wernment of india

NEW DELHI MONDAY 11 MARCH 2024

Modi sarkar ki Guarantee

Means Guarantee to root out corruption

Hamara Sankalp **Viksit Bharat**

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Over ₹ 32 lakh crore transferred directly to beneficiaries' accounts through DBT



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Britain's Kate, Princess of Wales, with her children in Windsor. Kensington Palace released the first official photo of the princess on Sunday, nearly two months after her abdominal surgery. – AFP

Poll bonds: SC to hear today SBI's plea for extension

New Delhi The Supreme Court will on Monday hear the application filed by the SBI seeking extension till June 30 to disclose details of each electoral bond encashed by political parties before the scheme was scrapped last month. A five-judge Constitution bench will also hear a separate plea, which has sought initiation of contempt action against the SBI alleging, it "wilfully and deliberately" disobeyed the apex court's direction to submit details of the contributions made to political parties through electoral bonds to the EC by March 6. Full report on Page 4

> Haryana **BJP** MP quits, joins Conq

Chandigarh/New Delhi: Ahead of the parliamentary elections, BJP MP from Hisar Brijendra Singh on Sunday resigned from the party's primary membership and the Lok Sabha due to "compelling political rea-sons" and joined the Congress. Full report on Page 3

2 new ECs to be picked by weekend to fill vacancies PM will chair meet

of panel by Friday AGE CORRESPONDENT with agency inputs NEW DELHI, MARCH 10

Two election commissioners are likely to be appointed by March 15 to fill the vacancies created by the retirement of Anup Chandra Pandey and the resignation of Arun Goel.

A search committee under law minister Arjun Ram Meghwal and comprising the home secretary and the department of personnel and training (DoPT) secretary will first prepare two separate panels of five names each for the two posts.

Later, a selection committee headed by the Prime Minister and comprising a Union minister and Leader of the Congress party in the Lok Sabha Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury will name two persons for appointment as election commissioners. The election commissioners will be appointed by the President.

"The selection committee could meet either on March 13 or 14, depending on the convenience of the members and the appointments are likely to be made by March

15," sources said. Days before the poll is expected to panel Turn to Page 4



TMC supremo and West Bengal chief minister Mamata Banerjee during a rally ahead of the Lok Sabha elections at the Brigade Parade Ground in Kolkata on Sunday. - PTI

TMC names 42 LS nominees; many new faces; 8 MPs axed

Will also contest in Assam, Meghalaya, UP: Mamata Cricketer Pathan among stars Fewer women in race

RAJIB CHOWDHURI KOLKATA, MARCH 10

For the first time in its history, the Trinamul Congress publicly announced the names of all its 42 candidates, full of surprises, for the Lok Sabha elections in West Bengal with huge fanfare from the historic Brigade Parade Ground here, turning its "Jana Garjan Sabha" mega rally into a Sunday extravaganza. TMC national general secretary and party MP Abhishek Banerjee spelt out the candidates' names after party supremo and chief minister Mamata

Did EC resign due to dif-ferences with CEC or Modi Banerjee made it clear, while addressing the govt? asks Cong: Page 3 rally Asif Ali Zardari takes oath as **Pak President**



TMC leaders Mahua Moitra and cricketer-politician Yusuf Pathan at the party's "Jana Garjan Sabha" at the Brigade Parade Ground in Kolkata on Sunday. - PTI

They

led by Ms Banerjee, later (Barrackpore) and party walked on a 320-ft-long Rajya Sabha MP Prakash Chik Baraik (Alipurduar).

One of them is former cricketer Yusuf Pathan,

Modi: Previous govts kept Azamgarh backward **Appeasement weakens** as UP develops, says PM

AGE CORRESPONDENT with agency inputs NEW DELHI/AZAMGARH, MARCH 10

Slamming nepotism in politics at a public rally in Azamgarh, a parliamentary constituency considered a bastion of the Mulayam-Akhilesh Yadav family, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday said that the "poison of appeasement is weakening" with Uttar Pradesh touching new heights of development.

Addressing a rally after dedicating and laying the foundation stone of multiple development projects worth over ₹34,000 crores, Mr Modi slammed the Yadav family for treating Azamgarh as their bastion and alleged that because of this nepotism, some people take a dig at him and say that he does

not have a family. "In the last election, the family, which considered Azamgarh its bastion, was defeated by a youth like Dinesh (Dinesh Lal Yadav Nirahua, MP of Azamgarh)," Mr Modi said.

Late SP patriarch Mulayam Singh Yadav had won the Azamgarh parliamentary seat in 2014. After him, his son Akhilesh Yadav won the Lok Sabha seat in 2019. The party, however, lost the seat to the BJP's Dinesh Lal Yadav in the 2022 by-election, which was necessitated after Akhilesh vacated the seat and decided to represent Karhal in the state

"Due to this *parivaar-vad*, the leaders from the

Opposition parties are so

frustrated that they abuse

Modi. They say that Modi

doesn't have a family. They forget that the 140-

Assembly.



minister Yogi Adityanath during the foundation stone laying and inauguration ceremony of the various devel-

We'll create 3cr 'Lakhpati Didis' in India, vows Modi

RABINDRA NATH CHOUDHURY RAIPUR, MARCH 10

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday said that economic empowerment has become widespread in every village in the country because of the sustained efforts of the Centre. He also indicated that the Centre will launch the "Namo Drone Didi Yojana" on Monday. Launching a welfare scheme for women, chris-tened "Mahtari Vandan Yojana", in Chhattisgarh

crore population of the country is the family of Modi," the Prime Minister said, referring to RJD president Lalu Prasad Yadav, who in a rally in Bihar on March 3

Liechtenstein, Norway

virtually, Mr Modi said that the Centre as well as the state BJP government have set the empowerment of women as their priority. He also dis-bursed the first install-ment of ₹1,000 each to 70,12,417 women beneficiaries in Chhattisgarh. "With the efforts of our government, over 1-crore

women have become 'lakhpati didi'. Now, we aim to make 3-crore 'lakhpati didi' women across the country," he said.

More on Page 4

touching new heights of development, the poison of appeasement is weakening.' The Prime Minister noted that Azamgarh asked him why he did not which was once considhave a family. Asserting that with development, nepotism in ered backward, is a shining star today and is writing a new chapter of politics is weakening in the country, Mr Modi development for the Turn to Page 4

said, "As Uttar Pradesh is

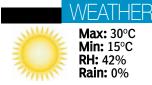


Car crashes into gates

of Buckingham Palace London: Officers arrested a man who crashed a car into the gates of London's Buckingham Palace over the weekend. Armed officers arrested the man at the scene on suspicion of criminal damage and he was taken to hospital. - AFP



Leaders denied tickets from all parties should form a new party and contest!



Forecast: Clear

ASTROGUIDE

Shubhakrut: Uttarayana Tithi: Phalguna Shukla Padyami till 10.46 am Star: Uttarabhadra till 11.04 pm Varjyam: 12.50 pm to 1.38 pm Durmuhurtam: 8.58 am to 9.45 am; 12.52 pm to 1.39 pm Rahukalam: 7.30 am to 9 am SUNSET TODAY 6.27 PM SUNRISE TOMORROW 6.34 AM MOONRISE TOMORROW 7,46 AM **MOONSET TODAY 7.40 PM**

Islamabad, March 10: Asif Ali Zardari on Sunday took oath as Pakistan's 14th President, a day after the veteran politician staged a remarkable comeback when he was overwhelmingly elected as the only civilian President of the coup-prone country for a second time.

Chief Justice of Pakistan Qazi Faez Isa administered the oath to the 68-year-old Zardari in a small yet formal ceremony at Aiwan-e-Sadr, the Presidential Palace. Mr Zardari replaces Dr Arif Alvi, who stayed in office for five months after completing his fiveyear term in September

2023 Apart from Mr Alvi, a senior member of jailed former PM Imran Khan's PTI party, also attended the oath-taking ceremo-*— PTI* ■ More on Page 6 ny.

that her party include 26 new and famous faces from sports, would alone contest all 42 cinema, healthcare and bureaucracy, and 10 TMC MLAs, including two ministers, Biplab Mitra (Balurghat) and Partha Bhoumik

grand

seats in the state and declared that the TMC would field candidates in Assam, Meghalaya and Uttar Pradesh as well. The 42 TMC candidates,

fielded at Berhampore. a Congress stronghold repliterature, resented by its Lok Sabha leader Ådhir Ranjan Choudhury since 1999. He later posted on X: "I'm eternally grateful to **Turn to Page 4**

Anti-CAA protests escalate in Assam as AASU joins stir

ramp in a parade for their

introduction before an

impressive crowd at the

venue.

Take legal action, don't agitate, advises Himanta MANOJ ANAND THE AASU asserted

that the CAA poses a

threat to the cultural

the government to

the contentious law.

ters

and demographic fabric

of Assam. They further

highlighted the need for

reconsider its stance on

Nalbari, Chiradeo and

other district headquar-

The AASU asserted that

GUWAHATI, MARCH 10

The All Assam Students' Union on Sunday staged a hunger-strike all over the state with the central committee hosting the hunger-strike Dighalipukhuri in Guwahati city starting from 6 am, demanding repeal of the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA). This 12-hour hungerstrike was participated in

the CAA poses a threat to the cultural and demoby 30 tribal groups. A similar hunger-strike at was organised Dibrugarh, Bilasipara, Kokrajhar,

stance on the contentious

In a show of solidarity, 30 national organisations endorsed the hunger-strike, emphasising the widespread concern and opposition to the CAA. The Dibrugarh district

committee of All Assam Students' Union (AASU), along with 30 other organisations, while holding the hunger-strike, warned the government of intensifying the ant-CAA movement in the Upper Assam districts. Meanwhile, Assam chief minister Himanta Biswa

law.

Turn to Page 4

India, EFTA ink FTA: **\$100bn over 15 yrs**

Deal after 16 years, 21 rounds of talks MADHUSUDAN SAHOO namely Iceland.

NEW DELHI, MARCH 10

and Switzerland, after The government on Sunday said that the four-nation_bloc_the holding 21 rounds of talks over 16 years for this broad-based trade European Free Trade Association (EFTA) has and investment agreement. As Prime Minister Narendra Modi aims for annual exports of \$1 trilagreed to invest \$100 billion in India as part of the free-trade agreement. With the mega lion by 2030, India has investment, India is been working on a trade expected to lift most and economic partnership agreement or TEPA with the EFTA import tariffs on industrial products from the four European councountries for a long time tries. India clinched the deal with the EFTA nations,

Farmers hold 'rail roko' stir in Punjab, TN on MSP issue AGE CORRESPONDENT

with agency inputs NEW DELHI/CHENNAI/ CHANDIGARH, MARCH 10

Farmers on Sunday squatted on railway tracks at many places in Punjab as part sof a "rail roko" protest called by the Samyukta Kisan Morcha (Non-Political) and the Kisan Mazdoor Morcha to press the Centre to accept their demands, including a legal guarantee of minimum sup-

blocking trains in rail-

way stations across the

Kovilpatti. In Punjab, the move-ment of several trains

was affected for about

four hours from 12 noon

till 4 pm as farmers blocked the railway

tracks and raised slo-

gans against the Centre

for not accepting their

Farmers sat on rail-

way tracks in 22 dis-tricts, including

Amritsar, Ludhiana,

Hoshiarpur, Firozpur,

Moga

More on Page 2

Taran.

and

Sangrur,

including

Tiruvarur,

state.

Chennai,

demands.

Tarn

Fazilka,

Bathinda.

Mansa,

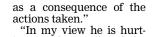
port price (MSP). The Union Cabinet has As a mark of solidari-Turn to Page 4 ty with the ryots of the northern regions, Tamil Nadu farmers staged agitations by

Netanyahu's approach to Gaza war 'hurting Israel, not helping': Biden

Washington, March 10: US **JOE BIDEN** said the President Joe Biden said Israeli PM Benjamin Israeli PM has a right to defend Israel, a right to Netanyahu's approach to continue to pursue the war in Gaza was "hurt-Hamas, but he must pay ing Israel more than helping Israel", as Mr Biden's more attention to the with his innocent lives being lost Israeli counterpart grows as a consequence of the actions taken With Gaza's humanitari-

southern Gaza.

Mr Netanyahu "has a right to defend Israel, a right to continue to pursue Hamas," Mr Biden said, but added that "he must pay more attention to the innocent lives being lost



ing Israel more than help-ing Israel," he said. Despite Mr Biden's shift in tone, his administration has given short shrift to activist calls to cut the billions of dollars in military aid the US sends to Israel. Gaza has faced relentless

bombardment by Israel since Hamas launched a shocking cross-border attack on October 7 that resulted in about 1,160 deaths. — *AFP* More on Page 6



Tibetan monks, living in exile in India, hold their homeland's flags at McLeodganj, near Dharamsala, on Sunday during a peace march on the occasion of the "65th Tibetan National Uprising Day" against the Chinese occupation of Tibet, driving the Dalai Lama and thousands of compatriots to flee to India in 1959. **Report on Page 3**







<u>_ РТІ</u>







impatience

increasingly visible.

an crisis growing more

dire and Mr Biden's left

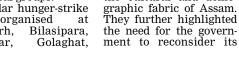
flank in uproar, the US

President made contradic-

tory remarks as to the

question of a "red line" over Israel's threatened

offensive on Rafah in



SHORT TAKES

4 held for supplying

counterfeit jeans

New Delhi: With the arrest of four accused, the Delhi police busted a gang involved in manufacturing and supplying counterfeit jean pants of reputed brands. The accused were identified as, Taliv (35), Tarik (24), Wasim Khan (44) and Mohd. Shoib (32). With their arrest, the police recovered 1,670 counterfeit jeans pants of reputed brands of Calvin Klein and Levi Strauss, fake labels and four sewing machines. The police said, a complaint regarding manufacturing and supply of counterfeit jeans pants of reputed brands was received in which it was alleged that some persons are involved in manufacturing and supply of counterfeit products of their company. After the complaint the team swung into action and raids were conducted in the Welcome area and four persons were nabbed. During the course of investigation, all the accused persons admitted their crime

BJP launches voter

awareness drive New Delhi: The Delhi BJP on Sunday flagged off a voter awareness campaign. In all Delhi constituencies, the party will conduct the race and raise awareness among youth against intoxication abuse. City BJP chief Virendra Sachdeva said, BJP had also pledged to make Delhi drug-free against the Kejriwal government, resulting in the government having to retract its new liquor policy. Social activist Manoj Kumar, renowned for running from Gateway of India to India Gate, setting a record, has decided to conduct 'Voter Awareness Run' in all the constituencies of Delhi. The initiative was flagged off by Mr. Sachdeva. He praised Manoj Kumar for this commendable step and also appreciated the initiative.

Min. temp at 10°C,

4°C below normal New Delhi: Delhi on Sunday recorded a minimum temperature of 10°C, four notches below the season's normal, according to the India meteorological department (IMD). The relative humidity stood at 65 per cent at 8:30 am. The national capital is likely to witness partly cloudy skies during the day. Light rain or drizzle is expected on March 13, the IMD said. City's Air Quality Index (AQI) stood at 165, in the 'moderate' category, at 9 am, according to Central Pollution Control Board data. An AQI between zero and 50 is considered 'good' 51 and 100 'satisfactory', 101 and 200 'moderate', 201 and 300 'poor', 301 and 400 'very poor', and 401 and 500 'severe'

NETA'S NATTER

AAP'S DELHI BUDGET EARNS FLAK FROM BJP & SILENCE FROM CONG

fter the Delhi govern-ment presented the

budget for the 2024-25

Mahila

fiscal year with an outlay of ₹76,000 crores and announced the launch of the Mukhyamantri Samman Yojana, under which women above 18 will be given a stipend of ₹1,000 monthly from the current fiscal, the AAP hailed it as a budget for "women empow-erment".

GOOD LAW, BUT BAD TIMING BEHIND BJP'S WOES

he gossip going around in Uttarakhand's BJP unit is that the timing of passing the UCC was not auspicious. Ever since the UCC was passed, the ruling BJP has been in the news for all the wrong reasons.

After waiting for more than a year to get justice for the murder of her daughter, Ankita Bhandari's parents decided to sit on an agitation, thus reigniting anger among people, with many locale ioning them locals joining them.

Then a Cabinet minister in the Pushkar Singh Dhami government found himself embroiled in a disproportionate asset case. Even more troubling was when a senior leader and a sitting MLA "threatened" an officer after a tender was not awarded to the person backed by the MLA and everything got



recorded and made it to social media, in an embarrassment to the ruling party.

