



OVER THE MOON
Actor Nushratt Bharuccha says with multiple films lined up for release, she feels like walking on cloud nine
LEISURE P2



₹817CR FOR 7 MED COLLEGES
The Centre has released ₹817 crore to Odisha for establishment of 7 new medical colleges
DOWNTOWN P3



EVES BEAT B'DESH
India women outplay Bangladesh by 110 runs to keep their semifinal hopes alive at the ICC Women's World Cup
SPORTS P12

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FITCH CUTS INDIA GROWTH TO 8.5 PER CENT
New Delhi: Rating agency Fitch Tuesday slashed India's growth forecast for the next fiscal to 8.5 per cent from 10.3 per cent, citing soaring energy prices and rising inflation on account of the Russia-Ukraine war. It has revised upwards the GDP growth forecast for the current fiscal by 0.6 percentage points to 8.7 per cent. "However, we have lowered our growth forecast for FY 2022-2023 to 8.5 per cent (-1.8 pp) on sharply higher energy prices," Fitch said. **MORE P11**



8 KILLED AS BENGAL MOB SETS HOUSES AFIRE
Kolkata/New Delhi: Eight people, including two children, were charred to death as nearly a dozen huts were set ablaze in West Bengal's Birbhum district early Tuesday in a suspected fallout of the murder of a ruling TMC panchayat official, provoking calls by the opposition BJP for imposition of the President's rule. Altogether 11 people have been arrested so far, and the West Bengal government has constituted a Special Investigation Team (SIT) headed by Additional Director General (CID) Gyanwant Singh to probe the incident, state police chief Manoj Malviya said. **MORE P7**



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IRREGULAR by MANJUL
The most precious things are inside. Door leads to the kitchen

Lensman murder: Cops clueless about Sarmistha

Bhubaneswar, March 22: Even after the arrest of almost all the accused involved in the murder of lensman Manas Swain, the Bhadrak police are still groping in dark to nab the prime accused, Sarmistha Rout. Meanwhile, the deceased's family members including his widow Tuesday alleged the involvement of ministers Pratap Jena and Dibya Shankar Mishra in the gruesome murder. The deceased's wife threatened she will commit suicide before Naveen Niwas if she does not get justice. They accused Bhadrak police of working under political pressure to shield Sarmistha whose photos with different political leaders are doing the rounds on social media. However, Bhadrak police have denied the allegations of political pressure in the investigations. Sarmistha's brother Parameswar Rout was arrested from Vijayawada

HC junks Rout's bail plea
The Orissa High Court has rejected the anticipatory bail plea of Sarmistha Rout, the prime accused in the sensational murder of Nayagarh cameraman Manas Swain. The deceased used to work as a cameraperson with web channel 'Sampoorna', owned by Sarmistha.

in Andhra Pradesh, police said Tuesday. Parameswar had prepared the blueprint for the escape of his sister. However, it was learnt that she did not hide in Vijayawada. The Chandbali police Tuesday searched to nab Sarmistha and her aide. Raids were carried out at various places related to Sarmistha and her kin. A three-member police team conducted raids at the house and office of Sarmistha in Sky Tower Apartment under Airfield police limits here and seized incriminating documents during the raid.



A woman carrying her baby on her back, washes clothes in a pond on World Water Day, in Ranchi, Tuesday **PTI PHOTO**

Poll loss snub: After man, wife too dies in Bhadrak



Padmapur, March 22: A samiti member candidate, who had consumed poison following her husband's death over alleged harassment by winning party's supporters at Bada Agapur village under Basudevpur block in Bhadrak district, succumbed after battling for life for around a week. Sumati Parida, wife of Ramakant Parida, contested as a samiti member candidate from Padmapur panchayat in the recently-concluded panchayat elections but lost the polls to the rival party candidate. This had sparked resentment and unhappiness among the couple. The winners of sarpanch and samiti member posts took out a victory procession after the results were announced. The victory procession was passing by their house when some workers of the winning candidates ridiculed the couple over their defeat. This resulted in a fight at the spot between Ramakant and the winning candidates and their supporters. Later, Ramakant returned home and had a spat with his wife. Unable to fathom the humiliation, Ramakant hanged himself with a rope and died March 13.

Fuel back to singe again

After a four-month gap, fuel companies have jacked up petroleum prices by up to ₹1; LPG also goes up to record high after a ₹50 hike



CPI workers stage a demonstration near Rajmahal Square in Bhubaneswar condemning rising fuel prices, Tuesday **OP PHOTO**

FUEL PRICES IN CITY

PETROL	₹102.74/L
DIESEL	₹92.54/L

Petrol in Delhi will now cost ₹96.21 per litre as against ₹95.41 previously while diesel rates have gone up from ₹86.67 per litre to ₹87.47, according to a price notification of state-owned fuel retailers. In Mumbai, the petrol price has been hiked by ₹0.84 per litre to ₹110.82, and diesel by ₹0.86 to ₹95. The rates, which differ from state to state depending on the incidence of local taxes such as VAT,

are likely to continue to rise over the next few days as state oil firms recoup losses from keeping prices on hold for a record 137 days. Simultaneously, the price of non-subsidised LPG cylinders has been increased to ₹949.50 per 14.2-kg bottle in the national capital and Mumbai, and to ₹976 in Kolkata. While LPG rates were last revised on October 6, 2021, petrol and diesel prices had been on a freeze since November 4 as five states, including Uttar Pradesh and Punjab, went to the polls. LPG prices had gone up by close to ₹100 per cylinder between July and October 6, 2021, before criticism halted the monthly revision in rates. Non-subsidised cooking gas is the one that consumers buy after exhausting their quota of 12 cylinders at subsidised or below market price. However, the government pays no subsidy on LPG in most cities and the price of the refill that consumers, including the poor women who got free connection under the much-talked Ujjwala scheme, undertake is the same as non-subsidised or market price LPG.

Jagadev behind bars

The Chilika MLA is charged with offences like attempt to murder, obstructing police from performing duty, injuring public and using car as a weapon to hurt people



Bhubaneswar, March 22: The Banpur police have arrested Chilika MLA Prasanta Jagadev soon after he was discharged from a private hospital in the city here Tuesday. The MLA was arrested for ramming his car into a crowd in Khurda district recently which left at least 27 persons injured. Inspector General of Police (central range) Narasingha Bhol has confirmed the arrest of Jagadev. Jagadev was under treatment after he was brutally roughed up by a crowd following the incident that occurred March 12. The incident snowballed into a major controversy in the state. The suspended BJD MLA was produced before the SDJM court in Bhubaneswar and subsequently taken to the Banpur court by an Ambulance Tuesday evening. Police may also take him on remand for further investigation. Jagadev has been charged with serious offences like attempt to murder, obstructing police personnel from performing their duty, injuring public and using car as weapon to hurt people in connection with the incident in which several police personnel were also injured. "We have taken serious note of the brutal act by the legislator. A DSP-ranked officer has been given the responsibility of the probe. Many people have recorded the barbaric incident in their cellphones. Those electronic evidence will be brought under the purview of investigation," Bhol had said earlier.

Delhi most polluted capital for 4th time running

India continues to feature prominently in the list with 35 of the top 50 most polluted cities in the world

air quality data from 6,475 cities in 117 countries. The report mentioned that among the most polluted capital cities, Dhaka ranked second after Delhi, followed by N'Djamena in Chad, Dushanbe in Tajikistan and Muscat in Oman. New Delhi saw a 14.6 per cent increase in PM2.5 concentrations in 2021 with the levels rising to 96.4 micrograms per cubic meter from 84 micrograms per cubic meter in 2020, the report said. "India also continues to feature prominently among the most polluted cities with 35 of the top 50 most polluted cities being in this country. India's annual average PM2.5 levels reached 58.1 µg/m3 in 2021, ending a three-year trend of improving air quality." It stated, "India's annual PM2.5 averages have returned to pre-quarantine concentrations as measured in 2019. Alarming, in 2021, none of the Indian cities met the



prescribed WHO standards of 5 µg/m3." The report also revealed that 48 per cent of Indian cities exceeded 50 µg/m3 air quality level, which is well over 10 times the WHO guidelines. Commenting on IQAir's recent data, Avinash Chanchal, the Campaign Manager at Greenpeace India said the report is a wake-up call for governments and corporations. "It is once again highlighting

It is once again highlighting that people are breathing dangerously polluted air. Vehicular emissions are one of the major contributors to urban PM2.5 concentrations. With annual vehicle sales in India expected to increase, it is certainly going to impact air quality if corrective measures are not taken in time
AVINASH CHANCHAL | CAMPAIGN MANAGER AT GREENPEACE INDIA

18 EV CHARGING POINTS IN CITY

New Delhi, March 22: The Union Ministry of Heavy Industries has sanctioned as many as 18 Electric Vehicle (EV) charging stations for Odisha's Bhubaneswar. This was revealed by the Minister of State for Heavy Industries Krishan Pal Gurjar in a written reply in the Lok Sabha Tuesday. This is a part of 2877 EV charging stations sanctioned by the ministry for 68 cities across 25 states/UTs under Phase-II of FAME India scheme. The ministry has sanctioned 1576 EV charging stations across 16 highways and nine expressways under this phase. As many as 44 EV charging stations on Kolkata-Bhubaneswar highway and 120 on Chennai-Bhubaneswar highway have been sanctioned, it was learnt. Further, there shall be at least one charging station at every 25km on both sides of the highway.

