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Waking to the call of the wild

Scan the QR code or use the link for an interactive story explaining how India's rich wildlife heritage is under threat due to increasing human-animal conflicts





Kerala Governor suspends V-C over death of student states » Page 4

Chinese 'nuclear' cargo heading to Pakistan seized

Karachi-bound 'dual-use' consignment was intercepted on January 22 in Mumbai; machines in it could be used in nuclear weapons programme

<u>Dinakar Peri</u> NEW DELHI

n the latest discovery of the possible transfer of dual-use items from China that could be used in Pakistan's nuclear weapons programme, two advanced Computer Numerical Control (CNC) machines manufactured by GKD, Italy and bound for the port of Karachi were seized by Indian customs at Mumbai Port in January. They continue to remain in Indian custody, according to sources in the security establishment.

The consignment was shipped on January 9 on a merchant vessel *CMA CGM Attila*, a Malta-flagged vessel from Shekou Port in



The consignment seized in Mumbai. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

China, and was heading to Karachi Port with Cosmos Engineering being the consignee, a source said. "The vessel reached Nhava Sheva Port (JNPT) Mumbai on January 22, 2024 and the consignment was seized by Indian customs officials based on intelligence inputs on possible prolifera-

tion concerns by Pakistan and China," the source said. The equipment could be used in manufacturing critical parts for Pakistan's missile development programme, said another source.

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BJP's first list for Lok Sabha poll out; PM keeps Varanasi

<u>The Hindu Bureau</u> NEW DELHI

The BJP came out with its first list of candidates for the upcoming Lok Sabha poll on Saturday, announcing 195 candidates across 16 States and two Union Territories. Prime Minister Narendra Modi will contest from Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh, his parliamentary seat for the last two Lok Sabha elections.

Out of the 195 candidates, 107 belong to backward communities, with 27 Scheduled Caste candidates, 18 Scheduled Tribe candidates, and 57 from other backward classes (OBCs).

There are 28 women candidates on the list, and 47 candidates who are under the age of 50. One Muslim candidate, Abdul Salam, has been fielded from Malappuram in Kerala.

Controversial sitting MPs – like Malegaon blast case accused Pragya Singh Thakur from Bhopal, and

...



Narendra Modi will be contesting from Varanasi for the third time. PTI

Ramesh Bidhuri from South Delhi who was accused of casting communal slurs at fellow MP Danish Ali on the floor of the Lok Sabha – have been replaced by former Bhopal Mayor Alok Sharma, and Ram Vir Singh Bidhuri, respectively. There are 34 Union Mi-

nisters who have found a place in the first list, including Ministers Rajnath Singh (Lucknow), Amit Shah (Gandhinagar), and Smriti Irani (Amethi). Minister of State Mee-

CLASSIFIEDS » PAGE 2 MAGAZINE » 8 PAGES

CONTINUED ON

» PAGE 6

nakshi Lekhi has been

dropped from her New

Delhi seat. Interestingly,

the former Chief Minister

of Madhya Pradesh Shivraj

Singh Chouhan, now a reg-

ular MLA in the State, will

fight for a Lok Sabha seat

from Vidisha, while Biplab

Deb, former Chief Minister of Tripura will be contest-

ing from Tripura (West).

Rajya Sabha MPs in fray

Among the Ministers who

were Rajya Sabha MPs and

are now in the fray for the

Lok Sabha are Labour Mi-

nister Bhupendra Yadav,

who is being fielded from

Alwar in Rajasthan, Health

Mandaviya from Porban-

dar in Gujarat, and Rajeev

Chandrashekhar from Thi-

ruvananthapuram who

will face off against Con-

gress MP Shashi Tharoor.

Mansukhbhai

Minister



A vivo India CSR initiative

ÇM YK



Empowering Tomorrow's Changemakers

A platform for young minds to innovate for social good



States

Bombay HC upholds life sentence for 'tantrik'

<u>The Hindu Bureau</u> MUMBAI

The Bombay High Court on Saturday upheld a sessions court ruling in 2016 sentencing a 45-year-old 'tantrik' to life imprisonment after it convicted him of sexually assaulting six mentally challenged girls.

The Division Bench of Justices Revati Mohite-Dere and Manjusha Deshpande said the accused does not deserve any leniency. " It is an unfortunate reality of our times that people at times knock on the doors of so-called tantriks/babas for a solution to their problems, and that these socalled tantriks/babas take advantage."

• C Timings MUMBAI

SUNDAY, MAR. 03 RISE 06:56 SET 18:45 ► RISE 00:30 SET 11:38 MONDAY, MAR. 04 RISE 06:56 SET 18:45 ✓ RISE 01:29 SET 12:30 TUESDAY, MAR. 05 RISE 06:55 SET 18:46 ✓ RISE 02:29 SET 13:29

Mumbai Weather	max	min
Mumbai Airport	31	23
Pune	34	18
Mumbai City	31	23

Mumbai Todav 33°C A dry weather to prevail

Morning will be pleasant with mist and haze. Day will be warm. Night will be pleasant

Mumbai Tomorrow

32°C Fall in temperature. The weather will be dry. Day will be little warm. Night will be bleasant

Copyright Skymet Weather 2024 I rights reserved.

Pawars share stage at 'Namo Rojgar Meľava 2024' in Baramati

Sharad Pawar's attendance at job fair on family's home turf marked end of a series of gaffes, which started with his omission from initial guest list

ture visit to Mr. Sharad Pa-

war in Baramati. Down-

by rain intermittently.

The Hindu Bureau MUMBAI

Tationalist Congress Party-Sharadchandra Pawar chief Sharad Pawar joined Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde, and Deputy Chief Ministers Devendra Fadnavis and Ajit Pawar for the launch of 'Namo Rojgar Melava 2024' in the Pawar family's stronghold of Baramati on Saturday.

The senior Pawar's attendance marked the end of a series of events, starting with his omission from the initial guest list.

He had recently invited the Chief Minister and his two deputies for a meal, which Mr. Shinde and Mr. Fadnavis declined due to prior commitments. However, the response

declining it, the CM said, "If someone comes close of Mr. Ajit Pawar, the 84to your home, you are year-old leader's nephew and bitter rival after the bound to invite him over."



Sharad Pawar with CM Eknath Shinde and his deputies Devendra Fadnavis and Ajit Pawar at the job fair on Saturday. X@GOM_SEEID

split in the Nationalist Con-Despite the controversy around Mr. Sharad Pawar's gress Party in July last year, formal invitation to the job remained undisclosed. fair, considering his long-CM downplays invite standing representation of Mr. Shinde, citing a busy Baramati, he participated schedule, promised a fu-

as a Rajya Sabha MP. Other participants at the programme included Miplaying the invite and him nisters Dilip Walse-Patil and Uday Samant, and Baramati Lok Sabha MP Supriya Sule, the daughter of Mr. Sharad Pawar.

GI tags bring back women artisans to whirring charkhas in Kashmir

Peerzada Ashiq SRINAGAR

Most houses in Srinagar's Nawa Kadal area used to be abuzz with whirring noise emanating from charkhas and spindles. Introduction of machines to bypass hand-driven processes for manufacturing shawls and carpets muted these houses, with hundreds of women artisans forced to discontinue. However, the move to tag hand-made shawls and carpets with Geographical Indications (GI) labels is finally bringing women artisans back to

charkhas and spindles. Nazima Jan from Nawa Kadal in the old city was a third-generation pashmina artisan and quit pashmina spinning 10 years ago. "The hand-driven processes like dehairing, spinning, and weaving almost vanished in the past three decades due to the introduction of machines. I decided to shift my daughter from this age-old family profession to become a beautician," Ms. Jan said.

The GI labels, however,



A woman weaves a pashmina shawl in Srinagar. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

are fast transforming the art scene in Kashmir. "GI tagging has been crucial for preserving and reviving traditional methods used in making shawls and carpets. It emphasizes authentic hand-spun yarn. It safeguards traditional hand processes associated with these crafts, preserving their cultural significance and authenticity," Mahmood Shah, Director, Handloom and Handicrafts, Kashmir, told *The Hindu*. While shawls are made

of pashmina, wool and silk

spinning skills and collaborates with 1.500 women to produce hand-spun yarn for his products. Wages for women, spinning 10 threads with 10-inch yarns, is up to ₹2. So, on an average, women spinners earn ₹6,000 and weavers up to ₹20,000 per month.

Around 3.5 lakh artisans create handmade products in Kashmir, home to at least 16 unique crafts. Women once made up 47.4% of the workforce in the sector, which has seen a dip in the past two decades, officials said. Unofficial figures suggest that over 10,000 women quit spinning pashmina by 2017.

GI tagging has boosted exports of shawls, which have risen from ₹271.62 crore in 2019-2020 to ₹424.20 crore in 2022-2023. "In the current financial year, for three quarters, exports of ₹694.46 crore have already been clocked by Kashmir handicraft," Mr. Shah said. This is the highest for the past five years as per data from the Handicrafts and Handlooms Department.

441 roads closed as snow, rain lash Himachal

Press Trust of India SHIMLA

Snowfall in the higher 'Red warning' reaches of Himachal Pra-The meteorological office desh crippled daily life in in Shimla has issued a 'red the tribal Lahaul and Spiti, warning' for Saturday with and Kinnaur districts and prediction of thunderstorms with lightning, hailmade 441 roads, including five national highways, instorm, and rain at isolated accessible. The State's mid places accompanied by

winds reaching speeds of and low hills were lashed 40-50 km per hour.

Five vehicles parked on a roadside were buried in an avalanche near Nehrukhund on the Manali-Solang Nallah road. No casualty was reported. A house was damaged following a landslide in Bharmaur area of Chamba district while few

houses are still under threat of damage. A total of 290 roads are closed in La-

haul and Spiti, 58 in Chamba, 56 in Kinnaur, 17 in Kullu, 10 in Mandi, nine in Shimla and one in Kangra. At least 1,314 transform-

ers are out of order, according to the State Emergency Operation Centre.



are used to make carpets.

Intricate techniques are

used. For example, Kani

shawls are woven by using

needles made from cane or

wood and not shuttles. All

have traditional designs

like 'buta' or paisley pat-

tern. Both shawls and car-

pets were granted GI tags

The impact of GI tagging

is evident from different

clusters operating in the

old city of Srinagar. Mujta-

ba Qadri, who owns the la-

bel, Me&K, has trained 500

women to enhance their

as registered products.

Vehicles buried under snow after an avalanche on Manali-Solang Nallah road in Manali on Saturday. ANI







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THE HINDU **States**

RJD chief Lalu Prasad .

Minister Tejashwi Yadav,

who has completed a tour

of all 38 districts, travelling

3.500 km in eleven days as

part of his Jan Vishwas Ya-

tra, will address the rally.

Raja, CPI(M) general secre-

tary Sitaram Yechury, and

CPI(ML) general secretary

Dipankar Bhattacharya

On the eve of the rally, Ra-

jya Sabha MP Manoj Jha

said the event would at-

tract an unprecedented

crowd. "The way the

crowd responded during

the Jan Vishwas Yatra of Te-

jashwi Yadavji was beyond

imagination. The youth

have total trust in him be-

cause they have this belief

that if there is one person

who will give employment

to them, it is none other

than Tejashwi Yadav," Mr.

On preparations for the

event, Mr. Jha said, "The

RID's rallv is not sponsored

like others and the crowd

Jha said.

is spontaneous."

will also be present.

Yatra impact

CPI general secretary D.

NBRIÐR



Congress biggest enemy of peace, development: Himanta

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Saturday hit out at the Congress for being the "biggest enemy of peace and development". "At a time when India is witnessing civilisational triumph, if they [Congress] oppose growth, how can they say they like India? They want anarchism while our Prime Minister wants development. This [Lok Sabha] election is a fight between anarchy and democracy," he said. PTI

Tribunals to be set up in J&K for Waqf Board complaints

The Jammu and Kashmir High Court has directed the constitution of tribunals in the Union Territory to deal with what it described as a "chaotic" situation, with at least 29 licensees of Waqf Board properties filing petitions against the Board's "arbitrary enhancement of monthly rent". Since the Board claimed it does not fall under the court's jurisdiction, the tribunals will be set up under the Waqf Act, 1955.

Vakeel Hassan refuses DDA's offer of alternative housing

Vakeel Hassan on Saturday refused the two-bedroom house offered to him by the Delhi Development Authority to replace the house that was demolished by the civic body on Wednesday in an anti-encroachment drive. Mr. Hassan, who has been sitting on protest ever since, was one of the miners who rescued 41 workers from the collapsed Silkyara Tunnel in Uttarkashi last year.

Development of Bihar is Modi's guarantee, says PM

Now, there is a double-engine government in the State, Prime Minister tells Bihar Chief Minister amid assurances from Nitish Kumar that the JD(U) will not stray from its alliance with the BJP

Amarnath Tewary PATNA

rime Minister Narendra Modi sounded the poll bugle in Bihar on Saturday at a public meeting in Bihar's Aurangabad while reiterating that "the development of Bihar is Modi's guarantee".

Speaking on the occasion, Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar assured the Prime Minister that he would remain with the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) and not "go anywhere from here".

"Now, there is a double engine government in Bihar, and a peaceful developmental regime has arrived in the State. The rights of the sisters and daughters of Bihar is Modi's guarantee," Mr. Modi asserted in his speech. He also asked the gathered crowd to flash their mobile phone torches to "celebrate the occasion of Bihar's development".

"In the past, the people of Bihar would sit frightened in their homes," he said. "But today, trains like Vande Bharat and Amrit Bharat are running in Bihar. The development of this State is Modi's guarantee," he reiterated.

Dig at Opposition

The Prime Minister also



Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar being garlanded at an event in Aurangabad. ANI

slammed the previous regime in Bihar and the "nepotism" therein, without naming the Lalu Prasad-Rabri Devi-led Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) government. "These leaders do not even mention the governments run by their Maa-Baap (mother and father)."

This dig was directed as a response to a recent remark by RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav. The former Deputy CM had said that the RJD works not only for Muslims and Yadavs (colloquially referred to as an 'MY' party), but also a partv of BAAP (Bahujan, Agda, or forward class, Aadhi aabadi, or half population, and Poor).

"Now, such a situation has arisen that even big leaders of their party [Op-

<u>Purnima Sah</u>

A petition filed by advocate

laishri Laxmanrao Patil be-

fore the Bombay High

MUMBAI

position] do not want to contest the Lok Sabha poll. They explore seats in the Rajya Sabha," the PM added.

The Bihar Chief Minister also addressed the crowd while sharing the dais with Mr. Modi after his most recent volte-face, the fifth in under a decade, to join hands with the BJP to re-

tain his office. "It is a matter of great happiness that the Prime Minister has come to Bihar to inaugurate several projects. He had come earlier as well, but I had vanished at the time," Mr. Kumar said, taking a potshot at himself and prompting a gale of laughter from Mr. Modi.

While listing the inauguration of several projects worth ₹ 1.60 lakh crore, Mr. Modi said, "With double efforts put in by a double-engine government, Bi-

har will certainly develop". He also obliquely referred to RJD chief Lalu Prasad in the Railways' land-for-job scam, and said that the State had seen "much corruption".

Once again, he took a dig at the previous regime for "promoting nepotism". "Bihar has witnessed nepotism for decades. Nepotism is the biggest enemy of talent. It is not only the

betrayal, but the curse of society," he said. er, the country will prosper. And now, Bihar will definitely prosper. This is not only a promise but a pledge, a mission," Mr. Mo-

At the public meeting in Begusarai, Mr. Modi re-

> Karnataka blast: police probe links with 2022 cooker blast case +

The Hindu Bureau BENGALURU

di added.

The Bengaluru City Police, probing the IED blast in the Rameshwaram Cafe in Bengaluru's tech corridor near Whitefield on Friday, is now looking at its possible link to the 2022 Mangaluru cooker blast case. Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar on Saturday stated that the investigation has indicated that the two could be linked, and those who probed the 2022 case have now joined the current probe. Police sources added that the detonator and timer used in the two blasts were similar and of low-intensity. Mohammed Shariq, the absconding accused in a terror conspiracy case in Shivamogga district, had turned up on November 19, 2022, with a cooker bomb that went off acci-

tion that called itself the 'Islamic Resistance Council' had claimed responsibility for the Mangaluru blast. However, security agencies have been sceptical of the existence of such

Bihar Oppn. to hold first mega joint rally today

Amit Bhelari PATNA

peated the slogan of "Abki

(this time, NDA govern-

ment will cross 400 seats).

He added that for him, "so-

cial justice means the em-

sisters), and lakhs of them

number to three crore wo-

Focus on development

men", he said

"We've made one crore

powerment of women".

baar, NDA Sarkar 400 par The stage is all set at Patna's Gandhi Maidan for Sunday's Jan Vishwas Maharally, the new Bihar Opposition's first joint rally after Chief Minister Nitish Kumar snapped ties with women of the country their Mahagathbandhan lakhpati didis (millionaire alliance and formed the government with the BJP. All are from Bihar. Now we've top Opposition leaders, indecided to increase that cluding former Congress chief Rahul Gandhi, are ex-

pected to be present. On Saturday, Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) chief Lalu Prasad appealed to the people of Bihar to take part in the rally to defeat Prime Minister Narendra Modi in the upcoming Lok Sabha election. Posters and banners put up across the State capital by RJD workers carried slogans about saving democracy and ousting the BJP.

"Brothers and sisters, we are organising a Jan Vishwas Maharally at Gandhi Maidan on March 3. I appeal to all farmers, poor people, youth to come in large numbers to uproot the BJP's Central government," Mr. Prasad said in a video posted on X. The RJD has arranged

"When Bihar will prospfor accommodation of over 50,000 people at the Veterinary ground in Patna, as also at the official residences of Mahagathbandhan leaders.

Former Deputy Chief



+ V-C over student's death; CPI(M) alleges 'attack on Left'

Kerala Guv. suspends KVASU

The Hindu Bureau THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Kerala Governor Arif Mo-



Registrar-General of the

Kerala High Court will be

submitted a formal re-

tions against the Students

Federation of India (SFI),

the Governor told media-

persons in Thiruvanan-

thapuram that the case

could not be treated as one

pertaining to ragging

alone. "This is a pure case

lowed to eat or drink for

more than 24 hours," he

said, faulting the university

authorities for being igno-

rant of the alleged brutality

meted out to the student

on the campus for three

Oommen launched a hun-

ger strike at Siddharthan's

native place at Neduman-

gad to express solidarity

with his family. Congress

president K. Surendran de-

manded a probe into the

alleged nexus between the

SFI and the proscribed

Popular Front of India.

Congress MLA Chandy

days.

Levelling serious allega-

quest, Raj Bhavan stated.

Advocates challenge

law granting 10%

quota to Marathas

hammed Khan on Saturday suspended Kerala Veterinary and Animal Sciences University (KVA-SU) Vice-Chancellor M.R. Saseendranath over the death of a junior student at the campus hostel on February 18.

Charging the Vice-Chancellor with gross dereliction of his responsibilities, the Governor, who is the Chancellor of the universities in the State, also announced a judicial probe into the alleged case of ragging that led to the death of second-year student Sidharthan J.S. of the College of Veterinary and Animal Sciences at Pookode in Wayanad.

The Raj Bhavan appointed former KVASU professor P.C. Saseendran to officiate as Vice-Chancellor until further orders.

Lamenting that the disciplinary action was taken against him without seeking his explanation, Prof. Saseendranath said he had no plans to challenge the Chancellor's order.

The move was met with resentment by the State government. Animal Husbandry Minister and KVASU Pro-Chancellor J. Chinchurani said the decision was taken "arbitrarily" without consultations.

"The university has already launched a probe and initiated action against the culprits. The police have registered a case and apprehended 19 students responsible for the death. The investigation is progressing. I cannot agree to the Governor's decision," Ms. Chinchurani said.

The Minister said the university dean had com-



The District Congress Committee taking a protest march to the university on Saturday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

mitted a serious error by failing to inform the family of Sidharthan of his death.

The Communist Party of India (Marxist) too opposed the decision which, the party alleged, was motivated by the Governor's objective to attack Left parties and their organisations.

developments The capped a day of turmoil on the university campus as a demonstration taken out by the activists of the Congress, Muslim League and their feeder organisations turned violent. The protesters also barged into the hostel where the student was allegedly tortured.

Suspension order

The suspension order highlighted the "indifferent, negligent and callous attitude" of the Vice-Chancellor towards his duties. "The developments which culminated in the unfortu-

nate death of Sidharthan MP Shashi Tharoor, who J.S. indicate that the affairs visited the protest venue, demanded a thorough inof the university are not being attended to by the vestigation into the culture Vice-Chancellor with the of student politics on Keradesired sincerity, gravity la campuses. Meanwhile, BJP State

and promptness," it stated. Mr. Khan also ordered an inquiry by a person who is or has been a judge of the Kerala High Court or the Supreme Court. The

Court on Friday has challenged the law passed by the Maharashtra State Assembly granting 10% reservation to the Maratha community under the Socially and Educationally Backward Class (SEBC) category in education and govern-

ment jobs. The law was passed on February 20, 2024, and on February 26, the notification for it was issued. The bill was based on a report of retired High Court judge, Justice Sunil Shukre.

The report, tabled by the Justice Shukre-headed Maharashtra State Backward Class Commission (MSBCC), had emphasised that the population of Ma-

sion said, warranted reservations for the Maratha community to go up beyond the 50% cap. writ petition The that Justice claimed

rathas in the State is at 28%

and the community has

been facing "extraordinary

conditions of backward-

ness". This, the commis-

Shukre's appointment to the MSBCC board as the chairperson was against the law.

The petitioners, which include lawyers Gunratan Sadavarte, Shankarrao Linge, and Rajaram Patil, have sought a stay on the effect of the law pending disposal of the plea. They have also sought that no advertisements should be issued for jobs and educational courses under the SEBC category reservation. The plea is likely to be heard on March 8, 2024.

A CCTV footage of the suspect has gone viral. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

dentally in an autorickshaw on the outskirts of Mangaluru. A probe had then indicated some links to the Coimbatore car blast case, which had happened weeks before the Mangaluru incident. Chargesheets of the National Investigation Agency in both the cases alleged the accused were inspired by the Islamic State.

While security agencies are now probing the possibility of a connection between the cases, a senior official sounded a word of caution that while the investigation was "on these lines among several other angles being pursued", they "could not conclusive-

ly say the two blasts are de-

finitely linked." The Bengaluru Police has been able to get a partial image of the face of the bomber from the CCTV footage from the restaurant. The accused, though wearing a white cap and black face mask, can be spotted on the road to the restaurant, as well as in-

An unknown organisaside it.

of murder. The post-mor-With successive hits, Malayalam film industry is on a roll tem report revealed that his stomach was empty. That means he was not al-

G. Krishnakumar KOCHI

The Malayalam film industry is back with a bang after a string of flops in 2023.

Five films – Abraham Ozler, Anweshippin Kandethum, Premalu, Bramayugam and Manjummel Boys - having hit the box office since January, have worked wonders at the box office. As per estimates by the Film Exhibitors' United Organisation of Kerala (FEUOK), the five films have earned a combined record gross collection in Kerala of over ₹200 crore as of March 1.

Despite the annual exam season and the soaring temperatures, audiences continue to flock to the ci-



A scene from the movie Premalu.

nema to watch Premalu, Bramayugam and Manjummel Boys.

Bonanza

"Abraham Ozler, released in January, will have earned a gross amount of gam, meanwhile, has netted a gross of ₹35 to ₹40 crore and is going strong. Manjummel Boys, which completed the first week of its release on March 1, has already earned over ₹30 crore and is marching towards a record gross collection," said Suresh Shenoy, exhibitor and member of the executive committee of FEUOK. "The audience response

has been tremendous. We have not witnessed such a buoyous trend for a long time," he added.

around ₹35 crore, followed With an interesting lineby Anweshippin Kandeth*um* raking in around ₹25 to up of movies getting ready for a theatrical release, in-₹30 crore. *Premalu*, which is expected to reach the cluding *Aadujeevitham*, ₹100-crore mark, has Aavesham, and Varshanearned around ₹70 crore galku Sesham to name a as of March 1. Bramayufew, the producers seem

elated by the grand box office opening at the start of 2024.

'Content is king'

"Content remains the king going by the huge audience response to these hit movies. A combination of factors, which include the pre-release hype, production banner, interesting cast, and storyline also impact the box office fate of a movie," said B. Rakesh, secretary of the Kerala Film Producers' Association.

