— JOURNA

MONDAY, MARCH 7, 2022, KOLKATA, LATE CITY, 14 PAGES

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/ CARachanaPhadkeRanade

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INDIA EXPOSITION MART LTD

Regd. Office: Plot No. 1; 210 - Atlantic Plaza, 2nd Floor, Local Shopping Centre, Mayur Vihar Phase-I, Delhi – 110091 Tel.:+91-120-2328011-20, Fax: +91-120-2328010 Email id: cs@indiaexpocentre.com, Website : www.indiaexpomart.com NOTICE OF THE 12TH EXTRAORDINARY GENERAL MEETING, INFORMATION ON E-VOTING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT the 12th Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) of the Company is scheduled on Tuesday, March 29, 2022 at 02:30 PM at Govt. Servants Cooperative House Building Society Limited, Kalyan Kendra, 9, Paschimi Marg, Vasant Vihar, New Delhi - 110057 to transact the business as stated in the notice sent to the members individually.

The Notice of EGM has been dispatched to all the members whose email IDs are registered with the Company. Physical copies of the same have been sent to all other members at their registered address in the permitted mode.

The same are also available on the Company's website www.indiaexpomart.com Additionally, the notice of EGM is also available on the website of National Securities Depositories Limited ('NSDL') at https://www.evoting.nsdl.com. The documents pertaining to the businesses to be transacted at the EGM are available for inspection at the Registered Office of the company between 12 Noon and 3 PM on all working days except Saturdays, Sundays and Holidays upto the date of EGM. The dispatch of notice of EGM has been completed on March 04, 2022.

In terms of Section 108 of Companies Act, 2013, read with rules thereto, as amended, the company is pleased to provide Remote e-voting facility to the members to cast their vote by electronic means (remote e-voting) on all the resolutions set forth in the notice. The company has engaged services of NSDL for providing e-voting facility. Kindly refer the notice of the EGM regarding instructions on e-voting.

The remote e-voting commences on Thursday, March 24, 2022at 10:00 AM (IST) and will end on Monday, March 28, 2022 at 05:00 PM (IST). The remote e-voting shall not be allowed beyond the said date and time.

- The cut-off date for determining the eligibility to vote by electronic means or at the EGM is Tuesday, March 22, 2022.
- A person whose name is recorded in the register of members as on the cut-off date, i.e March 22, 2022, shall be entitled to avail the facility of remote e-voting or voting facility available at the meeting, as the case may be.
- Any person who has acquired shares of the company and becomes member of the company after dispatch of the Notice and holding shares as on cut-off date, may obtain the login id and password by sending a request at evoting@nsdl.co.in or cs@indiaexpocentre.com by mentioning DPID/ Client ID No.
- The company shall also provide facility for voting through electronic voting system or polling paper at the meeting and Members attending the meeting who have not already casted their vote by remote e-voting shall be able to exercise their right to
- vote at the EGM. The members who have casted their vote by remote e-voting prior to the meeting may participate in the meeting but shall not be entitled to cast their vote again.
- In case of any queries, you may refer to the 'Frequently Asked Questions' (FAQs) and 'e-voting user manual' available in downloads section of NSDL's e-voting website https://www.evoting.nsdl.com. In case of any grievances, you may contact Ms. Pallavi Mhatre, Manager, of NSDL at Toll free number 1800-1020-990 and 1800-2244-30; email: evoting@nsdl.co.in who will also address grievances connected with the voting

The results of voting would be declared as stipulated under the relevant rules and will also be posted on the above-mentioned company's website and website of NSDL

March 07, 2022 Delhi

By Order of the Board of Directors Anupam Sharma Company Secretary & Compliance Officer



Name of the

Borrower / Guaranto

JODHPUR PARK BRANCH A/419A, Gariahat Road (South), Kolkata-700068 e-mail: jodcal@bankofbaroda.com

(For Immovable Property) Whereas The undersigned being the authorised officer of the BANK OF BARODA, Jodhpur Park Branch under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest (Second) 1[Act], 2002 and in exercise of powers

Description of Immovable Properties

Appendix IV, Rule 8(1)

POSSESSION NOTICE

conferred under Section 13(12) read with rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a demand notice calling upon the to repay the amount mentioned in the notice, within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice toward outstanding(s) of loan facilities. The borrower having failed to repay the amount due towards Loan within stipulated 60 days froi he date of receipt of Notice. Notice is hereby given to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described

nerein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/ her under Section 13(4) of the said 1[Act] read with rule 8 of the said rules on the late mentioned below. The Borrower/Guarantors/Mortgagorsin particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property detaile

pelow and any dealings with the property/ies will be subject to the charge of the BANK OF BARODA, Jodhpur Park Branch for an amount plus additional charges as applicable and further interest thereon at contractual rate plus costs, charges and expenses ti date of payment.

(1) Date of Demand Notice

(2) Date of Possession

The Borrower's attention is invited to provision of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available to redeem th ecured assets

Donowci / Oddiantoi	(3) Outstanding Amount	
67/42 Strand Road, Cross Road No 10 Kolkata 700006 Guarantor: Mr. Koushik Ghosh, Ind Floor, Block A, Prantik Abasan,	(1) 18.09.2021 (2) 02.03.2022 (3) Rs.99,79,991.51 (Rupees Ninety Nine Lacs Seventy nine Thousand Nine Hundred Ninety One Rupees and Fifty One Paise only) plus additional charges as applicable as on 13.09.2021 and further interest thereon at contractual rate plus costs, charges and expenses till date of payment.	1. All that piece and parcel of self-contained residential flat in the name of Mr Kaushik Ghosh measuring about 911.34 sq Ft being no C on the 2nd Floor Block A of PRANTIK ABASAN of G+ IV Storied building underneath of the proportionate share of land laying and situated at Mouza Salua P S Rajarhat (Old) Airport (New) J L No. 3 R.S No 109 Touzi No. 1258/1 C S Dag Nos. 403,404 R S & L R Dag Nos 418,419C S Khatian No 324 R S Khatian No 144 L R Khatian Nos Kri 313,394,392, 393,391,390 & 220/1 Ward No 8 Under Bidhannagar Municipal Corporation Dist North 24 Parganas Holding No RGM 4/207 Block F and RGM 4/205, Block F, Holding No RGM 4/207 Block F and RGM 8/205, Block F, Holding No RGM 4/207 Block F and RGM 8/206 Block F and RGM 8/205, Block F, Holding No RGM 4/207 Block F and RGM 8/206 Block F and RGM Block F and RGM 8/205, Block F Near Rajarhat Road Kolkata 700136 and bounded of approved property as follows: On the North: By Road of 15 ft. On the South: By Jonaki apartment, On the East: By Property of Sunil roy & Adhir Baugh, On the West: By Property of Sri Narayan Sengupta, Sadhan Paul & Basundhara Apartment 2. All that piece and parcel of self-contained residential flat/unit No: I in the name of Mrs. Sananda Roy on the 1st Floor measuring an area 914 sq ft in Block — 3 of the multistoried building namely "GOURAV GARDEN" underneath of the proportionate share of land laying and situated at Mouza Mondalpara in J L 6 Plot No 288 & 289 corresponding R S khatian No 878,877 & 147 within the local limits of Kolkata Municipal Corporation under Premises No 142 A Raja Rammohan Roy Road in Ward No 121 under PS Behala Kolkata 700008 under South 24 Parganas which is butted and bounded of approved property as follows: On the North: By Premises No 41/15 & 41/23 Raja Rammohan Road, On the South: By Premises No 94A & 94/1

Raia Rammohan Road

Authorised Officer, Bank of Barod

Lot

Branch Name /

Name & Address of the

Borrowers / Guarantors

KARNATAKA POWER CORPORATION LIMITED (A Government of Karnataka Enterprise)

CIN: U85110KA1970SGC001919

E-AUCTION NOTIFICATION (Through e-Procurement Portal of GoK)

No A1M1B3/Fly Ash/BTPS/Mar 2022 Dated: 07.03.2022

(Evaluation of Auction participants and E-Auction bidding) Name of Work: SALE OF DRY FLY ASH FROM BELLARY THERMAL POWER STATION (BTPS) Unit 1 to 3 OF KPCL. KPCL has already finalized H1 (M/s. UltraTec Cement Ltd..) and H2 (M/s. Dalmia Bharat Cement Ltd..) bidders in the previous tende cum auction for lifting of dry fly ash from Ballari TPS and is already issuing fly ash to ther after entering into contract agreements with them. Tenders are invited through e-auction from direct end-users/ suppliers to end-users of fly ash for H3, H4, H5......Hn positions for 'Lifting of dry fly ash of approximately 7.30 lakh MT per annum (2000 MT per day) o 'as available' basis for a period from finalization of this auction and issue of Letter of Award up to 06.06.2024 from Ballari, i.e., from Bellary Thermal Power Station - Unit # to 3 of KPCL. Even the above two existing H1 and H2 bidders can participate in this auction and have a separate contract additionally. Operation & Maintenance of Ast Handling System and Silo of BTPS, Unit 1 to 3, including Spares, Consumables Housekeeping & Miscellaneous works, if any, is in the scope of KPCL. The last date for receipt of the completed bids: 17.00 Hrs. on 21.03.2022. The Auction document can be downloaded from the website https://www.eproc.karnataka.gov.in. Further details car be had from: The Superintending Engineer (Mines), KPCL, No.82, Shakti Bhavar III Floor, Race Course Road, Bengaluru- 560001. e-mail: cefuelskpcl@karnataka.gov. in sefuels@gmail.com Website: www.karnatakapower.com e-Portal/ HP Help 080-22234115 / 22230960.

NIQ No. SPC/KOL/REP/SLGANGA Dt. 7-3-2022

M/S SUBIR PAUL CHOWDHURY, 4/19, Poddar Nagar, 1st Floor Kolkata 700068, invites sealed quotations from experienced, vesse repairers / Shipbuilders for Dry Dock repair of IWAI vessel SL GANGA (O&M contract) at Kolkata. Details and BOQ can be acquired from above address between 8th March 2022 to 10th March 2022 time 11:00 hrs. to 17:00 hrs. Last date for submission of quotation 14th March 2022, 15:00 hrs.

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Details of

known to the

secured

Date / Time

of E-Auctio



Description of the Immovable Properties

Mortgaged, Owner's Name (Mortgagers of

property(ies)

G.T. Road Burdwan Branch, Bhangakuthi, Near Life Line Nursing Home 1st Floor, Bank of Baroda Regional Office, Burdwan - 713101

AUCTION SALE NOTICE

A) Reserve Price

C) Bid Increase

The under mentioned persons are hereby informed that they have failed to pay off the liability in the loan accounts. Notice sent to them by Registered Post have been returned undelivered to the Bank. They are therefore requested to pay off the iability and other charges and redeem the pledged securities on or before 10.03.2022 failing which the said secu be sold by the Bank in public auction at the cost of the borrower at the Bank's premises at 11.00 A.M. on 10.03,2022 or or any other convenient date thereafter without further notice at the absolute discretion of the Bank

	SR. No.	Date of Loan	Loan Number	Name and Address of the borro	wer
1 09.10.2018 51190500000111 Kazi		51190500000111	Kazi Abdul Hafiz, P.O. Rajbati, Burdwan 713104		
П	2	18.11.2020	51190600000991	Sk Abdus Salam, Vill: Yusufabad , Burdwam - 713104	
3 17.05.2019 51190500000219 Dibyendu Bas		51190500000219	Dibyendu Basu, Kaligram, Burdwan- 713141		
- 1	late : 07.03.2022 Branch Manag				

A) Date of Demand

B) Date of Possession

Notice u/s 13(2)

पंजाब नैशनल बैंक 🕒 punjab national bank

SALE NOTICE E- Auction Dated: 16.04.2022

Head Office: Plot No. 4, Sector-10, Dwarka, New Delhi - 110075

Date: 02.03.2022, Place: Kolkata

Circle Sastra Centre, Durgapur, Nachan Road, Benachity, Durgapur, Paschim Bardhaman, W.B. / e-mail: cs8222@pnb.co.in SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES

LAST DATE & TIME OF SUBMISSION OF EMD (Earnest Money Deposit) AND DOCUMENTS: 13.04.2022/ UP TO 4.00 PM Sale of immovable property mortgaged to Bank under Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest (SARFAESI) Act, 2002 (No.54 of 2002)

E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8 (6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower (s) and Guarantor (s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor, the constructive/physical/ symbolic possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of the Bank/ Secured Creditor, will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is", and "Whatever there is" on the date as mentioned in the table herein below, for recovery of its dues due to the Bank/ Secured Creditor from the respective borrower (s) and guarantor (s). The reserve price and the earnest money deposit will be as mentioned in the table below against the respective propertie

DESCRIPTION OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES [The Said Properties are under Constructive Possession/ Physical possession of the Secured Creditor]

Lot No.	Branch Name / Name & Address of the Borrowers / Guarantors	Description of the Immovable Properties Mortgaged, Owner's Name (Mortgagers of property(ies)	A) Date of Demand Notice u/s 13(2) B) Date of Possession C) Outstanding as on	A) Reserve Price B) EMD C) Bid Increase Amount	Date / Time of E-Auction	Details of encumbrances known to the secured creditors
1.	B/O- Panagarh, G. T. Road, P.O. Panagarh Bazar, Paschim Burdwan - 713148 Borrower: Amal Kumar Koyal, S/o Pabitra Kr. Koyel, Vill. Bodhmati, P.O. Charicha, Birbhum, PIN-731127 Guarantor: i) Smt. Sujata Koyal Saha, W/o Amal Kr. Koyal, Vill. & P.O. Joka, Barui Para, Kolkata-700104 ii) Sh Komal Koyal, S/o Pabitra Kr. Koyal, Vill. & P.O. Joka, Barui Para, Kolkata-700104	i) All that piece and parcel of the land, structure measuring 40 decimal lying and situated in CS & RS kh No. 70, RS plot No. 357 & 358 in Mouza-Nirvaypur, Chiwki Suri, JL No. 110, Touzi No. 206, covered by Deed no. 5588 of 2006 in the name of Amal Kumar Koyal. Boundary: Northby a portion of RS dag No. 311 & 358, South- by a portion of RS dag No. 358, East- by a portion of RS dag No. 358, West- by a portion of RS dag no. 358, West- by a portion of RS dag no. 358, West- by a portion of RS dag no. 318	1. 06.07.2021 2. 08.11.2021 3. Rs. 2,01,47,588.38 (Rupees two crore one lakh forty seven thousand five hundred eighty eight only) as on 30.06.2021 plus further interest thereon from 01.07.2021 and costs, Charges and Expenses incurred/to be	A) Rs.275.73 lakh B) Rs. 27.58 lakh C) Rs.50,000.00	11.00 AM to 4.00 PM	Not known to Bank at present
	Tollida 100104	ii) All that piece And parcel of Flat No. 01 on the ground floor measuring 1210 sq. ft., more or less including super build up area consisting of 03 bed rooms, 1 drawing cum dining space, 1 kitchen, 2 toilets under Nalini Apartment five storied building together with undivided proportionate share of the landed property lying and situated of Mouza- Purba Barisha, P.S. Thakurpukur, JL No. 23, Plot No. 2591 within the limit of Joka Gram Panchayat in the name of Smt. Sujata Koyal and Kamal Koyal covered by Deed No. 4118/2007. Boundary: North- MG Road, South- land of Dag No. 2591, East- land of Mr. Das, West- Piyalii Apartment.	incurred and less amount recovered thereafter	A) Rs. 47.14 lakh B) Rs. 4.72 lakh C) Rs.10,000.00		
2.	B/O- Panagarh, G. T. Road, P.O. Panagarh Bazar, Paschim Burdwan - 713148 Borrower: Mimosa Trading, Prop. Sananda Roy, Vill. Budhmati, P.O. Charicha, P.S. Md. Bazar, Dist. Birbhum, West Bengal-731127 Sananda Roy, W/o Joydeep Roy, N76, Purba Putiary Dakshin Para, Kolkata-700093 Guarantor: i) Mrs. Oliveea Ghosh, W/o Kaushik Ghosh, Vill. Kali Park, P.O. Rajarhat Gopalpur, P.S. Airport, Kolkata-700136, ii) Mr. Saikat Kumar Roy, S/o Shri Swadesh Ranjan Roy, Purba Putiary Dakshin Para, House No. M/76, P.S. Regent Park, Kolkata-700093	i) All the piece and parcel of the residential land and building in the name of Saikat Kumar Roy S/o Sh. Swadesh Ranjan Roy, Mouza-Nirvoypur, JL No. 110, RS Khatian No. 112, 255, LR Khatian No. 618 & 489, at present khatian No. 595, Plot No. 354 & 348, total area-202 Decimal under Vill. Bodhmati, P.O. Charicha, P.S. Md. Bazar, ADSR Suri, Dist. Birbhum. Sale Deed No. 2279 of 2009. Bounded By: North-Plot No. 320, South-Plot No. 354, East-Plot No. 354, West-Plot Nos. 49, 352 & 30 Ft. Wide internal Rd. Possession-Constructive ii) All the piece and parcel of the flat situated at Prantik Abasan premises No. B, in 2nd Floor Under Mouza-Salua, P.S. Airport, JL No. 3, Dist. North 24 Parganas, having super built up area	1. 22.10.2021 2. 16.02.2022 3. Rs.96,84,881.46 (Rupees Ninety Six Lakh Eighty Four Thousand Eight Hundred Eighty One and Paisa Forty Six only) as on 30.09.2021 plus further interest thereon from 01.10.2021 and costs, Charges and Expenses incurred/to be incurred and less amount recovered thereafter.	A) Rs. 132.23 lakh B) Rs. 13.23 lakh C) Rs. 50,000.00 A) Rs. 42.97 lakh B) Rs. 4.30 lakh C) Rs. 10,000.00	16.04.2022 11.00 AM to 4.00 PM	Not known to Bank at present
		1090 sq. ft. (more or less). Flat situated at Mouza-Salua, CS Plot No. 403, RS & LR Plot No. 418 & 419, JL No. 3, P.S. Alipur, Dist. North 24 Parganas in the name of Oliveea Ghosh covered by Deed No. 369/16. Bounded By: On the North- 18 Ft. Municipality Road, On the South- Jonaki Apartment, On the East-Property of Sunil Roy and Adhir Bagh, On the west- Property of Narayan Sengupta and Others. Possession-Constructive	RS & LR Plot ur, Dist. North liveea Ghosh unded By: On Road, On the n the East- Bagh, On the			
3.	B/O- Panagarh, G. T. Road, P.O. Panagarh Bazar, Paschim Burdwan - 713148 Borrower: Mrs. Sananda Roy (borrower), Mr. Saikat Kumar Roy, Mrs. Arati Roy & Mr. Joydeep Roy, N-76, Purba Putiary, Dakshinpara, P.S. Regent Park, Kolkata- 700093	All the piece and parcel of the Residential-cum- Industrial land and building in the name of Joydeep Roy, S/o Sh. Swadesh Ranjan Roy, Mouza- Nirvoypur, Khatian No. 6294, JL No. 110, Plot No. 354, 348, P.S. Md, Bazar, Dist. Birbhum admeasuring area 2.02 acres, being Deed No. 2941 of 2009. Boundary: On the North- Land of Amal Kumar Koyel, On the South- Land of Saikat Kumar Roy, On the East- Land of Amal Kumar Koyel, On the west-Road. Possession-Constructive	1. 22.10.2021 2. 14.02.2022 3. Rs.64,29,844.45 (Rupees Sixty Four Lakh Twenty Nine Thousand Eight Hundred Forty Four and Paisa Forty Five only) as on 30.09.2021 plus further interest thereon from 01.10.2021 and costs, Charges and Expenses incurred/to be incurred and less amount recovered thereafter.	A) Rs.208.36 lakh B) Rs. 20.84 lakh C) Rs.50,000.00	16.04.2022 11.00 AM to 4.00 PM	Not known to Bank at presen
4.	B/O- Andalmore, Near Bharat Gas, Andalmore Andal-713321 Borrower: M/s Mahir Traders & Mahir Cloth Store, Prop. Nadir Khan, South Bazar, Andalmore, Andal-713321	All that piece and parcel of the land and building on Mouza- Ramprasadpur, JL No. 51, RS Khatian No. 496, LR No. 1523/3, Plot No. LR-236, Present Khatian No. LR-11764, in the name of Md. Nadir Khan, S/o Late Md. Shafique Khan being Deed no. I-2455 of 2013. Area of the land is 270 Sq. ft. Boundary: On the North-3.5 Ft. Gali, On the South-Shop, On the East-House of Md. Safique Khan, On the west-10 ft. Road. Possession-Constructive	1. 22.11.2021 2. 28.01.2022 3. Rs.7,28,208.62 (Rupees Seven Lakh Twenty Eight Thousand Two Hundred Eight and Paisa Sixty Two Only) as on 31.10.2021 plus further interest thereon from 01.11.2021 and costs, Charges and Expenses incurred/ to be	A) Rs.6.65 lakh B) Rs. 0.67 lakh C) Rs.10,000.00	16.04.2022 11.00 AM to 4.00 PM	Not known to Bank at presen

Expenses incurred/ to be incurred and less amount

ecovered thereafter.

C) Outstanding as on creditors B/O- Nachan Road, City Centre, All that piece and parcel of the land and building . 22.11.2021 A) Rs.31.53 lakh 16.04.2022 Not known to Durgapur-713216 situated at Singh Para Road, 42, Benachity . 21.02.2022 B) Rs. 3.16 lakh 11.00 AM Bank at preser Borrower: i) Sh Abani Mohan Panja Durgapur-713213, JL No. 67, RS Kh No. 49, LR C) Rs.10,000.00 3. Rs.10,87,172.28 Kh No. 90 & new renumbered as LR Kh No S/o Bansari Mohan Panja, Singh Para 4.00 PM Road No. 42. Benachity, Durgapur-1493 & 1494, RS Plot No. 517(P), LR Plot No. Eighty Seven Thousand 713213, ii) Sh Shatadal Panja, S/o 1105, Area- 4.26 decimal in the name of Abani One Hundred Seventy Two and Paisa Twenty Bansari Mohan Panja, Singh Para Mohan Panja & Shatadal Panja. Covered by Road No. 42, Benachity, Durgapur-Deed No. 5934 of 2007. Boundary: On the Eight Only) as on North-Two storied building of Binoy Pal, On the 31.10.2021 plus further South- Two storied building of Chhabi Rani Pal, terest thereon from 01.11.2021 and costs. On the East- House of Chandr Babu. On the west- 4 Ft. passage & then two storied building Charges and Expenses of Abani Das. incurred/ to be incurred Possession-Constructive and less amount recovered thereafte B/O- Andalmore, Near Bharat Gas, 1. 08.09.2021 A) Rs.4.88 lakh 16.04.2022 Not known to All the piece and parcel of the land and a Andalmore, Andal, PIN-713321 covered garage on Sunita Apartment, 2. 09.12.2021 B) Rs. 0.49 lakh 11.00 AM Borrower: Shaikh Imtiaz Alam, BF neasuring area 195 Sq. ft., situated at JL No. 3. Rs.9,51,966.15 C) Rs.10,000.00 4.00 PM Mazhar Court Upper Chelidanga, UC (Rupees Nine Lakh Fifty 20. RS Khatian No. 9284 to 9297. Plot No. RS 3985, CS 2019 & 2020, Holding No. 889(N), Hill Danga, Asansol, Pin-713304 One Thousand Nine view north (near Hill View Church), Asansol-Hundred Sixty Six and 713304, Dist. Paschim Bardhaman, Ward No. paisa Fifteen only) as on 06/49. Deed No. 491 of 2018 in the name of 31.08.2021 plus further Shaikh Imtiaz Alam. Boundary: North: Part of interest thereon from RS Plot No.3985, South: 13 Feet wide road, 01.09.2021 and costs East: 23 feet wide road, West: Land of Ashish Charges and Expenses Bandhu Baneriee incurred/ to be incurred Possession-Constructive and less amount ecovered thereafte **B/O- Bhiringi,** Nachan Road, Benachity, Durgapur-713213 All that piece and parcel of the land and building 1. 18.08.2021 A) Rs.17.64 lakh 16.04.2022 Not known to B) Rs. 1.77 lakh situated at Mouza- Kururia under R.S. Khatian 2. 19.10.2021 11.00 AM Bank at presen Borrower: Mr. Chaina Chatterjee & No. 933, LR Kh No. 2, RS Dag No. 361 LR dag . Rs.8,27,822.11 C) Rs.10,000.00 No. 1554, 1606, 1552 measuring 05 decimal, SDO- Durgapur, P.S. Durgapur, Dist. Paschim 4.00 PM Rathin Chatterje, VITAR Vitar Kanika (Rupees Eight Lakh Vivekananda Pally, Durgapur-713203 Twenty Seven Thousand Bardhaman. Bounded By: North: Dag No. 361, Eight Hundred Twenty South: Property of Firod Dey, East: 10 feet road, Two and Eleven paisa only) as on 17.08.202 Vest: Dag No. 360 Possession-Constructive plus further interest thereon from 18.08.2021`and costs Charges and Expenses incurred/ to be incurred and less amount A) Rs.17.82 lakh B) Rs. 1.79 lakh 8. **B/O- Asansol**, G T Road, 1. 01.07.2019 16.04.2022 All the piece and parcel of the land and building Not known to 95, G. T. Road, Asansol – 713301 situated at Mouza- Bundla, JL No. 160, LR Kh 2. 10.10.2019 11.00 AM Bank at present Borrower: Sh Joydeb Chowdhury, No. 5021, LR Plot No. 3767 under 8. Rs. 21.77.299.00 C) Rs.10,000.00 S/o Late Sambhunath Choudhury, S & T Staff Railway Qr No. E-12/C, Raghunathpur Municipality, Dist. Purlia, Area-4.00 PM (Rupees twenty one lakh seventy seven thousand 2.00 decimal in the name of Joydeb Chowdhury two hundred ninety nine Near Ramkanali Station, Puruliacovered by Deed No. I-0015 of 2018. Boundary: On the North- House of Budhu Sait, On the only) as on 30.06.2019 South- 15 Ft. wide concrete Road. On the East-Guarantor: Smt. Mangala plus further interest Chowdhury, W/o Sh Joydeb Chowdhury, S & T Staff Railway Qr No. E-12/C, Near Ramkanali Station, 6 Ft. wide common passage, On the west Vacant land of Khirbodh Shikdar 01.07.2019' and costs Possession-Physical Charges and Expenses Purulia- 723142 incurred/ to be incurred and less amount recovered thereafter B/O- Barakar, Barakar Begumia All the piece and parcel of the land and building 1. 16.11.2021 A) Rs.35.55 lakh More, Dishergarh Road, PIN-713324 situated at Dist. Paschim Bardhaman, P.S. B) Rs. 3.56 lakh 11.00 AM 2. 28.01.2022 Bank at presen Borrower: Moin Khan, Md. C) Rs.10,000.00 Salanpur, GP- Salanpur, Mouza- Hodla (Halda), 3. Rs.14.03.247.96 (Rupees Fourteen Lakh Shamshad Khan & Shamida JL No. 23, Plot No. 523, Sub Plot No. 523A, Khatoon, Left Bank colony, Hadla Khatian No. 26 measuring 05 decimal or 03 Three Thousand Two Road, P.O. Kalyaneswari, P.S. cottah of land registered in the name of Shamida Khatoon, Deed No. I-1613 of 2010. Hundred Forty Seven Salanpur, PIN-713369 and Paisa Ninety Six only) as on 31.10.2021 Boundary: North: 15 feet wide road, South: land of Mouza Debipur, under P.S. Salanpur, East: plus further interest land of Plot No. 523/B, West: Plot No. 525 thereon from **Possession-Constructive** 01.11.2021 and costs Charges and Expenses incurred/ to be incurred and less amount recovered thereafte 10. B/O- Bidhan Nagar (eUNI), Bank 1. 09.11.2021 A) Rs.62.84 lakh Not known to All that piece & parcel of leasehold property Colony More, Sec-2B, Bidhanaga situated at Mouza- Gopinathpur, CS Plot No. 2. 03.02.2022 B) Rs. 6.29 lakh 11.00 AM Bank at presen Dgp-713212 C) Rs.10,000.00 219(P). JL No. 85. Touzi No. 1. Khatian No. 147. 3. Rs.24.50.522.50 Borrower: Das Construction & Co., 151, 163, Plot No. D110 at Sector 2(a), area of 4.00 PM (Rupees Twenty Four Prop. Mr. Prabir Das, Rajbandh land 2.591 cottah 1865.52 sq. ft. or 0.042 acre in Lakh Fifty Thousand Five Chati, Rajbandh, Durgapur, Pinthe name of Sri Prabir Kumar Das. Son of Sri Hundred Twenty Two Saran Chandra Das, Hritwick Ghatak path, and paisa Fifty only) as Guarantor: Mrs. Shubhra Das, W/o Ward No. C/ 27, Bidhan Nagar, Durgapur-12, on 31.10.2021 plus West Bengal. Lease Deed No. I-3027 at Prabir Das, Rajbandh Chati, further interest thereon Rajbandh, Durgapur, Pin-713212 22.05.2009 in the name of Sri Prabir Kumar Das. Boundary: North: Layout plot No. C-83 of costs, Charges and Sec 2(a), Bidhan Nagar, South: 9 meter wide | Expenses incurred/ to be ADDA road at sec 2(a), Bidhan Nagar, East: 9 meter wide ADDA road at sec 2(a), Bidhan recovered thereafter. Nagar, West: Layout plot No. D-109 at Sec 2(a),

TERMS & CONDITIONS:

The sale shall be subject to the Terms & Conditions prescribed in the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002 and to the following further conditions: 1. The properties are being sold on 'AS IS WHERE IS BASIS and "AS IS WHAT IS BASIS" and "WHATEVER THERE IS BASIS"

Possession-Constructive

Date: 07.03.2022, Place: Durgapur

2. The particulars of Secured Assets specified in the Schedule hereinabove have been stated to the best of the information of the Authorised Officer, but the Authorised Officer shall not be answerable for any error, misstatement or omission in this proclamation

3. The Sale will be done by the undersigned through e-auction platform provided at the Website https://www.mstcecommerce.com on 16.04.2022 @ 11.00 AM to 4.00 PM
4. For detailed term and conditions of the sale, please refer to website: www.ibapi.in, www.mstcecommerce.com, https://eprocure.gov.in/epublish/app

&www.pnbindia.in

5. For any queries regarding the terms and conditions of the sale, the interested bidders may contact, Sadhan Chandra Mondal (Chief Manager) Mob: 9771441436 or Madan Mohan Mandal (Manager) Mob: 8617314696. STATURORY 30 DAYS SALE NOTICE UNDER RULE 9(1) OF THE SECURITY INTEREST ENFORCEMENT AMENDMENT RULES,

Sadhan Chandra Mondal, Chief Manager

Authorised Officer, Punjab National Bank STATUTORY SALE NOTICE UNDER RULE 8(6) OF THE SARFAESI ACT, 2002

Kolkata

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RESULT: MARCH 10

candidates





BSF man opens fire on colleagues, kills five

KAMALDEEP SINGH BRAR AMRITSAR, MARCH 6

FIVE BSF personnel were killed on Sunday at a battalion headquarters near the Pakistan border in Punjab's Amritsar after one of them allegedly opened fire at his colleagues with his service weapon before succumbing to bullet injuries himself.