MARKET WATCH

INDEX	VALUE	VARIATION
SENSEX	57989.30	↑ 696.81
NIFTY	17315.50	↑ 197.90
DOLLAR	76.56	↓ ₹0.04
EURO	83.93	↓ ₹0.26
GOLD	₹51,185	↓ ₹470
SILVER	₹67,439	↓ ₹910

WEATHER

	BHUB	CTK
MAX	37.8°C	37.2°C
MIN	24.7°C	24.4°C
Humidity	82%	85%
Rainfall	Nil	Nil

Forecast: Light to moderate rain

leisure



BEYONCE IN TALKS TO PERFORM IN OSCARS

Singer Beyonce is in talks to perform on Oscars telecast from Compton tennis courts. Organisers behind the big award event are pulling out all the stops to land an iconic performance from best original song nominee Beyonce, multiple sources close to the show told *Variety*.

DANIELA MELCHIOR JOINS FAST AND FURIOUS 10

Actress Daniela Melchior is the latest to join the cast of *Fast and Furious 10*. *Aquaman* star Jason Momoa recently became the first big addition to the cast, joining series stars Vin Diesel, Tyrese Gibson, Ludacris, Michelle Rodriguez and Sung Kang, reports *Deadline*.



FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES

Today, the stars put you on high alert... and not for nothing. You will save yourself from being swindled. Though you will easily manage to stay ahead of others, you may make a few enemies on your way. It's not a good day if you're looking to buy a house or vehicle, says Ganesh.

TAURUS

People around you will be surprised to witness the considerate and compassionate side of you today, says Ganesh. Problems may come knocking but you, along with support from your loved ones, will handle them with brilliant tact. Enjoy the company of near and dear ones and let your presence be felt in social outings, suggests Ganesh.

GEMINI

Today, you will decide to become a bit more conscious about your health. You may or may not join a gym or measure your calories, but you will definitely sit up and take notice of your lifestyle and unhealthy food habits, predicts Ganesh. A new job is also likely, which will pen a completely new chapter in your life.

CANCER

You will be in a joyous mood. You will be de-lightened in whatever task you do. Financial matters will confound you, with even a petty issue causing tension. Ganesh says it will be a colourful day, with happy tidings.

LEO

Your entire day will be spent at work. Those working in large corporations will have to fulfill heightened expectations from their superiors. Housewives will need to tackle other work, apart from their daily chores. It is an important day for you, says Ganesh.

VIRGO

You will stay away from partnership ventures. Ganesh says you have the ability to control large-scale projects on your own. You have leadership qualities, and will be able to coordinate team work and direct your colleagues to get the required amount of work from them.

LIBRA

Ganesh says that you will be able to attain a huge benefit because of your nature to take chances. Higher ups in the office will take notice of your skills and ability to work well. Seniors in your office will promote and inspire you to give your best. Ganesh says this is not a good time to get into a direct fight with anyone since it will lead to more problems and issues.

SCORPIO

You are ready to take up the challenges that life has to throw at you. Thanks to the confidence within you, which gives you power to fight it out against all odds. Even if you take up a mammoth task, you are bound to succeed today, predicts Ganesh.

SAGITTARIUS

Round and round they tumble, the wheels of life, smoothly gliding into a routine. You may spend your day in discontent due to the rut of regular activities. Sadly, there is little hope or adventure Ganesh foresees that might make this day worthwhile for you.

CAPRICORN

Duping the wisest with your extraordinary power of convincing may have been your forte, but you may have to prove yourself all over again, for Ganesh says you will be tested today. This apart, you are likely to find answers to questions lingering in your subconscious mind for long.

AQUARIUS

You may fall in love today! If single, romance colours your day with a rainbow. If married, you may enjoy a quiet but romantic evening with your spouse. Ganesh says that if nothing else, it's a good time to pour over your photo albums and float in nostalgia.

PISCES

You will be treading new ground at work. Exciting as that sounds, it merely means you will have to do a lot of travelling today. You will also find yourself swamped with drafting new business proposals, holding meetings, or otherwise networking over the phone. On the brighter side, your travels are unlikely to involve the cramps of flying economy class, says Ganesh.

Nushratt on cloud nine

Mumbai: Actress Nushratt Bharuccha says she is on cloud nine as she has back-to-back releases. Her latest is an announcement of a film and a song release at the same time.

The actress has recently made the headlines with the virality of her recent love song, featuring Sunny Kaushal alongside the announcement of her upcoming lead project, *Selfie*, co-starring Akshay Kumar and Emraan Hashmi.

Speaking about the same, the actress mentioned, "It's definitely an exciting time professionally because I am finally getting to share some of the things I have been working on, with

the audience. Yesterday our song, *Kya Yehi Pyaar Hai* released and we also announced *Selfie* so these 2 projects coming together, while I am shooting for other various projects, really feels like I'm walking on Cloud Nine.

"It is definitely very motivating and makes me want to push myself and keep putting out my best." The actress is to be seen with Sunny Kaushal and Emraan Hashmi for the first time, for *Hurdang* and *Selfie*, respectively.

The actress will be next seen in *Ram Setu*, *Janhit Mein Jaari*, *Chhorii 2*, *Hurdang* and *Selfie*.



Gully Boy rapper MC Tod Fod passes away at 24

Mumbai: Rapper Dharmesh Parmar, known by his stage name MC Tod Fod passed away at the age of 24. He had lent his voice to the song *India 91* from the Zoya Akhtar directorial *Gully Boy* which starred Ranveer Singh in the eponymous role.

The cause of death seems to be a result of a pre-existing heart ailment, said Azadi Records co-founder, Uday Kapur. "He was playing football with his Swadesi crew members at a place near Nashik when he collapsed. Right now, his friends and family are completely shell-shocked," said Kapur. Zoya Akhtar took to her Instagram to offer her condolences on the departure of MC Tod Fod.

"You have gone way too soon. I can only be grateful our paths crossed. Rest in peace Bantai #mctodfod," she wrote.

Gully Boy actors Ranveer Singh and Siddhant Chaturvedi also paid their tributes to the departed soul. Ranveer took to his Instagram story and shared a picture of the rapper with a broken heart emoticon. Siddhant shared a screenshot of his earlier conversation with the late Gujarati rapper, in which the two are appreciating each other for their music and performance. He wrote, "RIP bhai," along with a broken-heart emoticon.

Mujib biopic an interesting task: Benegal

Mumbai: Veteran filmmaker Shyam Benegal, who has directed the biographical Bengali film *Mujib* based on the life of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman - the founding father of Bangladesh, says it was quite an interesting task for him as a filmmaker to encapsulate the multiple layers of Mujib's life into a film.

The film *Mujib: The Making of a Nation* is produced by the Bangladesh Film Development Corporation and India's National Film Development Corporation



(NFDC). Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, also known as Bangabandhu, was the first Prime Minister of Bangladesh, leader of the Bangladesh Awami

League who was also the central figure of the Bangladesh Liberation War in 1971.

Benegal said: "It was a part of the cultural treaty between two countries, India and Bangladesh, where a film on Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was offered to be made by our Prime Minister Mr Narendra Modi to Bangladesh PM Sheikh Hasina. She happily agreed. They suggested a couple of names of filmmakers to helm the film and one of the suggestions was that of

my name. "When I was asked if I would like to make a film on Bangabandhu, I jumped at the idea because I believe that he was one of the exciting personalities of that time in our subcontinent. If we look at his journey, the story is really extraordinary, very powerful and deeply tragic at the same time." Benegal said, adding, "I think he really was a very passionate man and he gathered all his strength from the love of his country."

Dhauri-Kalinga Mahotsav gets off to a colourful start

Scintillating presentations of Manipuri, Odissi and Contemporary Martial Arts hold audience spellbound



A performance by Nrutya Naivedya, Bhubaneswar.

BHUBANESWAR- The three-day 18th Dhauri-Kalinga Mahotsav jointly organised by Department of Tourism, Government of Odisha and Orissa Dance Academy in association with Art Vision took off on a colourful note here at Shanti Vihar, Foothills of Dhauri, Tuesday.