Though the industry is excited about a possible turnaround in fortunes, the increasing production cost and dwindling returns from the sale of rights, including OTT, remain a concern.

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From Page One

6

Chinese 'nuclear' cargo heading to Pak. seized

The consignment has been inspected by a team of experts from the Defence Research and Development Organisation, it is learnt.

On the condition of anonymity, Customs officials confirmed that Cosmos Engineering had been on their watchlist since March 2022, when Pakistan was trying to procure 'thermo-electric instruments' from an Italian firm, with Cosmos Engineering being the consignee. The same was intercepted at Nhava Sheva Port on March 12, 2022, under the policy to prevent proliferation activities through Indian ports.

Earlier, in February 2020, China was attempting to supply an autoclave to Pakistan under the cover of an 'industrial dryer', which was seized from a Hong Kong-flagged Chinese ship named Dai Cui Yun which left Jiangyin port on the Yangtze river in China's Jiangsu province, and was headed to Pakistan's Port Oasim. "The seizure of the autoclave, which could be used in Pakistan's missile programme, strengthened apprehensions that Pakistan is continuing the illegal trade of missiles and violating the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR)," the first source stated.

BJP's first list for LS poll is out; PM keeps Varanasi

The list, finalised after major consultations and a marathon meeting of the central election committee on February 29, is interesting in the dramatic changes to the line up for Delhi, presaged by East Delhi MP Gautam Gambhir ruling himself out from the contest hours before the announcement.

However, almost no changes have been made to the list of 51 candidates announced for Uttar Pradesh.

The State saw the repeat of 43 sitting MPs, including cine star Hema Malini from Mathura. New names have been announced for seats where the BJP lost in 2019.

The list for Delhi seems to have seen the maximum changes. Apart from Manoj Tiwari, who has been repeated from North East Delhi, the BJP has fielded four fresh faces from the five seats it announced today, with two more seats left in abeyance. Bansuri Swaraj, the daughter of former External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj, will be running from Delhi, replacing Meenakshi Lekhi.

In Chattisgarh, the BJP retained only two out of the nine sitting MPs, Vijay Baghel and Santosh Pandey, with three MPs having been elected as MLAs in the recently concluded Assembly polls.

The list for southern States of Kerala and Telangana have seen much accommodation for newcomers. Mr. Chandrashekhar from Thiruvananthapuram; Anil Antony, the son of former Defence Minister A.K. Antony, from Pathanamtitha; and Suresh Gopi from Thrissur. In Telangana, Lok Sabha MP B.B. Patil, who was newly inducted from the BRS, has been fielded from Zahirabad.

The BJP has fielded nine sitting MPs from Wes

BJP should win all 42 Lok Sabha seats in Bengal: Modi

Targetting Trinamool over scams, Prime Minister says it is synonymous with corruption, dynasty politics; he also flays the ruling party for not listening to 'mothers and sisters of Sandeshkhali'

Shiv Sahay Singh KOLKATA

rime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday stepped up his attack on the Trinamool Congress leadership by levelling allegations of scams and corruption. He also set a target for the BJP leadership in West Bengal to win all the 42 Lok Sabha seats in the State.

Addressing a public meeting at Krishnanagar in Nadia district, Mr. Modi said, "Seeing you all gathered here in such huge numbers is giving me the confidence to say 'NDA sarkar, 400 paar'. The Prime Minister went on to tell the gathering "lotus should bloom on all the 42 seats". Earlier, Union Home Minister Amit Shah had set

up a target of winning 35 seats for the West Bengal BJP leadership. The BJP had won 18 out of 42 Lok Sabha seats from West Bengal in 2019 Lok Sabha seats.

Prime Minister The made reference to several scams in West Bengal and said, "Trinamool Congress government has turned every scheme into a scam. They have a mastery in turning every scheme into



Trading barbs: Prime Minister Narendra Modi with State BJP leaders during a rally at Krishnanagar in Nadia on Saturday. ANI

a scam,". Mr. Modi said that people of West Bengal have given a large mandate to the Trinamool leadership on several occasions and had high hopes from the Trinamool leadership but the party leadership had "disappointed the people of the State". "Trinamool is synonymous with corruption, atrocities, dynasty politics, and betrayal," he said. Mr. Modi touched on

unrest in Sandeshkhali for the second consecutive day and alleged that instead of supporting the "distressed mothers and sisters" of the area, the government had sided with

the accused. Mr. Modi said that in Bengal it is not the police but criminals who decide when they will get arrested.

ters kept pleading for justice, but the Trinamool did not listen to them. The situation in the State is such that here, the criminals decide when to get arrested," the Prime Minister said. On March 1 while addressing a rally at Arambagh in Hooghly, Mr. Modi had raised the Sandeshkhali issue and questioned silence

After weeks of protests, the Bengal police on February 28 arrested Sheikh

"The mothers and sis-

of INDIA alliance leaders.

PM visits Bengal only before polls, says Trinamool

KOLKATA

The Trinamool Congress on Saturday claimed that Prime Minister Narendra Modi's criticisms on corruption "sound hollow" as he shared the stage with leader of the Opposition Suvendu Adhikari, who is an accused in the Narada case. Trinamool leader Shashi Panja said that Mr. Modi visited the State only before elections. PTI

Shahjahan, the prime accused in Sandeshkhali unrest. The region has been has been on the boil over allegations land grab and sexual assault allegedly by Trinamool leadership.

He also stressed on the Modi's guarantee and said that the Centre is working towards the welfare of the people of Bengal. Earlier in the day, Mr. Modi inaugurated projects worth ₹15,000 crore in Bengal.

After addressing the gathering, Mr. Modi met State BJP leaders Suvendu Adhikari and Sukanta Majumdar and commended the courage and passion of party leadership.

Cong. poll manifesto to include promises on MSP, caste census

Sandeep Phukan NEW DELHI

said.

Making minimum support

Chidambaram, is sche-

duled to have a meeting on

March 4 to discuss the

draft manifesto, which is in

A senior party leader

told *The Hindu* on March 2

that the manifesto themati-

cally focuses on the

paanch nyay or five pillars

of justice that the Rahul

Gandhi-led Bharat Jodo

Nyay Yatra has been high-

lighting over the past two

its final stages.

months.

terms

manifesto and the party will also put up large hoardings at all the major mandis (agricultural markets).

price (MSP) a legal guarantee, the promise to con-The promise of a nationduct a nationwide caste wide caste census and giving rights to a community census, and filling existing in proportion to its numgovernment vacancies on priority will figure promibers has also been one of nently in the Congress' mathe main planks for the nifesto for the 2024 Lok Congress. The party hopes that it will effectively coun-Sabha election, sources ter the consolidation of The party's manifesto Hindu votes in favour of committee, headed by the BJP after the inauguraformer Finance Minister P. tion of the Ram Mandir at

> Ayodhya. The social justice narrative of the Congress, however, suffered a jolt after the Narendra Modi government honoured the late Karpoori Thakur with a

Bharat Ratna. Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar's switch, whose government had carried out the first ever caste survey at the State-level, further eroded the INDIA bloc's social justice pitch.

Mr. Gandhi had said the The party's election paanch nyay include jusdocument is also likely to tice for youth, women, focus on livelihood issues farmers, labourers, and in and would reflect the feedof bhagidari back that Mr. Gandhi re-(participation). ceived over the ongoing ya-Mr. Gandhi has already "Our promises, tra.

announced that if the INincluding filling up govern-DIA bloc gets voted to powment vacancies or creating er at the Centre, MSP new jobs and better wages, would be made a legal will be part of justice for right. The same assurance the youth and labour," the would be reiterated in the source quoted above said.

> companied by Election Commissioner Arun Goel, also asked the officials to check cases of impersonation.

Fraudulent activities The Chief Election Commissioner said that immediate action should be ta-

Cong. questions BJP for dropping sitting MPs from first list

elections.

from the BJP," he said.

"Why cancel the ticket?

Were these MPs useless? If

they were incompetent,

then the BJP should apolo-

gize to the voters on whom

such 'incompetent' MPs

were imposed," he asked.

not honour you," he said,

addressing a meet in More-

na. "This is happening be-

wants that the defence

budget is not given to the

jawans, and spent on their

training and pension, but

goes to the bank accounts

of big businesspersons," he

said, adding that the ex-

service personnel recruit-

ed as Agniveers will not get

government

the

cause

es now.

Press Trust of India NEW DELHI

The Congress on Saturday raised questions on the BJP's first list of 195 candidates for the Lok Sabha elections after some sitting members were not named. It said Prime Minister Narendra Modi should apologise to the people for hav-"thrust such ing 'incompetent' MPs on people" in the last five years. Congress spokesperson Pawan Khera also wondered if Mr. Modi's magic was waning that he had to deny party tickets to some sitting MPs, asking whether he is unable to help them win in his name. He further asked wheth-

Press Trust of India er the BIP was under "pres-LUCKNOW sure" from Union minister Ajay Mishra Teni that he

The Election Commission was fielded once again (EC) on Saturday directed even after "his son crushed all the district magistrates farmers under his vehicle". and superintendents of Mr. Khera said two BIP police to take strong action MPs Gautam Gambhir and against officials, who are Javant Sinha have stated on indulging in favouritism

ng Poll Preparedness for General Ele 2" March, 2034 (Sat लेंगे हम

officials indulging in favouritism

EC calls for strong action against

Bengal out of 20 candidates from the State announced on Saturday, including the party's State president Sukanta Majumdar from Balurghat, and Union Ministers of State Nisith Pramanik from Coochbehar, and Subhas Sarkar from Bankura. The party has also fielded three sitting MLAs: Manoj Tigga from the Alipurduar seat, Hiranmoy Chatterjee from Ghatal, and Sreerupa Mitra Choudhury from Malda Dakshin. John Barla, the sitting MP from Alipurduar, has been dropped.

The BJP is likely to hold a second meeting of the party's central election committee on March 6, where States not addressed so far - including big alliance States like Maharashtra and Bihar - will be considered.

The poll body's move X this morning that they

do not want to contest comes in a bid to ensure "temptation free (prahlo-"We don't know their han-mukt)" Lok Sabha reasons but we do underelections and provide a lestand that several people vel-playing field to all the want to maintain distance parties.

Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar said that directions have been issued to all the District Magistrates and SPs to ensure level playing field for all the political parties, and to take strong action



Strict vigil: Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar and others addressing a press conference on Saturday. SANDEEP SAXENA

said.

against those officials indulging in favouritism.

TOR SURE

"Ensure impartiality with junior officials working at cutting-edge level for level playing field. All the DEOs (District Election Officers) have been asked to immediately act on the

ken against people, who are involved in fraudulent activities pertaining to the election process.

He added that a social media cell should be made at the district level for tackling fake news so that "false narratives are tackled immediately".

"At present, no complaint is pending and all Mr. Kumar was on a the problems have been sathree-day tour to the State tisfactorily redressed," he capital to review the poll preparedness for the Lok Mr. Kumar, who was ac-Sabha elections.

Shah to visit Maharashtra to plan poll strategies

Abhinay Deshpande MUMBAI

Union Home Minister Amit Shah will visit Akola, Jalgaon, and Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar on Tuesday, where he will participate in election-related meetings and programmes organised by the BJP.

With the Lok Sabha elections around the corner, Mr. Shah's visit holds strategic importance in the State which sends 48 MPs to the Lower House, the second highest after Uttar Pradesh with 80 seats.

On Tuesday, in Akola, he will lead a meeting with the BJP's election management committee and core committee. The focus will be on discussing the Lok Sabha constituencies of Chandrapur, Buldhana, Akola, Yavatmal, Wardha, and Amravati, State BJP unit chief Chandrashekhar Bawankule said.

YK

Rahul flays Centre over Agnipath scheme during Nyay Yatra in M.P.

<u>Mehul Malpani</u> BHOPAL

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Saturday attacked the BJP-led Centre over recruiting soldiers in the armed forces as 'Agniveers' and said that the defence budget was now being put into the bank of accounts big

businesspersons. Mr. Gandhi also said that the party's manifesto for the upcoming Lok Sabha election includes a legal guarantee of Minimum Support Price (MSP) for the farmers.

He made the remarks in Morena as his Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra entered the State from neighbouring Rajasthan. After Morena, Mr. Gandhi also addressed public meeting in а Gwalior.

He was accompanied by former Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot and joined in Madhya Pradesh



Congress leader Rahul Gandhi at a roadshow during the Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra, in Madhya Pradesh on Saturday. PTI

by State unit president Jitu Patwari, former CMs Kamal Nath and Digvijaya Singh, and Leader of the Opposition Umang Singhar.

"There are now two types of martyrs after the Agniveer (Agnipath) scheme. Both will be martyrs but if he is an Agniveer, he will not get the martyr status and the pension. He will be told that 'you gave your life for the nation but the nation will

Morena is part of M.P.'s Gwalior-Chambal belt. which sees a significant number of youth joining the armed forces. The region had seen intense protests against the Centre's Agnipath scheme when it was introduced in 2022.

Reiterating his party's promise of conducting a caste-based census if it comes to power, he attacked the BJP accusing it of not giving proper representation to the OBCs, Dalits and tribals.

"In India, there are 50% OBCs, 15% Dalits and 8% tribals", he said, claiming that these 73% people have "very little" representation in both the government and private sectors. "You will only find names from this 73% in the lists of MGNREGS workers, contract labourers and sanitation workers," he added.

pension, canteen benefits The yatra will stay in M.P. until March 6 when it and respect in their villagwill enter Rajasthan.

The Hindu Bureau NEW DELHI

The BJP seems to have put faith in its 2019 list of candidates from Uttar Pradesh, the State that sends 80 MPs to the Lok Sabha. Of the names announced on Saturday by the party for the State, the BJP has retained 47 of those from its list of candidates in 2019.

In Nagina reserved seat, the party named Om Kumar as its candidate denying Yashwant Singh, who had contested the 2019 poll. Likewise, the party changed its candidate from Shravasti parliamentary seat with Saket Misra, son of retired bureaucrat Nripendra Misra, getting the ticket in place of Daddan Mishra.

Union Minister of State (Home) Ajay Mishra Teni, whose son is accused of

BJP retained 47 of the candidates announced in its list for U.P. from the **2019 general election**

complaint lodged by the

political parties," Mr. Ku-

BJP repeats most candidates

up half of M.P., Rajasthan list

from U.P.; fresh faces make

mar told presspersons.

mowing down four farmers in Lakhimpur Kheri, has been repeated from Kheri constituency, a seat that he had won in 2019 by over two lakh votes.

The BJP's list of 24 out of 29 candidates from Madhya Pradesh has 12 new faces as the party denied tickets to seven sitting MPs while five MPs had resigned from their Lok Sabha membership after becoming MLAs in the November 2023 State Assembly election.

The fresh faces include Darshan Singh Choudhary, Ashish Dubey, Rahul Lodhi and Rajesh Mishra from Hoshangabad, Jabalpur, Damoh and Sidhi respec-

tively. The seats were earlier represented by State Cabinet Ministers Uday Pratap Singh, Rakesh Singh and Prahlad Singh Patel, and MLA Riti Pathak.

The party also kept a largely similar ratio for Rajasthan, where it announced candidates for 15 of the State's 25 Lok Sabha seats. The list included eight sitting MPs.

The party gave tickets to two veteran leaders who switched over from Congress recently, besides fielding five new faces in the State.

Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla will contest the election again from Kota, BJP State president C.P. Joshi from Chittorgarh, and Union Ministers Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, Arjun Ram Meghwal and Kailash Choudhary from Jodhpur, Bikaner and Barmer, respectively.

News

IAF finishes black-topping of landing strip near LAC

Dinakar Peri NEW DELHI

The Indian Air Force's Advanced Landing Ground (ALG) in Nvoma, close to the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in eastern Ladakh, has now been blacktopped (paved runway), while work is going on to extend the runway so that it can eventually handle fighter jets, according to sources.

"The work is about 15% complete and is now stopped due to winter. It will restart in April. It is on track to be completed in two years," the source stated. Responding to apprehensions that the airfield could become an easy target for China as it is only 30 km away from the LAC, the source said it was very well located and would prove to be a great advantage for India. The first landing of a fixed-wing aircraft at the Nyoma ALG took place on September 18, 2009, when an AN-32 transport aircraft landed there. The runway is now being extended to 9,000 or 10,000 feet to en-

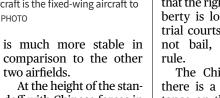


High-altitude point: The AN-32 aircraft is the fixed-wing aircraft to land at the Nyoma ALG in 2009. FILE PHOTO

able it to handle all fighter aircraft in the IAF's inventory.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh had laid the foundation stone for the ALG last September, exuding confidence that this airfield would prove to be a "game-changer" for the armed forces. The ALG's cost of development is approximately ₹200 crore.

Strategic infrastructure The IAF also has airfields at Leh, Thoise and Kargil, as well as ALGs at Daulet Beg-Oldie and Fukche. However, the Leh and Thoise airfields are located in interior areas and officials said that the weather at Nyoma



doff with Chinese forces in 2020, the IAF moved its Mi-17 medium-lift helicopters, CH-47F Chinook heavy-lift helicopters, and AH-64E Apache attack helicopters to Nyoma to support the forward deployment of troops, as well as for surveillance and intelli-

gence gathering purposes. As reported by The Hin*du* earlier, to overcome the challenges that fighter jets face at high-altitude airfields, the engines are being tweaked to enable them to start at low temperatures.

CJI flags 'growing reluctance' of trial judges to grant bail Worried about the increasing number of bail appeals reaching the High Courts and the Supreme Court, Chief Justice says the long-standing principle of 'bail being the rule' seems to losing ground

The Hindu Bureau NEW DELHI

hief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud on Saturday flagged the rising apprehension that the right to personal liberty is losing ground in trial courts, with jail, and not bail, becoming the

The Chief Justice said there is a growing reluctance on the part of trial judges to grant bail. This was evident from the increasing number of bail appeals reaching the High Courts and the Supreme Court.

"The longstanding principle that 'bail is the rule, jail is the exception' seems to be losing ground... This trend warrants a thorough re-evaluation," Chief Justice Chandrachud said in his address at the All India **District Judges Conference** held at Kachchh in Gujarat. The Chief Justice's remarks came even as the Su-



CJI D.Y. Chandrachud with Justices Satish Chandra Sharma and Augustine George Masih during an event on February 28. PTI

preme Court record on grant of bail has remained uneven. Student activist Umar Khalid chose to withdraw his bail application following multiple adjournments. The court had rejected bail to former Delhi Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia.

Chief Justice Chandrachud also highlighted the "adjournment culture" in Adjournments, courts. which were never intend-

ed to be commonplace, have become normalised within the judicial process, the Chief Justice noted.

"This culture of adjournments can effectively suspend time within a case, prolonging the agony of litigants and perpetuating the cycle of backlog," the Chief Justice said.

Delays are such that a farmer involved in a property dispute may never see the outcome in his life-



Amarnath Ghosh

time. "We should not wait

for our citizens to die for

their case to be decided by a court of law. Imagine a

victim of sexual assault

whose case remains unre-

solved in the courts for sev-

eral years. Isn't this a clear

violation of their funda-

mental right to access jus-

tice?" the Chief Justice

The Chief Justice ad-

vised the district judiciary

against using gender-stere-

otypical language that

work to perpetuate sys-

temic inequalities and con-

tribute to the marginalisa-

tion of women within the

Chief Justice Chandra-

chud also highlighted that

women now constitute

36.3% of the working

strength of the district jud-

iciary even as there is

"staggering" vacancy rates

for the seats reserved for

Scheduled Castes and

Scheduled Tribes, which

constitute 66.3% of the to-

blished and printed at reg-

ular intervals containing

public news or comments

on public news but does

not include a book or a

journal of scientific, techni-

cal, and academic nature".

journal including a book or

journal of scientific, techni-

cal and academic nature"

does not require registra-

tion with the PRGI.

Therefore, "book, or a

tal unfilled posts.

legal system.

asked.

India keeping tabs on probe into dancer's killing in U.S.

Kallol Bhattacherjee NEW DELHI

The Indian mission in Chicago is following up on the forensic investigation into the killing of an Indian Kuchipudi dancer in the U.S. earlier this week. A statement in this regard came after Amarnath Ghosh, the dancer, was found shot to death in St. Louis.

"Deep condolences to family & friends of deceased Amarnath Ghosh in StLouis, Missouri. We are following up forensic, investigation with police & providing support," the Indian Consulate in Chicago posted on X.

The murder was flagged by actor Devoleena Bhattacharjee, who said Mr. Ghosh had been pursuing a Ph.D. in the U.S., and that he was shot multiple times while he was out for an evening walk.

"Some friends in US are trying to claim the body but still no update about it. @IndianEmbassyUS kindly see to it if you could. Atleast we should know the reason of his murder. @DrSJaishankar @narendramodi," Ms Bhattachar-

jee had said. Earlier, Mr. Ghosh studied dance at the Kalakshetra Foundation in Chennai.

M BM-BME

Registration of periodicals moves online as Union govt. notifies new Act

The Hindu Bureau NEW DELHI

The new Press and Registration of Periodicals (PRP) Act, 2023, has come into force and the old Press and Registration of Books Act, 1867, now stands repealed.

The Centre has notified the new law and the associated rules in its official gazette. Accordingly, the

Act is effective from March 1. The registration of new-

spapers and periodicals has moved online in the Press Sewa Portal, while the Registrar of Newspapers for India (RNI) has been renamed as the Press Registrar General of India (PRGI), said the Union Information and Broadcasting Ministry on Saturday.

of Digital India, the new Act provides for an online system for facilitating the registration of newspapers and other periodicals in the country. The new system replaces the existing manual, cumbersome processes involving multiple steps and approvals at various stages which were causing unnecessary hard-"In tune with the ethos ships to the publishers," it

said. Earlier, Union I&B Minister Anurag Singh Thakur had launched the Press Sewa portal, through which various applications as mandated by the new Act can be submitted online.

"The Press Sewa portal ensures paperless processing and offers services with e-sign facility, digital payment gateway, QR code-

based digital certificates for instant download, online system for providing intimation by printing presses, percentage of probability for title availability, online access to registration data for all publishers, filing of annual statements, among others. It also intends to put in place a chatbot-based inte-

ractive grievance resolu-

tion mechanism," said the Ministry.

The portal is accompanied by a new website with all the related information and a user-friendly interface. The new Act removes books and journals from the purview of registration necessitated by the old law. It defines a periodical as "any publication including a newspaper which is pu-

Shah launches umbrella body for urban cooperative banks

The Hindu Bureau

organisation was a necessi- for compliance with the



Registrar

भारतीय विज्ञान शिक्षा एवं अनुसंधान संस्थान भोपाल (शिक्षा मत्रालय, भारत सरकार द्वारा स्थापित) Indian Institute of Science Education and Research Bhopal Advt. No.: IISERB/DOAA/2024/01 March 03, 2024 Admission for Academic Year 2024-25 Applications are invited for the semester commencing from August 2024.

NEW DELHI

Union Cooperation Minister Amit Shah on Saturday inaugurated an umbrella organisation for urban cooperative banks (UCB) the National Urban Cooperative Finance and Development Corporation Limited (NUCFDC).

Mr. Shah stated that the

a new beginning for selfregulation. "It is necessary that we upgrade ourselves and adhere to all the regulations of the RBI. If we fail to do so, we will not be able to sustain the competition in the times to come," he said. He highlighted a major role of the organisation is to prepare small banks

ty of the time, and marked Banking Regulation Act.

The Cooperation Minister said that the organisation had a collective strength of 11,000 branches with 1,500 banks, deposits of ₹5 lakh crore and loans totaling ₹3.50 lakh crore. He added that the UCBs had reduced their net non-performing assets (NPA) to 2.10%.

vacant posts of Professor. Associate Professor and Assistant Professor in the following Government aided degree engineering institutions o direct recruitment basis: Bundelkhand Institute of Engineering and Rajkiya Engineering College, Bijnor fechnology, Jhansi Rajkiya Engineering College, Kannau Kamla Nehru Institute of Technology, Sultanpur Rajkiya Engineering College, Mainpuri Rajkiya Engineering College, Ambedkar Nagar Rajkiya Engineering College, Sonbhadra Rajkiya Engineering College, Azamgarh Uttar Pradesh Textile Technology Rajkiya Engineering College, Banda Institute, Kanpur All information related to the recruitment and the online application forms will be available on the website of the university i.e https://aktu.ac.in and the websites of the related institutions from 01.03.2024. Interested candidates can fill their application form online till **21.03.2024**. If there is any amendment in this regard, it will be made

available on the websites of the university and institutions.