HAJIPUR CONUNDRUM: FIGHT BETWEEN UNCLE AND NEPHEW INTENSIFIES

The two factions of the Lok Janshakti Party continue to stake claims on the Hajipur parliamentary constituency in Bihar, teorging the PL in a fix keeping the BJP in a fix. Chirag Paswan's faction on Saturday said that just as life and death are eternal truths, Mr Paswan is certain to contest from the Hajipur seat. The certain to rise in the east,



Pashupati Paras' faction Mr Paras is certain to said that just as the sun is certain to rise in the east, While the squ squabble

The Opposition BJP criticised the budget by terming it "a bundle of papers with false announcements"

The Congress, which is in alliance with the AAP, maintained silence on the budget. The party neither praised nor condemned it, prompting a ruling party MLA to say that the AAP was expecting a statement from the Congress praising the budg-et, but to no avail.

WOULD LUCKNOW **BE AGAIN CALLED** LAKSHMANPURI?

he Uttar Pradesh secre-tariat is abuzz that capital city Lucknow could get a new name. After the consecration of the much-awaited Ram Mandir in Ayodhya, there has been a growing demand that the state capital be renamed to the original name Lakshmanpuri.

legends, According to Lucknow's original name was Lakshmanpuri, named after the brother of Lord Ram, but the name kept changing due to the prevailing accents and was then anglicised to Lucknow during British rule.

> between the uncle and nephew intensified, sources in the BJP said that an amicable settlement between the two factions will soon be

made. In 2019, Mr Paras won the Hajipur Lok Sabha seat election, while Mr Paswan retained his Jamui seat, which he won the first time in 2014.

AGE CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI/CHANDIGARH, Fazilka, Sangrur, Mansa,

Farmers block railway tracks during their 'rail roko' protest in Jalandhar.

Protests against Centre, demand MSP guarantee

hold 'rail roko' in Punjab

Services hit as farmers

Moga and Bathinda.Farmer leader Sarwan Singh Pandher Farmers on Sunday squatasked people to join the ted on railway tracks at protest in large numbers. Bharti Kisan Union (Ekta Ugrahan), BKU (Dakau nda-Dhaner) and many places in Punjab as part of a "rail roko" protest called by the Samyukta Kisan Morcha Krant-ikari Kisan Únion, (non-political) and the farmer bodies which are Kisan Mazdoor Morcha to part of the Samyukta press the Centre to accept their demands, including a legal guarantee of mini-Kisan Mor-cha, are also participating in the 'rail roko' agitation. The SKM, which had mum support price (MSP).

In Punjab, the movement spearheaded the farmers' of several trains was affected for about four 2020-21 agitation, is not part of the 'Delhi Chalo' protest but has extended hours from 12 noon till 4 pm as farmers blocked the its support to the ongoing farmers' agitation at Shambhu and Khanauri railway tracks and raised Centre for not accepting points on the Punjab-

Haryana border. The SKM (non-political) and the Kisan Mukti Morcha are spearheading the 'Delhi Chalo' march to press the government

to accept their demands. Besides a legal guarantee of MSP, the farmers are demanding the implementation of the S w a m i n a t h a n Commission's recom-mendations, pension for farmers and farm labourers, no hike in electricity tariff, withdrawal of police cases and "justice" for the victims of the 2021 Lakhimpur Kheri violence, reinstatement of the Land Acquisition Act, 2013 and compensation to the families of the farmers who died during a previous agitation in

2020-21. The protesting farmers from Punjab have been camping at the Shambhu and Khanauri border points since February 13 when security forces stopped from marching towards Delhi.

Man falls into borewell, dies; body retrieved

BHASKAR HARI SHARMA NEW DELHI, MARCH 10

An unidentified person died after falling into a 40feet-deep and 1.5-feet-wide borewell pit located inside a room at the Delhi Jal Board (DJB) sewage treat-ment plant in the Keshopur Mandi area on the dead night of Sunday. The body was pulled out after a nearly 14-hour-long operation on Sunday the police said adding that the man is yet to be identified. Sources said that the borewell is in a locked

room and is abandoned. service. Information about the man falling the the rescue agency tried difborewell at the DJB plant ferent methods to pull up in west Delhi's Keshopur the man from the borewell Mandi area was received at but they could not succeed. around 1 am The rescue However, after 13 hours of efforts were led by teams of operation, the rescue teams pulled out the body operation, the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) of the man. He was taken and the Delhi Fire Services to a nearby hospital where (DFS). As part of the resdoctors declared him dead. cue operation, the NDRF had dug another well par-A senior police officer said the person was



Rescue operation underway in New Delhi on Sunday. PTI

allel to the borewell into brought out from the which the man had fallen. borewell dead. "It appears Five fire tenders were that he was aged between immediately pressed into 25 and 35 years. Efforts are being made to identify him," he said. According to

For more than 8 hours,

Tibetans, living in exile in India, stage a protest march on the occasion of the "65th

Tibet-an National Uprising Day" at Jantar Mantar in New Delhi on Sunday.

Mantri visits site, vows action against accused AGE CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI, MARCH 10

Water minister Atishi on Sunday visited the Delhi Jal Board water treatment plant in Keshopur where a man fell into a 40-foot-deep borewell and said that action would be taken against the official who was responsible for this sewage treatment plant. Atishi visited the spot to take stock of the situation

ment plant)," Atishi told

slogans against

Farmers sat on railway tracks in 22 districts,

Ludhiana, Tarn Taran, Hoshiarpur, Firozpur,

Amritsar,

their demands.

including

MARCH 10

media. She said that the borewell surrounding was com-pletely locked when the rescue teams arrived and added that the police are looking into the matter

Delhi BJP chief Virendra Sachdeva said, "The death of a person is painful. The Kejriwal government should give compensation for the accidents caused by the DJB's negligence in Keshopur and Alipur. Atishi meanwhile sought compliance report within 48 hours. The minister has also directed the chief secretary to conduct a timebound enquiry into the incident and take strong and exemplary action against any officers found responsible.

seeking to enforce court

"Prima facie, the orders of this court have been

wilfully disobeyed by the

respondent/ RP. Issue

notice to show cause as to

why proceedings of con-

Tara

The counsel for the RP

submitted that he was

willing to revert to the

position regarding the maintenance of the air-

craft. The court listed the

matter for hearing on

March 15. It was hearing a

Vitasta

tempt be not initiated...,

'EC quitting ahead of LS polls concerning'

AGE CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, MARCH 10

The resignation of election commissioner Arun Goel just before the the Lok Sabha elections is raising significant questions about the upcoming polls, said the Aam Aadmi Party on Sunday.

In a press briefing. Delhi thing minister Atishi stated that the resignation of Mr Goel right before the Lok Sabha explain to the entire counelections is a major contry why the Election cern. "A commissioner appointed by the BJP, Commissioner resigned. whose appointment defended by the BJP-led central government even in the Supreme Court, his resignation just before the Lok Sabha elections raises questions about the reason behind it", claimed AAP leader. Ms Atishi said that today the question is being raised: just as there was ment.

THE COURT said reso-

not plead difficulties in

the implementation of

the judgment after con-

tempt proceedings have

seeking to enforce court

petition filed by one of the lessors – DAE (SY22) 13

Activity Company – seek-ing the initiation of con-

tempt proceedings against the RP for not comply-

ing with the court's

been filed by lessor

orders

Ireland

orders.

an attempt to rig the elections with Anil Masih in the Chandigarh mayoral elecwas Goel tions, Atishi Arun being also instructed to do somesimilar? Challenging BJP, she stated that the BJP should

has

'MADE IN INDIA REQUIRES MORE MARKETING³

New Delhi: Prominent industrialist and chairman of the Mahindra Group

Mr Anand Mahindra on Sunday pitched for Indian development assistance to other developing nations to be tied to purchasing

Anand from Indian com-Mahindra panies to boost

the global reach of Indian firms. Delivering the Ata Bihari Vajpayaee Memoria Lecture in the national capital on Sunday, in the presence of external affairs minister (EAM) S. Jaishankar and foreign secretary Vinay Kwatra, Mr Mahindra said such a move could help boost the presence of Indian firms in "closed markets" abroad. Speaking on the topic "The role of industry in building a resilient and resurgent India" at the Lecture, organised annually by the ministry of external affairs. the noted Induatrialist emphasised the importance of positioning "Made in India" as a "globally recog-nisable brand" through more marketing and trade shows. Mr Mahindra also sought "much more Government funding" to boost research and development (R&D), arguing that while India spends less than one percent of its GDP on R&D, both the United States and China spend more than two percent of their GDP on it.

government officials, the borewell was inside a locked room. "So whoever entered the borewell room would have done so by breaking the lock and the door," an official said.

Chief minister Arvind Kejriwal shared the news of the man's death in a post on X and thanked the NDRF for its rescue operation.

while the BJP targeted the AAP dispensation over the incident, calling it "shameful" and demanding compensation for the victim. "I have ordered all borewells in Delhi to be inspected in the next 48 hours and action will be taken against the official who was responsible for this STP (sewage treat-

The Delhi high court has

issued a show-cause notice

to the resolution profes-

sional of crisis-hit 'Go

First' airline, asking why

contempt proceedings should not be initiated against him for prima facie willfully disobeying

judicial orders on allowing

inspection and mainte-

nance of lessors' aircraft.

Professional) cannot plead

difficulties in the imple-

mentation of the October

12, 2023, judgment after

The high court said the

(Resolution

AAF leader also stated that Mr Goel, whose term was until 2027, resigned just a few days before the announcement of the Lok Sabha elections. Arun Goel was the same person appointed by the BJP, and he was made election commissioner within 24 hours of his voluntary retire

were not being tained by the RP, docu-ments needed were not being provided to them and even inspections, as directed by the court, were

not being allowed. Several other lessors have also raised similar issues and contentions regarding the non-compliance of orders passed by the court from time to time.

The court is seized of several petitions by Go First's lessors seeking the deregistration of their planes by aviation regulator DGCA so they could take them back from the airline.

The plea said aircraft

Modi virtually unveils expanded Delhi airport T1

which has a capacity of 40

PRITAM BANDYOPADHYAY

AGE CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, MARCH 10

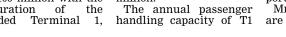
Prime Minister Narendra Modi virtually inaugurated the expanded Terminal 1 (T1) of the Delhi airport. having a total area that has tripled to 2,06,950 square metres now. All entry gates have facial recognition Ssystem (Digi Yatra), 20 automated tray retrieval systems (ATRS), individual carrier system (ICS), 108 common usage self service (CUSS) and 100 check-in counters, with 36 self baggage drop (SBD) kiosks, according to air-port operator DIAL.

The Delhi airport will now join the club of airports having an annual



Delhi airport's expanded Terminal 1.

passenger handling capacity of 100 million with the inauguration expanded



will increase to 40 million from 17 million. The Indira Gandhi International Airport (IGIA), operated by the Delhi International Airport Ltd (DIAL), han-dles around 1,500 flight movements daily. Currently, the airport has three terminals - T1, T2

and T3. T1's capacity is 40 million, T2 (15 million) and T3 (45 million). Ahead of the virtual inauguration of the expanded T1 by the PM, minister of state for civil aviation V.K. Singh and Delhi lieutenant-governor V.K. Saxena spoke at a function at the Delhi air-

Mr Singh said 15 projects being inaugurated

today, and together, these will take the total number of airports in the country to more than 160. Ten years ago, the number of airports was at 74, he added. Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led NDA government came to power in 2014.

On Sunday, Mr Modi inaugurated 12 new terminal buildings at Delhi, Pune, Kolhapur, Gwalior, Jabalpur, Lucknow, Aligarh, Azamgarh, Chitrakoot,

Shravasti Moradabad, and Adampur airports. He also laid the foundation stone of three new terminal buildings of Kadapa, Hubballi and Belagavi airports

Thakur organises biggest medical camp in Himachal

Desig-nated

AGE CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, MARCH 10

On completion of 10 lakh beneficiaries of 'MP Mobile Health Service', Union minister Anurag Thakur on Sunday organised the biggest medical camp of Himachal Pradesh till date in Dehra in which 5,312 people availed free health services.

On completion of six years of the health service artificial limbs were provided free of cost to 20 disabled people of the area. These prostheses are made from carbon fiber, which makes it more comfortable to wear, as well as stronger and durable.

Mr Thakur noted that under the leadership of respected PM Narendra Modi, India is going to become a medical hub for the world.

The number of medical colleges in our country has increased from 384 to 700. To provide good health services to the people of my Hamirpur parliamentary constituency free of cost at their doorstep, I had started Sansad Mobile Health Service six years ago. I feel happy and proud to say that the hospital service has reached out to 10 lakh people in such a short time and provided them free health services,"

Mr Thakur said.









million.

WE WILL NEVER

Showcause notice to Go First staff contempt proceedings have been filed by a lessor AGE CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, MARCH 10 lution professional can-

orders

Justice

Ganju said.



SHORT TAKES

4 BRS leaders from

Telangana join BJP

New Delhi: Four Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) leaders – including two former MPs — and a Congress leader from Telangana, joined the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on Sunday, as the ruling party looks to boost its Lok Sabha tally in the southern state. Those who joined the party are Godam Nagesh and Sitaram Nayak — both former MPs — Saidy Reddy and Jalagam Venkat Rao – former BRS MLAs – and Srinivas Gomase, who was in the Congress. The leaders praised Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership. BJP leader and party parliamentary board member K. Laxman welcomed them and said while the leaders of other parties are working to secure their children's future, Mr Modi is working for the country. BJP general secretary Tarun Chugh said that people, fed-up with "dynastic and corrupt" parties, praised these leaders for their work. – PTI

Himanta launches **₹1,700cr projects**

Guwahati: Assam chief minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, on Sunday, launched various infrastructure development projects worth nearly ₹1,700 crores in Sonitpur and Baksa districts, including a 50-MW solar power plant. Unveiling the projects as part of the ongoing "Vikas Yatra", Mr Sarma said these projects will improve the entire region's education, health and energy infrastructure. In Sonitpur, he dedicated various welfare projects to the tune of ₹1,370 crores, and in Baksa, the amount was ₹308 crores. Mr Sarma laid the foundation of the 50-MW solar plant in Sonitpur, to be developed at an investment of ₹300 crores. The plant, spread over an area of 864 bighas (nearly 286 acres), will come up at Barchalla. – PTI

Rahul mad person:

Expelled Cong neta Sambhal, UP: Expelled Congress leader Acharva Pramod Krishnam on Sunday hit out at Rahul Gandhi, calling him a "mad person". Mr Krishnam claimed that as long as Mr Rahul is in the party, the Congress cannot be saved. "A mad person can say anything. A boy who has gone mad can say anything. No one should take seriously what a mad person or a child says, ' Mr Krishnam said. He was ousted from the Congress for indiscipline in February. "In view of the complaints of indiscipline and repeated statements against the party, the Congress president has approved the proposal of the Uttar Pradesh Congress committee to expel Mr Krishnam from the party for six years with immediate effect," the party had said. - PTI

2 FORMER CONG

JOIN BJP IN RAJ

Jaipur, March 10: Several

former ministers Rajendra

BJP on Sunday ahead of the

Lok Sabha elections. Former

Mirdha, Vijaypal Mirdha and

Khiladi Bairwa, former inde-

pendent MLA Alok Beniwal,

Chaudhary, Rampal Sharma

joined the ruling party in the

state. Rajasthan chief minis-

BJP president C.P. Joshi and

ter Bhajanlal Sharma, state

Union minister Bhupendra

Yadav welcomed them into the party at its state head-

quarters here. Addressing a

joined the BJP because of

BJP understands the pain

It was CM Shama who

his conscience. He said the

and suffering of farmers, the

poor and the common man.

worked to resolve the issue

added. Mr Bairwa, who was

mission during the previous

Congress rule, hit out at for-

mer chief minister Ashok

Gehlot. Mr Kataria and Mr

Yadav were ministers in the

previous Congress govern-

ment headed by

Ashok Gehlot. – PTI

the chairman of the SC com-

of the eastern Rajasthan

canal project. Mr Kataria

gathering, Mr Kataria said he

among other leaders also

Congress MLAs Ricchpal

former state Congress

and Riju Jhunjhunwala

chief Seva Dal Suresh

Congress leaders in

Rajasthan, including

Yaday and Lal Chand

Kataria, joined the

MANTRIS, OTHERS

Trinamul Cong chief warns party leaders of fresh raids by ED **Didi hits out at Modi, says** no value in his 'guarantee'

RAJIB CHOWDHURI KOLKATA, MARCH 10

West Bengal chief minister Mamata Baneriee and her MP nephew Abhishek Banerjee tore into Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Lok Sabha election slogan "Modi ki guarantee" dur-ing the "Jana Gorjon Sabha" of the Trinamul Congress at the Brigade Parade Ground in the city on Sunday.

