said. "For the first time in the United States Congress, we have a Hindu Caucus. Number of initiatives we are taking to ensure that people have religious freedom to practice their religion the way they want to and not be, we need to fight this phobia, bigotry, and hatred. Because there should be no place for hatred in America, no place for hatred against people's religious rights. And so that's what we are focusing on in Congress," Thanedar, a Democrat, said. Suhag Shukla from the Hindu American Foundation said that college campuses in particular are experiencing rampant anti-Hindu bias and hate. She also listed out some of the major incidents of hate crime against the Hindu community in the US. "Just in the past two years we've seen a spike in anti-Hindu incidents," she said. There's unfamiliarity and there is complacency amongst law enforcement, she said. "The perpetrators that have been caught on video with all the temple attacks that I've

mentioned, all of the street attacks that I've mentioned, the statements that are made during the commission of the attacks, the nature and content of the graffiti all point to the Khalistan movement," she said. "When there are people from within the Sikh community who are speaking out against this movement, they've been physically attacked," Shukla said. Referring to SB403, she said there is institutionalised discrimination. Silicon Valley-based entrepreneur Sunder Iyer, a victim of targeted hate, told the participants that he learned that a civil rights agency can racially profile and violently stereotype Indian Americans. "I respectfully ask the members of Congress to allocate a budget within the Department of Justice to investigate the California Civil Rights Department and for the greater good of America. An agency that does not represent the truth harms all Americans. Several of my colleagues at Cisco and many other companies across California will be willing to give testimony. They must not live their lives in fear and their voices must not be suppressed," Iyer said. An increase in recent attacks on the temples is emotionally very disturbing to the executives of the temple and community at large, said Tejal Shah of the Hindu Temple Empowerment Council. Temple Priests face mental anguish, shock and trauma, she said. Observing that perpetrators of many of those attacks have not been found, Shah said in one case the police resisted registering a report. She listed out attacks on some of the temples. Later a joint declaration by HinduAction and Namaste-Shalom Multifaith Alliance urged the Congress to formally recognise rising anti-Hindu hate through a resolution.

Zardari assures Xi of closer ties

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

Pakistan's newly-elected President Asif Ali Zardari on Thursday promised his Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping that he would work closely with him to deepen the all-weather strategic partnership with Beijing and in the development of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). Zardari, the husband of late Pakistan Prime Minister, Benazir Bhutto was elected as the 14th President of Pakistan on Saturday, becoming the only civilian president of the coup-prone country for a second time. Responding to Xi's congratulatory message to him on his re-election as the President of Pakistan, Zardari said, "Our solid friendship serves as an anchor for regional peace, stability and development." He emphasised that Pakistan and China shared a unique bond forged in the crucible of history and nurtured by mutual respect, understanding, and

common views on all global issues. Zardari expressed his commitment to "working closely with the Chinese President to deepen practical cooperation, strengthen the all-weather partnership, and foster a shared community for the benefit of the two countries." "Pakistan and China were not merely neighbours, but iron-clad brothers fully committed to the success of our All-Weather Strategic Cooperative Partnership." Zardari noted with satisfaction that Pakistan and China had made significant progress in the diverse fields of bilateral cooperation, particularly in developing the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). He said President Xi's support would remain instrumental in achieving the CPEC's continued development and meeting the two peoples' shared objectives of progress and prosperity. In his message to Zardari on Sunday, soon after his re-election, Xi said "China and

Pakistan are good neighbours, good friends, good partners and good brothers, adding that the two countries' iron-clad friendship is a choice of history and a precious treasure of the two peoples." President Xi said that "the two countries have in recent years maintained close high-level exchanges, supported each other on issues concerning their respective core interests and major concerns, achieved fruitful results in the construction of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and maintained a high level of development of bilateral relations." The USD 60 billion CPEC is a 3,000-km Chinese infrastructure network project under construction in Pakistan. It connects strategic Gwadar Port in Pakistan's Balochistan with China's Xinjiang province, giving Beijing an opening to the Arabian Sea. India is opposed to the CPEC as it is being laid through Pakistan-occupied Kashmir.

Arrest warrants of Nawaz Sharif's sons cancelled

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

In a major relief to ex-Pakistan prime minister Nawaz Sharif's family, an anti-corruption court on Thursday cancelled the permanent arrest warrants against his two sons, who recently returned from the UK after a seven-year self-imposed exile. Hassan Nawaz and Hussain Nawaz left the country in 2018 after they were named in the 2016 Panama Papers scandal. They faced charges in cases related to the Panama Papers but never appeared before the courts, which declared them absconders. The brothers returned to Pakistan on Tuesday after an Islamabad anti-corruption court suspended the perpetual arrest warrants against the two until Thursday, clearing the last hurdle for their safe return to the country.

PPP wins four of the six seats in Senate bypoll

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

The Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari-led Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) got the lion's share in the Senate by-elections on Thursday by winning four of the six seats in the polls held to fill the vacant seats in the upper house of Parliament. The polling for the six Senate seats in the National Assembly, Sindh and Balochistan provincial assemblies began at 9 am and ended at 4 pm. The seats had fallen vacant when the senators were elected as members of National or provincial assemblies in the general elections held on February 8. Article 223 of the Constitution bars dual membership. The National Assembly lawmakers voted to elect one senator while the members of Balochistan and Sindh elected three and two senators respectively. Former prime minister Yusuf

Raza Gilani, who was a joint candidate of the newly-formed eight-party ruling coalition, won in the National Assembly, polling 204 of the 301 votes cast, while his rival Sunni Ittehad Council's Ilyas Mehrban got only 88 votes. Nine votes were rejected during the vote count. Gilani is expected to become the Senate Chairman of the ruling coalition.

The PPP also won two seats from Sindh for which polling was held in the Sindh Assembly. Jam Saifullah Khan Dharejo and Muhammad Aslam Abro were elected by obtaining 58 and 57 votes respectively. Nazeerullah and Shazia Sohail of the Sunni Ittehad Council got four votes each. One vote was rejected.

The total strength of the Senate is 100, including 23 members each from the four federating units, and four each from the erstwhile tribal region and Islamabad.

Israel says it plans to direct Palestinians out of Rafah

AP ■ TEL AVIV

The Israeli military said on Wednesday it plans to direct a significant portion of the 1.4 million displaced Palestinians living in the Gaza Strip's southernmost town of Rafah toward "humanitarian islands" in the centre of the territory ahead of its planned offensive in the area. The fate of the people in Rafah has been a major area of concern of Israel's allies — including the United States — and humanitarian groups, worried an offensive in the region densely crowded with so many displaced people would be a catastrophe. Rafah is also Gaza's main entry point for desperately needed aid. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has said a Rafah offensive is crucial to achieve Israel's stated aim of destroying Hamas following the militants' October 7 attack in which about 1,200 people, mostly civilians, were killed and around 250 taken hostage and brought into Gaza. Israel's invasion of Gaza has killed more than 31,000, according to Gaza health officials, left much of the enclave in ruins and displaced some 80 per cent of Gaza's 2.3 million people. Israel's chief military spokesman, Rear Adm. Daniel Hagari, said moving those in



Rafah to the designated areas, which he said would be done in coordination with international actors, was a key part of the military's preparations for its anticipated invasion of Rafah, where Israel says Hamas maintains four battalions it wants to destroy. Rafah has swelled in size in the last months as Palestinians in Gaza have fled fighting in nearly every other corner of the territory. The town is covered in tents. "We need to make sure that 1.4 million people or at least a significant amount of the 1.4 million will move. Where? To humanitarian islands that we will create with the international community," Hagari told reporters at a briefing. Hagari said those islands would provide temporary housing, food, water and other necessities

to evacuated Palestinians. He did not say when Rafah's evacuation would occur, nor when the Rafah offensive would begin, saying that Israel wanted the timing to be right operationally and to be coordinated with neighbouring Egypt, which has said it does not want an influx of displaced Palestinians crossing its border. The US has been firm with Israel over its concerns about Rafah, and Secretary of State Antony Blinken said on Wednesday that Washington had yet to receive from Israel its plans for civilians there. "We need to see a plan that will get civilians out of harm's way if there's a military operation in Rafah," he told reporters in Washington after convening a virtual ministerial meeting on Gaza aid with officials from the UN, the EU, Britain. Cyprus,

Qatar and the UAE. "We've not yet seen such a plan." At the start of the war, Israel directed evacuees to a slice of undeveloped land along Gaza's Mediterranean coast that it designated as a safe zone. But aid groups said there were no real plans in place to receive large numbers of displaced there. Israeli strikes also targeted the area. More than 31,270 Palestinians have been killed in Gaza and most of its 2.3 million people forced from their homes, Gaza's Health Ministry says. The ministry doesn't differentiate between civilians and combatants in its count, but says women and children make up two-thirds of the dead. Israel blames the civilian death toll on Hamas because the militants fight in dense, residential areas. The military has said it has killed 13,000 Hamas fighters, without providing evidence. Meanwhile, fighting continued across Gaza. An Israeli strike on Wednesday hit a food distribution site in southern Gaza run by UNRWA, the UN agency that works with Palestinian refugees, killing one staff member from the agency and wounding 22 others. The death brings to 165 the number of workers for the agency killed during the past five months of fighting, according to UNRWA.

UK tightens definition of extremism to counter right-wing, Islamist extremists

PTI ■ LONDON

The UK government on Thursday issued a new "more precise" definition of extremism in response to increased threats since the October 2023 Hamas terror attacks in Israel and to protect liberal democratic principles against extreme right-wing and Islamist extremists. Extremism in the UK is now defined as the promotion or advancement of an ideology based on violence, hatred or intolerance, that aims to: negate or destroy the fundamental rights and freedoms of others; or undermine, overturn or replace the UK's system of liberal parliamentary democracy and democratic rights; or intentionally create a permissive environment for others to achieve the results in the first two categories. The previous definition, introduced in 2011 under the government's Prevent strategy, defined extremism as "vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and belief". UK Levelling Up and Communities Secretary Michael Gove said the update was needed to safeguard the UK as a multi-national, multi-ethnic, multi-faith democracy

"success story", which is stronger because of its diversity. "But our democracy and our values of inclusivity and tolerance are under challenge from extremists. In order to protect our democratic values, it is important both to reinforce what we have in common and to be clear and precise in identifying the dangers posed by extremism," said Gove. "The pervasiveness of extremist ideologies has become increasingly clear in the aftermath of the 7 October (2023) attacks and poses a real risk to the security of our citizens and our democracy. This is the work of extreme right-wing and Islamist extremists who are seeking to separate Muslims from the rest of society and create division within Muslim communities," he said. "They seek to radicalise individuals, deny people their full rights, suppress freedom of expression, incite hatred, and undermine our democratic institutions," he added. The minister said the new measures will ensure that the government does not inadvertently provide a platform to those setting out to subvert democracy and deny other people's fundamental rights. He also indicated it marks the first in a series of measures to tackle extremism and protect British democracy.