The BSF described the incident at the 144 Battalion HQ in Khasa as a case of fratricide and ordered a court of inquiry while the local police registered a case. CONTINUED ON PAGE 4 15,920 INDIANS EVACUATED ON 76 FLIGHTS SO FAR

Hoping for rescue 'any minute', Indian students wait in Sumy

Officials hope to get them out via western border

SHUBHAJIT ROY& **JAYPRAKASH S NAIDU** NEW DELHI, MUMBAI, MARCH 6

ELEVEN DAYS into Russia's invasion of Ukraine, India's evacuation efforts have entered a critical stage with all eyes on the north-eastern Ukrainian city of Sumy, close to the Russian border, where about 700 Indians. mostly students, are waiting for rescue -- the last big group from the country still stranded there.

Officials said that a team from the Indian Embassy is stationed in Poltava, a city in central CONTINUED ON PAGE 4



open our eyes, that to keep peace, there might be a price" **WALTER J LINDNER**

PAGE 10

THE EDITORIAL PAGE

CALLING ON MOSCOW



A man leaves the town of Irpin, near Kyiv, with his child after heavy shelling on Sunday. Reuters

Problem

no-fly zone

with a

ENFORCING a no-fly zone

NATO fears could trigger a

"full-fledged war". Russian

President Vladimir Putin

has warned that any coun-

try enforcing a no-fly zone

would be "participating" in

the conflict.

WORLD

Russian aircraft, which

could mean shooting down

Civilian rescue stalls as ceasefire fails, Ukraine leader gives call to arms

YURAS KARMANAU LVIV, MARCH 6

A SECOND attempt to evacuate civilians from a besieged city in southern Ukraine collapsed on Sunday amid renewed Russian shelling, but President Vladimir Putin said the invasion could be halted "only if Kyiv ceases hos-

Food, water, medicine and almost all other supplies were in desperately short supply in the besieged port city of Mariupol, CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

Evacuation proves rising influence in world: PM

ANURADHA MASCARENHAS & AJAY JADHAV PUNE, MARCH 6

THE FACT that India succeeded in evacuating its nationals amid the war in Ukraine is proof of the country's growing influence in the world, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Sunday.

"You have seen how, under Operation Ganga, India is bringing its citizens safely out of the war zone. Many big countries are **CONTINUED ON PAGE 4**



A worker pastes roll numbers of students on benches as part of preparation for the West Bengal Board of Secondary Education examinations, in Kolkata on Sunday. PTI

MADHYAMIK BEGINS TODAY

To curb cheating in Board exams, Bengal to suspend Internet in some areas

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE KOLKATA, MARCH 6

TO CHECK cheating, the West Bengal government has decided to temporarily suspend internet services for a few hours in some areas on the days of the class 10 state board examination starting from Monday.

However, there will be no restriction on phone calls and SMS services anywhere.

The move comes after question papers were allegedly leaked on social media platforms within an hour of commencement of exams in 2019 and 2020.

The question papers were purportedly leaked mostly from exam centres in Malda and Murshidabad districts. Last year, the class 10 exams were not held in view of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Intelligence reports suggested that internet transmission and voice over Internet Protocol may be used for unlawful activities in certain areas over the next few days. "As assessment of the inputs gives

reason to believe that such unlawful activities are likely to occur in the absence of preventive measures," a statement read.

Although the order did not specifically mention 'Madhyamik' (class 10), examination, the area-specific clamp on the transmission of texts, images and videos will be in force from 11am to 3:15pm on March 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 14, 15 and 16 - the dates of the class 10 exams.

A senior government official said the places where the internet will be suspended would be decided as per requirement. An estimated 6.21 lakh girls

and 4.96 lakh boys will appear in the class 10 examination this year.

West Bengal Board of Secondary Education (WBBSE) president Kalyanmoy Ganguly said, "The board has no role in this issue. It is purely an administrative decision taken by the state secretariat."

Ganguly, however, claimed that no question paper leak had taken place in the Madhyamik examinations in 2019 and 2020 **CONTINUED ON PAGE 4**

Manipulation case: NSE ex-MD Chitra Ramkrishna held by CBI

DEEPTIMANTIWARY NEW DELHI, MARCH 6

THE CBI on Sunday arrested Chitra Ramkrishna, the former CEO and MD of National Stock Exchange (NSE), in the agency's 2018 case of alleged manipulation of the bourse, an official said.

> day after a Delhi court rejected her anticipatory bail application and pulled up the CBI for its "lackadaisical"

Arrest a day after bail rejected

investigation. agency's move marked its second high-pro-

file arrest in the case after it took into custody Anand Subramanian, NSE's former group operating officer, in Chennai on February 24. Earlier last month, the agency had ques-Ramkrishna. tioned Subramanian and former NSE

CEO Ravi Narain in the case. 'Ramkrishna has been arrested following questioning and will be produced in a competent **CONTINUED ON PAGE 4**

INSIDE

ANIS KHAN DEATH A **CONSPIRACY: BENGAL CONGRESS CHIEF**

UAPA INVOKED IN BAJRANG DAL WORKER KILLING PAGE 5

Civilian killed, policeman among 24 hurt in Srinagar grenade attack

NAVEED IQBAL SRINAGAR, MARCH 6

A CIVILIAN was killed and 24 peofered injuries Sunday in a grenade attack in the heart of Jammu and Kashmir's Srinagar city. No outfit has claimed re-

sponsibility, said Central Kashmir DIG Sujit Kumar. The attack took place at

around 4.20 pm in the busy



The blast site in Srinagar on Sunday. Shuaib Masoodi



njured are civilians," Kumar told The Indian Express On January 25, a grenade attack had taken place within metres of the same spot, injuring multiple civilians and

damaging a police vehicle. CONTINUED ON PAGE 4



BECOMING 'UNFIT FOR HUMAN LIFE'

WILL TRY MEDIATING EVEN IF PROSPECT SLIM: ISRAEL PM

Survivor, not victim: Kerala actor opens up about trauma following sexual assault

SHAJU PHILIP

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM. MARCH 6

MALAYALAM ACTOR Bhavana, who was abducted and sexually assaulted in 2017, a case in which actor Dileep is one of the accused, on Sunday said the idea of victims of sexual assault coming out in public and voicing their experiences should be nor-

Speaking at 'We the Women Global Townhall 2020', a show



Actor Bhavana on Sunday. She was abducted and sexually assaulted in 2017

hosted by journalist Barkha Dutt on her digital platform Mojo Story, Bhavana, when asked where she draws her courage from, said. "It makes me very angry and very sad (that perpetrators of sexual assault get rehabilitated)... It's not every day that I feel empowered and ready to fight. So many days, I have wanted to give up.... We must normalise the idea of the person who has gone through a trauma coming out in public and voicing it out. We must normalise that as a soci-

ety, normalise that courage.'

The actor was kidnapped and assaulted by a group of men in February 2017 while she was travelling from Thrissur to Kochi. The investigation led to Dileep, one of Malayalam industry's biggest actors, being named as an accused.

On Sunday, Bhavana spoke about the trauma and the fingerpointing that followed in the days after the incident. "When it happened, my whole life turned upside down. My mind was constantly searching for somebody **CONTINUED ON PAGE 4**

In Ahmedabad, modified city buses offer impoverished children a road to learning

PAGE 1 ANCHOR

RITUSHARMA AHMEDABAD, MARCH 6

SIBLINGS Sonal (8 years) and Jigar (10 years) Minama had never been to a school or even seen a formal classroom, but all that changed on Sunday morning. Instead of their daily routine of taking care of their two younger siblings and helping out in household chores, today they stood outside their shanty at the Doordarshan tower intersection.



A 'Signal School' run out of a modified city bus. Express

GUJARAT

excitedly waiting for the pili (yellow) bus.

The yellow bus is the 'Signal School' - an initiative implemented by the Ahmedabad Corporation Municipal (AMC) and Municipal School Board with support from state government and Gujarat State Legal Services Authority (GSLSA).

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4





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WANT TO CHANGE TRADEMARK OF JNU'S NEGATIVE PERCEPTION: NEWLY-APPOINTED V-C

In an exclusive interview with indian express.com, Santishree Dhulipudi Pandit, who will hold the V-C office for the next five years after taking over from M Jagadesh Kumar, shared her immediate plans for the university. A political science professor, she is the first woman vice-chancellor of Delhi's Jawaharlal Nehru University.

TECH



ASUS VIVOBOOK 13 SLATE OLED REVIEW

It's a device that doubles as an OLED TV and a 2in-1 hybrid laptop

CITIES



TELANGANA WOMAN AWAITS SON'S RETURN

Mohd Nizamuddin Aman is among students stranded in Ukraine

EXPRESS AUDIO

How Delhi's street names reveal its history

NEW EPISODE EVERYDAY

Journalist Adrija Roychowdhury joins Sandip Roy to talk about her new book, 'Delhi in Thy Name' which traces the history of the capital city through the naming of its streets.

FROM PAGE ONE

Bengal govt

as the "leaked" papers did not tally with the original ones.

"It was an act of mischief which failed to disrupt the process, and we request all to bring to our notice any such act in future," he said.

On Saturday, the West Bengal Board of Secondary Education announced strict measures to stop question paper leaks during this year's Madhyamik examinations.

It issued a fresh set of guidelines, including the one requiring that the examinees will not be allowed to visit the washroom in the first one hour and fifteen minutes. The rule previously was for the examinees to not step out of the hall for a toilet break or any other reason within the first 45 minutes of the exam.

Civilian rescue

where Russian and Ukrainian forces had agreed to an 11-hour ceasefire that would allow civilians and the wounded to be evac-

But Russian attacks quickly closed the humanitarian corridor, Ukrainian officials said.

"There can be no 'green corridors' because only the sick brain of the Russians decides when to start shooting and at whom." Interior Ministry adviser Anton Gerashchenko said on Telegram.

The news dashed hopes that more people could escape the fighting, Russia has made significant advances in southern Ukraine and along the coast, but many of its efforts have become stalled, including an immense military convoy that has been al $most\,motionless\,for\,days\,north\,of$

Voldymyr President Zelenskyy rallied his people to remain defiant, especially those in cities that Russian soldiers have

"You should take to the streets! You should fight!" he said on Ukrainian television on Saturday. "It is necessary to go out and drive this evil out of our cities, from our land," he said.

The war, now in its 11th day, has caused 1.5 million people to flee the country. The head of the U.N. refugee agency called the exodus "the fastest-growing refugee crisis in Europe since World War

Putin again blamed Ukraine for the war on Sunday, telling Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan that Kyiv needed to stop all hostilities and fulfill "the wellknown demands of Russia". Those demands include what Putin has called the "denazification" of Ukraine.

Putin also told Erdogan he hoped Ukraine "would show a more constructive approach (to talks), fully taking into account the emerging realities". A third round of Russia-Ukraine negotiations is scheduled for Monday

Putin also spoke with French President Emmanuel Macron on Sunday. The two leaders discussed the nuclear situation in Ukraine, which has 15 nuclear power plants, and agreed in principle to a "dialogue" involving Russia, Ukraine and the UN's atomic watchdog, according to a French official who spoke on condition of anonymity. Potential talks on the issue are to be organised in the coming days, the offi-

In a highly unusual move, the Pope said he had despatched two cardinals to Ukraine, and that the Vatican would do everything it

could to end the conflict. "In Ukraine, rivers of blood and tears are flowing," Pope Francis said in his traditional Sunday blessing. "This is not just a military operation, but a war that sows death, destruction and mis-

After the ceasefire in Mariupol failed to hold on Saturday, Russian $forces\,intensified\,their\,shelling\,of$ the city and dropped massive bombs on residential areas of

Chernihiv, a city north of Kyiv, Ukrainian officials said.

On Saturday, the emergency coordinator in Ukraine for the international aid group Doctors Without Borders called the situation in Mariupol "catastrophic".

The city of 430,000 has "no water, electricity and heating. Internet and phone services have been cut off. Hospitals, supermarkets and residential buildings have suffered heavy damage. And it is not possible to bring any relief supplies into the city," Laurent Ligozat said in a statement.

Zelenskyy on Sunday reiterated a request for foreign protectors to impose a no-fly zone over Ukraine, which NATO so far has ruled out because of concerns such an action would lead to a far wider war.

"The world is strong enough to close our skies," Zelenskyy said in a video address.

The death toll remains lost in the fog of war, with the UN saying it has confirmed just a few hundred civilian deaths, but also warning that the number is a vast undercount.

Ukraine's military is greatly outmatched by Russia's, but its professional and volunteer forces have fought back with fierce tenacity. In Kyiv, volunteers lined up Saturday to join the military. Even in cities that have fallen, there were signs of resistance.

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken spent the weekend visiting NATO member nations in Eastern Europe that have taken in refugees from Ukraine. In Moldova on Sunday, he pledged support for the Western-leaning former Soviet republic that is warily watching Russia's moves in Jkraine.

Health World Organisation on Sunday condemned attacks on health care workers in Ukraine, saving it verified at least six such attacks that have killed six people and wounded 11 others.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

BSF man

BSF IG (Punjab) Asif Jalal said the incident is being investigated. "We have called the police, which will also investigate," he said.

BSF sources said Constable Satteppa S K of 'B' company opened fire around 9.45 am, killing head constables Toraskar DS (Maharashtra), Ram Binod (Bihar), Rattan Singh (J&K) and Baljinder Kumar (Haryana).

The sources said Satteppa also fired at the vehicle of the officiating commandant of 144 Battalion. Satish Mishra, who escaped unhurt. While sources said Satteppa was "upset over his duty hours", IG Ialal denied that the incident was related to duty or previous

The victims were declared "brought dead" around 11 am at Guru Nanak Dev Hospital in Another head Amritsar. constable, Nihal Singh, was seriously injured in the incident and is undergoing treatment.

"In an unfortunate incident, 5 BSF troops were injured...due to fratricide committed by Ct Satteppa S K at HQ 144 Bn Khasa, Amritsar, Ct Satteppa S K was also injured in the incident. Out of the 6 injured, 5 troops including Ct Satteppa, have lost their lives. One of the injured is critical. A court of inquiry has been ordered to ascertain the facts," BSF said in a state-

Amritsar (Rural) SSP Deepak Hilori confirmed that all the victims died of bullet injuries but was "not sure" how Satteppa, from Karnataka, was killed. "BSF officials maintained that there was no cross-firing. He died on the way to hospital," said a police officer in Amritsar.

According to police sources, Satteppa took his weapon, went to the office where Toraskar, a clerk, worked and shot him. Then, he moved to the barrack and started firing indiscriminately, killing the three others, sources

Ukraine, through which they hope to coordinate the safe passage of the students in Sumy to the western border. The students have been told to be ready to

> leave at short notice, they said. Speaking to The Indian Express, Renish Joseph, a student coordinator with Sumy State University who has been communicating with Indian officials, said the evacuation could start "any minute", depending on the conflict situation.

> > Since Ukrainian airspace has been closed for civilian flights, India has been evacuating its stranded nationals via land routes of Moldova, Slovakia, Romania, Poland and Hungary.

On Sunday, India commenced the final leg of Operation Ganga, Government's evacuation mission, from Hungary. The Indian Embassy asked all students living in accommodation other than that arranged by the Government to reach Hungaria City Centre in Budapest between 10 am and 12 pm local time (2.30 pm and 4.30 pm IST).

In Ukraine, the Indian Embassy is trying to get a "sense" of how many Indians are still stranded in that country, particularly in Sumy, amid intense shelling and efforts to ensure safe passage. It has asked all those who are yet to leave conflict zones in Ukraine to "urgently" fill up a Google form, with personal details and location, for evacua-

Hoping for rescue 'any minute'

According to Joseph, there are less than 600 Indian students in Sumy, and not 800 as estimated earlier, since several of them had submitted multiple forms to register. "My top priority is mentally preparing the students to stay here for a week, The evacuation can begin any time but due to the mental state of students, I am trying to convince them for the long haul," he said. loseph, who is staving with

students in the Sumy university hostel, said he is "constantly in touch" with officials from the Embassy. "They are taking stock of the situation. For them, the safe evacuation of all is the top priority. I cannot divulge details, and there is no clarity yet. But one thing is clear, it (evacuation) will be done very soon, and the Indian Government has a proper plan for it, which has been conveyed to students," he said.

Under Operation Ganga, 76 flights have brought back 15,920 Indians so far, including 13 that transported 2.500 in the last 24 hours. There are seven flights scheduled over the next 24 hours: an IAFC-17 from Rzeszow in Poland, five from Budapest and one from Suceava (Romania).

India has also sent six tranches of humanitarian aid to

six tonnes that was dispatched on an IAF flight to Poland on Sunday. Officials said the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) control room and centres operated by Indian embassies continue to operate 24x7. The MEA control room has attended 12.435 calls and 9.026 emails till Sunday afternoon, they said.

Ukraine, including one weighing

In Sumy, scared and weary after 10 days of waiting, Indian students posted a video clip on Saturday, announcing that they had decided to risk the walk to the Russian border. But within hours, the Government responded, asking them to remain inside shelters and assured them that they will soon be evacuated.

"Yesterday, things were getting out of hand. But I told them it can be very dangerous to leave the premises. I told them strictly to stay back," Joseph said.

"I have divided the students into small groups and named team leaders for each. These leaders are now in charge of calming down the students and preparing them to be ready for evacuation. I told the students not to blame the Government or anyone, help each other to be mentally strong, take one day at a time, and prepare food in groups with whatever little is available." he said.

Joseph said the Ukrainians have been providing them with

water supply for two hours every day. "The food supply, though less, will suffice for the next two-three days. Electricity is provided during the day but is cut for several hours as per the security requirements of Ukrainian authorities," he said.

"The railway line has been damaged and roads are filled with army men, so evacuation from the western borders of Ukraine is very difficult. The Russian border is nearby but there is uncertainty over whether the Ukrainians will allow students to pass through that side," he said.

Asked if local officials have offered help to evacuate the students, Joseph said: "The place is under military rule. Even the Mayor does not have much control now and has his limitations. I communicate with university officials who communicate with the Mayor for any help. But on humanitarian grounds, the Ukrainians have been helpful so

Initially, it was estimated that around 18,000 to 20,000 Indians were in Ukraine, but that number went up during the evacuation process with some, who did not register in the initial days, doing so later. In all, over 21,000 Indians have left Ukraine since the last week of January, including 19,920 who have reached

up about the toll the incident took on her. "This has not been an easy journey. The journey from being a victim to becoming a survivor. For 5 years now, my name and my identity have been suppressed under the weight of the assault inflicted on me...To see justice prevail, to get wrongdoers punished and to ensure no one else goes through such an ordeal again, I shall continue this journey," she Speaking on the show on

shared an Instagram post, reveal-

ing her identity as the "survivor"

of the sexual attack and speaking

Sunday, Bhavana said that while several people stood by her following the assault, others blamed her, with some even saying she should not have travelled that late in the night. 'There was also propaganda that I staged it, and that the case is fake... I was devastated... While I was trying to pick up the pieces, trying to stand up and face life again, these kinds of things were pulling me down... It was hurting and painful," she said, adding that she faced a lot of abuse on social media.

But support too has poured in from friends, family, the Women's Collective in Cinema (WCC) and even people from the industry, she said. "After the incident, many offered me work and insisted I come back (to work). Aashiq Abu, Prithviraj, Jayasurya and others offered me work but I turned them down because I couldn't come back to this industry and work as if nothing had happened. I was not in the right state of mind. I worked in other language films. Now, I have also started listening to Malayalam scripts," she said. Saying she would fight till the

end. Bhavana said. "I would rather give a strong fight without worrying about the outcome. It is really overwhelming to see the kind of support and love from my familv. friends and audience. I had to go to the court for 15 days, sitting in the court from morning to evening. ... I was trying to prove that I didn't do anything wrong and that I am innocent.'

When asked what is the primary emotion she feels now -hope, rage, sadness or fear --Bhavana said, "Everything. I am still scared... fighting for justice is never easy."

Grenade attack

The deceased person is 55year-old Mohammad Aslam Makdoomi from Naidkadal in downtown Srinagar, police said. He had suffered multiple injuries and was declared dead at the Shri Maharaja Hari Singh hospital, where the injured people are being treated. Another civilian, Rafiya, who suffered multiple iniuries, is said to be critical. At least 12 among those injured are

Kashmir IGP Vijay Kumar said: "Police is working for the identification and arrest of (the) involved terror criminal and will smash this grenade-throwing module at the earliest.The police(have)got some vital clues and (the) investigation is rigorously going on in the right direction."

Lieutenant-Governor Manoj Sinha condemned the attack, stating "My deepest condolences to family of innocent civilian martyred & wish speedy recovery to injured. We are firmly resolved to dismantle terror ecosystem & defeat terrorist menace that continues to be perpetrated by neigh-

Former Jammu and Kashmir chief minister Mehbooba Mufti also tweeted: "I condemn this deplorable attack in the strongest possible terms. May the deceased find a place in Jannat & may the injured make a complete and speedy recovery."National Conference vicepresident Omar Abdullah posted on Twitter: "Condemn this dastardly attack. People of J&K have been paying with their lives & sadly neither India nor Pakistan are doing anything to end the conflict & stop this bloodshed. My prayers

are with the bereaved families & Police said most of the injured people have splinter wounds and

are stable. Following the incident. police urged civilians to "be vigilant and report any suspected ac-

Modified buses

Climbing up the stairs on a cue from the teacher, children aged 6-10 years quickly take their positions in rows. After greeting the teacher, they mimic their teacher and fold their hands reciting after her a Gujarati prayer. Soon their attention is grasped by the rhymes being played on the tv screen in front of them.

The Signal Scheme was launched on Sunday morning outside the Gujarat High Court Auditorium. In attendance were Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel, Education Minister Jitu Vaghani, Minister of Law and Justice Rajendra Trivedi along with Supreme Court judges Justice M R Shah and Justice Bela Trivedi, Gujarat High Court Chief Justice Aravind Kumar and Justice R M Chhaya, who is also executive chairman GSLSA. Ten buses took off on designated routes picking up children from the traffic signals, taking them through the first classroom in the bus, the route ending at the nearest municipal school.

With the motto 'bhiksha nahi, shiksha', the scheme has started with 10 discarded Ahmedabad Municipal Transport Service (AMTS) buses especially converted into a mobile school for the purpose. The AMC had announced the Signal School scheme -- for children at traffic signals across the city -- with a sanctioned budget of Rs 3 crore.

Parents of nearly 150 children from over 40 bigger traffic signals in the city were seen eagerly waiting to see their children board the bus for the first time.

While Sonal chooses to remain quiet, Jigar says, 'I want to be a good man' when asked why he wants to study and what he aspires to become. Originally residents of Petlad in the Anand district, the siblings lost their father a few years ago. As seasonal migrants, now they live in shanties along the road near the Doordarshan Tower intersection. Their mother does daily wage

Most of the 20 children on the Signal School on this route had not attended any formal school before. Ahmedabad municipal commissioner Lochan Sehra that this scheme has been designed keeping this fact in mind.

work to support the family of five.

"After conducting a survey to identify such children, a series of meetings followed with their parents to convince them. Now this being a gap-filling scheme after a period of six months or a year based on their learning levels, these children will be mainstreamed to the nearby municipal schools. This will be followed by another set of children who are out of the formal education system," says Sehra.

Each Signal School has one teacher and one assistant teacher and is decked up with colourful drawings with messages of good habits on its walls. The ceilings have been converted into an open sky painted with a rainbow. Basic lessons like alphabets, numbers, fruits and vegetables are painted in vibrant colours below the windows. These buses are also equipped with a tv screen, a writing board, a small desk and chair for the teacher, and toys and games for children.