Programme	Disciplines				
Ph.D. National/ International	Natural Sciences Stream: Biological Sciences, Chemistry, Earth and Environmental Sciences, Mathematics, Physics.				
Students Engineering Sciences Stream: Chemical Engineering Data Science Engineering (DSE), Electrical Engineering and Computer Science (EECS).					
	Humanities and Social Sciences Stream: Economic Sciences, Humanities and Social Sciences (Cognitive Science).				
Integrated Ph.D.	Natural Sciences Stream: Mathematics and Physics.				
Details of qualification, eligibility, application form and application procedure are available on https://www.iiserb.ac.in/admission					
Last Date for Submission of Application: April 02, 2024 (Updates, if any, shall be notified on the Institute website)					
	अधिष्ठाता शैक्षणिक				

SKM seeks united fight against govt.'s 'tyranny and state machinery'

<u>The Hindu Bureau</u>

NEW DELHI

The Samyukt Kisan Morcha (SKM) has reached out to the protesting farmers on the Haryana-Punjab boundary led by its splinter group SKM (Non Political) and the Kisan Mazdoor Morcha (KMM), and appealed for issue-based larger unity among all farmers' platforms and organisations.

A six-member SKM panel invited the SKM-NP for further discussions and urged them to follow the "right path and right thinking" adopted during the united farmers' struggle in 2020-21 against three controversial farm laws.

The main target, the SKM reminded its splinter group, still is the Union government, the ruling BJP and its allied parties and the Centre's "tyrannybased state machinery". "The united *kisan* struggle has to uphold secular and pan-India character, and

YK

be independent of political parties," the SKM said, urg-

ing the SKM-NP to defeat and keep away all kinds of distracting and disruptive forces from the struggle, which created obstacles for selfish, petty political interests. "During the Delhi joint struggle, the approach was to achieve victory through acceptance of demands or ultimately extract a heavy political price from the government," said the resolution.

Farmer leaders Hannan Mollah, Joginder Singh Ugrahan, Darshan Pal, Balbeer Singh Rajewal, Yudhavir Singh and Raminder Singh Patiala are part of the SKM's panel that was asked to reach out to the SKM-NP. The SKM-NP and the KMM are continuing their protests on the Punjab-Haryana boundary seeking a legal guarantee for MSP and other demands. The SKM has decided to organise a mahapanchayat of farmers in Delhi on March 14.

MAN MISSING Madaswamy, age 75, S/o Paramasivam, Kizhakke Kaleeckal House, Kollakadavu P.O, Cheruvalloor, Cheriyanadu Village, Alappuzha district has been missed from 04.09.2023 and he has not returned so far. Hence if any information is received about him, please inform to the nearest Police Station or below mentioned phone numbers. DESCRIPTION Height : 167 cm, Complexion : Medium, Body Shape : Lean CONTACT NUMBER SHO Venmony : 9497980296 DySP, Chengannur : 9497990043 District Police Chief, Alappuzha : 9497996982 91/F2/2024/I&PRD B JODHPUR VIDYUT VITARAN NIGAM LIMITED (MATERIAL MANAGEMENT & CONTRACT WING) NEW POWER HOUSI INDUSTRIAL AREA, JODHPUR-342003 PHONE: (0291) 2742223, FAX: (0291) 2746535 **E-PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTICE** E-Procurement Tender is invited for Rate contract of fabrication ns including transportation of raw material TN-1964 (UBN JVV2324SLR00682) e Bucket-4 nos, with stand under TN-1970 (UBN JVV2324GLOB00680) and To x (Empty) under TN-1971 (UBN JVV2324GLOB00681). Details regarding Quantity, Tender cost, Earnest Money, Schedule date of tender ening for aforesaid tenders are available on our website a vw.energy.rajasthan.gov.in/jdvvnl</mark> and also at http://sppp.rajasthan.gov.in Raj.Samwad/C/23/14001 SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER (MM&

वतों के लिए टोल फ्री नम्बर १८०० १८० ६०४५

कार्यालय अतिरिक्त मुख्य अभियन्ता, सार्वजनिक निर्माण विभाग, संभाग कोटा

हमाकः 2675 दिनाक: 28.02.2024 अल्पकालीन निविदा सूचना संख्या 37/पीएमजीएसवाई/2023-24 NIB No. : PWD2324A4787

राजस्थान के राज्यपाल महोदय की ओर से प्रधानमंत्री ग्राम सड़क योजनानगंत स्वीकृत सड़कों वे poradation (Rural Roads) कार्य के निम्नलिखित कार्यों मय पांच साल की मरम्मत के लिए 2 पैकेंज हेत उपयुक्त श्रेणी में सार्वजनिक निर्माण विभाग राजस्वान में पंजीकृत संवेदकों एवं राज्य सरकार/ केन्द्र सरकार र धिकृत संगठनों/ केन्द्रीय लोक निर्माण विभाग/ डाक एवं दूर संचार विभाग/ रेलवे इत्यदि में पंजीकृ संवेदकों, जो कि राजस्थान सरकार के उपयुक्त त्रेणी के संवेदकों के समकक्ष हो, से निर्धारित प्रपत्र में ई प्रोक्यूरमेन्ट प्रक्रिया से ऑन लाईन निविदायें आमंत्रित की जाती हैं। निविदा से सम्बन्धित विवरण येथ सईट http://dipr.rajasthan.gov.in व http://pwd.rajasthan.gov.in व http://pmgsytendersraj.gov.in पर देख जा सकता है। पैकेजवाईज यू. बी. एन संख्या निम्नानुसार है।

UBN No. PWD2324WS0B20683, UBN No. PWD2324WS0B20684 इच्छक संवेदकों को अपने डिजिटल हस्तावर के माध्यम से वेब सईट http://pmgsytenersrai.gov/r पर रजिस्टर्ड होना आवश्यक है। (एके साह), अतिरिक्त मुख्य अभियंता, सानिवि संभाग-कोटा DIPR/C/1801/2024

BRIHANMUMBAI MUNICIPAL CORPORATION Chief Engineer (Bridges) Department No. Ch.E./16297/Bridges dated 02.03.2024 **E-TENDER NOTICE**

The Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) invites e-tenders to appoint Contractors for the works of "(1) Design & Construction of Bridge between Madh&Versova in K/W & P/N Wards (2)Design &Construction of Elevated Road for Establishing East West Connectivity Over Khar Subway and Bandra Terminus Connector inH/E and H/W Wards"from Contractors of Repute, Multidisciplinary Engineering organizations i.e. Eminent firms, Proprietary/ Partnership Firms, Private Limited companies/ Public limited companies/Companies registered under the Indian Companies Act 2013, the Contractors registered with Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) in class as mentioned in the table below as per new registration or those having equivalent or more work experience from central or state Government/ semi Government organization/ Central or state Public sector Undertaking, will be allowed subject to condition that, the contractors who are not registered with BMC will have to apply for registering their firms within, three months' time period from the award of contract, otherwise their bid security i.e. EMD (Earnest Money Deposit) will be forfeited/ recovered and a penalty of 0.1 % of contract or Rs.10,000/- whichever is more will be recovered/deducted from contractors payment/ bill by the executing department. Bidding process will comprise three e-Packets (A, B & C).

The details of the works and timelines of Bidding process are mentioned in the table below:

•••

Sr. No.	Name of Work	Tender ID/ Bid No.	Class	EMD in Rs.	Contract period	Tender Scrutiny Fee in Rs.	
1	Design & Construction of Bridge between Madh & Versova in K/W & P/N Wards.	2024_MCGM_1022271_1	Class I(A) and above	Rs.18,00,00,000 (Rs.16,00,00,000 in the form of BG & Rs.2,00,00,000 in online wallet)	36 (Thirty Six) Months (Including Monsoon)	Rs.25,000/- + 18% GST	
2	Design &Construction of Elevated Road for Establishing East West Connectivity Over Khar Subway and Bandra Terminus Connector in H/E and H/W Wards.	2024_MCGM _1023758_	Class I(A) and above	Rs.13,00,00,000 (Rs.11,70,00,000 in the form of BG & Rs.1,30,00,000 in online wallet)	42 (Forty Two) Months (Including Monsoon)	Rs.25,000/- + 18% GST	
Date of Issue of Tender (Start Date)				06/03/2024 from 15:00 Hrs.			
Pre Bid Meeting		13/03/2024 15:00 Hrs. In the Office of Additional Municipal Commissioner (Projects), 2nd Floor, Municipal Head office, Fort, Mumbai- 400001					
Last Date and Time for Sale of e-Tender			20/03/2024 upto 15:00 Hrs.				
Last Date & Time of uploading documents in e- Packet 'A', e- Packet 'B' and Commercial Proposal in e-Packet 'C'			20/03/2024 upto 15:00 Hrs.				
Date & Time of Opening of e- Packet 'A' and Technical e-Packet 'B'		21/03/2024 from 15:00 Hrs.					
Date & Time of opening of e-Tender, e- Packet 'C'		Same will be informed after scrutiny of e-Packet A & B.					
Contact e-mail		che.br@mcgm.gov.in					
	tender copy can be downloaded from D/3163/ADV/2023-2024 AVOID SELF MEDICATION	Mahatender porta	l (https://r	-	gep/app). Sd/- Chief Enginee		

THE HINDU

8



Pop star Rihanna performs at pre-wedding bash

International pop star Rihanna performed her greatest hits on Friday as Bollywood, sports, and business tycoons from India and abroad arrived in Jamnagar for Anant Ambani and Radhika Merchant's pre-wedding festivities. Guests and celebrities who attended the party - themed 'An Evening in Everland' - shared videos of her performance on their social media channels, calling the pop star's renditions "electrifying". According to sources, Ms. Rihanna performed 17 songs. The singer left India on Saturday morning. The Ambani family has lined up other performances over the next two days for their guests.

PM to visit Tamil Nadu for second time in six days

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will visit Tamil Nadu on Monday for the second time in six days. The police have made elaborate security arrangements in the city and the adjoining Chengalpattu district. Mr. Modi will arrive in a special aircraft at the Chennai airport at 2.45 p.m. from Maharashtra. From there, he will take a helicopter to the Kalpakkam helipad, 70 km from Chennai. Between 3.30 p.m. and 4.15 p.m., he will participate in a programme organised by Bharatiya Navhikiya Vidyut Nigam (Bhavini), which is constructing and commissioning the Fast Breeder Reactor (FBR). He will return to the airport at 5 p.m, and then go to YMCA Grounds at Nandanam to address a public meeting.

Spanish woman raped in Jharkhand's Dumka; 3 held

A Spanish woman was allegedly gang-raped in Dumka district of Jharkhand when she was going to Nepal from West Bengal. The incident occurred at Kurumahat in the Hansdiha police station area on March 1 night, when the woman, along with her husband, was resting in a deserted area in a makeshift tent. The couple was on a tour of India on a two-wheeler. Three persons have been arrested in the case. According to police, seven persons assaulted the couple and allegedly raped the woman. Dumka Superintendent of Police Pitambar Singh Kherwar said, "they were taken to the hospital and the doctor said that woman was gang-raped."

On a journey fraught with danger to save her daughter

G. Krishnakumar KOCHI

Prema Kumari, 57, knows how risky a journey to the war-torn Yemen is. But her desire to somehow rescue her 35-year-old daughter Nimisha Priva who is on death row at the Central prison in Yemen's capital Sanaa is such that she is willing to put her own life on the line. Ms. Nimisha remains imprisoned for the alleged murder of a Yemeni national in July 2017.

"I will beg the victim's family to forgive my daughter and to take my life instead. If everything

goes as per plan, I may be able to travel to Yemen next week," her voice choked with grief over phone from Kizhakkambalam, where she has been working as a domestic help for over six years.

Appeal dismissed Ms. Nimisha's family is

hopeful that she will be able to convince the victim's family to accept the blood money and save her. She was sentenced to death by a trial court in Sanaa in 2020 and the Yemen's Supreme Judicial Council dismissed her appeal in November 2023



Prema Kumari

while keeping the option of paying blood money open.

The hurdles before Ms. Kumari's repeated efforts to travel to Yemen were cleared after the Delhi High Court on a plea filed by her and the Save Nim-

isha Priva International Action Council asked the Centre in December last to relax its 2017 notification which barred Indian passport holders from travelling to Yemen. She had submitted an affidavit agreeing to travel to Yemen at her own personal risk without any liability to the government.

Help in negotiations

'She will be accompanied by Samuel Jerome Bhaskaran, a native of Tamil Nadu, who will help her negotiate with the authorities concerned. Mr. Bhaskaran has been working in Ye-

men for over 24 years. We hope to get the flight tickets ready by next week," said Subhash Chandran K. R., a Supreme Court lawyer who represented her in the Delhi High Court.

Tomy Thomas, Nimisha's husband, a daily-wage labourer at Kothamangalam, recalled his conversation with Nimisha over phone two days ago. "We told her not to lose hope as her mother is expected to meet her soon," he said. Their 11-year-old daughter is also eagerly waiting for her mother to return. Mr. Thomas returned from Yemen along with their

daughter following the civil war in Yemen in 2014.

What led to the crime

A native of Kollengode in Palakkad district, Nimisha left for Yemen in 2008 to help her parents. She worked in a few hospitals in Yemen before deciding to start her own clinic in 2015. The family said that differences cropped up with Mahdi, her local partner after she questioned him about alleged embezzlement of funds. She allegedly injected him with sedatives in an attempt to reclaim her passport that he had confiscated and an overdose resulted in his death.

Centre, TIPRA Motha, Tripura govt. sign tripartite agreement

As part of the deal, a committee would be formed to resolve issues of the indigenous people of Tripura, who make up 33% of State's population

Syed Sajjad Ali AGARTALA

he Government of India, the government of Tripura, and the Tipraha Indigenous Progressive Regional Alliance (TIPRA) signed a tripartite agreement on Saturday to address the issues faced by the indigenous people of Tripura, who make up 33% of the population.

The agreement contains the formation of a joint working committee to resolve issues related to the "history, land rights, political rights, economic development, identity, culture, and language" of the indigenous people of the State. TIPRA, also known as TI-PRA Motha, has agreed to refrain from any form of protest until a solution is reached in a timely manner. The agreement



Amit Shah with Manik Saha, Pradyot Debbarma and others during the signing of the agreement in New Delhi, on Saturday. PTI

ment respectively in the agreement. Union Home Minister Amit Shah, Tripura Chief Minister Dr. Manik Saha, and two tribal Ministers of his Cabinet – Bikash Debbarma and Sukla Charan Noatia were present at the signing event.

The agreement signed on Saturday did not specify a timeline for the formation of the joint working committee, but a senior TI-PRA leader stated that the formation of the joint working committee would

The signing of the agreement occurred three days after Mr. Pradyot Manikya launched a fast unto death at Hatai Kotor (formerly Boromura Hills) in west Tripura to protest the Central government's alleged reluctance to provide a constitutional solution to the problems faced by the indigenous people.

Within an hour of starting his protest, he announced that he had received a call from the Ministry and left the venue

'Commissionerate system approved in Ú.P. after CAA stir'

Vijaita Singh NEW DELHI

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath approved the police commissionerate system in two cities of Lucknow and Noida, a few days after protests erupted in the State against the passage of the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) in 2019, says a new book authored by former State Director-General of Police O.P Singh.

Mr. Singh headed the Uttar Pradesh Police from January 1, 2018- January 30, 2020. As many as 22 people were killed in Uttar Pradesh after the CAA was passed by the Parliament on December 9, 2019. Across the country, 83 persons were killed in protests against CAA and the National Register of Citizens (NRC).

The CAA allows citizenship to "undocumented" six non-Muslim communities from Pakistan, Afghanistan and Bangladesh who entered India on or before December 31, 2014. There are apprehensions and fears that the Act, which is vet to be implemented, will benefit non-Muslims excluded from the citizens' register, while excluded Muslims will have to prove their citizenship. The government had earlier informed the Parliament that "till now the Government has not taken any decision to prepare NRC at national level."



O. P. Singh

ityanath. The police had no magisterial powers yet... A city like Lucknow, with a population of nearly 4 million, needed the Commissionerate," he writes in the book Crime, Grime and Gumption, Case Files Of An

The book says that after anti-CAA protests had erupted in Lucknow he was asked by the CM how its recurrence could be prevented.

"Sir, had the Commissionerate system been in operation, we would have contained the agitation far more effectively and in good time. We need a faster mechanism that would allow the police in respond

LUCKNOW The Uttar Pradesh government on Saturday cancelled the Review Officer/ Assistant Review Officer (RO/ARO) preliminary examination conducted by

U.P. scraps

exam over

'paper leak'

Review Officer

the Uttar Pradesh Public Service Commission (UPPSC) on February 11, following allegations of paper leak. The re-examination will now be conducted in the next six months.

"In view of the evidence provided to the government and the report made available by the Commission, it has been instructed by the Chief Minister that the examinations of both sessions of the Review Officer/Assistant Review Officer (Preliminary) Examination, organised by the Public Service Commission on February 11, 2024, be cancelled," reads a statement from the U.P. government.

The government also referred the investigation of the paper leak to the Special Task Force (STF) of the State police to identify individuals involved in the leak. The decision came after numerous complaints regarding certain questions from the exam paper circulating widely on social media. The UPPSC on February 11 conducted the examination at more than 2,000 centres across 58 districts for 411 posts with a whopping 10,76,004 candidates registering for it.

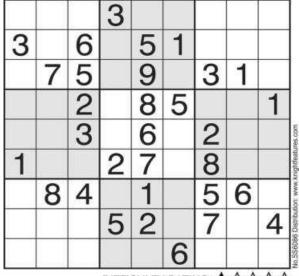
<u>The Hindu Bureau</u>

exchange with CM Yogi Ad-IPS Officer.

ED arrests one accused in Jal Jeevan Mission case

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has taken four-day custody of an accused in the Jal Jeevan Mission case in Rajasthan. The accused has been identified as Piyush Jain. He was arrested on February 29. The probe is based on a case registered by the Jaipur Anti-Corruption Branch. It alleged that Mr. Piyush, and others were involved in giving bribes to public servants. In lieu of the bribes, the officials extended favours like allocating tenders, getting bills cleared, and covering up the irregularities in the works executed by the contractors in respect of various tenders received by them, the ED said.

SUDOKU



DIFFICULTY RATING:

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

З	9	8	5	6	4	2	7	1
1	5	7	9	2	8	4	3	6
4	2	6	1	3	7	9	8	5
5	7	1	6	4	3	8	2	9
9	8	4	2	1	5	7	6	3
2	6	3	7	8	9	1	5	4
8	1	5	3	9	2	6	4	7
7	4	9	8	5	6	3	1	2
6	3	2	4	7	1	5	9	8

CM YK

signed by TIPRA founder be done next week.

and royal scion Pradyot He added that the com-Bikram Manikya Deb Barmittee will include reprema, party President Bijoy sentatives from the Minis-Kumar Hrangkhawl and the Tripura try, Leader of the Opposition government, TIPRA and in the State Assembly Anithe Indigenous People's mesh Debbarma on behalf Front of Tripura (IPFT), which is an alliance partnof their party. Chief Secretary J.K. Sinha and Addier of the BJP in the ruling tional Secretary (NE) of the coalition.

Celebrations broke out Ministry of Home Affairs Piyush Goyal represented in several places following the Tripura government the signing of the agreeand the Central government.

for Delhi.

TIPRA has become a major player in State politics with its demand for Greater Tipraland or a separate State for the indigenous population.

In response to the tripartite agreement, CPI(M) leader and former Deputy Speaker of the State Assembly Pabitra Kar stated that the episode was orchestrated with an eve on

the upcoming election.

"Post-CAA protests set the tone for a face-to-facein quick time," he informed Mr. Adityanath. The CM said he was ready to give the proposal a serious thought and asked to

expedite the paperwork. The proposal was approved by the State Cabinet on January 13, 2020 for Lucknow and Noida. The arrangement gives powers usually entrusted to District Magistrates, such as imposing a curfew and use of fire, to the police.

Mating calls of endangered hangul indicate record uptick in population

<u>Peerzada Ashiq</u> SRINAGAR

Kashmir's highly shy and sensitive animal, hangul, which is listed as a critically endangered indigenous species of deer, has reported one of the healthiest rutting or mating seasons in the previous autumn. Experts suggested the roars or calls made by hanguls during rutting indicate that their number will cross 300 this spring, the first time in more than three decades.

"The calls recorded by the wildlife staff during the rutting season in October last year were healthy compared to previous years. In fact, the Dachigam National Park, home to hangul, was closed between September 25 to October 18 for visitors to allow unhindered rutting," Rashid Naqash, Regional Wildlife Warden, Kashmir, told The Hindu.



Rising numbers: A pair of Kashmiri hangul spotted at the Dachigam National Park on Srinagar on February 27. ANI

Since 1947, the population of hangul, which is the State animal of J&K, witnessed a sharp decline. In 1947, around 2,000 were spotted and the number fell to 384 by 1968.

The hangul population was estimated at a mere 197 in 2004, touching the lowest of 183 in 2015 and showed a steady increase to 261 in 2021, according to Wildlife department figures. "Multiple disturbances,

tion, did disturb the habitat of hangul. However, we are able to provide a better environment now. We plan to secure all corridors, especially the Wangath-Naranag corridor in the north. We are coming up with a mechanism to ensure that the groups of hangul move safely on the highways in Ganderbal by regulating traffic," Mr. Nagash said.

areas and human interven-

The official figure suggested there are 19.2 males including stress on forest per 100 females "which is much lower than the ideal ratio of 40-50 males per 100 females".

Dr. Khursheed Ahmad, head of the Wildlife Sciences Faculty of Forestry at the Sher-i-Kashmir Agricultural and Science Technology-Kashmir, has identified a few threats that the hangul faces.

"Non-availability of water in the near vicinity might have forced the hangul, especially lactating females in summer, to move towards the disturbed habitats in and outside Dachigam. This might as well be acting as one of the factors for fawn falling prey to predators or even sheep dogs," Mr. Ahmad said. The J&K Wildlife department has identified 10 hangul sites "to provide a protection mechanism to ensure sustenance".

A captive-breeding facility for the endangered species has been set up at Shikargah Tral.

•••

of Myanmar Army in rebel-held areas: MP

Didn't see presence

Kallol Bhattacherjee NEW DELHI

An Indian MP who visited rebel-held areas of western Myanmar said that the area that he visited is part of the Chin state of Myanmar that has been liberated by the Arakan army, one of the several ethnic armed organisations (EAOs) that are waging an armed struggle against the military junta of Myanmar.

K. Vanlalvena, a member of Rajya Sabha from the Mizo National Front (MNF) was driven around 10 kilometres inside the Chin state where he inspected the condition of the Kaladan Multi Modal Transit Transport Project (KMMTTP), which is supported by the Ministry of External Affairs, and was hosted by a commander of the Arakan Army that has recently captured the route that the India-funded

project is expected to take. "I went there to inspect the road construction that has been delayed. In the beginning I thought that the Myanmar government's Army would be there. But I did not see a single person of the Myanmar Army. We saw only the Arakan Army," said Mr. Vanlalvena stating that he had been trying to visit the place for a long time to inspect the condition of the KMMTTP.

The MP said that his visit to the rebel-held areas of Myanmar was the result of efforts that stretched back at least two years. The Arakan Army snatched Paletwa from the control of the junta's forces in January.

Ever since, they have spread out from Arakan (Rakhine) to the Chin state's border with Mizoram, which is over hundred kilometres from Paletwa.

