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### 'Abuse of rights': SC pulls up Udhayanidhi on his Sanatan Dharma remark



DMK leader made the remarks in September 2023

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 4

REBUKING TAMIL Nadu minister Udhayanidhi Stalin for his "eradicate Sanatan Dharma" remark, the Supreme Court on Monday said he had abused his right to free speech.

The two-judge bench of Justices Sanjiv Khanna and Dipankar Datta was hearing Udhayanidhi's plea to club the FIRs filed in different states over his remarks.

"You abuse your Article 19(1)(a) right (freedom of speech and expression). You abuse your Article 25 right (freedom of conscience, freedom to profess, practice and propagate religion). Now, you are exercising your Article 32 right (to file plea in the Supreme Court directly)? Do you not know the consequences of what you said?", Justice Dutta said.

"You are not a layman. You are a minister. You should know the consequences," he said.

Appearing for the DMK leader, senior advocate Abhishek Manu Singhvi said he was not arguing on the merits of the matter, but only seeking to club the FIRs filed in six states. "I will suffer my

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

### 'BRIBERY IS NOT PROTECTED BY PARLIAMENTARY PRIVILEGE'

## SC: No immunity for MPs & MLAs who take bribe for vote, speech in House

7-Judge Constitution Bench overrules 5-Judge Bench's majority verdict in JMM bribery case; PM hails order

ANANTHAKRISHNAN G  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 4



The seven-judge Constitution Bench headed by Chief Justice of India D Y Chandrachud pronounces the verdict, Monday. PTI

MEMBERS OF Parliament and state legislatures who take bribes to vote or speak in a certain manner in the House are not immune from prosecution, the Supreme Court said in a landmark order on Monday, overruling its 1998 judgment (JMM bribery case) which granted immunity to such lawmakers.

"Bribery is not protected by parliamentary privilege," the seven-judge Constitution Bench headed by Chief Justice of India D Y Chandrachud said in a unanimous ruling. "The Constitution

envisions probity in public life," it said.

"We disagree with and overrule the judgment of the majority (in the JMM bribery case)," said the bench, which included Justices A S Bopanna, M M Sundresh, P S Narasimha, J B Pardiwala, Sanjay Kumar and

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

### Apex court draws a red line, pushes the envelope on House privileges

APURVA VISHWANATH  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 4

IN HOLDING that Parliament is not the sole judge of the privileges it enjoys, a seven-judge Constitution bench of the Supreme Court has extended the scope for judicial review of the House and the actions of its members.

"In a consistent line of precedent this Court has held that - firstly, Parliament or the state

legislature is not the sole judge of what privileges it enjoys and secondly, Parliament or legislature may only claim privileges which are essential and necessary for the functioning of the House," the ruling stated.

The ruling focuses only on the scope of immunity from prosecution when

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

WHEN LAWMAKERS TAKE BRIBES PAGE 12

### 'ANONYMITY MAKES TASK TOUGH'

## Poll bond details: Will comply, SBI tells SC, but need time until June 30

Says can't meet March 6 deadline due to challenge of matching donation to donor

ANANTHAKRISHNAN G  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 4

CALLING IT a "time consuming exercise", the State Bank of India (SBI) on Monday asked the Supreme Court to extend the deadline for submitting details on purchase of electoral bonds to the Election Commission of India (ECI) to June 30. The Lok Sabha election process would be over by then.

Last month, a five-judge Constitution Bench had struck down the electoral bonds scheme and directed the SBI, the authorised financial institution under the scheme, to submit by March 6 the details of electoral bonds purchased since April 12, 2019 to the ECI, which would publish the information on its official website by March 13.

In its application to the SC on

Monday, the SBI said it "intends to comply in full, with the directions issued" by the court. "However, there are certain practical difficulties with the decoding exercise and the timeline fixed for it... due to the stringent measures undertaken to ensure that the identity of the donors was kept anonymous," it said, adding that "matching of the donor to the donations made would be a complex process".

The bank said that "as per the gazette notification" of January 2, 2018, "whereby the central government framed the Electoral Bond Scheme 2018, it was categorically provided under Clause 7 (4)" that "the information furnished by the buyer shall be treated as confidential by the authorised bank and shall not be disclosed to any authority for any purpose, except when demanded

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

### KASHMIR, TELANGANA, GUJARAT, KARNATAKA: A COMMON THREAD

## Job hunt, YouTube channel: How Indian youths landed in Russia-Ukraine war

MEA says working to bring men back; families say contact erratic, fear the worst

SREENIVAS JANYALA & BASHAARAT MASOOD  
HYDERABAD, SRINAGAR, MARCH 4

FROM KASHMIR to Karnataka, Gujarat to Telangana, a thread connects the Indian youths trapped fighting Russia's war with Ukraine - desperation for a job, a YouTube channel that provided hope, and a lie that became clear only after landing in Moscow.

The families of men *The Indian Express* spoke to detailed how they were tricked into believing they were applying for jobs as helpers in Russian government offices, but were forced to head to the frontlines, putting their life in danger.

From Telangana, Mohammed Afsan (30) of Hyderabad and



Clockwise from above: Gurbpreet Singh and others from India who were promised jobs as helpers in Russia government offices; Mohammed Samir Ahmed; Mohammed Sufiyan

Mohammed Sufiyan (23) of Narayanpet district went to Moscow in November and

December, respectively. "They were duped. The agent who recruited them said they would

work in Moscow only; instead, they were given 15-day training and dropped in Ukraine, where they are being forced to stay alongside Russian troops fighting the war," said Afsan's brother Mohammed Imran.

Afsan was working as a salesman at a clothes showroom when he chanced on the job opportunity in Moscow. "He, like the other youths, was promised a salary of Rs 45,000 per month for the initial three months, which would gradually increase to Rs 1.5 lakh. After working for a year, he could apply for Russian passport and citizenship. It was a lucrative offer and unfortunately they fell for it. Afsan left for Moscow on November 9," Imran said.

Afsan's last video call from the Russia-Ukraine border was on December 31. "After that,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

### Blow to Cong in Gujarat, its ex-state chief quits, cites 'insult to Ram'



Arjun Modhwadia has not announced his next move yet

ADITIRAJA  
VADODARA, MARCH 4

ARJUN MODHWADIA was conspicuous by his absence at the media interaction of the Gujarat Pradesh Congress Committee (GPCC) on Monday, which shared the itinerary of Rahul Gandhi's Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra which enters the state on March 7. Although the Porbandar MLA was already on his way to hand over his resignation to the Speaker, Congress leaders remained in denial when asked about the rumours that Modhwadia had quit.

Within a couple of hours, Modhwadia, 67, confirmed he felt "suffocated" and that ending his 40-year association with the Congress was a "relief". "If there is any leader who has travelled most extensively for the Congress or held events for the party, it is me. If I have had to quit the party, it is for the Congress to introspect why I was forced to do so," he said.

In his resignation letter to Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge, Modhwadia said, "Since my dissent, I have met scores of people who were offended by

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8



Prime Minister Narendra Modi with Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy in Adilabad on Monday. PTI

## 'PM matlab bada bhai': Revanth seeks Modi's help for Telangana

SREENIVAS JANYALA  
HYDERABAD, MARCH 4

TELANGANA CHIEF Minister A Revanth Reddy on Monday referred to Prime Minister Narendra Modi as "bada bhai" (elder brother) while seeking support from the Centre for the development of his state.

Reddy flew to Adilabad on Monday and shared the stage with the PM, who had arrived in the morning to inaugurate several projects. Reddy's move was in contrast to his predecessor, former CM K Chandrashekar

Rao, who skipped meeting Modi several times during the PM's visits to the state.

Addressing the Prime Minister in Hindi, Reddy said, "Hamare hisaab se Pradhan Mantri matlab bada bhai (According to us, Prime Minister means elder brother). Only with his help can chief ministers take their states forward. It is my request that if Telangana has to progress, if it has to move ahead like Gujarat, your help is required. To reach your goal of a 5 trillion dollar economy, India needs five metropolitan cities

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

### THE WORLD



### TRUMP WINS COLORADO BALLOT DISQUALIFICATION CASE AT TOP COURT

### SHEHBAZ TAKES OATH AS PAK PM FOR SECOND TIME

## Delhi announces Rs 1,000 per month for women over 18, earmarks Rs 2,000 crore

GAYATHRI MANI  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 4

THE AAM Aadmi Party government in Delhi announced the Mukhyamantri Mahila Samman Yojana in the Budget for 2024-25 on Monday under which every woman over 18 years will receive an honorarium of Rs 1,000 a month. The scheme will exclude tax payers, beneficiaries of



Delhi Finance Minister Atishi with CM Arvind Kejriwal after presenting the Budget. Praveen Khanna

government pension schemes and government employees.

Presenting the AAP government's tenth budget with a total outlay of Rs 76,000 crore for 2024-25, Finance Minister Atishi said, "So, whether she is a

DELHI BUDGET INSPIRED BY RAM RAJYA: CM PAGE 4

### EXPRESS NETWORK



SET TO RESIGN TODAY, JUSTICE GANGOPADHYAY SAYS WORK DONE PAGE 6

### PAGE 1 ANCHOR

## In new school report card, role of parents, classmates, self-evaluation

R RADHIKA  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 4

MOVING AWAY from traditional evaluation methods that rely on marks and grades awarded by school teachers, the National Council for Educational and Research Training (NCERT) has introduced a new "holistic" report card that incorporates feedback from parents, classmates, and even self-evaluation by students to track their overall progress regularly.

PARAKH, a standard-setting body under the NCERT, has devised the Holistic Progress Card

(HPC) for foundational stage (Classes 1 and 2), preparatory stage (Classes 3 to 5) and middle stage (Classes 6 to 8) and is currently working on developing one for the secondary stage.

The NCERT has asked all states to either adopt the HPC or adapt it according to their requirements.

Traditionally, assessment in schools has been primarily focused on year-end examinations, with the responsibility solely placed on teachers. The HPC, aligned with the recommendations of the National Curriculum Framework for School Education (NCFSE) to make evaluation

more "learner-centric", marks a departure from this approach by considering various aspects of learning, including diverse skills and competencies, rather than solely relying on marks obtained in periodic tests. Its aim is to track not only students' academic performance but also their cognitive, socio-emotional abilities, and creativity during class activities.

To achieve this, the HPC emphasises on a descriptive form of evaluation where students are active participants. Each child will be able to evaluate not only their own performance but also of their classmates. According to the NEP 2020, the HPC is a

### WHAT IS HOLISTIC PROGRESS CARD

■ New form of student evaluation based on recommendations of NEP 2020

■ Doesn't depend on marks or grades to evaluate a student's academic performance

■ Instead, it gives greater role to parents in tracking a student's achievements in class



■ Students' own perception of their performance and what they wish to achieve in school included for the first time

means to build on self-awareness and self-esteem of students by communicating the strengths and areas of improvement.

At all stages, going beyond academic learning, students are assessed on self-awareness, interpersonal relationships, problem-solving, emotional quotient and creative skills. Each student has to reflect on their own progress at the end of an activity by circling statements such as - "I was able to learn something new" or "I was able to express my creativity" or "I was able to help others in some way".

For example, at the end of an activity, a student of Class 1 will

circle what they were able to do and not do. A child can self-evaluate her performance through descriptive remarks such as "I liked doing this work", "I could ask my friends for help", "I followed my teacher's instructions" by colouring smileys that say 'yes', 'no' or 'not sure'. This "student's self-reflection" is part of the HPC for all students from Class 1 to Class 8.

At middle stage (Class 6 to Class 8), students are encouraged to set their own academic and personal goals and a definite timeline by which they wish to achieve these goals at the beginning of the year. Students are also required to fill in their expecta-

tions from a teacher with respect to areas where they need help.

The HPC for middle stage also includes an "ambition card" where a student can fill in her ambitions for the year and mention areas where she must improve, skills and habits she must develop to achieve her ambitions.

The HPC will also link home and school by making parents an integral part of a child's learning process. It will include inputs of parents like ability to do homework, following lessons in the classroom and even student's ability to balance screen time with extra-curricular activities at home.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



● 'PM matlab bada bhai': Revanth

and Hyderabad wants to contribute. Please support us in the Metro rail... Just as you developed the Sabarmati river, we want to regenerate our Musi river," he said to cheers from the audience.

worth over Rs 7,000 crore. Speaking at the event, Modi said, "The various projects launched today will ensure development of Telangana and its people."

FROM PAGE ONE FULL REPORTS ON WWW.INDIANEXPRESS.COM SC overrules verdict in JMM bribery case

Manoj Misra. Welcoming the court's decision, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said in a post on X: "Swagatam! A great judgment by the Hon'ble Supreme Court which will ensure clean politics and deepen people's faith in the system."

In 1993, JMM leader Shibu Soren and some of his party MPs were accused of taking bribes to vote against the no-confidence motion against the then P V Narasimha Rao government. In its majority verdict in 1998, a five-judge SC bench quashed the case against the JMM MPs, citing immunity under Article 105(2).

On Monday, the bench said the 1998 judgment "has wide ramifications on public interest, probity in public life and parliamentary democracy" and "there is grave danger of this court allowing an error to be perpetrated if the decision were not reconsidered."

"Corruption and bribery of members of the legislature erode the foundation of Indian parliamentary democracy. It is destructive of the aspirational and deliberative ideals of the Constitution and creates a polity which deprives citizens of a responsible, responsive and representative democracy," the CJ said.

Stating that "corruption and bribery by members of the legislature erode probity in public life", the court said that Articles 105 and 194 of the Constitution -- which deal with the powers and privileges of Parliament, state legislatures, their members and committees thereof -- "seek to create a fearless atmosphere in which debate, deliberations and exchange of ideas can take place within the Houses of Parliament and the state legislatures".

"For this exercise to be meaningful, members and persons who have a right to speak before the

House or any committee must be free from fear or favour induced into them by a third party," it said. Saying that they "must be able to exercise their free will and conscience to enrich the functions of the House", the bench said: "This is exactly what is taken away when a member is induced to vote in a certain way not because of their belief or position on an issue but because of a bribe taken by the member".

"While some cherished freedoms exercised individually by members of the House, including the freedom of speech, have been undeniably understood to be essential to the functioning of the House as a whole, other exercises such as damaging public property or committing violence are not and cannot be deemed to have immunity," it said.

"Bribery is not rendered immune under Article 105(2) and the corresponding provision of Article 194 because a member engaging in bribery commits a crime which is not essential to the casting of the vote or the ability to decide on how the vote should be cast," it said. "The same principle applies to bribery in connection with a speech in the House or committee," it said.

Discussing the evolution of the privileges of the House, the court said that "unlike the House of Commons in the UK, India does not have ancient and undoubted privileges which were vested after a struggle between Parliament and the King. Privileges in pre-independence India were governed by a statute in the phase of a reluctant colonial government. The statutory privilege transitioned to a constitutional privilege after the commencement of the Constitution".

"Whether a claim to privilege in a particular case confirms to the parameters of the Constitution is amenable to judicial review," it

said. The court also held that "the privileges and immunities... belong to the House collectively" and "an individual member of the legislature cannot assert a claim of privilege to seek immunity... from prosecution on a charge of bribery in connection with a vote or speech in the legislature...". Where a member claims such privilege individually, it "must be tested on the anvil of whether it is tethered to the healthy and essential functioning of the House," it said.

The bench disagreed with the argument that prosecution for bribery is excluded from the jurisdiction of the criminal courts and the position need not be changed as it is already being treated as contempt of the House or breach of privilege.

"The issue of bribery is not one of exclusivity of jurisdiction by the House over its bribe-taking members. The purpose of a House acting against a contempt by a member for receiving a bribe serves a purpose distinct from a criminal prosecution. The purpose of the proceedings which a House may conduct is to restore its dignity. Such a proceeding may result in the expulsion from the membership of the House and other consequences which the law envisages," it said.

"Prosecution for an offence operates in a distinct area involving a violation of a criminal statute. The power to punish criminal wrongdoing emanates from the power of the state to prosecute offenders who violate criminal law. The latter applies uniformly to everyone subject to the sanctions of the criminal law of the land. The purpose, consequences, and effect of the two jurisdictions are separate. A criminal trial differs from contempt of the House as it is fully dressed with procedural safeguards, rules of evidence

and the principles of natural justice," it said. The court also explained when an offence of bribery would be complete.

"The offence of bribery is complete at the point in time when the legislator accepts the bribe" and "does not matter whether a vote is cast in the agreed direction or if the vote is cast at all", it said.

"The interpretation which has been placed on the issue in question in the judgment of the majority... (in the JMM bribery case) results in a paradoxical outcome, where a legislator is conferred with immunity when they accept a bribe and follow through by voting in the agreed direction" but "on the other hand a legislator, who agrees to accept a bribe, but decides to vote independently will be prosecuted," it said, adding, "such an interpretation is contrary to the text and purposes of Articles 105 and 194."

The question had arisen in the context of the allegations against JMM MLA Sita Soren, who was accused of accepting a bribe from an Independent candidate in the 2012 Rajya Sabha elections. She had later voted for her party candidate.

Sita Soren moved the Jharkhand High Court for quashing the criminal proceedings against her, citing provisions of Article 194 (2), but the HC declined to do so. She then approached the SC, where a two-judge Bench in September 2014 opined that since the issue was "substantial and of general public importance", it should be placed before a larger bench of three judges.