Run as a normal school, children in the Signal School will be provided mid-day meals at the nearest municipal school. They would also be covered under the state government's scheme of medical check-ups offered to municipal schools under the school

health programme (SHP) **FULL REPORT ON** www.indianexpress.com

Evacuation proof of growing influence: Modi

facing difficulties in doing so. But chology" of "earlier times". make use of the "infinite oppor- Metro from Garware College stait is due to India's increasing influence that we have brought thousands of students back to their motherland," Modi said at the commemoration ceremony of the Golden Jubilee of

Symbiosis University. More than 15,900 Indians have been brought back since the special evacuation flights began on February 22, the Ministry of Civil Aviation said in an official release on Sunday. Eleven special civilian flights had brought back 2,135 Indians on Sunday,

the release said. Modi, who also inaugurated the Symbiosis Aarogya Dham, a project for the integrated development of various institutions to provide healthcare services as well as academic programmes, at the university's campus in Lavale, told students that their generation was fortunate that it did not have to burdened by the "defensive and dependent psy-

Even as the officiating com-

mandant reached the barrack,

Satteppa opened fire at his vehicle

before moving away and entering

the BSF hospital nearby. "He kept

firing there also, in the air," sources

said. Police sources cited BSF offi-

cials to suggest that a bullet may

have ricocheted off the hospital

located a few kilometres from the

Attari-Wagah border, is one the

busiest for BSF in the state with

the Integrated Check Post be-

tween India and Pakistan under

its jurisdiction. The battalion also

arranges the popular Beating the

Retreat ceremony at the border.

high-stress border areas, the BSF

has witnessed similar incidents

BSF personnel were killed and an-

other injured after they opened

fire amid a brawl at a location

along the Indo-Bangladesh bor-

der in south Tripura's Gomati dis-

trict. In April 2019, a BSF consta-

ble at Panisagar in north Tripura

shot and injured two colleagues

before taking his own life.

With its troops serving in

On September 23, 2021, two

The battalion headquarters,

floor and hit Satteppa.

"But if there has been this tunities" available to them invartion to Anandnagar station on goes to the youth of India," he

The Prime Minister said India was now on the way to becoming a global leader in fields it could not even think of venturing into earlier.

"The example of mobile manufacturing is before us. Until a few years ago, we would only import... In the defence sector, we believed for decades that we could only be dependent on other countries... But today, both our situation and our circumstances have changed... Seven years ago, there were only two mobile manufacturing companies in India, today, there are more than 200 manufacturing units. The country that was known as the world's biggest defence importer is now becoming a defence exporter...," he said.

Modi asked students to

In May 2018, a BSF jawan

killed three of his colleagues at

Unakoti district in north Tripura

before shooting himself. Later that

month, the BSF made it compul-

sory for all its security personnel

to undergo an annual mental

health test -- apart from the phys-

ical tests that were in place. The

force also decided to allot recre-

ational time for soldiers, and initi-

ate periodic meetings and coun-

court on Monday," a CBI official

was fined Rs 3 crore by SEBI for al-

legedly violating rules in the ap-

pointment of Subramanian.

According to SEBI, several key de-

cisions taken by Ramkrishna dur-

ing her tenure as NSE's MD and

CEO from 2013 to 2016, including

Subramanian's appointment,

were guided by an unidentified

yogi "who may be largely

On February 11, Ramkrishna

selling sessions.

CBI arrests

completed on time.

change in the country, the credit ious sectors to contribute to the Paud Road along with children nation's growth, "Start-up India. Stand-up India, Make in India, and Aatmanirbhar Bharat represent your aspirations, India is innovating, improving, and also influencing the whole world," he said. Modi also inaugurated a 12km section of the Rs 11,400-cr Pune Metro Rail project. He said the construction of the Pune Metro was evidence of the difference that infrastructure projects could make if they were

"I had laid the foundation stone of the Pune Metro, and I am now inaugurating the mega infrastructure project, Earlier, there used to be a foundation stone laying ceremony for infrastructure projects, but no one knew when they would be inaugurated," Modi said after the inauguration.

The PM travelled by the

tains to charges of brokers being

given preferential access to the

NSE's trading system in the form

of a co-location facility through

which they bought "rack space"

for their servers. According to the

agency, these traders obtained

faster access to the Exchange's

Subramanian himself.

with disabilities and students of government schools. He bought his own ticket for the journey by making an online banking trans-At Symbiosis, Modi said the contribution of Pune in fighting the Covid-19 pandemic was known around the world, referring to Serum Institute of India the manufacturer of the Covishield vaccine against the coronavirus. Covishield has been used for more than 90 per cent

> try, and has been exported to several countries. During his visit to Pune, the PM also unveiled a statue of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj on the premises of Pune Municipal Corporation, inaugurated the R KLaxman Art Gallery-Museum, and laid the foundation stones of several development projects.

of the inoculations in the coun-

that it may allegedly be taken action against the main beneficiaries of the co-location The CBI's case, however, perscam, "who seem to be enjoying

> "Even Sebi, despite being the capital markets watchdog, has been too kind and gentle qua the accused persons in the present FIR /RC," the court said.

merrily at the expense of com-

mon citizenry for the reasons best

Speaking about the trial, which began in 2020 and is on at a special court in Kochi, she said "When my trial (in the court) happened, I had to go to court for 15 days. It was a different, dramatic experience altogether. On the 15th day of the trial, I came out of the court feeling like a survivor. I realised that I am a survivor, not a victim anymore. I am not just standing up for myself, (but) also for the dignity of all the girls who come after me. That was the time my mind convinced me that I am

Kerala actor or something I can put the blame

on. It was a constant chaos in my mind... Why did this happen? Why me?... So many questions..."

bouring country." a survivor, not a victim."

dwelling in the Himalayan Ranges". Investigating agencies have not yet established the yogi's identity although an Ernst and Young audit report had indicated

The CBI has booked Sanjay Gupta, the owner and promoter of Delhi-based OPG Securities Pvt Ltd, and others in the case.

According to the CBI, between 2010 and 2014, Gupta allegedly "abused" the NSE server architecture in a criminal conspiracy with officials from the Exchange. "...unknown officials of NSE gave OPG Securities Pvt Ltd access to servers which were technologically latest and least crowded at that particular period. This helped OPG Securities Pvt Ltd. in being mostly the first one to log in on the exchange server of the NSE," the CBI's FIR said.

On Saturday, rejecting Ramkrishna's anticipatory bail plea, Special Judge Sanjeev Aggarwal said the CBI had not

Earlier this year, Bhavana had

WESTBENGAL

Nirmal Majhi elected IMA's state unit president

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICEKOLKATA, MARCH 6

DRNIRMALMajhi was elected the state president of the Indian Medical Association (IMA) on Sunday, pipping his rival Dr Prashant Bhattacharya by nine votes

The results were declared after counting of votes which continued for more than 12 hours.

While Amitabh Dutta was elected as Vice President, Dr Anirban Dalui, a public health expert, won the post of treasurer. Elections were held for 34 posts of IMA. The two factions alleged irregularities in the voting process.

Majhi accused the BJP of trying to sabotage the poll process by bringing in outsiders. They were from Murshidabad and Malda areas. Most of them had no connection with IMA. I will file FIR against them," said Majhi.

"The BJP has no involvement in the IMA polling. The fight is between two lobbies of the TMC," said BJP state president Sukanta Maiumdar

State logs 2 new Covid-19 deaths

Kolkata: Bengal on Sunday logged 90 new Covid-19 cases, including 18 in North 24 Paraganas. In the past 24 hours, the state also saw 138 recoveries and two deaths, both in Kolkata. With two more deaths, the toll reached 21,180.

Meanwhile, the state recorded a drop in the number of active cases by 50 to 1,653. The positivity rate stands at 0.42 per cent. In the past 24 hours, 21,210 samples have been tested in the state, taking the total number of clinical examinations to 2,43,52,392. **ENS**

Adhir: Anis death a conspiracy, will protest until justice delivered

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE KOLKATA, MARCH 6

LED BY their West Bengal chief Adhir Chowdhury, Congress workers took to the streets here on Sunday, demanding justice for student leader Anis Khan, whose death in Howrah district on February 18 triggered state-wide protests.

Dr A Chellakumar, AICC Observer for Odhisa and Bengal and Lok Sabha MP from Tamil Nadu, also participated in the rally that originated from the West Bengal Pradesh Congress Committee headquarters at Vidhan Bhavan and continued till Park Circus 7-Point Crossing.

"A CBI probe under judicial supervision is what we demand. We will also approach the National Human Rights Commission. We

CIVIC POLL DEBACLE



Bengal Congress chief Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury (third from left) leads a Congress rally in Kolkata on Sunday. Twitter

extend our full support to the family, and if they want, we will also take them to the President of India," said Chowdhury.

Chowdhury said, "Anis was killed as part of a conspiracy.
People from the state government

and police are involved. We want justice for him." Anis was killed under suspicious circumstances. Till now, the mystery of his murder remained unsolved. We will continue with our protest against the government, and we will con-

tinue to press the government till justice is provided to the victim and his family," said Chowdhury.

On Saturday afternoon, six members of an SIT probing the case had gone to Anis's house in Howrah's Amta Dakshin Khan Para, but his father Salem Khan eportedly refused to speak with them

Chowdhury, too, met the family members of the student leader on Saturday and assured them of raising the matter in Parliament.

According to Anis's father, he died after being "pushed off the second floor of his house on the intervening night of February 18 and 19. Anis was found lying in a pool of blood minutes after four persons, including a man in khaki uniform, entered his house looking for him, Salem Khan claimed.

DHANKHAR SEEKS MEETING WITH CM

Governor writes to Mamata, blames her for 'dialogue stalemate'

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE KOLKATA, MARCH 6

WESTBENGAL Governor Jagdeep Dhankhar on Sunday wrote to Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, alleging that she was responsible for a "dialogue stalemate" between the two top constitutional functionaries of the state.

Dhankhar has called a meeting with the CM at Raj Bhavan next week to discuss the issues he flagged recently.

The move came in response to Banerjee's communication to the Governor wherein she said that she will meet him after the inaugural session of the Assembly on Monday.

"Since only one day is left before the inaugural session of the Assembly, we are ready to welcome you in the Assembly tomorrow," Banerjee wrote in a letter, a copy of which was attached to a press release issued by the Raj Bhavan. The release also referred to an earlier letter by the CM to which the governor had replied saying that he was "appalled" at her response.

Banerjee, Governor

Jagdeep Dhankhar

"I am tied up due to various programmes. After the inaugural session of the Assembly I will definitely come to thank you and have a cup of tea with you," Banerjee had written in response

to Dhankhar's call for a meeting.
The release issued by Raj
Bhawan further said that the intent of communications by the
Governor sent on February 15 and
22 to the chief minister was to effect response to all issues flagged
and make it convenient for an interaction seemed to be lost.

For details and updates visit:

The Governor said there was a need to end the "dialogue dead-lock" which became a hurdle to a possible resolution of issues.

"Dialogue stalemate between the top constitutional functionaries in the state — the governor and the chief minister — is a serious cause of concern. It has thus become expedient to put in the public domain continual and sustained outreach efforts by the Governor to catalyse dialogue with the chief minister," wrote Dhankhar.

Dhankhar also held an hourlong meeting with Assembly speaker Biman Banerjee on the budget session starting Monday. The Covernor had invited the

The Governor had invited the Speaker for an interaction on live coverage of his address to the House on Monday. Dhankhar complained that his speeches in the Assembly were "blacked out" on earlier occasions.

The Assembly has been summoned by the governor on Monday following an impasse over the timing of the sitting of the House.

निदेशक/Director

भारतीय रिज़र्व बैंक

RESERVE BANK OF INDIA

Kolkata

Easy to pass blame: Dilip Ghosh slams section of state BJP leaders

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE KOLKATA, MARCH 6

BJP NATIONAl vice president Dilip Ghosh on Sunday criticised a section of party leaders, including MP Locket Chatterjee, for blaming the party's state leadership for the debacle in the recently concluded civic elections, instead of shouldering their responsibilities.

Ghosh's remark came a day after Chatterjee reportedly said that instead of holding TMC and its electoral malpractices responsible, the BJP state unit



BJP national vice president Dilip Ghosh

should introspect to find the reasons for its poor performance in elections after the Assembly polls last year. Chatterjee had reportedly said this at an internal meeting of the party on Saturday.

Speaking with mediapersons on Sunday, Ghosh, without naming anyone, said, "It is very easy to make such comments and pass the blame to others. Those who went missing from the field during elections and did not shoulder their responsibilities are making such baseless comments. They are now blaming the party. But what have they done for the party, recently?"

Veteran BJP leader Tathagata Roy, who has been critical of his party's style of functioning in West Bengal, said in a tweet, "Reports I hv recvd abt ystrday's Chintan Baithak of West Bengal BJP say there were some small protests. Good. But too little, too late. There has to be a brutal dissection, including condemnation of the dealers of money and women. Ostrich-like conduct will seal W Bengal BJP's fate (sic)."

Out of 108 municipalities in the state that went to polls on February 27, the BJP failed to win even a single civic body. In terms of wards, BJP won only 63 compared to TMC's 1,870.

The saffron party's vote share stood at 13 per cent, just behind the Left's 14 per cent.

In a bid to introspect its poll debacle, the party had on Saturday held a 'Chintan Baithak' (brainstorming session) to discuss ways to revive its fate.

Two arrested for posing as doctor

Kolkata: Two persons were arrested by the Kolkata Police for allegedly impersonating a doctor and prescribing medicines to patients on his prescription pad.

Police identified the accusedwere identified as Rajib Sarkar of New Tollygunge and Suvo Nath of Bidhannagar South area. **ENS**

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BAJRANG DAL WORKER MURDER

Police invoke UAPA against 10 suspects

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICEBENGALURU, MARCH 6

KARNATAKAPOLICE have invoked sections of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act,1967 against 10 people arrested in connection with the February 20 murder of a Bajrang Dal worker in the Shivamogga region of the state.

Pressing charges under the UAPA against the accused in the murder of Harsha Hindu, 27, who had a criminal background, is being seen as a precursor to handing over the case to the National Investigation Agency (NIA).

"There is suspicion of a larger conspiracy behind the murder," a senior state police official said. Provisions of the UAPA are gener-

journalist held

within hours

of getting bail

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

HOURS AFTER getting bail from

a Shopian court and days after

securing bail from a special

court, journalist Fahad Shah

was arrested for the third time

in a month on Saturday

evening. The latest arrest has

been made by the Srinagar po-

lice in a case pertaining to cov-

erage of a May 2020 encounter

in the city by the news website

Currently, he is lodged at

the Safakadal police station in

Srinagar and his lawyer is re-

portedly contemplating to

move another bail application.

that Shah was wanted in three cases for "glorifying terrorism,

spreading fake news and incit-

ing general public for creating

law and order situations". Shah.

the Editor-in-Chief of thekash-

mirwalla.com, was arrested un-

der the NIA Act on February 4,

2022, by the Pulwama police. He

was granted bail by a special

court on February 26 after re-

maining in custody for 22 days.

Subsequently, he was arrested

by the Shopian police and was

granted bail on Saturday.

The J&K Police had noted

that Shah runs.

SRINAGAR, MARCH 6

Srinagar

ally invoked in cases where there is suspicion of a conspiracy to target national integrity. The UAPA gives the police custody of a suspect for 30 days, and 180 days to file charge sheet instead of 90 days in ordinary cases. The law also makes it difficult to get a bail.

Harsha was hacked to death by a group of men with whom he allegedly had a feud since 2016.

One of the 10 people arrested for the crime, Mohammed Kashif, 30, was in prison with Harsha in 2017. Several other accused who allegedly assisted him have multiple cases of assault, burglary and robbery against them.

Sources said the murder could be an outcome of a clash between Harsha and one of his attackers on the premises of a court around six months ago. However, police are looking into a larger conspiracy, especially considering that the crime took place in the midst of the hijab ban controversy. Harsha was allegedly involved in organising support for the ban on hijab at some colleges in Shivamogga.

"The accused are local criminals and there are serious doubts that they could have planned and executed the murder on their own," a senior police officer said.

Shivamogga MLA and minister KS Eshwarappa and the Union minister Shobha Karandlaje had demanded an NIA probe. On Friday, Karnataka Home Minister Araga Jnanendra, however, said the state police will continue with the probe. The state police had in-

voked provisions of the UAPA in a few murder cases of right-wing activists in the past.

In 2016, when the Congress was in power, UAPA was invoked in the murder case of RSS worker R Rudresh days after the arrest of Bengaluru district president of the Popular Front of India (PFI).

In 2015, the Mysuru police pressed charges under the UAPA against one Abid Pasha, who had links with the PFI, after finding his alleged involvement in six murders. In 2020, the the UAPA was invoked in two of 67 cases registered in connection with rioting in Bengaluru over a social media post that hurt the sentiments of Muslims. The said cases where UAPA was invoked were later handed over to the NIA.

Home Minister Amit Shah at the 53rd Raising Day ceremony of Central Industrial Security Force in Ghaziabad. Gajendra Yadav

CISF should develop hybrid model to train pvt agencies: Shah

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA GHAZIABAD, MARCH 6

UNION HOME Minister Amit Shahon Sunday pitched for a "hybrid" security model where the CISF could train and certify private security agencies so that they can take over the task of efficiently guarding industrial and manufacturing units in the country.

He said the CISF (Central Industrial Security Force) worked like a silent "karmayogi" to ensure the country's industrial development and secured the private manufacturing production units as India rode on to become a USD 2.5 trillion economy. He said many units in the manufacturing sector will be established and the CISF will face new scenarios. He said the 1.64-lakh-strong force could soon see an enhancement in its role.

He said: "The work of private security agencies is increasing...we have brought out rules for their functioning. Can the CISF take the responsibility of training these agencies?" he said

IUML chief Thangal passes away at 74

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, MARCH 6

INDIAN UNION Muslim League (IUML)state president and prominent spiritual leader Panakkad Sayed Hyderali Shihab Thangal,74, died at a private hospital in Angamali of Ernakulam districton Sunday. Thangal has been indisposed for the last few months. As the chief of IUML,

Thangal was one of the faces of Congress-led United Democratic Front (UDF) of which IUML is a key constituent. He was serving as the vice-president of the Samastha Kerala Jamiyyathul Ulema, an influential body of Muslim scholars in Kerala. He was the senior-most member of the Malappuram-based Panakkad Thangal family, which traditionally has the final say in IUML politics.

Born as the third son of Sayyid Pookoya Thangal, who also had been president of IUMLas well as Sunni scholars' body Samastha, Thangal started his career as a qazi in Malappuram. He had been the founder president of Sunni Yuvajana Sangam, a Sunni youth outfit. As an IUML leader, he had served as the party's Malappuram district president for 18 years.



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WORDLY WISE

In doing what we ought we deserve no praise, because it is our duty.

— SAINT AUGUSTINE

The Indian EXPRESS

Sounded By

RAMNATH GOENKA

BECAUSE THE TRUTH INVOLVES US ALL

Russia needs to be told: Its invasion endangered students, their safety is India's national interest, hostage talk obfuscates

CALLING ON MOSCOW

NDIA'S FIRST PRIORITY in the Ukraine war is the safety of all Indian students and other citizens in that country, parts of which are being subjected to heavy bombardment by Russian troops. So far, blending diplomacy and logistics, since the invasion began, the Government has brought back home over 15,000 Indian nationals. However, groups of students are still stuck in eastern Ukraine — reports from Sumy, close to the Russian border in northeastern Ukraine, raise deep concern. The town, where 800 Indian students are stuck in miserable conditions, is under near continuous shelling by Russian forces. While a "regime of silence", or ceasefire, called by Ukraine and Russia to enable civilians to leave the cities of Mariupol and Volnovakha collapsed amid mutual $recrimination, it is doubtful if the students stuck in Sumy, 600\,km to the north, could have$ taken advantage of the suspension had it held. They have no access to transport to make such a long journey. The Russian border, towards which these students decided to walk, is closer but is 48 km away and the journey hazardous because of shelling. On an appeal by the MEA that it is making efforts to evacuate them, the students have, for now, called off the journey. The next challenge is to ensure a humanitarian corridor to evacuate those stuck in Sumy, and in the Pisochyn area of Kharkiv, even if it takes more high-level calls between Delhi and Moscow. Both phone conversations between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Vladimir Putin dwelt on the safety of Indian citizens. India must lean

At the same time, New Delhi was right to call out Moscow's specious claim about Indian students being taken hostage by the Ukrainians. As a top official told this newspaper, had that been the case, these young men and women would not have been free to post heart-rending videos and SOS messages on social media, or keep in touch with their family members and friends back home. Not one of them has complained about being held captive or being asked to pay for a safe passage. Certainly though, trapped as they are, these hapless students are hostage to a situation not of their making.

This has to be conveyed to Moscow along with the message that India's abstention in the UN votes on resolutions condemning Russia doesn't mean an abdication of national interest. And, right now, India's national interest is that each of its students stuck in Ukraine following the Russian invasion should return home safe and secure. Over a relationship of decades, Delhi has built enough friendships in the Kremlin to speak frankly and tell its friends how crucial the safety of the students is for the relationship. Russia's invasion is what has endangered the students, the ball, therefore, is in Moscow's court.

THANK YOU, JUSTICE

Justice Akil Kureshi's remarks on judicial independence and the collegium strike many chords. Hope his colleagues heard him

HIEF JUSTICE OF the Rajasthan High Court Akil Kureshi retired Sunday ending a remarkable nearly two-decade long career as a judge of a constitutional court. In his farewell speech, Justice Kureshi broke his silence on the controversy surrounding his elevation nearly four years ago — and he deserves applause for that. First, he responded to the charge former Chief Justice of India, Ranjan Gogoi, made in his autobiography that the government had a negative perception of him based on his judicial pronouncements. As a judge, Justice Kureshi, said he considers such a perception a "certificate of independence". He added that what is of a greater significance to him was the perception of the judiciary, which was never officially communicated to him.

It was in 2018, that the government broke convention and appointed Justice A Dave in place of Justice Kureshi as acting chief justice of the Gujarat High Court. As senior-most judge of the court, Justice Kureshi would have had to serve under a chief justice who was his junior. Following protests from the Bar, the government withdrew the notification. He was acting chief justice for just two weeks before he was transferred to the Bombay High Court. When he was recommended for elevation as Chief Justice of the Madhya Pradesh High Court, the government once again stalled the process. The collegium buckled and instead appointed Justice Kureshi as Chief Justice of the Tripura High Court. His elevation to the Supreme Court, when he was second in line in the All India List of Seniority of Judges, was the cause of an unprecedented two-year long impasse within the collegium, virtually stalling all appointments to the Supreme Court. Eventually, under a new CJI, N V Ramana, the impasse was resolved with a list of nine appointments to the SC — that did not include Kureshi.

The government may have had reservations about Justice Kureshi — valid or otherwise — but it is the collegium's refrain on his elevation that is disquieting. While the collegium system of appointing judges keeps the public away from these crucial conversations, it is of concern that even the judges in question are kept guessing. It is a testament to his judicial tenure that the Gujarat Bar went on an indefinite strike and even moved the Supreme Court on the judicial side when he was not appointed the acting chief justice of the High Court. It is fitting that Justice Kureshi invoked Justice H R Khanna in his farewell speech — Justice Khanna is remembered for his integrity and standing up to the government of the day during the Emergency at the cost of his appointment to the Chief Justice of India's office. Justice Kureshi eloquently, reminded his colleagues on the bench what that means today — and what a democracy expects them to do.

Freeze Frame

E P Unny



Autocrats and oil

To deal with energy volatility, India must build reserves, revive talks with Iran, Turkmenistan



WHAT WILL BE the impact of the Ukrainian crisis on India's energy sector? What lessons should it draw from the playbook of the crisis? What policies must it frame to safeguard its national energy interests? These are the questions that this article will address. The focus will be on energy.

The tangible and unavoidable impact of the crisis will be on India's macro-economy. Sajjid Chinoy has, last week, summarised well the balance of payments, exchange rate and inflationary consequences of rising oil prices ('Crude Pressures', ÎE March 4). I want to add that the inflation-adjusted price of Brent crude is \$83/bbl (as of writing, the nominal price is \$116 / bbl), which is lower than the peak of \$145/ bbl in 2008 and the average price that year of \$100/bbl. In other words, prices could rise much further and we would still not be in uncharted waters. Further, there are manifold uncertainties. The price trajectory will depend on the duration of the conflict, its impact on global energy demand, countervailing supply measures (for example, drawdown of strategic reserves, diversion of US LNG supplies to Europe, the Iranian nuclear deal which, if signed, could release up to 1 mbd of Iranian crude into the market) and whether in all this mayhem, the pipeline infrastructure currently feeding Russian gas into Europe remains operational. One cannot discount the possibility of a wayward missile disrupting supplies. Let me also add that our earnings from petroleum products (diesel, petrol, naphtha) will be adversely impacted. In 2021, these products generated \$39 billion in revenue and at 14 per cent, they accounted for the highest share of export earnings.

Astill difficult to quantify impact will be on the value of India's energy assets in Russia. ONGC has a 26 per cent stake in the Vankor oil field, a 20 per cent stake in the Sakhalin-1 LNG/oil export complex and maybe a few other less valuable interests. All these holdings have eroded substantially in value. Many Western majors (Exxon/BP/Shell) have walked away from their investments. ONGC has that option too, as also the opportunity to increase its shareholding on the cheap. It will not do the

The Ukraine crisis throws up many learnings. But one needs particular emphasis. It is not enough to read the tea leaves of supply, demand and geopolitical trends to understand the trajectory of the energy market. It is comparably important to understand the mindsets of the autocrats that hold the levers of energy policy. Three individuals, in particular, must be carefully studied. President Putin, Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman and President Xi Jinping. These three exercise plenipotentiary powers over energy policy in their country and the hydrocarbon market has been witness to the consequences of their 'irrationality' twice in two years.

former and it would be opportunistic and morally wrong to do the latter. So, for the present perhaps, it should do no more than making provisions for a write-down. In India, Rosneft (the Russian national oil company) operates the 20 mtpa refinery in Vadinar through Nayara Energy. Nayara is not sanctioned but the traders of crude/products might worry about transacting with an Indian company owned by a sanctioned Russian entity.

India will also be affected by the emergent energy landscape. Four features define this landscape

One, the tightening energy embrace of Russia and China. Only last week, for instance, Gazprom signed off on an agreement to build a second gas pipeline to China christened "Power of Siberia 2". The "Power of Siberia 1" pipeline has been pumping gas into China since 2019

Two, the emergence of the US as the largest producer of oil in the world and potentially the largest exporter of LNG. It has the capacity to blunt the impact of a supply shortfall but as it is controlled by profit-maximising private corporates, this will depend on market forces. Supplies will head towards the highest bidder.

Three, the ability of Saudi Arabia to swing the crude oil market. It is the one member of OPEC plus with significant spares, low cost, producible capacity (approx 3 mbd) of crude oil. The US has pressured Saudi to bring this volume into the market but they have, as yet, not buckled.

And finally, the chokehold of China over the rare earths, minerals and components that are required to effect the transition to a clean energy system.

India will have to navigate the consequential (and conflicting) geopolitics generated by these four features.

The final impact will be on the petroleum industry. Ahead of the current state elections, the government disallowed the oil marketing companies (OMC) from passing on the rise in prices to the consumer. If this ban continues, the OMCs will be financially crippled and plans to privatise BPCL will come a cropper.