Ms Banerjee wondered, "What 'guarantee' are they giving? There is no value in their 'guarantee' that hikes LPG cooking gas cylinders' price. Before elections, they drop prices by ₹100 but increase it by ₹1,000 after the elec-tion. They pocketed ₹70,000 crores by shooting up the cooking gas prices. Didn't they think about the poor? Where was the



People attend a rally of TMC ahead of the Lok Sabha elections in Kolkata on Sunday.

guarantee then?" Echoing the CM, Mr alleged, Banerjee "Bohiragoto (outsiders) come here from Delhi and talk about 'Modi ki guar-antee', which has zero warranty. Thieves are going to the BJP instead of going to jail. Earlier, the judges used to punish

criminals and send them to jail but in Modi's new India, the crooks and thieves felicitate the judges' entry to the BJP. This is 'Modi ki guaran-Whose guarantee tee'. does Bengal want? Modi or Didi? Who will you choose, Bengal's bhoomiputro (son of the

Commissioner Arun Goel's unexpected exit from the poll authority, Ms Banerjee observed, "An election commissioner resigned yesterday. I read in news reports how forcefully they tried to take over the control of Bengal, which he didn't accept. We salute him from this meeting for not succumbing to

Reacting to Election

soul) or bohiragoto

their pressure." She added, "This provesthey (BJP) are misusing the poll panel. They are a blot on the poll process and are working under the directives of the BJP government. They are trying to loot the elections. This was proved by the election commissioner's resignation yesterday.' The CM also warned her party leaders of fresh raids by ED.

Every party wants me to be on its side, says Chirag

'Will align with those with Bihar first, Bihari first vision'

Paswan to be on its side,

ness

he said, adding that this

In his speech, he made

yet another attempt to

project himself as true heir to his late father Ram

Vilas Paswan, calling him-

He refrained from men-

tioning by name bete

noires in the NDA: the

self "sher ka beta".

Patna, March 10: Former Lok Janshakti Party president Chirag Paswan on Sunday asserted that every party wants him to be on its side, indicating he could tilt towards one that could offer a better bargain.

Mr Paswan, an NDA ally, has been getting feelers from the "Mahagath-bandhan", the Opposition coalition in Bihar.

Addressing a rally in the Sahebganj Assembly segwas because people were enamored with his "Bihar first, Bihari first" vision that seeks to pull the state ment, the LJP young leader dropped ample hints that he was weigh-ing his options and could tilt towards the side with out of chronic backwarda better bargain.

"I can see the posse of media persons here who are anxious to know whom Chirag Paswan is aligned with. I wish to tell them that Chirag Paswan is aligned only with the people of Bihar," said the young leader, who has

often sworn by his loyal-Bihar chief minister Nitish Kumar heads the JD(U) — and ty towards r i m e Union minister Pashupati Minister Kumar Paras (uncle) – who split the late leader's Narendra Modi, likenparty. The young leader, how-ever, spoke at length about ing him to

Chirag Lord Ram Paswan and himself Lord Hanuman. "Every party, every coalition wants Chirag

the "conspiracies" he had to face, "aimed at breaking my home, my family and my party, though I have demonstrated that Chirag Paswan cannot be cowed down"

who

The rally at Sahebanj under the Vaishali Lok Sabha seat, which the LJP won in the last two elections, is being seen as a fresh attempt by Paswan to claim his father's legacy, after having earlier declared that the Lok Janshakti Party (Ram Vilas), a splinter group that he now heads, will contest Hajipur, which the late leader had represented several times.

Hisar's MP quits BJP, joins **Dhami unveils ₹8K-cr projects** Congress ahead of LS polls in Uttarakhand AGE CORRESPONDENT **DEHRADUN, MARCH 10**

AGE CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, MARCH 10

Ahead of the parliamen-tary elections, BJP MP from Hisar Brijendra Singh on Sunday resigned from the party's primary present at party chief Mallikarjun Kharge's res-idence when Mr Singh

said, from the primary mem-bership of the BJP due to compelling political rea-



Brijendra Singh

sons. I extend my gratitude to the party, presi-dent J.P. Nadda, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, and Amit Shah for giving me the opportunity to serve as the Member of Parliament for Hisar."

"I have also resigned from the membership of Lok Sabha. I am grateful

ment to public service with which I entered poli-tics after leaving the job at IAS will continue," he said in another post. Speaking to reporters after joining the Cong-

ress, the bureaucrat-turned-politician said he resigned from the BJP "due to the unease that had been building up for a while due to certain political reasons". There was speculation

that he may be replaced as Hisar MP and would not be fielded again from the constituency by the BJP, as the JJP was demanding the seat. Mr Maken said the Congress is happy to announce that Brijendra Singh is joining the party. His father Birender Singh, former Union minister, is may also join the Congress soon.

stone for schemes worth about ₹7,227.4 crores and inaugurated schemes worth ₹1,048 crores. The CM distributed tool kits to workers registered through the building and other construction worker's welfare boards. He also gave

Uttarakhand chief min-ister Pushkar Singh Dhami virtually inaugu-

rated and laid the foun-

dation stones of various

development schemes

worth more than ₹8,200

The chief minister has

laid the foundation

crores on Sunday.

allotment letters for solar energy projects to entrepreneurs, as well as allotment letters to beneficiaries of the solar Swarozgar Yojana.

Party state prez says going to Delhi to hold 'seat discussion' 'No alliance' with BJD, reiterates BJP

AKSHAYA KUMAR SAHOO BHUBANESWAR, MARCH 10

neswar that the four top BJP leaders flew to Delhi after being called by the party's Central leadership to agree to a proposal for a tie-up with the BJD. BJP state pres BJP state president Manmohan Samal told reporters here at the airport that he was going to Delhi to conduct a "seatwise discussion" with the central leadership to finalise the candidates' list. "We are going to Delhi to hold a seat-wise discus-

Speculation ran high in Odisha capital Bhuba-neswar that the four top side of the elections," Mr Samal Modi and home minister



People attend a programme of Prime Minister Narendra Modi in Azamgarh in Uttar Pradesh on Sunday.

Seat-sharing of Mahayuti will be finalised today, claims Ajit

the

BHAGWAN PAWAR MUMBAI, MARCH 10

Amid the concern in the BJP alliance partners over getting less number of seats, deputy chief minister and NCP chief Ajit Pawar on Sunday claimed all three parties in the Mahayuti government in Maharashtra will get a respectable number



Ajit Pawar number of test," he said.

Ajit's remarks come in the backdrop of growing iliscontent among the BJP alliance partners over reports of saffron party being unwilling to offer more seats to the Shinde's Sena and Ajit's NCP. Out of Maharashtra's total 48 seats, the BJP is expected to contest 30-32 seats, while Mr Shinde is expected to get around 10-12 seats and Mr Pawar would get 4-6 seats. Of the six Lok Sabha seats in Mumbai, the BJP might Shinde-led Shiv Sena and

CONGRESS GENERAL

secretary organisation

post on X, "It is deeply concerning for the

health of the world's

K.C. Venugopal said in a

"In the last 10 years, it

that are the foundations

Congress general secre-

tary organisation K.C.

Venugopal said in a post

on X, "It is deeply con-

cerning for the health of the world's largest democ-

Commissioner Mr Arun

Goel has resigned on the

cusp of the Lok Sabha elections." There is

absolutely "no trans-parency" in how a consti-

tutional institution has

been functioning, Mr

that

racy

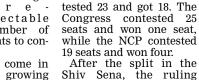
Goel added.

of our Republic!

Pawar-led remaining one seat by Mr Shinde's Shiv Sena. "All In 2019, the BJP contested 25 seats and bagged 23, while the Shiv Sena conpartested 23 and got 18. The Congress contested 25 seats and won one seat,

NCP tion. three ties will get a r e spectable while the NCP contested seats to con-19 seats and won four.

Ajit



membership and the Lok Sabha due to "compelling political reasons" and joined the Congress. After many desertions from its ranks, the Congress was finally able to get a BJP leader in its fold. Senior

Congress leaders Ajay Maken, Mukul Wasnik and Deepak Babaria were

joined the party. In a post on X, Mr Singh "I have resigned

to the people of Hisar for giving me the opportunity to represent them and raise their demands as their MP. The commit-

of seats to contest Ajit Pawar said that he, chief minister Eknath Shinde, deputy chief minister Devendra Fadnavis, state BJP president C h a n d r a s h e k h a r Bawankule and NCP leaders Praful Patel and Sunil Tatkare will visit Delhi on Monday to finalise the seat-sharing of the Mahayuti, which comprises the BJP, the Eknath

a strength of 13 MPs, while the Uddhav Thackeray-led Shiv Sena (UBT) five. On the other hand, Sharad Pawar's NCP commands strength of three while Ajit Pawar one.

Shinde-group commands

contest five and the

Several Shinde Sena leaders have openly criti-cised the BJP for trying to eat into the Shiv Sena's share of seats for the Lok Sabha polls.

AS confusion reigned supreme over a possible alliance between Odisha's ruling Biju Janata Dal (BJD) and Bharatiya Janata Party's (BJP), the saffron party's state president Manmohan Samal, organising secretary Manas Mohanty along with party's election in-charge Vijaypal Singh Tomar and co-in-charge Lata Ushendi left for New Delhi on Sunday evening.

saio Amit Election in-charge Vijayapal Singh Tomar reiteratdeal ed that there will be no alliance with the BJD.

'There has been no dis-

Shah WIII take a final call on the alliance

Meanwhile, BJP co-incharge for elections in Odisha, Lata Usendi, on Sunday added to the ongoing ambiguity.

cussion on alliance so far. We are fully prepared to While talking to reporters, Ms Lata said that such speculation is contest from all the 147 assembly seats and 21 parliamentary constituen-cies," Mr Tomar said. Sources in the party said the top leaderships in BJD and BJP are inching clos-

going on only in the media."We are ready to fight on all seats, be it Assembly or Lok Sabha.

'Did EC resign due to differences with **CEC or Modi govť**

'Concerning for health of democracy'

AGE CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, MARCH 10

A day after Arun Goel resigned as election commissioner, the Congress and other Opposition parties on Sunday attacked Modi government, asking

largest democracy." whether he did so due to seeing the democratic any differences with the exercise. Chief Election Commissioner or the Narendra looks like the election Modi government. commission has become an extended arm of the

Asked about Mr Goel's government," he said. In a post of X, Mr Sibal wrote, "Way cleared to: Pack the Commission resignation, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge said one has to wait to see what he does with Yes men. This applies to all institutions in the coming days.

"I was thinking that after the high court judge resigned and joined the BJP the next day and started abusing the TMC. It shows that the BJP has appointed people with such a mindset. Now the election commissioner has resigned, let us wait for some time to see what he does," he said.

Reacting to Mr Goel's exit, Rajya Sabha MP Kapil Sibal, a seasoned politician and legal luminary, minced no words in his criticism of the institution tasked with over-

Exiled Tibetans march on anniv of uprising crushed 65 years ago

Dharamsala, March 10: adopted home of the Tibetans in India, on Sunday, waved the flag of their homeland in protests marking 65 years of a failed uprising that was crushed by China, which drove the Dalai Lama and thou-sands of compatriots to flee.

Leaders warned of an "existential threat" to the decades long struggle by Tibetans in exile to win greater autonomy for a homeland many have never seen.

On Sunday, hundreds of Tibetans gathered in the northern Indian hilltown of Dharamsala, the

Dalai Lama, since he fled Tibet days after the March 10, 1959 uprising. leader returned. "The commemoration today is not just a way to amplify the voices of

Tibetans to the international community but a time for all Tibetans to reflect," said Lhagyari Namgyal Dolkar (37), a Member of Parliament in the world.

the Tibetan government in exile based in India. The Dalai Lama was just 23 when he escaped Penpa Tsering, the sikyernment, said Sunday the Tibetan capital Lhasa in fear for his life, after Chinese soldiers eviscerated the uprising, crossing across the snowy

Himalayas into India. The Buddhist spiritual has never

The Dalai Lama, now aged 88, stepped down as his people's political head in 2011, passing the baton of secular power to a government chosen democratically by some 130,000 Tibetans across

ong or head of that govthat they do not seek full independence for Tibet, but rather pursue a long-standing "Middle Way" policy seeking greater autonomy. — AFP

External affairs minster S. Jaishankar with minister of foreign affairs of Liechtenstein Dominique Hasler in New Delhi on Sunday.

Amid discontent in HP, Cong forms 6-member panel

AGE CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, MARCH 10

In a bid to smoothen ruffled feathers the Congress has announced the name of the coordination panel members for better coordination between Himachal Pradesh government and the party. Chief minister Sukh-vinder Singh Sukhu, state unit chief Pratibha Singh, deputy chief minister Mukesh Agnihotri are amongst the six members.

Kaul Singh Thakur, Dhaniram Shandil and Ram Lal Thakur were the other members. The committee is expected to improve the coordination between the government and the organisation of the Congress in the state. The CM should intro-

spect and realise who is responsible for the current situation, said the including nine MLAs, three independents and six disqualified Congress

THE TROUBLE started for the Congress when their official candidate for the Rajya Sabhya polls in the state lost, with the cross voting of six Congress MLAs

MLAs, who voted in favour of the BJP in the recent Rajya Sabha polls. In a joint statement issued here, the MLAs said they are fighting a

battle of self-respect and questioned the mindset of the CM, who is approaching them for compromise on one hand and issuing statements like black snakes and shepherds on the other hand.

The nine MLAs include six Congress rebels Sudhir Sharma, Ravi Thakur, Rajinder Rana, Inder Dutt Lakhanpal, Chetanya Sharma and Devinder Kumar Bhutto, and three independents

The trouble started for the Congress when their official candidate for the Rajya Sabha elections in Himachal Pradesh lost with six Congress MLAs

Ashish Sharma, Hoshiyar

Singh and K.L. Thakur.

The Speaker has disqual-ified these six MLAs after the chief whip of the party complained. Though, they have challenged their disqualification in the Supreme Court.





Election





















Nagpur: More than 50 persons in Maharashtra's Nagpur district suffered from food poisoning after consuming snacks and other eatables while observing fast on the occasion of "Mahash-ivratri", officials said on Sunday. The victims belonged to Kamptee in the district and some areas of Nagpur city. They had observed fast on the "Mahashivratri" festival on Friday. After consuming the "farali" (meant for consumption during fast) snacks made of sago, potatoes and other items purchased from some shops and roadside stalls in Kamptee, several persons complained of upset bowel movements, stomachache and vomiting, a police official said. In Ganesh Nagar area of the city, seven members of a family suffered from food poisoning after consuming "jalebis" (sweets) and other eatables made from water chestnut flour on Friday, offi-cials from Dhantoli police station said. - PTI

Bihar mining case: Fresh arrest by ED

Patna: The ED has arrested Subhash Yadav, a man allegedly linked to the RJD, in Bihar's Patna as part of a money laundering probe related to alleged illegal sand mining in the state, official sources said on Sunday. Searches at half a dozen premises of Yadav and his associates were launched in the state capital on Saturday by the central agency as part of the ongoing probe. He was held late on Saturday night and about ₹2.3 crore cash was seized from the various premises that were raided by the ED, the sources said. Alleged to be the "key syndicate member" of the sand mining racket, Yadav is expected to be produced before a special PMLA court in Patna on Monday. He had contested polls on an RJD ticket in the past, the sources said. PMLA case stems from a clutch of 20 FIRs filed by against a firm called Broadsons Commodities Pvt. Ltd. (BCPL) and its directors, alleging that they were enga-ged in mining and sale of sand without using e-challans. - PT

6 of family killed in road accident in UP

Jaunpur (UP): Six members of a family from Bihar died when their car was hit by a speeding truck here in the early hours of Sunday, police said. Superintendent of police (SP) Ajay Pal Sharma said the car was headed for Pravagrai when the accident occurred on the Karjag-Kerakat road in the Gaura Badshahpur police station area around 2:30 am. Three other members of the family are undergoing treatment in Varanasi, police said. The deceased have been identified as Gajdhar Sharma (60) and his son Anish Sharma (35), Jawahar Sharma (57) and his 17-year-old son, Sonam (34) and Rinku (32), all residents of Bihar's Sitamarhi district. Police have launched probe into the matter, the SP said. - PTI

Women beneficiaries to get training to operate drones **PM launches scheme, says govt** aims to make 3cr 'Lakhpati Didis'

RABINDRA NATH CHOUDHURY RAIPUR, MARCH 10

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday said that economic empowerment has become widespread in every village in the country because of the sustained efforts towards this

by the Centre. In the last 10 years, our government has changed the lives of more than ten crore women through selfhelp groups (SHGs), he said. "With the efforts of our government, over one

crore women have become 'Lakhpati Didis'. Now, we aim to make three crore women 'Lakhpati Didis' across the country," Mr Modi said.

empower-"Economic ment has become wide-spread in every village

Security for 43 BJP netas in Bastar by C'garh govt

AGE CORRESPONDENT RAIPUR, MARCH 10

The Chhattisgarh government has provided security cover to 43 BJP leaders in Left-wing extremism-hit Bastar in the state in the wake of sudden spate of killings of ruling party leaders in the region in recent times. The development comes three days after a local leader in Bijapur district under south Bastar made an appeal to Union home minister Amit Shah to provide them security following the killing of two BJP leaders within a span of a week in March in the district.