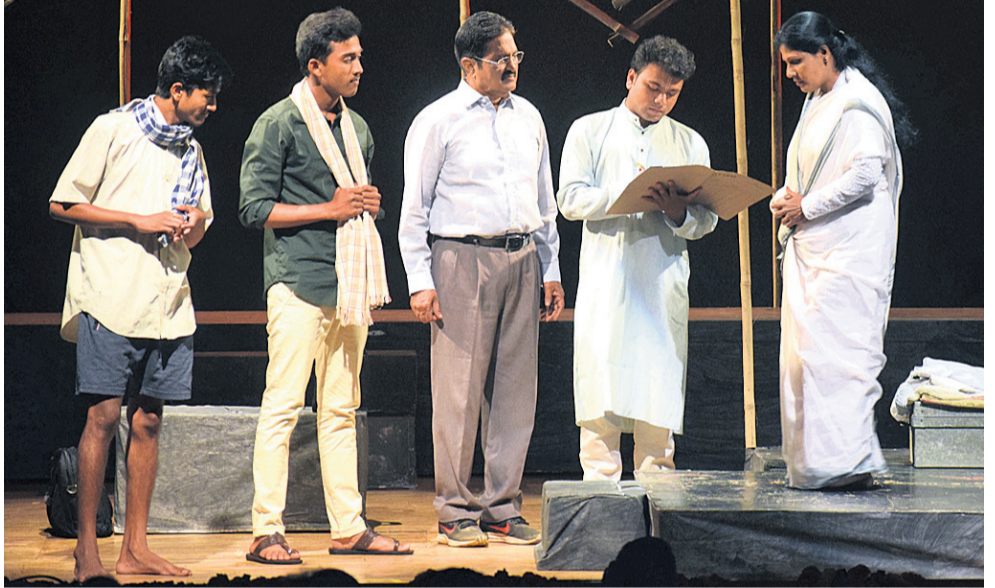
The festival opened with a Manipuri dance recital by Bimbabati Devi and group from Manipuri Nartanalaya, Kolkata. Their first presentation was *Bhoomi*, based on *Bhoomi Suktam* which is a hymn of 63 mantras in the 12th section of Atharva Veda, choreographed by Devi. It was followed by *Purna Purushottam*, a celebration of Vishnu in the form of Narasimha.

The second presentation of the evening was Odissi Dance by the artistes of Nrutya Naivedya, Bhubaneswar led by Guru Pravat Swain. They presented *Bakulabharana Pallavi* set to *Raaga-Bakulavarana* and *Tala-Ektala* followed by *Sadaripu* or six internal enemies. The dance was



Students of Sadhya performed Contemporary Martial Arts. OP PHOTOS

24TH KALINGA NATYA MAHOTSAV: DAY 3



A scene from the play *Phulanola* staged Tuesday, on the third evening of a national multilingual theatre festival organised by Satabdira Kalakar, at Rabindra Mandap, Bhubaneswar. Written by Gourahari Das on the backdrop of 1999's Supercyclone that ravaged the coastal Odisha, the play was dramatised and directed by Gouranga Rout and presented by City-based theatre troupe Interface. OP PHOTO

PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

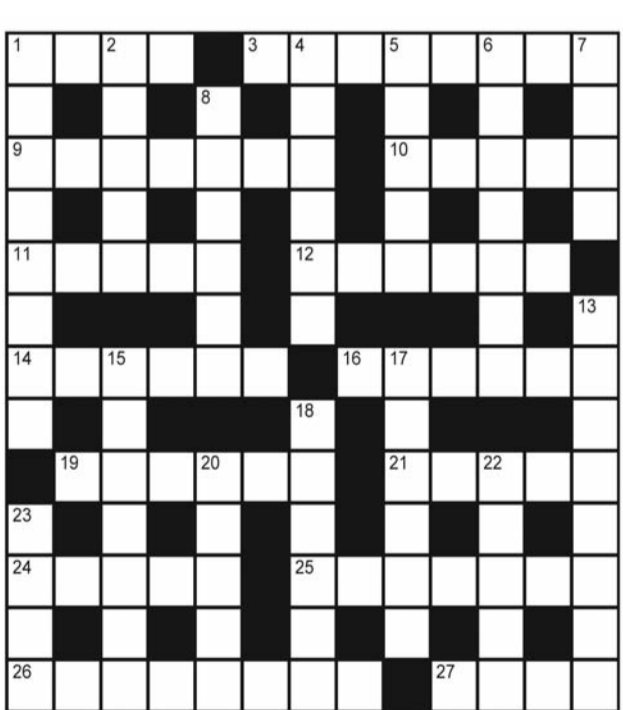


BREVITY



FUN post

CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 1 Free from danger
 - 3 Agreeable
 - 9 Graduate student
 - 10 Goddess of love
 - 11 Pulitzer Prize category
 - 12 Give the sack
 - 14 Legendary
 - 16 Shackle
 - 19 Shooting star
 - 21 Angler's basket
 - 24 Copious
 - 25 Special assignment
 - 26 Infant's utterance (4,4)
 - 27 Kind of blocker
 - Down**
 - 1 Stalemate
 - 2 Animal group
 - 4 Shoe part
 - 5 Emissary
 - 6 Charity event
 - 7 Leisure
 - 8 Infuriate
 - 13 Kandy locale (3,5)
 - 15 Cafe and bar combo
 - 17 Alibi
 - 18 Existed from the beginning
 - 20 Boot out
 - 22 Upper crust
 - 23 Duds

SUDOKU

To solve the Sudoku puzzle, fill in the boxes in such a manner that every row, column and 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9, without repeating any.



SOLUTIONS



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

of the day quote

When Jayalalitha was admitted to Apollo hospital, Sasikala told me a few times that Jayalalitha was doing fine. I was not aware of the food given to the former Chief Minister. Personally, I still have high regards and respect for VK Sasikala

The AAP government cannot escape any blame, as it had financially starved the municipal corporations for political reasons. The Union and state governments should not enter into a new blame game and ensure holding of MCD elections as soon as possible

Whatever happened in 1990 was a tragedy. My Kashmiri pandit brothers and sisters had to leave their homes. I would like everything to be investigated properly as to who were the 'parties' interested in ethnic cleansing at that part of the time

SHORT TAKES

Man gets 10-yr jail in rape case

Nagaon: A person accused of raping a six-year old minor girl was sentenced to 10 years of imprisonment by a special judge of the Nagaon district court Tuesday. The judge, Ipsita Barhakur, also imposed a fine of ₹20,000 on him and ordered increase of the prison sentence by another three months if the convict failed to pay the fine on time. The person had lured the girl, belonging to the same village in Nagaon district, to his house and repeatedly raped her in 2018.

2 men gunned down in clash

Amritsar: Two men were shot dead Tuesday in a clash in Anayatpur village allegedly over harassment of a woman, police here said. The deceased were identified as Surmu (22) and Arri (32), said police. They said that the shooting arose out of an altercation that took place between two groups over some minor issue. However, the victims' families challenged the version, alleging that the assailants were harassing some women and when they were asked to stop, they opened fire. Police said several police teams have been dispatched to nab the accused.

Major fertilizer scam busted

Guwahati: The Assam Police's CID has busted a major fertilizer scam in Assam and arrested nine people, including owners of various retail and wholesale outlets and hoarders, officials said Tuesday. A police spokesman said that following the direction of Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, the CID had earlier registered a criminal case and conducted raids at various places in Morigaon, Kamrup, Darrang, Cachar, Goalpara, and Darrang districts recently.

BSF officer found dead

Jammu: The body of a Border Security Force (BSF) officer was found hanging inside his quarters in a camp in J&K's Rajouri district Tuesday, police said. Police sources said at around 6 p.m., the body of BSF Sub-Inspector Ladup Bomza was found inside his quarters in the camp in Sunderbani area of Rajouri. Inquest proceedings have been started into the death of the sub-inspector who belonged to West Bengal.

Significant number of terrorists present in launch pads in Pak, PoK: Govt

ED hovers close to Thackeray

Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray's brother-in-law found himself targeted by the Enforcement Directorate Tuesday with the agency freezing ₹6.45 crore in his assets in a money laundering case, officials said



AGENCIES

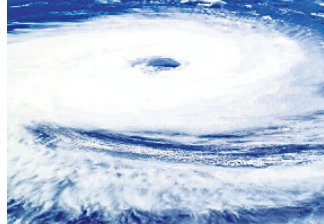
Mumbai, March 22: In a major development, the Enforcement Directorate (ED) said Tuesday that it has attached immovable properties worth around ₹6.45 crore belonging to Pushpak Group's entity, Pushpak Bullion, in Thane. These include 11 flats in the Neelambari project in Thane, belonging to Shree Saibaba Grihanirmiti Pvt Ltd, which is owned and controlled by Shridhar Madhav Patankar.

Patankar is the brother-in-law of Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray (brother of Thackeray's wife Rashmi Thackeray). The action follows a money-laundering case registered in March 2017 against Pushpak Bullion and other group companies under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), the ED said. Till date, the central probe agency has attached other properties worth ₹21.46 crore owned by Mahesh Patel, Chandrakant Patel, their family members and companies controlled by them, in connection with the case.

Asani, the cyclone that was not!

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, March 22: Faster speed and wind shear were the two major factors that prevented the deep depression skirting Andaman & Nicobar Islands from intensifying into a cyclonic storm Tuesday.