The Ukraine crisis throws up many learn-

ings. But one needs particular emphasis. It is not enough to read the tea leaves of supply, demand and geopolitical trends to understand the trajectory of the energy market. It is comparably important to understand the mindsets of the autocrats that hold the levers of energy policy. Three individuals, in particular, must be carefully studied. President Putin, Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman (MBS) and President Xi Jinping. These three exercise plenipotentiary powers over energy policy in their country and the hydrocarbon market has been witness to the consequences of their "irrationality" twice in two years. In Q1 2020, the oil market went into free fall because MBS was determined to protect Saudi's market share, and increased supplies, despite the Covid-induced collapse in demand. The result was so dramatic that on one day in April, the holders of crude futures had to "pay" to offload their holdings. The price of oil was in negative territory. President Putin has today driven an equally "irrational" wedge into the market with

The lesson: One must presume the word "rational" does not have the same meaning for these leaders as for those who derive its interpretation from the Oxford dictionary. And that to understand what it means for them, one must interpret it through the prism of their personal predilections, egos and political ambitions.

comparably severe but opposite ramifications.

Against this backdrop, I offer five broad policy suggestions for India. One, frame it around the expectation of continuing volatility. Two, build up strategic reserves to safeguard against the unexpected. Three, revive conversations with Turkmenistan and Iran about a transnational gas pipeline. Four, fast forward efforts to decouple the supply chain dependence on China for the minerals and components required for the clean energy transition. And, finally bring in psychologists to get a better fix on the logic that drives the decisions of the energy autocrats.

The writer is chairman and distinguished fellow, Center for Social and Economic Progress

PHYSICAL FOR DIGITAL

Fix non-tech elements like governance to realise utility for digital platforms

Varad Pande and Rohit Kumar

A LOT HAS been written about the emphasis on "digital" in the 2022 Union Budget. But one aspect that hasn't been talked about as much is the importance given in the budget to digital public infrastructure (DPI) — the idea that cross-sectoral "digital rails" like ID, payments and data exchanges when combined with open interconnected data systems in sectors like health, education and social protection, can transform service delivery.

India is seen as a global trendsetter in the

DPI movement, having set up multiple largescale DPIs like Aadhaar, UPI and sector-specific platforms like DIGIT for eGovernance and DIKSHA for education. These have helped push the frontier of public service delivery. This year's budget adds to the growing discourse on DPIs by making four key announcements: In health, an open platform with digital registries, a unique health identity and a robust consent framework; in skilling, a Digital Ecosystem for Skilling and Livelihood (DESH-Stack) to help citizens upskill through online training; a Unified Logistics Interface Platform (ULIP) to streamline movement of goods across modes of transport; and for travel, an 'open source" mobility stack for facilitating seamless travel of passengers. These announcements are welcome. Research by Omidyar Network India and BCG shows that the creation of national digital ecosystems in sectors like health, jobs and skilling, agriculture and justice can lead to economic opportunities worth Rs 35 lakh crore by 2030. Similar analysis by the Centre for Digital Economy Policy Research (C-DEP) also estimates that national digital ecosystems could

India must also focus on developing anchor institutions and robust governance frameworks. Just as Aadhaar is anchored by UIDAI under an Act of Parliament, and the Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission is anchored by the National Health Authority, every new ODE requires an accountable institutional anchor. These institutions are critical for setting standards, ensuring a level playing field and safeguarding consumer interest.

add over 5 per cent to India's GDP.

But important design considerations must be set right if we are to truly unlock the value of these platforms. One way to think about this is by differentiating between the "tech" and "non-tech" layers of our digital infrastructure — while India seems to have made significant headway on the "tech" layers, the "non-tech" layers of community engagement and governance need a lot more work. The combination of these three layers is what is critical to making tech work for everyone. Together, they embody what we call the open digital ecosystems (ODE) approach.

To unleash the true potential of India's ODEs, we need to get the "non-tech" layers right, by prioritising principles around data protection, universal access and accountability. While this presents a large menu, three specific non-tech levers are critical.

First, protecting the data of all users and giving them agency over how their data gets used. The passage of a robust Data Protection Bill is imperative. But we also need to go beyond the mere requirement of "consent". Consent as a construct is insufficient, as anyone who has tried to read privacy policies knows - it forces you to make a binary choice in quick time, in an environment overloaded with information suffused with dense legalese. Recent research by the Centre for Social and Behaviour Change (CSBC) suggests that users can be "nudged" to make privacyconscious decisions by providing standardised privacy ratings, presenting privacy policies more visually, and mandating users to stay on the privacy page for at least a few minutes.

Second, it is important to address the digital divide. Research by ORF, for instance, shows that Indian women are 15 per cent less likely to own a mobile phone and 33 per cent less likely to use mobile internet services than men.

So, we need a "phygital" approach that provides services through both online and offline options and strong grievance redressal mechanisms. Research has shown that leveraging trusted local intermediaries who are embedded in communities can significantly improve access to tech platforms for marginalised groups.

Finally, as we push the frontier on digitisation, India must also focus on developing anchor institutions and robust governance frameworks. Just as Aadhaar is anchored by UIDAI under an Act of Parliament, and the Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission is anchored by the National Health Authority, every new ODE requires an accountable institutional anchor. These institutions are critical for setting standards, ensuring a level playing field and safeguarding consumer interest. The sector-specific institutions also need to be complemented by a "National ODE Council" to inform coordinated policies and keep the focus on citizen-centricity.

From Aadhaar and UPI to DBT and CoWin, India's tech stacks are grabbing global attention. It is now critical to bring the gaze on to the non-tech layers of the stack, so that the potential of these platforms can be unlocked for every Indian.

Pande is a partner at Omidyar Network India and Kumar is co-founder of The Quantum Hub

MARCH 7, 1982, FORTY YEARS AGO

UPROAR IN HOUSE

THE BUDGET SESSION of the West Bengal assembly had a boisterous start marked by walkouts and noisy scenes throughout the brief sitting. The main business before the session is the vote-on-accounts for the period from April 1 to June 21, when the term of the present government expires. The walk outs were prompted by the address delivered by the governor B D Pande. The small SUCI group left the house in criticism of the state government's policies on education and language. When the house convened after the recess, the Congress members walked out. The Congress (I) leader described governor B D Pande's speech as an election manifesto.

BAD WEATHER

THE UNION AGRICULTURE minister's hopes of a bumper wheat harvest will be threatened if the bad weather does not clear. Reports do not indicate countrywide losses but damage to the wheat crop has been reported in some states, particularly Punjab and Haryana. About 200 villages in Haryana are believed to have been affected by hailstorm.

LOK DAL CRISIS

THE LOK DAL general secretary Madhu Limaye is believed to have quit the party post pushing the crisis-ridden party to the brink of disintegration on the eve of its national executive meeting. It's also believed that Limaye will stay away from the meeting. Karpoori Thakur and George Fernandes may also follow him.

SIMLA BUILDING FIRE

YET ANOTHER HISTORIC building of Simla, the Kennedy Cottage, was gutted. The oldest building in the summer capital during the British rule housed the state electricity board, the Forest Survey of India, the CPWD's electrical wing, statistical department, home guards and the office of an insurance company. The losses amounted to well above Rs 1 crore, besides valuable documents.

Kolkata



INDIAN EXPRESS

THE IDEAS PAGE

Ordinary Russians are unlikely to lose much sleep if the oligarchs lose out. But they will be hurt in a wider economic war with the west. - THE GUARDIAN

WHAT THE OTHERS SAY

Drawing the future

Given their inclination to question, cartoonists have predicted war and taken on authoritarians. But it's a demoralised cartoonist who faces the current moment. Hardly a state of mind to reflect, let alone predict



ITTOOK A Vladimir Putin to remind us of the long-forgotten nuclear button. Mercifully, so far, he has pushed only the rewind button. A minor military operation he started, meant to conclude in hours, isn't going away in a hurry. It is staying on to invoke parallels from the past. A favourite flashback point is the advent of World War II.

Cartoonists won't easily let go of that moment. Britain's star cartoonist David Low got that war right, ahead of prime ministers and kings. For him, the war began unsurprisingly. Not that he had any mystical gift for predicting or mind reading. He had fewer illusions. As an adversarial cartoonist, he would habitually question and disbelieve. Also, given his professional standing, he worked with much autonomy for publisher Lord Beaverbrook's Evening Standard. What he gave back to the paper was rigour.

David Low did better homework than his own government on the man who started the war. Adolf Hitler ordered German troops to march into Poland from the west at daybreak on September 1, 1939. In just over a fortnight, in choreographed timing, Soviet troops entered Poland from the east. Three days later, Low's iconic cartoon appeared in the Evening Standard. Under the one-word title 'Rendezvous', two vastly dissimilar political entities, Hitler and Stalin, were on the same page in the same frame bowing to each other over a man lying dead on a Polish battlefield.

To the world, the Nazi and the Communist were sworn enemies till their non-aggression pact went public. The deal was announced just a week before Hitler struck. Low had no inkling on what led up to the instant bonding. But when it occurred, he wasn't shaken, having sized up the players over the years. Both would do exactly what suited them. The cartoon said it.

There was nothing hurried or slapdash about the drawing. The artwork had all that one associates with the master – riveting composition, rehearsed brush strokes and gestural language in perfect sync with the message. Which was that big guys can violate national borders jointly or severally. A series of such violations ensued to build up a war

Low was a known critic of his own PM, the conflict-averse Neville Chamberlain. "War" wasn't a word the cartoonist shied away from. He had more than hinted at it in the weeks and months before the outbreak. so much so that friends of the PM had called him a warmonger. Across the maritime border, Goebbels agreed that the cartoonist was an alarmist and must be restrained. Hitler's propaganda minister did know the truth which was that Britain's PM was more clueless than its cartoonist. To cut a long story short, Chamberlain went down appeasing the German regime. Low celebrated the exit with a gleeful drawing of a Nazi tiger with swastika stripes. The well-fed creature is in post-prandial repose with the prime ministerial remains strewn around – dentures, moustache, and the ubiquitous umbrella.

In the annals of cartooning, this is an oft-



repeated success story. In a world yet to recover from its first big war, a young cartoonist zeroes in on the one who would start the second. Is anything like that happening now, when the world has shrunk too much to keep secrets? Did any contemporary cartoonist anticipate Putin's strike the way Low foresaw Hitler's? Today, the world over, cartoonists are digitally savvy. They couldn't have missed much. They have been following Putin as well as Low and his peers tracked Hitler.

Putin has been around since 2000, a good 22 years and he is by no means low key. He lacks the toothbrush moustache but offers a lot more to the caricaturist. While the German Chancellor was almost always seen in formal military wear, the Kremlin celeb goes about bare-bodied on trips to catch pike and battle bears. Cartoonists often fill up the torso with tattoos. He was the biggest cartoonist's delight till a bigger challenger popped up. In 2017 President Donald Trump appeared and the global cartooning space got seriously contested for the next four years. Trump packed a surfeit of everyday misanthropy into his presidency, enough to exhaust the cartoonist.

"Oh, good lord", was Pulitzer winner Ann Telnaes' reaction the day after the election of Donald Trump, "when it dawned on me that I would be serving my year as the president of the Association of American Editorial Cartoonists during the same time as the guy who wanted to 'open up' libel laws and weaken the First Amendment so he could sue journalists more easily." A year into Trump's

In a world yet to recover from its first big war, a young cartoonist zeroes in on the one who would start the second. Is anything like that happening now, when the world has shrunk too much to keep secrets? Did any contemporary cartoonist anticipate Putin's strike the way Low foresaw Hitler's? Today, the world over, cartoonists are digitally savvy. They couldn't have

presidency, she bemoaned that there was not a single day she could keep the man out of the cartoon. Putin had been squarely beaten.

The Russian supremo had better luck with Patrick Chappatte, perhaps the most globally watched editorial cartoonist today. Born in Karachi to a Lebanese mother and Swiss father, raised in Singapore and Switzerland, the 55-year-old works out of Los Angeles and Switzerland. Can't get more global than that and true to form, he did try to set universal standards by letting Putin in whenever he could. Even so, most days Trump clung to the cartoon. When finally, he was voted out in 2020, it was the pandemic that came into cartooning focus. Putin waited for the virus to

The last century was good to cartoonists. It gave them a world war to hone their skills on tvrants like Hitler, Mussolini, Franco and Stalin and apply these skills to question all authority including what prevailed in labelled democracies. The practitioners were far from kind to Winston Churchill, Margaret Thatcher, Richard Nixon and the Bushes, But none confounded the cartoonist more than Donald Trump. How do you cartoon a caricature who distorts everything he touches?

Unlike David Low, the jaunty New Zealander who went to work in pre-war London, it is a demoralised cartoonist who faces the war on Ukraine. Hardly the state of mind to sit back and reflect, leave alone

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The lessons that count

The post-pandemic school must seize the opportunity to fix systemic issues, allow teachers more autonomy and promote meaningful learning



SANJAY KAUL AND Uma Mahadevan-DASGUPTA

THE COVID-19 pandemic has been devastating for schoolchildren. Of India's 265 million children enrolled in school, the vast majority have barely set foot in the classroom for almost two years.

Now that schools are reopening, they must first welcome the return of children, with warmth and reassurance. The classroom must be a safe and non-threatening space where children can shed the anxiety, stress and isolation of the last two years.

Thereafter, the immediate imperative is to address learning gaps. Failure to do so would leave this generation of children irreparably affected. E-content can only have minimal impact, as less than 12 per cent of government schools have internet connectivity, and only 24 per cent of families have smartphones. Most poor households do not own a TV. Hence, along with school reopening, we need a massive basic instruction and revision programme in the first year, to help primary school children consolidate the skills of reading, writing, numeracy, and comprehension at their own pace. Older children will also be able to settle back into the school rhythm without added stress. Government schools must institutionalise this revision and support programme to bridge learning gaps before embarking on new stages of the syl-

Equally, we must resolve the fundamental systemic issues of weak learning and an unimaginative curriculum. Primarily due to the obsessive and misplaced focus on rote learning, many children of low-income households struggle with basic reading, writing, and arithmetic skills, even after eight years of schooling. Compounding this situation is mismanagement and lack of accountability in state education departments. School education should go much beyond merely monitoring numbers - students enrolled, teachers appointed, textbooks distributed, mid-day meals supplied, buildings constructed and toilets built.

While these are essential, they are the basic minimum inputs; school education should aim to do much more. Nor are marks and test scores the correct measure of the system's efficacy. The real goals of education are to enhance cognitive development and creative thinking.

The starting point to improve quality is a focus on meaningful learning. This requires school education departments to work closely with teachers, improve their pedagogic practices, and shift the focus from the rigid curriculum. For this, teachers should be given greater autonomy inside classrooms.

Would such recalibration further exacerbate the divide between children of poor and rich households? Superficially so. However, the Brazilian philosopher of education Paulo Freire, in his classic Pedagogy of the Oppressed,

flipped mainstream pedagogy on its head by pointing out that knowledge and expertise already exist within children. Children from low-income families acquire complex and nuanced learning from their experiences and everyday environment. Conventional thinking presumes educators are experts, while students are empty and passive receptacles. According to Freire, this frame of thinking must be replaced by making teachers "liberating educators" who help children to build on their knowledge and understanding. One way to achieve this would be for each school to incorporate strong local elements within a common curriculum framework. Teachers need space for creativity and a freer classroom environment.

Besides curriculum reform, pedagogic practices must change. There are one million government schools and five million government school teachers in India. Training teachers to change pedagogic practices poses considerable challenges and requires enhanced budgets and well-trained faculty; quite unlike the present situation where budgets are modest and faculty are mostly drawn from the cadre of education administrators.

Alongside the above supply-side recommendations on instruction, pedagogy, curricular reform and training, there is a need to address the demand side. Parents from lowincome families perceive government school education as offering little value, resulting in their sense of indifference and resignation. Further, as educated and well-off parents send their children to private schools, there is little societal pressure on the state to improve education quality. However, the perception of poor quality can be quickly changed – as has been shown in a few states, such as Kerala and Delhi, with equal equipment of government schools, and improved exam performance. An attractive physical school environment may not be adequate to change long-held perceptions.

Children will attend school and participate happily if, alongside the regular curriculum, it offers activities that enrich their school experience and make it fun. Even at the cost of reducing the time allocated to formal classroom teaching, it would be valuable to reorganise the school day with time devoted to activities such as art, music, and sports, along with the formal curriculum and the focus shifted to providing holistic education.

Not least of all, school governance reform and teacher motivation are vital factors to improve quality. As education officials are preoccupied with supply chain management issues, academic management and supervision require an exclusively dedicated cadre. The major pain point of government school teachers is in the manner of their posting to schools. Teachers are often constrained to use political influence or corruption to get themselves posted to locations of their preference. With rapidly increasing numbers of women working as primary school teachers, their safety and convenience must also become a priority. Transparency and fairness in postings and transfers are vital to motivate teachers and improve their performance.

Kaul is an ex-IAS officer and former secretary, school education, government of Karnataka. Mahadevan-Dasgupta is an IAS officer and former principal secretary, women and child development, government of Karnataka



The fire next time

Forest-dwelling and tribal people must be seen as allies in fighting forest fires

missed much. They have

been following Putin as well

as Low and his peers tracked

Aaran Patel

INDIA'S VARIED forest habitat is a giant tinderbox that can release vast amounts of carbon dioxide, imperilling lives and livelihoods. But, if safeguarded and thoughtfully expanded, these very forests could be vital in slowing down the world's warming by drawing down greenhouse gases from the atmosphere. In combating wildfires, we can no longer continue to ignore the critical role of our allies – the forest dwellers and tribal

Inaction on forest fires would have grave consequences for the country. In 2021 alone, large blazes in Simlipal Tiger Reserve in Odisha and Uttarakhand destroyed ecosystems of species from the microscopic to the magnificent, releasing thousands of tonnes of carbon. This trend is increasing across our planet - a new UN report describes a "global wildfire crisis" primarily because of climate change. In India, data on this issue — and forest cover more broadly — are either scarce or sketchy and will be critical to guiding decision-making.

India's ecosystems are closely intertwined with several state and societal goals. As part of the Paris Climate Accord, the Indian government committed to adding forests and tree cover as "carbon sinks" to absorb 2.5-3 billion tonnes of CO2 equivalents by 2030. On the livelihoods front, 300 million Indians depend on forests for their subsistence and jobs, according to the Food and Agriculture Organisation.

Given that these tribal and local communities live in forests or on their fringes, in the blame that follows the blaze, those who have the least power and voice are often cast as the villains. However, an emerging understanding from ecologists and grassroots organisations indicates how communities can be allies in arresting and preventing fires. In Simlipal, for instance, tribal people were on the frontline of battling fires last year and as this summer looms, women's self-help groups have been clearing the brush and creating fire lines.

For centuries, forest-dependent communities across the world have fine-tuned a balance between their needs and the natural world's regeneration. Their thoughtful practices are the principal reasons for the health of large parts of our planet's ecosystems, research has found. However, in India, longstanding mindsets from a colonial forestry model have transitioned into a fortress-style conservation model that keeps communities out. This marginalisation manifests itself in an energy poverty that leaves many tribal communities dependent on firewood for basic needs like cooking in the 21st century.

At the same time, fire is central to communities' culture and socio-economic cycles. On cool late spring mornings in the sal forests of central India, Baiga and Gond communities light fires under mahua trees while they wait to gather the pale yellow flowers that fall on the ashen earth. These small blazes keep them warm and keep potential rivals like bears away from the mahua harvest.

As conservation science fuses with social disciplines like anthropology, these traditional practices, which may have once been derided as primitive, could be seen as prescient. After ignoring Native Americans' knowledge about periodic controlled burns. the US is experiencing the consequences of allowing a massive build-up of flammable stock that combusts in mega blazes like in California in 2021. "Good fire" of low to moderate intensity may reduce the fuel for larger blazes and aid germination of plants whose seeds need fire to crack open.

These complexities require fusing contemporary knowledge with contextual needs. For instance, researchers at the Indian Institute of Technology Mandi have tested an intervention that makes the alpine forests of the Himalayan foothills less susceptible to forest fires and provides local livelihoods. Based on these studies, communities in Himachal Pradesh have set up businesses that gather and process highly flammable dry chir pine needles into bio-pellets that can be fired with or instead of coal in industrial processes.

To combat forest fires, India will also need to improve coordination between ministries and agencies at the union and state levels to ensure contextually appropriate interventions that can be delivered by the forest department and local administrations. Technical knowledge should also be decentralised so that people on the ground have access to information that helps them respond to disasters and build resilience in the

A fundamental shift in making India's forests less vulnerable will also require being clear-eyed about problematic community practises. Apart from accidents and negligence, flames can leap over into wooded areas because of stubble burning in forestadjacent fields. Occasionally, there can be sinister issues like intentional arson to clear forest land for agriculture. However, tackling these challenges should move past blaming communities to addressing root causes of issues like incentives for unsuitable farming.

Even Indians in concrete jungles are not removed from the fate and fecundity of the country's diverse and wondrous ecosystems. Forests continue to be central to our civilisation by shaping our air and rivers and to how pollinators give life to the fields that feed us and are a source of immense aesthetic and spiritual value. Tribal communities have a strong intuitive understanding of this. There is much to learn from how their relationship with natural resources is regulated by natural rhythms and cycles. Communities knowledge and customs should be central to how we deal with forest fires in a warming world.

> The writer is co-founder of Earth Focus Kanha

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

INDIAN NEUTRALITY

THIS IS WITH reference to the article 'On Ukraine, speak up India' (IE, March 6). The author has made valid points regarding the humanitarian crisis arising from the Russia-Ukraine conflict. But from the point of view of international relations, India is right where she should be and must not budge from her position, despite the constant prodding from the Western countries. India's neutral stance and at the same time condemning the war-like situation is deft maneuvering of the diplomacy ship. I disagree with the author when she says that India should be on Ukraine's side. Right now, India is on neither side. And that's how it should be until Russia and Ukraine come to a common ground against the backdrop of this regional turmoil.

Manseet Swaroop, Delhi

STAND UP, MEDIA

THIS REFERS TO the editorial 'Who Wants A Tough Leader?' (IE, March 6). Every country goes through a phase where it needs a tough leader to stand up and reorient the general direction for good because the nation is going haywire. However this does not in any way mean that there should be blind faith in the ruling leaders. The article is right in pointing out what is happening in UP and India at large, wherein a lot of random decisions are not being questioned or even investigated. But for all this, we have to blame the Indian media which has failed to raise these issues time and again. It is the media's responsibility to keep questioning the ruling party's decisions which it has failed to deliver upon. History has been witness to the fact that whenever tough leaders arose, it was largely due to the support by local media, which repeatedly failed to highlight their follies at the right time.

Gaurav Gupta, Gurugram

A DISAPPOINTMENT

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'On the wrong foot' (IE, March 5). When one of the legends of the game, Sourav Ganguly, took charge at the BCCI, we all hoped that things will change for the better. But to our utter disappointment, the BCCI has not changed its way of working and by bullying lesser experienced former cricketers-turned-selectors, Ganguly has not done any good to his image. He should have set high standards on conflict of interest and other critical matters. After the Kohli captaincy row, now Ganguly has dragged himself into the Saha issue too. Ganguly the God of offside and a great captain and Ganguly the BCCI administrator are completely different avatars and cannot be spoken of in the same breath.

Bal Govind, Noida

If there are questions of current or contemporary relevance that you would like explained, please write to explained@indianexpress.com

India's difficult evacuation challenge in Sumy

Around 700 Indians are stranded in this Ukrainian city, 60 km from the Russian border, which has been facing continuous shelling.

SHUBHAJIT ROY NEW DELHI, MARCH 6

SUMY, LYING about 350 km east of Kyiv and 180 km north-west of Kharkiv, is now at the centre of India's evacuation efforts from the war zone. About 700 Indians, mostly students of medical colleges at Sumy State University, are stranded in this

city in Ukraine's northeast. There has been no respite from shelling in the city. President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said on Sunday that Russian forces were trying to block and keep

encircled Sumy, along with Kharkiv and several other cities, the Associated Press reported.

Situation on the ground

Ukrainian media were reporting on Sunday that Russian forces had captured Trostyanets in Sumy oblast (province), south of the city of Sumy. "The city (Trostyanets) is

on the verge of a humanitarian catastrophe," Dmytro Zhyvytskyi, head of the Sumy Regional State Administration, said.

Residents are no longer able to go out to buy food and other essentials, shops are being looted, and snipers have been positioned across the city. The Russians are in control of the ambulance station, and are not allowing medical staff to leave except for

> emergency care of children. Russian strikes on the evening of March 3 left Okhtyrka, another city in the oblast further to the south of Trostvanets, without water. electricity, and heating. With several other places in the province also without power,

local authorities were looking at a general evacuation as homes turned into "cold, stone traps", according to Zhvvvtskvi.

Challenges for evacuation

It is in this situation that several hundred Indian students – all in their late teens and early 20s - are trapped in their underground

RUSSIA BELARUS Trostyanets - Kharkiv Pisochyn Volnovakha UKRAINE

shelters, waiting to be rescued. The challenges are manifold.

First, Sumy is right in the middle of a conflict zone, with no break in the fighting. It's been 11 days since the war began.

It is very cold, snowy, and windy. (At 6 pm local time on Sunday, the temperature was -1 °C.) It is a difficult situation for those who are stranded without proper heating and water.

The border with Russia is about 60 km

away, not easy to cover on foot in this weather even under normal circumstances. Right now. bombs and shells are falling in the region, and combatants are firing at each other.

"The main challenge remains the ongoing shelling there, violence, and the lack of transportation options. I think even more than transportation, it is about having a secure and safe way to get them (Indian students) out while they are not under threat," Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson Arindam Bagchi said on Saturday.

Ceasefire not holding

The Indian government is in touch with both the Russians and Ukrainians, seeking a halt to hostilities so that these Indians can be evacuated. There was a glimmer of hope after Russia and Ukraine announced a ceasefire on Saturday — they called it a "regime of silence" - and humanitarian corridors for civilians to leave the southern cities of Mariupol (on the Sea of Azov) and

Volnovakha to its north in Donetsk oblast. But that ceasefire was not observed on

Tiger density in India

Per 100 sq km; top 45 reserves

At or nearing

carrying capacity

Below carrying

protection and

Require enhanced

restoration of prey and

capacity

habitat

12

10

the ground. The Russian embassy in New Delhi said the ceasefire was in effect from 10 am Moscow time (noon in India) on Sunday, but the Ukrainians said the Russians had violated the agreement, and the ongoing shelling made it "impossible to open humanitarian corridors for the safe evacuation of civilians, the delivery of medicines and food".

"Russia continues to launch missile and bomb strikes on Mariupol, Volnovakha and other Ukrainian cities," the Ukrainian foreign ministry said. "We call on the international community - states and international organisations — to immediately condemn Russia's gross violation of the agreements..."

Shorter route not safer

Indians who were stranded in Kharkiv and nearby Pisochyn have been able to move out and travel west, where the border is about 1,000 km away. The Russian border to the east is, by contrast, only 40 km away — however, the conflict is raging on the eastern side.

"The shortest route is not the safest," a top official told The Indian Express on Sunday.

transportation.

Tigers and humans in Sunderbans

Source: NTCA-WII-Bangladesh Forest Dept

A 100 sq km grid-view of tiger and human density in the Sunderbans. Human

presence is higher near the edges of the forest and overall higher in Bangladesh Sunderbans where several river channels are used for commercial

Those stuck in Sumy, too, face a similar situation. The border to the east is 60 km away, but it is not safe for to venture out of their shelters until the guns fall silent at least for some time. Already, one Indian student has lost his life and another has been injured, and the government does not want to take any chances with the 700-odd Indians who remain in the war zone

Officials said a team from the Indian embassy is stationed in Poltava city in central Ukraine to coordinate the safe passage of Indian students stranded in Sumy to Western borders via Poltava. The Indian students have been asked to be ready to leave at short notice.