The new definition is not statutory, does not create new powers and has no effect on the existing criminal law of the country, but instead applies to the operations of the government itself. It will be used by ministerial departments and officials alongside a set of engagement principles to ensure they are not "inadvertently" funding or legitimising groups or individuals who attempt to advance extremist ideologies. Since the October 2023 Hamas terror attacks in Israel, the government said concerns have been raised about the "wide-ranging risk of radicalisation". The Community Security Trust recorded 4,103 antisemitic incidents in the UK since the attacks in 2023, an increase of 147 per cent compared to 2022, and Tell MAMA (Measuring Anti-Muslim Attacks) recorded a 335 per cent increase in anti-Muslim hate cases in the last four months. As indicated by Prime Minister Rishi Sunak in Parliament on Wednesday, the aim is to ensure the government has the tools it needs to effectively counter extremism. A new counter-extremism centre of excellence has been established in the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities to provide leadership for the cross-government counter-extremism community, ensure

consistent application of the definition and engagement standards, and take the lead on producing strategic assessments of extremism. The government said the new unit will draw on the expertise of the Commission for Countering Extremism as well as counter extremism policy fellows to ensure the "very best academic insight" in shaping the anti-extremism approach. The new definition, which draws on independent reviews, clarifies extremism involves advancing or promoting an ideology based on violence, hatred or intolerance, a high bar that only captures the most concerning of activities. It is not about silencing those with private and peaceful beliefs and will it affect free speech, which will always be protected, the government reiterated. "The threat to Britain from extremists includes those who may not use violence directly yet target our core values, so it is welcome that this updated definition includes those who seek to undermine or replace liberal democracy. Greater clarity in defining extremism can underpin a concerted approach across civil society to protect our country," said Lord John Walney, UK's Independent Adviser on Political Violence and Disruption.

Indian tourists shun Maldives; industry feels the pinch: Reports

PTI ■ MALE

Indian tourists, who used to flock to the Maldives, are now shunning the island nation and its tourism industry is already feeling the pinch of declined revenue, prompting calls for mending the fence with New Delhi. India has slipped to sixth position in 2024 compared to being a topper in visitor numbers in 2023, prompting voices from the local tourism industry to flag the danger for the tourism-dependent economy of the archipelagic country in the Indian Ocean.

A full-blown backlash was directed at the Maldives following derogatory remarks against India and Prime Minister Narendra Modi on social media by three Maldivian officials after Modi posted photos and video of the pristine Lakshadweep Islands on India's west coast on January 6 on his X handle. According to the Maldives Tourism Ministry statistics, over 17 lakh tourists visited the island nation in 2023, out of which more than 2,09,198 visitors were Indians followed by Russians (2,09,146) and China (1,87,118). The number of Indian visitors

was more than 2.4 lakh in 2022 while over 2.11 lakh Indians flew to the Maldives in 2021. The Maldives was also one of the few countries open for international tourists during the pandemic and nearly 63,000 Indians visited that country during that period. India occupied the sixth spot in tourist arrivals in 2024, the Ministry's statistics showed, compared to the consistent first spot since 2020 with Indian tourists visiting the island nation even during the pandemic time. Till about 10 days ago, the Ministry data showed that

tourist arrivals from India as of March 2 was 27,224, which is a 33 per cent decline compared to last year when the corresponding number stood at 41,224. The local tourism industry is worried about the development and already flagged caution. Explaining how India plays a vital role in sustaining tourism-related receipts to the state during off-peak season, a news portal Sun.mv said: "Indian travellers have a counter-travel pattern to European travellers; meaning Indian visitors frequent to the Maldives during hot seasons, which coincides with a

drop in European market arrivals. In other words, India is the most significant 'filler' for the Maldives tourism off-peak season." It further reported on Tuesday, how, tourism industry experts and analysts have highlighted the adverse impacts of dwindling Indian arrivals to the Maldives, while some have forecast estimated losses north of USD 1.8 billion to USD 2 billion. "Travel agencies and operators relying on Indian arrivals report a revenue decline of 80 per cent — a dangerous prospect," the report said.

Quoting an official from 'Let's Go Maldives', a prominent travel agency, the portal said, the Indian traveller market consists of multiple demographics and segments from affluent to budget travellers and India is a large summer market. "Without India, the occupancy rate is impacted negatively. This makes it a crucial market for us," the official added. It is not just the Indian passport holders that have boycotted the Maldives but "the arrival of affluent and wealthy Indian-origin travellers from other nations as well has declined, which too

indicated the contribution of the Indian market in Maldives tourism, the news report said quoting a prominent travel agency, Travel Connection Maldives' CEO Mohamed Mirshad. Authorities are hoping that the resumption of direct flights between Hanimaadhoo International Airport in Maldives and Thiruvananthapuram in Kerala state of India would bring back some more visitors from India. "This is the most opportune moment for the island nation to mend fences with its ally. It is

also logical that the smaller countries are in need of security and safety ensured by their larger allies. Any conduct to the contrary would not result fortuitously for the Maldives, as evident with the current tourism industry statistics and revenues," Sun.mv said. "Arrogance will not benefit us, it would damage the sensitive economy of the country even further. True wisdom lies in accepting one's own weaknesses and strengths, and the reality that we live in to avoid any future brunt," it added.

Seven more Nepalese citizens serving Russian Army killed

Total number of deaths 19, says Nepal's foreign ministry

PTI ■ KATHMANDU

Seven more Nepalese citizens serving the Russian Army in the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war have died in the last week, taking the total number of deaths to 19, the foreign ministry said on Thursday. Nepal's Ministry of Foreign Affairs latest update on the toll came two days after Deputy Prime Minister Kaji Shrestha asked Russia to share a list of Nepalese citizens serving the Russian Army in the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war but stressed that complications remained in bringing them back from the war zone. He also met the Russian Ambassador to Nepal Aleksei

Novikov on Tuesday over the matter when the latter called on him. In a statement issued on Thursday, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs confirmed the deaths of seven more Nepali nationals who were fighting from the Russian side in the Russia-Ukraine war. "With the deaths of 7 more Nepalese citizens with the Russian Army, the total number of such cases have touched 19," said the statement. The ministry said that the deaths of Nepali nationals in the Russian Army come even as the Nepal government has banned the recruitment of Nepali nationals in foreign armies except for those coun-

tries with whom Nepal has signed a traditional agreement. The ministry has extended heartfelt condolences to the families of those killed in Ukraine. The ministry said it has once again requested the Russian government to provide compensation to the kin of deceased soldiers, to provide treatment to those injured in the war and to repatriate those recruited illegally into the Russian Army. Nepal government has placed top priority on the works relating to repatriating those Nepalese nationals who have been recruited into the Russian Army, the ministry said. Hundreds of Nepali citizens are

reported fighting for the Russians against Ukraine. A small number of Nepali citizens are serving in the Ukrainian Army too, but both conflicting nations have not shared the details with the government of Nepal. On March 7, Shrestha held a telephone conversation with Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov and raised the concerns of the Nepali side. Shrestha also reportedly said that he wants to visit Russia and take stock of the condition of the Nepali nationals in Russia. He said he is keen to know how Nepali nationals were duped and brought to Russia and talk to Russian officials to resolve the issue.

Report claims Yemen's Houthis have a hypersonic missile

AP ■ DUBAI

Yemen's Houthi rebels claim to have a new, hypersonic missile in their arsenal, Russia's state media reported on Thursday, potentially raising the stakes in their ongoing attacks on shipping in the Red Sea and surrounding waterways against the backdrop of Israel's war on Hamas in the Gaza Strip. The report by the state-run RIA Novosti news agency cited an unnamed official but provided no evidence for the claim. It comes as Moscow maintains an aggressively counter-Western foreign policy amid its grinding war on Ukraine. However, the Houthis have for weeks hinted about "surprises" they plan for the battles at sea to counter the United States and its allies, which have so far been able to down any missile or bomb-carrying drone that comes near their warships in Mideast waters. The Houthis' main benefactor, Iran, claims to have a hypersonic missile and has widely armed the rebels with the missiles they now use. Adding a hypersonic missile to their arsenal could pose a more-for-



midable challenge to the air defense systems employed by America and its allies, including Israel. "The group's missile forces have successfully tested a missile that is capable of reaching speeds of up to Mach 8 and runs on solid fuel," a military official close to the Houthis said, according to the RIA report. The Houthis "intend to begin manufacturing it for use during attacks in the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden, as well as against targets in Israel." Mach 8 is eight times the speed of sound. Russia has maintained close ties with Iran, relying on Iranian bomb-carrying drones to target Ukraine. Russian state media, particularly its Arabic-language services, have closely reported on Yemen's yearslong

civil war that pits the Iran-backed Houthis against forces of the internationally backed Yemeni government, supported by a Saudi-led coalition. Hypersonic weapons, which fly at speeds higher than Mach 5, could pose crucial challenges to missile defence systems because of their speed and maneuverability.

The danger from a hypersonic missile depends on how maneuverable it is. Ballistic missiles fly on a trajectory in which anti-missile systems like the US-made Patriot can anticipate their path and intercept them. The more irregular the missile's flight path, such as a hypersonic missile with the ability to change directions, the more difficult it becomes to intercept. China is believed to be pursuing the weapons, as is America. Russia claims it has already used them on the battlefield in Ukraine. However, speed and maneuverability isn't a guarantee the missile will successfully strike a target. Ukraine's air force in May said it shot down a Russian hypersonic Kinzhal missile with a Patriot battery.

50 migrants feared dead in Mediterranean Sea

AP ■ MILAN

Survivors rescued from a deflating rubber dinghy in the central Mediterranean Sea have reported that some 50 people who departed Libya with them a week ago perished during the journey, the humanitarian rescue group SOS Mediterranee said Thursday. The European charity's ship Ocean Viking spotted the dinghy with 25 people on board Wednesday. Two were unconscious, and were evacuated by the Italian military for treatment. The other 23 were in serious condition, exhausted, dehydrated

and with burns from fuel on board the boat. SOS Mediterranee spokesman Francesco Creazzo said that the survivors were all male, 12 of them minors with two of those not yet teenagers. They were from Senegal, Mali and The Gambia. Creazzo said the survivors were traumatised and unable to give full accounts of what had transpired during the voyage. Humanitarian organisations often rely on accounts of survivors when pulling together the numbers of dead and missing at sea, presumed to have died. The UN International

Organisation for Migration says 227 people have died along the perilous central Mediterranean route this year through March 11, not counting the new reported missing and presumed dead. That's out of a total 279 deaths in the Mediterranean since January 1. A total of 19,562 people arrived in Italy using that route in the period. The survivors said the boat departed Zawiya, Libya with 75 people on board, including some women and at least one small child. The motor broke sometime after departure, and they had been adrift.

Denying same-sex marriage is unconstitutional: Japanese HC

AP ■ TOKYO

A Japanese high court ruled Thursday that denying same-sex marriage is unconstitutional and called for urgent government action to address the lack of any law allowing for such unions. The court does not have the power to overturn the current marriage law, which has been interpreted to restrict marriage as between a man and a woman. Government offices

may continue to deny marriage status to same-sex couples unless the existing law is revised to include LGBTQ+ couples, or a new law is enacted that allows for other types of unions. The Sapporo High Court ruling said that not allowing same-sex couples to marry and enjoy the same benefits as straight couples violates their fundamental right to have a family. A lower court issued a similar ruling earlier Thursday, becoming

the sixth district court to do so. But the Tokyo District Court ruling was only a partial victory for Japan's LGBTQ+ community calling for equal marriage rights, as it doesn't change or overturn the current civil union law that describes marriage as between a man and a woman. Five previous court decisions in various districts said Japan's policy of denying same-sex marriage is either unconstitutional or nearly so.