The IMD's initial forecast, even when the system was just a low pressure area, had mentioned wind speeds would increase to 70-80 kmph, gusting to 90 kmph, which was then revised to 65-75 kmph, gusting to 85 kmph, by Monday evening. The observations show that the actual wind speed was recorded at 55-65 kmph gusting to 75.

Covid-19 vaccines not mandatory: Centre to SC

The Centre had earlier told the apex court that all documents related to Covid-19 vaccines and their compositions were available in public domain, and the vaccine had proven to be very effective and safe

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 22: The centre Tuesday clarified in the Supreme Court that it has not made Covid-19 vaccines mandatory and has

only said that the vaccination should be 100 per cent. The clarification from Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the Centre, came after Additional Advocate General for Tamil Nadu Amit Anand Tiwari told a bench of Justices L Nageswara Rao and B R Gavai that the union government had issued a mandate to us that 100 per cent people should be vaccinated. "Milords one clarification... That the State of Tamil Nadu said they made it mandatory as the Centre said 100 per cent vaccination. This is not a mandate. The Centre has not issued any mandate, the stand of centre is that it should be 100 per cent but it is not a mandate," Mehta

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 22: Infiltration from Pakistan has reduced considerably but a significant number of terrorists remain present in various launch pads in Pakistan and Pakistan occupied Kashmir, Lok Sabha was informed Tuesday.

In written replies to questions pertaining to the situation along the Line of Control (LoC) and international border with Pakistan, ministers of state for home affairs Nityanand Rai and Nitish



Pramaik gave details of steps taken by the government in countering the menace of infiltration and dropping of arms and ammunition using drones.

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Rai told the house that the infiltration across the LoC has decreased significantly since 2018 in Jammu and Kashmir. He said in 2021, the figure of infiltration stood at 34 whereas it was 143 in 2018, 138 in 2019 and 51 in 2020.

However, there was a word of caution as the minister informed the house that "as per inputs, a significant number of suspected terrorists remain present at various launch pads in Pakistan/Pakistan Occupied

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kashmir (PoK)". Pakistan and India have been observing a ceasefire along the LoC for over a year now. He said the government has adopted a multi-pronged approach to contain cross-border infiltration which includes multi-tiered deployment along the international border and LoC, border fencing, improved intelligence and operational coordination, equipping security forces with advanced weapons and taking proactive action against infiltrators.



A fisherman spreads a fishing net in the river Brahmaputra in Guwahati

PTI PHOTO

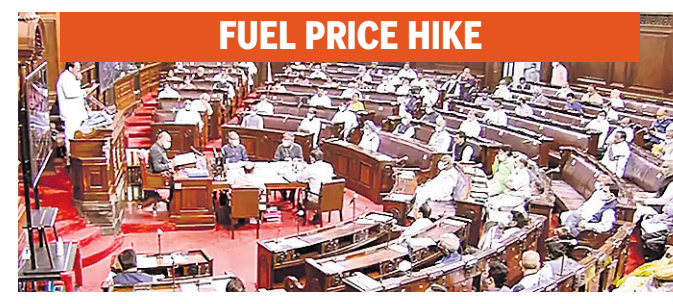
Oppn attacks govt, protests in Parl

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 22: Opposition parties Tuesday attacked the government over the rise in prices of cooking gas, petrol and diesel, alleging it had held back for the last few months only because of elections and had once again "inflicted pain" on the common man as the assembly polls were over.

They also protested in both houses of Parliament, with parties like the Congress, DMK, TMC, NCP, JMM, CPI, CPI-M, IUML, RSP, MDMK and VCK walking out from the Lok Sabha, while their members protested in Rajya Sabha forcing the chair to adjourn the House twice.

The Congress accused the government of "looting" ₹10,000 crore through this "triple assault" on the poor and common people and said it had warned of such price hike after the assembly election in five states. Several party leaders including Rahul Gandhi said the "lockdown" on petrol, diesel and gas



FUEL PRICE HIKE

prices has been lifted and the government will now increase their cost as assembly elections are now over. The Congress party in a statement demanded that the rise in petrol, diesel and gas prices be taken back and brought to the level that existed during the UPA rule. "The lockdown" imposed on the prices of gas, diesel and petrol has been lifted. Now the government will continuously increase the prices. If you ask the prime minister about the epidemic of inflation, he will say #ThaliBajao," Rahul Gandhi said in a tweet in Hindi. Samajwadi Party leader

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Akhilesh Yadav said, "Another gift of inflation given by the BJP government to the public... LPG cylinder in Lucknow is now near the ₹1000 mark and crosses ₹1000 in Patna! Elections end, inflation starts..."

Opposing the move, CPI-M leader Sitaram Yechury tweeted, "Modi government's cruel whiplashing of people. Prices of petrol, diesel and cooking gas hiked massively. Cascading inflationary impact will push up already soaring prices of all essentials. Inhuman callousness. Withdraw central cess/surcharges now."

Cov regulation for air travels relaxed

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 22: The Ministry of Civil Aviation has relaxed Covid-19-related regulations stating that cabin crew members need not wear PPE kit, airlines need not keep three seats vacant on international flights for medical emergencies and security personnel at airports can resume pat-down search of passengers.

The relaxation has been given to facilitate "smooth conduct of air operations", the ministry's order, dated March 21, stated. The aviation market in India is currently recovering after the Omicron variant suppressed the demand in January. Around 76.96 lakh domestic passengers travelled by air in February, approximately 20 per cent more than in January.



The Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA), in its order, said that the restriction of keeping three seats vacant on international flights for handling medical emergencies related to Covid-19 stands removed.

"Airlines may carry a few additional PPE protective gears, sanitiser and N-95 masks, to handle any respiratory infections related to cases on air; for passengers as well as the crew," the MoCA noted.

It said it had allowed full domestic flight operations from October 18, 2021, and has now decided to recommence scheduled international flight operations from March 27, 2022, "in view of the declining Covid-19 cases, high level of vaccinations and prevailing Covid-19 situation".

No re-exam if candidate fails to appear: UPSC to apex court

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, March 22: The Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) has informed the Supreme Court that there is no provision to conduct a re-examination, if a candidate fails to take the test on the scheduled date for any reasons.

In an affidavit, filed in the top court, the UPSC said it usually holds 13 examinations, apart from several recruitment tests, during a year and there is no provision for holding a re-examination in case a candidate fails to appear in the examination, for

any reason including any ailment or accident incapacitating him or her. It said it conducts the civil services examination strictly in accordance with the rules of examination framed annually by the government. It clarified that any decision regarding extra relaxation and compensatory/extra attempt is a policy matter falling under the domain of the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT).

On Monday, the top court was informed that the call regarding extra attempts to appear in the UPSC examination will have to be taken by the DoPT.



Representational image

told the top court which reserved its order on the plea seeking directions for disclosure of data on clinical trials of Covid-19 vaccines and post-job cases.

At the outset, Tiwari submitted

mandate is in larger public interest with a view to provide security from higher epidemics.

"I have submitted expert reports. Unvaccinated people are the cause of mutation of viruses... Where there is a likelihood that it would infect others or if there is a likelihood of spread, we have the power to issue such mandates... There is enough evidence to show that vaccines are preventing serious disease."

"It is further submitted that these provisions are also designed to nudge the public into getting vaccinated to stop the spread of disease. They are passed not only for the safety of the concerned individual but also serve a greater pur-

pose of ensuring the safety of others," he said.

The counsel for Maharashtra government also justified the state government orders which mandated the taking of Covid vaccines to access public areas.

The counsel for Bharat Biotech Ltd submitted that it has extensively published the findings of clinical trials in publicly available reputed peer-reviewed journals and are available on its website.

The centre had earlier told the apex court that all documents related to Covid-19 vaccines and their compositions were available in public domain, and the vaccine had proven to be very effective and safe.