Some 21,000 Indians have come out of Ukraine since the last week of January; about 16,000 of them have been evacuated on flights organised by the government under Operation Ganga. Partha Satpathy, India's ambassador to Ukraine, posted on Twitter that the government would leave "no stone unturned" to ensure the safe evacuation of students from Sumv.

A VAJIRAM & RAVI Strengthen your Main Exam Preparation with our Online & Offline Courses

DASHBOARD, AS ON MARCH 5

TRACKING INDIA'S COVID CURVE

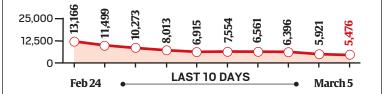
New cases

Active cases

Deaths

Weekly CFR: 0.69% | Overall CFR: 1.20% | Total deaths: 5,15,036

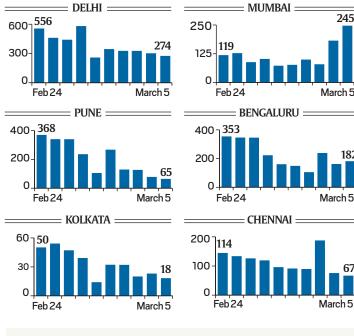
NEW CASES, DAILY



SURGE IN THE STATES

State		Weekly		
	New cases	Active cases	Deaths	positivity
Kerala	1,836	16,637	124	6.65%
Mizoram	568	4,615	1	21.26%
Maharashtra	535	4,038	10	0.84%
Karnataka	278	3,324	3	0.62%
Raiasthan	278	2.940	2	1.47%

Cases in the cities, last 10 days





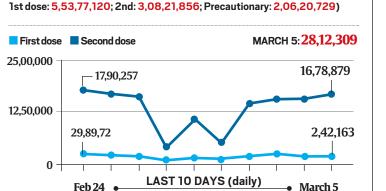
INDIA TOTAL DOSES

9,09,985

178,83,79,249

5.56%

(Adults 1st dose: 91,02,71,445; 2nd: 77,12,88,099; 15-18 age group



How many tigers are too many

Reports suggest the Sunderbans' tiger population is pushing the reserve's carrying capacity. The optimal number of tigers in a forest is determined by physical and biological factors, and perceptions of conflict.

A Sunderban tiger. NTCA/WII

JAY MAZOOMDAAR

NEW DELHI, MARCH 6

PRELIMINARY FINDINGS of a study by the Wildlife Institute of India (WII) suggest that the density of tigers in the Sunderbans may have reached the carrying capacity of the mangrove forests, leading to frequent dispersals and a surge in human-wildlife conflict.

Prey, eat, breed

Availability of food and space is the primary factor that determines how many tigers a forest can hold. And often, food is space for the tiger.

While they are known to establish vast ranges - the male in particular strives to control multiple females with typically smaller ranges - how far a tiger will range is determined by the abundance of prey in its forest.

In the Terai and Shivalik hills habitat think Corbett tiger reserve, for example -10-16 tigers can survive in 100 sq km. This slides to 7-11 tigers per 100 sq km in the reserves of north-central Western Ghats such as Bandipur, and to 6-10 tigers per 100 sq km in the dry deciduous forests, such as Kanha, of central India.

The correlation between prey availability and tiger density is fairly established. There is even a simple linear regression explaining the relationship in the 2018 All-India Tiger report that put the carrying capacity in the Sunderbans "at around 4 tigers" per 100 sq km.

A joint Indo-Bangla study in 2015 pegged the tiger density at 2.85 per 100 sq km after surveying eight blocks spanning 2,913 sq km across the international borders in the Sunderbans. "Low density of tigers in the Sundarbans is an inherent attribute of the hostile mangrove habitat that supports low tiger prev densities," it said.

The ongoing WII study indicates a density of 3-5 tigers in the Sunderbans. Given that 88 (86-90) tigers were estimated in 2,313 sq km of the Sundarbans in 2018, the population has been close to its so-called saturation point in the mangrove delta for some time.

Conflict: cause or effect

The consequence, as classical theories go, is frequent dispersal of tigers leading to higher levels of human-wildlife conflict in the reserve peripheries. But, experts say, carrying capacity and conflict may also pose a chicken-and-egg conundrum.

While physical (space) and biological (forest productivity) factors have an obvious influence on a reserve's carrying capacity of tigers,

Source: NTCA/WII what also plays a crucial role is how the dis-

While this not-so-discussed social carrying capacity assumes wider significance for wildlife living outside protected forests, it is an equally important factor in human-dominated areas bordering reserves where peri-

odic human-wildlife interface is inevitable.

More so when different land uses overlap

and a good number of people depend on forest resources for livelihood. Imagine a 1,000 sq ft terrace apartment. In theory, it can accommodate, say, 20 people at 50 sq ft per person. Put in place some furniture — think roads, traffic, encroachment and that capacity will fall. It will slide further if no one is allowed to step out in the common terrace where they are targeted by hostile

That's how potential carry capacity may shrink in a reserve. Perceived conflict can squeeze the tiger's domain, which the animal is bound to overstep from time to time, leading to further conflict with no immediate winners.

neighbours who consider them a threat.

The way ahead

Artificially boosting the prey base in a re-

persal of wildlife is tolerated by people – from be counter-productive. While tackling exter- the local perception of animals. It ranges the locals who live around them to policymak- nal factors, such as bushmeat hunting, is nec- from minding one's own business based on essary to ease pressure on the tiger, the government's policies have discouraged reserve managers from striving to increase tiger densities by artificial management practices of habitat manipulation or prey augmentation.

To harness the umbrella effect of tigers for biodiversity conservation, experts say, it is more beneficial to increase areas occupied by tigers. For many, the prescription is to create safe connectivity among forests and allow tigers to disperse safely to new areas. But though vital for genes to travel and avoid a population bottleneck, wildlife corridors may not be the one-stop solution for conflict.

First, not all dispersing tigers will chance upon corridors simply because many will find territories of other tigers between them and such openings. Even the lucky few that may take those routes are likely to wander to the forest edges along the way. Worse, the corridors may not lead to viable forests in reserves such as Sunderbans, bounded by the sea and villages.

Little choice

While it has never been easy to share space with wildlife, particularly carnivores,

the assurance gathered over generations that, left alone, animals rarely pose physical danger, to mobilising demand for removal

However, as several studies have shown, removing tigers or any wildlife cannot eliminate the chances of future interface as another lot invariably turns up. The remedy, experts say, lies in smarter land use to minimise damage and adequate incentives to promote acceptance of wildlife.

Ĝenerous compensation policies can take care of the financial cost of losing livestock or crops, or wasted man hours when a workplace is avoided due to a passing tiger. Besides, the percolation of financial benefits of having charismatic wildlife in the neighbourhood can also nudge some towards better tolerance.

Ultimately, it is the people of the Sunderbans who will decide how many tigers can be accommodated in their neighbourhood. In a landscape squeezed in by climate change, rising sea level and salinity, their future is nearly as precarious as the tiger's. It is for the policymakers to give them enough reasons to make a balanced choice.

Russia's ally Belarus and its role in Ukraine war

SONAL GUPTA NEW DELHI, MARCH 6

A NUMBER of Western countries have slapped sanctions on Belarus, a long-time ally of Russia, for its role in the latter's war on Ukraine. Belarus has already been facing restrictions from the West since its President, Alexander Lukashenko cracked down on protesters following his re-election in 2020.

The Belarus-Ukraine border has been the site of two rounds of talks between Russia and Ukraine so far. Initially, Ukraine had refused to hold talks in Minsk, but later agreed. Historically, too, Belarus has been the site of negotiations between Russia and Ukraine. Two sets of agreements were signed in the Belarusian capital of Minsk in 2014 and 2015 to end the conflict in eastern Ukraine.

Belarus in the war

While Lukashenko has denied that his country would be joining the war, it has already allowed Russian troops to use its territory for the invasion. CCTV footage has shown tanks with Russian markings crossing the border over to Ukraine on the day of the invasion.

Prior to the invasion, the United States had for months raised concerns over 30,000 Russian troops, fighter jets and defence missile systems being stationed in Belarus on the pretext of a military exercise. Last week, a top US official told The Washington Post that Belarus was preparing to send its soldiers to support Russia's invasion into Ukraine. The official handle of Defence of Ukraine, in fact, has tweeted that it has shot down a missile fired from Belarusian soil.

On February 27, a constitutional referendum in Belarus allowed the country to scrap its non-nuclear status, paving the way for Russia to potentially station its nuclear weapons on its territory. The Associated Press quoted Lukashenko as saying that if NATO and its allies deploy nuclear arms in its neighbouring countries, then Belarus has "agreed with Putin to deploy such weapons here that will make Poles and Lithuanians lose any desire to go to war".

Lukashenko and Putin

Lukashenko was elected President in 1994, shortly after the fall of the Soviet Union. In 2020, he declared victory for the sixth time, leading an uprising against the electoral process widely seen as rigged. Violent clashes broke out between citizens and the police. and over 30,000 were detained. Putin supplied Lukashenko with a loan of \$1.5 billion and offered to send in Russian troops to contain the protests.

Citing human rights violations and fraudulent elections, the European Union, the United Kingdom, the United States and other countries have over the years imposed restrictions such as travel bans and frozen the assets of individuals and entities from Belarus, including of Lukashenko and his son Viktor. Restrictions were also imposed on trade of petroleum products and potash - of

which Belarus was the second-largest exporter in 2020, according to figures shared by the Canadian government.

Moscow values its alliance with Belarus as it forms a strategic land between Russia and the NATO-aligned Lithuania, Poland and Latvia. On the other hand, Belarus needs the alliance with Russia after it was effectively cut off by the West. Last November, Minsk and Moscow signed off on 28 programmes under a pact called the Union State to align $on \, matters \, relating \, to \, taxes, \, business, energy, \,$ and agriculture.

Russia is Belarus's largest trading partner. In 2020, according to IMF data, Belarus exported over \$13,000 million worth of goods to Russia, and imported goods worth \$16,500 million, followed by imports from China

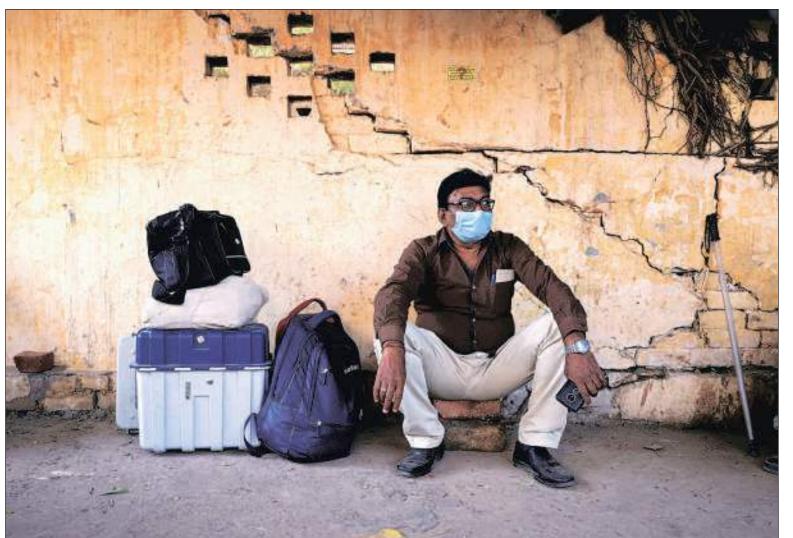
worth over \$3,700 million. Apart from this, Belarus also enjoys subsidies on oil and gas from Russia. In 2020, Reuters reported that Belarus owed Russia \$7.9 billion, accounting for 12-13% of its GDP at the time.







UTTAR PRADESH • UTTARAKHAND • PUNJAB • GOA •



LAST ROUND

A polling officer after collecting an EVM from a distribution centre in Varanasi on Sunday, a day ahead of the last phase of elections in UP. Reuters

I Hereby -DECLARE

ANIL KUMAR YADAV CONG CANDIDATE FROM NIZAMABAD

TOTAL ASSETS ₹1.74 lakh

(A7AMGARH)

MOVABLE ASSETS Self: ₹1.74 lakh IMMOVABLE ASSETS

LOANS FROM BANKS AND OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

CRIMINAL CASE

PROFESSION: Social worker EDUCATION: MA in Medieval

DURGA PRASAD YADAV

SP CANDIDATE FROM AZAMGARH **TOTAL ASSETS**

₹22.38 crore **MOVABLE ASSETS**

Self: ₹50.04 lakh (includes a pistol and a

Wife: ₹83.67 lakh **IMMOVABLE ASSETS** Self: ₹12.64 crore Wife: ₹8.41 crore

LOANS FROM BANKS AND OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS Couple (joint account): ₹37.45 lakh

CRIMINAL CASES

SOURCES OF EARNING Self: MLA salary, agriculture

Wife: Agriculture EDUCATION: LLB (1991)

VOTING FOR THE FINAL PHASE TODAY

On test today: Modi magic in Varanasi and Akhilesh charisma in Azamgarh

Small parties in big race; 54 constituencies in nine districts go to the polls

LALMANI VERMA LUCKNOW, MARCH 6

WITH 54 constituencies, spread across nine districts, going to polls on Monday in the seventh and final phase of the Uttar Pradesh Assembly elections, all eyes will be on BJP's performance in Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Lok Sabha constituency Varanasi. Samajwadi Party's show of strength in Azamgarh, from where Akhilesh Yadav was elected to Parliament in the 2019 general elections, will be on test, too.

Also, the impact of the smaller allies of the BJP and SP such as Apna Dal (S), NISHAD Party, SBSP and Apna Dal (K) in determining the electoral fate of their respective big partners will be gauged in this

In the 2017 Assembly elections, BIP had won 29 of the 54 seats, while its allies Apna Dal(S) and OP Rajbhar's Suheldeo Bharatiya Samaj Party (SBSP) bagged seven. The SP, on the other hand, had won 11 seats, BSP six and the NISHAD party one seat. Notably, in this election, the SBSP is with the SP, and the NISHAD Party with the BJP.

In the 2012 Assembly elections, when Samajwadi Party came to power, most of the seats in this southeast UP region were won by it -34. BSP had then won 7, BJP only 4, Congress 3, Quami Ekta Dal (QED) two, Independents three, and Apna Dal one seat.

Besides Varanasi and Azamgarh, the seven districts that will vote on Monday are Bhadohi, Chandauli, Ghazipur, Jaunpur, Mau, Mirzapur, and Sonbhadra.

In this phase, there are 2.06 crore eligible voters who will decide the fate of 613 candidates, including 75 women candidates.

For BJP, the litmus test of its popularity will be the three urban seats of Varanasi Varanasi South, Varanasi North and Varanasi Cantonment.

While they are considered safe seats for the party as it has never lost the election in these three seats in the past several elections, reports of strong anti-incumbency against the sitting MLAs in Varanasi South and Varanasi North made the BJP jittery, thereby forcing the party and RSS to lend their full strength in the campaign. Modi himself led a roadshow in Varanasi on Friday that criss-crossed through these three con-

stituencies. In nearby Azamgarh district, where the SP had won nine of the 10 seats in 2012, but managed to win only five in 2017, Monday's vote will test SP chief Akhilesh Yadav's influence in the district where Yadav and Muslim votes determine the outcome.

The prestige of two Union ministers — Mahendra Nath Pandey and Anupriya Patel is also at stake in their respective Lok Sabha constituencies of Chandauli and Mirzapur.

Anupriya Patel, the president of Apna Dal (Sonelal) faction which is a junior partner of the BJP, has to consolidate Patel or Kurmi-OBC voters behind the BJP. Her mother Krishna Patel, who runs another faction of the party -Apna Dal (Kamerawadi) – has forged an alliance with the SP and has fielded its candidates on three seats in this

president Om Prakash Rajbhar who had won his first election in 2017 from Zahoorabad in alliance with BJP, is seeking re-election from the same seat, but this time in alliance with the

Samajwadi Party. Rajbhar was a minister in the Yogi Adityanath government before snapping the ties with the BJP in the run-up to the 2019 Lok Sabha elections. His son, Arvind Rajbhar, is contesting from Shivpur in Varanasi district. The BJP has fielded candidates from the Rajbhar community against both the father and son.

Jailed MLA Mukhtar Ansari's son, Abbas Ansari, is contesting from his father's constituency Mau as an SBSP

Among the SP's allies, SBSP is contesting on six seats and Apna Dal (Kamerawadi) on

NISHAD Party, an ally of the BJP, has fielded candidates on four seats, while Apna Dal(S) in three.

DUDDHI & OBRA

In UP's only 2 ST seats, anger over stalled projects, drinking water

MAULSHREE SETH

LUCKNOW, MARCH 6

DUDDHI AND Obra, the only two Assembly constituencies reserved for Scheduled Tribes in Uttar Pradesh, seem stuck in a time warp. The two seats in backward Sonbhadra district go to the polls on Monday — the last day of polling in the state - with the all-too-familiar issues of rotikapda-makaan, besides clean drinking water, as their basic demands.

The four seats of the Naxalhit tribal belt (besides Duddhi and Obra, Robertsganj and Ghorawal), which share their boundaries with Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand and Madhya Pradesh, also have unemployment as a major issue. In 2017. the BJP won three out of four seats in this tribal belt, while its alliance partner, the Apna Dal(S), won one (Duddhi).

While the BIP is banking on the projects that it inaugurated in the past five years — a medical college, housing schemes, a project to provide clean drinking water – resentment has been building up since most of these schemes are yet to get off the

Proprietor / Guarantor & Address

ANANDATIKADAR

P.O. Rasakhowa, Dist. Uttar Dinajpur, PIN-733212

Rasakhowa, Uttar Dinajpur, PIN-733212, PIN-733212

P.S. Chakulia, Dist. Uttar Dinajpur, PIN-733209

Chakulia, Dist. Uttar Dinajpur, PIN-733209

Chakulia, Dist. Uttar Dinajpur, PIN-733209,

Chakulia, Dist. Uttar Dinajpur, PIN-733209

Borrower/Proprietor:

Proprietor:

Guarantors:

M/S LUDHIYANA LOVELY FASHION

Unit: Sajjad Alam, S/O MD Yasin, Vill. & P.O. Nizampur

1.Sajjad Alam, S/O MD Yasin, Vill. & P.O. Nizampur, P.S.

1. Anjar Alam, S/O MD Yasin, Vill. & P.O. Nizampur, P.S.

2. Naurej Alam, S/O MD Yasin, Vill. & P.O. Nizampur, P.S.

Chakulia, Dist. Uttar Dinajpur, PIN-733209

3. Azad Alam, S/O MD Yasin, Vill. & P.O. Nizampur, P.S.

Chakulia, Dist. Uttar Dinajpur, PIN-733209 4. Parvez Alam, S/O MD Yasin, Vill. & P.O. Nizampur, P.S.

Subin Karmakar, S/O Rabin Karmakar, Vill. & P.O.

Rasakhowa, Dist. Uttar Dinajpur, PIN-733212

3. Sagar Swarnakar, S/O Sushil Swarnakar, Vill. & P.O.

BANGIYA GRAMIN VIKASH BANK

(1)

Sonbhadra district Son ₁river Obra Duddhi

DUDDHI 2017 POLLS

Winner: Hariram, Apna Dal(S); 64,399 votes and 34.24% vote share

Runner-up: Vijay Singh Gond, BSP; 63,314 votes and 33% vote share 2017

Winner: Sanjiv Kumar M, BJP; 78,058 votes, 49.24% vote share Runner-up: Ravi Gond,

SP, 33,789 votes, 21.31%

while, is banking on its established tribal leaders in a region where land is the main currency

Uttar Dinajpur Regional Office

All that part and parcel of the property i) 13-04-2021

733212, (Guarantor) contained in the deed

Alam, Anjar Alam, Naurej Alam & Parve

Alam, S/O MD Yasin, Vill. & P.O. Nizampu

P.S. Chakulia, Dist. Uttar Dinajpur, PIN-

733209. (Borrower-proprietor & Guarantors)

contained in the deed no. I 1820 of 1999

All that part and parcel of the property i) 29-06-2021

consisting of Land and Building at Mouza: ii) 04-03-2022

Nizampur, JL No: 25, Khatian No: LR- iii) Rs.22,12,271.00 (Rupees

377,LR-2717,2718,2719,2720,2721, Plot Twenty-Two Lakh Twelve

No:RS-1611, LR-2063 ,Area: 0.13 acre Thousand Two Hundred Seventy classified as BASTU at Vill. & P.O. Nizampur, One) only along with unbooked

P.S. Chakulia, Dist. Uttar Dinajpur, PIN- interest and incidental charges

733209 in the name of Sajjad Alam, Azad costs etc w.e.f. 28.06.2021

2015, over the Kanhar irrigation project, and in 2019, when 10 tribals were killed in

In the current Assembly, Duddhi is represented by BJP ally Apna Dal(S) MLA Hariram. But this election, the BJP has decided to contest the seat on its own and has chosen Ram Dular, a tribal

A miffed Hariram has switched sides and is now the BSP candidate, but locals say much of the anger over unfulfilled promises is directed at Hariram and therefore, the fight could be between Ram Dular and SP's Vijay Singh. In the 2017 election, about 8,500 people of this constituency had chosen the NOTA option.

Vijay Singh is a seven-time MLA and a former minister who has won from the seat both on Congress and SP tickets. His supporters have been assuring voters that the Gond leader will get a space in the Cabinet if the party is voted to power. Singh had contested the 2017 election as a BSP can-

The Congress has fielded a woman candidate, Basanti

POSSESSION

and which has in the past seen **FULL REPORTON** The Samajwadi Party, meanclashes over land rights - in www.indianexpress.com

vote share

Raiganj-Kaliaganj Road, Sudarshanpur, P.O. Raiganj Dist.: Uttar Dinajpur, Pin-733134 Whereas the undersigned being the authorised officer of the Bangiya Gramin Vikash Bank under Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and

Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in the exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(12) read with rule 9 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued Demand Notice on the date mentioned against calling upon the borrower / guarantors to repay the amount mentioned in the notice within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice. The borrower having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower and the public in general that the Authorised Officer has taken

possession of the properties described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/her under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with rule 9 on the dates The borrower in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the

charge of Bangiya Gramin Vikash Bank for the amounts and interest and charges thereon

Suryapur bmsyp@bgvbank.co.in	Borrower/Proprietor: Unit: Ananda Tikadar, S/O Ashutosh Tikadar, Vill. Jhitkia, P.O. S B Toli, Surjapur, P.S. Chakulia, Dist. Uttar Dinajpur, PIN-733209 Guarantors: 1.Sanjay Kumar Das, S/O Sunil Kumar Das, Vill. Jhitkia, P.O. S B Toli, Surjapur, P.S. Chakulia, Dist. Uttar Dinajpur, PIN-733209 2. Basudeb Mondal, S/O Late Mukunda Mondal, Vill. Jhitkia, P.O. S B Toli, Surjapur, P.S. Chakulia, Dist. Uttar Dinajpur, PIN-733209.	S/O Ashutosh Tikadar, Vill. Jhitkia, P.O. S B Toli, Surjapur, P.S. Chakulia, Dist. Uttar Dinajpur, PIN-733209, (Borrower) contained in the deed no I 6815 of 2013 2) Mouza: Konal, JL No: 92, Khatian No:RS-112(old) LR-869(new), Plot No:LR-195, Area: 0.06 acre classified as BASTU at Jhitkia, P.O. S B Toli, Surjapur, P.S. Chakulia, Dist. Uttar Dinajpur in the name of Ananda Tikadar, S/O Ashutosh Tikadar, Vill. Jhitkia, P.O. S B Toli, Surjapur, P.S. Chakulia, Dist. Uttar Dinajpur, PIN-733209, (Borrower) contained in the deed no I 378 of 2014	iii) Rs.17,34,452.60 (Rupees seventeen lakh thirty-four thousand four hundred fifty-two and paise sixty) only along with unbooked interest and incidental charges, costs etc. w.e.f 25.03.2021.
(2) Rasakhowa bmrkh@bgvbank.co.in	DAS MOBILE CENTRE Borrower/Proprietor: Unit: Kankan Das, Vill. & P.O. Rasakhowa, Dist. Uttar Dinajpur, PIN-733212 Proprietor: 1. Kankan Das, S/O Late Subhas Chandra Das, Vill. & P.O. Rasakhowa, Dist. Uttar Dinajpur, PIN-733212 Guarantors: 1. Manoj Choudhury, S/O Nikhil Chowdhury, Vill. Hospitalpara, P.O. Rasakhowa, Dist. Uttar Dinajpur, PIN-733212, 2 Bappaditya Kundu, S/O Sushil Kundu, Vill. Hospitalpara, P.O. Rasakhowa, Dist. Uttar Dinajpur, PIN-733212	1369, Area: 0.10 acre classified as BASTU	ii) 04-03-2022 iii) Rs.13,29,637.80 (Rupees Thirteen Lakh Twenty-Nine Thousand Six Hundred Thirty- Seven And Paise Eighty) only along with unbooked interest and incidental charges, costs etc
(3) Rasakhowa bmrkh@bgvbank.co.in	M/S GUPTASTORES Borrower/Proprietor: Unit: Rajesh Gupta, S/O Manik Gupta, Vill. & P.O. Rasakhowa, P.S. Karandighi, Dist. Uttar Dinajpur, PIN-733212 Proprietor: 1. Rajesh Gupta, S/O Manik Gupta, Vill. & P.O. Rasakhowa, P.S. Karandighi, Dist. Uttar Dinajpur, PIN-733212 Guarantors: 1. Reena Gupta, W/O Sri Rajesh Gupta, Rudel Debnathpara, P.O. Rasakhowa Dist Uttar Dinajpur, PIN-733212	All that part and parcel of the property consisting of Land and Building at Mouza: Rudel, JL No: 102, Khatian No: RS-59, LR-221, LR-1181,LR-1340, Plot No:RS-294, LR-319, LR-317, Area: 0.09 acre classified as BASTU at Vill. & P.O. Rudel Debnathpara, P.S. Karandighi, Dist. Uttar Dinajpur, PIN 733212 in the name of Reena Gupta, W/O Sri Rajesh Gupta, Rudel Debnathpara, P.O. Rasakhowa, Dist. Uttar Dinajpur, PIN-	ii) 04-03-2022 iii) Rs.19,91,389.43 (Rupees Nineteen Lakh Ninety-one Thousand Three Hundred Eighty- Nine and Paise forty-three) only along with unbooked interest and incidental charges, costs etc



JODHPUR PARK BRANCH

A/419A, Gariahat Road (South), Kolkata-700068 e-mail: jodcal@bankofbaroda.com

E-AUCTION SALE NOTICE

SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES

"APPENDIX- IV-A [See proviso to Rule 6 (2) & 8 (6)] E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act,

2002 read with proviso to Rule 6 (2) & 8 (6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002. Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower (s) and Guarantor (s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor, possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of Bank of Baroda, Secured Creditor, will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is", and "Whatever there is" for recovery of below mentioned account/s. The details of Borrower/s/Guarantor/s/Secured Asset/s/Dues/Reserve Price/e-Auction date & Time, EMD

anu	and bid increase Amount are mentioned below -						
Sr/	Name & address of	Detailed description of		Date & Time	Reserve Price	Statusof Possession	Property
Lot		the immovable property with	Total Dues.	of	EMD amount	(Constructive	Inspection
No.	Mortgagor (s)	known encumbrances, if any		E-auction	Bid Increase Amount	/Physical)	date & Time
1	Mr Tarok Seal (Borrower),	All that piece and parcel of one self contained	Rs 22,13,591.61/-	24.03.2022	Rs.19,70,395/-	Physical	Any Working
	33 Nabanagar Jadavpur	flat no 2 oh the Ground Floor North South Side	(Outstanding in account	from			Day with
	Kolkata 700032	measuring area 772 sqft super built up	Rs. 1,707,316.00/- +	2 p.m to	Rs.1,97,030/-		prior
	Tronda 70002	comprise bastu land measuring 3 cottahs 15	Uncharged Interest Rs	6 p.m			appointment
		chittaks 30 sqft more or less situated at	401,333.55+ Unserviced		Rs.10,000/-		(10.00 AM to
		Mouza–Jadavpur, J L No. 35 Part of C S Dag	Interest Rs 36,909.06 +				03.00 PM)
		No 94, C S Khatian No 46 Ward No 96	legal charges				
		Kolkata 700032, in the District South 24	Rs. 68,031/-).				
		Parganas					

For detailed terms and conditions of sale, please refer to the link provided in https://www.bankofbaroda.in/e-auction.htm and https://ibapi.in. Also, prospective bidders may

Date: 07.03.2022, Place :- Kolkata Bank of Baroda

Place: Sudarshanpur, Uttar Dinajpur

Kanki

bmkki@bgvbank.co.in

Authorised Officer, Bangiya Gramin Vikash Bank Uttar Dinajpur Regional Office, Sudarshanpur, Uttar Dinajpur

10 IDEA EXCHANGE NEWSMAKERS IN THE NEWSROOM

Anyone can see that there is Russian aggression on a neighbour, which is a democratically elected government, is a member of the United Nations, and is not a small country. We are still in shock

Shubhajit Roy: Did the Russian aggression against Ukraine come as a surprise to Germany?