MOSCOW

Navalny's mother visits son's grave after funeral draws thousands



The mother of dead Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny visited his grave on Saturday, a day after thousands of Russians risked arrest to pay tribute to the anti-corruption campaigner at his funeral. Lyudmila Navalnaya visited her son's grave at the Borisovo cemetery in southern Moscow early on Saturday morning. AFP

BERLIN

German Army probes possible wiretap of Ukraine war talks



The German Defence Ministry was checking whether a confidential videoconference on the Ukraine war had been wiretapped after a recording was posted on Russian social media. A state-backed channel of Russia on Friday posted a 38-minute recording of what she claimed were German officers discussing striking Crimea. AFP

DHAKA

3 arrested in connection with fire at shopping mall in Bangladesh



The Bangladesh police have arrested three persons, including two owners of a restaurant, in connection with the massive fire that broke out at a shopping mall in the capital Dhaka that killed at least 46 people. More than 20 others sustained severe injuries by the devastating fire that broke out on Thursday night. PTI

PORT-AU-PRINCE

Haitian gang leader vows to 'fight' Prime Minister, violence surges



Haitian gang leader Jimmy Cherizier, also known as Barbecue, warned he would keep trying to oust Prime Minister Ariel Henry, and asked families to keep children from going to school to "avoid collateral damages" as violence surges in the capital. Cherizier is a former police officer who heads an alliance of gangs. REUTERS

U.S. airdrops thousands of meals into Gaza Strip

Associated Press WASHINGTON

U.S. military C-130 cargo planes on March 2 dropped food in pallets over Gaza, three U.S. officials said, two days after more than 100 Palestinians who had surged to pull goods off an aid convoy were killed during a chaotic en-

counter with Israeli troops. Three planes from Air Forces Central dropped 66 bundles containing about 38,000 meals into Gaza at 8:30 a.m. EST, according to two of the officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity before a public announcement.

The airdrop is expected to be the first of many announced by President Joe Biden on March 1. The aid will be coordinated with Jordan, which has also conducted airdrops to deliver food to Gaza.

At least 115 Palestinians were killed and hundreds more wounded in the February 29 attack as they scrambled for aid, the Health Ministry in Hamasruled Gaza said. Israel says many of the dead were trampled in a chaotic crush for the food aid, and

Many Palestinians shot at Gaza aid point: UN

Israeli forces opened fire near an aid convoy where thousands of Palestinians had gathered for food supplies; thousands of people in north Gaza 'are at risk of dying from dehydration and malnutrition', says Gaza Health Ministry; malnutrition among children is acute, says WHO

Israeli troops opened fire as

Palestinian civilians scrambled

for food supplies during a

chaotic incident in Gaza City

Agence France-Presse GAZA STRIP

UN team has reported seeing "a large num- \square ber" of gunshot wounds among Gazans after Israeli troops opened fire near an aid convoy, an incident which highlighted near-famine conditions after nearly five months of war.

On Saturday, the Health Ministry in the Hamas-run territory said thousands of people in north Gaza "are at risk of dying from dehydration and malnutrition", and the World Health Organization said it had delivered treatment for 50 acutely malnourished children in the north.



Shattered faith: A Palestinian youth stands next to a mosque that was destroyed in Israeli strikes in Deir El-Balah in central Gaza on Saturday. AFP

The Ministry on Friday reported a total of 10 children had died of "malnutrition and dehydration".

on Thursday that the ministry said killed 115 people and wounded more than 750.

The Israeli military said a "stampede" occurred when thousands of Gazans surrounded the aid convoy, leading to dozens of deaths and injuries, including some who were run over. An Israeli source acknowledged troops had opened fire on the crowd, believing it "posed a threat".

The Israeli armed forces spokesman, Rear Admiral Daniel Hagari, said troops had fired "a few warning shots" to try to disperse a "mob" that had "ambushed" the aid trucks. The aid convoy deaths pushed the number of Palestinian war dead in Gaza to

30,320, mostly women and children, according to Gaza's Health Ministry.

On Friday, a UN team visited some of the wounded from the aid incident, in Gaza City's Al-Shifa Hospital, and saw a "large number of gunshot wounds", UN chief Antonio Guterres's spokesman said. The hospital received 70 of

the dead, and around 200 wounded were still there during the team's visit, spokesman Stephane Dujarric said.

He was not aware of the team examining those killed, but said "from what they saw in terms of the patients who were alive getting treatments is that there was a large number of gunshot wounds".

U.S. military forces destroy Houthi surface-to-air missile in Yemen

Agence France-Presse WASHINGTON

U.S. forces struck and destroyed a Houthi surface-to-air missile in Yemen on Friday after deciding it posed an "imminent threat" to American aircraft, the U.S. Central Command in West Asia announced.

The Iran-backed Houthis, who control much of war-torn Yemen, have been attacking shipping in the Red Sea since November in a campaign they say is in solidarity with Palestinians in Gaza amid the Israel-Hamas war.

The United States is spearheading a naval coalition to protect vessels in the vital waterway, and has also conducted air strikes in Houthi territory, both on its own and alongside Britain.

Support from afar



Iran counts ballots in vote seen favouring conservatives

Agence France-Presse TEHRAN

Iran began counting ballots on Saturday after a vote for parliament and a key clerical body,

Statement about ownership particulars about newspaper "THE HINDU WEEKLY as required to be published under Section 19-D Sub-Section (b) of the Press and Registration of Books Act read with Rule 8 of the Registration of

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its troops fired warning shots after the crowd moved toward them in a threatening way.

White House national spokesperson security John Kirby said on March 1 that the airdrops were being planned to deliver emergency humanitarian assistance in a safe way to people on the ground.

The C-130 cargo plane is a widely used military jet to deliver aid to remote places due to its ability to land in austere environments and cargo capacity.

Citizens of Yemen march in the Houthi-run capital of Sanaa on Friday in support of Palestinians amid the ongoing battles between Israel and Hamas in Gaza. AFP

Milei vows to press with reforms irrespective of political support

Agence France-Presse BUENOS AIRES

Argentina's libertarian President Javier Milei, in his first policy speech to parliament on Friday, said he would push his package of sweeping economic reforms whether or not legislators back it.

"We are going to change the country for good... with or without the support of political leaders, with all the legal resources of the executive," Mr. Milei told lawmakers, who have stalled his project of deregulation and budget cuts.

"If you look for conflict, you will have conflict," he told them.

Mr. Milei offered a recap of his first 82 days in office, in which he devalued the peso more than 50%, slashed state subsidies for fuel and transport, cut tens of thousands of public service jobs, and scrapped hundreds of rules in his bid to deregulate the eco-

YK



Fresh start: President of Argentina Javier Milei greets lawmakers during the opening session of the Argentine Congress on Friday. GETTY IMAGES

them poorer.

In recent weeks, Mr. Milei

has reached out to influential

provincial governors, party

leaders and former Presidents

nomy of the country. "I ask for patience and trust," Mr. Milei said.

Planned reforms

Many of his planned reforms to forge a "new social conface challenges in court, with tract" for the country, based more than 60 lawsuits under on ten principles, including a way by labour unions, busi-"non-negotiable" balanced Budget, "inviolable" private ness chambers and NGOs, while Argentina has seen masproperty, and public spending sive protests by citizens who reduced to the "historic" level fear Mr. Milei's plans will leave of 25% of GDP.

PPP's Bugti elected unopposed as CM of Balochistan in Pakistan

Press Trust of India

KARACHI

The Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) candidate Sarfaraz Bugti was elected unopposed as the new Chief Minister of the restive Balochistan province on Saturday.

Mr. Bugti had stepped down as the caretaker federal Interior Minister in the interim government to contest the provincial Assembly elections on a PPP ticket in the February 8 general elections.

The senior politician also enjoyed the support of the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) when he submitted his nomination papers with Assembly Secretary Tahir Shah on Friday.

No other candidate filed any nomination paper for the Chief Minister's post till the given deadline on Friday following which Mr. Bugti was declared winner unopposed. Mr. Bugti faces a tough chal-



Sarfaraz Bugti

lenge as the new Chief Minister of a province frequently hit by terrorism and separatist violence and an ongoing crisis in the coastal port city of Gwadar and its adjoining areas which have been hit hard by heavy rainfall and flash floods.

PTI's bid for President

Meanwhile, the Sunni Ittehad Council (SIC) backed by Imran Khan's party on Saturday named the Pashtunkhwa Milli Awami Party chief Mahmood

with local media estimating a low turnout and conservatives expected to dominate.

Friday's elections were the first since widespread protests triggered by the September 2022 death in police custody of Mahsa Amini, 22, an Iranian Kurd.

State TV reported early Saturday the "start of vote counting" after polling stations closed at midnight. Voting hours had been extended several times during the day.

Local Fars news agency estimated turnout at "more than 4%", among 61 millionvoters.

Khan Achakzai as their presi-

dential candidate against Asif

Ali Zardari, the joint nominee

Mr. Achakzai, 75, was nomi-

nated for the post against the

Pakistan Peoples Party's se-

nior leader and former presi-

dent Asif Ali Zardari, Geo News

Mr. Zardari, 68, is a joint

candidate of the PML-N and

other political parties part of

the coalition set to form a go-

Pashtunkhwa Milli Awami Par-

ty (PKMAP), won the National

Assembly seat from the

NA-266 constituency in Balo-

Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf

(PTI) founder and former

Prime Minister Imran Khan,

who is incarcerated in Rawal-

pindi's Adiala jail, has urged

his party's lawmakers to vote

for the veteran politician, The

News International reported.

Kila

Mr. Achakzai, the chief of

vernment in the Centre.

Abdullah-cum-Chaman.

reported.

chistan's

•••

of the PML-N and the PPP.

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THE HINDU

SCIENCE

Predatory fish use rapid colour changes to coordinate attacks

The Hindu Bureau

Striped marlin are some of the fastest animals on the planet and one of the ocean's top predators. When hunting in groups, individual marlin will take turns attacking schools of prey fish one at a time. Now a new study (Current Biology) explains how they might coordinate this turntaking style of attack on their prey to avoid injuring each other. The key is rapid colour changes.

Studying the way rapid colour change as groups of marlin hunted schools of sardines, the authors found that the attacking marlin 'lit up' and became far brighter than others as it made its attack and the colour rapidly returned to its 'non-bright' colouration after the attack. The researchers used drones to study this phenomenon.

Reliable signal

contrast of the stripes on The video footage revealed the two attacking marlins that the stripes on indivicompared to a randomly

dual marlins got far brightchosen marlin that was not er as a fish moved in for an attacking. attack, and dimmed once

Their analysis confirms that the predatory fish rapidly change colour, suggesting that the colour change might serve as a reliable signal of an individual's motivation to go in for an attack.

Dual purpose

"Colour change in predators is rare, but especially so in group-hunting predators," Dr. Alicia Burns of Humboldt University, Ber-

lin, Germany and the cor-They now hope to exresponding author of the plore this idea, alongside paper said in a release. other questions. "Although it is known that For example, they want marlin can change colour, to find out whether marlins use their colour-changthis is the first time it's been linked to hunting or ing abilities in other conany social behaviour." texts. The authors are

curious to know whether The discovery suggests that marlins have more they still change colour complicated communicawhen hunting solo and tion channels than had how the changes affect been suspected. The retheir prey. searchers propose that the colour changes might even to similar colour changes serve a dual purpose of in other predatory species

confusing their prey.

They are also looking in-

of fish.

A case for life-saving modern contraception

Evidence suggests that the most common modern methods still in use in the country are female sterilisation, which is permanent, or male condoms, which are often incorrectly used thereby reducing their effectiveness

Jaydeep Tank

he article on high-risk pregnancies in The Hindu on February 17 astutely drew public attention to a matter of great concern to the obstetrics and gynaecology community, but often overlooked by the rest of the country. India has great strides in decreasing maternal mortality - from an MMR of 130/100,000 live births in 2016-2018 to a MMR of 97/100,000 in 2018-2020 - by ensuring an increase in institutionalised deliveries and antenatal care and improving women's access to reproductive healthcare services. However, India still has a long way to go. While we celebrate our achievements, we must confront the challenges that persist, ensuring that every pregnancy is safe, and every woman is assured of the best possible care.

Acknowledging that India is now the most populous country in the world.

Towards increased birth spacing

Short birth spacing - less than 18 months between two pregnancies accounts for 31% of high-risk pregnancies

A gap of two-three years between pregnancies is recommended to give a woman enough time to recover, regain her health, strength, and nourishment

they swam away.

marlins.

To explore if the chang-

ing colours were to com-

municate with one anoth-

er, they analysed 12

high-resolution video clips,

each containing two sepa-

rate attacks on a school of

sardines by two different

They also quantified the

Currently condoms, combined oral contraceptive pills, emergency contraceptive pills, intrauterine contraceptive device, injectable contraceptive, and contraceptive tablet centchroman are offered to women

The most common modern methods still used in India are female sterilisation (which is permanent) and male condoms

Two new methods — a subdermal contraceptive implant, and the subcutaneous injectable contraceptive (DMPA-SC) have been introduced in the public health programmes of a few States

The two new methods can prevent pregnancy for three years (subcutaneous implants) and three-four months (DMPA-SC)

adverse outcomes at 19%. These risks are disproportionately higher among women with limited or no education. In a telling comment, the researchers noted in the article, "nearly half of Indian women were not using contraception to delay their next pregnancv". This is a stark reminder of a critical gap in our healthcare and educational systems: the underutilisation of continuous, consistent, effective, modern contraception. Women and their partners need more information about and access to modern contraceptive products to help them choose what's best



Many choices: The Indian family planning programme has for many years been offering a basket of contraception choices

But there is lack of information and understanding among the end users, and there is limited engagement with communities

Women do not feel comfortable and empowered to make their choices. Also, misconceptions, negative experiences, misinformation, and taboos, often fuel hesitancy

er, regain her health, strength, and nourishment before she is ready to give birth to and take care of another child. Beyond the health benefits, when women exercise autonomy and agency over their bodies and reproductive decisions, they are stepping into realm of empowerment that has ripple effects beyond themselves . The Indian family plan-

contraceptive device (IUCD), an injectable contraceptive (medroxyprogesterone acetate or MPA) and contraceptive tablet centchroman (Chhaya). Additionally, two new methods – a subdermal contraceptive implant (HI) and the subcutaneous iniectable contraceptive

modern methods still in use in the country are female sterilisation (which is permanent), and male condoms (which are often incorrectly used - thus reducing their effectiveness - and women may not always have the choice to use them). Awareness and evidence-based information are key to encouraging people to choose the best method for themselves. However, a lack of information and understanding among the end users, and limited engagement with communities can mean that people do not feel comfortable and empowered to make these choices. Misconceptions, negative experiences, misinformation, and taboos, often fuel hesitancy. Better counselling and stronger communication are imperative.

that the most common

And that is where medical providers come in. As trusted credible sources of information, it is incumbent on medical providers to go the extra mile to ensure that people have accu

NAPSHOUS



Study finds 26 compounds responsible for orange flavour

Researchers have discovered key compounds responsible for the flavour of oranges. By evaluating more than 179 juice samples, researchers identified 26 compounds vital to orange flavour, including seven esters that differentiate it from mandarin flavour. Genetic analyses revealed a previously undescribed alcohol acyltransferase gene responsible for producing these esters, pointing to a potential DNA marker to predict flavour attributes of disease-resistant, orange-like hybrids.



Persistent inflammation in children increases deaths

Scientists have delineated how severe cases of malnutrition can have lasting negative impacts on hospitalised children, even after recovery. Their research involving 437 children in southern Africa also hints that long-term inflammation may help improve outcomes and lower the risk of death in the months following hospitalisation. Almost 45% of deaths among those under five years of age are linked to undernutrition, which has prompted the UN to aim to end malnutrition worldwide by the year 2030.



10

most States have begun to see an optimal total fertility rate to ensure a more stable population growth. But pregnancy is not always easy to go through and abounds with risk factors. The study referenced in the mentioned piece illustrates that on average across India 49.1% of pregnancies are high-risk. Short birth spacing - less than 18 months between two pregnancies – tops the list making up for 31% of the contributing risk factors, followed by previous

for their bodies. Pregnancy is an intense physiological experience. A gap of two-three years between pregnancies is recommended to give a woman enough time to recov-

ning programme has for many years effectively offered a basket of choices for modern methods - and has reached many milestones in reducing what is known as the unmet need across most parts of the country. In the public sector, the current basket includes condoms, combined oral contraceptive pills, emergency contraceptive pills, intrauterine

(DMPA-SC) - have been introduced in the public health programmes of a few States (these two methods though aren't available in the private sector just yet). They are easy to administer and can prevent pregnancy for three years (subcutaneous implants) and three-four months (DMPA-SC) at a time thus making them convenient and discreet choices. All these methods are safe, high-quality, and reversible.

But evidence suggests

rate information that can help them exercise their right to choose. Contraception and family planning are an essential part of a woman's freedom, her agency, her bodily autonomy – her empowerment. When we make sure our women are empowered. we can unleash and realise the full potential of Nari Shakti.

(Jaydeep Tank is the president of The Federation of Obstetric and Gynaecological Societies of India (FOG-SI))

Potential therapeutic target found for rheumatoid arthritis

Scientists have made new discoveries about how an inflammatory form of cell death may drive rheumatoid arthritis, according to experiments involving mice and samples from patients. The findings implicate a protein named ALOX5 as a key player in this autoimmune disorder and suggest it could serve as both a treatment target and a potential marker of active disease and remission. T cells from patients contained high amounts of the enzyme ALOX5.

Managing our resources with Artificial Intelligence



These days, the term Artificial Intelligence (AI) seems to be everywhere. The public has come to view it with mixed perceptions. On one side, it is a problem-solver: AI has helped in monitoring heart problems and eye conditions and offered treatment options; AI predicts protein structure and aids in the development of new drug molecules. Likewise, it predicts cyclones, monsoon strengths, etc. On the dark side are fears that jobs may be lost to thinking machines that work 24/7 and do not need a Diwali vacation, and may intrude on your privacy and misuse your data. But nobody doubts that AI will help us

YK

problems that require the analysis of huge data. As India's development gathers momentum, we

are faced with the eventuality of resource limitations. We may need much more than we have. This is especially true of water - every year we see floods in parts of the country and drought in others. Engineers have long dreamt of building links between our rivers to mitigate these problems. But uncertainties over the effects of such large-scale changes have stalled many initiatives.

Linking rivers

For the nation's planners, minimising the water deficit has become a critical goal in this age of climate change and unpredictable weather. Can AI tools be used to make predictions on how to bring about change? Computational



Interlinking paths: The proposed Pennar-Palar-Cauvery link canal connects the Mahanadi and Godavari rivers with the deficit rivers further south. FILE PHOTO

modelers at the IIT-ISM, Dhanbad and the NITs in Tripura and Goa have done just this while examining the proposed Pennar-Palar-Cauvery link canal.

This canal is part of a scheme to connect the flood-prone Mahanadi and Godavari rivers with the 'deficit' rivers further south. The link canal would aid half-a-million

hectares in a chain of districts, from Nellore in Andhra Pradesh to Cuddalore in Tamil Nadu. Such proposals have a complex set of objectives, which can be modeled in the search for maximum benefits to the most people.

Fulfilling objectives

than one objective optimally. For example, a farmer may wish to get the maximum yield of his crop with the minimum use of water. He would tweak his system to a point where he could no longer improve one objective without worsening the other. The IIT-NIT team has

In a multi-objective model, presented a model that the goal is to achieve more aims to improve the re-

turns from farms, without depleting groundwater or wasting the water in rivers and reservoirs (Agricultural Water Management, v-279, 2023). They used data that has been collected over the years by the National Water Development Agency on (a) water levels before and after monsoons in the 1.2 lakh wells and tube wells in these districts; (b) crop-sowing patterns; (c) prevailing minimum support price and the cost and benefits to farmers. This AI-based modeling effort suggests that favourable outcomes will come with a few adjustments to the choice of crops that are grown in the two seasons of July and November. Collecting more detailed data will help such AI-based models in making more focused predictions. (The article was written

in collaboration with Sushil Chandani, who works in *molecular modelling)*

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Question Corner

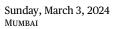
Foetal growth

Is placental oxygen level linked to foetal brain development?

Oxygenation levels in the placenta, formed during the last three months of foetal development, are an important predictor of cortical growth (development of the outermost layer of the brain or cerebral cortex) and are likely a predictor of childhood cognition and behaviour, a study has found. In the latest study, researchers used MRI to image placental growth. The use of MRI allows researchers to study neurodevelopmental disorders very early on in life. Poor nutrition, smoking, cocaine use,

chronic hypertension, anaemia, and diabetes may result in foetal growth restriction and may cause problems in the development of the placenta. If the placenta does not develop properly, the foetal brain may not get enough oxygen and nutrients, which may affect childhood cognition and behaviour. The study revealed that a healthy placenta in the third trimester particularly impacts the cortex and the prefrontal cortex, regions of the child's brain that are important for learning and memory.

Readers may send their questions / answers to questioncorner@thehindu.co.in





The resolutions against Centre's border plan

Why have two northeast States opposed the scrapping of the Free Movement **Regime with Myanmar?**

Rahul Karmakar

The story so far:

he Mizoram Assembly on February 28 and the Nagaland Assembly on March 1 adopted a resolution to oppose the Centre's decision to fence the 1,643 km long porous India-Myanmar border and scrap the Free Movement Regime (FMR) agreement that allows cross-border movement up to 16 km without travel documents.

What led to the resolutions?

At an official event in Guwahati on January 20, Home Minister Amit Shah said the Centre has decided to fence the India-Myanmar border and scrap the FMR implemented in 2018 as part of India's Act East policy for cultural, business, and terrestrial connectivity to Southeast Asia and beyond. The Centre decided to suspend the FMR ostensibly to thwart illegal migration of people, the smuggling of drugs, arms and ammunition, and the cross-border movement of extremists. The decision was influenced by the Manipur government's push – after the ethnic violence between the Meiteis and the Kuki-Zo people began on May 3, 2023 - for fencing the border to stop

Mizoram and Nagaland feel a fence on the border would divide their ancestral land and alienate people with blood ties; the Centre says fencing will check cross-border movement of extremists and drugs

Myanmar nationals from settling in the State illegally. Arunachal Pradesh and Manipur welcomed the Centre's decision but Mizoram and Nagaland, the other two States bordering Myanmar, opposed

it because of the ethnic composition along the border "imposed by the British rulers" and their age-old social, cultural, and trade links.

Why is the India-Myanmar border in focus? India has had an on-off diplomatic relationship

with Myanmar since 1948 when the latter attained independence from the British. India's border districts absorbed waves of refugees following military coups and pro-democracy movements in Myanmar in the 1960s, 1980s, and after February 2021. The growing Chinese influence in Myanmar made New Delhi establish warmer relationships with Yangon (Nyapyidaw later), but certain issues remained. The areas of Myanmar bordering India are controlled by ethnic militias and extremist groups such as the Arakan Army, Chin National Front, and the National Socialist Council of Nagaland (Khaplang), some of which have sheltered northeast-based outfits such as the United Liberation Front of Asom. These outfits have carried out hit-and-run operations in India. Although the Myanmar border is guarded by the paramilitary Assam Rifles, the terrain and lack of fencing are said to have made it difficult to check the movement of extremists and the trafficking of drugs, arms, and other contraband items.

What will Gaganyaan change for India?

What are some of the goals laid down by the Indian Space Research Organisation? Why is a crewed flight technologically ambitious? How many test flights are scheduled before the space mission with a crew takes place?

Gaganyaan

India's self-

humans to

instead of

relying on

expensive

contracts

launch

services

with foreign

sending

space,

Vasudevan Mukunth

The story so far:

n February 27, Prime Minister Narendra Modi publicised the final shortlist of candidates to be astronauts on board the maiden human spaceflight mission - called Gaganyaan of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO). Assuming two important test flights this year and the next are successful, the first crewed flight of the mission is scheduled for 2025.

What is Gaganyaan?

Gaganyaan is the name of the ISRO mission to send Indian astronauts to low-earth orbit for a short duration, onboard an Indian launch vehicle. Technically, it is a demonstration mission: it will test various technologies required for human spaceflight, which remains the most complicated form of spaceflight, and demonstrate India's familiarity with their production, qualification, and use. Last year, Prime Minister Narendra Modi "directed" ISRO to have an indigenous space station by 2035 and land an Indian on the moon by 2040. While its most recent missions have reinforced ISRO's reputation as a reliable launch provider also capable of flying sophisticated interplanetary missions, including Chandrayaan-3, the two new goals are technologically even more ambitious.

Further, ISRO will attempt to execute them together with future moon missions. Chandrayaan-3 concluded the first phase of ISRO's lunar exploration programme. The second phase begins with a joint mission with Japan to land a rover on the moon and another to collect a lunar soil sample and bring it back to earth. To these ends, the Indian government has



Scaling heights: Prime Minister Narendra Modi with the astronaut-designates at the Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre (VSSC) on February 27. PTI

divvied up spaceflight and services-related responsibilities that once rested solely with ISRO will establish to two new offices. They are the New Space India Ltd. (NSIL: to commercialise space sufficiency in technologies) and the Indian National Space Promotion and Authorization Centre (IN-SPACe; to authorise space activities in all sectors). ISRO also set up a coordinating body for Gaganyaan called the Human Space Flight Centre (HSFC).