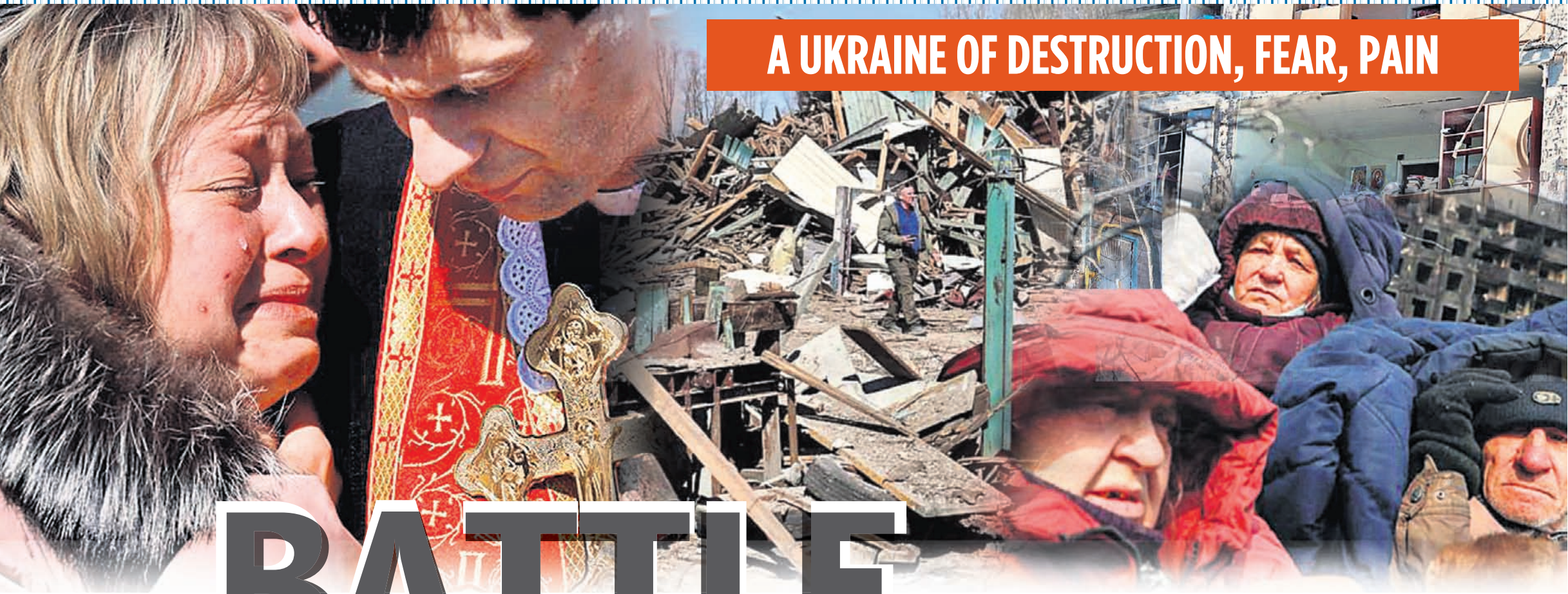
international

SL DEPLOYS MILITARY AT FUEL STATIONS

Sri Lanka Tuesday deployed military personnel at state-run petrol pumps to monitor and manage fuel distribution amidst a shortage that led to serpentine queues of consumers outside filling stations. The island nation is facing an acute economic and energy crisis triggered due to shortage of foreign exchange



A UKRAINE OF DESTRUCTION, FEAR, PAIN



BATTLE RAGES

Kyiv: Ukraine said it retook a strategically important suburb of Kyiv Tuesday, as Russian forces squeezed other areas near the capital and pressed their attack on the embattled southern port of Mariupol.

Explosions and bursts of gunfire shook Kyiv, and black smoke rose from a spot in the north. Intensified artillery fire could be heard from the northwest, where Russia has sought to encircle and capture several suburban areas of the capital, a crucial target.

Residents sheltered at home or underground under a 35-hour curfew imposed by city authorities that runs to Wednesday morning. Russian forces also continued their siege of Mariupol after the southern port city's defenders refused demands to surrender, with fleeing civilians describing relentless bombardments and corpses lying in the streets. But the Kremlin's ground offensive in other parts of the country advanced slowly or not at all, knocked back by lethal hit-and-run attacks by the Ukrainians.

Early Tuesday, Ukrainian troops drove Russian forces out of the Kyiv suburb of Makariv after a fierce battle, Ukraine's Defense Ministry said. The regained territory allowed Ukrainian forces to retake control of a key highway and block Russian troops from surrounding Kyiv from the northwest.

Still, the Defense Ministry said Russian forces were able to partially take other northwest suburbs, Bucha, Hostomel and Irpin,

Putin may deliberately impose unrealistic demands on Kyiv because he wants to conquer not only Ukraine but also the Baltic states

VOLODYMYR ZELENSKYI
UKRAINIAN PRESIDENT



some of which had been under attack almost since Russia's military invaded almost a month ago.

Russia's invasion has driven more than 10 million people from their homes, almost a quarter of Ukraine's pre-war population, according to the United Nations. The

U.N. has confirmed 953 civilian deaths while saying the real toll is probably much higher.

Estimates of Russian military casualties in the grinding war have been hard to come by and vary, but even conservative figures by Western officials are in the low

thousands. Russia has not given an update since it said March 2 that 498 soldiers had been killed in action in Ukraine. Russia's pro-Kremlin Komsomolskaya Pravda newspaper, citing the Defense Ministry, briefly reported Monday that almost 10,000 Russian soldiers

had been killed. The report was quickly removed, and newspaper blamed hackers. The Kremlin refused to comment on Tuesday.

Beyond the terrible human toll, the war has shaken the post-Cold War global security consensus, imperiled the global supply of key crops including wheat, and repeatedly raised worries it could set off a nuclear accident. Ukraine's natural resources minister said wildfires near the Chernobyl nuclear power plant have been extinguished

Russian President Vladimir Putin's forces are increasingly concentrating their air power and artillery on Ukraine's cities and the civilians living there

Talks to end the fighting have continued by video but failed to bridge the chasm between the two sides

and radiation levels in the area are within norms. Fires are not uncommon in the area, but raise concern about the potential release of radiation from fallout from the 1986 explosion and fire at the plant.

Concerns have been expressed for safety at the decommissioned plant since it was seized by Russian forces last month. The power supply was temporarily cut amid fighting earlier this month, and Ukraine's nuclear regulatory agency said Monday that radiation monitors around the plant had stopped working.

India 'somewhat shaky': Biden



Washington: US President Joe Biden has said that India is being "somewhat shaky" in terms of showing support against the Russian invasion of Ukraine as he asserted that most of the friends and allies of America have presented a united front in terms of dealing with Vladimir Putin's "aggression".



Russia's false accusation that Ukraine has biological and chemical weapons is a 'clear sign' that a desperate President Vladimir Putin is considering using them himself. He's already used chemical weapons in the past and we should be careful of what's about to come

JOE BIDEN | US PRESIDENT

February 24, Russian forces launched military operations in Ukraine, three days after Moscow recognised Ukraine's breakaway regions - Donetsk and Luhansk - as independent entities. "The one thing I'm confident, knowing Putin fairly well - as well as, I guess, another leader could know one another - is that he was counting on being able to split NATO. He never thought NATO would stay resolved - stay totally, thoroughly united. And I can assure you, NATO has never been stronger or more united in its entire history than it is today, in large part, because of Vladimir Putin," Biden told a business roundtable of CEOs on Monday

"But in response to his aggression, there has been - he's pretty - presented a united front throughout NATO and in the Pacific. The QUAD is, with the possible exception of India being somewhat shaky on some of this. But Japan has been extremely strong, so has

Australia, in terms of dealing with Putin's aggression," he said.

Last month, Biden had said that India and the US were trying to resolve their differences on the issue of Russian aggression against Ukraine. "We presented a united front throughout NATO and the Pacific, and you did a hell of a lot to help us impose sanctions and incur costs, real costs, on the Russian economy. We are seeing now that it mattered. It was really important what you all did. Not every one of you, but I'm not suggesting you all had to. But those of you who did step up, it made a big difference," he said.

The North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) is a group of 30 North American and European nations. According to NATO, its purpose "is to guarantee the freedom and security of its members through political

and military means". The QUAD - comprising Japan, India, Australia and the United States - is not an alliance but a grouping of countries driven by shared interests and values and interested in strengthening a rules-based order in the strategically-important Indo-Pacific region. PRESS TRUST OF INDIA/ REUTERS PHOTOS

2 teachers killed, student arrested

Stockholm: Two teachers were killed by a student at a high school in southern Sweden, police said Tuesday. The 18-year-old student was arrested at the scene Monday in Malmö, Sweden's third-largest city, for killing the women who were in their fifties, police said. The suspect was not previously known to the police and had no criminal record, and police did not disclose how the teachers were killed. A motive has not been established. "For now it is far too early to comment on that," Malmö Police Chief Petra Stenkula told a news conference. She said officers arrived and found the suspect and two victims on the third floor of the downtown Malmö Latin School 10 minutes after they were alerted, adding that the situation was then "under control".

Canada PM Trudeau strikes deal

Toronto: Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said Tuesday his Liberal Party has reached an agreement with the opposition New Democratic Party that would keep his party in power until 2025. "What this means is during this uncertain time the government can function with predictability and stability, present and implement budgets and get things done for Canadians," Trudeau said. Trudeau's Liberal Party won reelection in September but failed to win a majority of seats in Parliament and must rely on the opposition to pass legislation.



Imran's 'forgiveness' offer rejected

Islamabad: Rejecting Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan's offer of "forgiveness" ahead of voting on the no-confidence motion, the ruling PTI's dissident lawmakers have refused to rejoin the party. The News reported. PTI minority lawmaker Dr Ramesh Kumar claimed that the number of dissident MNAs of the ruling party has surged to 35, adding that none of them will rejoin PTI, the report said. Ramesh Kumar said stability is a must to steer Pakistan in the right direction. The disgruntled lawmaker said that he put up all issues before the Prime Minister, but nothing was done for the welfare of the minorities. Responding to a question, he said that three or four of the dissidents were elected on reserved seats while the remaining are all senior politicians.