It came as a surprise to many of us. Nobody would have thought that President Vladimir Putin would brutally attack his neighbours. Let's call a spade a spade, he lied to everyone. First they said, "We will build up troops of 50,000 (soldiers) around Ukraine. Don't worry, nobody wants to invade, this is just for manoeuvre reasons." Then he said, our troops are there as peacekeepers. A peacekeeper doesn't bring bombs and doesn't shell civilian houses. They bring, not water and not food, but death and destruction. The latest lies are about blaming the victims, that they are the ones who have taken hostages. Anyone can see that there is Russian aggression on a neighbour, which has a democratically elected government and parliament, is a member of the United Nations, and is not a small country; it has 40-plus million people. We are still in shock. Who would have expected this from a leader of a global power?

Shubhajit Roy: What is Germany's assessment of why Putin is doing this?

Germany and Russia have a very strong relationship. Without Mikhail Gorbachev there wouldn't be a reunited Germany. And what's happening with Putin now, the war of Putin, I have no idea.

Shubhajit Roy: Do you think Germany is so overly dependent on Russia for its energy needs that it had tied Germany's hands in the past.

It is true that we import a lot of our energy from the Russians. But I don't think this has had too much influence on our political decisions. Since the Crimean occupation (in 2014), we have reduced our imports from Russia. We will be reducing it more. We also have to reduce the influx from Russia. Being the economic powerhouse in Europe, the sanctions from the German side are very drastic. We have put a freeze on the pipeline

 Nord Stream. We have decided to increase our military budget and export weapons. We have never exported weapons into zones of tension. We have said this in the United Nations and in the German parliament. Democracy has its price and we are willing to pay it. Which means that inflation might go up, prices might go up. You can't get freedom and democracy for nothing. We have lived in a peaceful time for 70 years. Two to three generations have taken things for granted and Putin has made us open our eyes, and to keep that peace, there might be a price.

Shubhajit Roy: There's also India's dependence on Russia for its defence needs. Could India have done something different?

I'm a German ambassador here so I'm not the one who gives unwanted advice. Every country has a different history and different dependencies on neighbours. India has brilliant diplomacy, excellent diplomats. I was in New York for three years and some of the best and skillful diplomats were Indians. They know what to do and how to judge this. But I'm sure everyone in the world agrees that we cannot have the law of the jungle prevailing.

Krishn Kaushik: Do you think Russia's concerns of the eastward expansion of NATO is legitimate?

I don't want to go into a historic evaluation of who said what after the reunification of Germany. The fact is that NATO is a defence alliance. It's not threatening anyone. And what happened after the (Berlin) Wall came down is that those countries who became independent, and were previously with the Soviet, had their own choices to see to which alliances they belong to. These countries opted for being members of the NATO and European Union; with Georgia and Ukraine, it was a bit different, because they were still having border disputes. So, it was never on the actual agenda to make them members of NATO. The discussion was not even on the table. To justify this kind of breach of international order, you need a fake narrative. So, they're kind of bending history. And in this fast-living world, all these fake narratives have the tendency to prevail and influence people. If we let this happen, we all suffer.

Krishn Kaushik: Are we moving towards a more militarised world?

I grew up in a left-wing environment. We were protesting against the Vietnam War – make love, not war. Weapons are not a good thing. The world has to be a better place and fewer arms would be better than more arms because there are



Germany is one of Russia's closest partners in Europe and has deep historical, political and economic ties. With Russia's aggression against Ukraine, Germany, which is dependent on Russia for its energy needs, has decided to reverse its seven-decade long policy of not supplying arms to conflict zones. Under new German Chancellor Olaf

Scholz, this reversal is seen as a watershed moment. German ambassador Walter J Lindner, who has been in India since 2019, has engaged with G-7 and EU ambassadors over the last few weeks to convey their position to New Delhi. As a veteran diplomat, he is perfectly placed to put forth the German and European view on the crisis.



Putin is acting as an autocratic person. That's why democracies around the world have to speak with one voice. The additional danger is that this will set a precedent and we will have the law of the jungle in international relations

'Putin has made us open our eyes, that to keep peace, there might be a price'

Walter J Lindner talks about the Russian aggression on Ukraine, Germany's lessons from history, putting pressure on Putin and the role of civil society. He was in conversation with Shubhajit Roy, Deputy Chief of National Bureau, The Indian Express



Walter | Lindner, German Ambassador to India, in conversation with Shubhajit Roy, Deputy Chief of National Bureau, The Indian Express Abhinav Saha

so many challenges. You have climate change, overpopulation, poverty reduction, there are so many things to do. We need money for this. So, what do we do? We have to spend more money for the military which instead should be spent for poverty reduction or on infrastructure. But Putin forces things on us. And that's another thing which I don't accept because he changed the world.

Shubhajit Roy: Moscow's policies are very clear, where it allows it to use nukes to end conflict. Where do you think this is going?

So far, there was a kind of a taboo to threaten countries which are not in possession of nuclear weapons with nuclear weapons. We know what the repercussions of world wars have been. A third world war will be the end of us all. It's irresponsible behaviour to threaten a nuclear world war which will end the planet. Who is he to do this?

Shubhajit Roy: As a diplomat, what do you think it will take for a ceasefire to come in place?

This is a lesson which we have learned in Germany, living on the edge of the Cold War with the Berlin Wall. In Berlin, where I live, there are still reminders of the Berlin Wall as a remembrance for our future generation. We have to always keep channels of communication open. We have called it the Ostpolitik, which led to the disappearance of the Wall. Negotiated ceasefire would be the just thing to do, of course. But let's not comment from the outside. The Ukrainians are under threat of death and life and have to do this negotiation.

Liz Mathew: Do you think other countries should also change the contours and terms of diplomatic relations with countries in the new

world order? Shall we already call this a new world order? Shall we give Putin the right to define a new world order? Will a new world order be defined just by Putin and no one else? I think it's important that the whole world says 'no' to Putin, with one voice, I think that's a common understanding which we want to achieve in the world. I've talked to people who were in the UN meetings. Except a few of the diehards, like North Korea or Syria or Belarus, nobody is defending this. Sanctions are working already. Let's hope that this contributes to changing Putin's mind.

Shahid Judge: Is this going to test the heft the West has in international politics and economy.

I wouldn't say this is a test for the West; it's a test for the world. I don't want to see it as a confrontation between East, West, North, South. No, it's not. It's between Putin and most of the rest of the world, except those five countries, maybe. If you see the situation in the voting patterns in the Security Council, the Russians were the only ones with a veto against their own condemnation. And they had the presidency of the Security Council. By the way, it shows how outdated the Security Council is, it doesn't reflect the realities of today. So that's why they had to move this from the Security Council to the General Assembly. If you see, there were 141 (countries condemning Russia). That is big in historical terms.

Sourav Roy Barman: What explains the difference in reaction of European nations to refugees from Ukraine, who are being welcomed, and those in 2015 from Syria and Afghanistan?

I wouldn't share the view that this is a similar situation like 2015. What we have now is the aggression of one country towards another country, which is a democratically elected country. The United Nations Refugee Coordinator is expecting millions of people to flee from Ukraine. So that would be a massive movement. That's why the European countries are saying, okay, you can come from Ukraine and even choose where you want to go in Europe, there will be no visa issue. It's our answer to this brutal violation of norms. Our answer is: We are human, we take them in and we support them. Look at the support activities everywhere in Europe. Civilian groups, civil society, are collecting stuff, so are students in universities, wherever you go, football clubs, similar. They're all supporting the freedom and independence of Ukraine. Maybe that's why it's not really comparable to what happened with the refugees who were running away from Iraq or Syria.

Harikishan Sharma: Like Putin, there are strong leaders in other parts of the world. Do you think that they can

also commit such mistakes?

Putin here is acting as an authoritarian, autocratic person. So, you're right, this might be a stimulus for others. That's the additional danger, that this will set a precedent and then we will have the law of the jungle in international relations and nobody will win from that

Anil Sasi: How much of a surprise was the Sunday (February 27) Reichstag session? Was it expected that the action would be as severe (against Russia) on weaponisation, the energy aspect and the sanctions?

Honest answer, I didn't expect it and many didn't expect it, because it's a watershed. For Germany, it was maybe the biggest leap, because it is the European powerhouse and the financial and economic sanctions we are talking about would, of course, only make sense if Germany goes along. I think it was the call of the hour of our historic responsibility to make this leap. And we did in the face of the threat, which came there, and it shows the seriousness of this threat. And when he (Chancellor Olaf Scholz) presented this package of our reaction, there was a standing ovation afterwards, from left to right.

Raj Kamal Jha: Why is Putin using the term 'de-Nazification'?

He draws on anything. What better use of the word 'denazification' because then everyone remembers World War II. He said denazification and demilitarisation. There are no NATO troops, there are just Ukrainian people there. You can see they're going there with self-made Molotov cocktails and with lots of kitchen material on the streets. Where is the denazification? This is a part of the narrative he does and you see how often he has to repeat it. There are a lot of people in Russia, a vast majority, who are not feeling well with this, they might be ashamed of the President. People are go-

Every country has a different history and neighbours. India has ing on the street in Petersburg, in other places. If you go out there, the next thing that happens is that you go to jail. Still, they go out, and still there are journalists who write about it. There is a brave civil society still out there.

Shubhaiit Row With Russian dependence on China for its economy, do you think there is a great amount of leverage that China has?

Every country must see what kind of means they have to change Putin's course. Every country has different kinds of history, relations, and dependencies with Russia. Every country should use its influence. Your Prime Minister has already talked to Putin several times But you asked the question whether Putin first consulted China or not. I don't know. You have to ask him. What let him do that and who said to him, "yes, we agree" or not, I don't know. This is a speculation. It's Putin's war so he's responsi-

Krishn Kaushik: What are the red lines for NATO?

An attack on NATO territory is a redline, it's in the NATO Treaty. And Ukraine is not a NATO territory.

Divya A: Will the relation between the people of Ukraine and Russia change with this situation?

If you know the history of Russia, there is Belarus, Ukraine and Russia. So, they're brothers. I'm sure that's what you see sometimes on the streets. There is no problem between the people. But it will of course, change their attitude towards Putin and his regime.

Shubhajit Roy: When chancellor Angela Merkel was around for more than 16 years, there was a great deal of stability. Now, we have the new Chancellor Olaf Scholz. Does the country feel the absence of Merkel?

Merkel left huge shoes to fill. But it would be unfair to expect from a new chancellor to have 16 years of experience But he has been mayor in Hamburg and vice-chancellor and is an old hand. The way they are dealing with this crisis and how they reshaped German foreign politics, I think, has been pretty good.

Raj Kamal Jha: You talked about the history between Germany and Russia. **Chancellor Merkel had strong** ties...Can there be a backchannel...you make it seem Moscow revolves around one man.

As we see the reactions of the nomenklatura in the Kremlin, they're very focused on one person, it is pretty clear who calls the shots. The matter of the game is how do we make Putin stop. Through these diplomatic channels? If possible, ves. Whoever has an influence should do it. Or through social media, or through contradicting their false narratives, or through civil societies and sanctions.

Whatever it takes, it's necessary right now. By the way, you didn't bring up the question of any kind of mistreatment of refugees, who have a different skin colour? I say that for the reason that it could be fake news, it could be a kind of a narrative. But there could also be cases like these. Our foreign minister said in the General Assembly, "If there are cases like these, we take them very seriously." And we take them up with Ukrainians and the Ukranians have also said if there are such cases, we are taking them up. This is the difference between a democracy and an authoritarian regime like Russia. We are not putting this under the carpet. All the information we get, we take them seriously, and we try to find out what's

Shubhajit Roy: Germany has had relatively stable periods under long chancellor-ships. How do you see the trajectory of German politics ahead?

There was always a kind of a lowerintensity crisis like the Brexit, refugee crisis, and the economic breakdown, the bubble which burst, and then, you had Afghanistan. These days, I think being in politics means crisis management, wherever you are. I think that the result of our elections last year also reflects the situation in the world, which at that time, without Putin, was more focused on climate change. That's why the Green Party did very well. And that's why we have this kind of rainbow coalition, which means in the future not only in Germany, but in many European countries, climate will be a very important topic.

Shubhajit Roy: The India-German relationship in the last three years, you've seen it grow. What are the challenges that you faced in this relationship?

I think the challenges are to know how to get crises like Ukraine and such things out of the way because we have to focus on the real things which matter cooperation between the two countries, economic growth, getting jobs, working on renewable energies and technic transfer and getting the students to Europe. There are so many positive things which we have to focus on, you should not focus on the war. We have 2,000 companies here, we have six Goethe institutes, the highest number of Indian students in Europe are in Germany, they're not in the UK. France has 8,000 and the UK has 25,000. Germany has 30,000 students. We could do more.

different dependencies on excellent diplomats. They know what to do... Every country must see what means they have to change Putin's course

PM TO ADDRESS WEBINAR TOMORROW

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi will address a webinar on Tuesday on Budget 2022-23 with a focus on ways to accelerate the pace of growth, according to an official release. The government is holding webinars across various key sectors, the Finance Ministry said. PTI

RUSSIA-UKRAINE CONFLICT, POSSIBLE US FED RATE HIKE MAJOR HEADWINDS

Re under pressure as FPIs rush to the exit door, pull out ₹2 lakh cr since Oct

MUMBAI, MARCH 6

THE ONGOING sell-off by foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) has led to withdrawal of over Rs 2,00,000 crore from the domestic stock markets since October last year. The Russia-Ukraine conflict has added to the nervousness of FPIs, already bracing for interest rate hikes by the US Federal Reserve. The FPI pullout has hit the rupee, with its exchange rate against the dollar

despite heavy RBI intervention. On March 4, FPIs pulled out Rs 7,631 crore from the stock markets, taking the total outflows to Rs 18,614 crore in the last three sessions of March as Russia intensified the attack on Ukraine and oil prices soared. This outflow has come after withdrawals of Rs 45,720 crore in February and Rs 41,346 crore in January. With this, FPIs have pulled out

falling below the 76 level to 76.16

worsens and FPI sales continue, the rupee will cross the 77 level against the dollar in the coming days, analysts said. While banks have been purchasing dollars to facilitate FPI pull-out, the RBI has been selling dollar from its forex kitty to salvage the rupee, said a banking source.

During the week ended February 25, India's foreign currency assets declined by \$ 2.228 billion. "The Russia-Ukraine conflict is hurting Indian rupee, bonds and equities via three channels: oil prices, US dollar Index and global equity prices," said a Kotak Securities report.

Analysts said there could be a further temporary shock if things worsen more in Europe or, for that matter, a new front opens up in Asia. While the rupee is likely to remain under pressure, the RBI

FinMin

OVER THE years, the Finance

Ministry has questioned a rel-

atively high rate retained by

EPFO and has been nudging it

to reduce the rate to a sub-8

per cent level in line with the

overall interest rate scenario.

rates range from 4 per cent to

7.6 per cent, and have been

kept unchanged in recent

The Finance Ministry had

questioned 2019-20 interest

rate and the 2018-19 interest

rate of 8.65 per cent as well, be-

ingout of Covid-19." However,

from January 2021 onwards,

the EPFO began to credit the in-

terest in one go. The CBT rec-

ommends the rate for EPF sub-

scribers, which is then ratified

crore claims, disbursing an

amount of Rs 90,567 crore to

members from April 1,2021 to

Ianuary 31 this year. The Board

will also discuss preliminary

reports of four sub-commit-

tees constituted in November.

The panels have been formed

for establishment-related mat-

ters, futuristic implementation

of the Social Security Code, dig-

ital capacity building and pen-

The EPFO has settled 2.69

by the Finance Ministry.

market rates.

POLICY WATCH

RETIREMENT FUND

rate may be higher

than return on its

own investments

ENSECONOMIC BUREAU

THE EMPLOYEES' Provident

Fund Organisation will meet

on March 11-12 in Guwahati to

decide on the interest rate for

its subscribers for the financial vear 2021-22. The EPFO's

Central Board of Trustees (CBT)

had in March last year finalised

a recommendation of 8.5 per

cent interest rate for the previ-

ous financial year 2020-21.

which though was the same as

last year's, was the lowest of-

The EPF interest rate is ex-

fered by EPFO in eight years.

pected to be higher than the

rate of returns it has got on its

investments and is unlikely to

see a sharp change, a CBT

member said. The retirement

fund body earned net interest

of Rs 72,811 crore in 2020-21

on investments including eq-

uity related investments from

the contributions from the es-

tablishments managed by it, as

per its latest annual report. The

EPF's return on debt instru-

ments in 2020-21 was 6.87 per

cent. The gross amount in-

vested by the EPFO in the eq-

uity-linked exchange traded

funds between August 5, 2015

to March 31, 2021 is

Rs 1,37,895.95 crore, of which

Rs 32,070 crore was invested

Ministry has questioned a rel-

atively high rate retained by

the EPFO and nudged it to re-

duce the rate to a sub-8 per

cent level in line with the over-

all interest rate scenario. The

EPFO rate continues to be the

highest among other savings

instruments. Small savings

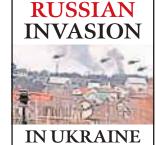
Over the years, the Finance

in 2020-21.

NEW DELHI, MARCH 6

EPF meet: FY22

October 1, 2021. If the situation in Ukraine



will be able to prevent a big slide in the currency.

However, domestic institutional investors (DIIs), led by LIC, mutual funds and insurance companies, have been stepping up their purchases, absorbing most of the FPI sales. "There is a $tug\hbox{-}of\hbox{-}war\,going\,on\,between\,FPIs$ and DIIs," said VK Vijayakumar, chief investment strategist at Geojit Financial Services.

Countering the FPI strategy, DIIs have invested Rs 12,599 crore in March 1-4, adding to their total a record amount of Rs 42,084 crore in February, their highest monthly investment since they put Rs 55,595 crore in March 2020 when Covid pandemic hit the country.

Despite a correction of around 13 per cent from the peak in Nifty, FPIs continue to sell since market sentiments have been impacted globally by the uncertainty triggered by the war and the surge in crude prices. This is likely to impact the IPO market and LIC's plan for listing this fiscal and push up the current account deficit (CAD).

The Sensex has already fallen 5 per cent, or 2,899 points, to 54,333.81 since February 24 when the Russian invasion of Ukraine started. Global markets are spooked with the events happening in Europe, which are causing volatility. "FPIs have been sellers for almost 6 months now. Commodities are hitting highs across the board - oil, coal, metals

Vineet Bagri, managing partner, TrustPlutus Wealth.

The FPI pull-out is dampening the sentiment in equity and forex markets. "Their impact on markets is visible, with increase in volatility and declining equity prices. However, the fact that this selling by foreign investors has been absorbed by domestic investors bodes well for the outlook

of Indian markets," Bagri said. According to a Morgan Stanley report, supply constrained oil price rises are bad for India. Indeed, the recent 25 per cent jump in oil prices will expand the current account deficit by 75 bps and inflation by 100 bps on an annualised basis, it said.

US Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell recently said he will back a quarter point rate increase when the Fed meets March 15-16, putting to rest debate over starting a post-pandemic round of rate hikes with a larger than

\$7.9 bn drawn by commodity funds in February, the biggest since August 2020. In January, they received \$5.3 billion, as per Refinitiv Lipper

\$84.2 bn net outflow seen by global bond funds last month

Energy funds have risen 24.7% this year, while precious metals and agriculture funds climbed 12.6% and 9.8%, respectively

As higher inflation hits bonds and equities, investors are favouring commodity funds as the underlying assets often act as a hedge

Visa, Mastercard suspend Russia ops, disruptions to grow

NEW YORK, MARCH 6

US PAYMENTS firms Visa Inc and Mastercard Inc on Saturday said they were suspending operations in Russia over the invasion of Ukraine, and that they would work with clients and partners to cease all transactions there.

Within days, all transactions initiated with Visa cards issued in Russia will no longer work outside of the country and any Visa cards issued outside of Russia will no longer work within the country, the company

"We are compelled to act following Russia's unprovoked invasion of Ukraine, and the unacceptable events that we have witnessed," Al Kelly, chief executive officer of Visa, said in a statement.

US President Joe Biden, in a call with Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskiy, welcomed Visa's and Mastercard's decisions to suspend their operations in Russia, the White House said.

The move by the payments firms could mean more disruption for Russians who are bracing for an uncertain future of spiraling inflation, economic hardship and an even sharper squeeze on imported goods.

Russia has been taking steps to increase the independence of its financial system for years, particularly after ties with the West deteriorated over the country's annexation of Crimea in 2014.

The country set up its own banking messaging system, known as SPFS, as an alternative to SWIFT and its own card payment system MIR began operating in 2015. They were part of Moscow's efforts to develop homegrown financial tools to mirror Western ones, to protect the country in case sanctions are

Empty shelves at a supermarket, in Bila Tserkva, Ukraine. Reuten Chinese UnionPay card system to the rescue

LONDON, MARCH 6

SEVERAL RUSSIAN banks said on Sunday they would soon start issuing cards using the Chinese UnionPay card operator's system coupled with Russia's own Mii network, after Visa and MasterCard said they were suspending operations in Russia.

Credit cards issued by Russian banks using the Visa and Mastercard payment systems will stop functioning overseas after March 9, Russia's central bank said on Sunday, adding that some local lenders would look to use China's UnionPay system instead.

Russian-issued Mastercard and Visa cards would be accepted within Russia until their expiry, the bank said. The overseas ban also applies to cards issued by local subsidiaries of foreign banks, the bank said. Its announcement came after US payments firms Visa Inc Awaiting govt, **RBI** guidelines on SWIFT: PNB

New Delhi: Punjab National Bank (PNB) said it was awaiting advisory from the Finance Ministry and the Reserve Bank with regard to SWIFT-related transactions with Russian entities. PTI

suspending operations in Russia, joining the list of companies that are severing business links with Russia. The central bank added that many Russian banks plan to issue cards using UnionPay, a system it said was enabled in 180 countries.

While several Russian banks already use UnionPay, others including Sberbank and Tinkoff could start issuing cards co-badging Russia's domestic Mir payments system with UnionPay.

'GST Council may consider proposal to raise lowest slab to 8%'

PRESSTRUSTOFINDIA NEW DELHI, MARCH 6

THE GST Council in its next meeting may look at raising the lowest tax slab to 8 per cent, from 5 per cent, and prune the exemption list in the Goods and Services Tax regime as it looks to increase revenues and do away with states' dependence on Centre for compen-

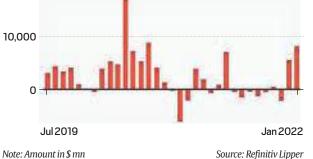
sation, sources said on Sunday. A panel of state finance ministers is likely to submit its report by this month end to the Council suggesting various steps to raise rev-

Global commodity funds are attracting huge inflows as investors seek to cash in on the rally in metals, gas and grains after the conflict between Russia and Ukraine, as per a Reuters report

Commodity funds in demand as

investors try to hedge inflation

COMMODITY FUNDS FLOW



Source: Reuters

Third party motor insurance premium to rise from Apr 1

MUMBAI, MARCH 6

AFTER A two-vear moratorium. third party motor insurance pre-

New Delhi: Skoda is mulling to

drive in electric vehicles in the

Indian market as it expects the

 $green\,mobility\,segment\,to\,pick\,up$

significantly in the country over

the next few years, according to a

nessing a turnaround in its domes-

tic business, however, has no plans

to get into the CNG space in the im-

mediate future. "We will have to

(get into the EV segment) because

we plan a long term future in

India," Skoda Auto India brand di-

rector Zac Hollis told PTI when

The automaker, which is wit-

senior company official.

Skoda looking to

launch EVs in India

sides the EPFO's exposure to The Union Road Transport IL&FS and similar risky entities. Ministry has proposed an increase In September 2020, the CBT in the third-party motor insurance recommended splitting the premium for various categories of payment of the interest for vehicles from April 1. FY20 into two parts, citing "exceptional circumstances aris-

cubic capacity(cc) will attract rates of Rs 2.094 compared to Rs 2.072 in 2019-20. Similarly, private cars with 1,000 cc to 1,500 cc will attract rates of Rs 3,416 compared to Rs 3,221, while owners of car above 1,500cc will see a premium

of Rs 7,897 compared to Rs 7,890. Two-wheelers over 150 cc but not exceeding 350 cc will attract a

The automaker has no

asked if the company is looking to

launch electric vehicles (EVs) in the

country. "We estimate that by

2030, 25-30 per cent of the mar-

ket would be electric cars and we

need to make sure that we play our

part, so we will bring EVs to the

market," he added. PTI

plans to get into the

CNG space in the

immediate future

According to the proposed repremium of Rs 1,366 and for twopremium will be Rs 2,804.

After remaining unchanged for two years due to Covid, the revised TP insurance premium will come into effect from April 1. Earlier, TP rates were notified by the insurance regulator Irdai. This is also for the first time that the Ministry will notify the TP rates in consultation with the insurance regulator.

'Some Amazon shareholders call for tax transparency'

Bengaluru: Twenty-four Amazon investors are calling on the tech giant to increase transparency in tax disclosures and adopt a new reporting standard, the Financial Times reported on Sunday.

Investors are trying to get a shareholder resolution demanding a new tax reporting standard brought at the company's annual meeting this year, FT said, citing a letter which will be sent to the US SEC this week. **REUTERS**

'Shops gone': How RIL stunned Amazon in battle for Future Retail

\$137 mn fundraise: **CredAvenue turns** 11th unicorn of '22

SOUMYARENDRA BARIK NEW DELHI, MARCH 6

DEBT MARKETPLACE CredAvenue has raised \$137 million to become the latest entrant to the unicorn club. It is the eleventh unicorn of 2022, joining the list of startups like Livspace, Xpressbees and ElasticRun, among others.