What are the components of Gaganyaan? Gaganyaan comprises the following components aside from the HSFC:

The Launch Vehicle Mark-3: The LVM-3 is the launch vehicle. Formerly called the GSLV Mk-III, it is a three-stage rocket. The first stage comprises of two solid-fuel boosters strapped to the rocket core. The second stage is powered by two liquid-fuelled and clustered Vikas 2 engines. The third stage has the CE-20 indigenous cryogenic engine with liquid hydrogen and liquid oxygen as fuel and oxidiser, respectively.

The orbital module: The 8.2-tonne orbital module is the object the LVM-3 rocket will launch and place in low-earth orbit. It consists of the crew module and the service module. The crew module can house up to three astronauts for a week. It includes parachutes to slow its descent to the ground once it descends from orbit; an environmental control and life-support system (ECLSS; to control the temperature, breathing environment, waste disposal, fire protection, etc.); and the crew escape system, which the astronauts can use to escape in case the rocket malfunctions during its ascent. The service module contains the propulsion system required to raise the orbital module's altitude once it separates from the rocket and later to propel it back towards the earth.

The crew: Of the first four astronaut candidates, Prashant Nair, Ajit Krishnan, and Angad Pratap are group captains and Shubanshu Shukla is a wing commander, all in the Indian Air Force (IAF). When Gaganyaan was approved, the IAF prepared a longlist of candidates, who were trained at the IAF's Institute of Aerospace Medicine. A subsequent shortlist of candidates were sent to Russia for advanced training. The crew module will include a gynoid (feminine robot) named 'Vyommitra' fit with sensors to track the effects of radiation and weightlessness monitor capsule conditions, and sound alarms in the event of an impending emergency, aside from being able to perform some other tasks.

How was the mission put together?

ISRO had realised many of the underlying technologies by the time the Union Cabinet approved Gaganyaan in 2018. Post-approval, it proceeded to human-rate many of them, that is, ensure their reliability met the minimum thresholds for human spaceflight.

It had already conducted the 'Space Capsule Recovery Experiment' (SRE) in 2007 and the 'Crew-module Atmospheric Re-entry Experiment' (CARE) in 2014. In 2007, a satellite placed in orbit earlier descended from an altitude of 635 km to splash into the Bay of Bengal. In 2014, a prototype of the module was launched onboard an LVM-3 rocket. It separated at an altitude of 126 km, descended until 80 km with retrograde thrusters, and finally with parachutes into the Bay of Bengal. Together, SRE and CARE tested the module's separation mechanism, heat shield, braking system, parachutes, floatation devices (in the water), and retrieval procedures. ISRO conducted a similar test on October 21 last year - a crew module was launched on a small rocket before being ejected using an 'emergency abort' command, followed by testing its descent and retrieval.

In October 2023, ISRO chairman S. Somanath told The Hindu there was no domestic capability to manufacture the crew module and that it will have to be procured "from outside". He also said ISRO's hope to source technologies related to the ECLSS from abroad didn't fructify, forcing the organisation's engineers to develop them internally. Other major components, including the engines and the rocket stages, underwent similar tests of their own until ISRO could sign off on their reliability. This has happened through a series of tests, simulations, and quality-control exercises. For example, ISRO said on February 21 it had finished testing four CE-20 engines for 8,810 seconds in all, in conditions mimicking those during the flight.

What will Gaganyaan achieve?

The birth of NSIL and IN-SPACe followed wide-ranging reforms of the space sector. They were joined by the National Geospatial Policy 2022, the Indian Space Policy 2023, and the Telecommunications Act 2023. On February 21, in a fillip to India's nascent space startups scene, the Cabinet also cleared 49% to 100% automatic foreign direct investment in space services and spaceflight. The Space Policy in particular provides an overview of what the Indian space programme will aim for in the coming decades as India joins a host of countries going to space, the moon, and beyond while conducting scientific, commercial, and exploratory missions. This new 'space race' extends geopolitical boundaries drawn on the earth into outer space. The result is a heavy premium on the human presence of different nationalities for longer durations in space and on the moon.

Against this backdrop, Gaganyaan will establish India's self-sufficiency vis-à-vis sending humans to space, on timelines it can control, instead of relying on expensive contracts with foreign launch services - and in step with other efforts to represent India in the final frontier.



What do the resolutions say?

Much of India's present-day northeast was temporarily under Burmese occupation until the British pushed them out in the 1800s. The victors and the vanquished signed the Treaty of Yandaboo in 1826, leading to the current alignment of the boundary between India and Burma, later renamed Myanmar. The border divided people of the same ethnicity and culture -specifically the Nagas of Nagaland and Manipur and the Kuki-Chin-Mizo communities of Manipur and Mizoram - without their consent. Asserting the right of the Mizo-Chin people to live together, Mizoram's Home Minister K. Sapdanga, moving the resolution, said a fence would divide their ancestral land and alienate people with blood ties. Nagaland's Deputy Chief Minister, Y. Patton, said while moving the resolution in the State Assembly that the Centre's move would disrupt the age-old ties of the Naga people living on both sides of the international border. Mr. Sapdanga belongs to the Zoram People's Movement, a party said to have been backed by the BJP. Mr. Patton is a key leader of the BJP, a minor partner in the coalition headed by the Nationalist Democratic Progressive Party.

What impact will the resolutions have?

In March 2021, the Supreme Court said there was no harm in State Legislative Assemblies adopting resolutions against central laws like the Citizenship (Amendment) Act. It said that such resolutions are merely "opinions" of the majority members of an Assembly and do not have the force of law. Some of the northeast States have adopted several resolutions over the decades but these have had little impact apart from reflecting the sentiments of the people, although a section of Mizos in "dry" Mizoram are not averse to fencing the India-Myanmar border primarily because of the inflow of drugs. Mizoram Chief Minister Lalduhoma had said earlier that his government does not have the authority to stop the Centre from fencing the border and scrapping the FMR. But security experts say a hostile terrain, issues of logistics and connectivity, and affinities among the people will make it difficult to fence the border.

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Why did the Court penalise Patanjali?

Is the Drugs and Magic Remedies (Objectionable Advertisements) Act, 1954 ineffective to stop misleading advertising campaigns on medicines? What has the court ruled? How harmful are the 'miracle cures' being offered by the company for diseases such as diabetes?

Limitations

in the law

companies

unscathed

like Patanjali

allow

to go

despite

repeated

offences'

<u>Saumya Kalia</u>

The story so far:

n February 27, the Supreme Court restrained Patanjali Ayurved from discrediting allopathy in its campaigns, and from advertising products that claim to cure chronic conditions. Patanjali's ads present its products to people as a 'permanent relief', which is "misleading" and "a violation of the law", the Bench remarked, citing provisions of the Drugs and Magic Remedies (Objectionable Advertisements) Act, 1954 (DMR&OA) and its Rules. The Bench also issued a contempt notice against Patanjali Ayurved (co-founded by yoga guru Baba Ramdev) and Managing Director Acharya Balkrishna for failing to adhere to directions passed last November.

What is the case?

The Indian Medical Association (IMA) in 2022 filed a petition in response to a Patanjali advert titled: "Save yourself and the country from the misconceptions spread by pharma and medical industry." The petition presented two grievances - that the company is denigrating allopathy through a "continuous, systematic, and unabated spread of misinformation", while making exaggerated claims about its drugs which are purportedly based on "scientific,



Misleading the public: A Patanjali store in Ahmedabad, India in 2019. REUTERS

evidence-based medicines". In December 2022, Nepal's drug regulator blacklisted Patanjali's Divya Pharmacy for failing to comply with WHO's drug manufacturing standards.

Such statements violate both the DMR&OA and the Consumer Protection Act, 2019 (CPA), the IMA has said. A Bench of Justices Hima Kohli and Ahsanuddin Amanullah on November 21 last vear warned Pataniali from advertising a permanent cure and threatened to impose a penalty of ₹1 crore for every product which promises a 'permanent' treatment. Patanjali assured the court against future violations, "especially relating to advertising or branding of products", adding "that no casual statements claiming medicinal efficacy or against any system of medicine will be released to the media in any form". The company failed on both counts. One day after the hearing, Mr. Ramdev extolled Patanjali's products at a press conference. Ads subsequently appeared in December and January in mainstream media. A Patanjali ad dated January 7 claims its products are "more effective than chemical-based synthetic medicines of allopathy". In addition to issuing contempt notices to Patanjali's owners, the Bench chided the Centre: "This petition was filed in 2022. For two years you did nothing."

What does the law say?

The DMR&OA regulates false medical advertisements in India. People or entities can be sentenced up to six months imprisonment, and/or a fine for the first offence. The CPA also penalises misleading advertisements and carries a sentence that can extend to two years.

Section 3 of the DMR&OA prohibits ads for the "diagnosis, cure, mitigation, treatment or prevention of any disease, disorder or condition specified in the Schedule". The Schedule includes "diabetes", "heart diseases" "glaucoma" and 51 other diseases. In his regular programme, the yoga guru claimed, "Modern medical science says cataract and glaucoma can't be fixed. I had done it 30 years ago. Glaucoma gets better 100%." Researchers agree there is no effective, proven and permanent treatment for glaucoma, but "Patanjali claims you can just put some drops and cure these

conditions," says Dr. K. V. Babu, an RTI activist and physician from Kannur. In addition, Section 4 prohibits any "misleading advertisement", which "directly or indirectly gives a false impression regarding the true character of the drug", "makes a false claim for the drug", or "is otherwise false or misleading in any material particular." Dr. Babu has seen at least 25 advertisements over the last two years which violates rules. The IMA had filed cases against Patanjali and Mr. Ramdev before in different States for making spurious statements about the efficacy of oxygen cylinders and for stoking vaccine hesitancy. The Uttarakhand Ayurvedic and Unani Services in 2023 ordered Patanjali to remove all 'misleading' ads and also banned the production of five drugs. The ban was reversed four days later.

Are there limitations in the law?

The DMR & OA is an imperfect law, suggest medical practitioners and experts. These limitations allow companies like Patanjali to go unscathed despite repeated offences.

Convictions under the Magic Remedies Act are few and far between. In 2017, the Ministry of AYUSH signed a memorandum of understanding with the Advertising Standards Council of India to identify illegal and misleading advertisements and agreed to bring cases to the notice of the State Regulatory Authorities. Between August 2018 and June 2021, the Ministry found 14,876 instances of misleading advertisements of Ayurveda, Siddha, Unani and Homoeopathy drugs, which were forwarded to State regulatory agencies, the Ministry said in the Lok Sabha. It is unclear how many were investigated.

What next?

The ads are not only unlawful, but also pose a risk to public health, argue experts. In 2022, Patanjali claimed to have developed an 'effective' treatment for insulin-dependent diabetics, who could now 'stop taking insulin'. The medical community criticised the company for peddling a false 'miracle cure'. "...Either [people] suffer due to delayed care from modern medicine or from a misguided and predatory advertisement that ...further exploits them," says Shivangi Shankar, doctor and public health expert. The Supreme Court has placed a temporary ban on all advertisements of medicinal products, refusing to even permit ads "without adjectives". The case will be heard next on March 19.

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PROFILES

Sunday, March 3, 2024 MUMBAI

The chosen four

Gaganyaan astronauts

Group Captains Prasanth Balakrishnan Nair, Ajit Krishnan and Angad Pratap, and Wing Commander Shubanshu Shukla, all with the Indian Air Force, have been chosen as the astronaut-candidates for the first human spaceflight mission of the Indian Space Research Organisation

Vasudevan Mukunth

t a ceremony during an official visit to the Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre in Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala, on February 27, Prime Minister Narendra Modi revealed the names of the four astronaut-candidates for the first human spaceflight mission, a.k.a. Gaganyaan, of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO). They are group captains Prasanth Balakrishnan Nair, Ajit Krishnan, and Angad Pratap, and wing commander Shubanshu Shukla – all with the Indian Air Force.

The purpose of Gaganyaan is for ISRO to demonstrate human spaceflight to a low-earth orbit, with an Indian launch vehicle. Teams at the organisation are currently putting various components of the mission through their paces in the course of human-rating them – i.e. making sure their failure rates are below specific thresholds, rendering them safe enough for humans to fly to space with. Gaganyaan has two important uncrewed test flights coming up. If they are successful, the first crewed flight is (so far) slated for 2025.

The four candidates

Group captain Nair hails from Kerala. He was born on August 26, 1978. According to media reports, Mr. Nair studied at N.S.S. Engineering College, Palakkad and then enrolled at the National Defence Academy (NDA) in Khadakvasla, Maharashtra.

After graduating from the NDA in 1997, he was commissioned in 1998 as a fighter pilot by the Air Force. He became a flying instructor and subsequently a test pilot – a class of pilots who are expected to fly new and/or modified aircraft, test new flight techniques, and evaluate safety parameters. According to people familiar with Mr. Nair's education, he reportedly excelled at academics. At the Air Force Academy, he received the 'Sword of Honour', a distinction reserved for the cadet with the best performance. As a test pilot as well, he is said to have clocked more than



a squadron of Su-30 aircraft, plus being able to fly other aircraft as well. Mr. Nair and Malayalam film actor Lena Kumar were wedded in a private ceremony in January this year.

Ajit Krishnan's selection in the final shortlist of candidates for Gaganyaan followed a similar trajectory. Mr. Krishnan was born on April 19, 1982, and hails from Chennai. He graduated from the NDA in 2002, received the 'Sword of Honour' at the Air Force Academy, and was finally commissioned by the Air Force in 2003. He is also a test pilot, with 2,900 hours of flight under his belt, and is able to fly Sukhoi, MiG, Jaguar, Hawk, Dornier, and the Antonov An-32 aircraft.

A year after Mr. Krishnan's passing out from the NDA, Angad Pratap (born July 17, 1982, in Prayagraj) followed suit. He was commissioned by the Air Force in 2004 and also went on to become a test pilot, accruing around 2,000 hours of flight and training to fly multiple aircraft.

Shubhanshu Shukla (born October 10, 1985, in Lucknow) finished his training at the NDA in 2005 and joined the Air Force as a fighter pilot in 2006, and went on to become a test pilot, with a similar flying experience as Mr. Pratap.

Because of their training and responsibilities towards the Air Force, test pilots have been the astronauts of choice for fledgling human spaceflight attempts. Rakesh Sharma, who became the first Indian citizen in space after launching onboard the Soviet Union's Soyuz T-11 mission in 1984, was a test pilot as well.

The NDA's training programme spans six terms over three years. Cadets aspiring to be commissioned by the Air Force train with the Air Force Training Team (AFTT) in the fifth and sixth terms. Their curriculum includes ground and flight training, aviation-related activities, and subjects related to their professional training at the Air Force itself.

Air Marshal Bhushan Gokhale (retd.) has been quoted describing the AFTT

as the "cradle of military aviation" in the country. It was established in 1956 with squadron leader Douglas George King-Lee as its first officer-in-charge.

ILLUSTRATION: SOUMYADIP SINHA

Astronaut training

Work on selecting and training the candidates for Gaganyaan commenced soon after the Union Cabinet approved the mission in 2018. These activities have spanned at least three facilities in two countries: the Institute of Aerospace Medicine (IAM), Bengaluru, of the Indian Air Force; the Gagarin Cosmonaut Training Centre (GCTC) in Russia; and the Astronaut Training Facility, also in Bengaluru.

The Soviet Union set up its astronaut training facility in 1960 and named it after the world's first astronaut, and the Soviet Union's first cosmonaut, in 1968. After the Soviet Union splintered, Russia set up the State Scientific Research Centre of Cosmonaut Training in 1995 and named it for Yuri Gagarin as well. It was administered by the aviation wing of the Ministry of Defence and the

Krishnadas Rajagopal

s a Supreme Court

judge, Justice Ajay

Manikrao Khanwil-

kar's judicial contributions

were interpreted by critics

as ones that enhanced the

powers of the state. As the

new Lokpal Chairperson,

Justice Khanwilkar is ex-

pected to stand up to the

A Commerce graduate

who became a successful

first-generation lawyer, Jus-

tice Khanwilkar began his

career as a judge on the

Bench of the Bombay High

Court in 2000. He was ele-

vated as the Chief Justice of

Himachal Pradesh in 2013.

Within months, he was ap-

pointed as the Chief Justice

of Madhya Pradesh. His ap-

pointment to the Supreme

Court along with three oth-

er judges, including the

current Chief Justice of In-

dia, D.Y. Chandrachud, in

May 2016 came as a much-

needed relief for the top

through after a 15-month

hiatus. They were the first

ones following the Su-

preme Court's striking

down of the National Judi-

cial Appointments Com-

mission (NJAC) law and the

revival of the Collegium

system of judicial appoint-

ments. The Supreme Court

had endured months of

tense stand-off with the go-

vernment over the NJAC,

exacerbated by unex-

plained delays in judicial

The appointments came

court.

state against corruption.

national space agency. Between 1960 and 1996, the Centre trained 24 astronauts from 17 countries other than its own crew.

The four candidates trained at the GCTC for 13 months. It includes facilities for simulating spacecraft controls, extra-vehicular activities (like spacewalks), neutral buoyancy, microgravity, centrifuges to simulate high-gravity training (for the launch), and survival (for example, in case the Gaganyaan crew capsule lands somewhere other than in the Bay of Bengal as planned).

The candidates' 13-month programme at the GCTC was followed by further activity at the Astronaut Training Facility in Bengaluru, which ISRO had operationalised in 2022 for Gaganyaan. This 'temporary' setup includes three simulators. A larger, more permanent establishment at the Challakere Science City in the same state is being set up for future missions. The candidates also had theory classes, according to ISRO.

Four powers

While the crew module can host up to three astronauts, ISRO chairman S. Somanath hasn't ruled out sending only one astronaut to space on the first Gaganyaan mission - stressing the importance of mental fitness as well.

The current plan for the first Gaganyaan mission is to send up to two astronauts onboard the crew module for at most a week to an altitude of 400 km. In this regard, two of the candidates will fly and two will be on stand-by. One of the four is also expected to be flown to the International Space Station before Gaganyaan's maiden flight.

Prime Minister Modi referred to each of the four pilots as a "shakti", or a power. Their responsibilities before being selected for Gaganyaan, fitness tests, and training regimen attest to this virtue. Yet, as multiple missions by other space agencies would attest, such rigorous qualification – of the astronauts and the machines - is simply to leave more bandwidth open for the vagaries human spaceflight has in store.

THE GIST

The current plan for the first Gaganyaan mission is to send up to two astronauts onboard the crew module for at most a week to an altitude of 400 km

In this regard, two of the candidates will fly and two will be on stand-by

One of the four is also expected to be flown to the International Space Station before Gaganyaan's maiden flight

Embattled entrepreneur

From SC to Lokpal

Vijay Shekhar Sharma

The founder of Paytm has stepped down as non-executive chairman of its Payments Bank as the company is facing regulatory challenges

Saptaparno Ghosh

itnessing their company's introduction on bourses can indeed be overwhelming for any entrepreneur. This was no different for One97 Communications' founder and CEO Vijay Shekhar Sharma who anyway had a reputation for wearing his heart on his sleeve. He burst into tears when the national anthem was played on the day of One97's listing - November 18, 2021.

The 43-year-old from Aligarh said in an interview the lines 'Bharat Bhagya Vidhata' got him teary. According to him, the lines that translate into 'India shall define its own destiny' best conveyed what Paytm aspired to achieve.

He built Paytm into a digital payment powerhouse. But more than two years after it was listed, the powerhouse is facing many headwinds, including regulatory hurdles and shaken investor confidence.

For Mr. Sharma, the journey has not been easy. His entire schooling was in medium. The Hindi smooth sailing went for a toss when he had to adapt to English medium of instruction at the Delhi College of Engineering.

"I moved from the front bench, to the last and ultimately out of the class," he told YouTube channel MindBatteries. He found solace at the computer

CM YK



centre where he would do sumer brand. programming. Mr. Sharma's operating

He thought he faced little prospects for a placement. That's when the entrepreneurial knack sought if he could become a 'job provider' instead. Back then, he was already working on his venture 'XS', building a content management system. In 1999, he sold the company receiving "a couple of lakhs" every week as instalment payments.

One97 Communications was founded in 2000. Initially, he was making about ₹10,000 a month. Facing financial hardships, the young entrepreneur was compelled to sell a

40% take in his company for ₹8 lakh ahead of his sister's marriage.

The coming of Paytm

One97 operated bootstrapped for seven years. It was providing internet content via SMS alongside USSD-based services.

Paytm, an acronym for Pay-Through-Mobile", was launched in December 2010 as a business-to-conILLUSTRATION: R. RAJESH

rationale was perhaps best

captured in a 2015 inter-

view. Responding to a

question on whether he

was a disruptor, Mr. Shar-

ma held that with technol-

ogy, he was only removing

"what was not needed" -

cash. According to him,

cash was not good for the

economy because "it en-

hances corruption, (is)

tough to carry and (is) cost-

ly". The other aspect of the

endeavour was to impart

financial inclusion by

bringing "half a billion In-

dians into the credit note

form's foray into lending

was the next step. Further,

to make it profitable, it was

important that cash flowed

from its own balance sheet

and not by distributing for

third parties. This is to re-

duce costs. This ambition

could only be made possi-

ble by acquiring a small fi-

However, recurrent reg-

nance bank licence.

The payments plat-

circle".

governance issues and lack of risk profiling have put the company in a spot, hurting its ambitions. On January 31, the RBI asked Paytm to halt its payment bank business, leading to a crash in its stock price. On February 26, Mr. Sharma stepped down as non-executive chairman of Paytm Payments Bank.

In a larger context, a former senior RBI official told online publication Founding Fuel, "We weren't sure he understood what regulation meant and how to engage with us in a serious manner." The official stated that Mr. Sharma would shed "crocodile tears" in the meeting and would be found "laughing and smiling loudly" outside.

Furthermore, Mr. Sharma often appears particularly instinctive. "It is not intuition, it is not data, it is an opinionated decision. We will do this because I think I like this," he once explained. His idea would be to "build a better product by iterating fast".

The impact of his runins can be best gauged from the stock price of One97. It hasn't recovered its debut price of ₹1,955 on BSE till date. It closed at ₹414 on Saturday after the special trading sessions.

Not for the first time in his life perhaps, Mr. Sharma is living to fight another ulatory run-ins over comday, at the same time, striving to preserve the profitapliance issues such as flouting of KYC norms, ble paradigm.

A.M. Khanwilkar

The former Supreme Court judge is now expected to stand up to the state against corruption as the new chairperson of the anti-corruption body

ILLUSTRATION: R. RAJESH



to the then Chief Iustice T.S. Thakur's emotional and public outpouring in the presence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi about the "impossible burden" shouldered by a depleting number of judges who work day in and day out to quell pendency.

The relief was so apparent and obvious that CJI Thakur and his successor, Dipak Misra had Justices Khanwilkar and Chandrachud as their puisne judges on their Bench for months together.

As a puisne judge on the Chief Justice Bench, Justice Khanwilkar was mostly on the same page as the Chief Justice in significant judgments. During the last days of the tenure of Chief Justice Thakur, Justice Khanwilkar agreed with the decision to refer the demonetisation policy challenge to a five-judge Bench without granting the petitioners any interim relief. The case was kept pending for nearly seven years, only to have a Constitution Bench uphold the policy in January 2023.

Khanwilkar, Iustice authoring the majority view shared with CJI Misra, disagreed with historian Romila Thapar that the arrests of poet Vara Vara Rao, lawyer Sudha Bhardwaj, activists Arun Ferreira, Vernon Gonsalves and Gautam Navlakha in the Bhima-Koregaon case were an attempt to silence dissent. Justice Chandrachud, in his dissent, said the arrests were indeed a muz-

zling of the voices of

Sabarimala verdict

opposition.

Justice Khanwilkar joined CJI Misra to condemn the centuries' old prohibition on women from the age of menarche to enter the famed Sabarimala temple in Kerala as "hegemonic patriarchy". But when the judgment came up for review, he did not join in with Justices Rohinton Nariman and Chandrachud to dismiss the review of the September 2018 verdict. Instead, he chose to cast his decisive vote on the five-judge Bench in favour of CJI Ranjan Gogoi, who had replaced CJI Misra on the Bench, and Justice Indu Malhotra, who had upheld the Sabarimala prohibition in the original judgment, to form the majority view that the case concerned an "essentially religious issue", which should be examined by a seven-judge Bench.