Bombs, half-empty cities, hunger

Medyka (Poland): Yulia Bondariva spent 10 days in a basement as Russian planes flew over and bombs were falling on the Ukrainian city of Kharkiv. Having reached safety in Poland, Bondariva's only wish now is for her twin sister in the besieged city of Mariupol to get out, too.



"They have been in the basement since February 24, they have not been out at all," Bondariva said. "They are running out of food and water." Bondariva, 24, managed to speak to her sister on the phone recently. The fear of what will happen to her in the encircled and bombed-out city that is going through some of the worst fighting in the war has been overwhelming. "She does not know how to leave the city," Bondariva said after arriving in the Polish border town of Medyka. Before the war, Mariupol had a population of about 430,000, and about a quarter got out shortly after Russia invaded Ukraine on February 24. Leaving the besieged city later became nearly impossible. Tens of thousands escaped over the past week by way of a humanitarian corridor, including 3,000

on Monday, but other attempts have been thwarted by the fighting. The Mariupol City Council has asserted that several thousand residents were taken to Russia against their will. Bondariva said her sister told her of "Russian soldiers walking around

the city" in Mariupol, and people not being allowed out. "Civilians cannot leave," she said. "They don't give them anything." Maria Fiodorova, a 77-year-old refugee from Mariupol who arrived Monday in Medyka, said 90% of the city has been destroyed.

Washington must stop escalating tensions if it wishes to normalise ties with Moscow

SERGEI RYABKOV
RUSSIAN DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER

Power outage alert in Japan

Tokyo: Japanese were Tuesday urged to conserve energy as the government warned of potential blackouts here due to a shortfall in power generation after several coal-fired plants temporarily stopped generating electricity following an earthquake last week. The rare alert on Tuesday came as people used more heat than usual due to snow and unusually cold weather for the early spring. The magnitude-7.4 earthquake off the coast of Fukushima on March 16 killed four people and injured more than 230 others. It was a reminder of the deadly March 2011 quake and tsunami that killed thousands, triggered a nuclear disaster and devastated northeastern Japan's coast. Last week's quake caused temporary power outages, peaking at two million homes in Tokyo and eight other areas, as the coal-fired plants in the region serviced by the Tokyo Electric Power Company Holdings assessed and repaired damage. Several plants are still down and might not resume operations for several months. With the power grid under unusual strain, Economy and Industry Minister Koichi Hagiuda warned the conservation effort might not avert blackouts. He asked department stores, supermarkets and convenience stores to turn off their neon signs and urged factories to conserve as much power as possible. Tokyo's Haneda International Airport turned off some lighting and air conditioning in its terminals.

No survivors found in plane crash

Beijing: Over a day after a passenger aircraft with 132 people on board crashed in south China, a Chinese official announced Tuesday that no survivors have been found, official media here reported. No survivors have been found in the China plane crash, state-run Xinhua news agency quoted a Chinese official in a brief report. The announcement came as hundreds of rescuers carried desperate search operations in the mountainous regions of China's Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region where the Boeing 737 on the way from the Chinese city of Kunming to Guangzhou plunged and crashed on Monday. "People on board the aircraft are still unaccounted for as the rescue work is underway at the mountainous site," state television CGTN reported Tuesday over 24-hours after China's worst air disaster in a decade. Aircraft debris and some personal belongings have been found at the air crash site in Tengxian County of Wuzhou City, but no survivors, state-run CGTN reported Tuesday.



Navalny jailed for nine years

Moscow: Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny was convicted of fraud and contempt of court and sentenced to nine years in a maximum security prison Tuesday, in a trial Kremlin critics see as an attempt to keep President Vladimir Putin's most ardent foe in prison for as long as possible. A judge also ruled that Navalny would have to pay a fine of 1.2 million rubles (about USD 11,500). Navalny can appeal the ruling. Navalny, who is already serving 2½ years in a penal colony east of Moscow, had been accused of embezzling money that he and his foundation raised over the years and of insulting a judge during a previous trial. The politician has rejected the allegations as politically motivated. The prosecution had asked for 13 years in a maximum security prison for the anti-corruption crusader and a 1.2 million-ruble fine. The trial, which opened about a month ago, unfolded in a makeshift courtroom in the prison colony hours away from Moscow where Navalny is serving a sentence for parole violations. Navalny's supporters have criticized the authorities' decision to move the proceedings there from a courthouse in Moscow, saying it has effectively limited access to the proceedings for the media and supporters.



of the day quote

By 2030, all (our) hotels will be single-use plastic-free, have onsite organic waste management systems, and all of the wastewater will be recycled or reused

PUNEET CHHATWAL | IHL MD & CEO

Government of India is closely monitoring the global price movements and their impact on India's economy through trade

PANKAJ CHAUDHURY | MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE

Energy transition is an important step to cater to the increasing demand and can help the economy by creating jobs, which is estimated to employ 3.2 million people by 2050

BHAGWANTH KHUBA | UNION MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

Zomato faces backlash

New Delhi: Online food delivery platform Zomato was Tuesday forced to clarify over the road safety of its delivery partners as its plans to start instant 10-minute food delivery faced backlash on social media. Zomato founder Deepinder Goyal, who had Monday announced the company's plans to start a pilot of 'Zomato Instant' with four stations in Gurugram from next month, took to social media to clarify that there are no penalties for late deliveries and no incentives for on-time deliveries for both 10-minute and 30-minute deliveries.

Adani Power ties up with IHI, Kowa

New Delhi: Adani Power on Tuesday said it has collaborated with IHI Corporation and Kowa Company to study ammonia co-firing for environmentally sustainable power generation. "Adani Power Ltd (APL), IHI Corporation, and Kowa Company, Ltd (Kowa), have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to study the feasibility on a modification to achieve 20 per cent liquid ammonia co-firing ratio and thereafter extend this to a ratio up to 100 per cent mono-firing at the Adani Power Mundra Coal Fired Power Plant," a company statement said. APL aims to lead India's initiatives in achieving the targets of greenhouse gas reduction by evaluating the possibility and potential of ammonia as a fuel in thermal power generation which will utilize Green Hydrogen-derived ammonia in the existing thermal power plant. Kowa supported APL by conducting a global survey of hydrogen and ammonia-related technologies being utilised for power generation.

Infy to acquire oddity for ₹419cr

New Delhi: IT company Infosys will acquire oddity -- a Germany-based digital marketing, experience, and commerce agency -- in an all cash deal for 50 million euros (about ₹419 crore), the company said Tuesday. As part of Infosys' digital experience and design offering, oddity will become part of Wongdoody and join its network of studios across Seattle, Los Angeles, New York, Providence, Houston, and London, and design hubs in five cities in India, Infosys said in a statement. The company had acquired US-based Wongdoody, which offers creative and marketing services, in a USD 75 million deal in 2018. "To consummate the transaction, Infosys will also acquire Germany-based Kristall 247 for 3,000 euros (about ₹2.5 lakh)," the Indian IT firm said.

FITCH SLASHES FY23 GROWTH FORECAST TO 8.5 PC ON INFLATION

In its Global Economic Outlook-March 2022, the rating agency says the post-COVID-19 pandemic recovery is being hit by a potentially huge global supply shock that will reduce growth and push up inflation

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 22: Rating agency Fitch Tuesday slashed India's growth forecast for the next fiscal to 8.5 per cent from 10.3 per cent, citing soaring energy prices and rising inflation on account of the Russia-Ukraine war.

It has revised upwards the GDP growth forecast for the current fiscal by 0.6 percentage points to 8.7 per cent. For 2023-24, it is estimated at 7 per cent. "The jump in oil and gas prices will add to industry costs and reduce consumers' real incomes... Higher energy prices are a given," Fitch said as it has reduced the world GDP growth forecast by 0.7 percentage points to 3.5 per cent.

International oil prices started rising this year and jumped to a 13-year high of USD 140 per barrel earlier this month as an aftermath of the Russia-Ukraine war. Brent was trading at USD 118.59 per barrel Tuesday.

TCS ready to roll out 5G network anyday

BSNL is working with TCS and C-DoT to roll-out an indigenously developed 5G-enabled 4G network

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 22: IT major TCS is ready to put in place 5G network for any telecom operator across the globe on any given day and the company is working in India on a country-specific gears for the network, a senior company official said.

TCS head for Communication, Media & Information Services Kamal Bhadada told PTI that the company is already helping telecom operators across the globe in managing their networks, swapping equipment and technology providers. When asked about the readiness of TCS to roll-out 5G network for telecom customers, Bhadada said, "TCS can stitch it today. TCS is doing it today. So it's not about whether TCS is ready or not. TCS is ready. What we are working for in India is India-specific stack," Bhadada said.