The 43 BJP leaders will be provided security under categories of "Y", "Y+" and "X" consider-ing the scale of threat perception to the individual leaders from Maoists, a senior police officer said on Sunday.

rity for each of these 43 BJP leaders as per their assigned categories of

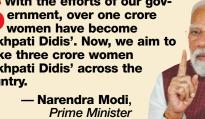
With the efforts of our government, over one crore women have become 'Lakhpati Didis'. Now, we aim to make three crore women 'Lakhpati Didis' across the country.

because of the efforts of our government," he added. The Prime Minister indicated that the Centre would launch "Namo Drone Didi Yojana" on Monday.

the scheme, Under drones will be provided to the women beneficiaries. They will also be imparted training to operate the drones

scheme for women, chris-

The Chhattisgarh police will arrange secu-



tened Yojana", in Chhattisgarh virtually, Mr Modi said that the Centre as well as the state BJP government have set the empowerment of women as their priori-

Launching a welfare

ty. Mr Modi disbursed the first instalment of ₹1,000 each to 70,12,417 women beneficiaries Chhattisgarh under the scheme by clicking a button on the occasion. The state government has

"This money will contin-ue to come into your accounts every month without any hassle," Mr

in

"Mahtari Vandan

Modi said. Mr Modi lauded chief minister Vishnu Deo Sai for fulfilling a pre-poll promise by launching the Mahtari Vandan Yojana within three months of coming to power in the state.

released a total of ₹655.57

Under the scheme, the

women beneficiaries are

given a monthly incentive of ₹1,000.

crores for the purpose.

"Modi's guarantee is the assurance of fulfilling the guarantee," he said.

Mr Modi said that today, women are the primary beneficiaries of various schemes, including the distribution of affordable gas cylinders through the Ujjwala Yojana.



People collect free drinking water from a tanker due to water crisis at Bangarappa Nagar in Bengaluru on Sunday

NDRF trains and deploys its 1st forest fire fighting teams

New Delhi, March 10: NDRF director general Atul Karwal has said the force has trained and deployed the first contingent of its 150 responders who can undertake forest fire combat operations even as it has also sought force the Union home ministry's permission to get them fur-

fire extinguishing opera-tions, drawing the "fire line" in the forest to con-A PARLIAMENTARY panel had in 2022 expressed its concern tain the spiralling inferno and help in the rescue of over forest fires not being officially a part of the people, who are trapped in this disaster disasters tackled by the that can either be manspecialised national made or natural.

Torce Forest fires, a parlia-Uttarakhand," Mr Karwal mentary panel had said, is a growing threat globally

Navy's INS Tir takes part in naval drill in Seychelles

16 Navies participate in Exercise Cutlass Express-24

AGE CORRESPONDENT TRAINING WAS con-NEW DELHI, MARCH 10 As part of engaging naval

forces in the Indo-Pacific, the Indian Navy participated in naval exercise in Seychelles. Along with India, some 16 Navies participated in Exercise Cutlass Express-24 (CE-24) in Port Victoria.

"INS Tir, the lead ship of First Training Squadron (1TS), participated in Exercise Cutlass Express held at Port Victoria, Seychelles, from February 26 to March 8," a senior official said on Sunday.

The exercise was inaugurated by the President of Seychelles Wavel Ramkalawan in the presence of dignitaries from India, the USA and African countries. As part of Cutlass Express, the Navy actively engaged with par-ticipants from 16 friendly

ducted on theoretical and practical aspects of maritime interdiction operations, visit board search and seizure procedures, and diving operations

foreign countries Training was conducted on theoretical and practical aspects of maritime interdiction operations, visit board search and seizure procedures, and diving operations.

During the sea phase, the ship's VBSS team boarded Seychelles Coast Guard (SČG) ship LE Vigilant and demonstrated procedures for boarding operations. Indian divers, along the US and with Seychelles divers, undertook joint diving operations after a rigorous training week. The ship

Foster, deputy commander of the US Navy 6th Fleet, who shared his views on the importance of maritime cooperation and shared commitment in the region, appreciating the crucial role played by the Indian Navy. The exercise culminated at a closing ceremony held at the Seychelles Defence Academy, Ile Perseverance, on March 8. The Indian Navy has been participating in the exer-

hosted R. Adm. Calvin M.

cise since 2019. Earlier, *INS Tir* under-took joint EEZ surveil-lance with the Seychelles Coast Guard. During the ship's stay at Seychelles, part of long-range as training deployment, professional exchanges cross-deck visits, and friendly sports fixtures were held with Seychelles defence forces

Poll bonds: SC

to hear today

SBI's plea on

SA cheetah gives birth to 5 cubs in MP's Kuno Count of big cats in park rises to 26

RABINDDRA NATH CHOUDHURY Bhopal, March 10

A cheetah in the Kuno National Park (KNP) in Madhya Pradesh on Sunday gave birth to five cubs. With this, the number of cheetahs in the park has increased to

Union minister for forest, environment and climate change Bhupender Yadav disclosed this while taking to social media platform X. "High Five, Kuno! Female cheetah Gamini, aged about five years, brought from Tswalu Kalahari Reserve, South Africa, has given birth to 5 cubs today", the post by the Union minister read.

This is the fourth chee-tah litter on Indian soil

Former SC judge sworn in as Lokpal chairperson

New Delhi, March 10: Former Supreme Court judge Ajay Manikrao Khanwilkar was adminisweek of February. tered the oath of office as Chairperson of the Law Commission of India and the Lokpal chairperson former Chief Justice of Karnataka HC Ritu Raj on Sunday, nearly two years after the post fell Awasthi, former Chief Justice of HP high court vacant. (retired) Justice Khanwilkar, 66, served as Lingappa a judge of the apex court Swamy and former Chief from May 13, 2016 to July Justice of Allahabad HC Sanjay Yadav were appointed as judicial members in Lokpal. The 29. 2022.President Droupadi Murmu admin-istered the oath of office of chairperson, Lokpal to Lokpal was functioning Mr Khanwilkar at a cerewithout its regular chief since Justice Pinaki Chandra Ghose completmony at the Rashtrapati Bhavan Sunday evening, ed his term on May 27, 2022. — PTI according to an official statement.

In a landmark verdict delivered on February Justice Khanwilkar was 15, a five-judge constituappointed as the Lokpal tion bench scrapped the chairperson in the last Centre's electoral bonds scheme that allowed

Narayana

info disclosure and the first litter of chee-tahs brought from South Africa, Mr Yadav said. In March last year, female cheetah Jwala, brought from Namibia, had given birth to four New Delhi, March 10: The SC will on Monday hear the application filed by the State Bank of India (SBI) seeking extension till June 30 to had given birth to four cubs in Kuno. Of them, disclose details of each only one survived. Jwala electoral bond encashed by political parties before the scheme was gave birth to her second litter of four cubs in January this year. Another Namibian female scrapped last month. A five-judge Constitution Bench headed by CJI D.Y. Chandrachud will also hear a separate

cheetah, Aasha, gave birth to 3 cubs in Kuno in the same month. "Congratulations to all, especially the team of forest officers, vets and field staff who have ensured a stress-free environment which has led to successful mating and birth of cubs. The total number of cheetahs, including cubs in the Kuno National Park, is 26," the Union minister said.

parties through electoral bonds to the Election Commission by March 6. The apex court bench, also comprising justices Sanjiv Khanna, B.R. Gavai, J.B. Pardiwala, and Manoj Misra, will assemble at 10.30 am to hear the two petitions.

plea, which has sought

initiation of contempt action against the SBI alleging, it "wilfully and deliberately" disobeyed

the SC's direction to sub-

mit details of the contri-

butions made to political

security cover, the police officer said. These leaders hail from the districts Sukma, Bijapur, Dantewada, Bastar. Kanker and Narayanpur under Bastar division in the state. Two of the 43 BJP leaders, given security cover by the Chhattisgarh police, are women. Kamala Nag, former chairperson of the local panchayat of zilla Dantewada district under Bastar in the state, has been given "X" category security.

her skilled in the domain told PTI during an inter from a foreign country. view

A parliamentary panel "A fourth such team is under training currently had in 2022 expressed its concern over forest fires and it will be designated as a reserve unit," he said. Mr Karwal said, "We are not being officially a part of disasters tackled by the specialised national force. also coordinating and "The forest fire fighting requesting the ministry of teams are trained now and home affairs (MHA) to get we are equipping them. Three teams of 50 people them trained aboard, in countries which suffer each are now deployed from this disaster the with our first battalion most. We can learn from based in Guwahati, 10th them how to tackle the forbattalion located in Vijaywada and the battal-ion number 15 in est fires effectively." The NDRF official said

the force will undertake

now. The incidents of forest fires not only damage the forest resources but also damage the biodiversity cause climate change. adversely impact tribal livelihood and lead to severe distress among flora and fauna of forests. the panel had said.

In view of the increase of these incidents in the country, it had said the forest fires should be "expeditiously" added to the list of disasters tackled by the NDRF. -PTI

anonymous political funding, calling it "unconstitutional" and ordered disclosure by the EC of the donors, the amount donated by them, and the recipients by March 13.

The SC subsequently directed SBI to submit by March 6 the details of the electoral bonds purchased from April 12, 2019 till date to the EC, which was asked to publish the information on its official website by March 13. — *PTI*

Appeasement weakens as UP develops, says PM

■ Continued from Page 1

country. "Today, Azamgarh is shining like a star. There was a time when there would be an event in Delhi and other states would join in. But today, the event is being held in Azamgarh and thousands of people from different parts of the country are connecting with Azamgarh," Mr Modi said.

Referring to the development projects he had inaugurated prior to his speech, the Prime Minister said that one must not link these projects with elections. He said he sped up the development work to achieve the dream of a developed India by 2047.

"I am running with speed and moving the country with speed to fulfil the promise of developed India by 2047," he said.

In his Azamgarh address, Mr Modi accused the previous Opposition governments of not keeping their promises and deceiving the public by announcing schemes with no intention to start on them.

they (the "Sometimes Opposition) would announce new railway schemes while sitting in Parliament, believing no one would ask later. I have reviewed the announcements that were made 30-35 years ago. Sometimes they would lay the foundation stone before an election and then disappear. Today the country is witnessing that

IN HIS Azamgarh address, Mr Modi accused the previous Opposition governments of not keeping their promises and deceiving the public by announcing schemes with no intention to start on them

Modi is a different kind of person," he said.

The Prime Minister further noted that the planning for urbanisation that is going on in the country should have been done 30 years ago, but it wasn't, and that he is working on making urbanisation an opportunity.

"Such a fast pace of develop-ment happens only when the government works with the right intentions and honesty. Development work on such a honesty. large scale was not possible in the previous parivaarvadi governments steeped in corruption, he said, adding that in the previous governments, Azamgarh and the Purvanchal region did not just face backwardness but also suffered due to deliberate attempts to tarnish the image of this place.

"The entire country saw how patronage was given to terrorists by the previous governments. To change this situation, the double engine government is also work ing to provide new opportunities to the youth here and working in this regard continuously," Mr Modi said.

TMC names 42 LS nominees; 8 axed ■ Continued from Page 1

Smt@MamataOfficial for welcoming me into the TMC family and trusting me with the responsibility to become the people's voice in Parliament. As representatives of the people, it is our duty to uplift the poor and deprived, and that is what I hope to achieve." Another former cricketer, Kirti Azad, will contest in the Bardhaman-Durgapur seat which went to the BJP last time. Others are Tollywood actor Rachna Banerjee (Hooghly), who hosts the popular show Didi No 1 that Ms Banerjee recently attended, Padma Shri awardee and Santhali playwright Kalipada Soren (Jhargram), Dr Sharmila Sarkar (Bardhaman Purba), and Prasun Banerjee (Malda Uttar), an IPS officer who resigned as IG (Raiganj Range) on Saturday,

At Bishnupur in Bankura, the ruling party fielded Sujata Mondal against her ex-husband and BJP MP Saumitra Khan. It also dropped eight MPs of 22 who had won in 2019, and bagged two more later. At Basirhat, which covers Sandeshkhali, former MP Haji Nurul Islam will contest in place of Tollywood actor Nusrat Jahan. At Jadavpur, the TMC gave a ticket to actor-turned-politician Saayoni Ghosh, replacing actor Mimi Chakraborty, who wanted to resign as an MP last month.

The remaining 16 sitting MPs have been kept intact. They are Sougata Roy (Dum Dum), Sudip Bandopadhyay (North Kolkata), Mala Roy (South Kolkata), Abhishek Banerjee (Diamond Harbour), Pratima Mondal (Joynagar), Prasun Banerjee (Howrah), Sajda (Uluberia), Kalyan Banerjee (Serampore), Kakoli Ghosh Dastidar (Barasat), Deepak Adhikari aka Dev (Ghatal), Shatabdi Roy (Birbhum), Asit Mal (Bolpur) Mahua Moitra (Krishnanagar), Abu Taher Khan (Murshidabad), Khalilur Rahaman (Jangipur) and Shatrughan Sinha (Asansol). Interestingly, the TMC also reduced the number of its women candidates from 17 in 2019 to 12.

Anti-CAA protests escalate in Assam as AASU joins stir Continued from Page 1

Sarma urged all those opposed to the CAA to approach the Supreme Court for redressal of their grievances rather than taking up agitations. While voicing his support

for the CAA, Mr Sarma said that many are opposed to it and there was a need to accommodate both points of

He clarified: "In Assam, there are two sections of people, some support CAA and I am one of them, and there are many who oppose it." Citing the example of the Illegal Migrants (Determin-ation by Tribunal) (IMDT) Act, the CM said: "À large section of people was opposed to it. It got scrapped by the SC and

not by any agitation." Urging those opposed to the CAA to seek legal recourse, he said: "It was already taken to the Supreme Court but was not listed as the rules were not framed. The minute the rules are notified, the case will be ready for argument and hearing." "Instead of disturbing peace and tranquillity of the state, people must go to the court and ventilate their grievances," he said, adding that the SC was a neutral body and will listen to logical reasoning.

■ Continued from Page 1 announce the schedule for the Lok Sabha polls, Mr Goel resigned on Friday morning. His resignation was accepted by President Droupadi Murmu on Saturday and the law ministry issued a notification to announce it. This leaves Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar as the sole member of the poll body. Mr Pandey had demitted office on

Responding to questions on the reasons behind Mr

February 14 at the age of

Goel's resignation, sources said that he might have resigned due to personal reasons. And rejected suggestions that there were differences between Mr Goel and Mr Kumar, saying records of internal communication, minutes and decisions show there was no dissent recorded by Mr Goel. "If seasoned bureaucrats brainstorm on an issue, there are bound to be dif-

2 new ECs to be picked by

weekend to fill vacancies

resignation on Friday morning, did not attend the crucial meeting between the EC and top home ministry and railway officials to firm up the plan for the deployment and movement of Central forces across India for poll duty.

Mr Goel was a 1985-batch IAS officer of the Punjab cadre. He joined the EC in November 2022. His tenure was till December 5, 2027. ferences in opinion and perception. These cannot He was in line to become be described as differthe CEC after Mr Kumar's ences," they said. Mr Goel, who tendered retirement in February next year.

added.

and

India, EFTA ink FTA: \$100bn over 15 yrs

■ Continued from Page 1 symbolises our shared also approved the signing of the TEPA with the EFTA commitment to open fair, equitable trade as well as states. "It is a momentous generate growth occasion. The signing of employment for the youth. the trade and economic 'The global leadership of the EFTA countries in partnership agreement with the European Free research and development Trade Association marks across diverse spheres such as digital trade, bankthe culmination of nearly 15 years of hard work and ing and financial services, transport and logistics, industrial machinery, tremendous effort," said minister of commerce and industry, food and con-sumer affairs and textiles biotechnology, pharmaceu-ticals, chemicals, food processing and clean energy Piyush Goyal. e minister will open up new doors of collaboration," Mr Goyal further elaborated, saying that the trade agreement

Mr Goyal also said that this is the new India that we would wish to offer all our friends in the EFTA countries. "It is a resurgent India, an India that believes in the world being one family. The agreement will give a boost to Makein-India and provide opportunities to the young and talented workforce in the country. The FTA will provide a window for Indian exporters to access large European and global markets," the minister said.





















THE ASIAN AGE

THE ASIAN AGE | MONDAY | 11 MARCH 2024 | NEW DELHI

11 MARCH 2024

Naidu returns to NDA to fight 'invincible' Jagan

ven as the incumbent chief minister of Andhra Pradesh continues his "*Siddham*" (prepared) campaign across the state seeking all 175 Assembly constituencies, upping the mood and morale of his leaders and cadre, and exuding an aura of almost-invincibility, the Opposition is closing in ranks. After protracted attempts to get a go-ahead from the BJP, the Telugu Desam just succeeded in entering the NDA alliance a third time.