Rare protest by Chinese official media against police crackdown

PTI ■ BEIJING

In a rare show of defiance, Chinese media on Thursday protested against the attempts by police to block the coverage of a suspected gas leak explosion at an eatery in the country's north, which killed seven people and injured 27 others. The blast that rocked a fried chicken shop in Yanjiao township in the city of Sanhe, near Beijing, on Wednesday is suspected to have been caused by a gas leak. As Chinese official media and foreign journalists rushed to cover the explosion, which killed two people and injured 27 others, they were forcibly prevented by local authorities from the scene, raising a rare controversy over the country's press restrictions. A journalist with state broadcaster CCTV was interrupted while reporting live from the scene of the blast. The journalist was seen surrounded by several uniformed police officers who blocked the camera and shouted about the potential danger at the scene, according to a video that circulated online. The video of the report was no longer available on CCTV's website as of Thursday, the Hong Kong-based South China Morning Post newspaper reported. In another video, reporters were seen surrounded by a group of uniformed police officers asking them to leave the scene. A reporter with state-run China Media Group — of which CCTV is a division — was heard saying, "We three reporters are shoved by a dozen people". The state-run All China Journalists Association objected to the official crackdown, saying that officials should not "simply and brutally obstruct journalists in the normal performance of their duties for the sake of controlling public opinion". The association urged officials to make it easier for media to conduct on-site

interviews when reporting emergencies. The police crackdown against media was seen as an attempt by the local officials to downplay the coverage, fearing reprisals as last month, Chinese President Xi Jinping ordered steps to curb occurrences of recurring incidents of burning fires due to various causes and protect people's lives and property and social stability. As the videos of media protests went viral on the Chinese social media platform Weibo, akin to X, local authorities on Thursday issued a statement saying they were "deeply remorseful" and apologised to the journalists, the Post report said. The media protest against the official crackdown also figured in the Chinese foreign ministry briefing, as many foreign journalists were reportedly prevented from covering the evening. When questioned on restrictions imposed on journalists, Foreign Ministry spokesperson Wang Wenbin said local officials have issued a statement on the incident. China welcomes foreign journalists conducting reporting activities under the law and is willing to facilitate if the media faces any problems, Wang said. Fire and gas explosions have been taking place almost every month, prompting President Xi to order the concerned agencies to take pre-emptive measures. Fifteen people were killed and 44 others injured in a building fire in Nanning city in China last month, while 39 were killed and nine others injured in a building fire that broke out in Xinyu city in east China's Jiangxi Province on January 24. Fatal fires in China are not uncommon due to lax enforcement of building and safety standards.

Denmark plans to expand military draft to women

AP ■ COPENHAGEN (DENMARK)

Denmark wants to increase the number of young people doing military service by extending conscription to women and increasing the time of service from 4 months to 11 months for both genders, Danish Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen said on Wednesday. "We do not rearm because we want war. We are rearming because we want to avoid it," Frederiksen told a press conference. She said the government wants "full equality between the sexes". Denmark currently has up to 9,000 professional troops on top of the 4,700 conscripts undergoing basic training, according to official figures. The government wants to increase the number of conscripts by 300 to reach a total of 5,000. The country is a member of the NATO alliance and a staunch supporter of Ukraine in its war against Russia's invasion. Foreign Minister Lars Lokke Rasmussen stressed that "Russia does not pose a threat

to Denmark". "But we will not bring ourselves to a place where they could come to do that," Lokke Rasmussen said. All physically fit men over the age of 18 are called up for military service, which lasts roughly four months. However, because there are enough volunteers, there is a lottery system, meaning not all young men serve. In 2023, there were 4,717 conscripts in Denmark. Women who volunteered for military service accounted for 25.1 per cent of the cohort, according to official figures. Defence Minister Troels Lund Poulsen said the new system would require a change in the law, which he said will happen in 2025 and take effect in 2026. The security policy situation in Europe "has become more and more serious, and we have to take that into account when we look at future defence", Lund Poulsen said. "A broader basis for recruiting that includes all genders is needed," he said, adding it will create "a more versatile and more complete defence".

Four, including three Indians, arrested trying to enter US illegally from Canada

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

Three Indian nationals are among four people arrested in Upstate New York after they jumped off a moving freight train coming from Canada in their bid to enter the US illegally. US Border Patrol agents arrested the four, including a woman, on March 12. The investigation concluded that all four people were undocumented non-citizens. Border Patrol

agents assigned to the Buffalo Station spotted four people jumping off a moving freight train on the International Railroad Bridge in the city of Buffalo. The men left the woman who became immobile due to an injury and were caught shortly after a foot pursuit. The injured woman received first aid from Erie County Sheriff's deputies and U.S. Customs and Border Protection officers (CBP). After treatment, the woman was trans-

ported by ambulance to a local medical centre. Border Patrol agents were able to identify that the woman and two men were from India and the third man was from the Dominican Republic. The three men are being processed for removal and detained in Batavia Federal Detention Facility awaiting a deportation hearing for charges under Sections 212 and 237 of the Immigration and Nationality Act, a media release said.

BABA FARID UNIVERSITY OF HEALTH SCIENCES, FARIDKOT

BFU-24/08

RECRUITMENT NOTICE

Online applications are invited upto **15/04/2024** from eligible candidates through University website i.e **www.bfuhs.ac.in** for the recruitment of 01 post of Law Officer under Deptt. of Medical Education & Research, Govt. of Punjab. For Eligibility, terms & conditions & other information visit university website i.e **www.bfuhs.ac.in**
00/12/225/2023/33695
Dated CHD :- 3/14/2024

THE MAHARAJA BHUPINDER SINGH PUNJAB SPORTS UNIVERSITY, (MBSPSU), PATIALA
Mohindra Kothi, Near Fountain Chowk, Patiala-147001

Advertisement No. PIS-02-2024
1. Online applications are invited for the post of Chief Coach (14), Psychologist (2) in the Punjab State Institute of Sports (PIS) Mohali.
2. Online registration of application for these posts will start w.e.f. **15.03.2024** and end on **02.04.2024**. Last date for submitting the hard copy of the online submitted application form and supporting documents (4 sets of hard copies of online application form along with self-attested copies of all the certificates/documents) by courier or by hand is **05.04.2024**.
3. For further details visit University Website **http://pisrecruitmentpsu.com/**
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14.03.2024
NA/12/22925/2023/33737 Dated CHD :- 3/14/2024

REGISTRAR

NKorea's Kim test drives new tank, orders troops to prepare for war

AP ■ SEOUL

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un joined troops training on a new tank model and drove one himself, state media reported on Thursday, as his rivals South Korea and the US wrapped up their annual military exercises. It's the third time Kim was reported to have observed military exercises since the start of the 11-day South Korean-US drills, which he views as rehearsals for an invasion. That's a less provocative option than missile tests. North Korea has intensified launches since 2022 and ramped up belligerent rhetoric this year. At the tank drills Wednesday, Kim praised the country's latest tank as "the world's most powerful" and told his troops to bolster their "fighting spirits" and complete "preparations for war", according to the official Korean Central News

Agency. The other two drills he inspected recently were dedicated to artillery firing and maneuvering exercises. The tank was first unveiled during a military parade in 2020, and its rolling during Wednesday's drill indicates that it's ready to be deployed, South Korean experts say. Photos of the tank released by North Korea shows it has a launch tube for missiles, a weapons systems the former Soviet Union already operated in the 1970s. The new tank could pose a threat to South Korea, said Yang Uk, an analyst at Asan Institute for Policy Studies, but it remains to be seen whether it can be mass produced. The North's Defense Ministry last week threatened "responsible military activities" in reaction to the South Korea-US military drills, which involved a computer-simulated command post training and 48 kinds of field exercises, twice the num-

ber conducted last spring. The US and South Korea have been expanding their training exercises in a tit-for-tat response to the North's weapons testing spree. Concerns about North Korea's military preparations have deepened since Kim vowed in a speech in January to rewrite the constitution to eliminate the country's long-standing goal to seek peaceful unification of the Korean Peninsula and cement South Korea as its "invariable principal enemy". He said the new constitution must specify North Korea would annex and subjugate the South if another war breaks out. Kim's moves signal "North Korea's fundamental change on its South Korea policy, beyond just rhetoric," as the North's previous push for inter-Korean unity had allowed it to make a steadfast call for the removal of US troops in South Korea, a senior South Korean presidential official said.

THE PUNJAB STATE COOPERATIVE MILK PRODUCERS FEDERATION LTD.
SCO 153-155, SECTOR 34-A, CHANDIGARH-160022. EPABX NO. 0172-5041812,66
Notice Inviting Tender **www.verka.coop**
e tenders are hereby Invited for the purchase and supply of following items:-

Sr. No.	Name of Work/Item	Period/Tentative Qty
1.	For Verka Chandigarh Dairy i. Designing, Supplying, Installing, Testing, Commissioning and handing over of 01 no. Elevator. ii. Hiring services for outsourcing activities/ contractor for packing UHT Milk & Milk products/ Beverages.	01 No. Annual
2.	For Verka Mohali Dairy Renovation/ UP gradation of electrical sub-station.	Job work
3.	For Verka Bathinda Dairy i. Supply of Laptops Complete in all respects. ii. Supply and Installation of server system complete in all respects.	15 No's 01 No.
4.	For Verka Hoshiarpur Dairy Hiring of:- i. Car required for procurement activities at Verka Hoshiarpur Dairy. ii. Vehicles for Transportation of milk products to Punjab & other states.	01 No. Annual
5.	For Verka Patiala Dairy Hiring of:- i. 1.5 MT insulated vehicles for transportation of fresh milk and Milk Products for Mandi Gobindgarh /surrounding area. ii. Vehicles for transportation of Plo, Ghee and Cheese/ Dairy products etc. for different stations. iii. Insulated vehicles for transportation of Cheese for Ahemdabad and Delhi. iv. Leasing out Verka Milkbooth situated at PRTC old Bus stand, near Railway station Patiala.	Annual Annual Annual 03 years
6.	For Verka Amritsar Dairy i. Hiring of vehicles for supply of fresh milk and Milk Products. ii. Backlit glow sign board, double sided glow sign board, flange glow sign board, non lit flex board, flex banner, wall painting/ Shop painting, vehicle painting, Umbrella, Dangler, A- type standing flex board, vinyl stickers.	01 No. Annual Rate Contact
7.	For Cattle Feed Plant, Bhatiani (Khanna) i. Purchase of A.I. Material • Mini A.I. Sheaths 0.25 ml • Mini A.I. Straws 0.25 ml ii. By-Pass Fat (Palm based fractionated) (E-auction to be on dated 27-3-2024 at NCDFI e-market portal). iii. Pest/Rodent Control service	Annual/ 6,00,000 Approx. 7,00,000 Approx. Three Months/ 185 MT for both Plants Annual

NOTE:-
1. 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**.
2. Corrigendum, if any, will be uploaded on website only.