As a lead judge on the Bench, Justice Khanwilkar confirmed the restrictions under the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act. He upheld amendments to the Prevention of Money Laundering Act which virtually gave the Directorate of Enforcement sweeping powers and made bail nearly impossible. In the Zahoor Ahmed Shah Watali case, Justice Khanwilkar concluded that courts need not decide bail applications under the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act after an "elaborate examination" of evidence. Just a look at the "broad probabilities" of the accused's involvement would suffice.

Justice Khanwilkar found allegations of a "larger conspiracy" levelled by Zakia Jafri, widow of Congress leader Ehsan Jafri who was killed in the 2002 Gujarat riots, "preposterous". His judgment lashed out at those who wanted to "keep the pot boiling" in the State.

A Gujarat Anti-Terrorism Squad team detained activist Teesta Setalvad in Mumbai the very next day after the judgment.

appointments, which led

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Business

NBRIÐR



'Coal output from captive, commercial mines rose 27%

Coal production from captive and commercial mines has increased 27.06% y-o-y to 126.8 million tonne (mt) in the April-February this fiscal. The coal dispatch from these mines in the first eleven months of the current financial year also rose 29.14% from the year-earlier period to 128.88 mt, the Coal Ministry said in a statement. The total coal production and dispatch in February was 14.85 mt and 12.95 mt, registering an increase of 37% and 33%, respectively. $_{\mbox{\scriptsize PTI}}$

Sensex, Nifty hit new highs in special Saturday session

Indian shares ended higher in a special session for stock exchanges to test a fail-safe system for equity trading. Benchmark NSE Nifty 50 closed up 0.18% at 22,378.40, while the S&P BSE Sensex added 0.08% to 73,806.15, hitting record highs for the second day in a row. "Strong economic fundamentals and steady earnings growth indicate the momentum in domestic equities is intact and could sustain further," said Abhijit Bhave, CEO and MD, Equirus Wealth. REUTERS

CUMI supporting DRDO in localisation initiatives'

Carborundum Universal Ltd. (CUMI), announced that it has been closely working with Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) in supporting their indigenisation initiatives to strengthen defence capabilities. CUMI supplies ceramic plates for bulletproof vests and tiles for armoured vehicles. These products are manufactured in India, including the grains needed to make them, the leading materials science company said in a statement.

'Google's app delisting cannot be allowed'

IT Minister Vaishnaw emphasises Google's delisting of certain apps from Play Store over in-app payment commissions is not acceptable; tells Press Trust of India government will meet company's representatives on Monday; Info Edge says some of its apps restored on complying with the norms

The Hindu Bureau NEW DELHI

inister of Electronics and Information Technology Ashwini Vaishnaw told Press Trust of India that Google's delisting of certain Indian apps from the firm's Android Play Store "cannot be permitted," and that a government meeting with the company's representatives was scheduled for Monday.

Matrimonial, streaming and job search apps like Bharat Matrimony, Kuku FM and Naukri were removed from Google's Android app store after they resisted platform fees that Google requires them to pay on in-app purchases.

A Google spokesperson did not immediately respond to an e-mailed request for comment.

'Policy very clear'

"India is very clear, our policy is very clear... our start-ups will get the protection that they need," Mr. Vaishnaw told PTI.

The apps were taken down on Friday following a prolonged battle that some large app developers

Resolute stand

MeitY Minister Vaishnaw tells PTI that Google's delisting of certain Indian apps from Android Play Store 'cannot be permitted'

 'Our policy is very clear... our start-ups will get the protection that they need' Google's delisting of apps comes over dispute on platform fees on in-app purchases

Supreme Court had refused to extend interim relief to these application providers

physical product purchaswaged against Google for charging anywhere betes, like cab rides or e-commerce deliveries, do not atween 11-30% commissions for payments made by users for digital goods. While subscriptions and purchas-

es do. Few Indian apps are able to build businesses on the back of such direct pavments for digital goods, but matrimonial and streaming apps are among key ones for whom such revenue is substantial. The Supreme Court re-

fused to extend interim re-

list them. Testbook, an exam prep service, and streaming service Disney+ Hotstar, continue to have interim protections granted to them as they joined the Supreme Court case late, and their apps were never delisted.

Naukri restored

lief to these apps, which Some apps by Info Edge had lost their case against Google's fees at the Madras (India), such as Naukri and High Court last year. Subreal estate platform sequently, Google an-99acres, were restored afnounced on Wednesday ter they updated the apps that it would no longer proto comply with Google's vide these apps leeway by payment requirements, awaiting the hearings' conthe firm's CEO Sanjeev clusion, and moved to de-Bikhchandani said on X.

SRO for fintechs will aid uniformity, help in compliance adherence: DLAI

Lalatendu Mishra MUMBAI

A Self-Regulatory Organisation for Fintechs (SRO-FT), as has been proposed by the RBI, would bring standardisation and help in distinguishing serious players from the rest of the lot, said Jatinder Handoo, CEO, Digital Lenders Association of India (DLAI).

"At present, the Indian fintech industry is diverse in nature, hence the priorities and their representations are also divergent," Mr. Handoo said in an email interview.

"For members of an SRO-FT, the single biggest benefit would be a credible



Jatinder Handoo

platform to take forward genuine, common voice of fintech players to appropriate offices and contribute positively in the regulatory and policy making dialogue which affects the entire sector," he said.

"Additionally, it will bring a common minimum standardisation in processes like addressing customer grievances or common Leading Service Providers (LSP) agreements and forging sectoral partnerships," he added.

pository for sectoral data and it will release credible data backed reports regularly, it will bring more transparency and openness to the system and hence, will also reinforce investors' and policy makers' confidence and interest," he further said.

decibel campaign by a section of the fintech industry contending that the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) as regulator is 'stifling innovation' by stressing on compliance. The RBI had rebarred Pavtm Payments Bank Ltd. from accepting any further deposits and ordering the closure of its wallet, nodal

tract this fee, digital

Draft framework The RBI has already set into motion steps for the establishment of a framework for an SRO for fintech companies with an objective to set standards, aid in oversight and enforcement, and provide grie-

a feedback stage, is expected to be formalised shortly.

'Stainless steel can save India ₹12 lakh cr.'

Lalatendu Mishra MUMBAI

Jindal Stainless Ltd. (JSL), India's largest stainless steel manufacturer said it will lead in mitigating corrosion by promoting the use of stainless steel to build sustainable infrastructure in the country.

Claiming 4% of GDP gets 'wasted through corrosion", a top company official said 25% reduction in corrosion is a huge saving. "As per research, and experts present here, about 4% of the GDP gets eroded because of corrosion in India every year," said Vijay Sharma, Direc-

tor, JSL, on the sidelines of

International Summit on



Corrosion Technology and Management (CORTEM) 2024, a global event organised by the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) in Mumbai. "This is equivalent to about ₹12 lakh crore". CORTEM is a part of CII's 'National Mission on War against Corrosion' unveiled last year.



BANGALORE METROPOLITAN TRANSPORT CORPORATION Central Offices, Mechanical Engg. Dept., K.H. Road, Shanth Bengaluru-27, Tele No: 080-22537519 TENDER NO: BMTC/2023-24/SE0217/CALL-4 Dated: 01.03.2024 NOTICE INVITING SHORT-TERM TENDER (Through e-procurement mode only) (1) BMTC invites Tender through E-Procurement Portal for Selection o rvice Provider for Procurement, Operation and Maintenance of 120 Nos 900mm floor height, 9 mtr. City type Non AC Electric Buses on Gross Cost Contract (GCC) Model. (2) Last Date for Bid Submission in e-procurement portal is 09.03.2024 before 17:30 Hours. Any changes in calendar of events, scope or other terms & conditions will be uploaded in e-portal only OTE: Interested Bidders need to register in the GoK e-procurement port https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in For further assistance, contact e-procurement Help Desk for support on bid submission over Ph: 080-46010000, or 080-68948777 or email at eprocurementhelpdesk@gmail.com. Sd/- CHIEF MECHANICAL ENGINEER (Tender Inviting Authority)

cently "SRO-FT will act as a re-

This comes amid a high

and other accounts.

vance, dispute resolution. The process, which is at





Volatile times: World cotton prices went up by 15% in the last two weeks and corrected 3% or so on Friday. THE HINDU

'Textile demand to determine price trajectory in cotton'

M. Soundariya Preetha COIMBATORE

Even as demand for cotton from textile mills remains subdued, traders say sustainability of the trend of a surge in domestic cotton prices in the last two weeks will depend on demand for textiles and apparels.

'Low global demand'

As per Nishanth Asher, secretary of the Indian Cotton Federation, more than 60% of the cotton produced this season has come to the market. With prices going up, arrivals have reduced from 1.8 lakh bales a day to almost one lakh bales a day. "Spinners are risk averse now as the global demand for textiles is low," he said.

"It is hard to say now what will happen to the prices. World cotton prices went up 15% in the last two weeks and corrected 3% or so on Friday. The prices will cool down if the demand for the main textile products remains subdued," he added.

The International Cotton Advisory Committee (ICAC) on March 1 said the recent surge in global cotton prices "can be attribut-

YK (



"World cotton prices went up 15% in the last two weeks. Prices will cool if demand for textile products remains subdued." NISHANTH ASHER

Secretary, Indian Cotton Federation

ed primarily to a wave of speculative buying on the futures market." The real situation will unfold in the next few months when plantings intensify. If the planted area remained less than the previous season and consumer sentiment improved, prices would increase, ICAC observed.

'Indian cotton cheaper'

Atul Ganatra, chairman, Cotton Association of India, said the Intercontinental Exchange (ICE) futures market went from 80 cents to 103 cents for a pound in recent days and eased a tad on March 1. At current prices. Indian cotton is cheaper than its international counterparts and hence, cotton exports are likely to cross 20 lakh bales this season, he said.

RAJASTHAN POLICE INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION LTD, JAIPUR of Rajasthan Undertaking), CIN NO. U45201RJ201 Office : 756, Police Head Quarter, Lal Kothi, Jaipur 0141-2740784, Fax: 0141-2744 - RPHCCL/469/NJT/2023-24/D-4007 दिनांक :- 26/02/202 ई<u>-निविदा सूचना स० ३२/२०२३-२४</u>

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ज सवाद/सी/23/14022 राजस्थान पुलिस आधारभूत सरचना विकास निगम लिमिटेड, जय			

कार्यालय अतिरिक्त मुख्य अभियन्ता, सार्वजनिक निर्माण विभाग, संभाग-अजमेर

क्रमांकःअमुअ/अज/तक/एफ-2(30ए)निविदा/डी-5697 दिनांक: 23.02.2024 अत्यकालीन निविदा सूचना संख्या-34/एफ.आई.-पीएमजीएसवाई/2023-24 राजस्थान के राज्यपाल महोदय की ओर से एफ. आई. प्रधानमंत्री ग्राम सड़क योजनान्तगंत क 2023-24 के रिनीवल कार्यों मय पांच साल की मरम्मत के 08 पैकेजों के लिए उपयुक्त श्रेणी मे सार्वजनिक निर्माण विभाग राजस्थान में पंजीकृत संवेदकों एवं राज्य सरकार/ केन्द्र सरकार के अधिकृत संगठनों/ केन्द्रीय लोक निर्माण विभाग/डाक एवं दूर संचार विभाग/ रेलवे इत्यादि में पंजीकृत संवेदकों, जो कि राजस्थान सरकार के बी, ए. एवं एए श्रेणी के संवेदकों के समकक्ष हो, से निर्धारित प्रपत्र में ई- प्रोक्यूरमेन्ट प्रक्रिया से ऑन लाईन निविदायें आमंत्रित की जाती हैं। निविदा से सम्बन्धित विवरण वेबसाईट http://dipr.rajasthan.gov.in व http://pwd.rajasthan.gov.in व http://pmgsytendersraj.gov.in पर देखा जा सकता है।

निविदा की कुल लागत	:	रु. 1226.707 लाख
ऑनलाईन निविदा फार्म मिलने की तारीख	:	25 फरवरी 2024, प्रातः 9:30 बजे से 07 मार्च, 2024 अपरान्ह 12:00 बजे तक
ऑनलाईन निविदा फार्म जमा कराने की अंतिम तारीख	:	07 मार्च, 2024, अपरान्ह 12.00 बजे तक
ऑनलाईन निविदा खोलने की तारीख	1.1	07 मार्च, 2024, सायं 3:00 बजे

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	NIB- PWD2324A4697	

The longest war in human history was not waged between countries.

used to share a home with they were attacked or hungry. But even back then, we were not a threat to their very existence. We consumed what was essential from our shared home. Eventually, we upgraded ourselves to better homes, better survival plans, better food habits, better everything. With their sole enemy out of their hair, for the animals. Not really. Their enemy left the jungle and built their cities only to expand them right back into killed ecosystems and took Sounds like a battlefield of a battlefield for animals.

highways, power lines and complicated animal lives. ensure their doom? Now, every time an animal

History tells us that animals away sand from the rivers. sorts, eh? It is. One where Their watering holes have all no one wants to take over us. We hunted them for a dried up, thanks to the anyone's territory and yet living. So did they when global warming we end up killing each other in global warming we end up killing each other in escalated into existence. a bid to survive. Progress The need being theirs, they must serve everyone. The began walking a few extra world would be a different miles to find water but that place if animals were capable is where the catch lay. We of making technological decorated the path to the progress. Sadly for them next nearest waterbody and fortunately for us, they with death traps. Railway cannot. As the 'superior tracks, electrified fences, being' on the planet, can we not use our intellect to the works. Inventions that find better ways to co-exist life should have gotten easier simplified human lives and rather than sadder ways to

ventures out in search of This World Wildlife Day, let food or water, they stand us take concrete measures the jungle. We cut trees, the risk of getting killed. to stop making this planet





Scan to read the story on 回溯说回 human-animal conflicts in India and various mitigation efforts taken or visit https://newsth.live/WWD2024

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THEMANHINDU

March 3, 2024 World Wildlife Day **Sport**

THANKS GIVING

Jurel shares heart-warming post with 'Real MVPs' of his life



India wicketkeeper-batter Dhruv Jurel took to social media on Friday and shared a picture of him with his parents, calling them the "real MVPs" of his life. Jurel took to Instagram and shared a picture with his parents and the 'Player-of-the-Match' award he won during the fourth Test against England at Ranchi.

FIFTIES DON'T MATTER

Off-spin veteran Nathan Lyon's unique batting record



Australian spin veteran Nathan Lyon made a unique batting record during the first Test against New Zealand, becoming the player with the most Test runs without scoring a single half-century. On day two, Lyon made 41 off 46 balls. Now in 128 Tests and 162 innings, Lyon has 1,501 runs (avg 12.72). His best score is 47.

OPTIMISING CALENDAR

Hockley denies reports Big Three ignored study to save Test cricket



Cricket Australia CEO Nick Hockley on Saturday rebutted reports that India, England and his organisation had not paid attention to a draft presented to the ICC to save Tests. "I think there was some misreporting around that. The discussions I'm in at the moment are very much thinking about how we can optimise the calendar."

LIFE LESSON

With experience, things have changed for me, says Sreejesh



FILE PHOTO: M. VEDHAN

Veteran goalkeeper P.R. Sreejesh says he has learned to steer clear of negative thoughts with experience, something that has helped him immensely. "It is a thankless job at times because if I made 10 saves and concede one goal, everyone will remember that one mistake. But I have accepted that and I have moved on with that.'

Walk in the park for Mumbai Indians as **Royal Challengers batters fail to fire**

Pooja's incisive bowling and Yastika and Kerr's fluent innings seal a seven-wicket win; Perry's top score of 44 goes in vain

WPL SEASON 2

Mayank Choudhary BENGALURU

or a second game Trunning, the raucous home crowd was silenced as Mumbai Indians handed Royal Challengers Bangalore a sevenwicket drubbing in the Women's Premier League encounter at the M. Chinnaswamy Stadium here on

Saturday. Nat Sciver-Brunt (2/27 and 27 off 25 balls) led from the front and helped MI chase down 132 in 15.1 overs after restricting RCB to 131 for six. MI's openers, Hayley Matthews and Yastika Bhatia, got it off to a flying start, scoring 37 in the first three overs. Royal responded Challengers with two quick wickets, but Amelia Kerr and Sciver-Brunt combined for a 49run stand, helping MI with its third win.

Earlier, Ellyse Perry (44 n.o., 38b, 5x4) took RCB to a modest total following a clinical howling performance by MI, led by Pooja Vastrakar's two for 14, after the home team was put in. Harmanpreet Kaur and

Shabnim Ismail were unavailable again and Sciver-Brunt walked out for the toss. For RCB, Nadine de Klerk made way for a fitagain Perry.

Sciver-Brunt's first change in the attack - Issy Wong – delivered quickly. She took just three balls to dismiss RCB skipper Smriti Mandhana, leaving the home fans shell-shocked. Sciver-Brunt soon ended S. Meghana's stay.

Opener Sophie Devine's poor show with the bat continued as left-arm spinner Saika Ishaque trapped her in front.

Three overs later, Pooja removed Richa Ghosh as the host slid to 42 for four.

Perry started to counterattack and found an able ally in Georgia Wareham. The former's solid backfoot play saw her handle pacers Pooja and Wong with ease and also strike a few boundaries.

The Australian duo propelled RCB past 100 in 16 overs when Wareham, looking to up the ante, was caught by Kerr off Sciver-Brunt. The sixth-wicket



Blazing away: Kerr's rapid knock took Mumbai Indians home with plenty to spare after Pooja shone with the ball. K. MURALI KUMAR

SCOREBOARD

ROYAL CHALLENGERS Smriti Mandhana c Sciver-Brunt b Wong 9 (11b, 1x4), Sophie Devine lbw b Saika 9 (10b, 1x4), S. Meghana c Keerthana b Sciver-Brunt 11 (12b. 1x4). Ellvse Perry (not out) 44 (38b, 5x4), Richa Ghosh c Sajana b Pooja 7

5; Total (for six wkts. in 20 overs): 131.

FALL OF WICKETS

1-14 (Smriti, 2.3 overs), 2-31 (Meghana, 4.6), 3-33 (Devine, 5.4), 4-42 (Richa, 8.2), 5-71 (Molineux, 12.1), 6-123 (Wareham, 18.5).

Yastika Bhatia c Richa b Devine 31 (15b, 4x4, 2x6), Hayley Matthews c Smriti b Shreyanka 26 (21b, 3x4, 1x6), Nat Sciver-Brunt c Molineux b Wareham 27 (25b, 4x4), Amelia Kerr (not out) 40 (24b, 7x4), Pooja

MUMBAI INDIANS

(Matthews, 7.4), 3-118 (Sciver-Brunt. 13.3) **RCB BOWLING** Renuka 2-0-25-0, Molineux 3-0-26-0. Devine 2-0-16-1. Wareham 2.1-0-18-1, Shreyanka 2-0-15-1, Simran 1-0-11-0, Perry 2-0-10-0, Asha 1-0-12-0.

Ravindra holds the key to NZ's chase

AUS IN NZ

Agence France-Presse WELLINGTON

Steve Smith pulled off two stunning catches on Saturday to leave Australia with the advantage as New Zealand stumbled early in pursuit of 369 to win the first Test.

The home side was 111 for three at stumps on day three, with Rachin Ravindra unbeaten on an eyecatching 56 and Daryl Mitchell on 12, with the pair having put on 52 in 20.3 overs.

Nathan Lyon took two for 27 - aided by some brilliance from Smith in the slips - to give the accomplished off-spinner six wickets for the match.

Lyon shapes as a key figure in preventing New Zealand from scoring the remaining 258 runs it needs to win on a Basin Reserve pitch taking turn and bounce.

New Zealand part-time spinner Glenn Phillips earlier capitalised on the conditions, snaring careerbest figures of five for 45 as Australia was bundled out for 164 in its second



Ravindra. AFP

defied Australia late in the day with a series of aggressive strokes in his 94-ball knock.

The 24-year-old struck most of his eight fours through cuts or pulls and swatted Head over midwicket for six.

Earlier. Australia lost its last six wickets in the space of 13 overs, with Phillips producing the best figures by any New Zealand spinner on home soil in 18 vears.

The scores: Australia 383 & 164 (Usman Khawaja 28, Nathan Lyon 41. Travis Head 41. Henry 3/36. Phillips 5/45) vs New Zealand 179 & 111/3 (Rachin Ravindra batting 56)

partnership was worth 52, but it could not prevent MI from climbing to the top of the WPL standings.

(10b, 1x4), Sophie Molineux b Pooja 12 *(14b, 1x4)*, Georgia Wareham c Kerr b Sciver-Brunt 27 (20b, 3x4), Shreyanka Patil (not out) 7 (5b, 1x4); Extras (lb-1, w-4):

ABAI INDIANS BOWLING Sciver-Brunt 4-0-27-2, Matthews 4-0-29-0, Wong 3-0-20-1, Saika 2-0-9-1, Kerr 3-0-20-0, Pooja 3-0-14-2. Keerthana 1-0-11-0.

Vastrakar (not out) 8 (6b, 1x4) Extras (w-1): 1; Total (for three wkts. in 15.1 overs): 133. FALL OF WICKETS 1-45 (Yastika, 3.5), 2-69

Toss: Mumbai Indians Mumbai Indians won by seven wickets with 29 balls to spare. Sunday's match: Gujarat Giants vs. Delhi Capitals, 7.30 p.m.

Agencies

Red Bull's Max Verstappen

started his bid for a fourth

successive Formula One tit-

le with a commanding Bah-

rain GP win from pole posi-

tion, plus fastest lap, ahead

of team mate Sergio Perez.

completed the podium un-

der the floodlights with

team mate Charles Leclerc

The win was Red Bull's

114th since it arrived in For-

finishing fourth.

Ferrari's Carlos Sainz

SAKHIR

innings. Ravindra, who scored 240 in the first Test against South Africa last month,

Hernandez's strike helps **Bengaluru** pip Blasters

ISL-10

N. Sudarshan BENGALURU

Bengaluru FC notched up a much-deserved 1-0 win over Kerala Blasters - the club's first back-to-back success this Indian Super League campaign – at the Sree Kanteerava Stadium here on Saturday.

Midfielder Javi Hernandez scored the winner in the 89th minute with a clean, flat strike into the bottom-right corner off a splendid first-time cross from the right by the young substitute Shivaldo Singh. The victory helped Gerard Zaragoza's outfit rise up to sixth in the table (21 points), the last of the playoff positions.

Going into the match, the Blasters were fifth and BFC ninth. But it was the home side that played with more purpose

Ryan Williams, stationed on the left, was heavily involved and was the recipient of many an optimistic out-ball. It was no surprise that two of the best chances in the first period fell BFC's way.

Naorem Roshan, after being put through, found himself in an advanced position but his cut-back was

YK



Turn of fortunes: Hernandez's goal in the 89th minute helped BFC rise to sixth in the table. FOCUS SPORTS/ISL

from Gurpreet Singh Sand-

hu soaring over the cross-

bar from six yards out. He

will probably spend the

next few days ruing the

beat Punjab FC 3-2 at the

(Hernandez 89) bt Kerala Blasters

FC 0. At New Delhi: Puniab FC 2

(Talal 37, Jordan Gil 39) lost to

Guarrotxena 53, 64).

Mumbai City FC 3 (Chhangte 16,

Earlier, Mumbai City FC

mistake.

into no man's land.

A few minutes later, Sunil Chhetri failed to connect with a fine free-kick swung in from the right flank by Hernandez.

The second half started with BFC displaying even more verve.

Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium On 68 minutes, Chhetri in New Delhi. Odisha FC had the second of his and Mumbai City FC bechances when Williams came the first two teams to slid in a terrific ground ball qualify for the playoffs as that the skipper couldn't well. get a touch on despite his outstretched leg. The results: Bengaluru FC 1

Just before Hernandez scored, Blasters' forward Fedor Cernych sent a rebound following a save

Nunez snatches late win for Liverpool

EURO LEAGUES

Agencies NOTTINGHAM

Liverpool striker Darwin Nunez scored a huge goal in the English Premier League title race, netting in the ninth minute of stoppage time to beat Nottingham Forest 1-0 and move his team four points clear on Saturday.

In the race for Champions League qualification, fifth-placed Tottenham came from behind to beat Crystal Palace 3-1.

humdrum Chelsea's league campaign wasn't getting much better, with Mauricio Pochettino's team needing a late equaliser to draw at struggling Brentford 2-2.