Interestingly, the third party in this alliance, the Jana Sena Party (JSP) led by Tollywood "powerstar" K. Pawan Kalyan who is younger brother of megastar Chiranjeevi, is already an alliance partner of the BJP in Telangana and the TDP in Andhra Pradesh, separately.

N. Chandrababu Naidu, a three-time CM, was instrumental in stopping the BJP from coming to power in 1996. He then went on to enable alliance governments headed by H.D. Deve Gowda and I.K. Gujral, which could not complete a term. Following this, he joined the

NDA as one of the biggest partners and enabled After facing an existential crisis for the last five years, Mr Naidu has been working hard to win the favour of the Narendra Modi-Amit Shah duo for over a year now and his efforts have

twice. After the BJP lost power at the Centre in 2004, he quit the NDA. He again joined the NDA ahead of the 2014 Lok Sabha elections, and the trio of BJP, TDP and Pawan Kalyan won the Assembly and Lok Sabha polls in Andhra Pradesh. But before completing the term, he again quit the alliance and joined the Congress-led UPA, opposing Prime Minister Narendra Modi ahead of 2019. His party was trounced by Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy's YSR Congress Party.

Atal Behari Vajpayee to become Prime Minister

borne fruit After facing an existential crisis for the last five years, Mr Naidu has been working hard to win the favour of the Modi-Amit Shah duo for over a year now and his efforts have borne fruit. He must have been certain that he would not be able to fight Mr Reddy alone. It is not clear how much of an impact the alliance would have in Andhra Pradesh or the results that they would be able to get in the coming Assembly election, but it does give Mr Naidu a better chance.

Mr Naidu, who called the alliance with the BJP a "win-win situation" in Andhra Pradesh and India, however, was not given an audience with the PM whom he had once famously abused while out of the NDA. He was allowed only a picture with Mr Shah and BJP national president J. P. Nadda, besides releasing a joint official statement of the three parties to fight elections together.

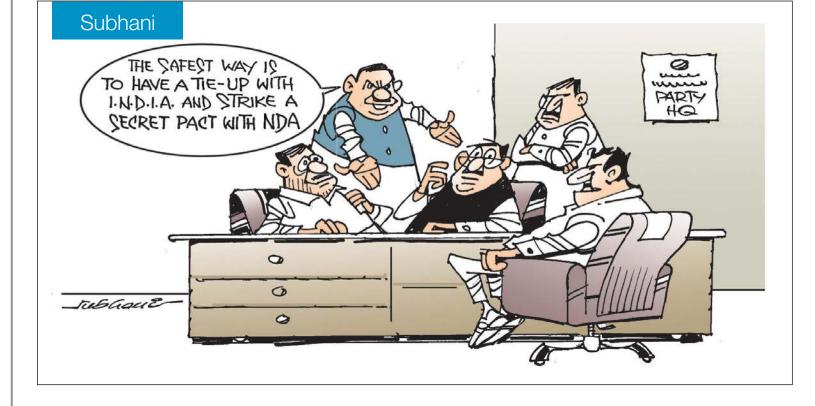
The alliance, besides facing a formidable YSRCP and popular leader in Mr Reddy, also faces internal contradictions and social engineering challenges. Even as informal sources indicated that the TDP would get only 17 seats out of 25 Lok Sabha seats, with the BJP fighting six and JSP two seats, there are already several disgruntled elements not afraid to raise the banner of revolt.

The alliance hopes the leadership of Mr Modi will give the edge it requires to challenge Mr Reddy, and Mr Naidu, who has never come to power or won an election fighting alone, hopes to get lucky yet again.

India sweeps 'Bazball' aside

eam India is in clover after toppling the English brand of 'Bazball' in Test match arenas and getting back to the top of the Test ladder and hence topping all three formats. The best part of it all was that the 4-1 verdict over Team England was made possible by a young Indian Test side that was missing a stalwart of the game like Virat Kohli, who was away on personal leave, besides a few other star performers like KL Rahul. The deeds of Yashasvi Jaiswal, Shubman Gill, Sarfaraz Khan and Dhruv Jurel ensured that Team India had the runs on the board, irrespective of tough match situations. The spinners were on top of their game, as ever, with Ravichandran Ashwin, who coincidentally had the same match figures of 9-128 in his first Test 13 years ago and in his 100th Test, being out-standing in his studious destruction of England's 'Bazball' fixated batters, and a rejuvenated Kuldeep Yadav.

Team England were competitive up to a point after snatching victory in the first Test when they were a sweeping success with their positive sweep shot tactics. But soon, the conditions, in which it is wiser to eke out Test runs with traditional methods of temperament ruling as much as nique, caught up with them. Team India were the better bowling team in pace and spin and its batters were more patient in run gathering. Ably led by Rohit Sharma, who put away concerns over his form with two centuries, Team India showed ideal enthusiasm for the Test match game also and the cricket board stepped in to incentivise further the longer format the purists swear by with an attractive payment scheme. In the end, Team England, prone to boasting of their tactics of always showing positive intent and attacking in every situation, were taken to the cleaners by the home team that applied itself diligently with Test match skills. It does appear now that India and Australia, the two teams with the best win percentage, are headed towards clashing again in the summit of the World Test Championship.



Modi 'guarantees': Flurry of projects on eve of polls

Parsa Venkateshwar Rao Jr

ne Press Information Bureau's eleases for Prime Minister

have turned into a constant refrain about "multiple development projects". In the first week of March, Mr Modi was in West Bengal. in Bihar, in Telangana, in Odisha and in Assam. That he travels the length and breadth of the country in a span of a few days is not surprising. Here is an energetic leader who is forever on the movie, speaking tirelessly of his goal of a "Viksit Bharat", or Developed India, of 2047. He is careful nowadays not to mention 2047 too much because it is a distant date despite the fact that time flies, and has already been Prime Minister for 10 years. He knows that at election time it is not right

March 6, he announced "connectivity projects" worth ₹15,400 crores in Kolkata. The frenetic pace of these

Commission announces

Narendra Modi announcements is reflective of the Prime Minister's desire to launch the maxi-mum number of projects before the Election the dates for the Lok Sabha elections in the second to harp on 2047.

So, the buzzword is "Viksit Bharat". But he just ha the word. He announces and inaugurates projects in the name of "Viksit Bharat". And the projects run into thousands of crores of rupees. On March 1, he announced "multiple development projects" worth ₹7,200 crores. On March 2, in Aurangabad in Bihar, he announced projects worth ₹21,400 crores; and in Begusarai, the same day, he announced oil and gas projects worth ₹1.48 lakh crores, development projects worth ₹13,400 crores. and railway projects worth ₹3,917 crores. On March 4,

Telangana.

Adilabad.

development

a future India is escapism into the future. The idea that Indians will somehow make it big in the next five, 10 or 25 years is nothing but a lotuseater's dream.

The Prime

Minister's vision of

tarianism, and that the poor do not have much sympathy for ideology. And the Prime Minister's desperate attempt to announce development projects is a recognition of this harsh reality, that development trumps Hindutva.

week of this month. Also, it There is, however, the betravs a sense of anxiety on the part of the Prime more basic fact that must Minister to cover his flanks be taken into account in on all sides, as it were. He is the case of Prime Minister not entirely sure whether Modi's announcements. He the Ram Mandir he had inaugurated at Ayodhya in is misusing his position in the government to make Uttar Pradesh would get announcements that only him votes across the counsomeone in the governtry, though he and his ment can do. India is not admirers in the party and likely to adopt the sensible practice developed in outside have been shouting hoarse about the "civilisaneighbouring Bangladesh tional moment" in history. and Pakistan, where a caretaker government takes He can hope to win votes in sities are getting to be part of the scandal now. That the Hindi heartland on the over for a short span before basis of the construction of an election. So, the Election Commission Ram temple after the 1992 should demolition of the Babri mpose a rule the rul ing party must refrain from making announcements in the run-up to the elections and which could possibly impact the electoral outcome. Quite clearly, the announcements made by Prime Minister Modi from March 1 to 6 were part of the election season strategy. The fact that Mr Modi finds it necessary make announcements of development projects at the end of his term in office also reveals a flaw in his governance model. First, his invocation of a developed India by 2047 is a cunning way to sidestep the issues of the day. It is a ploy used by political dictators to dis-tract people from the problems facing them in the present. The Indian econothe present. my, despite its headline growth figures, is plagued with many issues like employment, education,

health, challenges to agriculture, manufacturing and upgrading technology. Mr Modi offers the opiate of "developed India in 2047" as an answer to all these issues. The semiconductor industry, which is the base for the growth of AI systems, is naturally entangled in teething problems which are natural. To pretend that the country is in control of the challenges it faces in this sector is

escapism. The Prime Minister's vision of a future India is escapism into the future. The idea that Indians will somehow make it big in the next five, 10 or 25 years is nothing but a lotus-eater's dream. The majority of Indian youth, who form the work population segment, are not educated enough and the government has not done anything to build the educational infrastructure. Increasing the number of IITs, IIMs and not caring about the quality of education is a way of undermining the future. The private professional colleges of medicine and engineering have always been a scandal in this country, and the private univer-

LETTERS **MYSTERY EXIT**

The resignation of EC Arun Goel just before the elections are due in a couple of months comes as a complete surprise. It is very unusual for such resignations to happen before elections. Anup Pandey has iust retired and that leaves CEC Rajiv Kumar to shoulder the burden alone of the office. There seems to be a furtive haste in which Arun Goel both assumed and left the office. The President, too, has accepted his resignation without delay. A lot of rumours are floating around about the reason for this step. The man himself has said nothing. But surely the people deserve to know what caused this resignation.

Anthony Henriques Mumbai

EQUAL CITIZENS

IN A SHOCKING incident in India's capital, a Muslim while performing jummah prayer on the road was hit by police. Since the BJP came to power in 2014, there have been many hate crimes against Indian Muslims. From the case of Md Akhlaq in Dadri, Uttar Pradesh, in which even the investigating officer s murdered later to the lvn ning of other Muslims, it leaves one in no doubt as to the rabid communalism in the minds of its constituents. Though the cop concerned has been suspended, when will we reach the critical mass of enlightened people required to stop this shameful inhumanity?

THE ASIAN AGE

KAUSHIK MITTER

K. SUDHAKAR

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Fuoristica and Finited on behavior of and too Deccan Chronice Holdings Limited, Javaharlal Nehru National Youth Centre, 219 Deen Dayal Upadhyay Marg, New Delhi 110 002 at BFL Inforceh Ltd., C-9, Sector-III, Noida -201301. London: Quickmarsh Ltd. 8th Floor. Block 2. Elizabeth House, 39 York Road, London, SE1 7NO.

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Masjid, which the courts held to be an act of vandalism. Mr Modi is not confident that Hindutva will ensure a third term for him. So, the announcements about "multiple development projects". Not many in the media would ques tion the rationale of Mr Modi's announcement of projects worth thousands of crores which are necessary for the development of India in a short span of a week, and in the run-up to the elections. No one wants to state the plain truth that the emperor has no clothes. There will be many who he announced "multiple development projects" worth ₹56,000 crores in see this flurry of announcement of development pro-jects as a positive sign that which cover the rail, road Mr Modi, the BJP and the Sangh Parivar, including and power sectors. On March 5, at Chandkhole in the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, cannot hope Odisha, he announced projects to win a national election worth ₹19,600 crores. On based on majoritarian secIndian institutes are struggling to get into the list o world rankings tells a cruel tale of its own. To make things worse, the ruling party, its ideological affiliates and the slightly unhinged Hindu rightwing intelligentsia are riding high on the glories of ancient India even as the country faces a tough situation on the global stage economically and politically. To take refuge in the cultural glory of a dead past is escapism, plain and simple. So, we have two escapisms, that of Mr Modi's escapism into the future, and that of the Hindu right-wingers' escapism into the past. This is not a good sign for a country that wants to be a big economy and a major power in the real world of

The writer is a Delhi-based commentator and analyst

Faizan Ahmed New Delhi

SELF-SERVING

PEOPLE TRYING to defend the indefensible by furnishing the argument that a certain industrialist "provides employment to thousands of Indians" and are hence entitled to enjoy the state privilege of getting an Army airport converted to an international airport for 10 days just for the sake of the comfort of his VVIP guests arriving to attend a private function need to be told in no uncertain terms that the industrial group has provided employment to thousands perhaps to serve themselves and lead comfortable lives! Thus when the state apparatus scandalously bent its own rules for them, it was a fatal assault on democracy. Kajal Chatterjee

Kolkata

Pradeep S. Mehta and T.B. Simi

Warning labels for informed choices over food: How to navigate challenges

s consumers, let's reflect on the challenges we face in making informed choices, particularly in India, where the need for transparency in our complex marketplace has never been more pressing. The abundance of options, complex product information, and aggressive marketing tactics often make it dif-ficult for us to purchase products that best suit our needs and pockets.

This struggle is aggravated by a lack of transparency, where inadequate product information, ambiguous labelling, and deceptive advertising make it difficult for consumers, to make the best choices. The consequences of this lack of trans-parency extends beyond our individual decisions, particularly in the realm of food products. Misleading information on nutritional content and health benefits contributes to the rise of dietrelated diseases and other public health issues. While the government is making all-out efforts to ensure consumers' health, more needs to be done, in particular its orientation to a market-friendly approach rather than a business-friendly one.

A study "India: Health of the Nation's States" by the Indian Council of Medical Research says the prevalence of deaths attributable to non-communicable diseases (NCD) in India increased from 37.9 per cent in 1990 to 61.8 per cent in 2016, rising further to 66 per cent in 2019. In 2018, Lancet Global Health reported that in India the largest proportion of NCD deaths is due to cardiovascular diseases (CVDs), comprising 48 per cent, followed by cancers at 21 per cent. Compelling evidence suggests CVDs and strokes occur at an earlier age

+

in Indians compared to individuals in the Global North. Further, a 2021 study published in the American Journal of Preventive Cardiology, revealed that while death rates from coronary artery diseases are declining in most rich nations, they are on the rise in Global South, including India.

The surge in NCD-related death rate in India is not solely attributed to inadequate healthcare facilities but is also linked to various other prime factors. These include lack of stringent regulations and implementation within our food sector and the widespread availability of processed and unhealthy foods without adequate warnings for consumers. Often, one could observe that major food giants adhere to stringent manufacturing and labelling practices mandated in Global North, yet have double standards in the Global South. This type of discriminatory behaviour exists across various consumer goods and services sectors. They are often seen using their dominant market presence, political influence and threat to leave to their advantage. That's why in India, despite years of policy discourse, the mounting pressure of large food industries is making it hard for regulators and policymakers to introduce and implement much-needed regulations like warning labels on the front of food packages. Such a policy is vital to help deal with mitigating NCDs and rising level of obesity across all age groups by enabling the consumer to practise an informed choice.

Recently, in its Asia-Pacific SDG Progress Report 2024, UNESCAP said that the escalating levels of obesity among children pose a significant challenge to India's economic progress towards achieving SDGs by 2030. Despite such multiple cautionary reports on health in recent times, the persistent disagreement between the preferences of health experts and the influence businesses have in shaping health rules has left the informed public questioning whether the authorities are genuinely concerned with public health and wellbeing of its citizen-consumers

Today, the social media is buzzing with criticism and impactful videos, where both experts and individual consumers vehemently express concerns about the rampant sale and effortless accessibility of unhealthy and deceptive food products in the Indian market. What is particularly striking is the flood of comments accompanying these viral posts, revealing consumers' evident frustration and discontent with misleading claims. Such incidents underscore the pressing need for prominent warnings on food packages to alert consumers.

In the realm of public health policymaking, it is vital for regulators and policymakers to recognise the growing resentment and respond promptly, prioritising national health over short-term economic interests. Acknowledging the voices of public health experts and consumer groups is even more crucial in light of the alarming rise in NCDs. This will require a "whole of government" approach, otherwise files get lost in silos.

In this challenging context, manufacturers also bear a moral and social responsibility to present healthier food choices. Prioritising public health, food safety and acknowledging consumers' right to be informed, they should willingly provide transparent and detailed information about nega-

-

tive ingredients through warning labels. Such actions would align with the Prime Minister's sentiments expressed during the B-20 summit on August 27, 2023, where he urged businesses to prioritise consumer well-being and proposed an International Consumer Care Day. His call for balanced global commerce and consumer-centric policies underscores the need to reconsider conventional economic governance frameworks.

Further, embracing a shift towards healthier products not only aligns with ethical considerations but also opens doors to lucrative markets for our agricultural products in the realm of wholesome and nutritious foods. Then, alongside regulatory and voluntary measures, promoting consumer education is vital. Initiatives that raise the awareness of food labelling, nutritional information, and consumer rights empower individuals to make informed choices and advocate for their interests.