The round was led by Insight Partners, B Capital Group and Dragoneer Investment Group, and propelled the startup's valuation to \$1.3 billion from \$410 million in September, making it India's fastest fintech unicorn — a private billion dollar company — within 18 months of being established.

The company, which has also received funding from Seguoia Capital and Lightspeed Ventures, provides digital technology solutions for all stages of the debt cycle, from disbursal to collections. The startup claims to work with over 2,300 corporates and has a loan book of over Rs 90.000 crore.

CredAvenue plans to use the funds to expand in India and into key global markets as well as make

INDIA'S FASTEST FINTECH UNICORN

■The round was led by Insight Partners, B Capital Group and **Dragoneer Investment** Group, and propelled the startup's valuation to \$1.3 billion from \$410 million in September, making it India's fastest fintech unicorn

acquisitions. The company had recently acquired digital collection solution provider Spocto. The fresh funds would also be used to expand Spocto's international presence beyond Middle East Asia and India organically and inorganically. "Debt in India is still under-

penetrated as a percentage of GDP at about 60%," said Kabir Narang. founding general partner at B Capital Group. "At \$1.9 trillion, the Indian debt market is still underserved, he said, adding that it "creates a massive opportunity.'

enue, including hiking the lowest slab and rationalising the slab. Currently, GST is a four-tier

structure attracting a tax rate of 5, 12, 18 and 28 per cent. As per sources, the GoM is likely to propose raising the 5 per cent slab to 8 per cent, which may yield an additional Rs 1.50 lakh crore annual revenues. As part of rationalisation, the GoM is also looking at a 3-tier GST structure, with rates at 8, 18 and 28 per cent. **PTI**

BRIEFLY —

India at WTO

New Delhi: India has suggested to convene a meeting under the aegis of the World Trade Organization (WTO) to discuss the role of e-commerce during the time of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Maruti on SUVs

New Delhi: Maruti Suzuki needs to bolster its presence in the SUV segment to maintain its dominance in the domestic PV segment, said senior executive director (marketing and sales) Shashank Srivastava. PTI

ADITYAKALRA & ABHIRUPROY NEW DELHI/MUMBAI, MARCH 6

AT A large Future Retail supermarket in Mumbai last week, workers were unloading hundreds of bright blue grocery crates belonging to the country's biggest retailer

Prospective customers were turned back by security, disappointed at the closed state of the store that still carries the signage of Future's biggest brand, Big Bazaar, but which will likely soon be rebranded as a Reliance outlet.

Across India, similar scenes are being played out as Reliance Industries (RIL) presses ahead with a shock de facto takeover of prized retail real estate that Amazon.com Inc has been keen to take partownership of.

Reliance's takeover began with utmost stealth on the night of February 25 when its staff began arriving at Future stores. Many in Future's management were in the dark about the plans as store emplovees from all over the country frantically began to call, according to people with direct knowledge

"It was tense, everybody was panicking. We didn't know who they were. They wanted access and seniors didn't know about it," a New Delhi Big Bazaar store employee said, describing what happened around 8 pm that day.



A closed Big Bazaar, Ahmedabad. Reuters file

At a Future store in Sonipat, announcements were made asking customers to leave as Reliance seized control, one source said. In Vadodara, Future employees arriving for work the next morning were asked to go back home with no explanation, said another

Citing unpaid payments by

Future, Reliance has taken control of operations of some 200 Big Bazaar stores and has plans to seize another 250 of Future's retail outlets. Combined, they represent the crown jewels of Future's retail network and around a third of all Future outlets.

Although Reliance had not played a large public role in the legal dispute, it had, according to sources, for some months assumed many of the leases held by cash-strapped Future, India's No. 2 retailer and Amazon's estranged business partner.

Reliance's sudden possession of the stores appears to have landed what some analysts are calling a coup de grace that spoils Amazon's chances of untangling

the transfer of Future's assets to Reliance. That's despite a series of legal battles won by the US e-commerce giant to date blocking the 2020 deal announced between the two Indian companies. "What will Amazon fight for

now?" said a source close to the US company with knowledge of the

legal dispute. "The shops are gone." Representatives for Reliance. Amazon and Future did not respond to Reuters queries for this article. Future Retail said on February 26 it was "scaling down its operations" to cut losses although it made no mention of Reliance in its statement. Future Group as a

whole has over \$4 billion in debt. Reliance plans to retain Future's employees at the stores it

Amazon, which has a stake in a separate Future Group unit that it argues prevents Future from selling retail assets without its permission, has called the supermarkets and other stores an "irreplaceable" network in a sector worth \$900 billion in revenues annually.

takes over, sources have said.

Reliance's move. Amazon at a Supreme Court hearing unexpectedly called for cordial talks to end the dispute - a proposal Future agreed to. "People have taken over shops

Last Thursday, six days after

.. let's at least have a conversation," Amazon's lawyer Subramanium said.

Discussions are expected to begin soon, REUTERS Kolkata



12 THE WORLD



MEANWHILE

N Korea Confirms Tests On Spy Satellite

North Korea performed data transmission and other key tests needed to develop a spy satellite, state media said Sunday, in the second such tests in about a week, indicating the country intends to conduct a prohibited long-range rocket launch soon. The moves come as North Korea has been carrying out a spate of ballistic missile launches.

UNDER RUSSIAN SHELLING, UKRAINE CITY RUNNING LOW ON FOOD, WATER

Dire conditions in besieged Mariupol, city becoming 'unfit for human life'

THE NEW YORK TIMES MARCH 6

STAGGERED BY blasts pummelling the city, cut off from heat through freezing nights, and running low on food and water, the people of Mariupol, Ukraine, have been trapped by Russia's siege.

In interviews, residents and local officials in Mariupol, a port on the Sea of Azov, described nightmarish conditions after five days of shelling by Russian forces around the city. On Sunday, city officials said they would attempt to resume an evacuation effort that was called off a day earlier because of Russian attacks.

There's no electricity, no heating, no telephone connection. It is absolute horror," said Petro Andryushchenko, an adviser to the mayor of Mariupol. "People drink from puddles in the streets."

The shelling has destroyed the city's left bank district, he said, making it "unfit for human life". The city had not been able to accurately count the dead or even help many of the wounded because of the barrage, he added.

"It just never stops," he said. "Everyone who tries to go outside risks their life. That is why the mayor can't ask people to do that, it would be like sending people to a certain death."

Videos have shown explosions rocking Mariupol's residential areas and starting fires, as well as the ruins of shops and cars around city.

"The shelling is constant and at random," said a resident, Diana Berg. "When you're on the street, at any moment, a rocket can land next to you." She said that people were still braving the streets to make fires for warmth.

On Saturday, city leaders halted a planned evacuation because of the shelling, and accused Russian forces of violating a temporary ceasefire that was meant to allow some of the city's nearly half-million residents to flee. President Vladimir Putin blamed Ukraine for sabotaging the humanitarian routes.

Another evacuation announced for Sunday was also cancelled after Ukrainian officials accused Russian troops of violating the ceasefire again.

Mikhail Vershinin, the head of the Donetsk Regional Patrol Police, said that several hundred cars had planned to form convoys to leave the city through the humanitarian corridor.

"As soon as we sent the cars back home, the offensive attacks in that region began," he said. The city, he said, was facing "a humanitarian catastrophe."

Andrvushchenko. mayor's adviser, said that city officials were wary of the Russian forces even as they gathered people for the planned evacuation, and could not send residents out because the route was too dangerous. "There was no ceasefire for the whole length of the corridor and Russian troops continued to attack our positions," he said. "That is why we did not let the people board the buses.'



People on an improvised path under a bridge that was destroyed by a Russian strike, while fleeing the town of Irpin in Ukraine. AP

Russian forces fire on evacuees, leaving 3 people dead outside Kyiv

THE NEW YORK TIMES IRPIN, MARCH 6

A RUSSIAN force advancing on Kyiv fired mortar shells on Sunday at a battered bridge used by evacuees fleeing the fighting, sending panicked civilians running, kicking up a cloud of dust and leaving three members of a family dead on the pavement.

Crowds of hundreds have clustered around the damaged bridge over the Irpin River since Saturday, Ukrainian forces had blown up the bridge earlier to slow the Russian advance. Only a dozen or so Ukrainian soldiers were in the immediate area of the bridge on Sunday, not fighting but helping carry civilians'

BERNAT ARMANGUÉ

THE DIRECTOR of Ukraine's

largest art museum walked its

hallways, supervising as staff

packed away its collections to

protect their national heritage in

case the Russian invasion ad-

of the Andrey Sheptytsky

National Museum, employees

placed carefully wrapped

baroque pieces into cardboard

boxes. A few meters away, a group

walked down the majestic main

staircase carrying a giant piece of

sacred art, the 18th century

coming because a lot of labour

has been put in here. It takes

"Sometimes the tears are

Bohorodchany iconostasis.

In one partially empty gallery

LVIV. MARCH 6

vances west.



Kyiv, on Sunday. Reuters

At noted art museum, race to protect heritage

luggage and children. To cross a hundred yards or so of exposed street on the side of the bridge closer to Kyiv, people seeking to flee to the capital formed small groups and made a run for it together. Soldiers ran out, picked up children or luggage, and ran for cover behind a cinder block wall

The mortar shells fell first 100 or so yards from the bridge, then shifted in a series of thunderous blasts into a section of street where people were fleeing.

A man helps an

elderly woman

to run for cover

in Irpin, near

As the mortars got closer to the stream of civilians, people ran, pulling children, trying to find a safe spot. But there was nothing to hide behind. A shell landed in the street, sending up

Soldiers rushed to help, but the woman and children were dead. The father still had a pulse but was unconscious and severely wounded.

The shelling suggested either targeting of the evacuation routes from Irpin, something of which the Ukrainian authorities have accused the Russian army after a railroad track used for evacuations was hit on Saturday, or disregard for the risk of civilian casualties.

a cloud of concrete dust and leaving one family — a mother, a father, a teenage son and a daughter who appeared about 8 years old — sprawled on the ground.

Their luggage, a blue roller suitcase and some backpacks, was scattered about.

couragement of all parties" an allusion to the United States, among other powers. Bennett and Putin had discussed the mediation idea by phone last week.

'We will continue to assist wherever this is requested, even if the chances are not great," Bennett said. small opening, and we have the access to all sides and the capability, I see it as a moral duty to make every attempt."

Israel has condemned the Russian invasion of Ukraine, expressed solidarity with Kviv and sent humanitarian aid. But Bennett has not met Ukrainian requests for military assistance and has kept channels open to Russia, with which Israel coordinates operations against Iranian deploy-



Israel PM Naftali Bennett

Putin says campaign will not stop until Ukraine stops fighting In call with Russian leader, Turkey's Erdogan urges ceasefire

LVIV, KYIV, MARCH 6

RUSSIAN PRESIDENT Vladimir Putin said on Sunday his campaign in Ukraine was going according to plan and would not end until Kyiv stopped fighting, as efforts to evacuate the heavily bombarded city of Mariupol failed for a second day in a row.

He made the comments in a phone call with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, who appealed for a ceasefire in the conflict that the United Nations says has created the fastest growing refugee crisis in Europe since World War Two.

Putin told Erdogan he was ready for dialogue with Ukraine and foreign partners but any at-

if prospect slim

will try to

DAN WILLIAMS

JERUSALEM, MARCH 6

ISRAEL WILL continue try-

ing to mediate between

Russia and Ukraine even if

success seems unlikely.

Prime Minister Naftali

Bennett said on Sunday af-

ter returning from surprise

talks with Russian President

that Israel serve as interme-

diary, citing the Bennett gov-

ernment's good relations

with both Kyiv and Moscow.

Bennett's office said he spoke

three times over the week-

end with Ukrainian President

his cabinet, Bennett gave no

details on his three-hour

Kremlin meeting with Putin

on Saturday, saying only that

it had "the blessing and en-

In televised remarks to

Volodymyr Zelenskyy.

Ukraine has requested

Vladimir Putin.

He said his to plan

in Ukraine according

tempt to draw out negotiation would fail, a Kremlin statement

The Turkish presidency said Erdogan told Putin that Turkey was ready to contribute to a peaceful resolution of the conflict.

"President Erdogan, who said an immediate ceasefire will not only ease humanitarian concerns in the region but also give the search for a political solution an opportunity, renewed his call of 'let's pave the way for peace together'," his office said.

Russian media said Putin also held almost two hours of talks on Sunday with French President Emmanuel Macron, who has stayed in regular contact but, as with other international efforts, has yet to persuade Moscow to call off a campaign now in an 11th day.

Kyiv renewed its appeal to the West to toughen sanctions beyond existing efforts that have hammered Russia's economy. It also requested more weapons, including a plea for Russianmade planes.

US Secretary of State Anthony Blinken said Washington was considering how it could backfill aircraft for Poland, if Warsaw decided to supply its warplanes to Ukraine, speaking on a trip to neighbouring Moldova.

Israel PM says Pope calls for peace: Rivers of blood, tears in Ukraine mediate even Vatican City: Pope Francis on

Sunday rejected Russia's use of the term "special military operation" for its invasion of Ukraine, saying the country was being battered by war and urging an immediate end to the fighting.

"In Ukraine, rivers of blood and tears are flowing. This is not just a military operation but a war which sows death, destruction and misery," the pope said in his weekly address to crowds gathered in St. Peter's Square.



"In that martyred country the need for humanitarian assistance is growing by the hour," the pope said. "War is madness, please stop."

The pope said he dispatched two cardinals to Ukraine, saying the Vatican would do everything it could to end the conflict.

IN BRIEF



Volunteers distribute warm drinks those crossing from Ukraine to Poland, at the border in Medyka on Sunday. Reuters

Radio Free Europe halts ops in Russia

Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, the US-funded media outlet founded in the Cold War to deliver news into Communistcontrolled countries, announced that it would cease its operations in Russia as the country cracks down on information following their invasion of Ukraine. Jamie Fly, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, president and chief executive said in a statement on Sunday that the move was a result of "the Putin regime's assault on the truth". Since its invasion of Ukraine, Russia has moved swiftly to limit free speech and dissent, forcing Western companies to reassess. Bloomberg News, the BBC, CNN International and ABC News have also suspended their news reporting operations inside Russia. The Kremlin has blocked access to Facebook inside the country. NYT

Hundreds still line up to join army

Hundreds of men have been lining up in Kyiv to join the Ukrainian army. An order from Ukraine's government prohibited men between the ages of 18 and 60 from leaving the country to keep them available for military conscription. But some like Volodymyr Onysko volunteered to fight. "We know why we are here. We know why we defend our country. And our guys that are actually standing there and fighting Russian military forces," he told Britain's Sky News. Others, like British Army veteran Mark Ayres, travelled to Ukraine to help. Ayres said the Ukrainian people have been inspiring and "it's galvanised everybody". AP

PESHAWAR

Officials say unearthed network of bombers responsible for blast

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA PESHAWAR, MARCH 6

PAKISTANI INVESTIGATION authorities on Sunday claimed to have uneartherd the entire network of bombers responsible for the deadly suicide attack on a crowded Shia mosque in Pakistan's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa provice that killed 63 people and wounded 200 others, a senior official said.

A suicide bomber, believed to be from ISIS-Khorasan, blew himself up inside a mosque in Oissa Khwani bazaar in Peshawar, capital of Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa province on Friday, in one of the deadliest attacks in the restive region, bor-



At a funeral in Peshawar on Saturday. Reuters

dering Afghanistan.

Adviser to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister on Information Barrister Muhammad Ali Saif along with Peshawar City Police Chief Ijaz Khan told reporters that a rickshaw driver and facilitator have been traced while the police investigators are very close to family of the bombers as their identification process has been completed.

time, energy. You are doing

something good, you feel

pleased. Today you see empty

walls, so it feels bitter, sad. We

didn't believe it till the last

minute that this could happen,"

museum General Director Ihor

The doors of the museum in

Kozhan said Friday.

The development came a day after Pakistan's Interior Minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmed vowed to arrest the masterminds behind the deadly suicide attack.

According to the investigation team, they have found seven bullet shells and maintained that bomber used a 9 mm pistol before blowing himself.

The sketches of the bombers and two facilitators who have come on Tri wheeler at the blast site have been completed.

City police chief Ijaz khan said he did not agree to the assertions of some that police personnel did not play their role properly.



ELSEWHERE IN THE WORLD

serve the museum's works.

is our life. It is very important to us,"

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Workers prepare to move works of art, Andrey Sheptytsky National Museum in Lviv. AP

the western city of Lviv have been

closed since Russia's war on

Ukraine began on February 24,

and heritage sites across the coun-

try face danger as the fighting continues. Korzhan said he receives

daily calls from other European

cultural institutions offering to

help as he and his staff race to pre-

NEW US Ambassador Nicholas Burns has arrived to take up his post in Beijing amid heightened tensions between China and the United States over Taiwan, trade, human rights and the war in Ukraine.

Burns arrived Friday with his wife Libby and a group of other US diplomats and their families and will undergo three weeks of quarantine at his official residence as China requires, according to a US Embassy spokesperson. During his quarantine, the

ambassador will virtually meet with US Mission staff, the spokesperson said. The post had been empty

since Terry Branstad departed in

October 2020.



Nicholas Burns

Burns is a career diplomat, former State Department spokesperson, ambassador to NATO and leading academic, teaching most recently at the Harvard Kennedy School and serving as a foreign policy adviser to Joe Biden's presidential campaign. He has framed the US relation-

ship with China as manageable, saying Americans should "have confidence in our strength" when dealing with the rise of China.

roars through central Iowa her husband, Tony, called her **ASSOCIATED PRESS** from a nearby shed where he was working and alerted her

DES MOINES, MARCH 6

when a tornado swept through central Iowa, damaging buildings and knocking down trees and power lines, authorities said. Emergency management of-

SIX PEOPLE were killed Saturday

ficials in Madison County said four were injured in addition to those killed when the tornado touched down in the area southwest of Des Moines at about 4.30 pm Among those killed were children and

Madison County Emergency Management Director Diogenes Ayala said 25 to 30 homes were badly damaged by the tornado.

"This is the worst anyone has seen in a very long time," he said. Officials didn't identify those



Official: 6 dead as large tornado

Members of the fire department after a long evening responding to emergency calls in Winterset, Iowa. AF

killed but said they were not all in the same location.

Wendy Burkett told the Des Moines Register she and two of her three daughters were in their house Saturday afternoon when



other, a window shattered outwards and water began spewing from the pipes, she said.

ting louder and louder.'

But within about a minute, the tornado passed by, and while the family was unhurt, their home was in ruins amid debris

bris flying around and it was get-

daughters to their basement as

the tornado roared by within

seconds. As they clung to each

They hurried with their

all around, even in the trees. Kolkata

Mumbai, Jharkhand, UP, Bengal win to make knockouts

PRESSTRUST OF INDIA

MUMBAI STORMED into the Ranji Trophy quarterfinals for the first time since 2017-18 after an innings-and-108-run win over Odisha in their Group D match in Ahmedabad on Sunday. Having conceded a 248-run first innings lead, Odisha resumed the final day on 84/5 before the Mumbai spin duo of Shams Mulani (5/64) and Tanush Kotian (3/31) ran through their lower order. With the bonus point victory, Mumbai ended with 16 points, three ahead of Saurashtra who failed to make the cut despite a 211-run win over Goa.

At Guwahati: Skipper Saurabh Tiwary struck a match-winning 93 while Kumar Kushagra made 50 to guide Jharkhand to the knockout stage with a two-wicket win over Tamil Nadu in their last Elite Group H match. Chasing 212 for victory, Jharkhand needed 104 runs on the final day with six wickets in hand to dislodge Chhattisgarh from the top of the group. Tiwary and Kushagra added 90 runs for the fifth wicket before a few wickets put some drama into proceedings

At Cuttack: Bengal thrashed Chandigarh by 152 runs in their Elite Group B match to advance to the quarterfinals. Defending 413, Bengal bowled Chandigarh out for 260 on the final day with the pace troika of Ishan Porel (3/37), Mukesh Kumar (2/72) and Nilakantha Das (2/50) sharing seven wick-

At Sultanpur (Haryana): Uttar Pradesh stunned Maharashtra by six wickets in their Elite Group G match to qualify for the knockouts. Maharashtra, who had the first innings lead, resumed final day on 84 for 4 and made a brave declaration at 211/5, with Rahul Tripathi remaining unbeaten on 123 off just 110 balls. Uttar Pradesh were thus set 357 for victory, but rode on hundreds from opener Almas Shaukat (100) and skipper Karan Sharma (116) to win the match. Rinku Singh also chipped in with an unbeaten 78 off just

At Chennai: Karnataka thrashed Puducherry by an innings and 20 runs in their Elite Group C match to qualify for the knockouts. With the win and seven points, Karnataka finished with 16 points.

At Rajkot: Madhya Pradesh made it to the knockouts despite their last Elite Group A match against Kerala ending in a draw. They qualified with a better quotient of 2.147 than Kerala (1.648). Madhya Pradesh came into the game on 13 points after beating Gujarat and Meghalaya. Kerala were also on 13 points before their match. Since, the match ended in a draw and the first innings - of Kerala was not completed, both teams got one point each and their tally stood at 14 each.



Pooja Vastrakar (67), along with Sneha Rana (53 not out), put on a world record partnership of 122 runs for the 7th wicket. AP

Vastrakar's tale: From outplaying boys to helping win WC opener against Pakistan

PRATYUSH RAJ NEW DELHI, MARCH 6

LIKE ANY other budding cricketer, Pooja Vastrakar was fond of the gully version of the game. Among the first to notice her talent was Ashutosh Srivastava, a local cricket coach in Shahdol, a small town in Madhya Pradesh's Rewa district. Srivastava saw a kid smoking sixes off bowlers double her size. At first, Srivastava thought Pooja was a boy because of her cropped locks. "It must be 2010. I used to work at a local cricket academy in Shahdol. I saw her playing at the Municipal ground in Shahdol. I saw a kid smacking sixes in tennis ball cricket. I asked one of the kids, who is this boy, the reply was 'sir ye toh ladki hai.' I was amazed by her power-hitting," Ashutosh Srivastava shared Vastrakar's early journey with The Indian Express.

Next day Srivastava asked a ten-year-old Pooja if she was interested in playing cricket. Pat came the reply, "Cricket mera passion hai." But Srivastava had a condition. He told his ward that she would only train with the boys and not play with girls."She was way too good for the girls of her age. I put her in the boy's team. She used to play U-14 cricket with the boys. When she started playing with the boys, it turned out that she is the best among the boys of her age group as well," laughs Srivastava.

"What defines Pooja from others is her confidence. The energy is just next level. She is fearless," he adds. On Sunday against Pakistan in India's opening match against arch-rivals Pakistan, Pooja displayed her fearless cricket.

When Pooja Vastrakar walked in to bat at No 8, India was reeling at 114 for 6, losing five wickets for just 18 runs. The fearless youngster took on Pakistan. It felt like India's tail was set to wrap up quickly, but Pooja Vastrakar had other ideas. Vastrakar (67 off 59b; 8x4), alongwith Sneha Rana (53 not out off 48b; 4x4), put on a world record partnership of 122 runs for the seventh wicket and turned the tide in

favour of India. She took on the Pakistan bowlers from the word go. It was not only big shots, but the way Vastrakar and Rana ran, converted those ones into twos, and twos into threes that was praiseworthy. Back in Shahdol, Srivastava was not overawed with his ward's performance.

"I've seen her playing such innings so many times. For the Madhya Pradesh Under-19 side, she used to bat in the middle-order. Last year, in the JS Anand Trophy (Women's Senior Tournament), organised by MPCA, she smashed two double hundreds and one score of 150. She is ruthless with the bat," recollects Srivastava.Like any Indian athlete, Pooja had her share of struggles. Just a month after joining the academy in Shahdol, she lost her mother. A distraught Pooja would not visit the academy for a month. "I was not in Shahdol. When I came back, a fellow coach said that she is not coming to the academy for one month. I immediately went to her house. Usha (Vastrakar), one of her sisters, assured me that she will not miss a single training session ever," he says. Pooja is the youngest among the seven siblings (five daughters and two sons), and Usha, who was into athletics, made sure that she would never skip her training session ever.

"When our mother passed away, Pooja was only 10. she was devastated and when Ashutosh sir visited our house and told us that she is a gifted cricketer, I made up my decision she is going to pursue her passion. We are very proud of her achievements," says Usha.

Pooja's father, Bandhan Ram Vastrakar, a retired BSNL employee, is very happy with his daughter's performance but is worried about her injury."I hope it won't be too serious and she will be fit for the next match. Since the age of 4, she has been into cricket. I never thought that she would go on to play for India one day, but she always knew it. Whenever she asks for money for cricket, I will tease her why is she wasting her time in cricket. She used to say, 'aap dekhna India khelungi (One day, i will play for India)," says Bandhan Ram."I hardly did anything for her. Initially, it was Ashutosh sir, who helped her out. Then when she was picked for the Madya Pradesh Under-19 team, she started earning money and never asked anything from me. She even helped with money during her sister's marriage," says a proud father. Vastrakar was rightly named the Player of the Match for her excellent knock. The plan was to somehow try and get to 200. I like to bat in pressure situations, even in domestic games. I told the same to Sneh (Rana), to keep the partnership going. The batters told us that the wicket was slow, so the target was 200, but we didn't bat differently," Vastrakar told the broadcasters after the match.

BRIEF SCORES: India 244/7 in 50 overs (Pooja Vastrakar 67, Sneh Rana 53 not out; Nashra Sandhu 2/36,) bt Pakistan 137 in 43.0 overs (Sidra Ameen 30; Rajeshwari Gayakwad 4/31.)

Baby's Day out: Pak captain's daughter wins Indian hearts

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE MARCH 6

THE INDIA-PAKISTAN World Cup game at Mount Maunganui, New Zealand, finished in oodles of love and toddler clucks showered upon eight-month-old Baby Fatima, daughter of the Pakistan captain Bismah Maroof by the Indian team. While postmatch beers tend to be a tradition after a hard day's play in the men's game in these parts of the world, the cynosure of all eyes post the game on Sunday, was an infant donning a bright red bow ribbon and clad in a matching jumpsuit and red-black tartan check booties.

The Indians - including Harmanpreet Kaur, Shafali Verma and Smriti Mandhana gathered around the young mother, who returned to captain Pakistan in December 2021, just four months after giving birth, and the Indians sought the quiet baby's attention.

Maroof, an Asian Games gold medallist from 2010 Guangzhou Games, has been Pakistan captain since 2017, and was Pakistan's first player to reach 1000 runs in ODI cricket. In April 2021, she had taken an indefinite break after announcing impending motherhood, but the cricket-crazy lady from Lahore, who has been playing since she was a teen, couldn't quite stay away from the game and returned to the field - baby and

The ICC posted an image of the Indians

clicking a selfie with Maroof and baby Fatima in the centre and captioned it: "Little Fatima's first lesson in the spirit of cricket from India and Pakistan (with blue and green hearts) #CWC2022." The tweet had garnered close to 50K Likes. India cricketer Ekta Bisht was later clicked babbling gleefully with the baby. India started their Women's ODI World Cup campaign with a 107-run win on Sunday against Pakistan but the winners were bowled over by Bismah Maroof's daughter after the match, as the two teams interacted post the game and their video went viral. Earlier, Bismah had walked into the stadium in Mount Maunganui stadium, with Fatima in her arms.