Dy. General Manager (Purchase)

PUNJAB STATE POWER CORPORATION LTD.
Regd. Office : PSEB Head Office, The Mall Patiala-147001.
(O/o Superintending Engineer / Tl Circle Jalandhar)
Address: Office Room No.310-311, 2nd Floor, Shakti Sadan,
G.T. Road, Jalandhar. Contact No.96461-07248)
Corporate Identity Number U40109PB2010SGC033813

Tender Inquiry No. 41/TL Circle Jal/2023-24 Dated: 12-03-2024
Dy. Chief Engineer/ TL, Circle, Punjab State Power Corporation Limited, Room No.310, 2nd Floor, Shakti Sadan, Jalandhar, invites one No. E-Tender of:
1) Dismantlement of old 65 KV Rehana Jattan-Panchtha HRP /SC tower line.
For detailed NIT & Tender specification please refer to **https://eproc.punjab.gov.in** from **14-03-2024 from 5.00 PM onwards**.
Note: Corrigendum and addendum, if any will be published online at **https://eproc.punjab.gov.in**
76155/12/2834/2023/33639 Dated CHD :- 3/13/2024C-234/24

Short Notice Inviting Tender
No. SS/CW/RR/78/2023/223
The Mission Director, Samagra Shiksha, Assam invites bids for "Supply & installation of chairs for conference hall & Vidya Samiksha Kendra at State Mission Office, Kahilpara, Guwahati-19", from authorized dealers of reputed furniture brand.
Details of the bid may be seen at e-procurement portal **www.assamtenders.gov.in** and also in the office of the undersigned during office hours from 15-03-2024 upto 22-03-2024 (1400 hrs).
The bidder must be enrolled in **www.assamtenders.gov.in**

Sd/-Mission Director, Samagra Shiksha Axom Kahilpara, Guwahati-19

Janasanyog/ICF/6555/23/15-March-2024

Indira Gandhi University Meerpur, Rewari

इंदिरा गांधी विश्वविद्यालय मीरपूर रेवाड़ी

(A State University Established under Haryana Act No. 29 of 1913)
Recognized u/s 12-B & 2(f) of UGC Act, 1956

Employment Notice (Advt. No. 33/2024 to 48/2024)
Indira Gandhi University, Meerpur (Rewari) invites online applications from the eligible candidates for recruitment of Teaching and Non-Teaching Posts on regular basis and deputation/contractual basis (Librarian). The detailed instructions, requisite qualifications, pay scales and modalities for selection are given on the university website **www.igu.ac.in**. The link for submission of online application shall be available on the university website w.e.f. **13.03.2024**. In case of deputation/contractual appointment, application form is available on the university website. The candidates who had applied against the post of Professor, Associate Professor and Assistant Professor vide **advt. No. 10/2023 to 55/2023 and 04/2024 to 28/2024** need not to apply again. The candidates who have already applied for the post of Steno Typist vide **advt. No. 30/2024** need not to apply again. However, candidates can submit their latest updates if any through hard copy by **12.04.2024 (5:00 p.m.)**.

REGISTRAR

RO 25885 Dated 14-03-2024

Markets rebound on buying in IT stocks

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Benchmark Sensex rebounded 335 points and Nifty closed above the 22,100 level on Thursday on the back of buying in IT shares and metal shares as broader markets recovered from previous day's sharp losses. The 30-share BSE Sensex climbed 335.39 points or 0.46 per cent to settle at 73,097.28. During the day, it jumped 602.41 points or 0.82 per cent to 73,364.30. The NSE Nifty gained 148.95 points or 0.68 per cent to 22,146.65. From the Sensex pack, HCL Technologies, Infosys, Wipro, Bharti Airtel, Larsen & Toubro, Mahindra & Mahindra, Tata Consultancy

Services and Asian Paints were the major gainers. Axis Bank, IndusInd Bank, Bajaj Finance, JSW Steel, State Bank of India and Tata Steel were among the major laggards. The broader markets also staged a smart recovery, with the BSE Smallcap gauge jumping 3.11 per cent and midcap index climbing 2.28 per cent. Wholesale inflation rate declined marginally to 0.2 per cent in February compared to 0.27 per cent in the preceding month despite a slight uptick in the food basket. "The market was able to recover half of last trading day's sell-off as leverage based square-off neutralised it, while institutional buying sustained the buoyancy.



"Domestic economic data (WPI) eased to four-month low at 0.2% YoY in February, bringing ease to upcoming CPI trajectory, a relief for

future rate cuts. The broader market is outperforming the headline indices, taking advantage of mid and smallcap as a bargaining strategy," said Vinod Nair,

Head of Research, Geojit Financial Services. Fitch Ratings raised India's economic growth forecast to 7 per cent for the next fiscal year on the back of strong

domestic demand and sustained level of business and consumer confidence. Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth Rs 4,595.06 crore on Wednesday, according to exchange data. In Asian markets, Seoul and Tokyo settled in the green while Shanghai and Hong Kong ended lower. European markets were trading mostly in the green. The US markets ended on a mixed note on Wednesday. The BSE benchmark index tanked 906.07 points, or 1.23 per cent, to settle at 72,761.89 on Wednesday. The Nifty plummeted 338 points, or 1.51 per cent, to 21,997.70. Global oil benchmark Brent crude climbed 0.76 per cent to USD 84.67 a barrel.



Blue Star to invest ₹250 crore in next fiscal

PTI ■ KOLKATA

Leading home appliances company Blue Star will invest Rs 250 crore in the next financial year to raise the manufacturing capacity of room air conditioners at its Sri City facility in Andhra Pradesh, an official said here on Thursday. The company now has a production capacity of 10 lakh room air conditioners across its various manufacturing facilities, including the Sri City unit. "Plans are there to raise the manufacturing capacity to 1.8 million units in the near future," Blue Star Managing Director B Thiagarajan told reporters here. "The present manufacturing capacity at Sri City will be added by three lakh units next fiscal, for which an amount of Rs 250 crore will be spent," he said. The company intends to garner a market share of 15 per cent in the room AC segment, for which there is a need to have products at various price points, he said. Presently, the market share of the company is 13.75 per cent, Thiagarajan said. The AC maker will also expand its distribution network across the country. Blue Star, which earned a revenue of Rs 8,000 crore in the last fiscal, aims at a turnover of Rs 9,500 crore at the end of the current financial year, he said. "The market for room ACs is at its infection point and is poised to grow exponentially. The industry size is expected to more than double by 2030," he said. The present market size of room ACs in the country is approximately 10 million

NTPC crosses 400 billion units power generation in FY24

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

State-owned NTPC on Thursday said its electricity generation has crossed 400 billion units (BU) this fiscal year. In FY23, the company had generated 399.3 BU, a company statement said. According to the statement, till March 13 of FY24, NTPC coal stations recorded a plant loading factor (PLF or capacity utilisation) of 77.06 per cent. During the fiscal year, the company recorded the highest ever single-day generation of 1,428 MU (million units) on September 1, 2023. NTPC has an installed capacity of 75.4 GW, while 18 GW capacity including 5 GW renewables is under construction. The company is committed to



achieving 60 GW of renewable energy capacity by 2032. NTPC has also ventured into various new business areas including e-mobility, waste-to-energy, green hydrogen solutions and participated in the bidding for power distribution of Union Territories. It is India's largest integrated power utility, contributing 1/4th of the power requirement of the country.

Gold rises ₹250; silver jumps ₹1,700 per kg

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Gold prices rose Rs 250 to Rs 66,200 per 10 grams in the national capital on Thursday amid a rally in precious metal prices in the global markets, according to HDFC Securities. The yellow metal had settled at Rs 65,950 per 10 grams in the previous close. Silver also surged Rs 1,700 to Rs 77,000 per kg. In the previous trade, it had ended at Rs 75,300 per kg. "Spot gold prices (24 carats) in the Delhi markets are trading at Rs 66,200 per 10 grams, up by Rs 250 from the previous close," Saumil Gandhi, senior analyst of commodities at HDFC Securities, said. In the international markets, spot gold at Comex was trading at USD 2,169 per ounce, up by USD 9 from the previous close. Gold prices recovered from a recent low and moved higher during the European trading session on Thursday due to a pullback in the US dollar and safe-haven buying, Gandhi added. Silver also quoted higher at USD 24.92 per ounce, and it had settled at USD 24.22 per ounce in the previous trade. "Investors look forward to today's US data, such as the Producer Price Index (PPI), weekly



job data, and retail sales, to gauge the direction of precious metal prices," Praveen Singh, Associate VP of Fundamental Currencies and Commodities at Sharekhan by BNP Paribas, said. Investors closely monitor these indicators for further insights into the health of the economy and potential shifts in the US monetary policy, which can affect the demand for safe-haven assets like precious metals.

Cyber attack, data breach among top risks for businesses in India: Survey

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Cyber attacks and data breaches are the top business risks for organisations in India, according to the 2023 Global Risk Management Survey. Cyber attacks and data breaches were placed seventh in the 2021 business risks survey. Global professional services firm Aon collected inputs from around 3,000 risk managers, c-suite leaders, treasurers, talent professionals, and other executives from 61 countries and territories to identify the most pressing business challenges. The biennial survey said that India's dependency on technology is likely to increase with the widespread adoption of digital infrastructure like the Unified Payments Interface, Aadhaar, and Open Network for Digital Commerce.



"With increasing digitisation, cybercrimes continue to become rampant with costs and complexities associated with such breaches forcing organisations to look at risk mitigation and transfer mechanisms to better manage cyber risks," the survey noted. Business interruption and failure to attract or retain top talent were marked as the second and third biggest risks facing organisations in India, respectively. "There is a compelling need

for Indian businesses to leverage advanced data analytics and experts to understand and manage the dynamics of integrated risks," said Nitin Sethi, Chief Executive Officer of Talent Solutions in India at Aon. Failure to meet customer needs, rapidly changing market trends, supply chain disruptions, and personal liabilities were marked down the list as other critical challenges for businesses in India.

Rupee falls 1 paisa, ends at 82.82 against US dollar

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The rupee depreciated 1 paisa to settle at 82.82 (provisional) against the US dollar on Thursday amid a strong greenback against major rivals overseas and rising crude oil prices. However, a firm trend in domestic equity markets supported the local currency and restricted the fall, forex traders said. At the interbank foreign exchange market, the local unit opened slightly weak at 82.84 and witnessed an intra-day low of 82.89 and a high of 82.82 against the greenback during the session. The local unit finally settled at 82.82 (provisional) against the dollar, registering a loss of just 1 paisa from its previous close. On Wednesday, the rupee declined 1 paisa to settle at 82.81 against the US dollar.

Electric mobility scheme shows Government thrust on EV: Experts

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Rs 500 crore Electric Mobility Promotion Scheme 2024 shows the government's continued thrust on vehicle electrification as it is indispensable on a long-term basis to fortify the case for an EV ecosystem, industry experts said on Thursday. Ministry of Heavy Industries has announced the new scheme to promote e-mobility in the country with an outlay of Rs 500 crore for four months beginning April 2024. The new scheme is for 2-wheelers and 3-wheelers. Commenting on the government's decision, Srikumar Krishnamurthy, Senior Vice President and Co-Group Head - Corporate Ratings, ICRA said the scheme is a favourable move towards the acceleration of the electrification pace in the

country. "The EMP scheme reflects the government's continued thrust on vehicle electrification, although the quantum of subsidy is seen lower in line with expectations," he said. ICRA expects the penetration levels of e-2w and e-3w (excluding e-rickshaws) to reach 6-8 per cent and 14-16 per cent, respectively in fiscal 2024-25, he added. Ayush Lohia, CEO, Lohia opined that the scheme offers a significant opportunity to expand the market and contribute to the growth of the electric vehicle industry. "With subsidies of up to Rs 25,000 for small three-wheelers and Rs 50,000 for large ones, the scheme is expected to drive increased demand for three-wheelers and two-wheelers," he said.