As we reflect on these challenges and potential solutions, we need to advocate, sensitise, raise awareness and drive change. It's a chance for the government, individuals and organisations to come together, advocate for consumer rights, and work towards creating a transparent and consumer-centric global marketplace. Through collective action, we can pave the way for a future where consumers are empowered, informed and protected. In the interest of consumers lies the national interest.

The authors work for CUTS International, a global public policy research and advocacy group











Wilmington, Cairo, Was-hington, March 10: US

Netanyahu that he must

pay more attention to the innocent lives being lost as a consequence of the

Meanwhile, the US Army

has dispatched a ship to

send humanitarian aid to

Gaza, Central Command

(CENTCOM) said on Sun-

day, days after President

Joe Biden vowed to build a

temporary pier to supply

The General Frank S. Besson left Joint Base

Langley-Eustis in Virginia

"less than 36 hours after

President Biden announc-

ed the US would provide

humanitarian assistance

to Gaza by sea," CENT-

The US and Jordan car-

ried out a new airdrop of

humanitarian aid to Gaz-

a's Palestinians on Sund-ay, parachuting in more

The Israeli offensive in

Gaza, which is supported

anda' on Sunday expand-

ed his Cabinet for a seco-

nd time by inducting two

new members, days after dumping the Nepali Con-

gress and forging a new

alliance with the CPN-

UML, the second-biggest

party — led by former premier K.P. Sharma Oli. 'Prachanda' is planning to seek a vote of confide-

nce in Parliament by

Prachanda inducted se-

nior Madhesi leader and chairman of the Janata

RUSSIA, UKRAINE

TRADE FIRE; KYIV

DOWNS 35 DRONES

Kyiv, March 10: Russian

shelling of towns in eastern Ukraine killed three people on Sunday while a Moscow strike

on a residential building

in the town of Myrnograd wounded a

Ukraine also said Moscow launched mis-

sile attacks on the north-

eastern Kharkiv region

and sent attack drones

across the centre and

dozen, Kyiv said.

people.

lage.

Rūssia,

March 13.

than 11,500 meals.

COM said in a statement.

the besieged enclave.

st Hamas in Gaza.

actions taken.



BEIJING OPERATES

some of the world's most

extensive censorship over

the internet, with web

users in mainland China

unable to access every-

news websites without

"Unfortunately, not all

VPN protocols are functi-

oning at this time," they said. "We are working int-

ensively on bringing all

services back to normal,

but currently have no ETA." The use of a VPN

without government aut-

horisation is illegal in China, as is using the soft-

ware to access blocked

websites. State media wo-

rkers and diplomats, how-

ever, are allowed to access

using a virtual private

network.

thing from Google to

SHORT TAKES

SWISS POLICE SEARCH FOR MISSING SKIERS

Geneva, March 10: Police in Switzerland's Valais canton on Sunday were searching for six people who went missing during a ski tour that departed from the Alpine town of Zermatt.

The skiers went missing around Tête Blanche mountain on Saturday on the Zermatt-Arolla path, near the Matterhorn mountain that straddles the border between Switzerland and Italy, police said. "The weather conditions are currently very bad, which makes the emergency response very difficult," the police said.

U.S. AIRLIFTS EMBASSY STAFF FROM HAITI

Washington, March 10: The US military said on Sunday it has carried out an operation in Haiti to airlift non-essential embassy personnel from the country and added US forces bolster embassy security, as Caribbean nation reels under a state of emergency.

The operation was the latest sign of Haiti's troubles as gang violence threatens to bring down the government and has led thousands to flee their homes. "This airlift of personnel into and out of the embassy is consistent with our standard practice for embassy security augmentation worldwide."

PORTUGESE VOTE IN TIGHT GENERAL ELECTION

Lisbon, March 10: Portuguese voters headed to the polls on Sunday, facing a choice between switching to a centre-right government or keeping the centre-left in power, although neither appears to have a clear path to a full majority. The far-right Chega party has

been growing in clout and could play a role in post-election talks. The issues dominating the campaign in western Europe's poorest country include a crippling housing crisis, low wages, sagging healthcare and corruption, seen by many as endemic to the mainstream parties

BANDITS KIDNAP 15 SEMINARY PUPILS IN NIGERIA

Kano, March 10: Gunmen kidnapped 15 pupils from their Islamic seminary in northwest ern Sokoto State Saturday, local sources said, days after the mass abduction of more than 280 schoolchildren. Staff there said gunmen stormed Gidan Bakuso village in Gada district at around 0100 GMT Saturday, rounding up 15 pupils of the seminary as they slept outdoors. "The gunmen were passing by the school with a woman they kidnapped from another part of town and the pupils were awoken by her cries," said Liman Abubakar, the head of the seminary.

Biden blames Netanyahu for loss of innocent lives in Gaza

US dispatches aid ship to Gaza after US President promises to build pier

ISRAELI STRIKES KILL 5 IN LEBANON

President Joe Biden said **HEZBOLLAH FIRES ROCKETS** Saturday that he believes **INTO ISRAEL AFTER STRIKES** Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is Lebanon's Hezbollah on hurting Israel more than Sunday said it had fired helping Israel in how he is dozens of rockets into 0 approaching its war againnorthern Israel after Biden had expressed sup-port for Israel's right to Israeli strikes the day before left five dead in southern Lebanon, includpursue Hamas after the Oct. 7 attack, but said of ing three of the group's

members.

EGYPT KEEPING CONTACT WITH HAMAS, ISRAEL FOR GAZA TRUCE

Egypt was in contact with senior Hamas and Israeli figures as well as other mediators on Sunday in an effort to restart negotiations for a truce in the Gaza Strip during the Muslim holy month of Razdan, starting Monday or Tuesday.

ISRAEL'S HERZOG OPENS HOLOCAUST MUSEUM IN AMSTERDAM AMID PROTEST Israeli President Isaac Herzog is attending the opening of the National Holocaust Museum in Amsterdam on Sunday amid pro-Palestinian protests demanding an immediate ceasefire in the Israel-Hamas conflict in Gaza.

critical shortages of food, water and medicine. The US military's Central Command said that the latest airdrop took place over northern Gaza and included rice, flour, pasta, and canned food. The United States has dropped about 1,35,000 meals in airdrops this month, accord-

ing to Pentagon data. Biden has for months warned that Israel risks by the US, has displaced most of the enclave's 2.3 million people and led to

the Council of Ministers led by PM Prachanda, has

Yaday, who is also am-ong the four deputy prime

ministers, along with Shah took the oath of off-

ice and secrecy on Sund-

av from President Ramch-

andra Poudel at the Presi-

an official press note.

dent's Office, according to

Raghubir Mahaseth from UML, Narayan Kaji

Shrestha from Maoist

Centre, Rabi Lamichhane

from Rastriya Swatantra

losing international support over mounting civilian casualties in Gaza, and the latest remarks in an interview with MSNBC's Jonathan Capehart pointed to the increasingly strained ties between the two leaders.

Biden said of the death toll in Gaza, "it's contrary to what Israel stands for. And I think it's a big mis-

the Israeli civilian populace from rocket attacks in

- AFP

take." The US President about Rafah.

A Palestinian boy inspects

the damage to a building

hit in an Israeli strike in

Rafah. on Sunday.

out on October 7, while 42 more "will expire in the coming few weeks", said Faris Arouri, director of said a potential Israeli invasion of the Gaza city the Association of Internof Rafah, where more than ational Development Age-1.3 million Palestinians ncies (AIDA), whose memare sheltering, is a red line bers work in the Palestfor him. but said he would inian territories. not cut off weapons like the Iron Dome missile "At least 50 requests for new visas — for staffers interceptors which protect ramping up the response

PALESTINIANS RAMZAN READY

AMID CONFLICT

Palestinians

prepared for

heightened

ures by

Israeli

police

in Gaza

and

Ramzan in som-

bre mood with

security meas-

the spectre of war and hunger

overshadowing

the normally

festive Muslim

holy month as

talks to secure

a ceasefire

stalled.

ISRAEL FREEZES

VISAS OF GLOBAL

AID EMPLOYEES

Jerusalem, March 10:

Along with cumbersome

border checks and relent-

less Israeli bombardment,

the humanitarian respon-

se in war-ravaged Gaza

faces a new challenge: A

de facto freeze on visas for

many international aid

Israeli authorities have

stopped issuing new visas

or renewing old ones for

ting more than 80 groups.

red since the war broke

Arouri

-AFP

employees.

to worsening humanitarian conditions in Gaza and the region. "It is a red line," he said, when asked the West Bank - have gone nowhere," -AP





China tightens grip over net at political meeting

Beijing, March 10: China has intensified efforts to software that block enables internet users to access banned websites during a top political me-eting this week, a leading provider of firewall-leaping software told *AFP*. Beijing operates some of

the world's most extensive censorship over the in-ternet, with web users in mainland China unable to access everything from Google to news websites without using a virtual private network (VPN). And as thousands of delegates gather in Beijing this week for the annual 'Two Sessions" meeting, VPN software has increa-

foreign employees of inte-rnational NGOs, most of singly struggled to circu-mvent the censorship whom occupy senior positions, according to three while outages have becosenior humanitarian offime much more frequent, cials and a body represeneven when compared to during previous sensitive As of Thursday, 57 aid workers' visas had expi-

political events. "Currently, there is increased censorship due to political meetings in China," a representative of the Liechtenstein-based service Astrill — one of the most popular VPN services for foreigners in China — confirmed.

prohibited websites such as X, formerly Twitter. Security has tightened across Beijing during the Two Sessions, with security officers patrolling streets with sniffer dogs and elderly volunteers in red armbands monitoring pedestrians for suspicious behaviour.

Ramzan moon sighted in Saudi

Arabia. home to the holiest sites in Islam, marking the start of the fasting month of Ramzan for many of the world's 1.8 billion Muslims.

The sacred month, which sees those observing abstain from food and water from sunrise to sunset, marks a period of religious reflection, family get-togethers and giving across the Muslim world. Seeing the moon Sunday night means Monday is

the first day of the fast. However, some countries, like Australia, Bru-nei, Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore, will begin Ramzan on Tuesday after failing to see the crescent moon on Sunday.

This year's Ramzan comes as the Middle East remains inflamed by Israel's ongoing war against

Hamas in the Gaza Strip.

That's raised fears that

the conflict may spark unrest far beyond the cur-

rent borders of the war.

Muslims walk next to the Dome of Rock Mosque at the Al-Aqsa Mosque compound in Jerusalem's Old City, on Sunday. nd the world since the pa-

ndemic continue to pinch In Saudi Arabia, the kingdom had been urging the public to watch the skies from Sunday night in preparation for the sighting of the crescent moon. Ramzan works on a lunar calendar and moonsighting methodologies often vary between countries, meaning some nations declare the start of

the month earlier or later.



SUDAN ARMY **RULES OUT** RAMZAN TRUCE

Dubai, March 10: There would be no truce in Sudan in the Islamic holy month of Ramzan unless the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) paramilitary group leaves the homes and sites of civilians, senior Sudanese armed forces General Yasser al-

Atta said on Sunday. The statement follows an appeal by the United Nations Security Council for a truce during Ramadan, which begins this week. The paramilitary RSF said it welcomed the truce call. Atta's statement, issued on the armv's official Telegram channel, cited recent military advances by the Army.

KATE ISSUES FIRST MESSAGE SINCE SURGERY

London, March 10: Kate, Bri-tain's Princess of Wales, thanked the public on Sunday for their support in her first public message since undergoing surgery, posting a picture of her-self with her three children. Her statement may go some

way to answering the speculation on social media about the princess, absent from public royal life since Christmas Day. The photograph, taken by her husband, Prince William, showed Kate, 42, smiling and looking well, surrounded by Princes George and Louis and Princess Charlotte.

Samaiwadi Party (JSP) Party and Upendra Yaday Upendra Yadav as the minister for population and health and Koshor Shah,

2 ministers join Nepal Cabinet

Kathmandu, March 10: Nepal Prime Minister Pu-shpa Kamal Dahal 'Prach-

reached 22

from JSP became deputy prime ministers in the new government. -PTI

A bridge submerged by the flooded Gard river is pictured in Dions, on Sunday following heavy rain over south-eastern France. - AFP

Zardari sworn in Pak's 14th Prez Islamabad, March 10: Asif

Ali Zardari on Sunday took oath as Pakistan's 14th President, a day after the veteran politician was overwhelmingly elected as the next head of state.

Chief Justice of Pakistan Qazi Faez Isa administered the oath to the 68year-old Zardari at Aiwane-Sadr, the Presidential Palace. Zardari will replace Dr Arif Alvi, who stayed in office for five more months despite completing his five-year term in September 2023.

Paris, March 10: French

linguist Bernard Cerquigl-

south of the country. Kyiv said Sunday that Meanwhile, jailed ex-PM Imran Khan's PTI and the it downed 35 Russian drones across Ukraine, Sunni Ittehad Council including in the capital have jointly nominated region, and that a strike his party leader Omar Ayub Khan as the leader of the opposition in Pakion an eastern town wounded at least nine stan's National Assembly. The swearing-in ceremo-

meanwhile, said one woman was ny was attended by PM killed in Ukrainian shelling of a border vil--AFF

MALDIVES BUYS TURKEY DRONES FOR PATROLLING Male, March 10: Mald-

Mohamed Muizzu after

ini would like to send a ives has for the first time acquired surveillance copy of his new book, "The English language doesn't exist: It's badly drones from Turkey for patrolling its vast exclusive economic zone. King Charles III.

Efforts have begun to Rather than aiming to establish a drone base in Noonu atoll Maafaru to make the monarch sputter into his morning tea, "it's operate the military droa book written from a nes brought from Turkhumorous perspective, it's ey to conduct monitorideliberately in bad faith, arrogant, chauvinistic and so on," Cerquiglini ng of Maldives' ocean territories, Editon.mv news portal reported. told AFP. Turkey was the first for-Beneath the provocative eign country visited by title and humour, the pro-

PAKISTAN MAY SEEK INDIA'S HELP TO RETRIEVE BODIES OF FISHERMEN

Islamabad, March 10: The Pakistan government mav seek the help of India to retrieve the bodies of 14 fishermen who are missing after their boat capsized near Keti Bandar in the Sindh province. Forty-five fishermen bel-

onging to Ibrahim Hyder a fishing village in the Malir district of Sindh, had gone fishing but their boat capsized at Hijamkro

Shehbaz Sharif, all three service chiefs, senior officials and diplomats. Zardari, Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) co-chairman, the joint candidate of the ruling alliance, was elected

Creek near Keti Bandar in Thatta on March 5. Thirty-one of the fisher men were saved while 14

others were still missing. -PTI

as the country's president for the second time on Saturday after he defeated PTI-backed Sunni Ittehad Council (SIC) candidate Mahmood Khan Achakzai -PTIby a huge margin.

PTI SUPPORTERS NABBED FOR POLL RIGGING PROTEST

Lahore, March 10: Dozens of Pakistan's jailed former prime minister Imran Khan's party supporters were arrested on Sunday in different cities of Punjab province for staging "peaceful" protests against alleged rigging in the polls and the "fake election" of the prime minister and the president.

In several videos circulating on social media platforms, police can be seen manhandling Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) workers, including children and the elderly. -PTI

Meanwhile, inflation and high prices of food aroutimes a day. Virginia hails work of Indo-US journo

Washington, March 10: Virginia State Senate has passed a resolution commending the work of an Indian American journal ist T. Vishnudatta Jayaraman for his dedication to journalism and foreign policy. The resolution was introduced on March 4 by Indian American State Senator, Suhas Subramanvam, who is also a Democratic candidate for US Congress from Virginia's

T. Vishnudatta Jayaraman 10th Congressional dis-trict. The Virginia State ramanyam referred to Senate unanimously passed the resolution with a voice vote on March 8.

Introducing Jayaraman in the Senate gallery, Sub-

him as the recipient of the prestigious Ashoka Award for social change, while commending his dedication to journalism, foreign policy.

NEW | BOOK Written from humorous perspective, writer wants to send copy to King Charles English is badly pronounced French: Academic



Half of English's borrowings from French took place from 1260-1400 AD, says the author. Agencies

But Cerquiglini is most guage used in trade, admiinterested by the 13th and nistration and law — bled 14th centuries, when French — by then a second lan-

or cash, upholding a contract, liberty or even one's life, could depend on mas-

tering" the tongue. Half of English's borrowings from French took place from 1260-1400 AD, producing words like "bachelor", from the old French word "bachelier", mea-ning a young noble not yet a knight. "Travel" is relat-ed to the modern French word for labour, "travail", while "clock" stems from the French "cloche", a bell struck to sound the hours before mechanical time-

pieces were invented. By the time Shakespeare came to write his plays in centuries, around "40 per cent of the 15,000 words in his works are of French origin", Cerquiglini notes. These days the place of "Anglo-Saxon" words in modern French can stir defensiveness in Paris, often from the Academie Francaise, charged since 1635 with preserving the language in its "pure" form.

the late 16th and early 17th

'Language in France is official, of the state, nati-onal. And so of course we have an academy" whose members enjoy "a ridiculous outfit, a sword, a palace by the Seine" river in Paris, he said. -AFP

he became President. convey the cross-Channel



'anglicisms" can be. "You can also see my pronounced French", to book as an homage to the English language, which has been able to adopt so

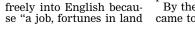
resistance

many words... Viking, Da-nish, French, it's astonishing," Cerquiglini said. Norman French's use by the new colonial aristocra cy endowed English with words that at first glance

French

might look homegrown, like "cabbage", "lure" or "wage", in the 150 years after William the Conqueminent academic hopes to ror took the throne.