On March 7, 2019, a bench of three judges took up the appeal and noted that the HC judgment dealt with the 1998 verdict, and hence should be referred to a larger bench, and it was ultimately referred to the seven-judge bench.

● Apex court draws a red line

an MP is charged with bribery since Article 105(2) of the Constitution guarantees that "no member of Parliament shall be liable to any proceedings in any court in respect of anything said or any vote given by him in Parliament or any committee thereof..."

Analogous to keeping parliamentary privilege out of the purview of the Courts, Article 121 of the Constitution places restrictions on the Parliament from discussing the conduct of judges of the Supreme Court or High Courts. These two provisions are part of the separation of powers between the state and the judiciary.

The judiciary has always made a strong case for this line of separation for its own functioning -- holding that the independence of the judiciary is part of the basic structure of the Constitution.

The seven-judge bench ruling that lawmakers can be booked for graft even when it involves their actions within the House, relies on a reading of the Constitution that "envisions probity in public life." While this interpretation is not based on reading any one provision of the Constitution, the ruling states that corruption of lawmakers "is destructive of the aspirational and deliberative ideals of the Constitution and creates a polity which deprives citizens of a responsible, responsive and representative democracy."

While a 3-2 majority ruling

in 1998 had allowed virtually blanket immunity from graft charges, the SC has in the years since chipped at this privilege.

In 2021, State of Kerala v Ajith, a bench headed by DY Chandrachud had dismissed pleas challenging the filing of a criminal FIR against six LDF members in the Kerala assembly ruckus case of 2015. The SC held that while MLAs are protected for their speech and even protest on the floor of the Assembly, criminal acts committed like damaging microphones or furniture cannot be covered under parliamentary immunity.

Also pending before the SC are pleas seeking its intervention on defining the contours of the Governor's powers in the law-making process. About this case, the SC ruling said that "the interplay between fundamental rights of citizens and the privileges of the Houses of Parliament or Legislature is pending before a Constitution bench of this Court."

The SC also said that Parliament or legislature may only claim privileges which are essential and necessary for the functioning of the House. The Court reasoned that since parliamentary privileges are a "collective right" of the House, the privilege exercised by members individually is in turn qualified by its "necessity," which would be restricted only to privileges "without which they could not discharge their functions."

● Poll bonds: SBI asks for more time

by a competent court or upon registration of criminal case by any law enforcement agency."

"In order to protect the donors' anonymity and to maintain confidentiality/secretcy", the bank "has laid down a detailed standard operating procedure for 29 authorised branches, spread all over India, with regard to sale and redemption of electoral bonds," it said.

"Section 71.2 of the said SOP categorically provided that no details of bond purchaser including KYC and other details will be entered in CBS (core banking system)," it said. "Details of purchases made at the branches are not maintained centrally at any one place, such as the name of purchaser/ donor which could be tallied with date of issue, place of issue (branch), denomination of bond, bond number," the bank said.

"To ensure that donors' anonymity would be protected... data related to the issuance of the bond and the data related to the redemption of the bond was kept recorded in two different silos... (and) no central database was maintained," it said.

"Donor details were kept in a sealed cover at the designated branches and all such sealed covers were deposited in the main branch of the applicant bank, which is located in Mumbai," it said.

"Each political party was required to maintain a designated account in any of the 29 authorised branches. It was only in this account that electoral bonds received by that party could be deposited and redeemed. At the time of redemption, the original bond, the pay-in slip would be stored in a sealed cover and sent to the SBI Mumbai main branch," it said.

"It can thus be noted that both sets of information were being stored independently of each other. Thus, to re-match them would be a task requiring

significant amount of effort. In order to make available donor information, the date of issue of each bond will have to be checked and matched against the date of purchase by a particular donor. This exercise would only deal with the first silo of information. These bonds were redeemed by the political parties in their designated bank accounts. Accordingly, this information would then have to be matched against the bond redemption information that makes up the second silo," it said.

"The retrieval of information from each silo and the procedure of matching the information of one silo to that of the other would be a time consuming exercise. The details are stored separately, some of the details such as number of bonds etc, are stored digitally while the other set of details such as name of purchaser, KYC etc., are stored physically. The purpose of not storing all details digitally was to ensure that it cannot be gathered easily to achieve the object of the scheme," SBI said.

Stating that "22,217 electoral bonds were used for making donations to various political parties", the bank said: "Redeemed bonds were deposited in Mumbai main branch by the authorised branches at the end of each phase in sealed envelopes. Coupled with the fact that two different information silos existed, this would mean that a total of 44,434 information sets would have to be decoded, compiled and compared".

"It is therefore respectfully submitted that the timeline of three weeks fixed by the court in its judgement dated 15.02.2024 would not be sufficient for the entire exercise to be completed. Therefore, an extension of time may kindly be granted by this Hon'ble Court in order to enable the SBI to comply with the judgement," it said.

● SC pulls up Udhayanidhi

fate, I am not saying one word or merits. I am not justifying or criticising. Nor am I accepting or denying," he said, adding that the purported remarks were made at a private event.

As the bench suggested that he should approach the respective high courts, Singhvi said he would then "have to move six high courts" and "will constantly be tied up in this". "This is persecution before the prosecution," Singhvi said.

Singhvi pointed out that the court had allowed the requests

to club FIRs in the Nupur Sharma and Arnab Goswami cases. He said Sharma's comments on Prophet Muhammad during a TV debate in 2022 were provocative, but the Supreme Court had allowed the clubbing of FIRs against her.

The court later agreed to consider Udhayanidhi's plea on March 15.

Speaking at a conference in September 2023, Udhayanidhi had likened Sanatan Dharma to coronavirus, malaria and dengue, and said it should be eradicated.

● How Indian youths lured in Russia-Ukraine war

there has been no contact with him; we recently discovered he has injured his leg. We request the Centre to intervene and arrange for their evacuation," he said.

Sufiyan was working at a packing firm in Dubai, earning Rs 30,000 a month. "He came in contact with an agent named Faisal Khan, who runs a YouTube channel, and was brainwashed into applying for this job in Moscow, saying he would never earn more," said Saiyed Salman, Sufiyan's brother. "He was told the job was as a helper in a Russian government office. He was promised over Rs 1 lakh per month and citizenship after one year. He paid Rs 1.5 lakh as commission to the agent and came to India. The agent arranged flight tickets and Sufiyan left on December 17".

Faisal Khan, and his YouTube channel Baba Vlogs, found mention in the testimonies of other families as well.

In video calls to his brother, Sufiyan said he and other youths from India were taken to a military camp and, after three days, sent for training. "At the camp, they saw other Indians who had returned from the frontlines. They had shrapnel injuries, broken limbs, and Sufiyan came to know that he and the others undergoing basic training would also be sent to the frontlines," Salman, an autorickshaw driver, said. "On February 27, Sufiyan was almost killed in a drone strike. A youth from Gujarat (Hemil Mangukiya) was killed... Sufiyan called us to narrate the ordeal. He was traumatised seeing death up close, and desperate to return to India. That was his last call..."

The three from Karnataka's Gulbarga have been identified as Mohammed Samir Ahmed, 23, Saiyed Ilyas Hussaini, 22, and Abdul Nayeem, 23. All three were working alongside Sufiyan in the Dubai company. Samir's elder brother Mustafa said the agent explicitly promised that the job was in Moscow. "He even allayed concerns that they may be sent to the war, but after reaching there, they found they would be helping Russian troops in the field. Samir called four-five days ago and was extremely scared. He pleaded

with me to approach the authorities here to evacuate him safely," said Mustafa. "I am even more traumatised because the youth from Gujarat, Hemil, had called me just two days before he died. They (others from India) loaded his body in the back of a truck... The Centre should do whatever it can to rescue all of them."

Surat resident Hemil Mangukiya, 23, died on February 21. Like others, his journey to the warzone started via a YouTube video on the Baba Vlogs channel. According to a family member, he was "put on duty from December 24". "Their work was to dig mud and make bunkers for a couple of hours in a day and later supply arms and ammunition to the Russian soldiers on the frontlines."

In Kashmir's Awantipora, Aazad Yousuf Kumar, 32, had been keen to move out as his family work -- of digging borewells -- didn't fetch enough returns. In search of something more lucrative, Kumar would often scan his phone for job opportunities outside the state. It was during one such search that he came across a YouTube channel promising jobs in Dubai. "He got married three years ago and wanted a better job," said Kumar's brother Sajad Ahmad. He, too, said the YouTube channel was run by Dubai-based Faisal Khan. "My brother was told that he would have to clean rooms and work in the kitchen in Dubai and would earn well." The channel often advertises jobs in the Gulf. In one video, Faisal Khan said he has studied only up to class VI and earns Rs 80,000 a month.

A week after the birth of his child, Kumar left for Mumbai on instructions from his "recruiters". "From Mumbai, he was taken to Chennai. But once he left Chennai, we lost contact with him," said his brother. In January, Ahmad received a WhatsApp call from an unknown number. When he answered, it was his brother. "He told me that when they reached Dubai, they were asked to sign a contract for a job in Russia. Azad told me he thought it was a cleaning job in Moscow. But when they reached Russia, they were directly sent to a training centre," Ahmad said. "He said he received a gun-

shot wound in the foot at the training centre and was admitted to a hospital, while 11 others with him were sent to the frontlines. He was calling from the number of a Russian citizen."

Ahmad said that since then, Kumar has sent him occasional messages. "He told me he is now at the border with Ukraine. He said they have been divided into six groups of two each and each group has been assigned to a unit." Ahmad said his brother fell prey to a "big gang that is luring desperate job seekers to Dubai and then sending them to Russia to fight against Ukraine".

Gurpreet Singh, 23, from Punjab's Hoshiarpur is another youth pleading for help to escape the war. While the war landed up there is different, he too fell prey to a lie. An avid traveller who has been to several countries on low-budget backpacking trips, he decided to go to St Petersburg to attend a New Year festival.

According to his cousin Sandhu, he left on December 27 and stayed in Moscow for a few days before proceeding to St Petersburg. After attending the festival, he hired a cab and went to Belarus, thinking his Russian visa was valid there. He was detained and the Belarus Army handed him over to Russian Army personnel at the border.

"The Russian personnel told me that he had broken the country's laws... and threatened to jail him for 10 years... After he pleaded for several hours, the Russian troops connected him on the phone with a translator, who explained to him that instead of rotting in jail, he should join the Russian army as a helper. He was promised Rs 1 lakh salary and told that he would live and work in Moscow, but after two days, he was sent for training and is now at the frontlines," Sandhu said.

Last week, the Ministry of External Affairs said India is trying its best for an "early discharge" of around 20 Indians. "It is our understanding that there are 20-odd people (Indians) who have gone there to work as support staff or as helpers with the Russian army," MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said. "We are trying our level best for their early discharge."

● In new school report card, role of parents, classmates, self-evaluation

The new assessment form gives importance to peer evaluation as well. At the end of a classroom activity, each student is required to remark whether their classmates were able to execute tasks while learning and engaging. Each student has to circle descriptive indicators of progress like classmates were able to "understand the activity", "were able to support me or the teacher in the activity" or "were able to contribute to the success of activity".

In March 2023, NCERT conducted a pilot study in select states following which, in September, NCERT wrote to the states and UTs to start implementation of the HPC in schools.

"We had conducted a pilot study with select schools in March 2023 and then we had asked the states to implement the HPC by adopting or adapting it according to their own contextual requirements. The states can also translate these HPC in their re-

spective regional languages. Almost 15 to 16 states and UT as well as CBSE schools are now assessing students based on the HPC," said Indrani Bhaduri, head and CEO of PARAKH. Other states are at various stages of implementing the HPC, she said.

After the NCERT's direction in December last year, the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) released its own "implementation manual" for the HPC model of assessment for the

foundational stage up to Class 2. The Board adapted the HPC with certain tweaks that categorises students in the age of 3 to 6 years into a 'beginner', 'progressing' or 'proficient' category. Unlike the NCERT HPC, which is fairly detailed, the CBSE model encourages teachers to mark the level of attainment of a student using neutral icons such as flowers, trees, smileys etc. Also, the progress reports are mostly prepared by teachers in consultation

with parents and student inputs.

The NCERT has made plans to digitise the records of schoolchildren on a dedicated platform. In 2022, states were advised to establish a central digital repository of data called the Vidya Samiksha Kendra to track student enrolment, progress in their learning levels among other details. The states, as directed by the NCERT, will have to upload the student HPC online.

"Currently, the schools are making physical copies of the HPC but the plan is to digitise

these records eventually. We have asked schools to scan and upload the HPCs on Vidya Samiksha Kendra. We are developing this platform to host all digital records of the students and soon teachers will be able to directly make these records online," said Bhaduri.

For the secondary stage, the NCERT is preparing the HPC with inputs from SCERTs and state and central boards. "The secondary stage HPC will be very special as it will include Board exams as well," said Bhaduri, adding that the HPC will be out by the end of March.

IN REMBRANCE Corps of Signals salutes its following Signallers who left us for their heavenly abode during the month of Feb 2024. (a) IC-52881Y Brigadier Apinder Pal Singh (b) 15675351A Havildar Kafal Masih (c) 15679486Y Havildar G Anandhan (d) 15695294L Havildar Debajit Das (e) 15755929L Sigm Maram Reddy Verra Brahmananda Reddy (f) A4200517N Agniveer Gajjela Venkatesh

NORTHERN RAILWAY TENDER NOTICE Invitation of tender through E-Tendering (E-Procurement Systems) N.I.T. No. 50 (A,B)-23-24/WE Name of work with its location (A) Setting up of press briefing room/studio room in Railway Board in the S/O SSE/W/IRB under ADEN/E-III (B) Repair of drainage/sewerage arrangement at Tilak Bridge Railway Colony in the section of SSE/W/IRB under ADEN/E-III

मध्य प्रदेश पुलिस आवास एवं अधोसंरचना विकास निगम कार्यालय परियोजना यंत्री, पुलिस लाइन रीवा (म.प्र.) Ph. No. : 9425601556, 9340714903 प्रेस-विज्ञप्ति

संभाग रीवा के अंतर्गत मुख्यमंत्री पुलिस आवास योजना के अंतर्गत 24 एन.जी.ओ. एवं 96 आरक्षक आवास- गृहों का निर्माण कार्य सतना जिला सतना के कार्य हेतु निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना क्रमांक 15/2023-24 (ऑनलाइन निविदा क्रमांक MPPHCL/TENDER No. 2024 MPPHC 341220 1 आमंत्रित की जाती है। उक्त निविदा प्रपत्र दिनांक 30.03.2024 समय 17:00 बजे तक ऑनलाइन खरीदे एवं प्रस्तुत किये जा सकते हैं एवं निविदा सूचना व अन्य विवरण Portal : http://www.mptenders.gov.in पर देखे जा सकते हैं। म.प्र. माध्यम/114104/2024 परियोजना यंत्री

NORTHERN RAILWAY NOTIFICATION Re-engagement of Retired Railway Staff on monthly remuneration basis in exigencies of services in Delhi Division, Northern Railway. Applications are invited from Retired Railway Staff for Re-Engagement on monthly remuneration basis in Delhi Division, Northern Railway for various categories (Total 06 vacancies) on or before 20.03.2024. Maximum upper age limit for re-engagement on 20.03.2024 is 64 years. The employee Removed/Dismissed/Compulsory retired as a result of disciplinary action or pending vigilance cases or in review and Retired employees being re-engaged, covered under the Safety Related Retirement Scheme/Liberalized Active Retirement Scheme for Guaranteed Employment for Safety Staff (LARS/GESS) are not eligible for re-engagement.

NAVYUG SCHOOL EDUCATIONAL SOCIETY HEAD OFFICE : NDMC SCHOOL OF SCIENCE & HUMANITIES TUGHLAK ROAD, NEW DELHI-110001

ADMISSION NOTICE FOR THE ACADEMIC SESSION 2024-2025 IN NAVYUG SCHOOLS UNDER NDMC Admission are open for residents of NDMC area in all branches of Navyug Schools located in New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC) area for the academic session 2024-2025 as per the following schedule: 1. Class K.G. and I - Only online applications will be accepted. Parents may apply online through the admission portal at NDMC website www.ndmc.gov.in from 05.03.2024 to 20.03.2024 for admission in 11 Navyug Schools.