R2R to launch IPO

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Routes 2 Roots (R2R), a Delhi-based non-profit NGO with a global reach, is launching its Initial Public Offering (IPO) on the NSE's Social Stock Exchange. This will be an important entry in the newly created Social Stock Exchange (SSE) where Zero Coupon Zero Principal (ZCZP) instruments, have been introduced for Non-Profit Organizations (NPO's). As part of its commitment to social impact, Routes 2 Roots extends an invitation to investors to participate in this unique IPO. The primary objective of this offering is to aid the recovery of two critical Border States, Himachal Pradesh, and Uttarakhand, which have recently faced the brunt of floods and landslides. The funds raised will be utilized to install smart panels, NGO's cultural digital interactive program and K12 educational e-books, in hundred schools across these states, in all the 25 districts. This will benefit lakhs of students in getting quality educational tools at par with any other public school. With an initial issue size of Rs. One crore, the IPO invites a minimum subscription of Rs. Two lakhs (and then in multiples of Rs. 50,000) from corporates, business houses, firms and institutions. This IPO is not for individuals. Founded in 2004, Routes 2 Roots has established itself as a leader in the non-profit sector, diligently working to disseminate culture, art, and heritage across India and beyond. The NGO's commitment to digital education is evident through its 'Digital Learning of Performing Arts' program, initiated in 2016, providing free live interactive classes encompassing 20 disciplines of Indian art, culture, and heritage. It stands out as the largest provider of Art and Culture education in digital and hybrid modes, setting up smart classrooms equipped with digital panels and e-books in rural India.

Iconic Air India building with numerous firsts gets new owner

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Standing on the land reclaimed from sea for more than five decades now, Air India building in the country's commercial capital in the 1970s had people queuing up just to have the experience of using an elevator. Designed by New York-based architect John Burgee matching the aspirations of J R D Tata, the 23-storey building was among the first in those days to have elevators, neon signage on top and two levels of basement parking to name a few facilities. The building had "numerous firsts" is how a retired senior official of erstwhile Air India put it on Thursday as he recalled his more than two decade-long stint there. And the neon signage on top of the building that displayed Centaur, the logo of Air India which was later replaced after the merger of Indian Airlines,

was also a key attraction in the 1970s as not many structures boasted of such an element. The building, constructed on the state government's land, is among the many commercial high-rises to come up on the Southern tip of the land reclaimed from sea that was developed as the city's business district Nariman Point. With its central location, the iconic building, which completed 50 years in June 2020, also provides an expansive view of the Marine Drive from Nariman Point up to Malabar Hill. On Thursday, the central government announced approving the transfer of the Air India building in Mumbai to the Maharashtra government for a consideration of Rs 1,601 crore. Former executive director of erstwhile Air India Jitender Bhargava, who had worked out of the building for over 20

years, on Thursday told PTI that the building had "numerous firsts" and added that the board room was on the 23rd floor. Centralised air conditioning facilities and elevators with piped music were among the other attractions. When Burgee designed the building, it was one of its kind at that time in 1970. Bhargava, whose office was on the 20th floor of the building during the period from 1989 to 2010, said that when the building was opened, people used to come to have the experience of taking the elevator from the ground floor to the first floor, which housed the airline's booking office at that time. There is also an auditorium and cafeteria, among other facilities at the building, where around eight floors were occupied by Air India, he recalled. During the Gulf boom in the 80s, job seekers used to flock to the Air India booking



counter. As many as 400 people would be visiting the place to book flight tickets to various Gulf countries, a retired airline official told PTI. According to Godrej archives, the Air India building was among the first few high-rises to be constructed on the new stretch of the reclaimed land. The building had its share of cinematic moments as many Bollywood movies have featured it in various scenes.

During its more than five-decade-long existence, the building, also earthquake-resistant, was rocked by a bomb blast in 1993. The iconic building in many aspects also reflects the development journey of Mumbai and even as a link between the past and the present. In its archive Volume 2, Issue 1 dated April-May 2014, Godrej said that back in the 1920s, when the post-war

boom put great stress on land, the Development Directorate proposed the Backbay Reclamation Scheme. "The pier at the southern end of Block II, near Colaba, was completed in 1960 and named Nariman Point, after the firebrand Khurshed Framji Nariman, a whistle-blower who brought to light financial misappropriation by the British Government," it added. It also said that a construction boom in the following decade saw this region spurting many commercial high-rises. Some of the first few high-rises to be constructed on this new stretch of land were the headquarters of Air India and Indian Express. "Interestingly, Godrej fabrications can be found on both these buildings. While 1,502 windows were supplied and fitted in the Air India building, at the Express Towers, false ceilings with trapezoid perforations made possible by the skills of the

Panchals were installed, along with aluminium frame," as per the archive. While Tata Group took over Air India in January 2022, the airline's non-core assets, including land and buildings, were transferred to AI Assets Holding Company Ltd (AIAHL). The non-core assets valued at Rs 14,718 crore were transferred to AIAHL after it was set up in 2019 by the government as a precursor to the sale of Air India for holding the debt and non-core assets of the then national carrier. "GoI has approved transfer of Air India building, Mumbai of AI Assets Holding Company Ltd (AIAHL) to Government of Maharashtra (GoM) at consideration of Rs 1,601 cr. GoM has agreed to waive dues of Rs 298.42 cr, which would have been otherwise payable by AIAHL to GoM for this transaction," DIPAM Secretary Tuhin Kanta Pandey said in a post on X.



Malik stays in fourth place in Cape Town

PTI ■ CAPE TOWN

India's Tvesa Malik carded a three-under 71 to stay in tied fourth place after the second round of the Standard Bank Ladies Open here. Tvesa, who shot 1-under 73 on the first day at the Par-74 course, was four-under for two rounds with one more day to go. A multiple winner on her domestic Pro Golf Tour in India and a winner in South Africa last month, Tvesa is four shots behind the first round leader Kylie Henry of Scotland. After a first round 69, Kylie added a 71 to be 8-under 140. Tvesa made good use of the Par-5s, as three of her six birdies came on them. Tvesa opened the second day with a bogey, but hit back fast with three birdies between the third and the sixth and added three pars to turn in 2-under. On the back nine, Tvesa birdied the Par-5s on the 11th and the 14th to get closer to the top before she was pulled back by bogeys on the 15th and the 17th. A closing birdie was a good way to end the day as she aims for another good finish in South Africa. South African duo Cassandra Alexander (74-69) and

Gabrielle Venter (74-69) shot identical scores for the second day running and moved into shared second place at 5-under 143. Tvesa, French golfer Emie Peronnin (73-71) and England's Florentyna Parker (73-71) were tied fourth at 4-under 144. The top 30 and ties make the cut, which was projected at 3-over 149. The field this week includes all three winners on the Sunshine Ladies Tour this year with Kylie Henry, Tvesa Malik and Helen Kreuzer. They have been joined by Kiera Floyd, Gabrielle Venter, Nicole Garcia, Cara Gorlei, Tandi McCallum, Nadia van der Westhuizen and Stacy Bregman. The 54-hole tournament carried a purse of 600,000 and is the fourth event of the schedule for this year. The tournament will also play a key role in determining the overall Sunshine Ladies Tour Order of Merit champion, with the winner here earning an historic exemption in the Sunshine Tour's new Waterfall City Tournament of Champions to be played in May. All winners from the 2024 Sunshine Ladies Tour will also be exempt into the event.

Hitaashee keeps 10 shot lead at Hero WPGT



PTI ■ GURUGRAM

Hitaashee Bakshi managed to hang onto a 10-shot lead despite carding a three-over 75 in the third round of the sixth leg of Hero Women's Pro Golf Tour here on Thursday. Playing at the Gary Player layout, Hitaashee after 64-66 couldn't produce the kind of birdie fests she had conjured up on the first two days. But at 11-under 205, she was still 10 shots clear of the field in the Rs. 25 lakh event. Gaurika Bishnoi (70) had the best and the only under par round of the breezy third day and at 1-under 215 was tied second alongside former Order of Merit winner, Vani Kapoor (75) at the DLF Golf & Country Club. Last week's winner, Amandeep Drall (76) was fourth, while Queen Sirikit bound amateur Vidhatri Urs (73), also the winner of the opening leg this season, was tied fifth with amateur teammate Tara Anand (74). Jasmine Shekar (73), Riya Yadav (79), Khushi Khanijau (78) and amateur Janneya Dasannjee (77) were occupying the seventh to tenth spots. Hitaashee, who was in unstoppable form last two days, began with three pars and then a double bogey on Par-5 fourth. She made up one shot on the next hole, the Par-3 fifth, but after two more pars, she dropped back-to-back bogeys on the eighth and ninth.

On the back nine, a bogey on 13th was compensated by a birdie on 18th for a round of 75, yet she holds a massive lead going into the final day. Bishnoi had an up-and-down round with five birdies but also gave away three bogeys for a 70, the best card of the day. She shared the second place with Vani, whose 75 did not have any birdies. She double bogeyed the Par-4 sixth and bogeyed the seventh. Amandeep had three bogeys on the front nine and her solitary gain of the day came on the Par-4 13th, but she also closed with double bogey on the Par-5 18th for a 76. Vidhatri and Zara, who will be part of the Indian Golf Union's team at the Queen Sirikit Cup next week in New Zealand, shot 73 and 74 respectively. Vidhatri had two birdies against



CHANGE OF NAME

I, Jagdish Parsad S/o Mehar Chand R/o Daiyar Dayor Fatehabad Haryana-125053 have changed my minor son's name Himaksh to Himaksh Jangra aged-4- Years.

PD(305)A

three bogeys, while Zara had two birdies and a bogey on the

front nine and a birdie on the 10th at which point she was 2-

under for the day. She then dropped shots on the next four

holes from the 11th to 14th for a 74.

Classifieds

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Mukesh Kumar S/O. Ram Asra R/O Vpo. Dhak Pandori, Tehsil Phagwara, District Kapurthala, Punjab, India 144401 Have Changed My Name As Mukesh As Given Name & Kumar As Surname.

I, Sandhya W/O Harpreet Kumar R/O Mohalla Kotrani, Phagwara District Kapurthala Have Changed My Name From Sandhya To Sandhya Kaur After Marriage.

I Satish Kumar Miglani S/o Gurbakash Lal R/O St. No. 2, W. No. 7, Mahavir Nagri Malout (Sri Muktsar Sahib) have changed my name from Satish Miglani to Satish Kumar Miglani.

I Ramsh Kumar Bansal S/o Sita Ram Bansal R/O House no. C41, Ward No. 24, Tahli Mohalla Ferozpur City have changed my name to Ramesh Kumar Bansal.

I Rajnish S/o Krishan Kumar R/o Plot No 1, Block E/11, Near Panjiri Plant Rajpura Distt Patiala changed name as Rajneesh Kumar.

I, Suruchi Wadhera W/o Romi Wadhera R/O H.No.267/6, W.No. 14, Nabha Colony, Samana, Teh-Samana, Distt. Patiala have change my name from Suruchi to Suruchi Wadhera.

I Manjit Ram S/o Gurmit Ram Vpo Dhuleta, Teh Phillaur Distt Jalandhar have changed my D/o name Anchal to Anchal Virdi. and now Virdi his surname.

I, Karmjit Singh S/o Sooba Singh R/o Vill: Wakilan Wala Teh-Zira (Ferozepur) Pb, India, have changed my name to Karamjit Singh.

I, Paramjit Kaur W/o Dilbag Singh R/o Vill: Lohgarh (Ferozepur) Pb, India, have changed my name to Paramjeet Kaur.

I, Monica W/o Harish Chander R/o H.No. 478 W.No.11 Banjar Bagh (Hoshiarpur) Punjab, have changed my name from Monica to Monika.

I, Baj Singh S/o Wariyam Singh R/o Vpo. Purihar (Hoshiarpur) Punjab, have changed my minor's daughter's name from Jannat to Jannat Kaur.

I, Kamaljeet Kaur W/o Gurnam Singh Gondara R/o Ramuwala (Faridkot) have changed my name to Kamaljit Kaur Gondara.