A search operation by divers of the Pakistan Navy, Maritime Security Agencies and Edhi Foundation to find the missing men continued on Saturday but the 14 missing fishermen could not be traced, officials said.













INDICATORS		%
Sensex	74119.39	0.05
Nifty 50	22493.50	0.09
S&P 500*	5,123.69	-0.65
Dollar (₹)	82.78	0.07
Pound Sterling (₹)	106.03	-0.45
Euro (₹)	90.52	0.04
Gold (10gm)* (₹)	66,019 ▼ 9	-0.01
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	82.05	-1.10
IN 10-Yr bond yield	7.031	-0.024
US 10-Yr T-bill yield*	4.077	-0.27
* As of 8:30 PM IST		

Rx Propellant leases 1.3L sqft to GV Research

Rx Propellant, which develops life sciences parks, has given on lease 1.3 lakh sq ft of R&D facility in Hyderabad to GV Research Platform for ₹162 cr rental for 10 years. The company is developing life sciences parks in Hyderabad, Mumbai and Bengaluru. The company already has 10 lakh sq ft of portfolio, of which 6 lakh square feet area is fully leased and operational and 4 lakh sq ft on the verge of completion.





Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPIs) are turning steady buyers as they bought Indian equities worth ₹6,139 crore so far this month driven by strong economic growth, market resilience and decline in US bond yields. This came following a modest investment of ₹1,539 crore in Feb. and mas-

Will not tailor policies to suit US EV maker Tesla: Goyal

India aims investments from EVs, not just Tesla

New Delhi, March 10: India will not tailor its policies to suit US electric vehicle (EV) maker Tesla and its laws and tariff rules will be formulated to attract all EV manufacturers from across the world to set up a base in the world's fastest-growing economy, commerce and industry minister Piyush Goyal said.

Tesla has been seeking an initial tariff concession that would allow it to

offset 70 per cent customs duty for cars priced less than \$40,000, and 100 per cent for cars of higher Goyal said the governshop in India, he said.

ment recognises the need for a vibrant EV ecosystem as greater use of battery-run vehicles will cut rial (consultations) and a



carbon emissions as well as the staggering oil import bill.

But for this, it will not tailor policies that suit any one company and would rather frame ones that will encourage all-EV manufacturers from across the world to set up



holders, with potential

investors from across the

world from Europe, from

Tesla made the conces

sion demand a precondi-

tion to build a plant in

India. High tariffs on motor vehicles, meant to boost local production,

have been a lingering

issue for foreign carmak-

With the general elec-

tions to be held during

1QFY25, tender awards

could slow down further

over 4QFY24 and larger

part of 1QFY25.

the US, from Japan and

Korea," he said.

"We are working on several initiatives where we are having inter-ministe-

tailor policy for any one individual company or its interests. Everybody is free to make their demands. But that does not mean that the government will necessarily take a decision (based on) what you demand," he said. At present, cars import

"Government does not

ed as completely built units (CBUs) attract customs duty ranging from 60 per cent to 100 per cent, depending on engine size and cost, insurance and freight (CIF) value less or above \$40,000.

"We recognise that India must have a vibrant elec-tric mobility ecosystem. We recognise that it has multifarious benefits to towards electric grow mobility," he said. — PTI

is likely to slow down fur-

ther in 4QFY24-1QFY25.

That being said, the ten-

dering momentum could

rise significantly from the

last month of 1QFY25" said Krishan Binani,

director of India Ratings.

The central govern-

growth of capital spend,

while on expected lines, is likely to weigh on the rev-enue outlook of engineer-

ing, procurement and con-

Although headline capex

growth of 17 per cent announced in the union

budget FY25 is modestly

higher than expectations.

struction sector in FY25.

moderation in



I-T WING SENDS SMSES, MAIL OVER MISMATCH OF TAX LIABILITIES IN FY

New Delhi, March 10: The income tax department on Sunday said it has started sending emails and SMSs to assessees whose taxes paid during the current fiscal are not commensu-rate with financial transactions.

department is The undertaking an e-campaign, which aims to inform such persons or entities of significant financial transactions, through email (marked as Advance Tax e-Campaign Significant Transactions for AY 2024-25) and SMS, urging them to compute their advance tax liability correctly and deposit the due advance tax on or before March 15.

The Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) said the income tax department has received certain information on specific financial transactions undertaken by persons or entities during the financial year (FY) 2023-24.

"On the basis of analysis of taxes paid so far during the current FY, the department has identified persons or entities where payment of taxes for FY 2023-24 (AY 2024-25) is not commensurate with the financial transactions made by persons or entities concerned, during the said period," it said. — PTI

Macro economic data, global cues to drive markets

New Delhi, March 10: In a data-packed week, the domestic macroeconomic figures -- industrial production and inflation numbers -- along with global trends would dictate trends in the equity market this week, analysts said.

According to experts, markets may face volatile trends due to high valuations. Equity benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty hit their fresh record peaks on Thursday.

Besides, trading activity of foreign investors, movement of global oil benchmark Brent crude and rupee-dollar trend would also influence trad-ing in equities. 'This week's market

focus shifts to inflation data releases. Both India and the US will unveil their Consumer Price Index (CPI) figures on Tuesday. On Thursday, data will WPI announced.

"Large-cap stocks may continue their outperfor-mance as Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) are expected to maintain their buying spree," Santosh Meena, Head of Research. Swastika Investmart Ltd, said.

Industrial Production data for January and inflation numbers for the month of February is scheduled be to announced on Tuesday. WPI (Wholesale Price

Index) inflation data will announced Thursday. "Inflation data from the

US, China, and India will

THIS WEEK'S market focus shifts to inflation

data releases. Both India and the US will unveil their Consumer Price Index (CPI) figures on Tuesday. On Thursday, WPI data will be announced.

provide investors with insights into the global macroeconomic outlook. We expect volatility to persist in this week due to high valuations and forthcoming policy rate guid-ance releases," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Financial Services. a record-breaking In rally last week, the BSE benchmark climbed 374.04

points or 0.50 per cent. Stock markets were closed on Friday for Mahashivratri. "Apart from the sched-

uled macroeconomic data, the performance of the global indices would continue to offer cues over direction. market Currently, the US markets are seeing some profit-tak-ing, after a steady uptrend for 4 months. And, that might result in intermediate volatility in our markets too, especially at the open," Ajit Mishra, SVP-Technical Research. Religare Broking Ltd, — PTI

MG MOTOR INDIA TO ACCELERATE GROWTH PLANS

New Delhi. March 10: MG Motor India expects an accelerated growth path with more expansion plans after getting the JSW Group as an investor, according to

company chief executive

officer Emeritus Rajeev

tomer experience, gender

diversity and community

service in the first phase

of its journey in India, he said MG Motor India is

laid foundation

company

the

With

Govt construction tenders to pick up by June

ers too.

SANGEETHA G CHENNAI, MARCH 10

A total of ₹3.097 lakh

crore in Dec. quarter,

value.

crore was announced. Among the tenders announced in the Dec. tenders The tenders floated and awarded by the central quarter, roads contributed and state governments for construction activities are to 42 per cent, followed by buildings with 20 per cent, irrigation and sewage expected to pick up by June. The overall tenders floated with value above with 16 per cent and power ₹250 crore across all divi-10 per cent. sions in the construction

past four quarters. In the Sept. quarter, ₹3.497 lakh

Even in terms of awardspace fell 24 per cent in the Dec. quarter of FY24. ing contracts, there was a slowdown in Dec. quarter to ₹1.339 lakh cr against ₹1.466 lakh crore in the

were announced against The immediate previous ₹1.466 lakh cr in the same quarter of the previous fiscal, finds India Ratings. quarter also had recorded higher awards of ₹2.326 This was lowest in the



After delivering back-toback innovations in fuel Indian Oil grades, Corporation (IOC) has now set sight on the Grand Prix and will in next three months start producing fuel used in Formula One (F1), motor

New Delhi, March 10:

Tender announcements same quarter of FY23. could see upward momentum from June and in line with historical announcements starting 2QFY25. lakh crore "The awarding activity





ment's

Disney CEO Bob Iger has said a joint venture with Reliance Industries after merging its India business would benefit the compa-



Disnep

Reliance

Reliance

announced

companies in India. But even though it is the most populous country in the world, we felt we want to be there because of that we also know that there

sive outflow of ₹25.743 crore in Jan. Apart from equities, FPIs have injected ₹1,025 cr in debt market during the period.

Sun Pharma recalling gout medication in US

Drug major Sun Pharma is recalling around 55,000 bot-tles of a generic medication to treat gout from the American market due to manufacturing practices norms deviations, according to the US health reg-ulator. The New Jersey-based unit of the Mumbai-based drug major is recalling Febuxostat Tablets in 40 mg and 80 mg strengths, US Food and Drug Administration (USFDA) said in its latest Enforcement Report.

Stone Sapphire to invest ₹1,000 cr in manufacturing

Toys and stationery manufacturer Stone Sapphire India will invest ₹1,000 crore to set up a manufacturing facility for homewares like glassware, sippers, dinnerware etc, in Baroda. Stone Sapphire India Pvt. Ltd. (SSPL) chairman Vick Rana said that homeware products available in India are either for the lower class or very high-end for the elite and leave a huge vacuum for middle-class consumers.

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racing. The firm's refinery at Paradip in Odisha will in three months produce the petrol used in F1 car racing, said IOC chairman Shrikant Madhav Vaidya. IOC will be the first Indian company and only a handful globally that will produce fuel used in F1 racing.

Vaidya said the company expects to get its Formula 1 fuel certified in around three months, after which it will start competing with other global majors like Shell to supply it to the F1 teams. F1 fuel is essentially

high-octane petrol and the standards are heavily regulated by global motor sport governing body Federation Internationale de l'Automobile (FIA) on various counts, including permissible additives and

blending agents. IOC had in October last year helped India join a select league of nations when it began producing highly specialised 'reference' petrol and diesel



that are used for testing

INDIANOIL

automobiles. There are only three suppliers of reference fuels globally including US giant Chevron. IOC's Paradip refinery in Odisha is producing 'reference' grade petrol and its Panipat unit in Haryana produces similar

quality diesel. Prior to this, Indian automobile manufacturers had to use imported reference fuel for testing cars and motorcycles. Now, IOC is supplying them the same grade fuel at much cheaper cost.

Vaidya said IOC has entered the racing fuels segment with its high-octane 'Storm' petrol for motorcycle racing.

IOC will be the official fuel partner for the Federation Internationale De Motocyclisme (FIM) Asia Road Racing Championship (ARRC) for Racing three years - 2024 to 2026, supplying 'Storm' petrol across all ARRC race rounds. -PTI



KG BASIN PRODUCE

ny in terms of profit and

New Delhi, March 10: First oil from state-owned Oil and Natural Gas (ONGC) Corporation's just-started KG deepsea oilfield has gone to its subsidiary Mangalore Refinery and Petrochemicals Ltd (MRPL) for processing into fuels like petrol and diesel, the two firms said. ONGC in January started oil production from its Krishna Godavari basin KG-DWN-98/2 (KG-D5)

block, lying in Andhra offshore. The field is producing some 12,000-12,500 barrels of oil per day currently, using a floating production and storage offloading (FPSO). The oil is stored on the FPSO, and once it reaches a critical level, it is transferred to a

refinerv MRPL managing director M Shyamprasad Kamath said this crude oil production results from ONGC Group's commitment and technical capabilities to contribute to the nation's energy selfdependence. -PTI

ship which carries it to a

also "derisk" its business in the Indian market. The merger deal will create a big entity and help it

to stay in the market at a "significant level", said Iger at a Morgan Stanley investor conference earlier this week.

as well there," Iger said. Last month, Walt Disney 'We had an opportunity Co. to align with the Reliance, Industries which is obviously the company that has done very well there and one that we respect. And in doing so, end up owning part of a bigger media company. And we believe that, that not only should benefit us in terms of the one of the biggest media

signing of binding pacts to merge their media operations in India. "We wanted to stay in India. We made a big investment in India when we purchased the assets of 21st Century Fox. We are

and

bottom-line, but derisk us

are challenges in that market," he said.

Iger said, the merger will create a big entity and already establishing a help it to stay in the market at a "significant level". well based on technology, cus-

'So, it's kind of the best of both worlds. We stay in the market at a significant level. We have a very good partner in Reliance, and we get to have a chance of growing a business and lowering the risk of doing so," he added.

The transaction values the joint venture at ₹70,352 crore (\$8.5 billion) on a post-money basis, excluding synergies. - PTI

now looking ahead to the next phase of growth. "Now with the investor coming in, definitely I would expect an accelerated growth path, and more aggressive expansion plans in the coun- \hat{C} haba said. — PTItry,'

Ayvens to invest ₹1,800 cr for fleet addition

MICHAEL GONSALVES PUNE, MARCH 10

Car leasing player Ayvens, the new business brand launched recently after ALD Automotive and LeasePlan merged, is eying an 8-10 per cent increase in its fleet size this year with an investment of ₹1,800 crore.

ALD Automotive is listed on Euronext Paris and Societe Generale Group is Ayvens majority shareholder at 52 per cent.

"This year, our fleet will grow by approximately 8-10 per cent," Suvajit Karmakar, managing director in India and subregional director Asia for Avyens told FC.

"We are a profitable company and as a group," he said without divulging the value.

Karmakar said Ayvens will invest ₹1,800 crore this year in buying about 12,500 to 13,000 vehicles ranging from luxury to mass market models.

"This addition of vehicles will increase our fleet

Long-form

televisions,

Samsung users.

Elon Musk said.

social network X planned

to launch next week a TV

app for Amazon and

The platform rolled out

an early version of video

and audio calling for some

users last October, after

Musk had said he planned

to turn it into a super app

offering services from

messaging to peer-to-peer

'Coming soon," Musk

from the present 44,000 cars to 46,000 to 47,000 cars December-end, Karmakar said, adding that the company had a market share of 50-53 per cent.

The Indian car leasing market comprises approximately 80,000 to 90,000 luxury to mass market vehicles.

Long form videos soon

Firm's probe found Atlman's dismissal wasn't due to financial concerns NEW TEAM Altman to return to OpenAI's board

San Francisco, March 10: OpenAI chief executive Sam Altman will return to ChatGPT-maker's the board along with three new directors, the world's most prominent artificial intelligence (AI) company said.

An investigation by law firm WilmerHale into the events surrounding Altman's November firing has concluded, and the company has created new governance rules and strengthened its conflict of interest policy. The board said it unani-

mously backed Altman's



leadership.

OpenAI said it was appointing new directors including Altman, Sue Desmond-Hellmann, a former chief executive officer of Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Nicole



Altman welcomed the new board members in a post on X, adding, "We

have important work in

front of us." They will join current board members Adam D'Angelo, the chief executive officer of Quora, former U.S. treasury secretary Larry Summers and chairman Bret Taylor, for-mer co-chief executive officer of Salesforce. The investigation by

WilmerHale found that Altman's dismissal was not the result of concerns related to OpenAI's finances, product safety or other issues. 'Instead it was a conse-

quence of a breakdown in



"WilmerHale found that the prior board of OpenAI believed at the time that its actions would mitigate internal management challenges and did not anticipate that its actions would destabilise the com-

pany," it said. OpenAI said it was adopting new corporate governance guidelines and creating a whistleblower hotline.

payments. — Reuters

-

on smart TVs, says Musk Bengaluru, March 10: said in a brief response on videos will X to a user's posting that soon be available on smart the platform's long-form videos could be watched billionaire

directly on smart TVs. The app could look simi-lar to the TV app offered by Google's Youtube. An unidentified source as saying Musk was set on competing with YouTube. In the push to become a "video-first platform", X has been forging partnerships with the likes of former Fox commentator Tucker Carlson and former CNN anchor Don Lemon. – Reuters



ANE THE ASIAN AGE | MONDAY | 11 MARCH 2024 | NEW DELHI

SHORT TAKES

Bajrang, Ravi fail to book Oly spots

Sonepat, Haryana: Bajrang Punia and Ravi Dahiya - the Tokyo Games medallists – were on Sunday eliminated from the race for the Paris Olympics qualification after losing their respective bouts in the selection trials for the national team. Punia, who was a prominent face of protest against former WFI President Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh, suffered a crushing 1-9 defeat in the men's freestyle 65kg semifinal against Rohit Kumar. This was after he barely managed to win against Ravinder (3-3 on criteria) in the opening

round. If Ravinder had not conceded a caution point in the bout, Punia would have been eliminated in the opening bout itself. Punia had trained in Russia to prepare for the trials, which are being organised by the IOA adhoc panel. Punia though won a case in the Delhi High Court after contending that the suspended Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) had no authority to conduct trials. He left the Sports Authority of India Centre here in a huff after being eliminated. - PT

Roy pulls out of

IPL, Salt comes in

New Delhi: Kolkata Knight Riders have brought in Englishman Phil Salt as a replacement for compatriot Jason Roy who pulled out of the IPL due to personal reasons. This will be Salt's second season in the IPL, having played for Delhi Capitals last season. The 27-year-old Salt, who went unsold at the auction, has been bought at his reserve price of ₹1.5 crore.