New Okhla Industrial Development Authority Administrative Building, Sector-6, Noida - 201301 (U.P.) Website : www.noidaauthorityonline.com

E-Tenders notice: E-Tenders are invited from eligible contractors/firms for the following jobs against which bids can be uploaded and same shall be opened/downloaded as per schedule mentioned. The details and conditions of all tenders are available on Noida Authority's official website: www.noidaauthorityonline.com & https://etender.up.nic.in. Please ensure to see these websites for any changes/amendments & corrigendum etc. A) Re Tender Work:- SL No. Job No. Name of Work Tender Amount (in Lacs.) 1 52/DGM(E)/M/ Sr.M(E)/M-IV/ 2023-24 Supply, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of Flycozo Lamp From DND Film City Flyover, Sector-16A, Noida 96.29



PERMITS PARTY TO MOVE L&DO

# SC to AAP: Vacate Rouse Avenue land by June 15

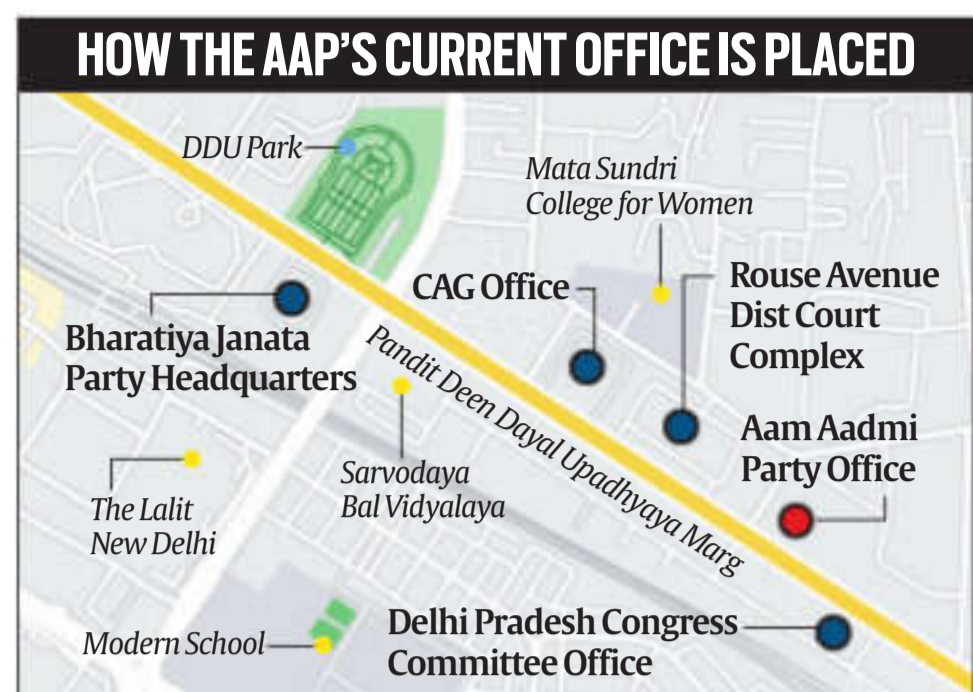
EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 4

NOTING THAT the land has been allotted to the Delhi High Court for expansion of judicial infrastructure, the Supreme Court on Monday asked the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) to vacate its office in Rouse Avenue in the national capital by June 15.

"In view of the impending general elections, we grant...time until June 15, 2024, to vacate the premises so that the land that has been allotted for the purpose of expanding the footprint of the district judiciary can be duly utilised on an expeditious basis," a three-judge bench presided by Chief Justice of India D Y Chandrachud said.

The bench, also comprising Justices J B Pardiwala and Manoj Misra, permitted the AAP to move the Land and Development Office (L&DO) of the Government of India for allotment of land to set up the party's office. It also asked the L&DO to process the application in accordance with the law and communicate the decision within a period of four weeks.

Hearing a matter related to judicial infrastructure on February 13, the SC, while expressing displeasure over the functioning of a political party office on land allotted to the HC, had directed that "on the next date of listing, a specific timeline shall be furnished to this Court for the removal of the encroachment." Though the name of the



political party was not taken in the hearing, it later became clear that the reference was to the AAP office in Rouse Avenue.

Subsequently, the AAP, in an intervention application filed before the court, denied that its office is an encroachment and told the SC that it was officially allotted to it by the Government of National Capital Territory in 2015.

On Monday, senior advocate A M Singhvi, appearing for the AAP, told the SC that the said land was allotted to GNCTD in 1993 by L&DO.

Pointing out that the AAP was among the six national political parties in the country, Singhvi said it had requested the central government to provide land in NDMC area suited to its status, but was told to go to Badarpur.

"The ruling party has...entire office headquarters on the same road... there has to be a level playing field... Is it conceivable that two months before the elec-

tions, I am put on the road?", Singhvi said.

Advocate K Parameshwar, the amicus curiae in the case, said it was only a building on the land that was allotted to the political party for "temporary office building for party work" and not the entire land.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta said the AAP "cannot hold the Supreme Court and High Court to ransom that I will not vacate unless given some other land," Singhvi countered this and said, "you are the one holding me to ransom by not giving me (land)". The senior counsel also took exception to the party being called "encroachers".

Mehta, however, referring to the fact that the allotment to AAP was revoked in 2017, said records showed they were encroachers.

The CJJ too said, "After 2017, you have no lawful right to be in occupation. That you cannot deny".

# Mistakenly served 'dry ice' as mouth freshener at Gurgaon eatery, five diners land in hospital

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
GURGAON, MARCH 4

AFTER CONSUMING what they were told was mouth freshener — but turned out to be "dry ice" — at a restaurant in Gurgaon Saturday night, five diners were rushed to a hospital after they began spitting out blood. Prima facie, police believe, a waiter mistakenly served them dry ice.

The five — Neha Sabarwal, Manika Goenka, Pritika Rustagi,

Deepak Aroda and Himani — along with others were having dinner at Laforessta cafe in Sector 90 around 9.30 pm. Ankit, who was also part of the group and the complainant in the case, said after their meal, a waiter offered them a mouth freshener.

"Upon consuming it, they experienced a burning sensation in their mouths, followed by bleeding... they started throwing up blood. I did not consume the mouth freshener as I was holding my one-year-old daughter..

We inquired about the contents of what we were given and the waiter showed us an open polythene packet, which I took possession of," said the Greater Noida resident in his complaint.

Ankit then called police and arranged for an ambulance to take his friends to Aarvy Hospital in Sector 90. The complainant claimed the doctor examined the 'mouth freshener' sample, which he had taken along with him, and said it was dry ice. "The doctor advised us to

hand over the packet to the hospital... He said it could be fatal," Ankit said, urging police to file a complaint against the restaurant.

Police said they have registered an FIR against the waiter, who gave them the substance, under IPC sections of causing hurt by poison and criminal conspiracy at Kherki Daula police station. As per the FIR, the doctor said the patients suffered chemical burns poisoning.

"We have sent the sample to FSL to ascertain what the sub-

stance was. Prima facie, it is dry ice and the staff mistook it for mouth freshener. Three people are still admitted to the hospital, but their condition is better," said police.

Meanwhile, the restaurant's manager, Gagan, said it was the negligence of the staff that led to the incident. "The incident took place after dinner and the staff gave out the substance. Police are taking action against the staffer; they have taken samples," he added.

# Day after Greater Noida mall mishap, victim's father stages dharna; maintenance firm blames the wind

DHEERAJ MISHRA  
NOIDA, MARCH 4

RAJENDRA BHATI could not control his tears as he shared how his eight-year-old grandson lit the funeral pyre of his father. "He asked me, 'what are we doing, dada?' I told him 'Holi aarhi hai, Holika dahan me aisa hota hai' (This is a ritual that we perform before the festival of Holi)," said the 62-year-old.

Bhati's son Harendra was among the two men — the other being his employee Shakeel — who were killed after a part of an iron grille fell on them at Galaxy Blue Sapphire Mall in Greater Noida West on Sunday.

"They have declared it an accident, how can they say so without an investigation? They have destroyed everything," said Bhati, who sat on a dharna with 50 others outside the mall on Monday. Demanding the arrest of the



The incident took place at Galaxy Blue Sapphire Mall.

owners of the mall, he said, "I was appalled to see that just beside the spot where my son died, a restaurant was open as if nothing happened. Why are they so insensitive? Even after this incident, I do not have any enmity towards any person associated with the mall. I demand that my son's widow and

children be taken care of." Meanwhile, Kanav Consultancy and Liaisoning Pvt. Ltd., the maintenance agency, told police that the accident happened due to heavy wind flow. In a letter written to the station house officer of Bisrahk police station, Ajay Bisht, manager of the company,

# Video shows damaged roof at Vasant Kunj mall; part of renovation work, say staff

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 4

AFTER A purported video of Ambience Mall in Southwest Delhi's Vasant Kunj popped up on social media, showing a damaged roof and debris strewn across different floors, the Delhi Police said it is probing if it was due to a collapse. No reports of any injuries have come in, officers said.

A spokesperson for the mall, however, said it was part of renovation work on the false ceiling and the premises was shut on Monday for the work. "The false



A videograb showing debris at the spot. Express

ceiling required renovation work and it was a planned move... no business was affected and there was no damage to any mall property," said the spokesperson.

# Behind fake bomb threat, man reluctant to meet brother-in-law

ARNABJIT SUR  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 4

ON FEBRUARY 27, Delhi Police's IGI unit received an email stating that a passenger on the scheduled Delhi to Kolkata Indigo flight was carrying explosives. All passengers were asked to deboard, a high alert was issued at the airport, and following a thorough check, the flight was given the go-ahead. Later, the email turned out to be a hoax.

But who sent out the email? And why? Police learnt that the ID through which the mail was sent was created hours before the hoax mail was sent out.

Investigation took the police to Kolkata, from where the email had originated. "The source of the email was traced to a WiFi connection installed at a hotel at Park Street. At that time, 40 guests were staying in that hotel and almost all were Bangladesh nationals," said DCP, IGI, Usha Rangnani.

Further examination revealed that one Amardeep Kumar had come to the hotel after taking the said Indigo flight from Delhi. "On questioning, Kumar stated that he had come to the hotel to meet his brother-in-law, Mohd Nazrul Islam, 29, who had been staying there for almost a month," said police.

On examining Islam's mobile phone, police found that he had deleted the entire history from his phone. With the help of Cyber Police and Special Task Force of Kolkata, necessary details from Islam's phone were recovered. And indeed, police learnt, the email was sent from Islam's device.

# Fake profile, mounting debt

Islam told the police about his connection with Kumar, and his motive behind sending the hoax message. "A Bangladesh national, he did a course in 2017 in Airlines, Tourism and Hospitality from a university in Punjab where he met a girl named Soniya and they became friends...they later grew apart but in 2020, he again came in touch with the woman through social media and told her that he was pursuing a PhD from USA and had also earned a US visa," said an officer.

According to police, Soniya "got impressed" and married Islam in April last year.

His wife continued staying in Punjab and Islam would visit her every three to four months from Kolkata. But soon, she got suspicious and insisted he take her along to the US.

"Islam kept deferring the trip on the pretext of being stuck in Kolkata due to the ongoing farmers' protest...the wife then decided to send her brother, Kumar, to check on her husband...Islam sent out the



The arrested man is a Bangladesh national. Express

hoax as he wanted the flight that his brother-in-law was in to be cancelled," said DCP Rangnani. Police said Islam had been staying in India for the past few months to avoid his lenders in Bangladesh as he was "under a debt of around Rs 50 lakh".

# Delhi tops in forced evictions

New Delhi: According to Housing and Land Rights Network's annual report on forced evictions in India, Delhi topped the list with 78 incidents between 2022 and 2023. According to the report, around 2.78 lakh people were evicted by various state authorities in Delhi.

The report notes that Delhi saw evictions in 44 sites in 2022 and 17 sites in 2023. What contributed to the city's high numbers in these two years were demolitions before the G20 summit in September 2023. "The Delhi Development Authority (DDA), admittedly, carried out 49 demolition drives in Delhi since 1 April 2023 in which an area measuring 229.137 acres was claimed to be 'reclaimed'," the report highlights. ENS

**MAHARASHTRA INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION**  
(A Government of Maharashtra Undertaking)  
Head Office : "Udyog Sarathi", Mahakali Caves Road, Andheri (E), Mumbai-400 093 | Tel.: 02352-228630

**NOTICE**

Inviting Expression of Interest (EOI) for preparation of Detailed Project Report (DPR) for Development of Port facilities at Mirya Bay, Ratnagiri district, Maharashtra

Name of Project: Consultancy services for preparation of DPR for Development of Port Facility at Mirya Bay.

Location: Mirya Bay, Dist. Ratnagiri

Last date of receipt of EOI: 01.05.2024

MIDC - is inviting expression of interest from reputed Consultants for preparation of detailed project report for proposed Port at Mirya Bay, Ratnagiri District. Interested parties can submit their EOI to Superintending Engineer, Konkarn Circle, Panvel, Plot No. 57, Sector-17, Khanda Colony, New Panvel (W), 410206

Or via email at [sekonkan@midcindia.org](mailto:sekonkan@midcindia.org)

For further inquiries, please contact at Office of Executive Engineer, MIDC, Ratnagiri, Phone No.: 02352-228630/7021130986 or via email at [sekonkan@midcindia.org](mailto:sekonkan@midcindia.org)

Application can be downloaded from website: [www.midcindia.org](http://www.midcindia.org)

**NATIONAL BOOK TRUST, INDIA**  
Ministry of Education, Government of India

**WALK-IN-INTERVIEW/SKILL TEST**  
for  
**SKILLED DATA ENTRY OPERATORS**  
(short-term contract/project based requirement)

**Immediate Hiring through Manpower Agency**

**Essential Qualifications-**

- Graduate in any stream
- Typing Speed 30 WPM in Unicode (Hindi) and English
- Proficient in MS Excel

**Venue:** 5 Institutional Area, Phase-II, Vasant Kunj, New Delhi-110070

**Date:** 4 March 8 March 2024 Time: 2 pm to 4 pm

**Email:** [recruitment@nbtindia.gov.in](mailto:recruitment@nbtindia.gov.in)  
CBC-21103/11/0083/2324

**Chief Engineer, Uttarakhand Rural Roads Development Agency,**  
First Floor, Directorate of Panchayatraj, Opp-IT Park, Sahastradhara Road, Dehradun.

Ref. No. 2443/II-02(xix)-2/ITCO/URRDA/23 Dated : 02.03.2024

**PRADHAN MANTRI GRAM SADAK YOJANA (PMGSY) e-Procurement Notice-36(Relaying Works)/2023-24**

The Chief Engineer, URRDA on behalf of Governor of Uttarakhand invites the item rate bids in electronic tendering system for construction of works under Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana in the Districts of Almora, Bageshwar, Chamoli, Champawat, Dehradun, Nainital, Pauri, Pithoragarh, Rudrapur and Uttarkashi for 16 number of packages with estimated cost totaling to Rs. 43.22 Crore including their maintenance for five years from the eligible contractors (Class-A and above) registered with PWD/CPWD or equivalent".

Date of release of Invitation for Bids through e-procurement: 05-03-2024.

**Availability of Bid Documents and mode of submission:** The bid documents are available online and should be submitted online in [www.pmgstendersuk.gov.in](http://www.pmgstendersuk.gov.in). The bidder would be required to register in the web-site which is free of cost. For submission of the bids, the bidder is required to have Digital Signature Certificate (DSC) from one of the authorized Certifying Authorities. The bidders are required to submit original affidavit regarding correctness of information furnished with bid document as per provisions of Clause 4.4 B (ii) of ITB with **CONCERNED CIRCLE OFFICES, mentioned in SBD/MBD, on a date not later than three working days after the opening of technical qualification part of the bid (for Regular PMGSY Works)**, either by registered post or by hand, failing which the bids shall be declared non-responsive. No physical documents will be accepted after the closing date and time of submission of bids.

Last date/Time for receipt of bids through e-procurement: **18-03-2024 01:00 PM.**

For further details please log on to [www.pmgstendersuk.gov.in](http://www.pmgstendersuk.gov.in)

**Chief Engineer, URRDA, Dehradun.**

*\*Non Registered bidders may submit bids, however, the successful bidders must get registered in appropriate class with appropriate authorities before signing the contract.*

**Note :** For e-Procurement for any sort of queries 0135-2608125 number may be contacted 10:00 AM to 05:00 PM.

**DR. A.P.J. ABDUL KALAM TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY**  
UTTAR PRADESH  
Jankipuram Extension, Sector-11, Sitapur Road, Lucknow-226031

Letter No. : A.K.T.U./R.O./STORE/2024/860 Dated : 28.02.2024

**Notice for Direct Recruitment**

As per the responsibility/instructions given in the Govt. order no. File No. 16-1099/65/2023-1-641/484252/2024, dated 02 February, 2024, regarding recruitment of faculty members, the previously published advertisement no.: F.S.R.E.C./2021/01 dated: 06.09.2021 is hereby cancelled. Fresh applications are invited for the appointment to the vacant posts of Professor, Associate Professor and Assistant Professor in the following Government aided degree engineering institutions on direct recruitment basis:-

Bundelkhand Institute of Engineering and Technology, Jhansi	Rajkiya Engineering College, Bijnor
Kamia Nehru Institute of Technology, Sultanpur	Rajkiya Engineering College, Kannauj
Rajkiya Engineering College, Ambedkar Nagar	Rajkiya Engineering College, Mainpuri
Rajkiya Engineering College, Azamgarh	Rajkiya Engineering College, Sonbhadra
Rajkiya Engineering College, Banda	Uttar Pradesh Textile Technology Institute, Kanpur

All information related to the recruitment and the online application forms will be available on the website of the university i.e. <https://aktu.ac.in> and the websites of the related institutions from 01.03.2024. Interested candidates can fill their application form online till **21.03.2024**. If there is any amendment in this regard, it will be made available on the websites of the university and institutions.