BSNL is working with TCS and C-DoT to roll-out an indigenously developed 5G-enabled 4G network. The government expects the



Suzuki, SkyDrive sign deal to develop 'flying cars'

The two companies said they will also work to open up new markets with an initial focus on India, where Suzuki has a roughly half share of the auto market



I can say within maximum two years, the cost of electric scooter, car, autorickshaw will be same as petrol-driven scooter, car, autorickshaw

NITIN GADKARI | UNION ROAD TRANSPORT MINISTER



conomic sanctions on Russia have put global energy supplies at risk. Sanctions seem unlikely to be rescinded any time soon," the agency said. Last week, another global rating agency Moody's had slashed India's growth estimate for the 2022 calendar year to 9.1 per cent from 9.5 per cent earlier, saying high fuel and fertiliser import bill could limit capital expenditure.

Russia supplies around 10 per cent of the world's energy, including 17 per cent of its natural gas and 12 per cent of oil.

"The jump in oil and gas prices will add to industry costs and reduce consumers' real incomes... Higher energy prices are a given," Fitch said as it has reduced the world GDP growth forecast by 0.7 percentage points to 3.5 per cent.

International oil prices started rising this year and jumped to a 13-year high of USD 140 per barrel ear-

lier this month as an aftermath of the Russia-Ukraine war. Brent was trading at USD 118.59 per barrel Tuesday.

India relies on overseas purchases to meet about 85 per cent of its oil requirement, making it one of the most vulnerable in Asia to higher oil prices.

Observing that Indian GDP growth was very strong in the December quarter, Fitch said the GDP is more than 6 per cent above its pre-pandemic level though it is still well below its implied pre-pandemic trend.

"High-frequency data indicate that the Indian economy has ridden out the Omicron wave with little damage -- in stark contrast with the two previous coronavirus waves in 2020 and 2021," it said.

Fitch now sees inflation strengthening further, peaking above 7 per cent in the December quarter of 2022, before gradually easing.

PANDEMIC KEEPS UBER RICH OFF CHARITIES

In spite of a massive jump in the number of the uber rich and rich becoming richer, their contributions to charity continued to decline during the pandemic when a whopping 200 million-plus were forced into poverty, says a report. Charity by the uber rich slipped from 18% of the total funding in FY15 to a paltry 11% in FY21, say Bain & Company and Dasra in their India Philanthropy Report 2022.



Shares reverse course to end above 1 per cent

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, March 22: Benchmark stock indices Sensex and Nifty made a spirited recovery to close over 1 per cent higher Tuesday, riding on gains in Reliance Industries, Infosys and TCS amid a recovery in global equities.

After opening lower, the 30-share BSE Sensex had plunged to a day's low of 56,930.30 points on concerns over inflation and growth as India hiked fuel prices after a 137-day hiatus. However, the barometer rebounded in afternoon trade in line with gains in European and Asian stocks. The BSE Sensex closed up by 696.81 points or 1.22 per cent at 57,989.30 as 26 of its constituents ended in green. The broader NSE Nifty climbed 197.90 points or 1.16 per cent to finish at 17,315.50.

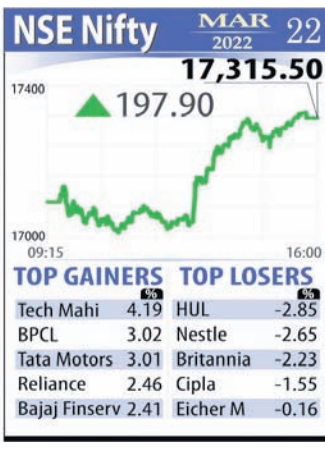
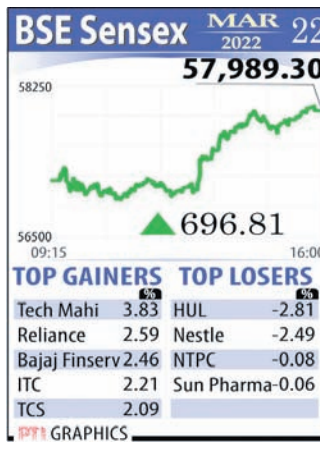
"We witnessed good rebound in

markets driven by buying in Reliance. Market recovery after the morning fall is a good sign for Indian market. In coming days, we still expect volatility to persist till the war situation between Russia and Ukraine and crude price stabilize," said Rahul Sharma of Equity 99.

Gains in the broader market were marginal compared to the benchmark index, with the BSE midcap index gaining 0.17 per cent and smallcap gauge 0.15 per cent.

Tech Mahindra emerged as the lead gainer with a jump of 3.83 per cent, followed by RIL (2.59 per cent), Bajaj Finserv (2.46 per cent), ITC (2.21 per cent), TCS (2.09 per cent), Kotak Mahindra Bank (1.88 per cent) and Infosys (1.87 per cent).

In contrast, Hindustan Unilever Limited, Nestle India, NTPC, and Sun Pharma were the laggards.



BPCL privatisation process has reached second stage: Govt

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, March 22: The privatisation process of state-owned oil marketing company Bharat Petroleum Corporation has reached its second stage, the Parliament was informed Tuesday.

"The Transaction Advisor appointed for the privatisation of BPCL had informed that multiple Expressions of Interest (EOIs) had been received for privatisation of BPCL, and the transaction is in second stage of the process," Minister of State for Finance Bhagwat Kishanrao Karad told



the Rajya Sabha in a written reply. According to the minister, the transaction advisor is bound by

the non-disclosure agreement for not sharing the information relating to bidders during the "currency of the process to ensure competitive non-collusive bidding."

On the question of whether the government has a plan in place to ensure job security of current BPCL employees, Karad said: "The terms and conditions of the strategic disinvestment in the Share Purchase Agreement suitably address employees' concerns."

The Centre is divesting its entire 52.97 per cent shareholding in BPCL to a strategic investor via a bidding process.

BIZ BUZZ

World Water Day at PPL

BHUBANESWAR: World Water Day-2022 was observed at PPL Water Treatment Plant in presence of teachers and students of PPL DAV School. It's a great initiative from PPL Management where school students were invited to the Water Treatment Plant. The students were made aware of the different processes of treatment of water through a flowchart. This Year the theme of the National Safety Day is 'groundwater, making the invisible visible'. Anil Verma, Jt. General Manager (Production) led the technical team which explained the process and the importance of water treatment. Prachi Sourabh Panda, Dy. General Manager (Production) highlighted the importance of chlorination of water and functions of different equipment. He was supported by Prassanna Kumar Acharya, Manager (Production), Pranab Bhattacharyya, Chief Manufacturing Officer and Unit Head expressed his happiness over students attending the event in large numbers. All the senior executives attended the meeting, while Soumyashree Omprakash Sahoo conducted the proceedings.



Academia-Industry Innovation Conclave

BHUBANESWAR: Academia-Industry Innovation Conclave, specific to Minerals, Materials & Life Sciences Technology was organised at CSIR - IMMT Auditorium, Bhubaneswar. The conclave was jointly organised by National Research Development Corporation, and CSIR-IMMT. The one day conclave was inaugurated in presence of Chief Guest, Pratap Sarangi, Honourable Member of Parliament, Dr Shekhar C Mande, Secretary DSIR & DG CSIR, Govt of India in the presence of Prof. S Basu, Director, CSIR-IMMT, Bhubaneswar, Commodore Amit Rastogi (Rtd), CMD, NRDC, Dr Ashok K Sahu, Chief Scientist, CSIR-IMMT, Dr T Pavan Kumar, Sr. Scientist, CSIR-IMMT, Mr N G Lakshminarayan, Chief-BD, NRDC, Dr Bijay Kumar Sahu, Head-IPFC & TISC, NRDC. Delivering his inaugural speech, Sarangi emphasised on more and more technological support for the growth of the country particularly during this pandemic time. He advised the industry and institutions to formulate their excellence and increase productivity with their expertise in this field.



Tata Motors to hike commercial vehicle prices from April 1

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 22: Homegrown auto major Tata Motors Tuesday said it will hike prices of its commercial vehicles range by 2-2.5 per cent, depending upon individual model and variant, from April 1.

The increase in the prices of commodities, such as steel, aluminium and other precious metals -- in addition to higher costs of other raw materials -- has incited this price hike of commercial vehicles, Tata Motors said in a regulatory filing. Last week, Mercedes-Benz India had said it would increase prices of the entire model range by up to 3 per cent from April 1.



nership, nor outline any production timetable or target. Founded in 2018, Tokyo-headquartered SkyDrive counts big

Japan businesses like trading house Itochu Corp, tech firm NEC Corp and a unit of energy company Eneos Holdings Inc among its main

shareholders. In 2020 it raised 5.1 billion yen (\$42 million) in total in Series B funds, according to its website.

SkyDrive is currently engaged in the development of a compact, two-seating electric-powered flying car with plans for full-scale production. The statement did not say whether Suzuki would be working on this specific vehicle.

The company, which is also developing cargo drones, aims to launch a 'flying car' service in Osaka in 2025 when the Japanese city hosts the World Expo.

For Suzuki, the partnership will add 'flying cars' as a fourth mobility business, in addition to automobiles, motorcycles and outboard motors, the statement said.