I, Gurjeet Singh S/o Somkiran Singh R/o Vpo. Sarabha (Ludhiana) have changed my name to Gurjeet Singh Grewal.

I Hitherto Known As Rekha W/o Sh. Kamal Mehra R/o W.No.15 Randhawa Colony Mukerian Distt. Hoshiarpur Punjab have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as Rekha Devi.

I, Gurmeet W/o Ravinder Singh R/o W.No. 7 Indira Puri Samana (Patiala) Punjab, have changed my name to Gurmeet Kaur.

I, Rekha Rani W/o Rajnish Kumar Goyal R/o Flat No. 70 1st Floor Sunshine Enclave Zirakpur (SAS Nagar) have changed my name to Rekha Goyal.

I, Savinder Singh S/o Sangara Singh Vill-Guru Nanakpura Beas, Teh-Baba Bakala Distt Amritsar Punjab have changed my name from Savinder Singh to Surinder Singh.

I Gurvander Singh Sandhu S/o Mewa Singh R/o Village Mohamadpura, P.O. Joulhan, Tehsil Raikot, Distt. Ludhiana, Pin – 141109 have changed my name to Gurvander Singh.

I Harjinder Kaur W/o Ranjeet singh R/o Vill Koharka Po Shahbazpur Distt Tam Taran Punjab declare that I have changed my name to Harjinder is my given name and Kaur is my surname.

I, Anshika W/o Rahul Mittal R/o Maur Mandi Teh-Maur (Bathinda) have changed my name from Anshika Kanda to Anshika.

I, Takdeer Singh S/o Harpal Singh Aulakh and Joginderpal Kaur Aulakh R/o Vpo. Dhillwan Kalan Teh-Kotkapura (Faridkot) have changed my name to Takdeer Singh Aulakh.

I Pardeep Kumar Jain S/o Shiv Kumar Jain R/o House No. 30, The Mall, Sunny Side, Kapurthala, Punjab-144601 have changed my name to Pardeep Jain.

I Arjinder Kaur D/o Gurmail Singh R/o Aulia, Hoshiarpur, Punjab- 144211, have changed my name to Rajinder Kaur.

I Satinder Kaur W/o Malvinder Singh R/o Kotli No.83 Rose Avenue Patiala have changed my name to Kaur Satinder.

I hitherto known as Rimpdy D/o Garza Singh and W/o Balwinder Singh R/o H.No. 822, Guru Nanak Pura Mohala, Vward No. 24, Rajpura, District Patiala, Punjab-140401 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as Jaswinder Kaur.

I, Balvir Kaur W/O Sukhdev Singh R/O Vpo Otalan, Tehsil Samrala (Ludhiana) Declare That My Name Be Read As Given Name Balvir And Surname Kaur.

I, Ajesh Kumar Singla and Ajesh Kumar and Ajesh Singla S/O Surjit Kumar Singla R/O House Number 287, Bazar Number 2, Ferozepur Cantt, Tehsil and Distt. Ferozepur I am Known by Both names as Above One and is Same Person.

I, Sunil Kumar.S Is Legally Father Of S.V Ashish Kumar (Son) Presently Resident At Village- Kallikad, Tehsil Neyyattinnara, Distt-Thiruvananthapuram, State-Kerala, Pin-695572. Have Changed My Son Name From S.V Ashish Kumar To Ashish Kumar S.V Vide Affidavit No In Pb96076490271444w Dated 14-03-2024 Before District Court Gurdaspur Punjab.

I, Vijithararajam Is Legally Wife Of Sunil Kumar.S Of Resident At Village- Kallikad, Tehsil- Neyyattinkara, Distt-Thiruvananthapuram, State-Kerala, Pin-695572. Have Changed My Name From Vijithararajam To Vijithra Rajam V.V Vide Affidavit No-In Pb 96074580203214w Dated 14/03/2024 Before District Court Gurdaspur Punjab.

Jagdish Brahmin Is Legally Father Of Sapana (Daughter) Presently Resident At 103/111 Prem Vihar Nagar, Nandari, Banar, Distt- Jodhpur, State- Rajasthan, Pin-342027. Have Changed My Daughter Name From Sapana To Sapna Sharma Vide Affidavit No-In Pb96070188089540w Dated 14-03-2024 Before District Court Gurdaspur Punjab.

I, Seema Is Legally Wife Of Jagdish Brahmin Of Resident At 103/111 Prem Vihar Nagar, Nandari, Banar, Distt- Jodhpur, State Rajasthan, Pin-342027. Have Changed My Name From Seema To Seema Devi Vide Affidavit No-In Pb96071676247080w Dated 14-03-2024 Before District Court Gurdaspur Punjab.

I, Satpal Singh S/O Kashmiri Singh R/O Gali No-3, Baba Tehal Singh Colony Tibri Road, Gurdaspur, Tehsil/Distt- Gurdaspur, Punjab, India. Declare That In My Daughter Name From Kaur Agampreet To Agampreet Kaur.

मैं, सुनील शर्मा पुत्र श्री ज्ञान चंद शर्मा निवासी मकान नं. 85/1164, बाबा भवन, बहो रोड, डिफेंस एक्स्टेंसिव बोर्ड, जिला अमरसाला, हरियाणा अपने हल्क से बयान करता हूँ कि मैं सेना में कार्यनिवृत्त हूँ। मेरी माता काता शर्मा पत्नी स्व. श्री ज्ञान चंद शर्मा की जन्मतिथि मेरी सेना सेवा पुस्तिका में 02.03.1953 दर्ज है। जो कि गलत है। जबकि मेरी माता काता शर्मा के सभी सरकारी दस्तावेजों आधार कार्ड, पैनकार्ड में 02.03.1954 दर्ज है। जो कि सही है। मेरी सेना सेवा पुस्तिका में मेरी माता की जन्मतिथि 02.03.1954 सही दर्ज किया जाता।

I, Gurkirat Singh S/o Sh. Parmjeet Singh R/o H.No. 17/1, Shamshabad Patti, Ahamadpur, Sirsa , Distt. Sirsa (Haryana). That I have changed my name from Gurkirat Singh to Gurkirat Singh Sandhu.

I Sumit S/o Sh. Dalbir Singh R/o VPO - Butana, Teh. - Gohana, District - Sonipat (Haryana) have changed my name from Sumit Sangwan to Sumit vide affidavit dated 14 Mar 2024 before Sonipat (Haryana) Court. In future I should be known as Sumit.

I Meenakshi Malik W/o Sh. Sandeep R/o H.No - 15, Ward No -15, Bank Colony - Bahadurgarh, District - Jhajjar (Haryana) and legal daughter of No. 14904068L, Ex Hav Suresh Kumar R/o Gali No. -14, Mayur Vihar - Sonipat, District - Sonipat (Haryana) have changed my name from Minaxi to Meenakshi Malik vide affidavit dated 14 Mar 2024 before Sonipat (Haryana) Court. In future I should be known as Meenakshi Malik.

I, Poonam Agarwal W/o Sh. Anish Kumar R/o D/104, First Floor, Sushma Colony, Zirakpur, Distt. Chandigarh. That I have changed my name from Poonam Agarwal to Poonam Aggarwal, in future my name is to be called as Poonam Aggarwal.

I Rashmi Pal W/o Service No. 17004569X Rank NK Rajendra Singh Pal Unit 77 Armed Workshop C/o 56 APO Ambala Cantt R/O Vill. Taga P.O. Chirula distt Datia state Madhya Pradesh Pin-475661 that I have changed my name from Rashmi Pal to Rashmi Devi Rajpali . Concerned note

I, JC- 703134W Sub (CLKSD) Anil Kumar K, resident of Village- Muchukunnu, Post- Muchukunnu, Tehsil- Quilandy, District- Kozhikode, State- Kerala, Pin- 673307, have changed my Father name from Gangadharan K to Gangadharan Nair Vide affidavit No.IN-PB95301815062265W dated 13 March 2024 before notary public Pathankot

I, Vimlesh spouse of No.5455692H Hav Shivovr Vishwakarma resident of Village- Madora, Post- Madora Hadrukh, Tehsil- Jalaun, District- Jalaun, State- UP, have changed my name from Vimlesh Kumari to Vimlesh Vide affidavit No.IN-PB91480421036550W dated 01 March 2024 before Executive Magistrate Pathankot

I, No.5455692H Hav Shivovr Vishwakarma resident of Village- Madora, Post- Madora Hadrukh, Tehsil- Jalaun, District- Jalaun, State- UP, have changed my son name from Aayush to Ayush Vide affidavit No.IN-PB91480421036550W dated 01 March 2024 before Executive Magistrate Pathankot

I, Dipali spouse of Patil Yadunath Gunvantrao resident of Village- Togari, Post- Togari, Tehsil- Udgir, District- Latur, State- Maharashtra, Pin-413517, have changed my name from Dipali to Dipali Yadunath Patil Vide affidavit No.IN-PB95927485003709W dated 14 March 2024 before notary public Pathankot

I, Vasundhara spouse of JC-702241L Sub (PTA) Sanaka Srinivasa Rao resident of Village- Thurpu Palem, Post- Pushadapu Vari Palem, Tehsil- Repalle, District- Guntur, State- Andhra Pradesh, Pin-522268, have changed my name from Vasundhara to Sanaka Vasundhara Vide affidavit No.IN-PB95779872523147W dated 14 March 2024 before notary public Pathankot

I, Manisha Santosh Salunkhe spouse of Salunkhe Santosh Raghunath resident of Village- Nagthane, Post- Nagthane, Tehsil & District- Satara, State- Maharashtra, Pin-415519, have changed my date of birth from 02 June 1980 to 16 Feb 1980 Vide affidavit No. 90AA 400332 dated 22 Feb 2024 before notary public Satara (Maharashtra)

I, Mayawati Maruti Shinde spouse of Shinde Maruti Pandurang resident of Village- Soradi, Post- Soradi, Tehsil- Jath, District- Sangli, State- Maharashtra, Pin- 416412, have changed my Date of birth from 01 Nov 1989 to 01 Nov 1991 Vide affidavit No.IN-PB95931394929553W dated 14 March 2024 before notary public Pathankot

I, Shinde Maruti Pandurang resident of Village- Soradi, Post- Soradi, Tehsil- Jath, District- Sangli, State- Maharashtra, Pin- 416412, have changed my Son name from Aditya to Aditya Maruti Shinde Vide affidavit No.IN-PB95932603560100W dated 14 March 2024 before notary public Pathankot

I, Shinde Maruti Pandurang resident of Village- Soradi, Post- Soradi, Tehsil- Jath, District- Sangli, State- Maharashtra, Pin- 416412, have changed my Daughter name from Arti to Arti Maruti Shinde Vide affidavit No.IN-PB95930589884328W dated 14 March 2024 before notary public Pathankot

I, Kamla Chand Mother of Gaurav Chand resident of Village- Pachpakariya, Post- Chandani, Tehsil- Chandani, District- Champawat, State- Uttarakhand, Pin- 262310, have changed my name from Kamala Chand to Kamla Chand Vide affidavit No.IN-PB95656879171358W dated 13 March 2024 before notary public Pathankot

I, Sivaprakasam K S Father of No.16121152M NK Prabakaran KS resident of Village- Kilminnal, Post- Rathinagiri, Tehsil- Walaja, District- Vellore, State- Tamilnadu, Pin- 632517, have changed my name from K S Sivaprakasam to Sivaprakasam K S Vide affidavit No.IN-PB95217067934469W dated 12 March 2024 before notary public Pathankot