There were 3-0 home wins for Newcastle and Fulham against Wolverhampton and Brighton, respectively, while West Ham won at Everton 3-1.

Freiburg forward Lucas Hoeler scored an 87th-minute goal on Friday to snatch a 2-2 draw against visitor Bayern Munich.

The result left Bayern seven points behind leader Bayer Leverkusen, which has 61 and can pull further away with a win over Cologne on Sunday.



Nunez celebrates. GETTY IMAGES

Premier League: Brentford 2 (Roerslev 50, Wissa 69) drew with Chelsea 2 (Jackson 35, Disasi 83): Everton 1 (Beto 56) lost to West Ham 3 (Zouma 62, Soucek 90+1 Alvarez 90+5); Fulham 3 (Wilson

21, Muniz 32, Traore 90+1) bt Brighton 0; Newcastle 3 (Isak 14, Gordon 33, Livramento 90+2) bt Wolves 0; Nottingham Forest 0 lost to Liverpool 1 (Nunez 90+9); Tottenham 3 (Werner 77, Romero 80, Son 88) bt Crystal Palace 1 (Eze 59).

LaLiga: Sevilla 3 (En-Nesyri 11, 13, Ramos 66) bt Sociedad 2 (Silva 45+5-pen, Mendez 90+2). Serie A: Lazio 0 lost to AC Milan 1 (Okafor 88).

Bundesliga: SC Freiburg 2 (Guenter 12, Hoeler 87) drew with Bayern Munich 2 (Tel 35, Musiala 75); Union Berlin 0 lost to Borussia Dortmund 2 (Adeyemi 41, Maatsen 90+1); Bochum 1 (Wittek 7) lost to RB Leipzig 4 (Olmo 30, Openda 68, Ordets 71-og, Poulsen 72).

Verstappen starts new F1 season with victory in Bahrain



Utter domination: Verstappen notched up his 55th career triumph. GETTY IMAGES

former champions Williams at fourth equal in the all-time lists. Verstappen now has 55 career wins.

Maini seventh in F2

India's Kush Maini finished seventh after starting from the back of the grid in the opening round of the Formula 2 Championship Feature Race. Maini had secured pole in the qualifying but was disqualified because of some technical infringement with his car.

(Red Bull) +22.457s; 3. Sainz

The results: 1. Verstappen (Red Constructors: 1. Red Bull 44; 2. Bull) 1h:31m:44.742s; 2. Perez Ferrari 27; 3. Mercedes 16; 4. McLaren 12; 5. Aston Martin 3.

(Aston Martin) 93.216; +1 lap: 11. Zhou (Stake F1); 12. Magnussen (Haas); 13. Ricciardo (RB F1); 14. Tsunoda (RB F1); 15. Albon (Williams); 16. Hulkenberg (Haas) 17. Ocon (Alpine); 18. Gasly (Alpine); 19. Bottas (Stake F1); +2 laps: 20. Sergeant (Williams). Standings: Drivers: 1. Verstappen 26; 2. Perez 18; 3. Sainz 15; 4. Leclerc 12; 5. Russell

mula One 20 years ago, lifting the team level with

•••

(Ferrari) 25.110; 4. Leclerc (Ferrari) 39.669; 5. Russell (Mercedes) 46.788; 6. Norris (McLaren) 48.458; 7. Hamilton (Mercedes) 50.324; 8. Piastri (McLaren) 56.082; 9. Alonso (Aston Martin) 74.887; 10. Stroll

Sport



Tentoglou soars to second long jump title

Miltiadis Tentoglou of Greece edged Italian teenager Mattia Furlani to clinch the long jump gold at the World indoor athletics in Glasgow on Saturday, adding another World title to his glittering resume. The 25-year-old Tentoglou and the 19-year-old Furlani both leapt 8.22 metres on their opening jumps. The tie-break went to Tentoglou as his second-best effort was better than Furlani's. Carey McLeod of Jamaica won bronze with 8.21. Noah Lyles' quest for four global titles this year came unhinged after Christian Coleman outsprinted him for gold in the 60m on Friday. Coleman led from gun to tape, scorching to victory in 6.41, the fastest time run over the distance this season. It was the world record holder's second World indoor sprint title after previously winning in 2018.

Disappointing show by Jeswin at World indoor athletics

Exactly a year after jumping a then world-leading 8.42m, national long jump record-holder Jeswin Aldrin produced a disappointing 7.69m and finished 13th at the World Athletics indoor championships in Glasgow on Saturday. The 22-year-old from Tamil Nadu had just one legal jump, his opening effort.

Heroes post facile win over **Black Hawks**

Calicut Heroes returned to winning ways in dominant fashion, defeated Hyderabad Black Hawks 15-13, 18-16, 16-14 in the third RuPay Prime Volleyball League at the Nehru Indoor Stadium in Chennai on Saturday. Chirag Yadav was named the Player-of-the-match. His incessant attacks gave Calicut control of the topsy-turvy battle.

LIVE TELECAST

NBA: Sports 18-1 (SD & HD) & Jio Cinema App, 7 a.m. Ranji Trophy: Semifinals, Jio Cinema App, 9.30 a.m.

Badminton: German Open, Sports 18-1 (SD & HD) & Jio Cinema App, 4.30 p.m.

Serie A: Jio Cinema App, 5, 7.30; Sports 18-1 (SD & HD) & Jio Cinema App, 10.30 p.m. & 1.15 a.m. (Monday).

Premier League: SS Select 1 (SD & HD), 6.30 & 9 p.m. PVL: Sony Sports Ten 1 (SD & HD) & LIV, 6.30 & 8.30 p.m. ISL: Sports 18-1 (SD & HD) & Jio Cinema App, 7.30 p.m. WPL: Sports 18-1 (SD & HD) & Jio Cinema App, 7.30 p.m. LaLiga: Jio Cinema App, 6.30, 8.45: Sports 18-1 (SD & HD) & Jio Cinema App, 11 p.m. & 1.30 a.m. (Monday).

Mumbai takes control as the Tamil Nadu batters come a cropper on a green top

The visitors bowled out for a paltry 146 after taking first strike on a pitch assisting pacers; Deshpande breaks the back of the batting line-up

RANJI TROPHY

Amol Karhadkar MUMBAI

nce is a mistake, twice is a pattern. The pattern of Mumbai pacers making Tamil Nadu specialist batters appear ordinary on the first morning continued for the second successive season.

Riding on an all-round effort by Mumbai's bowling pack, the host seized control of the Ranji Trophy semifinal on day one at the Sharad Pawar Cricket Academy ground here on Saturday.

Though Mumbai lost its openers to end the day at 45 for two, Tamil Nadu had little reason to smile. After all, its batters had let the team down to being bowled out for 146 after opting to bat.

The last time these two sides met at the Brabourne Stadium in 2022-23, Mumbai had shot TN down for a paltry 144.

Hence, it was a surprise

to see R. Sai Kishore opting to bat on a greenish and The Mumbai pacers the match.

bowled accurately to force the TN batters into errors. one to rise more than N. Ja-B. Sai Sudharsan paid the gadeesan expected to get

price for trying to play Shardul Thakur across the line in the opening over of

Mohit Avasthi then got

Musheer Khan at forwardshort leg into play.

Musheer Khan and night-Sai Kishore walked in to watcher Mohit Avasthi see off the new ball. But, Tushar Deshpande broke then avoided further the back of TN's line-up damage with an opening burst of

and will remain so only if Pradosh Ranjan Paul the pattern of pacers pick-(uppish drive sharply ing wickets in the first sescaught on return), Sai Kishsion continues on Sunday! ore (missed an audacious The scores: drive to lose the middle-Tamil Nadu — 1st innings: B. stump) and B. Indrajith (top-edged to Kotian at

Sai Sudharsan lbw b Shardul 0, N. Jagadeesan c Musheer b Avasthi 4. Pradosh Ranian Pail c & b Deshpande 8, R. Sai Kishore b Deshpande 1, B. Indrajith c Kotian b Deshpande 11, Vijay Shankar c Mulani b Shardul 44, Washington Sundar lbw b Kotian 43. M. Mohammed c Rahane b Musheer 17, S. Aiith Ram c Rahane b Kotian 15, Sandeep Warrier lbw b Musheer 0, Kuldeep Sen (not out) 0; Extras (lb-1, nb-2): 3; Total (in 64.1 overs): 146. Fall of wickets: 1-0, 2-10, 3-12, 4-17, 5-42, 6-90, 7-114, 8-139,

15

9-146. As the spinners came in-Mumbai bowling: Shardul to play, Washington lived a 14-4-48-2, Avasthi 12-4-23-1, charmed life before being Deshpande 12-7-24-3, Mulani 14-4-22-0, Musheer 7-2-18-2, When Mumbai batted, Kotian 5, 1-0-10-2 Kuldeep Sen drew an edge

Mumbai - 1st innings: Prithvi Shaw c Indrajith b Kuldeep Sen 5, Bhupen Lalwani lbw b Sai Kishore 15, Musheer Khan (batting) 24, Mohit Avasthi (batting) 1; Total (for two wkts. in 17 overs): 45. Fall of wickets: 1-5, 2-40.

Tamil Nadu bowling: Warrier 4-0-11-0, Sen 6-0-25-1, Mohammed 3-1-5-0, Sai Kishore 3-1-3-1, Ajith Ram 1-0-1-0.

Tamil Nadu pays the price for batting first on a pitch with a tinge of green

S. Dipak Ragav MUMBAI

It is very difficult to win a First-Class match in one session, but often just one poor session, especially on the first morning can put a team on the back foot from which it is difficult to stage a comeback.

On Saturday morning, Tamil Nadu had such a poor session where it lost half its side in 90 minutes, leaving the team in deep trouble

cision surprised quite a few pande. "We all can see that the pitch has enough help observers, with Indian pacer Jaydev Unadkat rhetorifor the pace bowlers and cally posting on his social with the shadow staying till media, "Bat first on that late at the BKC, it helps pitch? How? Why?" pace bowlers a lot in the first session. When former cricketer

Vijay Dhaiya, who conduct-"So, a bit surprised, but ed the toss, suggested it we bowled in the right was a brave call to Sai Kishareas," he added. ore, the skipper said, "I TN even bolstered its looked at the wicket and

bowling attack by including pacer Kuldeep Sen for batter M. Boopathi Vaishna Kumar and had a golden chance to put the Mumbai



'It was important to bowl in the right areas'

Sports Bureau MUMBAI

5-2-15-3.

five.

Digging deep

short mid-wicket) fell to

Deshpande as Tamil Nadu

was left reeling at 42 for

The next 87 minutes saw

Vijay Shankar and Wash-

ington Sundar digging

deep until Shardul came

back for another burst to

account for Vijay Shankar,

caught at second slip.

the last man dismissed.

off Prithvi Shaw in his first

over. Sai Kishore extended

his season's tally to 48

wickets by trapping Bhu-

pen Lalwani in front.

The game is still open

Tushar Deshpande came on to bowl in the ninth over of the day and broke the back of the Tamil Nadu top-order with three crucial strikes to put Mumbai in command in the Ranji Trophy semifinal.

"We wanted to bowl first, and what stood out was how we bowled in the right channels instead of going for individual strengths," said Deshpande. "It was important to bowl in the right areas rather than bowling haywire with higher speeds, and it paid rich dividends." The 28-year-old pacer

spoke about how vital it

was to not get swayed by

the conditions where there is good bounce and carry.

"On this pitch, it (length) was fuller and around the off-stump," Deshpande said. "It looks good from the outside if the ball is bouncing above +the chest. But the effect the good-length ball gives is not there in that delivery."

Meanwhile, TN's topscorer Vijay Shankar felt the batters did not do a good enough job in challenging conditions. "Anything ar ound 200-220



Over ambitious: Sai Kishore goes for an expansive drive off Deshpande only to lose his middle stump.

Bundesliga: Sony Sports Ten 2 & Jio Cinema App, 8 & 10 p.m.

Having won the toss, TN skipper R. Sai Kishore's decision to bat first on a green top backfired as the Mumbai pacers made full use of the conditions to bowl out the visitors for 146. The de-

27-year-old.

didn't know much. I didn't

decide what I am going to

do. Felt like I should bat on

this wicket," said the

EMMANUAL YOGINI

moist surface.

It even surprised the Mumbai camp and Tushar Deshpande had a glint in his eye when asked what he thought of it. "Absolutely!" said Desh-

batters under pressure after winning a crucial toss.

But, instead, Ajinkya Rahane's men now have the best conditions with the bat to tighten their grip on the game.



Deshpande... on fire. EMMANUAL YOGINI

would have been a good total. We could have done much better as a batting unit and must put our hands up and say we should have got more runs," he said.

MP in command after Avesh & Co. bowl out Vidarbha cheaply

Abhishek Saini NAGPUR

The Madhva Pradesh pace battery, spearheaded by Avesh Khan's four wickets, made the most of conducive conditions to orchestrate Vidarbha's batting demolition on day one of the first Ranji Trophy semifinal here on Saturday.

The overcast conditions and a green tinge on the playing strip could not convince Vidarbha skipper Akshay Wadkar, who won the toss and opted to bat.

It seemed the correct call after Atharva Taide's (39, 63b, 8x4) initial burst took Vidarbha to 27 runs in five overs. His back-to-back drives - first through point and second down the ground - off Anubhav Agarwal put forth his intent in the second over.

But a nip-backer from Avesh that breached Dhruv Shorey's defence in the seventh over sprung the visitor into action. With Kul-Khejroliya and want Anubhav in better control post the wicket, Taide geared down and his partn-Aman Mokhade er dropped anchor.

But the stonewalling

YK



Wrecker-in-chief: Avesh shone with a four-wicket haul for MP. **B. JOTHI RAMALINGAM**

Karun for the sixth wicket

but their 24 runs together

were a momentary pause

in Vidarbha's slide. Anub-

hav cleaned up Sarwate,

and Avesh accounted for

Akshay Wakhare and Yash

Thakur in the space of four

Karun collected boun-

daries square of the wicket,

bringing up his half-centu-

ry in 79 balls. A delivery

from Kulwant Khejroliya

skidded through and rear-

ranged Karun's stumps but

not before he extended Vi-

Himanshu Mantri and

Dubey gave no hint of any

urgency as they com-

menced MP's pursuit of a

first-innings lead. Even

darbha's run tally to 170.

deliveries.

could only last so long before Venkatesh Iyer strangled Taide down the leg. Despite ample assistance, it took 27 overs for the shortball ploy to dawn upon MP. With boundary riders behind and in front of square on the on side, Avesh forced Mokhade to miscue a pull to fine leg.

MP's incursion continued in the second session as a helpless Karun Nair (63, 105b, 9x4) saw his side's implosion. Yash Rathod's promise proved brief when Venkatesh castled him on 17 before Yash Dubey plucked a one-handed blinder at gully to end Wadkar's stay.

Aditya Sarwate joined

though Umesh removed Dubey caught behind, Harsh Gawali and Mantri took their side to 47 for one at Stumps, well poised to bat the home team out of the contest.

The scores:

Vidarbha — 1st innings: Atharva Taide c Himanshu b Venkatesh 39, Dhruv Shorey b Avesh 13, Aman Mokhade c Venkatesh b Avesh 13, Karun Nair b Kulwant 63, Yash Rathod b Venkatesh 17, Akshay Wadkar c Yash b Khejroliya 1, Aditya Sarwate b Anubhav 12, Akshay Wakhare b Avesh 0. Yash Thakur c Himanshu b Avesh 0, Umesh Yadav c Saransh b Kartikeya 0, Aditya Thakare (not out) 0; Extras (b-4, lb-7, nb-1) 12; Total (in 56.4 overs): 170.

Fall of wickets: 1-32, 2-68, 3-77, 4-101, 5-106, 6-132, 7-137, 8-137, 9-170.

Madhya Pradesh bowling: Avesh Khan 15-2-49-4, Anubhav Agarwal 16-4-42-1, Kulwant

Khejroliya 12-2-38-2, Venkatesh lyer 11-3-28-2, Kumar Kartikeya 2.4-0-2-1.

Madhya Pradesh — 1st innings: Yash Dubey c Wadkar b Umesh 11. Himanshu Mantri (batting) 26, Harsh Gawali (batting) 10; Extras 0; Total (for one wkt, in 20 overs): 47. Fall of wicket: 1-20. Vidarbha bowling: Umesh Yadav 7-1-18-1, Aditya Thakare 6-1-18-0, Yash Thakur 5-1-10-0, Aditya Sarwate 2-1-1-0.

Odisha FC thrashes Sethu FC

Press Trust of India VASCO

Odisha FC struck twice in each half to blank Sethu FC 4-0 in the Indian Women's League on Saturday. Myanmar striker Win Theingi Tun (fourth minute), India International K. Indumathi (23rd) and Pyari Xaxa (60th and 78th) scored for the winner.

Odisha's seventh win from nine matches took it two points clear of Gokulam Kerala (20) at the top of the table.

Ishaque & Adil duo in final

Sports Bureau

Ishaque Eqbal and Adil Kalyanpur defeated Rishi Reddy and Gheorghe Schinteie (Romania) 6-2, 7-5 in the doubles semifinals of the \$15,000 ITF men's tennis tournament at Kish Island, Iran.

In the title clash, the second-seeded Indian pair will play Matyas Fuele and Gergely Madarasz of Hungary.

Wong to face Blancaneaux in the summit clash

DELHI OPEN

Kamesh Srinivasan NEW DELHI

Coleman Wong of Hong Kong stretched his dream run as he beat Yuta Shimizu of Japan 7-6(5), 6-4 in the semifinals of the Dafa News \$82,000 Delhi Open Challenger tennis tournament at the DLTA Complex on Saturday.

The 19-year-old Wong, ranked 241 in the world, was more athletic and energetic in taming the Japanese who had put out the top seed Benjamin Bonzi in the second round.

It was more about capitalising on the chances and handling the windy conditions well, as Wong converted one of nine break points, while he did not let Shimizu convert any of the ten break points that he faced.

Wong, who had beaten S. Mukund in the first round in three sets, had enjoyed the fortune of getting a walkover in the second round from the champion of the last tournament, the third seed Va-

•••



Dream run: Wong will be banking on his good form to take him across the finish line. KAMESH SRINIVASAN

in strengthening his tennis lentin Vacherot of Monaco. In the other semifinal, career. Geoffrey Blancaneaux was crafty and had more fire-Matuszewski of Poland power in his strokes to put and Matthew Romios of out Tristan Boyer 6-3, 6-4. Australia won the doubles Blancaneaux, who was title beating the Germans ranked a career best 134 in Jakob Schnaitter and Mark 2022, had outplayed the Wallner in straight sets. second seed Adam Walton

in the second round. The Frenchman will be looking for his 15th singles title, second in a Challenger, when he plays Wong on Sunday. Wong himself has only

Doubles (final): Piotr Matuszewski (Pol) & Matthew won two singles titles, but Romios (Aus) bt Jakob Schnaitter has everything to play for & Mark Wallner (Ger) 6-4, 6-4.

6-4

The results: Singles

(semifinals): Coleman Wong

7-6(5), 6-4: Geoffrev Blancaneaux

(Fra) bt Tristan Boyer (USA) 6-3,

(Hkg) bt Yuta Shimizu (Jpn)

The third seeds, Piotr

and Jamari be the villains

of the piece and deprive Ju-

liette of what will probably

be her final moment in the

One will have to wait un-

til a little after 4 p.m. on

Sunday afternoon to find

sun?

out.

Sport

Time And Tide takes the honours in Sprinters' Cup

Double delight for trainer Adhirajsingh Jodha as tote favourite Dyf claims the Stayers' Cup

INVITATION CUP

Sports Bureau

16

t was trainer Adhirajsingh Jodha's day out as his wards claimed the honours in both the marquee events on the opening day of the Invitation Cup weekend, at the Royal Calcutta Turf Club in Kolkata, on Saturday. In the Zavaray S. Poonawalla Sprinters' Cup, Time and Tide, partnered by P.S. Chouhan, was racing second behind front-run-ner Joaquin till the bend before Chouhan took control. The son of Dali and Starlet stretched out well to win the race in 1m, 9.81s which was just a fraction of second away from the track record. Time And Tide is owned by Mr. Vikram Bac-chawat rep. Bachhawat Farms Pvt.

Tote favourite Dyf, who was con-fidently kept in last position by Trevor till the bend, covered good ground in the straight to prove his mettle and win the M.A.M. Ramaswamy Chettiar Of Chetti-nad Memorial Stavers' (up. This nad Memorial Stayers' Cup. This son of Cougar Mountain-Soak is the property of Mr. K.N. Dhunjib-hoy and Mr. Z.K. Dhunjibhoy rep. Five Stars Shipping Co. Pvt. Ltd., Mr. Jiyaji Bhosale & Mr. Rishikesh Bhosale, Mr. Rama Seshu Evunni. It was a memorable and landmark achievement in the noted trainer Adhirajsingh's career. THE RESULTS:

COROMANDEL GROMOR MIL-LION: VILLANELLE (C. Umesh) 1, Dona Sienna (Trevor) 2, Marcolini (F. Norton) 3 and Hermes (S. Saqlain) 4. Not run: Menjou's Moustache. 5-1/4, 4-1/4 and 2-1/2. Motstache. 51/4, 41/4 and 21/2. Im, 5.26s. ₹11 (w), 10 and 11 (p). SHP: 17, THP: 24, FP: 19, Q: 11, Tanala: 50. Favourite: Villanelle. Owners: Mrs. Liane Luthria, Mr. & Mrs. Homi Mehta, Mr. Jehangir Mehta & Mr. Roshan Emmanuel J.

Trainer: P. Shroff. 2. DELHI RACE CLUB MILLION: STAR PROSPERITY (Yash Narredu) 1, True Faith (S. Zervan) 2, Fancy Nancy (Mustakim) 3 and Dragon's Gold (Hindu Singh) 4. Not run: Zuma. 4, 2 and 1-3/4. 1m, 36.23s. ₹14 (w), 13, 10 and 17 (p). SHP: 19, FP: 29, Q: 21, Tanala: 129. Favour ite: Star Prosperity.

Owners: Mr. & Mrs. Prem Vazir-ani, Mr. & Mrs. P.J. Vazifdar, Mr. Firoze A. Vakil & Mr. M. Rishad. Trainer: M. Narredu.

3. HYDERABAD RACE CLUB MIL-LION: ROYAL MYSORE (Vivek G) 1, Meropi (Yash Narredu) 2, Douglas (R.S. Bhati) 3 and Clever Hans (Vinay Jaiswal) 4. Not run: Dandi Satyagraha. 1/2, 5-1/4 and Shd. 1m, 23.28s. ₹15 (w), 11, 14 and 33 (p). SHP: 27, THP: 77, FP: 38, Q: 29, Tanala: 604. Favourite: Royal Mysore.

Owners: M/s. Blazing Saddles (PF). Trainer: Prasanna Kumar.

4. MYSORE RACE CLUB MILLION: KING'S RETREAT (P. Trevor) 1, Remy Red (Mustakim) 2, Hoping (Mohit Singh) 3 and Speculator (S.K. Paswan) 4, 5-1/2, 3 and Neck. 1m, 24.90s. ₹13 (w), 10, 21 and 65 (n) SHP 46 THP 114 FF



Rewarding a winner: Ms. Behroze Z. Poonawalla presenting the Zavary S. Poonawalla Sprinters' Cup to Mr. & Mrs. Vikram Bacchawat as Zavaray Poonawalla, right, looks on at the Royal Calcutta Turf Club in Kolkata on Saturday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT



Honouring a champion: M.A.M.R. Muthiah, right, chairman, Madras Race Club, presenting the Dr. M.A.M. Ramaswamy Chettiar Of Chettinad Memorial Stayers' Cup to Ms. Anita J. Captain, Mr. K.N. Dhunjibhoy, Mr. Rama Seshu Eyyuni, and Mr. Jiyaji Bhosale. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

) (Yash

and Chamonix (Dunaden-Beacon

Lady) (P.S. Chouhan) 4. 1-1/2, Neck and 7. 3m, 8.74s. ₹15 (w), 12,

44 and 11 (p). SHP: 141, THP: 41, FP: 226, Q: 320, Tanala: 1,441. Fa-

Owners: Mr. K.N. Dhunjibhoy and

Mr. Z.K. Dhunjibhoy rep. Five Stars Shipping Co. Pvt. Ltd., Mr.