**Registrar**

**EXPRESS Careers**

**IDBI BANK** Regd. Office: IDBI Tower, WTC Complex, Cuffe Parade, Mumbai 400 005. CIN: L65190MH2004G0148838 Tel.: 6655 3355

**IDBI Bank Ltd.**  
Advertisement No. 16/ 2023-24

**Appointment of Data Protection Officer (DPO)**

Post Name	Vacancy
Data Protection Officer (On Contract)	1

For eligibility criteria (age, work experience, job profile etc.) and other details, please visit the 'Careers' section of the Bank's website [www.idbibank.in](http://www.idbibank.in)

**Applications received on or before March 15, 2024, will only be considered.**

**NOTE:** IDBI Bank reserves the right to accept or reject any/all application(s) without assigning any reason(s) whatsoever. Any addendum/modifications with regards to the selection process shall only be published on the Bank's website (career section) [www.idbibank.in](http://www.idbibank.in) and not through any other media. Candidates are requested to regularly visit the website as above, for update in the matter.

Place - Mumbai **General Manager-HRD**

**IDBI BANK** Regd. Office: IDBI Tower, WTC Complex, Cuffe Parade, Mumbai 400 005. CIN: L65190MH2004G0148838 Tel.: 6655 3355

**IDBI Bank Ltd.**  
Advertisement No. 15 / 2023-24

**Appointment of Chief Information Security Officer (CISO)**

Post Name	Vacancy
CISO (On Contract)	1

For eligibility criteria (age, work experience, job profile etc.) and other details, please visit the 'Careers' section of the Bank's website [www.idbibank.in](http://www.idbibank.in)

**Applications received on or before March 14, 2024, will only be considered.**

**Note:** IDBI Bank reserves the right to accept or reject any/all application(s) without assigning any reason(s) whatsoever. Any addendum/modifications with regards to the selection process shall only be published on the Bank's website (career section) [www.idbibank.in](http://www.idbibank.in) and not through any other media. Candidates are requested to regularly visit the website as above, for update in the matter.

Place - Mumbai **General Manager-HRD**

**Indian Institute of Engineering Science and Technology, Shibpur**  
भारतीय अभियांत्रिकी विज्ञान एवं प्रौद्योगिकी संस्थान, शिबपुर  
डाक्टोरल स्कोलरशिप और प्रोफेसरियल प्रोमोशन, शिबपुर  
(An Institution of National Importance under MOE, Govt. of India)

**Employment Notification**

**Recruitment against Non -Teaching Posts**

Advt. No. RO/MA/24/03 Date:04.03.2024

Applications in the prescribed format are invited from the Indian Nationals for Direct Recruitment to the following Officer Cadre Post at the Indian Institute of Engineering Science and Technology, Shibpur.:

Sl. No.	Name of the Post	No. of Post	Pay Band & Grade Pay	Category
1.	Deputy Registrar	2	PB 3 (Rs.15600-39100/-) with Grade Pay of Rs.7600/.	UR-1 OBC-1

For detailed information refer to Institute's website [www.iiests.ac.in](http://www.iiests.ac.in)

The application duly filled in all respects should reach to the Registrar on or before 28.03.2024 by 5.30 p.m.

**Registrar**



<b>ANAND VIHAR</b> Moderate 144 AQI PM 10	<b>DTU</b> Moderate 125 AQI PM 10	<b>R K PURAM</b> Moderate 122 AQI PM 2.5	<b>SIRIFORT</b> Moderate 155 AQI PM 2.5 At 9 pm
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0-50 Good 51-100 Satisfactory 101-200 Moderate 201-300 Poor 301-400 Very Poor 401-500 Severe

**SKYWATCH**  
FORECAST: March 5  
Partly cloudy sky.

**MAX: 26** | **MIN: 13**  
1.4°C below normal | 0.4°C below normal

## GIVE US ALL 7 LOK SABHA SEATS, I WILL GET SEVEN MORE HANDS: CM'S APPEAL TO VOTERS

# In 'Ram Rajya' budget, AAP govt's election push



Finance Minister Atishi seeks the blessings of former Deputy CM Manish Sisodia's mother before the Budget session, Monday. PTI

**GAYATHRI MANI**  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 4

ANNOUNCING A 'Ram Rajya' Budget with schemes aimed at wooing its core voter base — women — the AAP-Delhi government is leaving no stone unturned ahead of two crucial elections.

The 2024-25 Budget, presented by Finance Minister Atishi on Monday, is likely to be the government's last as the Delhi Assembly polls may take place before next year's session. With an outlay of Rs 76,000 crore, it has also reduced from last year's Rs 78,800 crore.

Appealing to Delhiites to vote for the INDIA alliance — which the AAP is a part of — and make it win the Lok Sabha polls, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal said at a press conference: "You gave me 68 out of 70 seats once (in 2015) and 62 seats (in 2020)... that's why we could form our government. If you had given me 40 seats, these people (BJP) would have toppled the government like they are doing in other states. At present, I am fighting with the Centre, BJP and the L-G alone... Whenever work is stopped, the seven BJP MPs enjoy and do not do anything... If you choose us and give us all 7 seats, I will get 7 more hands and more strength... Think about this, vote for us."

Atishi also said: "We are confident and hopeful that we will present the next five budgets."

Kejriwal chimed in: "Unless they (BJP) declare Delhi as full UT (Union Territory)."

"If (we get) 7 seats from

Delhi, 13 from Punjab, Assam, Haryana, then we will have 25-30 MPs and will be more powerful; then no one will stop the work in Delhi. When you go to vote, think of Delhi..." he added.

Meanwhile, outlining the aspects of the new financial assistance scheme for women, the CM said: "Today, we made a big announcement for my sisters and mothers in Delhi... for women empowerment... Rs 1,000 will be credited to their account every month."

Before the 2020 Assembly polls, the government had announced the 'pink ticket scheme' for free bus travel for women.

Kejriwal also said previous governments had only one theory, "trickle-down economics", which benefited only a particular section: "... Ours is a bottom-up theory, where the poor benefit; because when a poor person gets money, he or she invests in his family's basic needs which helps boost the economy... (Similarly), when women receive money, they will buy things they need and it will help the economy..."

He further emphasised the AAP government's slew of subsidies in several sectors: "Delhi has a very honest government (AAP) which saves money... unlike other parties... and spends it on the public by providing free electricity, water, health services, Teerth Yatra Yojana and travel for women..."

The CM also said the Budget is inspired by teachings of Ram Rajya: "We've been working towards education, health, and roads but the condition of village roads was left unnoticed.

### KEY ANNOUNCEMENTS

#### MUKHYAMANTRI MAHILA SAMMAN YOJANA

**Rs 1,000 financial assistance per month for women**

**Who will benefit:** All women aged above 18 years (excluding taxpayers, beneficiaries of government pension schemes and govt employees)

**Budget: Rs 2,000 crore**

#### BUSINESS BLASTERS SENIOR

After a successful launch in schools, the Delhi govt has proposed this scheme for universities and IITs to promote entrepreneurship among college students

**Who will benefit:** Any student wishing to begin a startup will be given seed money. Currently, the seed money is Rs 2,000

**Budget: Rs 15 crore**

#### DEVELOPMENT OF VILLAGE ROADS

Redevelopment and upgradation of 1,000 km of roads in villages to provide a better commuting experience

**Who will benefit:** 360 villages

**Budget: Rs 900 crore**

#### UNAUTHORISED COLONIES

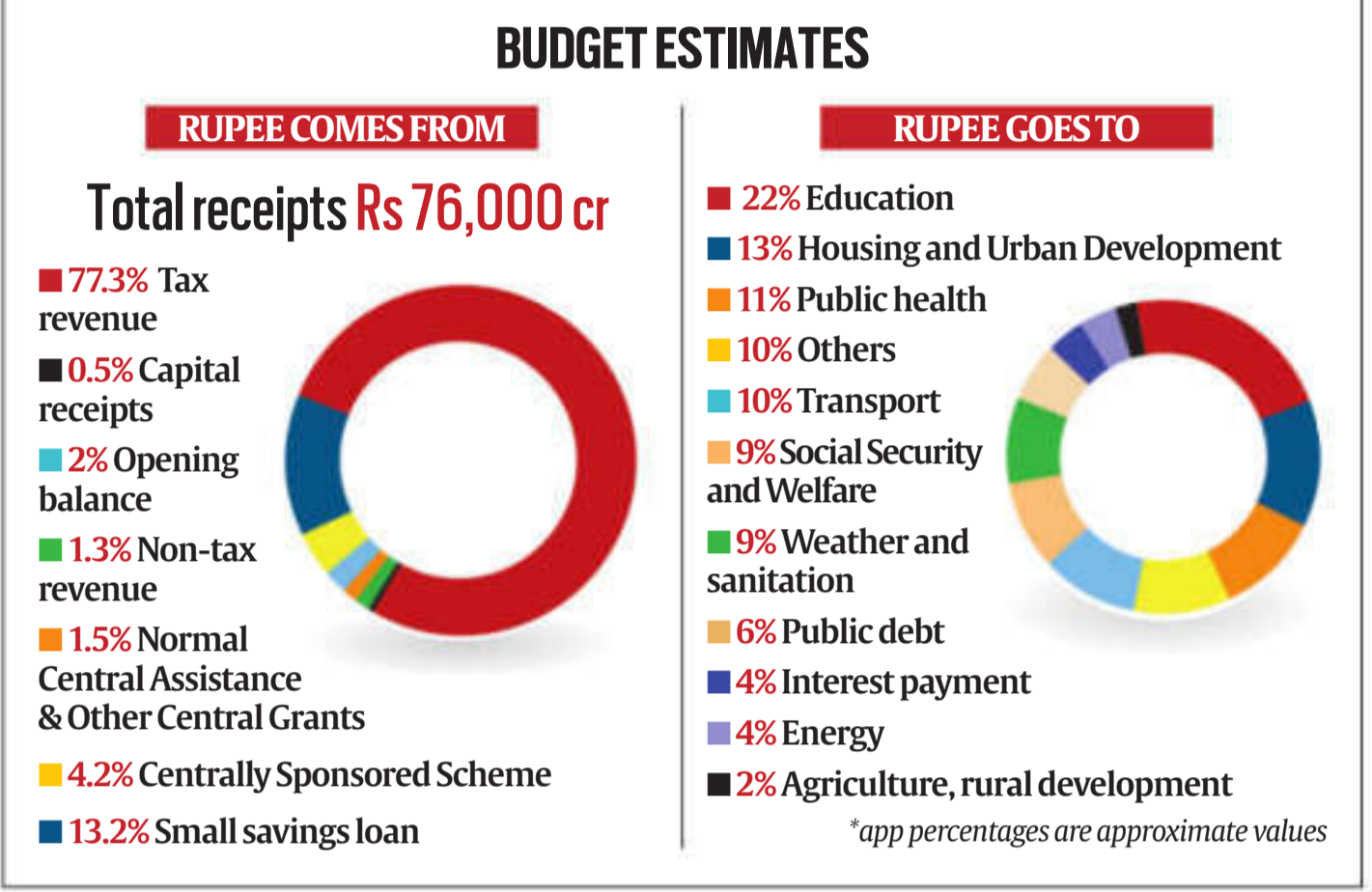
Developing infrastructure like roads, laying sewer and water lines and other facilities in such colonies

**Who will benefit:** 1,800 unauthorised colonies which house 30% of the city's population

**Budget: Rs 902 crore**



Women above the age of 18 are eligible for the govt's new scheme. Archive



### CUTS AND INCREASES

Sectors	2024-25	2023-24	Difference
Medical and Public Health	3,423 cr	4,830 cr	-1,407 cr
Education	5,476 cr	7,565 cr	-2,089 cr
Transport (total)	6,731 cr	9,048 cr	-2,317 cr
PWD (total)	1,218 cr	3,061 cr	-1,843 cr
Social Security and Welfare	5,980 cr	4,333 cr	+1,647 cr
Rural Development, Agriculture	1,029 cr	435 cr	+767 cr
Housing & Urban Development	4,395 cr	5,462 cr	-1,067 cr
Water Supply & Sanitation	7,195 cr	6,342 cr	+853 cr

Keeping that in mind, we have allocated a separate budget for redevelopment of village roads..."

When asked about the 'Ram Rajya' push, Kejriwal said, "We

believe in Ram Rajya... We have mentioned the concept in several budget presentations... even during Manish (Sisodia)'s time."

On if the announcements will have an impact on Lok Sabha vote

banks, the CM said, "Yes, it should... why not... *Kejriwal jo bolta hai wo karta hai.*"

The CM also said this budget was very emotional for him: "... I thank the people of Delhi for

electing us... for me every person living in Delhi is like my family. I try to take care of them like I care for my parents, daughter and son by providing them better education and health facilities..."

## Health schemes see cuts

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 4

THE DELHI government has slightly reduced its health budget this year as compared to 2023, along with significant cuts in funds for various schemes, programmes and projects. No new projects have been announced.

In 2023-2024, a total of Rs 9,742 crore was allocated to the sector. This year, it's Rs 8,685 crore. For schemes and projects, the allocation last year was Rs 4,830 crore — this has, it has been reduced to Rs 3,423 crore.

These schemes include those on maternal and child health, family planning, universal immunisation programme, and for major diseases such as tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS, vector-borne diseases leprosy etc.

Out of the total budget, Rs 6,215 crore has been proposed for

hospitals to maintain world-class facilities; Rs 212 crore has been set aside for mohalla clinics; and Rs 194 crore has been allocated to purchasing new ambulances for the Centralised Accident and Trauma Services. Existing hospitals undergoing remodeling, and construction of new hospitals, will have a share of Rs 400 crore. Rs 80 crore has been kept for patients availing treatment under Delhi Arogya Kosh.

In her Budget speech, Finance Minister Atishi said the government has provided free treatment to more than 81,000 OPD patients daily and 65,806 IPD patients monthly in its 38 hospitals. She added that 64,000 people receive free medicines, tests, and treatment at the 530 mohalla clinics every day. Comparing it with 'Ram Rajya', "where every life is considered precious", Atishi said under Farishtey Scheme, lives of 22,000 people have been saved so far.

# Who are Shimpi and Himanshu, two former Delhi govt school students who found mention in Atishi's speech

**ABHINAYA HARIGOVIND**  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 4

TILL MONDAY evening, IIT-Guwahati student Shimpi Kashyap was not aware that she had featured in Delhi Finance Minister Atishi's budget speech.

Kashyap, who is in her first year of college, completed Class XII from the Delhi government's School of Specialised Excellence (SoSE) and went on to clear the JEE last year. "I went to a Government Girls Senior Secondary School till Class X and then to SoSE, where I prepared for the JEE. Those two years were crucial. I used to enthusiastically participate in extra-curricular activities earlier, like sports and

debate, but during my JEE preparation, I felt that was my priority and completely dedicated myself to it, cutting myself off from other activities," said Shimpi, who is pursuing BTech in Chemical Engineering.

She added that she is slowly getting back to these activities in college.

Referring to Shimpi in her speech, Atishi said: "Today, a child from a poor family or an ordinary family can achieve anything by studying in Delhi government schools... Shimpi studied at a Delhi government School in Rohini Sector 23. Her father works in a small factory. To contribute to household expenses, Shimpi used to give tuition to the children in her neigh-



Shimpi Kashyap and Himanshu



bourhood. With the help of her school teachers, she prepared for the IIT-JEE. Today, she is studying... at IIT-Guwahati. This means that the daughter of a factory worker now has the potential to become a Managing Director of a factory in the future."

Shimpi's family lives in Narela. "My father works in a ca-

she said, adding: "The best part was that we had coaching in the school... which was very beneficial for me (as) we can't afford coaching from outside... What-ever doubts we had, the teachers would clear (them)... we were allowed to stay back after classes and get them cleared as well."

She decided to prepare for the JEE in Class XI. "After taking science (stream), I got to know about the JEE exam, and that on clearing it, we can get admission to institutions like IIT. Since then, I have wanted to join an IIT... so I prepared for the exam," she said.

Shimpi said when she was in Class X and for a while in Class XI, she used to hold home tuitions for class VIII students till she could no longer manage.

Atishi also pointed to another student, Himanshu, who studied at a government school in Nand Nagri and cleared the NEET exam last year to make it to Maulana Azad Medical College. "When he was in Class XI, his father passed away... In just one year, 2023-24, around 2,121 children studying in Delhi government schools cleared the JEE and NEET exams," the education minister said.

Himanshu, who studied at a Rajkiya Pratibha Vikas Vidyalaya, had told *The Indian Express* last year: "I was in Class 11 when I found out about my father's death. We found his body on the railway tracks near my house. Since then, it has just been my mother who is taking care of us."

## Girl mauled by dogs: HC seeks Delhi govt, police response on father's plea for relief

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 4

NEW DELHI: The Delhi High Court Monday sought the response of the Delhi government and other authorities on a man's plea seeking compensation of Rs 50 lakh, after his one-and-half-year old daughter was allegedly mauled to death by stray dogs in Central Delhi's Tughlaq Lane last month.

A single-judge bench of Justice Subramonium Prasad issued notice to the Delhi government, New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC) and Delhi Police, asking them to file a status report with regard to the steps taken to ensure that such incidents do not take place again. The HC, while listing the matter on March 13, also directed that the CCTV footage of the relevant time be preserved. **ENS**

## Excise policy case

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 4

CHIEF MINISTER Arvind Kejriwal has written to the Enforcement Directorate (ED), which had summoned the AAP leader for the eighth time on Monday in connection with the excise policy case, saying that he was ready to answer the probe agency's questions. Seeking a date after March 12, Kejriwal has said he will respond to questions via video conferencing.