I, Mamta Singh spouse of No.15621604W Hav Ashok Kumar resident of 26 Thano Road, Near Government Inter College Sodasaroli, District- Dehradun, State- Uttarakhand, have changed my name from Mamta to Mamta Singh Vide affidavit No.IN-UK10598950136802W dated 13 March 2024 before notary Dehradun (Uttarakhand)

I, Dharm Pal resident of Village- Gugodh, Post- Gogodh, Tehsil- Kosli, District- Rewari, State- Haryana Pin- 123302, have changed my Mother name from Gyarasi Devi to Gyarshi Vide affidavit No.IN-PB95933732072451W dated 14 March 2024 before notary public Pathankot

I, No.JC- 314850N NB/Sub Basappa Burli resident of Village- Tavalageri, Post- Koudiund, Tehsil- Saundatti, District- Belagavi, State- Karnataka, Pin-591129, have changed my Son date of birth from 08 March 2014 to 18 March 2014 Vide affidavit No.IN-PB95656142656135W dated 13 March 2024 before notary public Pathankot

I, Krishna Chandra Dutta Father of No.16118631H NK Susobhan Dutta resident of Village- Belari, Post- Belari, Tehsil- Bardhaman, District- Purba Bardhaman, State- West Bengal, Pin- 713141, have changed my name from Krishna Dutta to Krishna Chandra Dutta Vide affidavit No.IN-PB960441120734314W dated 14 March 2024 before notary public Pathankot

I, No.JC- 769084W Sub/M TECH C VEH Raghubir Singh resident of 736 TPT WKSP COY (HQ 39 EME BN) C/O 56 APO, have changed my daughter name from Tanavi to Tanvi Rana Vide affidavit No.IN-PB96045528723140W dated 14 March 2024 before notary public Pathankot

I, Vishal Rana Son of No.JC- 769084W Sub/M TECH C VEH Raghubir Singh resident of Village- Drahall (Gadaria) Post- Golwan, Tehsil- Ladbharol, District- Mandi, State- Himachal Pradesh Pin- 175032, have changed my name from Vishal to Vishal Rana Vide affidavit No.IN-PB96047279558717W dated 14 March 2024 before notary public Pathankot

I, Roma Chamyal Daughter of No.4193225A Hav Bache Singh resident of Village- Dungar Lekh, Post- Mangtalla, Tehsil- Almora, District- Almora, State- Uttarakhand, Pin- 263624, have changed my name from Roma to Roma Chamyal Vide affidavit No.IN-PB95217323032196W dated 12 March 2024 before notary public Pathankot

I, No.14668854M Hav Vineet Kumar Dubey resident of Village- Badchhad, Post- Badchhad, Tehsil- Manpur, District- Umariya, State- Madhya Pradesh, Pin- 484661, have changed my Son name from Siddharth Dubey to Siddhant Dubey Vide affidavit No.IN-PB95216808166929W dated 12 March 2024 before notary public Pathankot

I, Koppisetty Naga Lakshmi is legally spouse of No. GS-164574H Rank:UPLSTR Name: Koppisetty Venkata Satyanarayana R/O No. 5-102/4,Kanchivaripalem Mamidikurum Mandal, East Godavari, District Andhra Pradesh State,Unit of WBW GREF C/o 56 APO declare that I have changed my name from Koppisetty Naga Lakshmi Kanak Pushpavati to Koppisetty Naga Lakshmi due to mistake in my husband's Service Record.My DOB-02-04-1972

I, Indra Singh Brother of No.4193225A Hav Bache Singh resident of Village- Dungar Lekh, Post- Mangtalla, Tehsil- Almora, District- Almora, State- Uttarakhand, Pin- 263624, have changed my name from Vikram Singh to Indra Singh Vide affidavit No.IN-PB95217152678681W dated 12 March 2024 before notary public Pathankot

I, Service No.GS-166815W Rank CH/Meen Narinder Kumar S/o Late Sh.Kasuri Lal of WBW GREF Pathankot, Punjab, have changed my Son name from Dev Ansh to Devansh and DOB is 25/02/2012 as per his adhar card Vide affidavit No.IN-PB94911440885758W dated 12 March 2024 before notary public Pathankot


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Hojgaard, Paul confirm participation at Hero Indian Open

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Denmark's Rasmus Hojgaard and Yannik Paul of Germany have confirmed their participation for the Indian Open golf tournament beginning March 28. Rasmus, who turns 23 on Tuesday, will be seeking more silverware to his already growing collection when he tees off at the USD 2.25 million event. He already has four wins on the DP World Tour to his name. Rasmus will be making his debut at the tournament, which will be played at the DLF Golf and Country Club, and will hope to mark his birthday month with a fifth career win on the DP World Tour. Currently 75th in the world rankings, the Dane will be one of the highest-ranked players in the field, his career-best rank being 63rd. He is coming off a glorious start to 2024 with Top-10s in three successive starts in Ras Al Khaimah, where he was second, and then T-8 in Bahrain and T-6 in Qatar. Before that, he was an identical T-11 at the Hero Dubai Desert Classic and the Dubai Invitational. His first win at the 2019 AfrAsia Bank Mauritius Open (part 2020 season) made him the third youngest to win a title in the DPWT and he added to that by winning the 2020 ISPS Handa UK Championship, 2021 Omega European Masters and the 2023 Made in Himmerland. A win at the Hero Indian Open would bring Rasmus closer to getting into the Top-10 of the DP World Tour rankings for 2024, which could earn him a card into the PGA Tour and join his brother Nicolai. Incidentally, his twin brother Nicolai played last year here and finished T-32. Another popular name confirming his entry will be Paul, who turned 30 last week. The one-time DP World Tour, Paul, who made his Indian Open debut last year, came within a whisker of his second win on the Tour, after starting with a brilliant 65 on the first day. Even though Paul was unable to add to his tally of wins in 2023, he had a superb season with two runner-up finishes, one third place and four other Top-10 results. Paul, who broke through into Top-100 of the world, is now just outside at 112th.



KOTAK MAHINDRA BANK LIMITED
Regd office: 27BKC, C 27, G Block, Bandra Kurla Complex, Bandra (E), Mumbai 400 051 Corporate office: Kotak Infiniti, Bldg No 21, Infinity Park, General AK Vaidya Marg, Malad (E), Mumbai 400 097 www.kotak.com

AUCTION - NOTICE
That the below mentioned Borrower/s had availed gold loan facility against security of the gold ornaments/ items, as specified below. The Borrower/s defaulted in due repayment of the installments and outstanding dues and as a result of which the Bank was constrained to issue notices calling upon the Borrower/s to repay the outstanding amounts. However, the Borrower/s has failed to repay/clear his outstanding dues thereby compelling the Bank to auction the gold ornaments pledged in favour of the Bank.
The auction of the below mentioned gold ornaments would be held on/after at :-**Date: 22-Mar-2024 Time: 11.00 AM** Place: Respective Branch Premises

Appno	Apas/ Account No	Borrower Name	State	Location	Branch	Gross weight (In Gms)
GLN	2983760	GAUTAM LAKHESAR	PUNJAB & CHANDIGARH	LUDHIANA	AMRITSAR	38.90
GLN	2831500	KARNAIL KAUR	PUNJAB & CHANDIGARH	CHANDIGARH	BARNALA	9.08
GLN	2871627	GAGANJOT SINGH	PUNJAB & CHANDIGARH	CHANDIGARH	BARNALA	27.18
GLN	2233340	RAVI KUMAR MISHRA	PUNJAB & CHANDIGARH	CHANDIGARH	CHANDIGAS46	49.30
GLN	2775404	MUKESH KHANDELWAL	PUNJAB & CHANDIGARH	CHANDIGARH	CHANDIGAS46	10.19
GLN	2970374	RITU	PUNJAB & CHANDIGARH	CHANDIGARH	HISAR	20.40
GLN	2962538	PARVEEN KUMAR	PUNJAB & CHANDIGARH	CHANDIGARH	HISARDELRO	37.90
GLN	2513913	SOMU	PUNJAB & CHANDIGARH	CHANDIGARH	HUDAOMPLX	20.90
GLN	2664241	AJAY KUMAR	PUNJAB & CHANDIGARH	LUDHIANA	JALANDHAR	51.70
GLN	2705540	AMIT CHHABRA	PUNJAB & CHANDIGARH	LUDHIANA	JALANDHAR	108.10
GLN	2792108	AJAY KUMAR	PUNJAB & CHANDIGARH	LUDHIANA	JALANDHAR	65.60
GLN	2858386	AJAY KUMAR	PUNJAB & CHANDIGARH	LUDHIANA	JALANDHAR	71.90
GLN	3008513	URMILA	PUNJAB & CHANDIGARH	CHANDIGARH	JHAJJAR	18.70
GLN	3008509	SUNIL	PUNJAB & CHANDIGARH	CHANDIGARH	JHAJJAR	98.40
GLN	2119515	BAHADAR SINGH	PUNJAB & CHANDIGARH	CHANDIGARH	PATIALA	16.10
GLN	2285240	RAVINDER KAUR	PUNJAB & CHANDIGARH	CHANDIGARH	RAJPURA	48.24
GLN	2664241	SUKHWINDER SINGH	PUNJAB & CHANDIGARH	CHANDIGARH	RAJPURA	38.78
GLN	2758642	MANJIT KAUR	PUNJAB & CHANDIGARH	CHANDIGARH	RAJPURA	88.96
GLN	2821140	GURWINDER SINGH	PUNJAB & CHANDIGARH	CHANDIGARH	RAJPURA	128.62
GLN	2765454	CHANDER MOHAN	PUNJAB & CHANDIGARH	CHANDIGARH	RATIA	108.02
GLN	2102929	MUKHTIAR SINGH	PUNJAB & CHANDIGARH	CHANDIGARH	SAMANA	18.70
GLN	2108767	JACSEER SINGH	PUNJAB & CHANDIGARH	CHANDIGARH	SAMANA	142.70
GLN	2323954	SUKHWINDER SINGH	PUNJAB & CHANDIGARH	CHANDIGARH	SAMANA	33.00
GLN	2524564	BALJIT SINGH	PUNJAB & CHANDIGARH	CHANDIGARH	SAMANA	20.30
GLN	2					

Mumbai clinch Ranji Trophy for 42nd time

BEAT VIDARBHA BY 169 RUNS IN FINAL

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Domestic heavyweights Mumbai ended their eight-year barren run to lift a record-extending 42nd Ranji Trophy title here on Thursday, beating a resolute Vidarbha by 169 runs on the fifth and final day of a thoroughly engrossing summit clash.

The fate of the final — Mumbai's 48th in the 90 years of the tournament's history — here at the iconic Wankhede Stadium was sealed when the hosts set a 538-run target for the visiting team.

Vidarbha captain Akshay Wadkar (102) and the unheralded Harsh Dubey (65) kept Mumbai at bay for the entire first session on the last day after Vidarbha resumed on 248 for five, needing another 290 runs to win.

The team was eventually bowled out for 368 in a contest that ebbed and flowed with Vidarbha frustrating the hosts for long periods of play on the last two days.