India women keep semis hopes alive

IPL one of greatest physiotherapists: Shastri

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 22: Former India head coach Ravi Shastri Tuesday said the IPL acts as one of the world's greatest physiotherapists, with its ability to get the injured players fit in time for the league. In his own inimitable way, Shastri said what many within the cricket fraternity, and outside of it, feel.

"IPL is one of the greatest leagues in the world, and it's also one of the greatest physios in the world, because, before the IPL auction everyone wants to get fit, because everyone wants to play in the IPL," Shastri said during a press conference organised by Star Sports, the official broadcaster of IPL 2022. Shastri is returning to the com-

mentary box after a seven-year absence. He will however be a part of the hindi commentary team, something he has not been associated with in the past.

Shastri, who was serving as the India head coach till last year's T20 World Cup, said he could not do commentary because of "a stupid clause that binds us".

This edition of the tournament will see 10 teams in action, with the addition of Gujarat Titans and Lucknow Super Giants. All the league stage matches will be played in three venues of Mumbai and one in Pune.

"All these three pitches (in Mumbai venues) are red soil pitches so you get to know how they behave very quickly, you will get similar

pitches in the three venues of Mumbai," he said.

Shastri and Suresh Raina will be part of the elite commentary panel of Star Sports for the upcoming IPL. Meanwhile, Raina said he sees, among others, leading all-rounder Ravindra Jadeja as a possible successor to the legendary MS Dhoni at Chennai Super Kings, where the southpaw established himself as one of IPL's greatest performers.

Both Shastri and Raina were asked if young players coming into the tournament with big price tags puts them under pressure. Raina said, "It matters a lot to those young players who come with a huge price tag. He needs to be very grounded and only focus on the process."



YASTIKA BHATIA



SNEH RANA (R)

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Hamilton, March 22: Yastika Bhatia's gritty half century (50, 80b, 2x4) and Sneh Rana's all-round performance (27; 4/30) powered India to a dominating 110-run win over Bangladesh and kept them in the hunt for a semifinal spot at the ICC Women's World Cup here Tuesday.

Opting to bat, India recovered from a mid-innings collapse to post a modest 229/7, riding a responsible knock by Bhatia and a late flourish from Rana and Pooja Vastrakar (30).

Defending the total, the spinners, led by Rana, controlled the proceedings as they struck at regular intervals. As a result, India bowled out Bangladesh for 119 in 40.3 overs to register their third win of the tournament. The big victory helped India improve their net run-rate (0.768) further.

The Mithali Raj-led side will take on South Africa in its final league match Sunday. Before that game however, if the second-placed Proteas beat West Indies Thursday, India's semifinal chances will get better.

India's decision to bring in senior spinner Poonam Yadav (1/25) in place of pacer Meghna Singh paid

dividends. With the spinners operating from both ends on a slow track, Bangladesh struggled to force the pace and were reeling at 69/5 after 25 overs.

Lata Mondal (24) and Salma Khatun (32) provided some resistance with a 40-run partnership, which was broken by Jhulan Goswami when she dismissed the latter, while Vastrakar accounted for Mondal a few overs later.

The pace duo of Goswami (2/19) and Vastrakar (2/26) shared four wickets between them while the spinners accounted for the rest.

Earlier, Smriti Mandhana (30) and Shafali Verma (42) shared 74 runs for the opening wicket but Ritu Moni (3/37) and Nahida Akter (2/42) shared five wickets between them to reduce India from 74 for no loss to 108/4.

Mandhana ended up hitting straight to Fargana Hoque off Akter, while Moni struck twice in two balls in the next over to leave India at 74/3 in 15.4 overs. While Verma was stumped by Nigar Sultana, skipper Mithali Raj (0) was out for a first-ball duck as India lost three wickets in quick succession.

Vice-captain Harmanpreet Kaur (14) then joined Bhatia as the two

tried to resurrect the innings, but the duo scored only 34 runs in 70 balls before a direct throw from Hoque caught the former short of her crease.

Bhatia and Richa Ghosh (26) then added 54 runs to take India past the 150-run mark. The duo played at a good pace with Ghosh slamming Lata Mondal (0/20) for successive fours in the 30th over.

However, Akter brought Bangladesh back into the game when she had Ghosh caught behind while she tried to cut a ball that was too close to her body. After completing her fifty, Bhatia too perished in the next ball while trying for a paddle scoop.

Vastrakar and Rana came together at 180/6 at the end of 44th over and added 48 runs in 38 balls, taking India past the 200-run mark. With the two going strong, the last 10 overs yielded 64 runs.

BRIEF SCORES

India Women 229/7 (Yastika Bhatia 50, Shafali Verma 42, Smriti Mandhana 30, Pooja Vastrakar 30; Ritu Moni 3/37, Nahida Akter 2/42) **beat Bangladesh Women 119** (Salma Khatun 32, Lata Mondal 24; Sneh Rana 4/30, Jhulan Goswami 2/19, Pooja Vastrakar 2/26) by 110 runs.

Paris 2024 sets USD 26 lowest rate for tickets

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Paris, March 22: One million tickets for the 2024 Paris Olympics will be sold for 24 euros (USD 26.50) each with availability for all 32 sports, organizers have said.

The Paris proposal to the IOC sets the basic price lower than at the 2012 London Olympics, where the 20 pounds tickets cost more than USD 31 at the exchange rate then.

"This is something important for us," Paris organizing committee president Tony Estanguet said. "This is a very strong promise to offer accessibility of everyone to Olympic sports." A centralized global sales program unveiled by Paris Olympics organizers calls for pricing nearly half of the 10 million total tickets at no more than 50 euros (USD 55).

For the 2024 Paralympics, prices start at 15 euros (USD 15.60) and about half of the 3.4 million tickets will cost no more than 25 euros (USD 27.50). Paris aims to raise 1.1 billion euros (USD 1.22 billion) in revenue — about 30% of its budget — from ticket sales, Estanguet said.

Hitting that target would lift ticket income for Paris above the USD 1 billion raised by London from more than eight million tickets sold.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Lakshya breaks into top 10 in BWF rankings

NEW DELHI: Indian badminton star Lakshya Sen's silver medal winning feat at the All England Badminton Championships helped him break into the top 10 of the latest BWF World Ranking Tuesday. The 20-year-old from Uttarakhand, who became only the fifth Indian ever to reach the summit clash of All England Championships, improved two places to become World No.9 with 74,786 points, surpassing reigning world champion Loh Kean Yew of Singapore. The former world junior number one Indian thus became the country's highest ranked men's singles player, surpassing Kidambi Srikanth, who slipped to the 12th spot this week. PV Sindhu remained at No.7, while Saina climbed two places to 23rd, following a second round defeat at All England. Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty, who had claimed the men's doubles title at India Open in January, jumped a place to the seventh spot.

Russia loses third football ruling at CAS

LAUSANNE (Switzerland): The Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) dismissed a third request by the Russian soccer federation for urgent rulings to freeze FIFA and UEFA decisions before World Cup playoffs begin this week. The latest challenge was against a decision by FIFA leaders March 8 to award Poland a bye into a playoff bracket final scheduled next week without having to face Russia. The latest dismissal confirms Poland will host either Sweden or the Czech Republic next week with a place at the World Cup tournament in Qatar at stake. All three teams had already refused to play Russia. Previous CAS rulings this month rejected the Football Union of Russia's requests to freeze bans on its teams imposed by FIFA and UEFA since the country's invasion of Ukraine February 24.

Dharambir sets new Asian record

DUBAI: Indian para athlete Dharambir set a new Asian record in the men's F32/51 club throw event en-route winning a silver on the opening day of the 13th Fazza International Para Athletics Championships here. India won three medals on the opening day with Devendra Singh also clinching a silver in the F44 men's discus throw event, while Jyoti Behera claimed a bronze in 400m women's final T37/38/47 final. In the club throw F32/51 men's final, Dharambir threw the club to a distance of 31.09m in his second attempt to finish second behind Algeria's Walid Ferhah (37.42m) Monday.

No NOC for Taskin

NEW DELHI: Bangladesh pacer Taskin Ahmed, who was approached by IPL side Lucknow Super Giants as a replacement for injured England quick Mark Wood, will not participate in the cash-rich league, the country's cricket board (BCB) has said. According to a report by local media, Super Giants reached out to the 26-year old pacer after Wood was ruled out of the tournament due to an elbow injury. However, the Bangladesh Cricket Board has refused to give Taskin the No-Objection Certificate (NOC) to take part in the IPL as it clashes with the ongoing tour of South Africa.

Mickelson opts out

WASHINGTON: Three-time Masters champion Phil Mickelson, out of public view since his inflammatory remarks about the Saudi-funded rival league and the PGA Tour, has decided not to play at Augusta National this year. Mickelson's name was moved from the list of players expected to compete in the Masters to a section at the bottom titled, "past champions not playing." The club confirmed that Mickelson has notified Augusta National he will not be playing. It will be the first time Mickelson is not at the Masters since 1994, when he was recovering from a broken leg suffered while skiing.

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