Speaking in the Assembly, after the presentation of the Budget, Kejriwal said, "ED summons are legally invalid and illegal... I wrote letters to them but they haven't

## Ready to provide answers via video call: Kejriwal writes to ED after 8th summons



CM Kejriwal sought a date after March 12 and said he will respond to questions via video conferencing. Praveen Khanna

replied to any of (them)."

He added, "As per law, ED proceedings are like judicial proceedings. I am ready to give answers through video conferencing."

The CM was asked to appear before the probe agency on March 4 after he skipped the seventh summons on February 26, stating that since the matter

was before the court, which has asked him to appear on March 16, the agency should wait for its order. The ED had moved court, filing a complaint against Kejriwal for "intentionally" disobeying the summons.

In the past, too, Kejriwal has called the summons "illegal".

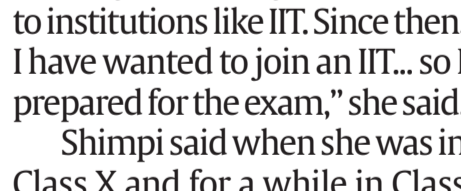
Reacting to the move, Delhi BJP president Virendra Sachdeva said: "Until yesterday, they (AAP) called the summons invalid, today they are ready to respond because they know that the court will direct him to appear before the ED. Every time they receive a summons, they present new tactics... Arvind Kejriwal should understand that playing with the ED summons is not good."

## IIT student suicide: Kin demand action against guides, senior

**VIDHEESHA KUNTAMALLA**  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 4

OVER TWO weeks after a final-year M Tech student at IIT-Delhi died by alleged suicide, his parents have pointed a finger at his guide, co-guide and a PhD student, and demanded action against them.

Varad Sanjay Nerkar, from Maharashtra's Nashik, was found dead in his hostel room on February 15. His parents said the 23-year-old had been under immense pressure for the last two months. In a letter to the institute on Sunday, they said, "On Thursday, 15/2/2024, he told me that his project would be finished between 8 and 8.30 in the morn-



23-yr-old Varad Sanjay Nerkar

ing... (After a few hours) he called me and said, 'Mummy, this litmus paper has turned black'. I was worried. Then I asked him to go and tell his guide..."

Nerkar's parents further alleged that a PhD student had also assigned him his own work, which had contributed to the pressure. "I request you to pay full attention to all the above mentioned things and take strict action against all the people mentioned..." the letter added.

Official sources at the institute told *The Indian Express* that

police are investigating the case and did not elaborate further.

DCP (Southwest) Rohit Meena said the family has written to IIT but no complaint has come to them so far. "Once we receive a complaint, we will initiate a probe," he added.

Speaking to *The Indian Express*, Sanjay Kashinath Nerkar, Varad's father, said, "Our son was a brilliant student. We worked very hard to send him to IIT. He was under a lot of pressure for the past two months because he couldn't attain the results of his research."

Remembering Varad, one of his classmates said, "He was friendly and helpful... he used to be worried about his project work. We are not really sure what triggered him..."





# Viksit Bharat Viksit Odisha Modi Sarkar ki Guarantee



## Gift of Development Projects worth over ₹ 20 Thousand Crore for Odisha

### Dedication to the Nation of

- Bansapani-Daitari-Tomka-Jakhapura Rail Line (162 KM)
- 4-laning of Singhara-Binjabahal Section of NH-49 for 104.176 km
- 4-laning of Binjabahal-Teleibani Section of NH-49 for 78.318 km
- 6- laning of Tangi-Bhubaneswar Section of NH-16 for 56.788 km
- 4- laning of Balasore-Jharpokharia Section of NH-18 for 81.26 km
- Khurda Road - Barang 3rd Rail Line (32.34 KM)
- 5 Million Litres per day capacity seawater desalination plant at Ganjam

### Foundation Stone Laying for

- 8-laning of Chandikhol-Paradip Section of NH-53 for 77 km
- 4L+PS/2L+PS from km 0.000 to 35.800 (Kuakhia-Mangalpur Section) of NH 20
- Electric Loco Periodical Overhauling Workshop at Norla
- Wagon Periodical Overhauling Workshop at Kantabanji
- Wagon maintenance facilities at Baghuapal

### Inauguration of

- Mono Ethylene Glycol (MEG) Project at IndianOil's Paradip Refinery
- IndianOil's Paradip-Somnathpur-Haldia Product Pipeline
- IndianOil LPG Import Terminal at Paradip
- CONCOR Container Depot in Kalinga Nagar area

### Flagging Off of

- New train between Puri-Anand Vihar Terminal from Kendujhargarh Station
- New Train between Paradeep-Kendujhargarh from Paradeep Station
- Container Train from MMLP Jajpur, Odisha to ICD Dadri, Uttar Pradesh

### PROJECT BENEFITS:

Big step towards energy independence and self reliance

Creation of 60 Lakh mandays of employment

Improved connectivity between Odisha and the adjacent states of West Bengal, Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh

Efficient rail connectivity to drive in trade and industrial growth in the region

Enhancing Port Connectivity to Paradip Port

by

## Shri Narendra Modi Hon'ble Prime Minister

In the august presence of

Shri Raghubar Das  
Governor, Odisha

Shri Naveen Patnaik  
Chief Minister, Odisha

Shri Dharmendra Pradhan  
Union Minister of Education and Skill Development and Entrepreneurship

Shri Bishweswar Tudu  
Minister of State for Tribal Affairs & Jal Shakti

Chandikhol, Odisha, Tuesday | 5<sup>th</sup> March, 2024, 3:15 PM



Watch the programme live on DD News

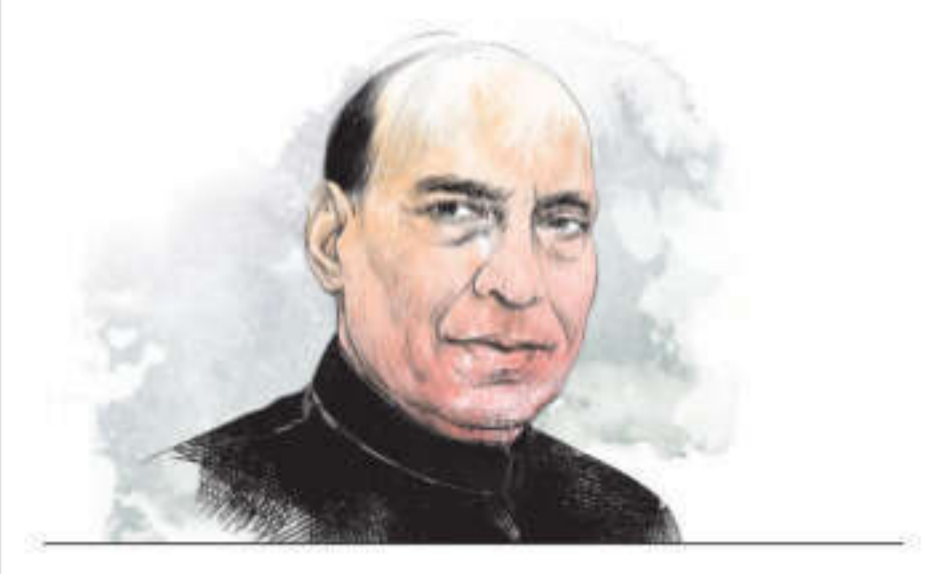
epaper.indianexpress.com



# 6 GOVT & POLITICS



## DELHI CONFIDENTIAL



### GIFT FOR WIFE

AT A fair organised at the recently concluded naval multinational exercise, MILAN, in Visakhapatnam, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh bought a pendant for his wife from one of the stalls put up by Naval Wives Welfare Association. The stall displayed a range of artificial jewellery, clothes, shawls and home décor items for thousands of people, including foreign dignitaries, visiting the fair. Out of the many things, a particular neck piece caught the attention of the Defence Minister. Singh digitally paid for the purchase.

### FOR THE PARENTS

REFERRING TO the makers of the Constitution as "founding fathers" is common despite the fact that 15 women were part of the Constituent Assembly. In its seven-judge constitution bench judgment on the limits of parliamentary privilege, the Supreme Court marked a shift. The judgment authored by Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud referred to the makers as the "founding parents" in the ruling.

### YET TO DECIDE

WHILE THE Congress is still in talks with its allies over seat sharing in some states, including Maharashtra, Bihar, and Jharkhand, the party's central election committee (CEC) will meet for the first time on March 7 to clear the first list of candidates for the Lok Sabha elections. The BJP announced its first list of 195 candidates Sunday. Some of the allies of the Congress such as the Samajwadi Party and the AAP, too, have come out with their first list of candidates. Sources said the Congress CEC is expected to discuss names of candidates for seats where it is going solo and the first list will be out soon.

## Odisha legislator joins BJP, fourth BJD MLA to do so in a month

SUJIT BISOYI  
BHUBANESWAR, MARCH 4



Premananda Nayak quit BJD recently, alleging neglect

AHEAD OF the Lok Sabha and Assembly polls in Odisha, BJD's Telkoi MLA Premananda Nayak on Monday joined the BJP, the fourth sitting legislator to join the saffron camp in the past one month.

Nayak, a former minister, had resigned from the BJD recently, alleging neglect in the ruling dispensation. Nayak, a tribal face, was first elected to the state Assembly in 2009 and again in 2019. He had served as the minister of skill development and technical education in Naveen Patnaik's cabinet from May 2019 to June 2022. The BJP is likely to field Nayak from Telkoi Assembly segment.

Gopalpur MLA Pradeep Kumar Panigrahy, Chilka MLA Prasanta Jagdev, who were expelled from the BJD over various charges, had joined the BJP in the recent past. Similarly, BJD's Jayadev MLA Arabinda Dhali switched to the saffron camp on Sunday, alleging neglect in the party.

On Monday, former BJD MLA Rajendra Das also joined the BJP.

Das was elected to the state Assembly in 2009 on a BJD ticket. Though he was denied a ticket in 2014, the BJD fielded him again in 2019, which he lost to BJP's Bishnu Charan Sethi.

During the October 2022 by-election in Dhamnagar following the untimely death of Sethi, Das had filed nomination as an independent candidate after the ruling party denied him a ticket. The BJD lost the Dhamnagar by-election even as Das secured 8,153 votes. Anticipating difficulty in his return to BJD fold, Das joined the saffron camp.

"I have joined the BJP as a disciplined member. I will accept whatever the party decides for me. I will always remain with the people of Dhamnagar," said Das.

Among others, former Congress MLA from Bhadrak Naren Pallai and former Congress minister Nabin Chandra Narayan Das also joined the BJP in separate programmes.

## Former Calicut University V-C is BJP's LS candidate from Malappuram seat

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, MAR 4



Dr M Abdul Salam. File

THE BJP has picked former Calicut University Vice Chancellor and agronomist Dr M Abdul Salam as its candidate for the Muslim-dominated Malappuram Lok Sabha seat in Kerala.

He is the only Muslim in the BJP's first list of 195 Lok Sabha candidates released Saturday. Salam is slated to take on IUML's seasoned Parliamentarian E T Muhammed Basheer. CPI(M) has fielded a young Muslim face, V Vaseef, the state president of DYFI.

Salam was V-C of Calicut University from 2011 to 2015, nominated by IUML. He joined

the BJP in 2019 as the party was making efforts to bring in more minority faces into its fold.

In 2021, Salam contested the state polls from Tirur, but lost to IUML's Kurukkoli Moideen, managing to garner only 5.33 per cent votes.

His tenure as Calicut University V-C was marked by controversial moves, including the bid to sell off varsity land and to admit students for degree courses without a plus-two qualification.

## BJP LEADERS ADD 'MODI KA PARIVAR' TO SOCIAL MEDIA HANDLES

# Modi counter to Lalu jibe: '140 cr people of country are my family'

VIKAS PATHAK  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 4

BJP LEADERS rallied around Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday as he sought to counter RJD chief Lalu Prasad's "no family" jibe, saying the country's "140 crore people are my family".

Union Ministers and top party leaders added "Modi ka parivar (Modi's family)" to their social media handles even as Modi told a rally at Adilabad in Telangana the people of the country "consider me their own... love me like a member of their family".

"And that is why I say 140 crore people of this country are my family. The youth... crores of daughters, mothers and sisters... all the poor people in the country, they are my family. The millions of children and elderly in the country are Modi's family. Those who have no one belong to Modi and Modi belongs to them. My Bharat, my family," Modi said.

The Prime Minister's remarks came a day after Prasad, at a rally of the Opposition INDIA bloc in Patna, said, "Modi keeps counting how many leaders have their children in politics. What can we do if Narendra Modi does not have a family of his own? He keeps bragging about the Ram temple. He is



PM Narendra Modi with actor Vyjayanthimala in Chennai, Monday. The PM arrived in Tamil Nadu from Telangana. PTI

not even a true Hindu. In Hindu tradition, a son must shave his head and beard upon the demise of his parents. Modi did not do so when his mother died".

The top leaders who added "Modi ka parivar" to their social media handles in solidarity with the PM included Home Minister Amit Shah, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, BJP chief J P Nadda and UP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath. By Monday afternoon, the phrase was trending on X.

The social media drive is reminiscent of a similar campaign by the BJP ahead of the Lok Sabha election in 2019, when party leaders prefixed "Chowkidar" to their Twitter profile names to counter Congress leader Rahul

Gandhi's "Chowkidar chor hai" jibe at PM Modi.

BJP spokesperson Sudhanshu Trivedi said the RJD chief's remarks against Modi were driven by the Opposition's "grudge and jealousy". "For years, we all have been seeing that they (Opposition) have made disrespectful and offensive statements against PM Modi with a feeling of jealousy, grudge, and inferiority complex... I want to remind everyone that for him (PM) the family is the entire country," Trivedi said.

Meanwhile, targeting the PM, Congress's Rahul Gandhi wrote in a Hindi post on X: "Farmer in debt, youth unemployed, labourers helpless. And Modi's 'real family' is looting the country."

## 'Suspicious': Opp after SBI seeks time to reveal poll bonds data

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 4

THE CONGRESS Monday slammed the government accusing it of trying to hide its "business of donations" and the "real face" before the Lok Sabha elections after the SBI approached the Supreme Court seeking extension of time till June 30, 2024, to submit details on the purchase of electoral bonds to the Election Commission of India.

"Narendra Modi is leaving no stone unturned to hide the business of donations. When the Supreme Court said it is the right of the people of the country to know the truth about the electoral bonds, then why does SBI not want this information to be made public before the elections?" asked senior Congress leader Rahul Gandhi.

He said the SBI's plea seeking time till June 30 for collating information, which can be retrieved with "a click of a button" shows there is something amiss. "Every independent organisation of the country is becoming 'Modani family' to hide their corruption," he said.

The CPM, too, questioned the SBI move.

"This would be a travesty of justice. Is the SBI seeking extension till the general elections are over to protect Modi and the BJP from exposure of the 'quid pro quo' that the Supreme Court apprehended. In this digital age, all this information is a mouse-click away. Seeking extension raises suspicious apprehensions," CPM general secretary Sitaram Yechury said.



Justice Abhijit Gangopadhyay at Calcutta High Court on Monday. PTI

## Justice Gangopadhyay set to resign today: 'My work done'

SWEETY KUMARI  
KOLKATA, MARCH 4

ROOM NUMBER 17 of the Calcutta High Court, which has been the centre stage for litigants, lawyers and media for the past two years, witnessed an emotional scene on Monday, a day after Justice Abhijit Gangopadhyay announced his decision to resign.

A large number of lawyers and common people gathered in the courtroom on Monday, meant to be the last working day of Justice Gangopadhyay at the High Court.

Justice Gangopadhyay, who said that he would join politics and could also contest the Lok Sabha elections, entered the courtroom at 2.36 pm on Monday. With a smile on his face and folded hands, he greeted those present in the courtroom.

In the next 10 minutes before heading out, he released over 60 matters that were part-heard in his bench and passed one order in which he referred a matter to the chief justice of the high court.

As he began to preside over the day's proceedings, a lawyer said, "Don't leave us."

Justice Gangopadhyay responded with a smile. "My work is done here. I also have some other work to do. I have completed my job."

He then said: "I am dropping all the cases. Write it down. I only want to see one case... In this matter, a vigilance inquiry was conducted by the registrar vigilance of this court. The report shows very, very serious allegations against the district judge. I request the chief justice to look into the report and take steps in accordance with the law. In my view, if the report is found to be true and correct, the district judge should

## Drug smuggling in TN has DMK blessings: PM

ARUN JANARDHANAN  
CHENNAI, MARCH 4

LAUNCHING A scathing attack on the M K Stalin-led DMK government, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday said he was concerned about the "uncontrolled" drug smuggling in Tamil Nadu and cautioned people about "the party ruling you".

He also targeted Stalin's son and state minister Udhayanidhi Stalin, who was pulled up by the Supreme Court over his Sanatan Dharma remarks, saying that insulting the faith of crores of people was an identity of the dynasts. The PM was in the state to inaugurate the core loading procedure of the country's indigenous Prototype Fast Breeder Reactor at Kalpakam. He later addressed a party rally in Chennai city.