Wadkar led the fight for his side with his first century of the year which also helped him cross the 600-run mark this season. Dubey brought up only the second fifty of his



first-class career. Together, they forged the longest stand of the innings, consuming 255 balls in 194 minutes from day four until a little after the resumption of

the second session on the final day. Wadkar fell shortly after play resumed — leg before off Tanush Kotian (4/95) — and once the pair was broken, it all

ended in a jiffy for the visitors who have now lost the Ranji Trophy final for a third time after winning two titles. Tushar Deshpande continued to employ the short ball to

dismiss Dubey (65 off 128 balls, 5 x4s, 2x6s) and Aditya Sarwate, who missed the majority of the game owing to a back spasm. While Kotian cleaned up Yash

Thakur (6) for his fourth wicket, Dhawal Kulkarni signed off from all forms of cricket with the final wicket of the game in the form of Umesh Yadav for a fairytale ending.

Mumbai skipper Ajinkya Rahane praised Vidarbha for their gritty display before lifting the trophy and rightly so. For a team which paid a heavy price for a poor first-innings score — 105 to concede a 119-run lead in response to Mumbai's 224 — Vidarbha showed resilience to gave a fine account of themselves in the second innings. Mumbai began the final day hoping to break the sixth-wicket stand between Wadkar and Dubey early but their wait only extended since the batters overcame all challenges that the hosts threw at them. With the pace bowlers not being able to trouble the batters, Mumbai hopes were pinned on their spinners but their own error cost Rahane's side early on. Kotian appealed for a bat-pad catch at silly point against Dubey in the 101st over of the innings but the appeal was turned down. In a show of desperation, Mumbai went for the DRS intervention which confirmed the ball had not grazed the bat and was also going to miss the leg stump. Kotian then found an outside

edge off Wadkar's bat which fell close to Rahane. Mumbai's frustration was evident when Kulkarni held his ground at the end of his follow through after being declined a leg-before appeal against Dubey. Kulkarni made some gestures and even exchanged a few words with the umpire but replays confirmed that the ball had pitched outside the leg-stump. Dubey was also lucky when Kotian pinned him in front of the wickets but Mumbai could not get it overturned since they had no reviews left. The Vidarbha batter continued to ride his luck, getting another decision in his favour when replays showed the ball had missed his bat and gloves off Shams Mulani. Wadkar completed his century shortly after lunch but once he was dismissed, the rest of the batting collapsed soon after.

Brief scores
Mumbai: 224 & 418
Vidarbha: 105 & 368 in 134.4 overs (Atharva Taide 32, Aman Mokhade 32, Karun Nair 74, Akshay Wadkar 102; Tanush Kotian 4/95) by 169 runs.

Pant resilience, mental strength was quite something: Medical staff that worked with

PTI ■ BENGALURU

The medical staff that nursed Rishabh Pant back to full fitness after the horrifying car crash in 2022 has raved about the resilience and mental strength shown by the cricketer, saying he persevered through a “frustrating” recovery process.

Pant is set for his cricketing return in the IPL on March 23 when he will captain Delhi Capitals against Punjab Kings in Mohali.

“I feel very close to normal,” Pant told ‘bcci.Tv’ with a radiant smile.

It seemed far fetched 15 months ago when he suffered multiple injuries in the crash. However, it has come true thanks to the expert care he got from the likes of Dr Dinshaw Pardiwala, Director, Centre for Sports Medicine, Kokilaben Dhirubhai Ambani Hospital in Mumbai, and some dedicated staff at the National Cricket Academy (NCA) in Bengaluru.

Pardiwala remembered how arduous Pant's recovery journey was.

“As surgeons and as doctors, it's very important for us to inform our patients, their family and all the stakeholders of the actual status of the injury. Rishabh's mother was with him. She was very concerned whether he would ever be able to walk again,” Pardiwala said.

“I told her that this is such a critical injury and we will definitely aim for him to get back to competitive cricket. But that's going to be a long-drawn process.”

However, Pardiwala was left astonished when he saw Pant's confidence as he



entered the recovery phase.

“When I told Rishabh 18 months, he said ‘okay, I am going to show you I can do it in 12 months,’” he said.

Pant stayed true to his words as he put in the hard yards at the NCA during his recuperation.

“When I started walking without crutches, that was a high point. Then started jogging a little bit, that was a high for me, then started batting, then started keeping as I took joy in everything,” said the 26-year-old.

But each of those baby steps had to be taken with utmost care because of multi-level complexities.

Pardiwala said the complex knee injury, the trauma following the accident and Pant's own frustration at being away from the cricket field had to be dealt with in an effective manner.

“For any surgeon, knee dislocation is one of the worst injuries because everything breaks. You need to get back the stability, you need to get back the shock absorption capability,” he said.

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The triumphant Mumbai team will receive an additional Rs 5 crore for its unprecedented 42nd Ranji Trophy title after the state cricket association doubled the prize purse on Thursday. Mumbai won a record-extending 42nd Ranji title after beating Vidarbha by 169 runs on the fifth and final day of the summit showdown at the Wankhede Stadium.

“MCA President Amol Kale and Apex Council has decided to double the Ranji Trophy prize money. The MCA will pay additional sum of Rs 5 crore to the winning Mumbai Ranji Trophy team,” a statement from MCA secretary Ajinkya Naik read.

“It has been a great year for the MCA as the association has won 7 titles and we have made it to knockout stage in all age groups in BCCI tournaments.”

Mumbai ended an eight-year wait to lift a record-extending title here, getting the better of a resolute Vidarbha.

The fate of the final -- Mumbai's 48th in the 90 years of the tournament's history -- here at the iconic Wankhede Stadium was sealed when the hosts set a 538-run target for the visiting team.

Mumbai head coach Omkar Salvi, who was appointed to the post last year, lauded MCA's move to double the prize money considering that lot of players don't have full-time jobs these days.

“For all the players, nowadays, there



are very less institutions which provide jobs. For youngsters, there is also a lot of lure towards franchise cricket (where) there is also a lot of

money,” Salvi said.

“The BCCI is taking that step and raising that money along with that, the MCA taking that step forward

to equal that amount is a great help for the players who don't have some jobs or some earnings.

“It is definitely an inspiration (and) it should be intrinsic -- the monetary help will give them that security and it will definitely stabilise them mentally and financially so that they can give more to the game,” he added.

On the final day, Vidarbha captain Akshay Wadkar (102) and the unheralded Harsh Dubey (65) kept Mumbai at bay for the entire first session on the last day after Vidarbha resumed on 248 for five, needing another 290 runs to win. The team was eventually bowled out for 368 in a contest that ebbed and flowed with Vidarbha frustrating the hosts for long periods of play on the last two days.

RCB kick starts pre tournament camp, Kohli expected to join in next few days

PTI ■ BENGALURU

Royal Challengers Bangalore began their pre-tournament camp without their numero uno Virat Kohli, who might take a few more days to join before the team starts its IPL campaign against reigning champions Chennai Super Kings on March 22.

Most of the domestic players joined the camp under the guidance of new head coach Andy Flower and Director of Cricket Mo Bobat and they went through the paces on the opening day of the camp on Wednesday.

While skipper Faf du Plessis was in attendance along with West Indies fast bowler Alzarri Joseph, Kohli, easily



the biggest ‘Box Office’ in Indian cricket, is yet to hit the straps after a paternity break that ruled him out of the marquee five-Test series

against England.

“Kohli is expected to join in the next few days,” a BCCI source, who is tracking developments within IPL

teams, told PTI.

Kohli might make his first appearance for the franchise during ‘RCB Unbox’, a high-profile annual event held at the Garden City in which fans get a glimpse of their favourite stars.

As RCB started their training session, skipper Du Plessis told the team it was lucky to have Flower as its coach.

“I think he's an incredible coach. So I feel team is very lucky to have him, kind and big hearted man,” Du Plessis was quoted as saying on RCB ‘Bold Diaries’.

Flower, on his part, said: “New chapter to write in RCB story, we have been given the chance to write and it is a privilege, something to be very excited about.”

Former Lankan cricketer Lahiru injured in accident

PTI ■ COLOMBO

Former Sri Lanka cricketer Lahiru Thirimanne sustained minor injuries after a road accident, leading to his hospitalisation in Trippane, Anuradapura, local media reported on Thursday.

According to a report in ‘Ada Derana’, the 34-year-old Thirimanne was admitted to Anuradhapura Teaching Hospital “with minor injuries sustained in the accident”.

Anuradapura is a major city, located about 205km from national capital Colombo.

“Police mentioned that the car in which Thirimanne was travelling had collided with a

lorry arriving from the opposite direction at around 07.45 a.m. This morning,” it stated.

“Three other individuals travelling in the car, the driver of the lorry and another person have been injured and hospitalised.”

Thirimanne appeared in 44 Tests for Sri Lanka, scoring 2088 runs, including three hundreds.

He played 127 ODI for the island nation, scoring 3164 runs in all. He also played 26 T20 Internationals for Sri Lanka.

Thirimanne last played for Sri Lanka in 2022 before announcing his retirement the next year.

Domestic umpiring standards under scanner after CK Nayudu Trophy howler

PTI ■ BENGALURU

The dubious dismissal of Karnataka opener Prakhar Chaturvedi in the recent Col. CK Nayudu Trophy U23 final against Uttar Pradesh has raised concerns about the standards of umpiring in domestic matches.

The unsavoury incident happened in Karnataka's first innings after Chaturvedi played a pull against UP pacer Kunal Tyagi well away from his body.

The ball, which took a rather healthy edge off Chaturvedi's bat, moved further away from stumper Aaradhya Yadav who had to make a full-length dive to his left to make the collection.

But the ball rolled out of Yadav's gloves before he could complete the catch even as the wicketkeeper thudded on to the ground.

However, the on-field umpire upheld the appeal for caught behind much to the dismay of batter Chaturvedi, who made 33

and 86 in Karnataka's maiden victory in the tournament which came by virtue of their first innings lead here at the M Chinnaswamy Stadium.

“Yes, it was a clear case of not out as I later saw the clippings. The ball came out of UP wicketkeeper's hands before he completed the catch. The umpire should not have given it out,” a former First-Class umpire told PTI on conditions of anonymity.

“It is important to maintain top standards because these junior tournaments are stepping stones for several budding cricketers. Imagine how bad that boy (Chaturvedi) would have felt after spending close to an hour at the crease, only to get out like that.

“Also, umpiring standards have a direct relation with the overall quality of a match,” he said.

So, how can one ensure consistency and high level of accuracy in domestic umpiring?

“The BCCI has laid out some



strict parameters in the umpires' selection process and many state associations themselves have umpires associations working hard to ensure a good level of officiating.

“But I feel former cricketers should be encouraged to take up umpiring as they know the game closer than anyone else. We have had S Venkataraghavan, Peter Willey, David Shepherd and Dickie Bird who were excellent umpires as they leaned on their experience from their playing days,” he added.

Recently, former India batter Manoj Tiwary had lashed out at poor standards of umpiring in domestic cricket.

Another former First-Class batter said instances of umpires making childish mistakes were quite common in domestic circuit.

“It is quite common, especially in junior cricket. But in one Ranji (Trophy) match, I was hit on my hips and the umpire gave that out leg before. I was 48 then. I

brushed it aside, thinking that mistakes can happen to anyone.

“But in the next innings, when I was batting on 45, the same umpire gave me out caught behind off a left-arm spinner when my bat was tucked safely behind my pads while leaving the ball. Even the silly point fielder could not hide his surprise,” he noted.

There have been initiatives like the umpiring academy in Nagpur to better the standards but the lack of continuity has been the bane.

“Those were good ideas but somehow did not take off as expected. There is an ICC online course too for the umpires.

“But beyond all these, the board should increase remuneration for umpires and should also ensure that First-Class umpires officiate at state level or even some local matches so that there is no gap between the assignments and they remain sharp,” the umpire detailed.