While Pakistan had India under the pump, before a match-rebuilding partnership was forged, it had been a rough day in the end for Pakistan. Bismah said Pakistan could not capitalise on the strong start and let India off the hook. "We gave away easy runs to them, we were sloppy on the field, we didn't put them under pressure," she said. "Our batting has to improve, our shot selection wasn't good, we'll work on it ahead of the next game." India had prevailed in all 10 previous one-day matches between the two, but Bismah's team threatened to pull off an upset when they reduced Mithali Raj's side to 114-6 in the 34th over. "Relieved to have won the first game but there are a lot of things we have to work on," Mithali said of India's patchy batting.



Members of the Indian team flank Baby Fatima and mother, Pakistan captain Bismah Maroof after the game for a selfie. Courtesy: PCB

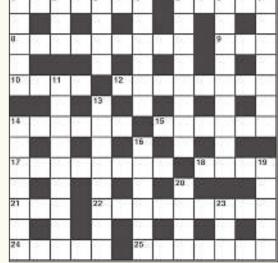
DAY TODAY

The future looks

relatively optimistic at the moment. In fact

ARIES (Mar 21 - Apr 20)

CROSSWORD 4681



ACROSS

- I'm holding a number said to
- $be \, corrupt \, (7)$ 5 She returns a valuable possession (5)
- 8 Mugs declare it avoids humiliation (4-5) 9 Backdated a leave?
- 10 Uses the knuckles to fight back
- 12 Newly arrived it is put back
- inside and reserved (8) 14 Radio reception problem
- which never goes away (6) 15 He helps the priest arrange a
- 17 Pupil power?(8) 18 Temperature in the freezer
- ordinarily(4) 21 For each childless person
- 22 Ballots to silence discord (9)
- 24 Drains topless pitchers (5) 25 A desert resort that is most expensive (7)

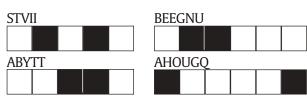
DOWN

- What could be finer to conclude?(5)
- 2 Scottish mother figure
- 3 Not considered a disfigurement (4)
- 4 Elsie is upset about a number of taxes (6)
- 5 The end of schooldays in the
- 6 Deadlock with an old friend 7 After getting in the beer he
- went round preaching 11 Does it supply wood for
- building aircraft? (5,4) 13 Insisted order is order (8)
- 14 Church eminence (7)
- 16 Delhi's defensive arrangement
- 20 Sicilian hothead (4)
- 23 Lionel loses Lil, now single

Solutions Crossword 4680: Across: 1 Reverses. 5 Fold. 9 Ailed. 10 Airless. 11 Impersonator, 13 Assets, 14 Pilots, 17 Minor prophet, 20 Servant, 21 Elope, 22 Tied, 23 Deceased. **Down**: 1 Road, 2 Volumes, 3 Red-letter day, 4 Elapse, 6 Overt, 7 Distress, 8 Frontispiece, 12 Marmoset, 15 Onerous, 16 Writhe, 18 Nurse, 19 Weed.

JUMBLED WORDS

Given below are four jumbled words. Solve the jumbles to make proper words and move them to the respective squares below. Select the letters in the shaded squares and jumble them to get the answer for the given quip. Aae wrinkles the body._ ___wrinkles the soul. - Douglas MacArthur (8)



Answer: Age wrinkles the body. Quitting wrinkles the soul. - Douglas MacArthur

OVER THE HEDGE by Michael Fry & T Lewis









CALVIN & HOBBES by Bill Watterson



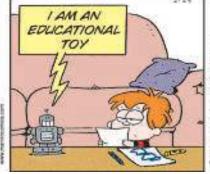




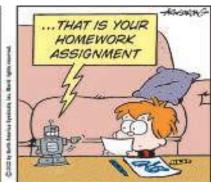


MARVIN by Tom Armstrong





9



LEO (July 24 - Aug 23) You're still unhappy

about financial matters, and quite right too. If you weren't dissatisfied with the conditions of your life you'd never make the necessary improvements. Everything will work out if you realise that you have another two weeks before agreements will stick

VIRGO (Aug 24 - Sep 23) Your stars are splendid, as they often are at this time

of year. Play social activities to the hilt but take it easy if firm agreement is required. You might find that close partners are impossible to pin down, but then what is new? Perhaps your demands are impossible to meet.

BY PETER VIDAL

Your social planets

often find in the

really are exceptional, as you

current season. Just don't get

all huffy if promises are

broken and arrangements

forgotten, it's all in the stars.

Or is it? By that I mean that

the best place to start might

SAGITTARIUS (Nov 23 - Dec 22)

well to keep your wits about

you and pursue your affairs as

conscientiously as possible.

talking. Pick the right words.

choose the appropriate time

Your interests are served

best at home if you keep

and you should win

partners over.

The Moon is moving

position to another.

I'd sav that vou'd do

from one lively

be a long look at your

own behaviour.

LIBRA (Sep 24 - Oct 23) quite keen to dominate your

that's an amazing though in the nicest possible understatement. The stars are emphasising peace rather than way. Yet, at the moment, I doubt if you are genuinely able to sweetness and light to areas of exert any sort of real or your life from which they have permanent control. You see. been sadly lacking. Make sure there are just too many that other people feel good as powerful emotions. well, and your thoughtfulness SCORPIO (Oct 24 - Nov 22)

TAURUS (Apr 21 - May 21)

will give you credit.

The week begins and ends with significant domestic indications. How

about formulating plans today and then waiting about four or five days before putting them into practice? One thing is certain: conditions can only get better. But it may take an almighty effort to see that improvements last.

GEMINI (May 22 - June 21) Your skills as a peacemaker could be in demand at home over the coming days. One thing to remember is that disputes will arise as a result of the sheer range of different options, not from any ill-will. And that's the simple reason why you should give partners

enough big

two tricks up its sleeve. The only

atmosphere of farce. A partner

probably needs all the support

complicating factor is that

misunderstandings may

periodically create an

you can give them.

surprises, but fate

may still have one or

the benefit of the doubt.

CANCER (June 22 - July 23) CAPRICORN (Dec 23 - Jan 20) You've probably had

Try and get everything important done as soon as you can,

before fresh information arrives and circumstances move on. That way you'll be able to enjoy pleasurable propositions when they arrive, and get ready for more significant developments, just in case.

AQUARIUS (Jan 21 - Feb 19)

You may now have to do some guick thinking if you are to avoid personal complications. However, if at all possible, do bring in other people who can share any good fortune and stand with you in adversity. Also, do yourself a favour and keep a watchful eye

PISCES (Feb 20 - Mar 20)

on your cash.

You have a great deal to achieve. Don't allow arguments or conflicts to make you drop out of the race. You're not normally so competitive, but neither can you really afford

to let partners treat you as a complete push-over. Frankly, the more support you've got from friends, the better.

Kolkata

SOLUTION: VISIT, BATTY, BUNGEE, QUAHOG

Difficulty Level 4s Instructions

DOKU

SU

To solve a Sudoku puzzle every digit from 1 to 9 must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Difficulty Level 1s = Very easy; 2s = Easy; 3s = Medium; 4s = Hard; 5s = Very Hard; 6s = Genius

5 1 2 284 3 3

SOLUTION SUDOKU 476 2 8 9 7 1 3 6 4 5 1 9 5 6 6 3 8 1 2 7 5 9 2 3 8 5 4 8 7 6 4 9 1 8 5 7 8 1 7 6 3 5 4 2 9

6 5 2 4 9

3

5 6

8 9 7 2

If you create that bench strength and you start thinking from now, Indian cricket will be in good hands. This is one of my challenges and one of my responsibilities. I have to take it upon me to create that bench strength, keeping in mind a lot of things."

ROHIT SHARMA, INDIA TEST CAPTAIN

BRIEFLY —

Mary Kom to skip Worlds, Asian Games

New Delhi: Olympic bronze medallist boxer MC Mary Kom has decided to

skip the World Championships and the Asian Games to be held later this year to give more exposure to youngsters. The sixtime world



champion wants to focus on her prepathe Birmingham rations for Commonwealth Games. The IBA World Women's Boxing Championships is scheduled to be held from May 6 to 21 in Istanbul, Turkey while the 2022 Commonwealth Games and 2022 Asian Games will begin on July 28 and September 10 respectively. In a communication to the Boxing Federation of India, Mary said, "I would like to withdraw to give opportunity to the younger generation to make a name for themselves on the international stage and get exposure and experience of major tournaments. I would like to focus on the preparation for the Commonwealth Games only."

ISL: Goa, Kerala split points in 8-goal thriller

Bambolim: A play-off berth already booked, Kerala Blasters played out an exciting 4-4 draw against FC Goa - who are out of reckoning - in an Indian Super League match here on Sunday. Hat-trick hero Airam Cabrera (49th, 63rd, 82nd) and Aibanbha Dohling (79th) both came off the bench to score for FC Goa. Earlier, Jorge Pereyra Diaz $(10th, 25th) had \, impressed \, with \, a \, brace$ in the first half. Vincy Barreto (88th) and Alvaro Vazquez (90th) ensured that the Blasters gained a point late on. The drawn result came less than 24 hours after Kerala qualified for the ISL semifinals. The Gaurs ended their campaign at ninth place with 19 points. Kerala finished fourth with 34 points and await to learn their semifinal opponents, one between Jamshedpur FC and ATK Mohun Bagan.

Women's 25m pistol team in hunt for gold

Cairo: Indian shooters Shriyanka Sadangi and Akhil Sheoran bagged the bronze medal in the 50m rifle 3 positions mixed team event of the ISSF World Cup on Sunday. The Indian duo $was fifth out of 34\,teams, then third out$ of eight and then won the bronze convincingly, beating Austrians Rebecca Koeck and Gernot Rumpler. Late on Saturday, women's 25m pistol team of Rahi Sarnobat, Esha Singh and Rhythm Sangwan reached the gold medal match in the year's first World Cup. PTI

Krrish, Ravi in Youth Boxing C'ship semis

New Delhi: India's Krrish Pal (46kg) and Ravi Saini (48kg) registered contrasting wins to enter the semifinals of the 2022 ASBC Asian Youth & Junior Boxing Championships in Amman, Jordan on Sunday. Krrish, who hails from Chandigarh ASBC Asian Youth & Iunior Boxing Championships in Amman, Jordan on Sunday. Krrish, who hails from Chandigarh ASBC Asian Youth & Junior Boxing ChampionshRobert Jamero 4-1 while Ravi beat Aphichit Chaemdi of Thailand 3-2. In the youth men category, Deepak (75kg) moved into the semifinals after an easy 5-0 win over Khaled Alkurdy of UAE.

Jadeja feasts on Lankan ineptitude

All-rounder follows unbeaten 175 with nine-wicket match haul as India canter to innings win in first Test

ABHISHEK PUROHIT MOHALI, MARCH 6

RAVINDRA JADEJA became the first Indian in 50 years to make 150-plus and take a five-for in the same Test as India hammered Sri Lanka by an innings and 222 runs in Mohali. The visitors could not surpass Jadeja's unbeaten 175 in their first innings of 174, and barely managed to do so in their follow-on effort of 178. In all, they lost 16 wickets on the third day of the first Test, and their combined tally of 125 overs across both innings fell short of the 129.2 India faced in the only innings they batted and declared on 574.

It may be worthwhile to recall some of the Indian landmarks in this Test, because as far as the competition is concerned, there was almost none. Rohit Sharma began his Test captaincy with a thumping victory, Virat Kohli had a decent outing of 45 in his 100th Test during which he went past 8,000 runs, Cheteshwar Pujara and Ajinkya Rahane weren't missed in the first Test in a decade which had neither, and Ravichandran Ashwin went past Kapil Dev's 434 Test wickets to become the second-most successful bowler for India behind Anil Kumble

The scorecard may scream 'dustbowl' to some considering the Indian spinners picked up 15 of the 20 Sri Lankan wickets, and the match was over inside three days. The reality is that India had lost only eight wickets themselves in nearly five sessions of batting; and even on the third day, breaking through could have taken some hard work only if Sri Lanka had been in the mood for something that might have come close to resembling a contest. It actually took India an hour to strike on Sunday morning after the Sri Lankans resumed their first innings on 108 for 4. As Ashwin would say later, it was hard to get batsmen out on this pitch if they were not attacking. Rohit used two short midwickets and a short extra cover but they hardly got anything uppish, although their presence kept the batsmen quiet. Ashwin was beating the bat but also the stumps, and edges weren't carrying

Enter Jasprit Bumrah, with a surprise dipping off-cutter from round the stumps that straightened alarmingly after slanting in sharply. It would have been unplayable for any



Ravindra Jadeja became only the sixth player to score 150 or more and take a five-for in a Test match. PTI

fortunate one on this occasion.

That was the cue for Sri Lanka to self-destruct. Niroshan Dickwella came out sweeping and even if it might have worked for a while against Ashwin if played carefully, it wasn't advisable against Jadeja. Especially when the ball was bursting in from outside the left-hander's off stump, and there was a deepish square leg as well as a backward square leg. The former gobbled up a top edge.

Suranga Lakmal was the best representative of Sri Lanka's state of mind. In both innings. As soon as he came in, he charged at Jadeja only to give mid-off and mid-on catching practice for a couple of ducks. In no time, Jadeja had ripped out the tail, and Sri Lanka had gone from 161 for 4 in the 58th over to 174 all out in 65. Pathum Nissanka, who had had two lives, was stranded on an otherwise resolutely-compiled 61.

Jadeja had once spoken about it being a

dream to make a century and take five wickets in the same Test, and here he realised that dream. As Rohit said about him, "Hunger drives athletes forward." And this refined version of Jadeja is nothing if not hungry, be it with bat or ball.

No fight

The only hunger that could be associated with Sri Lanka, as with any living being, was the basic one to refuel. In the four overs between the start of their follow-on innings and lunch, they lost Lahiru Thirimanne, edging to the slips for his umpteenth fall at Ashwin's

If the pace-bowling genius had come from Bumrah in the first innings, it came from Mohammed Shami after the interval. A short ball was followed by a pacy, pitched-up delivery from round the wicket, bang on the stumps and moving just a little to take Dimuth Karunaratne's edge behind.

The short extra cover was to finally come into action when Dhananjaya de Silva found Jadeja's length wasn't all that driveable and popped it to the fielder. That's the thing with Jadeja; his relentless accuracy gets highlighted all the time, but like the classical left-arm spinners of yore, he just doesn't seem to arrive where the batsmen think he will, forcing errors from them. Even two days before the match in the nets, he'd beaten Rohit first ball on the forward defensive with flight, dip and turn. There isn't much to be said about the rest of the Sri Lankan follow-on, except that Ashwin and Jadeja helped themselves to four wickets each, ending with six and nine for the match respectively. Dickwella chose his strokes with a bit more caution this time to make an unbeaten 51.

Sri Lanka had one fifty partnership in the entire match, while India had three century stands in their lone innings. It wasn't just that the visitors were totally outplayed, their batsmen barely seemed to be in the mood to put up any fight.

Skipper Karunaratne didn't try to defend the indefensible. "The batters need to put their hands up and bat longer innings," Karunaratne said during the post-match presentation. "When you are playing against India, you have to capitalise on the starts. It was easy to bat on this track, once you get in you have to score big. We were too defensive or too aggressive with the bat. We need to get a balance between both by rotating the strike and getting to the other

end. That's how you play a big innings." Constructing a big innings is likely to get harder with the pink ball under lights in the second and final Test starting in Bengaluru on March 12. That is a Saturday, so at least the weekend crowd will get its money's worth, like it did here in Mohali, irrespective of whether Sri Lanka develop the willingness to fight in a week.

SCORE CARD

India 1st innings 574/8 declared Sri Lanka 1st Innings: Nissanka not out 61, Mathews lbw b Bumrah 22, de Silva lbw b Ashwin 1, Asalanka lbw b Bumrah 29, Dickwella c Iyer b Jadeja 2, Lakmal c Ashwin b Jadeja 0, Embuldeniya c Agarwal b

Shami 0, Fernando c Sharma b Jadeja 0, Kumara

b Jadeja 0 Extras: (lb6, nb8) 4

Total: 174

Fall of wickets: 1-48, 2-59, 3-96, 4-103, 5-161. 6-164, 7-164, 8-173, 9-174, 10-174

Bowling: Shami 12-5-27-1, Bumrah 14-3-36-2, Ashwin 20-7-49-2, Jayant 6-2-15-0, Jadeja 13-4-41-5 Sri Lanka 2nd Innings:

ThirimannecSharmabAshwin0,Karunaratne c Pant b Shami 27, Nissanka c Pant b Ashwin 6, Mathews lbw b Jadeja 28, de Silva c Iyer b Jadeja 30, Asalanka c Kohli b Ashwin 20, Dickwella not out 51, Lakmal c Yadav b Jadeja 0, Embuldeniya c Pant b Jadeja 2, Fernando lbw b Shami 0, Kumara c Shami b Ashwin 4

Extras: (b4, lb5, nb1) 10

Fall of wickets: 1-9, 2-19, 3-45, 4-94, 5-121, 6-121, 7-121, 8-153, 9-170, 10-178

Bowling: Ashwin 21-5-47-4, Shami 8-1-48-2, Jadeja 16-5-46-4, Jayant 11-3-21-0, Bumrah 4-

Ashwin overtakes Kapil, but both great in their own right

ABHISHEK PUROHIT

MOHALI, MARCH 6

DURING THE Mohali Test, the broadcast displayed the list of 12 Indians to have played 100 or more Tests, Virat Kohli being the latest entrant to the club. On commentary, former Sri Lanka batsman Russell Arnold told Sunil Gavaskar – another member of the club - that the list included mostly batsmen. The only bowlers on it are Anil Kumble, Kapil Dev, Ishant Sharma and Harbhajan Singh. When the telecast resumed after an ad break, Gavaskar responded by saying that he'd just received a text from Kapil Dev. 'I'm not a bowler, I'm an allrounder.'

On Sunday at the Punjab Cricket Association Stadium, Ravichandran Ashwin went past Kapil's tally of 434 Test wickets when he dismissed Charith Asalanka in the Sri Lankan follow-on innings. It was the 11th wicket to fall on a day Sri Lanka lost 16 in an innings rout, and the weekend crowd celebrated it amidst India's inexorable march to victory. As they had celebrated all the Sri Lankan wickets preceding it, and would celebrate all the wickets to follow. One wonders whether some of the fans celebrated Asalanka's fall more because it had made Ashwin India's second-highest wicket-taker in Tests, after Kumble.

There was a nice touch as well to where this happened. Kapil had been overtaken about a



With the wicket of Charith Asalanka, Ravichandran Ashwin went past Kapil Dev's tally of 434 Test wickets. File

15-minute drive away from the ground at which he began his career - the Sector 16 Cricket Stadium in neighbouring Chandigarh that is forever associated with him. It is simply referred to as 'Sector 16' by local reporters. That much is enough to make the mind flashback to that iconic run-up and leap.

 $A \, couple \, of \, fitting \, parallels \, are \, attached \, to \,$ when Kapil had gone past Richard Hadlee's then-record 431 wickets in 1994. Firstly, the feat came in Ahmedabad, where, seven years earlier, Sunil Gavaskar had become the first to score 10,000 Test runs. Secondly, Kapil had also achieved his record with a Sri Lankan wicket - Hashan Tillakaratne - just like Ashwin did.

The Asalanka dismissal was classic Ashwin to a left-hander. Tossed up from round the wicket, drifting in, pitching around off, forcing the batsman to push forward but not quite full enough, thus having the distance to kick away and take the glove off the keeper's thigh to first slip.

The dismissal to equal Kapil - Pathum Nissanka - had been classic Ashwin to a right-

backers to Nissanka, who'd had to scramble to defend and ended up inside-edging. The wicket ball was flighted too, but turned only four degrees compared to the eight on the previous one. By changing the angle of the seam and the amount of tweak he imparts on the ball, Ashwin varies the degree of turn. And often, the variation is too much to negotiate for batsmen with the big-turning ball playing on their minds.

hander. He'd bowled a couple of sharp break-

According to numbers

Ashwin now has 436 wickets from only 85 Tests, still the fewest matches for a 400clubber. And his average of 24.26 is next only to Muttiah Muralitharan among spinners in that club. By any means, these are astonishing numbers, even more so considering how many injuries Ashwin has had in recent years. As skipper Rohit Sharma said on Saturday, for him, Ashwin is already an alltime great, and there doesn't seem to be too

much reason to disagree. Kapil's average of 29.64 and the fact that he took as many as 131 Tests to reach where Ashwin did in 85 might appear to lose some sheen in comparison to the off-spinner. This is not to take anything away from Ashwin, but the plain fact remains that he is an Indian spinner, and Kapil was an Indian fast bowler, that too in an era where bowling fast was a questionable choice for a budding Indian

cricketer. As he was famously told upon demanding extra chapatis as a young pacer, there were no fast bowlers in India then. It is also not unreasonable to state that

spinners get wickets in India because of the pitches, and fast bowlers get wickets in India despite them. It is revealing that despite all the advancements in sports science, only one more Indian fast bowler has managed to play 100 Tests after Kapil. And Kapil still has 123 more wickets than Ishant.

On the batting front, Ashwin averages 27.14 to Kapil's 31.05, so roughly in the same range, and has five centuries as of now against the latter's eight, which came in 46 more games. Again, this is no disservice to Ashwin, but three of Kapil's centuries came in South Africa, England and West Indies, when West Indies were at their peak. As solid a batsman as Ashwin is, even a proud competitor like him won't mind it being said that Kapil was more talented and far more attacking. Just imagine Kapil in the mood in the Indian Premier League.

None of this is meant to make light of Ashwin's mountainous body of work on a day he has gone past the once-magical 434, and is closing in on 3,000 Test runs. It is only to say that while Kapil may have been overtaken in far fewer games, his value to Indian cricket shouldn't be judged by sheer numbers alone. For although he has phenomenal numbers too, Kapil himself was a phenomenon foremost.

Khawaja misses ton, leads Australia's strong reply

ASSOCIATED PRESS ISLAMABAD, MARCH 6

USMAN KHAWAJA narrowly missed out on a century in the country of his birth as Australia's top batters made full use of a placid wicket to reach 271-2 on the third day of the first Test against Pakistan on Sunday.

Khawaja, whose family migrated to Australia when he was four, capitalized on two dropped catches to score 97 while his opening partner David Warner (68) and Marnus Labuschagne (69 not out) also scored aggressive half centuries.

Bad light and heavy clouds brought an early closure to the third day's play, 21 overs ahead of schedule as Australia batters prospered on a grassless wicket.

Australia still trails by 205 runs in its first Test in Pakistan in 24 years after the home team had declared at 476-4 late on the second day. Labuschagne, who hit nine boundaries, raised his half century under overcast conditions in a shortened last session and vice-captain Steve Smith was not out on 24



Usman Khawaja and David Warner put on 156 runs for the first wicket. AF

when umpires took the players off the field. The flat wicket has not changed to give any assistance to the bowlers over the last three days with batters continuing their

domination in all nine sessions.

Pakistan's only productive period with the ball came when its spinners claimed the wickets of Khawaja and Warner in the second session. Khawaja had escaped a second chance when on 62 with wicketkeeper Mohammad Rizwan unable to grab a sharp chance off a reverse sweep against left-arm spinner Nauman Ali (1-49).

However, he attempted the same shot again against Nauman and was caught close to the wicket when Pakistan successfully called for a television review against onfield umpire Aleem Dar's not out decision. Replays suggested Khawaja had gloved the ball as it ballooned to Imam-ul-Haq at short leg.

Khawaja's entertaining knock lasted just over three and a half hours and came off 159 balls featuring 15 boundaries as Australia scored at a rate of 3.71 run per over on Day 3.

Earlier, Khawaja and David Warner (68) shared a rapid 156-run opening-wicket stand as Pakistan's pace attack struggled like its Australian counterpart earlier and couldn't get any lateral movement.

Warner exchanged pleasant smiles with Pakistan fast bowlers Shaheen Afridi and Naseem Shah, who tested the left-hander with some short pitched deliveries, but the left-hander exerted his authority with some exquisite drives on both sides of the wicket. Warner hit 12 boundaries before he was

clean bowled by offspinner Saiid Khan (1-94) from a delivery that skidded off the pitch as the left-hander tried to cut off the backfoot and missed the line of the ball. Earlier, resuming on 5-0, both Australian left-handed openers were untroubled by the

early pace of Afridi and Naseem and didn't

let the two specialist spinners — Sajid and Nauman – get settled. Pakistan came close to dismissing Khawaja on 22, but Fawad Alam dropped a simple chance at gully in Afridi's fifth over. Khawaja added insult to injury by taking three consecutive boundaries against the left-arm fast bowler. Khawaja raised his fifty

BRIEF SCORES: Australia 271 for 2 (Khawaja 97, Labuschagne 69*, Warner 68, Nauman 1-49) trail Pakistan 476 for 4 dec by 205 runs at stumps Day 3

off 67 balls with eight fours while Warner

raised his fifty from 86 deliveries.

Warne's room had blood stains on floor, bath towels: Thai police

PRESSTRUST OF INDIA KOH SAMUI (THAILAND), MARCH 6

THAILAND POLICE have reportedly found "blood stains" on the floor of Shane Warne's room and on bath towels while searching the villa where the legendary Australian cricketer died while holidaying.

The 52-year-old cricketing legend was declared dead by doctors in the Thai International Hospital on Friday night, after friends tried to revive him in his luxury villa hours earlier.

On Sunday, skynews.com.au quoted Thai media saying that the Thai police had found blood on the floor and bath towels in the room Warne was staying.

"A large amount of blood was found in the room," Satit Polpinit, a commander of the

local provincial police, told Thai media. "When CPR was started, the deceased

had coughed up liquid and was bleeding." According to the Koh Samui's Bo Phut police station superintendent Yuttana Sirisomba,

"A large amount of blood was found in the room," Satit Polpinit, a commander of the local provincial police, told Thai media. "When CPR was started, the deceased had coughed up liquid and was bleeding."

Warne had "seen a doctor about his heart" recently, following which they have ruled out treating it as suspicious death.

Warne along with his friends had reportedly travelled to the popular island of Koh Samui, situated in the Gulf of Thailand.

As per the local police information, one of Warne's friends found the Aussie legend unresponsive around 5pm.

The group commenced CPR on Warne while waiting for an ambulance.

Warne's management later released a brief statement to confirm his death.

Kolkata

R.N.I. No. WBENG/2005/20789 VOL. XVII No. 293 Printed by V.Srinivasan and Published by V.Srinivasan on behalf of The Indian Express (P) Ltd and Printed at Saraswati Print Factory Pvt.Ltd, 789, Chowbhaga (West), Kolkata-700105 and Published at The Indian Express (P) Ltd JL No.29 & 30, N.H.-6, Mouza - Prasastha & Ankurhati, P.O. - Salap, P.S.-Domjur, Howrah - 711 409. Ph: (033)66043800 Fax: (033) 66043825 & 66043847. Chairman of the Board: Viveck Goenka, Chief Editor: Raj Kamal Jha, Editor: Unni Rajen Shanker, Editor (Kolkata): Rakesh Sinha* (*Responsible for selection of news under the PRB Act)Copyright: The Indian Express (P) Limited. All rights reserved. Reproduction in any manner, electronic or otherwise, in whole or in part, without prior written permission is prohibited. The Indian Express®