"With blessings of the ruling party here, Tamil Nadu is witnessing uncontrolled drug smuggling and selling... Such a party is ruling you. You should be very cautious about it," he said. FULL REPORT [www.indianexpress.com](http://www.indianexpress.com)



Tapas Roy leaves the Assembly after submitting his resignation to the Speaker in Kolkata on Monday. Express

## Veteran Tapas Roy quits TMC: 'Party didn't stand by me'

Speculation he may contest against TMC's Sudip Bandopadhyay from North Kolkata

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
KOLKATA, MARCH 4

DAYS BEFORE the schedule for the Lok Sabha elections is likely to be announced, Trinamool Congress veteran Tapas Roy on Monday submitted his resignation as MLA to the West Bengal Assembly Speaker amid speculation of his switching over to the BJP.

Roy, a three-time MLA, is the deputy chief whip of the ruling party in the Assembly and president of the TMC's Dum Dum-Barrackpore organisational district. He is an MLA from the Baranagar Assembly seat.

Speaking to mediapersons, Roy said, "The Trinamool Congress is not for me anymore. I am a free bird. I will let you all know about my next course of action later."

His statement came after Education Minister Bratya Basu and TMC state secretary Kunal Ghosh visited Roy's North Kolkata residence and held a meeting for over an hour. According to sources, they were trying to dissuade Roy from leaving the party.

After the two TMC leaders left, Roy held a press conference at his residence and expressed anguish that no one from his party called him up or his family when the Enforcement Directorate (ED) raided his premises on January 12 in connection with an alleged recruitment scam in civic bodies.

"For the last 23-24 years, I have been with the TMC. On

January 12, the ED raided my house. Even after 52 days of the raid, my party did not support me even once. (Chief Minister) Mamata Banerjee did not call me once. No one stood with me or my family," said Roy.

"There is so much corruption in the party. The Sandeshkhali (allegations of sexual assault and land-grabbing against a section of TMC leaders) episode has also

pained me a lot," he added. Sources said the MLA was upset as the CM defended Sheikh Shahjahan in the Assembly but did not speak a word in his support.

Meanwhile, speculation is rife Roy may join the BJP and contest against TMC MP Sudip Bandopadhyay from North Kolkata seat.

Asked about Tapas Roy and the chances of him joining the saffron party, state BJP president Sukanto Majumder said, "Politics is a game of possibilities. But at this time I have nothing to share on this."

CPI(M) politburo member Sujan Chakraborty said, "Although the TMC is our political opponent, Roy was courteous. A person like him leaving the party shows that the TMC is now a party of strongmen and criminals like Sheikh Shahjahan and not a place for good politicians."

Criticising Roy's move, TMC youth wing general secretary Debangshu Bhattacharya said, "Why did he decide to leave the party just 15 days before the Lok Sabha elections are to be announced?"

## RLD and SBSP likely to get berths in UP cabinet today

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
LUCKNOW, MARCH 4

WEEKS AHEAD of the Lok Sabha elections, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath is all set to expand his Cabinet on Tuesday evening with induction of at least four to six ministers, including one each from allies Suheldev Bharatiya Samaj Party (SBSP) and Rashtriya Lok Dal (RLD).

Sources told *The Indian Express* that while a Dalit leader from west UP, believed to be from RLD, will be inducted into the Cabinet, SBSP chief Om Prakash Rajbhar would be making a return to the Adityanath Cabinet, almost five years after he severed ties with the BJP and quit the government.

Ahead of the swearing-in

ceremony, Chief Minister Adityanath will chair a Cabinet meeting at 11 am, officials said.

The Cabinet expansion was being speculated since Samajwadi Party MLA Dara Singh Chauhan switched sides and contested the bypoll from Ghosi in Mau on a BJP ticket. Though he lost the election, Chauhan was made an MLC.

While the names of Chauhan and Rajbhar were confirmed earlier, the RLD too is believed to have got the confirmation about its one leader, a member of the Dalit community from Muzaffarnagar, sources added.

There have also been speculations that at least one Opposition MLA who recently supported the BJP candidates in the Rajya Sabha election will get a ministerial berth.

## 'We joined SP for being party of ideology of Lohia, not Periyar'

DURING THE Rajya Sabha elections for 10 seats in UP, the Samajwadi Party suffered a setback as a section of its own MLAs cross-voted in favour of the BJP, helping the party pick an extra seat and leaving the SP with one less. The biggest surprise was the crossover by SP chief whip MANOJ KUMAR PANDEY, who quit his post before apparently helping the BJP nominee win. He speaks to MAULSHREE SETHI about the reasons and timing behind his decision.

You have been associated with the SP for so long, you also served as a minister in the party government. Why choose the BJP now?

I joined the SP after being associated with Netaji (late SP founder Mulayam Singh Yadav). You ask me what went wrong... it is the party established by Netaji which is now sidelining the peo-

ple who stood by him. Instead, people who have no ground or base and failed to get even a decent vote share for the party in their respective areas are being given importance.

I am PhD in Political Science from BHU. I have studied (Ram Manohar) Lohia and know that the basic mantra of the Samajwadi ideology is respect for all castes, religions and sects.

However, today, in a country like India with 135 crore population, out of which over 90 crore follow Sanatan Dharma or are Hindu, a person who lost the Vidhan Sabha election by over 50,000 votes (Swami Prasad Maurya, who has also resigned from SP) attacked Hindu gods and goddesses, Sanatan Dharma, a particular caste - at party fora, in the Vidhan Sabha. He did all this while in the party.

I raised it at the party fora. I also took up the issue with the

where a long discussion took place. But nothing happened.



THE EXPRESS INTERVIEW WITH MANOJ KUMAR PANDEY FORMER SP CHIEF WHIP

So you did not get adequate response from the party's leadership to your objections?

Ignore kiya gaya (I was ignored)... But the bigger question is that ever since that person (Maurya) registered his own party... has he spoken against Sanatan Dharma or Hindus? A person who used to speak against Durgaji, Laxmiji, Hanumanji, Hindus, Sanatan Dharma and even Brahmins, has not spoken a word since then. I have a count of his statements against Sanatan Dharma and Brahmins while being in the SP - 87. He had come to destroy the party, and did his job.

But Swami Prasad Maurya also pointed fingers at you as he left the SP?

Swami has never been a personal issue for me, instead it is a

political issue. My fight with him is of ideas. I come from a Savarna (upper caste) family, but no one can point a finger at me that I have ever disrespected anyone. In 2004, I installed a statue of Sardar (Vallabhbhai) Patel at Raebareilly, later a statue of Jharkari Bai. I fought for the rights of the people who sell milk, and cases were registered against me.

One can fight one Swami Prasad. But if in a party, over two dozen Swami Prasads who have come from the BSP take root, and abuse Hindu gods, or a caste, one can't tolerate this.

There is talk that you may contest from Raebareilly for BJP or accept a position in govt?

It is too early to say, I am still an SP MLA. But I would say that the way the Prime Minister or the Chief Minister worked during the Covid pandemic and have ensured houses for the

poor and toilets in villages, even being in the Opposition, these things attracted me. (And) While dharma is only an issue of faith for me, if someone abuses it, then it is not acceptable to us.

What would you say has changed in the SP, and what is forcing leaders to leave?

Any individual, society or political party, if it deviates from the ideology with which it was established, then it becomes impossible to save that individual, family, society or political party. Ram Manohar Lohia had started a Ramayan Mela in Ayodhya, and the government gave funds for it too. What kind of an ideology is it that allows speaking against the Ramcharitra Manas?... we had joined SP for being a party of the ideology of Ram Manohar Lohia, and not Periyar (seen as the father of the Dravidian movement in Tamil Nadu and a sworn atheist).





# 60 DAYS OF TRANSFORMATION

## MADHYA PRADESH BRINGS VALUE TO GOVERNANCE



**NARENDRA MODI**  
Prime Minister



**DR. MOHAN YADAV**  
Chief Minister Madhya Pradesh

### Cyber Tehsil operative in all districts A historic step to overhaul revenue administration

**A** RADICAL change is going to take place in the interest of the citizens through the Cyber Tehsil System in the revenue administration reform of Madhya Pradesh. The Prime Minister Narendra Modi virtually launched the Cyber Tehsil Project in all districts on 29th Feb. '24 simultaneously launching a number of development projects worth Rs 17000 crore.

As intended by Chief Minister Dr. Mohan Yadav, disposal of revenue cases and disputes will be possible in a very short time. After implementation in the land records, the concerned beneficiary and stakeholder will be able to get the verified copy of the land records and the relevant order.

Now the pending cases can be resolved with quality with the help of technical assistance. Disposal of cases is taking an average 15 to 17 days in cyber tehsils. This is a significant achievement compared to the 60 days taken in the manual process.

Every year about 14 lakh mutation cases are registered in the state. Out of this, 8 lakh cases relate to mutation after execution of sale deeds. About 2 lakh undisputed cases related to purchase and sale of entire Khasra.

Against this backdrop, Cyber Tehsil has been established for paperless, faceless and online transfer and updating of land records within 15 days.

In this way, 2 lakh mutation cases related to purchase and sale of Khasra can be resolved through cyber tehsils. Apart from quick disposal of land records updating is done at the same time.

The burden of resolving undisputed cases at the tehsil level will be reduced. For the Cyber tehsil system, the Revenue Department has amended the



Madhya Pradesh Land Revenue Code, 1959 and made provisions for Cyber Tehsil in Section 13-A. Cyber Tehsil Project started from 01 June 2022 as a pilot project in District Sehore and Datia. The project is now put in place in all districts.

#### HOW IT WORKS ?

- The process from registration to name transfer has been implemented in Cyber Tehsil.
- Cyber Tehsil has been linked to 4 different platforms namely Sampada Portal, Bhulekh Portal, SAARA Portal and RCMS Portal.
- In Cyber Tehsil, such cases are eligible

for resolution - complete Khasra, which has not been divided and such land which has not been mortgaged or mortgaged in any way.

- After registration on the portal and after registration, the case will be automatically registered on the revenue portal.
- After this the investigation will be done by Cyber Tehsildar. After the information, a memo will be issued for advertisement and Patwari report. After this, the land records will be updated by passing an order.
- If the claim is not received after ten days, orders will be given through e-mail and WhatsApp.

- During the execution of sale deed (registration) in the Registrar's office, the applicant will have to give the necessary processing fee and general information in the prescribed format.
- In case of registrations which cover the entire Khasra number or the entire plot and there is no division of any Khasra or plot, details of the registered sale deed (registry) will be generated through automated process.
- It is sent to the tehsil on the RCMS portal.
- Cyber Tehsildar matches the registered documents with the revenue land records and issues notice through SMS to the buyer, seller and all the residents

of the concerned village. This notice also contains a link for objection. An online memo is also issued for Patwari report.

- If no objection is received within ten days and if there is no objection in the Patwari's memo, then the Cyber Tehsildar passes the transfer order in the case and updates the records.
- Upon resolution/passing of the order, the concerned person is informed through SMS and the status of the order passed through e-mail.

#### WHICH CASES TO BE RESOLVED ON PRIORITY?

In Cyber Tehsil, such cases are being resolved (transfer) in which the entire Khasra number or the entire plot is involved and there is no division of any Khasra or plot.

#### DISPOSAL OF OVER 17000 CASES

Till now, final orders have been passed in 17,152 cases and land records have been verified through automated process.

100% implementation has been done. Verified copies of the final orders have been sent to the applicants through email and WhatsApp.

#### REVISED SET-UP OF TEHSILDAR/NAIB TEHSILDAR

15 Tehsildars/Naib Tehsildars will be required in the cyber tehsil established in the office of the Chief Revenue Commissioner.

This arrangement can be implemented immediately by attaching additional Tehsildars/Naib Tehsildars. A proposal will be brought to review the set-up of Tehsildar/Naib Tehsildar, which will also include the proposal for creation of 15 Tehsildar/Naib Tehsildar posts in Cyber Tehsil.

#### BENEFITS OF CYBER TEHSIL

- After registry, case for title transfer is registered even without applying.
- In this process, buyer and seller do not need to be present at the Tehsil office for name transfer.
- The entire process is end to end online, decision-making, and paperless.
- The entire process is transparent. There is no human intervention.
- Notice to buyer, seller and all residents of the village will be received through SMS. Notice also on RCMS portal.
- Objections can be filed online.
- Copy of final order is given through email or WhatsApp to the applicants.
- As soon as the order is passed, the land records (khasra/maps) are automatically corrected.
- The process of implementation of orders and revenue records will be completed in 15 days except government holidays.
- This system has eliminated the limits of jurisdiction.
- This system has provided a unique facility of updating land records in real time. From this there will be no manual interference.
- There is a facility to submit Patwari report online.
- It will be resolved in minimum time. Earlier these processes took an average of 60 days. This process will be completed in both Cyber Tehsils on average 15.
- PDF copy of the order passed by Cyber Tehsil, the applicant will get it through email/Whatsapp. Its copy will also be uploaded on the RCMS portal.

### GREEN GOVERNANCE

## Bison Resorts, Madhai Gets First Five Swachhata Green Leaf Rating Certificate Of Recognition

**B**ison Resorts, Madhai, in the heart of Narmadapuram, Madhya Pradesh has taken the lead by obtaining the first Five Swachhata Green Leaf Rating Certificate of Recognition. This accolade solidifies the resort's commitment to responsible tourism practices and sets a commendable precedent for the industry.

This recognition of Bison Resorts serves as a clarion call for other tourist facilities across all States/UTs to actively involve themselves in enhancing the aesthetic and sanitation levels of tourist spots. With the current progress trend of Swachh Bharat Mission and the SGLR, potential to redefine the image of the tourism sector, positioning it as a global ambassador for cleanliness and responsible tourism.

In a major move to revolutionize sanitation practices in India's burgeoning tourism industry, the Department of Drinking Water & Sanitation (DDWS), Ministry of Jal Shakti, in collaboration with the Ministry of Tourism, has introduced the Swachhata Green Leaf Rating (SGLR) initiative.

This visionary program aligns with Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's emphasis on providing world-class hygiene and sanitation facilities for tourist, marking a crucial step towards cleaner and more sustainable tourism practices.



All tourist facilities enhance aesthetic and sanitation levels at tourist destinations. As ambassadors of hospitality & development, all tourist facilities should actively involve themselves in enhancing the aesthetic & sanitation levels of our tourist spots.

With its investment in the desired direction of responsible sanitation, the hospitality sector will be able to attract increased tourist footfall while simultaneously achieving brand value for itself.

#### THIS MILESTONE ACHIEVEMENT FOR BISON RESORTS HAS BEEN COMMENDED FOR DEDICATION TO RAISING SANITATION STANDARDS.

Hospitality sector plays an important role in attracting an increased tourist footfall while contributing to a positive image of responsible tourism. As ambassadors of country's hospitality and development, Bison Resorts exemplifies the spirit of responsible tourism. The Swachhata Green Leaf Rating is just a recognition of our tourism industry.

The SGLR initiative seamlessly aligns with the Travel for LIFE (TFL) program under Mission LIFE, fostering awareness about sustainable tourism. By nudging both tourists and businesses to adopt practices harmonious with nature, the SGLR program aims to develop an economically viable, responsible, and resilient tourism industry.

### ECONOMIC SECURITY OF TRIBALS Organic certificate for export of minor forest produce

**I**n order to promote export of minor forest produce, tribal dominated districts will soon get organic certificate. Social security has been widened for tendu leaf collectors by including them in Sambal Yojana.

For the economic security of the tribal families involved in tendu leaf collection, the tendu leaf collection rate has been increased from Rs 3000/- per standard bag to Rs 4000/- per standard bag. The collection rate in 2003 was only Rs. 400/- per standard bag. As a result of this decision, approximately Rs 560 crore has been distributed to the collectors as remuneration.

Along with the remuneration, the net profit received from the trade of tendu leaves is also shared with the collectors. This dividend has also increased. In 2003, only 50 per cent of the net profit was shared with collectors as bonus, now 75 per cent is being distributed to the collectors as bonus. The amount of bonus distributed in the year 2002-03 was Rs 5.51 crore while the amount of bonus distributed in the year 2022-23 is Rs 234 crore.

At present, 38 lakh members of about 15 lakh families are involved in minor forest produce collection work. More than 50 percent of these belong to the tribal community. To protect them from exploitation by middlemen and to provide them the benefits of their collected minor forest produce, a three-tier structure of cooperative has been created. There are 10 primary forest produce cooperative societies formed at the primary level

with the membership of 15.2 lakh collectors. At the second level, there are district level unions in 51 districts and at the top level, Madhya Pradesh State Minor Forest Produce Federation is functioning at the apex level.