"Kolkata Knight Riders have named Phil Salt as a replacement for Jason Roy after the latter pulled out of the upcoming TATA IPL 2024 owing to personal reasons," an IPL media release said.

Salt, an aggressive wicket-keeper batter, scored two consecu-tive T20I centuries against the West Indies in December last vear

His 48-ball century in the fourth T20I at Trinidad is also the joint-fastest for England. — PTI

Mona-Aadithya duo bags silver

New Delhi: India's Mona Agarwal clinched her second medal in the ongoing Para Shooting World Cup, bagging a silver partnering Aadithya Giri in the Mixed Team Air Rifle Standing (SH1) event here on Sunday. On a day when the hosts won two silver and two bronze medals, Tokyo Paralympic gold medallist Manish Narwal and his partner Rubina Francis lost to China's Li Min and Yang Chao 12-16 in the Mixed Team 10m Air Pistol (SH1) gold-medal match. India also won a bronze medal in the same event with Bhakti Sharma and Rudransh Khandelwal defeating the Cuban pair of Yenigladys Suarez and Loriga Rodriguez The 37-year-old Mona from Japiur, who had clinched an individual Women's 10m Air Rifle (SH1) gold and a Paris Paralympic berth on Saturday, paired with Giri but went down in the final to the Chinese pair of Zhong Yixin and Dong Chao 16-4 to settle for silver. - PT

Young & old combined to script one of India's finest series wins

BALANCING ACT

Dharamsala, March 10: The thumping series win over England on sporting pitches was not only one of India's finest at home, it also reaffirmed their supremacy in the longest format with young and old combining to smash 'Bazball' out of the park. The likes of Virat Kohli and Mohammed Shami were not available throughout and injuries to K. L. Rahul and Ravindra Jadeja after the shock loss in the series opener threatened India's enviable dominance at home but Rohit and Co found a way to put pressure back on their aggressive opposition over the

next four games. Four out of the five debutants — Sarfaraz Khan, Dhruv Jurel, Akash Deep and Devdutt Padikkal — showed they were ready for the big stage while the pillars of the team like the captain himself, Jasprit Bumrah and R. Ashwin also stood tall with timely performances.

The future does look bright for a team in transition.

The standout perform-ers that allowed India to maintain their upper hand over England were young opener Yashasvi Jaiswal and wrist spinner

Kuldeep Yadav. It was India's 17th straight series triumph at home, a remarkable feat that is often taken for

"I think sometimes we just take it for granted. What is especially heartening is over the last 10 years or a decade or so, India have had this dominance and has been able to string together successful series and have not lost a lot of Test matches inspite of the fact that the exposure that the foreign players get in this coun-try, compared to what they would get in the 90s or the 80s or even early 2000s, before the IPL is not comparable," said head coach Rahul Dravid. He was speaking after the innings and 64-run win in the final Test here

on Saturday, which gave India a 4-1 series win. "I know it is a different absorb pressure and format but it is about change gears was the familiarity. A lot of the English players 01 Australian players spend a lot of time here in these conditions, they know people. So that's made it a lot easier. But inspite of that, the fact that we've been able to maintain that record and the standard is a real tribute to the players." Jaiswal came of age in ly.

Mumbai,

DREMI OREAN DRERMI

India players walk back to the pavilion after winning the final Test against England in Dharamshala on Saturday. India won five-match Test series 4-1.

England just get lost with term bazball, fumes Nasser

Dharamsala, March 10: Miffed at England's 4-1 shellacking by India, former captain Nasser Hussain has advised the team's misfiring batters to work on individual performances and eschew their obsession with bazball.

Bazball, which is derived from England Test coach Brendon McCullum's nickname Baz, fell flat as the tourists capitulated in three days in the fifth and final Test here, helping

matches from 1999 to 2003, wrote in his column for

Sky Sports. He added, "Look at the opposition. Like in anything in life, try and learn. Why did we collapse? 'Why Crawley keeps get-

ting starts and keeps get-ting out? Ben Duckett, got a brilliant 150, gave a charge when the ball was too new.'

By his standards, skipper Ben Stokes had a forgettable series and that was not lost on Hussain.

ly to blame for the frequent collapses.

The former opener praised James Anderson who completed 700 Test wickets in his 187th match, calling it an unbelievable achievement and also lauded senior India spinner R. Ashwin for crossing 100 Test matches and picking 500 wickets.

'There is too much said and written about Bazball. I have said the other day it is about the individuals. It is about the individual WOMEN'S PREMIER | LEAGUE

Delhi edge RCB to go top of table

New Delhi, March 10: Richa Ghosh hit two monstrous sixes but paid the price for her poor fitness as Delhi Capitals found her short of crease to win a cliffhanger against Royal Challengers by a solitary run in the Women's Premier League

and another maximum off the penultimate deliv-

ery to bring the equation

down to two runs off the

However Richa, not exactly known for being the fittest among Indian cricketers despite brute

power in her strokes, was-

n't fast enough to beat Jonassen, who whipped the bails off in a flash to restrict RCB to 180 for 7.

Delhi, with their fifth

win, are now on 10 points

and lead the table due to

superior net run-rate (+0.918) compared to Mumbai Indians (+.343).

Capsey b Patil 48, Marizanne Kapp not out 12, Jess Jonassen st Ghosh b Patil 1, Radha Yadav not out 1. Extras (Ib-1, nb-1, w-7) 9. Total (for 5 wickets in 20 overs) 181. on Sunday. Needing 17 off last over to reach a target of 182, Richa, who blasted 51 off **Fall of wickets:** 1-54, 2-60, 3-157, 4-176, 5-179. 29 balls, smashed left-arm spinner Jess Jonassen for a 78 metre straight six

Bowling: Renuka Singh 3-0-31-0, Shradda Pokharkar 3-0-26-0, Sophie Molineux 4-0-45-0, Asha Sobhana 4-0-29-1, Shreyanka Patil 4-0-26-4, Georgia Wareham 2-0-23-0.

8

SCOREBOARD

Delhi Capitals: Meg Lanning Ibw b Patil 29, Shafali Verma c Molineux b Sobhana 23, Jemimah Rodrigues b Patil 58, Alice Cancov b Patil 48

pq

Challengers Royal Royai Bangalore: Smri Mandhana Ibw b Capsey Sophie Molineux Smriti Sophie Molineux c Rodrigues b Reddy 33, Ellyse Perry run out 49, Sophie Devine c Reddy b Kapp 26, Richa Ghosh run out 51, Georgia Wareham c Yadav b Pandey 12, Disha Kasat run out 0, Shreyanka Patil not out 0. Extras (w-4) 4. Total (for 7 wickets in 20 overs) 180.

Fall of wickets: 1-9, 2-89, 3-93, 4-142, 5-165, 6-172, 7-180. Bowling: Marizanne Kapp 4-

0-30-1, Alice Capsey 1-0-5-1, Shikha Pandey 4-0-34-1, Jess Jonassen 3-0-39-0, Radha Yadav 4-0-36-0,

Arundhati Reddy 3-0-24-1, Titas Sadhu 1-0-12-0.

liant at the business end

of the Delhi innings to put brakes on the home

Rodrigues scored 58 off

34 balls, adding 97 runs in

just 10.1 overs for the third wicket with Alice

Capsey (48 off 32 balls),

who used the long handle

team's scoring.

Needing 28 off final two overs, Shikha Pandey conceded couple of boundaries but removed Georgia Wareham, leav-ing left-arm spinner Jonassen to defend 17 in the final over the final over.

Earlier, Jemimah Rodrigues displayed her complete mastery over slow bowlers with a 26ball half-century that propelled Delhi Capitals to a competitive 181 for 5 in 20 overs.

However, young off-spinner Shreyanka Patil grabbed four for 26 in her four overs and was bril-

to good effect during the slog overs. **SATWIK-CHIRAG WIN** FRENCH OPEN

March Paris, 10: S a t w i k s a i r a j Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty continued their love affair with Paris, lifting the French Open badminton crown for the second time with a dominating straight game win over Chinese Taipei's Lee Jhe-Huei and Yang Po-Hsuan in the men's doubles final

time in 2023. The Indian duo had finished second best at Malaysia Super 1000, India Super 750 this year, while signing off as runners-up at China Masters Super 750 as well last year. Satwik and Chirag

proved third time lucky

and their stellar show this week only recon-

coach

tirmed chief

Maini finishes 2nd in F2 Saudi Arabia

Jeddah, Saudi Arabia: Indian racer Kush Maini finished a creditable second in the F2 Saudi Arabia Grand Prix after starting the race from pole position here on Sunday. Maini, who is appearing for Invicta Racing, had earlier become the first Indian to grab a pole in the Formula 2 race, which was won by Enzo Fittipaldi from Van Amersfoort Racing with MP Motorsport's Dennis Hauger finishing third. 'It was a positive race, especially after yesterday where we really struggled, so happy the team and I switched it around. We were really competitive," Maini said. "Obviously, Enzo was in a different league today so congratulations to him. I think I am happy with P2. We need to analyse a little bit more on where we can catch Enzo, but good (to get) points," he added. – PTI

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sixes in the series spoke a lot about his power game. Ravindra Jadeja and R Ashwin bowling in tandem in home conditions instill fear and doubts in the mind of any opposition and they lived up to their reputation with 26 and 19 wickets respective--PTI

NO

the series and ended up

with as many as 712 runs,

becoming only the second

India batter to scale the

700-run peak in a series after the great Sunil

However, the gargantu-

an numbers won't be

enough to measure the

decisive impact he made

His back-to-back double

hundreds in Vizag and

Rajkot went a long way in

keeping the English at

bay. Especially in the sec-ond Test in Vizag, his 209

was the only reason India

got to 396 in the first

innings, with the next

The way he was able to

hallmark of his batting

phenomenal

-26

Shardul helps Mumbai claw back

best score being 34.

ana

Gavaskar.

in the series

India secure their 17th straight Test series triumph on home soil on

Saturday. "We just get lost with this term Bazball. The team, the management does not like the term Bazball. They need to look at their own individual performances," Hussain, who led England in 45 Test ing middle-order primari-

because he is playing only with the bat. Just look at your own game and improve," said Hussain. England rarely had the kind of collective batting performance that India enjoyed throughout the series, with their misfir-

Ben Stokes had a poor performances in those sit series with the bat. Maybe uations.

'There are two people playing in this game. Jimmy Anderson and R Ashwin. The reason they end up as greats of the game is because they are constantly looking at improving in the game. Trying to improve," said Hussain. — PTI Hussain.

NZ SENSE UPSET

OZ TOP ORDER

AFTER DISMISSING

Christchurch (New Zealand), March 10: New Zealand cleaned out the

top four Australian bats-

men on Sunday to leave

the tourists on 77/4 and

facing an uphill task in

their chase of 279 to win the second Test in

Christchurch.

The hosts

Lanka last year.

Zealand's seamers.

Travis

With two days remain-

ing and no rain forecast,

a draw is out of the

Zealand battle for their

first win over Australia

Brief scores: New Zealand 162

& 372 (Rachin Ravindra 82, Tom Latham 73, Pat Cummins

as

unbeaten on 17.

runs.

with

equation

since 2011.

here on Sunday. The world No. 1 Indian pair had finished runners-up in the French Open in 2019 before winning the title in 2022.

Pullela Gopichand's assertion that the duo will be the favourites to win Paris Olympics gold. However, Lakshya

On Sunday, the Asian Games champions outwitted Lee and Yang 21-11. 21-17 in 37 minutes to regain the Super 750 tournament title and also win their first crown of the season after reaching the summit clash for the third semifinals.

Sen's campaign in the tournament ended after he lost to reigning world champion Kunlavut Vitidsarn of Thailand. Kunlavut won 20-22, 21-13, 21-11 in an hour and 18 minutes in his singles

ENGLISH PREMIER | LEAGUE

Havertz takes Arsenal to top

set London, March demanding target for an Arsenal needed Australian side strug-Havertz's late winner to gling for runs on a ground where the highgo top of the Premier League bv beating Brentford 2-1 on Saturday est successful fourth innings is 285-8, set by as Manchester United New Zealand against Sri kept alive their faint hopes of finishing in the Steve Smith, Marnus top four with a 2-0 win

Labuschagne, Usman Khawaja and Cameron over Everton. An eighth consecutive Green were all swiftly Premier League win took sent back to the Hagley Mikel Arteta's men one Oval pavilion by New point ahead of Liverpool and two clear of defend-ing champions City. But Matt Henry had figures of 2/37 with debutant they had to overcome a Ben Sears on 2/22. glaring error from Aaron

Australia still need 202 Ramsdale on his return to the Arsenal goal. At the close of play on day three, Mitchell Marsh was not-out 27 All seemed to be going to plan for the home side when Declan Rice contin-Head

ued his fine goalscoring form by heading in Ben White's cross on 19 minutes. However, there was a

sting in the tale in a moment Ramsdale will want to forget in first-half stoppage time.

The England international was making just his second Premier start since League September as the on-loan David Raya was ineligible

10: to feature against his par-Kai ent club. Ramsdale's lack of match sharpness may have been a factor as he

dallied on the ball as his attempted clearance ricocheted off Yoane Wissa into the net.

The Arsenal goalkeeper bounced back after the break to make vital saves from Ivan Toney's spectacular effort and Nathan Collins' header.

Havertz then bulleted home a header from another White cross four minutes from time.

Everton were made to pay for conceding two first-half penalties as Bruno Fernandes and Marcus Rashford scored rom the spot.

Erik ten Hag's team are now eight points adrift of fourth-placed Aston Villa and three behind and Tottenham in fifth, who

face each other on Sunday, in the race to qualify for next season's Champions League. Everton sit four points

above the relegation zone as their winless league run extended to 11 games. - AFP

Seasoned duo Shreyas Iyer and Ajinkya Rahane's run drought continued but Shardul Thakur's all-rounder utility helped hosts Mumbai to claw their way back against a gutsy Vidarbha on the opening day of the Ranji Trophy final. After scoring a counterpunching 75 off only 69

March

balls to give Mumbai's below-par first innings score of 224, some semblance of respectability, Thakur also dismissed veteran opener Dhruv Shorey (0) with an angular delivery which got him a favourable DRS result.

Vidarbha were 31/3 at stumps with another 193 runs in arrears in the first innings with Atharva Taide (21 not out) and night-watchman Aditya Thakare at the crease.

Playing the last firstclass game of his career, medium pacer Dhawal Kulkarni bowled his customary late outswingers which had Aman Mokhade (8) and Test triple centurion Karun Nair (0) nicking it to Hardik Tamore behind

stumps. Mumbai's top guns Rahane and Iyer were both dismissed for identical scores of 7 in a shocking collapse that saw the 41-time champions slipping from 81/0 to 111/6 on either side of the lunch break.

His achievement as a leader notwithstanding, Rahane's miserable run in



to mid-on to be dismissed

at a time when his team

anchor.

seen if Mumbai selectors would persist with the 35year-old for the next season.

needed him to drop the bail Mumbai out of trou-Around the same time ble due to his poor techlast year, Rahane was a nique.

contender to earn his spot During the morning ses sion, Umesh Yadav (2/43 back in the national team but as things stand, irrein 13.3 overs) was as wayspective of the outcome of ward as one could be

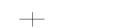
over and mostly drifting on the pads of openers

Brief scores: Mumbai 224 in 64.3 overs (Prithvi Shaw 46, Bhupen Lalwani 37, Shardul Thakur 75; Umesh Yadav 2/43,

Prithvi Shaw and Bhupen Lalwani.

Harsh Dubey 3/62, Yash Thakur 3/54) vs Vidarbha 31/3 in 13 overs (Atharva Taide 21*; Shardul Thakur 1/14, Dhawal





New

-AFP



Mumbai's Shardul Thakur (second from left) celebrate the dismissal of Vidarbh batter Dhruv Shorey (right) on the first day of the the Ranji Trophy final match at the Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai on Sunday. – DEBASISH DEY the Ranji Trophy continthis final it remains to be spraying the new ball all ued when the Mumbai skipper played one meekly

Iyer once again failed to