Jiyaji Bhosale & Mr. Rishikesh

In the first set of quarterfinals on

The remaining two

includes defending cham-

pion Karnataka and Maha-

see Services (Group A top-

per) facing Railways and

Goa (Group A second) tak-

The next day, Manipur

will take on Assam (Group

A fourth) in the first and

Mizoram will meet Kerala

(Group A third) in the con-

cluding match.

The results: Mizoram 4

(Lalthankima 17, Vanlalbiaa

Chhangte 81, Abhishek Aich

87-og, Malsawmfela 90+3) bt

Sanathoi Meetei 7, L. Sangkar

Singh 66) bt Delhi 1 (Rishabh

Railways 0; Manipur 2 (P.

Dobriyal 41).

ing on Delhi on March 4.

The quarterfinals will

rashtra, crashed out.

March 4, Services (Group A

STAYERS' CUP (GR. 1): DYF (COU-Narredu. Trainer: S. Mr. S. Narredu 6. ZAVARAY S. POONAWALLA SPRINTERS' CUP (GR. 1): TIME AND (DALI-STARLET) TIDE (P.S.

SOCIATION MILLION: MY PRIN-GAR MOUNTAIN-SOAK) (P. TRE-VOR) 1, Ruling Dynasty (Western CESS (P. Trevor) 1, Castillo (Nikhil Naidu) 2, Dubai King (Parmar) 3 Aristocrat-Super Class) (Akshay Kumar) 2, Third Avenue (Ampereand Cosmic Cowboy (J.H. Arul) 4. Not run: Devine Chakra and Head Head and

Will Juliette's love affair with the **Invitation Cup continue?**

Cyrus J. Madan

The Royal Calcutta Turf Club (RCTC) hosting the 62nd running of the Indian Turf Invitation Cup could not have come at better time.

It has given the club the ideal opportunity to showcase the remarkable progress and turnaround that it has made in the quest to take racing back to it's competitive best in Kolka-

Dispelling all doubts that had arisen six to seven months ago, the Board of Stewards, working in con-

team of officials, has put together a weekend that has raised the bar and made it one of the memorable ones ever. This is RCTC at it's very best.

junction with a dedicated

The HPSL Indian Turf Invitation Cup has four 4year-old colts, one 4-yearold filly and just two horses representing the older generation of which one is 5year-old and the other is named Juliette.

Record beckons

Running in her fifth Invitation Cup, eight-year-old Juliette is looking at rewriting

the record books by bidding for a hat-trick in the marquee event.

Racing is indeed the winner as one has had the opportunity to watch one of the greatest horses still competing instead of being retired to stud.

Juliette will take on five But before making up your mind on whether to horses who are half her age go with age or youth, when she lines up to face the starter on Sunday. here's an intriguing little

They're not there to snippet of information. have a look at the pictures-In Kolkata, when there are two greys in a race, one que Kolkata racecourse and will fancy their chancof them wins. There are two greys today and one of them happens to be

Will age prevail, or will young guns like Synthesis named Juliette!

Juliette primed to complete a historic hat-trick of Invitation Cup wins; Mojito appeals most in Super Mile Cup

KOLKATA: The wonder mare Juliette, who is in great heart as evidenced by her morning trials, should continue her winning that, streak by winning the HPSL In-dian Turf Invitation Cup (Gr.1), while Mojito, who won well at Mumbai in his last start, may re-peat in the Maj. P.K. Mehra Memorial Super Mile Cup (Gr.1), the two plum events of the concluding day of the Invitational week-end races here on Sunday (March

BANGALORE TURF CLUB MIL-LION (1,400m), rated 41 to 66, 21 to 46 eligible. 1.30 p.m.: 1. Minecraft (5) P. Sai Kumar 61.5, 2. Jean Lafette (11) V.R. Jagadeesh 59.5, 3. Celtic Harlequin (9) Rahil Akhtar 58, 4. Miss American Pie (10) Parmar 58, 5. Adjustment (1) Antony Raj 56.5, 6. Horus The Great (4) Shezad Khan 56, 7. Oh My Darling (8) Kirtish Bhagat 56, 8. Toussaint (7) Neeraj 55, 9. For-tune Teller (6) S. Saqlain 54.5, 10. Shez R Star (12) Ayaz Khan 52, 11. Superstellar (2) D.S. Deora 52 and 12. Golden Bella (3) S.K. Paswan

at Hyderabad, may defy the pen-alty; MISS AMERICAN PIE: Ran good fourth in Indian 1000 Guineas, in great heart as evidenced by her track trials, should win; ADJUSTMENT: Won comfort-ably in lower class last outing, retains form, may fight it out; OH MY DARLING: Ran second in last start, working well, may make amends

may pose a threat. 1. GLOBAL INFLUENCE, 2. LADY SUNSHINE

3 OCI CABLES & BOLRACECARD. COM MILLION (1,100m, rated 41 to 66, 21 to 46 eligible, 2.30; 1.

Leather Back (11) P. Sai Kumar 60, 2. Kay Star (1) Ayaz Khan 59.5, 3. Stunning Force (5) R. Manish 59.5, 4. Mandela (10) Neeraj 56.5, 5. Sir Baffert (9) P.S. Chouhan 56.5, 6. Swift Lady (12) Imran Chisty 56.5, 7. La Dominate (3) AntonyRaj 56, 8. Zukor (14) S. Saqlain 56, 9. Divine Thoughts (13) Mustakim 54.5, 10. All Time Legend (7) Bhawani 53, 11. Bundle Charm (8) Kirtish Bhagat 53, Devushka (2)P. Tejeshwar 52.5, 13. Yuvi (6) Vinay Jaiswal 52.5, 14. Dance Along (4) Vinod Shinde 51.5 and 15. Sporting Trainer (15) Hindu Singh 51.5.

LEATHER BACK: Moving well in morning trials, may fight it out; SIR BAFFERT: Slowly off last time out, impressive workouts, may have a say at the finish; ALL TIME LEGEND: Good second to Archway, pleasing in morning trials, could win. DANCE ALONG: Finished close second to Sporting Trainer in lower class, may run close with light weight.

1. ALL TIME LEGEND, 2. LEATHER BACK, 3. SIR BAFFERT

4 SURESH MAHINDRA MULTI MILLION TROPHY (Gr. 2) (1,400m), 4-y-0 & over, 3.00: 1. Ahead Of My Time (2) C.S. Jodha 60, 2. Shamrock (5) Suraj Narredu 59, 3. Siege Courageous (1) Vivek G 56.5, 4. Imperial Blue (8) Antony Raj 55.5, 5. Iron Clad (9) P. Sai Kumar 54, 6. The Pre-(10) R.S. Bhati 54, 8, Yukan (12) P. Trevor 54, 9. Savvy Chic (7) P.S. Chouhan 53.5, 10. Snowfall (4) Yash Narredu 53.5, 11, Moon's Blessing (11) F. Norton 52.5 and 12. White Roses (6) Neeraj 52.5. AHEAD OF MY TIME: Last run at Mumbai can be ignored, moving impressively, may score over his rivals; SHAMROCK: Unbeaten in his last five starts, in good shape as evidenced by morning trials, should win; SIEGE COURAGEOUS: Won well in his last outing, main-

INVITATION CUP

has done everything asked of her.

She is as well as she can be and

I don't think the short straight in

Kolkata will pose too much of a

problem as she is a mare with a

great heart who always gives off

Satish Narredu: Champions

Way, who won the Golconda

the Ruia, where he probably

picked up a stone and came back

That was a bit of a setback, but

he came out of it nicely. He will

spearhead the challenge of the

Sathish Narredu: Touch of

Won eight races and twice

Grey is as genuine as they come.

second from 11 starts. Winner of

the Mysore Derby and the South

India Derby. Don't underestimate

Pesi Shroff: Jamari is a filly

taking on the wonder mare

with huge talent and has had a

really tough campaign. Though

Juliette and renewing her battle

with Synthesis, she will be right

there when the race comes to a

Derby in style, gets the trip and

within herself.

her best.

sore.

him

boil

4-year-olds.

Karthik Ganapathy: Juliette

tains form, may fight out the fin-ish; IMPERIAL BLUE: Ran good second to Shamrock, working well on track, can make amends 1. SHAMROCK,

2. AHEAD OF MY TIME,

3. SIEGE COURAGEOUS **5** MAJ P.K. MEHRA MEMORIAL SUPER MILE CUP (Gr. 1)

(1,600m), 4-y-o & over, 3.30: 1. A Star Is Born (4) Suraj Narredu 59, 2. Chopin (8) Neeraj 59, 3. De Vil-liers (6) P. Trevor 59, 4. Evaldo (2) Akshay Kumar 59, 5. Mojito (7) Parmar 59, 6. Destroyer (1) P.S. Chouhan 57.5, 7. Knotty Charmer (5) Vivek G 57.5 and 8. Philosophy (3) Antony Raj 57.5. A STAR IS BORN: Unbeaten in his

A STAR IS BORN: Unbeaten in his last three starts, maintains form and may strike; MOJITO: Won comfortably at Mumbai over a mile trip with blinkers on, should repeat; **DESTROYER:** An impressive winner in his last start, retains form, may pose a threat; KNOTTY CHARMER: Won well in 2000 Guineas & second in Derby at Chennai, may make amends.

1. MOJITO, 2. A STAR IS BORN,

3. KNOTTY CHARMER **G** HPSL INDIAN TURF INVITA-TION CUP (Gr. 1) (2,400m), 4-y-o & over, 4.00: 1. Kalamitsi (2) F. Norton 59, 2. Juliette (6) C.S. Jodha 57.5, 3. Champions Way (3) Yash Narredu 57, 4. Prana (4) Ant-oru Pai 67, 5. Surbiceia (5) Surai ony Raj 57, 5. Synthesis (5) Suraj Narredu 57, 6. Touch Of Grey (7) Neeraj 57 and 7. Jamari (1) P. Trevor 55.5. JULIETTE: Came from last position

to pip Dyf at the wire in the Eclipse Stakes at Mumbai, retains her winning form, should continue her winning streak; SYNTHESIS: Fin-ished second to Enabler in Indian Derby, moving well on track, may fight it out: TOUCH OF GREY: Un beaten in his last four starts, maintains form as evidenced by track performances, and may pose a threat; JAMARI: Ran third in the Indian Derby, impressive morning trials, may upset. 1. JULIETTE, 2. SYNTHESIS, 3. JAMARI

rated 61 to 86, 41 to 66 eligible. 4.30: 1. Long Lease (6) Suraj Narredu 60, 2. Shubankar (Merchant) 58.5, 3. Golden Kingdom (2) P.S. Chouhan 58, 4. Magneto (5) S. Saqlain 57, 5. Life Is Good (4) Mohit Singh 56.5, 6. Kiefer (7) R.S. Bhati 53.5, 7. Burmese (8) Vinod Shinde 52.5, 8. Good Tip (9) V. Bunde 52.5 and 9. Basharat (1) Mustakim 52.

LONG LEASE: Won the Kolkata Derby Stakes in a close finish, retains form, should score; SHBUANKAR: Ran third in his last outing, may upset; GOLDEN KING-DOM: Finished second to **DOM:** Finished second to Chamonix at Mumbai, may run close: KIEFER: Ran second to Am ber Knight in her last start, may make amends

1. LONG LEASE, 2. GOLDEN KINGDOM,

3. SHUBANKAR

8 MADRAS RACE CLUB MILLION (1,200m) rated 21 to 15 MADRAS RACE CLUB MILLION (1,200m), rated 21 to 46, 1 to 26 eligible, 5.00: 1. Hasting Sun-rise (5) Akshay Kumar 60, 2. Blackstone (10) Bhawani 58, 3. Granpar (11) D.S. Deora 58, 4. Cuban Pete (3) Ayaz Khan 57, 5. Time (15) Shezad Khan 56, 6. Raisina (6) Arman Khan 55.5, 7. Italian Gold (7) Rahil Akhtar 55, 8. Italian Gold (7) Rahil Akhtar 55, 8. Xtravagant Star (14) Imran Chisty 55, 9. Fresh Hope (2) S.K. Paswan 54.5, 10. Msg Fantasy (1) R. Shelar 54.5, 11. Flamingo Road (13) V.R. Jagdeesh 53.5, 12. Power Racer (12) Vinay Jaiswal 53, 13. Tres Bien (20) D. Udou Vieno C. 14. Situr circ (8) P. Uday Kiran 53, 14. Sixty Six (9) Mustakim 50 and 15. Sun Flare (4) Vinod Shinde 50.

HASTING SUNRISE: Won comfort ably in her last start, may repeat; BLACKSTONE: An easy winner of

MINECRAFT: Winner of three races 1 MISS AMERICAN PIE

2. OH MY DARLING, 3. MINECRAFT DASHMESH STUD CALCUTTA

66, Q: 54, Tanala: 1,326. Favourite: King's Retreat. Owners: Mr. Faiz Adam & Mr. Atul Ishwardas Chordia. Trainer: P.

Quinn. 5. JAPAN CUP: STAR GLORY (Surai Narredu) 1, Black Eagle (S. Saqlain) 2, Gazino (P.S. Chouhan) 3 and Hall Of Grace (Neeraj) 4. 1/2, 1-1/2 and 1-1/2. 1m, 11.17s. ₹18 (w), 15, 14 and 30 (p). SHP: 41, THP: 88 FP: 73, Q: 45, Tanala: 993. Favourite: Star Glory. Owners: Mr. Daulat Chhabria &

Committee

discusses

ofnew

coaches

Providence) (Surai Narredu) 2. Siege Courageous (Top Class-Golden Queen) (Vivek G) 3 and Etosha (Phoenix Tower-Namibia) Neeraj) 4. Not run: Cool Rider. 2-1/2, Shd and 1-1/2. 1m, 9.81s. $\overline{54}$ (w), 15, 17 and 14 (p). SHP: 56, THP: 67, FP: 262, Q: 85, Tanala: 1,196. Favourite: Ascoval. Owner: Mr. Vikram Bachhawat rep. Bachhawat Farms Pvt. Ltd. Trainer: Adhiraisingh Iodha.

Bhosale, Mr. Rama Seshu Eyunni. Trainer: Adhirajsingh Jodha. 7. DR. M.A.M. RAMASWAMY CHET-8. CALCUTTA BOOKMAKERS' AS-

vourite: Dyf.

TIAR OF CHETTINAD MEMORIAL

1/4. 1m, 5.68s. ₹24 (w), 15, 21 and 21 (p). SHP: 45, THP: 49, FP: 229, Q: 184, Tanala: 2,254. Favourite: My Princess

Owners: Mr. Ashok Ranpise, Mr. Vishwajeet Sood, Mr. Aziz A. Vir-ani, Mrs. Ayesha A. Hussain & Mr. Aman Hussain. Trainer: Aman Hussain.

Jackpot: 70%: ₹1,896 (313 tkts.) & 30%: 203 (1,114 tkts.). Mini Jackpot: 906 (20 tkts.). Treble: (i) 24 (119 tkts.), (ii) 41 (482 tkts.), (iii) 777 (136 tkts.).

MILLION (20 -24) (Gr. 3), 3 y-o only, 2.00: 1. Global Influence (2) Suraj Narredu 56, 2. Nomitsi (4) Yash Narredu 56, 3. Lady Sunshine (3) P. Trevor 54.5, 4. Mothers Grace (5) Neerai 54.5 and 5. Phenomenal Lady (1) P.S. Chouhan 54.5.

GLOBAL INFLUENCE: Won two races comfortably this season, maintains form and should repeat; NOMITSI: Missed the jump in his last start and ran second, working well, may upset; LADY SUNSHINE: Won over a mile trip last time out,

his last start over 1,200m, main tains form; **ITALIAN GOLD**: Good second to Zukor in his last start, can make amends: POWER RACER Ran second to Fort Nelston in his last start, may go close. 1. HASTING SUNRISE, 2. BLACKSTONE, 3. ITALIAN GOLD Day's Best: MOJITO Jackpot: 4, 5, 6, 7 & 8. Mini Jackpot: 5, 6, 7 & 8 Treble: (i) 1, 2 & 3, (ii) 3, 4 & 5, (iii)

T ROYAL WESTERN INDIA TURF CLUB MILLION (2,000m),

Nine boxers will try to



Ready for action: The Indian contingent, which will take part in the

Sports Bureau

Nine Indian boxers will try to earn as many quota places as possible in the first World Olympic boxing qualification tournament, starting at the E-work Arena in Busto Arsizio, Italy, on Sunday.

The Indians trained in a multi-nation camp, including boxers from Ukraine, Tajikistan, Japan, Greece and Hungary, for 10 days in Montenegro.

Deepak Bhoria (51kg), Mohammad Hussamuddin (57kg) and Nishant Dev (71kg) and former Worlds and multiple Asian medallist Shiva Thapa (63.5kg) will be among the leading names who are capable of

book tickets to Paris



Olympic qualifying event in Busto Arsizio, Italy. X@MEDIA_SAI

securing slots for Paris.

While Bhoria and Nish-

who is coming back after his knee surgery, will be keen to prove himself. Commonwealth Games bronze medallist Jaismine Lamboria (60kg) and former World youth champion

ant will try to overcome

their disappointing perfor-

mances in the Asian

Games and underline their

potential, Hussamuddin,

Ankushita Boro (66kg) will try to win quota places and complete a full women's squad to Paris.

The Indian squad:

Men: Deepak Bhoria (51kg), Mohammad Hussamuddin (57kg), Shiva Thapa (63.5kg), Nishant Dev (71kg), Lakshya Chahar (80kg), Sanjeet (92kg), Narender Berwal (+92kg).

Women: Jaismine Lamboria (60kg), Ankushita Boro (66kg).

AIFF Women's Mizoram wins big, takes second spot in Group B appointment

SANTOSH TROPHY

Sports Bureau

Press Trust of India NEW DELHI

The All India Football Federation's (AIFF) Women's Committee on Saturday held discussions regarding the appointment of new for National coaches teams.

In recent times, India finished joint winner in the SAFF under-19 women's championship in Dhaka. Immediately after that, the senior team ended the runner-up in the Turkish Women's Cup.

The committee underscored the importance of recruiting more A and B Licence coaches, particularly for goalkeepers, and encouraging their active participation within the ecosystem. In addition to these initiatives, the committee recommended the celebration of Women's Day and the organisation of virtual workshops.

YK

topper) will face Railways and Goa (Group A second) plays Delhi. Mizoram outplayed Rail-Manipur will take on Assam ways 4-0 in its concluding (Group A fourth) and Mizoram will meet Kerala (Group A third) Group B league outing of in the concluding match on the 77th National football second day of the last-eight championship, for the Sanclashes tosh Trophy at Yupia, Arunachal Pradesh, on Saturthe third and the fourth day and booked the spots in the final standings. remaining quarterfinal berth. teams in Group B, which

Manipur emerged the most successful team of the group league stage as it beat Delhi 2-1 for its fourth win in another match of the same group.

Manipur secured the top spot with 13 points from four wins and a draw for the highest aggregate of points in groups A & B taken together. Services topped Group A with 10 points.

Mizoram tallied seven points from two wins and a draw to form a three-way tie for the second spot on points with Delhi and Railways. The goal averages separated the three with Delhi and Railways taking A day of draws for Indian trio

Press Trust of India PRAGUE R. Praggnanandhaa, D. Gukesh, and Vidit Gujrathi

played out draws in the fourth round of the Prague Masters chess tournament here.

Praggnanandhaa, who had back-to-back losses, played a solid game to sign peace with local hopeful Nguyen Thai Dai Van.

Gukesh did not give any chances to Nodirbek Abdusattarov of Uzbekistan and split the point while Gujrathi could not make much headway against Mateusz Bartel of Poland.

Vaishali wins

In the Challengers section, Grandmaster R Vaishali scored her second victory on the trot at the expense of Stepan Herbek of Czech Republic.

The results: Round 4: Richard Rapport (2.5) drew with Vincent Keymer (1.5); David Navara (1.5) drew with Parham Maghsoodloo (3); Nguyen Thai Dai Van (1.5) drew with R. Praggnanandhaa (1.5); Nodirbek Abdusattarov (3) drew with D. Gukesh (2.5); Vidit Gujrathi (2) drew with Mateusz Bartel (1).

WHAT THE PROFESSIONALS SAY SUPER MILE

Surai Narredu: After his hat-trick of wins in Kolkata, we felt that the mile would suit A Star is Born better than a mile and a half. He's never been better and we have home advantage.

Rajesh Narredu: A Star is Born has bee in great heart ever since he has come to Kolkata. We decided to bring him here during the Monsoon season knowing that the RCTC would be hosting the Invitation weekend. He has thrived and is at his best. The manner in which he won the

what prompted us to keep him at this distance.

September, but he's in the same form as he was then when he beat A Star Is Born by 3 lengths in Mysuru. Don't write him off. M.K. Jadhav: Mojito, one of the most consistent horses that I have ever trained, has a touch of class. The blinkers he sported for

helped him considerably and he won that really well. Mojito comes in with an outstanding

taking on the best today, I'm sure he will run a great race.

Prasanna Kumar: Knotty Charmer has never been out of the first three and the mile is his best trip. Older horses like A Star Is Born, Moiito, and Evaldo have a lot of class and we are meeting them for the first time, but Knotty Charmer is definitely there.

chance

Patrick Quinn: Destroyer is a top-class miler and we have home advantage. Though he is

will run a great race. Yash Narredu: Champions Way will run a big race. Calcutta Gold Cup over a mile is Rajesh Narredu: Synthesis ran a great race in the Indian Derby, bouncing back after a poor run in

Prasanna Kumar: Evaldo may not have run since the 28th of

the first time in his last start have

Suraj Narredu: Synthesis is my pick out of the Narredu-trained trio. He ran a great race in the Indian Derby and I'm sure will do well here also.

THE HINDU **News in Frames**



Hilltop struggles: Many girls drop out of school to support their families by collecting firewood from the forest near Theni, Tamil Nadu.



Finding joy: Kavi, a class four student after school hours. She is one of the four students in a primary school in Velappar Kovil settlement.



Creating awareness: Vijayaraja, a hostel warden in Periyakulam, volunteers to identify education and career opportunities for tribal families in Theni and Dindigul districts.

Forest turmoil

Tribal communities, who have relied on resources from the hills around Theni in Tamil Nadu, face challenges after the enforcement of the Forest Act; education could help them stay connected to their roots



riginating from the Palani hills, the Paliyar tribe is renowned for their extensive expertise in forests and wildlife. Their primary occupations include gathering firewood, farming, cultivating tubers, and beekeeping. Over the years, their survival has depended on the resources within the hills.

The enforcement of the Forest Act has compelled many indigenous people to relocate to the plains, where they are compelled to reside in government settlements. The case of the people of Velappar Kovil is one such. The 125 acres of fertile land that once belonged to the Kaara Paarai tribe have been given to the forest department, resulting in the gradual loss of their connection to the land, and their livelihoods. Moreover, they stand on the verge of losing their cultural heritage, as they aren't able to pass their knowledge of the forest to the next generation. The younger members of the community find themselves grappling with the challenge of adapting to the external world and preserving their traditions.

Here is where higher education could help, as

the students would feel more empowered to choose their own paths. Vijayaraja, a hostel warden at the Government Adi Dravidar Welfare boys hostel in Periyakulam, has been working for the education of tribal students in the regions of Theni and Dindigul districts over the past four years. His voluntary work involves frequent visits to tribal villages, engaging with parents, and providing information about government initiatives, free educational resources, and scholarship opportunities.

Categorising his students into two groups, Mr. Vijayaraja works with school-age dropouts who remain eligible for reapplication and those who have exceeded the school age but are still eligible for tutorial exams.

Currently, he is on a mission to enrol students who have completed the tenth grade in coaching classes for the Tamil Nadu Public Service Commission (TNPSC) Group 4 exam in 2024. This exam offers 288 positions in the Forest Department specifically reserved for Scheduled Tribes. Such opportunities would help the students keep in touch with their roots.



Second chances: Students who had previously dropped out, now enrolled in a school in Kottur, Theni.

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News in Frames



Reaching heights: The Government Tribal Residential Primary School, Kannakarai, is both home and education hub.



All smiles: Enrolment at the primary level of schooling has seen improvement.





CM YK

Campus chronicles: The Government Tribal Residential Primary School at Kannakarai has classrooms, a dining area, kitchen, and separate residential facilities for boys and girls.



High spirits: Students practise Silambam as part of their extra-curricular activities. The two girls recently won first place in a competition organised by the Theni Lions Club.