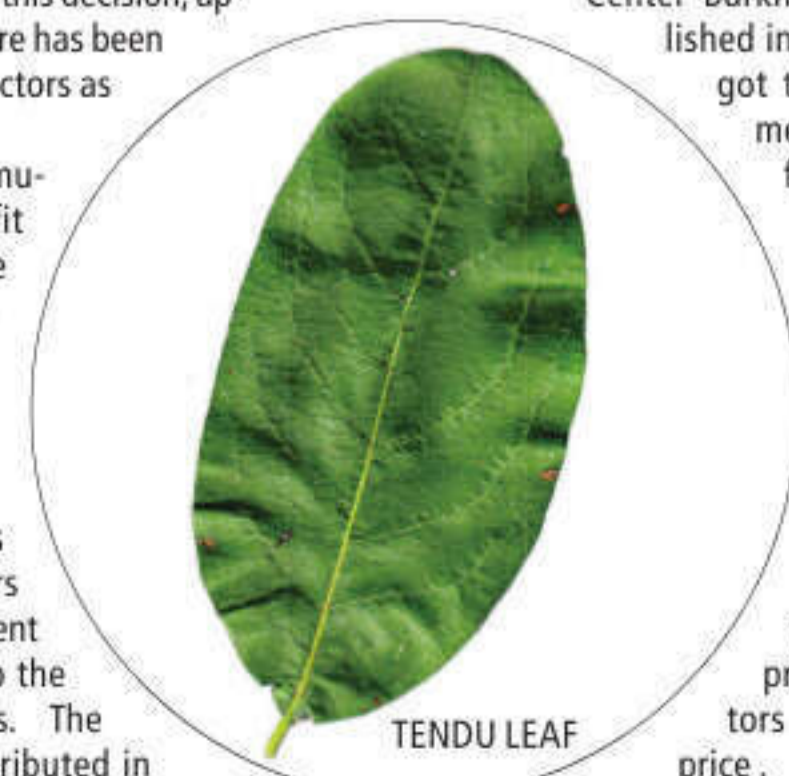
In "Eklavya Vanvasi Shiksha Vikas Yojana" started in 2011 for the education of children of tendu leaf workers, more than Rs 14.00 crore has been provided to 15,026 students.

Minor Forest Produce Processing and Research Center Barkheda Pathani was established in the year 2004-05. It has got the license to make 840 medicines based on minor forest produce while 350 medicines are being manufactured.

In order to provide fair price of forest produce to the minor forest produce collectors, the state government has also declared the minimum support price for 32 major minor forest produce so that the collectors can get remunerative price.

To increase the income of minor forest produce collectors, attention is also being given to processing and approval has been given for the establishment of 126 Van Dhan Kendras under the Pradhan Mantri Van Vikas Yojana. Of these, processing of products has also been started by about 70 Van Dhan Kendras.

Under the PESA, 268 gram sabhas in 20 districts in the collection year 2023-24, 13363 standard bags of tendu leaves were collected generating a business valuing at Rs. 7.19 crore. Collection has started this season.



TENDU LEAF



# Uttarakhand nod for ordinance to recover damage caused during riots

AVANEESH MISHRA DEHRADUN, MARCH 4

THE UTTARAKHAND government on Monday approved an ordinance mandating that losses incurred from damage to public and private property during riots be recovered from those deemed to be responsible for the disturbance.

After the Cabinet's approval, the Uttarakhand Public (Government) and Private Property Damage Recovery (Ordinance) Law 2024 has been sent to the Governor. Apart from recovering losses, the ordinance also has provisions for fines of up to Rs 8 lakh to be levied on the rioters.

According to a statement issued by the state government, if anyone gets injured during a riot, the entire cost of treatment will also be recovered from those responsible. Apart from this, all expenses incurred during the riot — on the police, administration, and other riot control agencies — will also be recovered.

The Cabinet has also approved setting up a formal Claims Tribunal to deal with such cases and recover compensation. The members of the tribunal will include a retired judge, and an Additional District Magistrate-category officer will be given the responsibility of Claims Commissioner.

Under the ordinance, when a case is registered for causing damage to government or pri-

ate property, the Circle Officer (CO) concerned will send his report to the District Magistrate. The Claims Tribunal will then assess the loss, after which the recovery will be made from those deemed responsible for the damage.

"Since the state legislature is not currently in session, the Governor has the authority to implement this law in the state by using the powers conferred by Clause 1 of Article 213 of the Constitution of India. After the approval of the Governor, the law will come into force... No one has the freedom to spoil the law-and-order situation in Devbhoomi," the government's statement said.

"We have approved strict laws to deal with rioters. The rioters will be punished and full compensation for the loss will be made. This law will be strictly enforced in the state," the statement said.

The move comes less than a month after the demolition of a mosque and a madrasa during an anti-encroachment drive in Nainital district's Haldwani triggered protests and violence, in which five people were killed.

During the violence, people resorted to pelting stones and burning cars, and the local police station was surrounded by a mob. Chief Minister Pushkar Dhami had later announced that the cost of damaged property would be recovered by those involved in the violence.

# Lokpal to CBI: Probe two properties of Shibu Soren within six months

ABHISHEK ANGAD RANCHI, MARCH 4

THE LOKPAL on Monday ordered the CBI to probe within six months two properties belonging to Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) president Shibu Soren under The Lokpal and Lokayuktas Act, 2013. The direction came while disposing of a complaint filed on August 5, 2020, by the MP of a rival political party.

The complainant had urged the Lokpal to investigate "57 properties" in Ranchi, Dhanbad, Dumka, and other places belonging to former Jharkhand CM Shibu Soren. The Lokpal had asked the CBI to conduct a preliminary enquiry (PE) after which the agency mentioned 82 properties, allegedly linked to the Sorens.

Since all other properties, barring two, were acquired beyond the period of limitation of seven years i.e. after the expiry of seven years from the date on which the alleged offence had been committed, the Lokpal Monday ordered to investigate only two properties. However, the Lokpal ordered that the CBI is at liberty to take 'necessary action' at their level.

It also ordered: "...we make it clear that regarding the 80-odd properties, acquired by the RPS (Respondent Public Servant Shibu Soren) and his family members prior to 7 years from

the date of complaint... and not covered by this order by virtue of limitation imposed under Section 53 of the Act, but admittedly coming within the purview of PC Act, the complainant is at liberty to pursue his complaint with the competent authority."

While the Lokpal proceedings were ongoing, the Delhi High Court had granted a stay on the Lokpal's proceedings in September 2022 based on a plea by Shibu Soren. Later the single bench of the High Court refused to interfere with the proceedings initiated against the Lokpal of India. Shibu Soren appealed the single bench's order, however, on February 20 this year, a division bench dismissed the appeal.

In Monday's order, the division bench of the Lokpal led by Justice Abhilasha Kumar, wrote: "To us (it) appears to be an anomalous and ironical situation, where in spite of the fact that the RPS (Shibu) and his family members have indulged in acquiring a plethora of prime properties in different parts of Jharkhand, often at unreasonably low prices, he escapes scrutiny of the Lokpal due to this legal position. Be that as it may, we focus on the two properties... because these are not hit by the period of limitation of seven years."

The Lokpal asked for progress reports to be filed monthly and the first before April 30, 2024.

## Fresh norms for AYUSH centres to 'extend quality health service'

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI, MARCH 4

THE UNION Ministry of Health released Monday the norms AYUSH healthcare centres in the country will have to follow in terms of infrastructure, human resource, and availability of medicine.

By adopting the 'Indian Public Health Standards for AYUSH' the states and Union Territories will be able to extend quality AYUSH health care services, the Government said in a statement. "The fundamental aim is to augment preventive, promotive, curative, palliative, and rehabilitative services within the public health domain," it said.

Similar norms for allopathic healthcare centres already exist. The AYUSH standards list the minimum requirements for beds based on the population and the minimum requirement for personnel in the health centres. It says there should be at least 10 AYUSH beds per 50,000 population, 30 beds per 1.5 lakh population, and 50 per 2.5 lakh population.

The standards also create an essential drugs list for different levels of health centres and for different streams of AYUSH.

## Annual festival can't be named 'Intifada', varsity to students union

SHAJU PHILIP THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, MARCH 4

AUTHORITIES AT the University of Kerala on Monday prevented the students union from naming its annual youth festival "Intifada" — a word widely used to refer to the Palestinian uprising against Israeli occupation.

Vice Chancellor Dr Mohanan Kunnammal ordered that the word Intifada be removed from all promotional material of the festival, including posters and social media handles. The festival was renamed Kerala University Youth Festival.

The action comes after the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP), the student wing of the BJP, complained to the university regarding the name of the festival. The ABVP had also petitioned Governor Arif Mohammed Khan, who is also the Chancellor of the university.

The festival is scheduled to be held from March 7 to March 11 in Thiruvananthapuram. The university's students union, which organises the festival, had unveiled its logo last week. The students union is controlled by

the Students' Federation of India (SFI), the student wing of the CPI(M).

The VC said, "The festival is not a place for any protest. The students union had committed a mistake by choosing a word, which has connotations that could affect many among the students and the public. The platform of the youth festival cannot be permitted to be made a stage to propagate any type of ideology. The word 'Intifada' has direct links with the Palestine-Israel issue. The same can have implications on the country's foreign policy as well," he said.

The event was facilitated by Rocket Health, an edu-tech non-profit organisation.

"The importance of early education has become very clear over the last few years, and is clear in the NEP too. The department is putting every effort to ensure this is implemented in the next couple of years," Sanjay Kumar, Secretary of the Department of School Education and Literacy said.

Highlighting the Anganwadi system's achievements in the last 49 years, NITI Aayog member Dr V K Paul said: "The country should be proud that we were able to create such a large infrastructure with 14 lakh anganwadis... have done phenomenal work, even with very limited resources."

Dr Paul said the Anganwadi system was still relevant but there was a need to re-energise and re-imagine the effort to meet evolving challenges and aspirations.

## Policymakers, experts discuss nutrition and education in early childhood development

SAMAN HUSAIN NEW DELHI, MARCH 4

SENIOR GOVERNMENT officials, policymakers, and experts were among over 20 speakers who participated in a dialogue to discuss intersection between nutrition and education in early childhood development (ECD) on Monday. The speakers discussed the role that the Anganwadi system can play in Early Childhood Development (ECD).

The event was facilitated by Rocket Health, an edu-tech non-profit organisation.

"The importance of early education has become very clear over the last few years, and is clear in the NEP too. The department is putting every effort to ensure this is implemented in the next couple of years," Sanjay Kumar, Secretary of the Department of School Education and Literacy said.

**INDIAN RAILWAYS**  
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA (BHARAT SARKAR)  
MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (RAIL MANTRALAYA)  
(RAILWAY BOARD)  
CORRIGENDUM-IV

Subject : E-Tender No. TM-2303 for procurement of Rail Borne Maintenance Vehicle "RBMV" for Indian Railways to be opened on 04.04.2024

The Corrigendum-IV regarding modifications to response to technical & commercial prebid queries, corrigendum to commercial tender conditions & technical specifications, final tender document after prebid and extension in date of tender opening have been uploaded on website <http://fireps.gov.in>.

(Vijay Singh)  
Executive Director/Track (M&MC)  
Railway Board  
Tel: No. 011-47845531  
E-mail: vijay.singh.2017@gov.in

691/2024

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

**HIMACHAL PRADESH STATE ELECTRICITY BOARD LIMITED**  
(A State Government Undertaking)  
"Press Tender Notice" (e-tendering Mode Only)

ONLINE TENDERS are hereby invited on partial turnkey basis (two part bid) by the undersigned for & on behalf of Managing Director, HPSEB Ltd., Shimla-4, from the Bidders/Joint venture firms having A-Class Electrical contractor license from Chief Electrical Inspector, for the following work:-

Tender No. CEO/M&C/T No. 20/WB-24x7 SOP/Solan & Nahan/2023-24

Description of Work Providing 24x7 Quality & Reliable Power Supply Through Implementation of Smart Grid Technologies in the Towns (Solan, Parwanoo, Baddi, Nalagarh, Nahan, & Poanta Sahib) under (OP) circle HPSEB Solan & Nahan. H.P. (IBRD funded Project) under Himachal Pradesh Power Sector Development Program (HPPSDP).

Estimated Cost Rs. 175.63 Cr  
Earnest Money Rs. 175.63 Lac  
Cost of Tender Documents inclusive GST (Non-refundable) Rs. 2950/-

Completion period 18 Months

KEY DATES

1. Date of online publication 12.03.2024 (11:30 AM)
2. Start date and time of bid submission 12.03.2024 (11:30 AM)
3. Pre Bid Meeting date 27.03.2024 (11:00 AM to 01:00 PM)
4. End date and time of bid submission 08.04.2024 (11:30 AM)
5. Date & time of opening of techno comm. bid 10.04.2024 (11:30 AM)

The bid document is available online and bid shall be submitted on line on website <https://www.hptenders.gov.in>. Bidders would be required to register in the website which is free of cost. For submission of bids, the bidders are required to have digital signature certificate (DSC) from one of the authorized certifying authority (CA). Aspiring bidders who have not obtained the user ID and password for participating in e-tendering in HPSEB Ltd. may obtain the same from the website <https://www.hptenders.gov.in>. DSC is mandatory to participate in e-tendering. Bidders already possessing valid DSC issued from authorized CAs can use the same in this tender.

(Dr. Rakesh Kumar)  
Chief Engineer (OP)  
HPSEB Ltd., Shimla-Zone.

Save Energy for the Benefit of Self and Nation

**GOVERNMENT OF ASSAM**  
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ENGINEER (ROADS),  
PUBLIC WORKS ROADS DEPARTMENT,  
ASSAM, GUWAHATI- 03

No. CE/DEV/TB/906/2023-24/14

**PRESS NOTICE INVITING TENDER (RE-BID)**

The Chief Engineer (Roads), PWRD, Assam, Chandmari, Guwahati-3 invites re-bids on behalf of Governor of Assam for 1 (One) nos of Packages for construction of Roads and Bridge project under SOPD-ODS for the year 2023-24 in Sonitpur Districts of Assam amounting to **Rs 1.18 Crores** (Approx.) including GST etc. from approved & eligible Contractors registered with PWRD, Assam.

Details along with packages under each district may be seen from 05.03.2024 at website [www.assamtenders.gov.in](http://www.assamtenders.gov.in). Amendment /Addendum to the SBD, if any, and further notifications shall appear in this website and also at the office of the undersigned during office hours. The contractor/bidder must be registered with the Electronic Tendering System (ETS) of PWRD, Assam website [www.assamtenders.gov.in](http://www.assamtenders.gov.in).

Schemes are not yet sanctioned by the competent authority. In the event of non-sanction of the schemes, the bids may be cancelled and no claim what so ever on this account shall be entertained from the bidders.

**Note:-** NIT Value is inclusive of GST (12%), Labour Cess (1%), etc.

**Chief Engineer (Roads), PWRD, Assam, Chandmari, Guwahati-3.**

JANASANYOG/CF/6213/23/5-Mar-24

**PSPCL Punjab State Power Corporation Limited**  
(Regd. Office.: PSEB Head Office, The Mall, Patiala-147001)  
CIN: U40109PB2010SGC033813; Website: [www.pspcl.in](http://www.pspcl.in)  
(Contact No. 96461-25300)

**OPEN E-TENDER ENQUIRY No 15/RSD/O&M/2023-24**

Dy. CE/O&M Circle, PSPCL, RSD, Shahpurkandi invites E-tenders for procurement of 2 No. 400NB Gear Operated Gate Valve for 4x150 MW units of RSPSP Shahpurkandi.

For detailed NIT and Tender Specifications please refer to <https://eproc.punjab.gov.in> from 06.03.2024 from 04:00 PM onwards.

**Note** :- Corrigendum & Addendum, if any will be published online at <https://eproc.punjab.gov.in>

C-191/24 33193/PB

**nidm NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF DISASTER MANAGEMENT**  
(Ministry of Home Affairs, Govt. of India)

**VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT**

The National Institute of Disaster Management, Delhi is seeking qualified candidates for followings contractual positions under the project "Preparation of DM Plan for the Department of Food and Public Distribution (DMP-DFFD)":

S.No.	Name of the position	Remuneration (Rs.)
1.	Research Consultant	70,000/- p.m.
2.	Project Assistant	22,000/- p.m.

Details of the assignment and information for applicants can be found on the website at <https://nidm.gov.in>. The last date of submitting application is **15.03.2024**.

CBC-19107/11/0037/2324 **Executive Director, NIDM**

**Dakshin Gujarat Vij Company Limited**  
CIN U40102GJ2003SGC042909  
Regd. & Corp. Office : 'Urja Sadan',  
N. V. Road, Kapodara Char Rasta,  
Surat 395 006 GUJARAT | Toll Free No. : 19123 (or 1800 233 3003)

**Tender Notice**

Tender details are available on [www.dgvcl.com](http://www.dgvcl.com) (for view and download tender documents) and <https://tender.nprocure.com> (for view, download and online tender submission).

Sr. No.	Tender No.
1	No. DGVCL/C&R/DSM/PM KUSUM C FLS/TN-03/DT 01.03.2024

"Publishing Tender of Request for Selection of SPG through 'On-line' mode for purchase of power from solar power Procurements through competitive bidding process (followed by reverse e-auction) for Solarization of 11kv Agricultural feeders emanating from selected 66/11kv Sub-stations in the supply area of DGVCL under Component-C of PM-KUSUM Scheme for Feeder level Solarization through RESCO Mode"

Note: Bidders may visit the above website/s for regular updates till opening of the tenders.

**ACE (C&R), DGVCL, Surat**

**GOVERNMENT OF HARYANA TENDER NOTICE**

Sr. No.	NAME OF BOARD/CORP./AUTH	NAME OF WORK NOTICE TENDER	OPENING DATE CLOSING DATE (TIME)	AMOUNT / EMD (APPROX.) IN RUPEES	WEBSITE OF THE BOARD CORP./AUTH	NODAL OFFICER/CONTACT DETAILS/EMAIL
1	UHBVN	CONVERSION OF EXISTING OVERHEAD 11KV AND LT ELECTRICAL LINES TO TRENCHES UNDERGROUND 11 KV AND LT CABLE SYSTEM, RING MAIN UNIT (RNU), MAIN FEEDER AND SERVICE PILLARS COMPATIBLE WITH SCADA ETC. AT SOHANA.	CLOSING DATE 27.03.2024	10 LACS	<a href="http://www.uhbvn.org.in">www.uhbvn.org.in</a> NET No. 426/PB/UG Callng/2024 (Sd.No. 782)	01722559431 ops@uhbvn.org.in
2	UHBVN	CONVERSION OF EXISTING OVERHEAD 11 KV AND LT ELECTRICAL LINES TO TRENCHES UNDERGROUND 11 KV AND LT CABLE SYSTEM, RING MAIN UNIT (RNU), MAIN FEEDER AND SERVICE PILLARS COMPATIBLE WITH SCADA ETC. AT DISTRICT HEAD QUARTER OF KARNAL, CIRCLE IN UHBVN.	CLOSING DATE 27.03.2024	10 LACS	<a href="http://www.uhbvn.org.in">www.uhbvn.org.in</a> NET No. 426/PB/UG Callng/2024 (Sd.No. 781)	01722559431 ops@uhbvn.org.in

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION KINDLY VISIT : [www.haryanaeprocurement.gov.in](http://www.haryanaeprocurement.gov.in) or [www.etenders.hry.nic.in](http://www.etenders.hry.nic.in)

**उपग्रह पावर ट्रांसमिशन कारपोरेशन लिमिटेड**  
लिमिटेड ई-निविदा सूचना निम्नलिखित कार्य/आपूर्ति हेतु ई-निविदा एवं भागों में जोएम्पटी-01 से ऑनलाइन, प्रतिष्ठित एवं अनुभवी ठेकेदारों/फर्मों से जीन लाइव ई-निविदा पोर्टल वेबसाइट 'http://etender.up.nic.in' पर आमंत्रित की जाती है। निविदा मूल्य जोएम्पटी-01 सहित तथा धरोहर राशि आरंटी-01-जोएम्पटी-02/एम्पटी-03/आईटी-01/बैंक गारंटी के माध्यम से अधिशासी अभियन्ता, विद्युत पारिषद खण्ड, अमरोहा के भारतीय स्टेट बैंक, शाखा - जोया (जिला - अमरोहा) में संचालित चालू खाता सं 0 (Current Account) - 30723557626, IFSC Code- SBIN 0007413, MICR No. 244002026 में डेपॉजिट रखने का कार्य। अथवा अन्य विधि विस्तार ई-निविदा पोर्टल पर अवश्य देख लिया जाय। अल्पकालिन ई- निविदा खुलने की दिनांक- 22.03.2024

1. ई-निविदा संख्या- 07/ई-01-सीओ/एम/2024 विद्युत पारिषद खण्ड अमरोहा के अन्तर्गत 220 केपीओ उपकेन्द्र गजरोला पर 160 एमवीए परिवर्तन से तेल रिखाव को रोकने एवं सेन्ट्रीफ्यूजिंग इत्यादि का कार्य। धरोहर राशि ₹ 3000/-
2. ई-निविदा संख्या- 08/ई-01-सीओ/एम/2024 विद्युत पारिषद खण्ड अमरोहा के अन्तर्गत 132 केपीओ मुगादाबाद (220) अमरोहा लाइन के टॉवर सं 29-30 तथा 45-46 के मध्य कंडक्टर के हार्ड रेंजिंग का कार्य। धरोहर राशि ₹ 10,00,000/-
3. ई-निविदा संख्या- 09/ई-01-सीओ/एम/2024 विद्युत पारिषद खण्ड अमरोहा के अन्तर्गत 132 केपीओ मुगादाबाद (220) अमरोहा लाइन के टॉवर सं 29-30 तथा 45-46 के मध्य कंडक्टर के हार्ड रेंजिंग का कार्य। धरोहर राशि ₹ 10,00,000/-
4. ई-निविदा संख्या- 10/ई-01-सीओ/एम/2024 विद्युत पारिषद खण्ड अमरोहा के अन्तर्गत 132 केपीओ मुगादाबाद (220) अमरोहा लाइन के टॉवर सं 29-30 तथा 45-46 के मध्य कंडक्टर के हार्ड रेंजिंग का कार्य। धरोहर राशि ₹ 10,00,000/-

ई-निविदा पोर्टल पर अवश्य देख लिया जाय। लिमिटेड ई-निविदा सूचना निम्नलिखित कार्य/आपूर्ति हेतु ई-निविदा एवं भागों में जोएम्पटी-01 से ऑनलाइन, प्रतिष्ठित एवं अनुभवी ठेकेदारों/फर्मों से जीन लाइव ई-निविदा पोर्टल वेबसाइट 'http://etender.up.nic.in' पर आमंत्रित की जाती है। निविदा मूल्य जोएम्पटी-01 सहित तथा धरोहर राशि आरंटी-01-जोएम्पटी-02/एम्पटी-03/आईटी-01/बैंक गारंटी के माध्यम से अधिशासी अभियन्ता, विद्युत पारिषद खण्ड, अमरोहा के भारतीय स्टेट बैंक, शाखा - जोया (जिला - अमरोहा) में संचालित चालू खाता सं 0 (Current Account) - 30723557626, IFSC Code- SBIN 0007413, MICR No. 244002026 में डेपॉजिट रखने का कार्य। अथवा अन्य विधि विस्तार ई-निविदा पोर्टल पर अवश्य देख लिया जाय। अल्पकालिन ई- निविदा खुलने की दिनांक- 22.03.2024

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2. ई-निविदा संख्या- 08/ई-01-सीओ/एम/2024 विद्युत पारिषद खण्ड अमरोहा के अन्तर्गत 132 केपीओ मुगादाबाद (220) अमरोहा लाइन के टॉवर सं 29-30 तथा 45-46 के मध्य कंडक्टर के हार्ड रेंजिंग का कार्य। धरोहर राशि ₹ 10,00,000/-
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ई-निविदा पोर्टल पर अवश्य देख लिया जाय। लिमिटेड ई-निविदा सूचना निम्नलिखित कार्य/आपूर्ति हेतु ई-निविदा एवं भागों में जोएम्पटी-01 से ऑनलाइन, प्रतिष्ठित एवं अनुभवी ठेकेदारों/फर्मों से जीन लाइव ई-निविदा पोर्टल वेबसाइट 'http://etender.up.nic.in' पर आमंत्रित की जाती है। निविदा मूल्य जोएम्पटी-01 सहित तथा धरोहर राशि आरंटी-01-जोएम्पटी-02/एम्पटी-03/आईटी-01/बैंक गारंटी के माध्यम से अधिशासी अभियन्ता, विद्युत पारिषद खण्ड, अमरोहा के भारतीय स्टेट बैंक, शाखा - जोया (जिला - अमरोहा) में संचालित चालू खाता सं 0 (Current Account) - 30723557626, IFSC Code- SBIN 0007413, MICR No. 244002026 में डेपॉजिट रखने का कार्य। अथवा अन्य विधि विस्तार ई-निविदा पोर्टल पर अवश्य देख लिया जाय। अल्पकालिन ई- निविदा खुलने की दिनांक- 22.03.2024

**दक्षिणांचल विद्युत वितरण निगम लिमिटेड**  
कार्यालय अधिशासी अभियन्ता, विद्युत जापद मण्डल (वितरण)  
64-खया, 220 केपीओ उपकेन्द्र, सिकन्दरा  
आगरा-282007 (उत्तर प्रदेश)

**अल्पकालीन निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना (ई-निविदा)**

अधोहस्ताक्षरकर्ता द्वारा दो भागों में प्रतिष्ठित एवं योग्य कान्फिडेंसीय/आपूर्तिकर्ताओं से निम्न कार्य हेतु निविदा शुल्क/धरोहर धनराशि एवं ई-निविदा दिनांक 20.03.2024 को अपराह्न 4:00 बजे तक ऑनलाइन पोर्टल पर प्राप्त की जायेगी एवं ई-निविदा दिनांक 21.03.2024 को अपराह्न 3:00 बजे से खोलो जायेगी। (1) निविदा सं 133/ECC(D) Ag/2023-24 :- मुख्य अभियन्ता (वि), जानपद क्षेत्र, आगरा एवं अधीक्षण अभियन्ता विद्युत जापद मण्डल (वि), आगरा के प्रयोगार्थ एक - एक अर्द्ध डीजल चालित वाहन मय चालक के बाढ़ एजेन्सी के माध्यम से क्रियेय पर रखने का कार्य। (2) निविदा सं 134 / ECC (D) Ag/2023-24 :- विद्युत जापद खण्ड (वि), आगरा एवं विद्युत जापद उपखण्ड (वि), आगरा के प्रयोगार्थ एक - एक अर्द्ध डीजल चालित वाहन मय चालक के बाढ़ एजेन्सी के माध्यम से क्रियेय पर रखने का कार्य। (3) निविदा सं 135 / ECC (D) Ag/2023-24 :- विद्युत जापद उपखण्ड (वि), मथुरा के प्रयोगार्थ एक अर्द्ध डीजल चालित वाहन मय चालक के बाढ़ एजेन्सी के माध्यम से क्रियेय पर रखने का कार्य। (4) निविदा सं 136/ECC(D)Ag/2023-24 :- विद्युत जापद उपखण्ड (वि), झांसी के प्रयोगार्थ एक अर्द्ध डीजल चालित वाहन मय चालक के बाढ़ एजेन्सी के माध्यम से क्रियेय पर रखने का कार्य। (5) निविदा सं 137 / ECC (D) Ag/2023-24 :- विद्युत जापद अनुसंधान एवं भूमि प्रबन्धन खण्ड, उपखण्ड, आगरा के प्रयोगार्थ एक - एक अर्द्ध डीजल चालित वाहन मय चालक के बाढ़ एजेन्सी के माध्यम से क्रियेय पर रखने का कार्य। (6) निविदा सं 138 / ECC (D) Ag/2023-24 :- विद्युत जापद उपखण्ड (वि), अलीगढ़ के प्रयोगार्थ एक अर्द्ध डीजल चालित वाहन मय चालक के बाढ़ एजेन्सी के माध्यम से क्रियेय पर रखने का कार्य। (7) निविदा सं 139 / ECC (D) Ag/2023-24 :- विद्युत जापद उपखण्ड (वि), अलीगढ़ के प्रयोगार्थ एक अर्द्ध डीजल चालित वाहन मय चालक के बाढ़ एजेन्सी के माध्यम से क्रियेय पर रखने का कार्य। (8) निविदा सं 140/ECC(D)Ag/2023-24 :- विद्युत अधिकांश कालोनी, 220 केपीओ उपकेन्द्र सिकन्दरा आगरा के विद्युत वार्षिक अनुसंधान कार्य हेतु दो अर्द्ध इलेक्ट्रिशियन बाढ़ एजेन्सी के माध्यम से रखने का कार्य। (कृपया विस्तृत जानकारी के लिये [www.dvnl.org](http://www.dvnl.org) एवं <http://etender.up.nic.in> पर देखें। हेल्लो लाइन-1800-180-3023

प्र संख्या- 1717/विजाओएम(वि)/आ/दे-2 (किसोर कुमार)  
दिनांक- 02.03.2024 अधीक्षण अभियन्ता (जापद)  
"सुनहरा भविष्य बनायें, राष्ट्रहित में बिजली बचाएँ"

**GOVERNMENT OF HARYANA TENDER NOTICE**

Sr. No.	NAME OF BOARD/CORP./AUTH	NAME OF WORK NOTICE TENDER	OPENING DATE CLOSING DATE (TIME)	AMOUNT / EMD (APPROX.) IN RUPEES	WEBSITE OF THE BOARD CORP./AUTH	NODAL OFFICER/CONTACT DETAILS/EMAIL
1	THE SIRSA DISTT COOP. MILK PRODUCERS UNION LIMITED (VITA SIRSA)	HIRING OF REFRIGERATED VEHICLE OF TRANSPORTATION AND DISTRIBUTION OF MILK & MILK PRODUCTS FOR INSTIT. HISAR AND OTHER INSTITUTIONS KHARA KHERI, AGROHA MOR AND HISAR	04.03.2024 14.03.2024	80000/-	<a href="http://www.vitalandia.org.in">www.vitalandia.org.in</a>	01666-2245059 vitsars@gmail.com

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION KINDLY VISIT: [www.haryanaeprocurement.gov.in](http://www.haryanaeprocurement.gov.in) or [www.etenders.hry.nic.in](http://www.etenders.hry.nic.in)

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2	UHBVN	CONVERSION OF EXISTING OVERHEAD 11 KV AND LT ELECTRICAL LINES TO TRENCHES UNDERGROUND 11 KV AND LT CABLE SYSTEM, RING MAIN UNIT (RNU), MAIN FEEDER AND SERVICE PILLARS COMPATIBLE WITH SCADA ETC. AT DISTRICT HEAD QUARTER OF KARNAL, CIRCLE IN UHBVN.	CLOSING DATE 27.03.2024	10 LACS	<a href="http://www.uhbvn.org.in">www.uhbvn.org.in</a> NET No. 426/PB/UG Callng/2024 (Sd.No. 781)	01722559431 ops@uhbvn.org.in

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION KINDLY VISIT : [www.haryanaeprocurement.gov.in](http://www.haryanaeprocurement.gov.in) or [www.etenders.hry.nic.in](http://www.etenders.hry.nic.in)

# Centre, Ladakh bodies meetings end with no 'concrete' results

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE SRINAGAR, MARCH 4

THE FOURTH round of talks between Ladakh and the Centre remained inconclusive with Leh Apex Body and Kargil Democratic Alliance stating that the meeting on Monday produced no "concrete" results.

Representatives from the two socio-political bodies from the Ladakh region also met Home Minister Amit Shah at his residence in New Delhi on Monday after talks with ministry officials earlier in the day failed to make any headway. This was the first meeting of the Ladakh groups with the Home Minister since 2020.

Sources, who were at the meeting, told *The Indian Express* that the ministry has refused to engage on core matters of statehood and protections under the Sixth Schedule for Ladakh. "First, the Home Minister and then the Home Ministry, have refused to engage with us on the matter," the source said.

However, according to the ministry, Shah assured the delegation that the government-

pointed high-powered committee formed to look into their statehood and other demands has been discussing the modalities to provide such Constitutional safeguards.

He told the delegation that under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the central government was committed to providing necessary constitutional safeguards to the Union Territory of Ladakh, according to the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA).

A ministry statement said, "Home minister expressed that the consultative mechanism established through this High Powered Committee should continue to engage on issues such as measures to protect the region's unique culture and language, protection of land and employment, inclusive development and employment generation, empowerment of LAHDCs and examine constitutional safeguards for positive outcomes."

With this, talks with the Centre could remain suspended as the Leh Apex Body



# 9 EXPRESS NETWORK

**BRIEFLY**

**DELHI**  
Diagnosed with cancer, cured now: ISRO chief

New Delhi: ISRO chairman S Somanath has revealed that he learnt about being diagnosed with cancer on the day of the launch of India's Aditya L1 mission. In an interview with Tarmak Media House, Somanath said he underwent an operation to remove the growth in his stomach, followed it up with chemotherapy and was now completely cured of the disease. "Undoubtedly, they would have been shocked. But now, I perceive cancer and its treatment as a solution. There is a message that it is not incurable," he said when asked about the reaction of his family members to the diagnosis. He said he would be undergoing regular checkups and scans, but he was now completely cured and has resumed duties. **PTI**

**Two more NHAI officials held in bribery case**

New Delhi: A day after arresting six persons, including two NHAI officers, in an alleged ₹20-lakh bribery case in Maharashtra's Nagpur, the CBI on Monday has arrested two more NHAI officials, including a deputy general manager posted in Madhya Pradesh in connection with a bribery racket busted by the agency, taking the total number of arrests to eight. The CBI busted the bribery racket on Sunday, arresting NHAI General Manager and Project Director Arvind Kale, posted in Nagpur, who had allegedly received ₹20 lakh bribe, and Deputy General Manager Brijesh Kumar Sahu, posted in Harda, MP. **ENS**

**KARNATAKA**  
Kerala man held over acid attack on three girls

Bengaluru: A man allegedly threw acid at three girl students of Kadaba Government Pre-University College in Dakshina Kannada district Monday. The incident occurred when the victims were about to enter the examination hall of the college. The accused has been identified as Abeen Shibi, 23, from Malappuram in Kerala. Shibi, who has been arrested, claimed during interrogation that one of the victims had spurned his advances, and he took the step "to show my disappointment in love". Karnataka Health Minister Dinesh Gundu Rao condemned the attack on the three students, directing authorities to ensure that victims received essential medical care. **ENS**

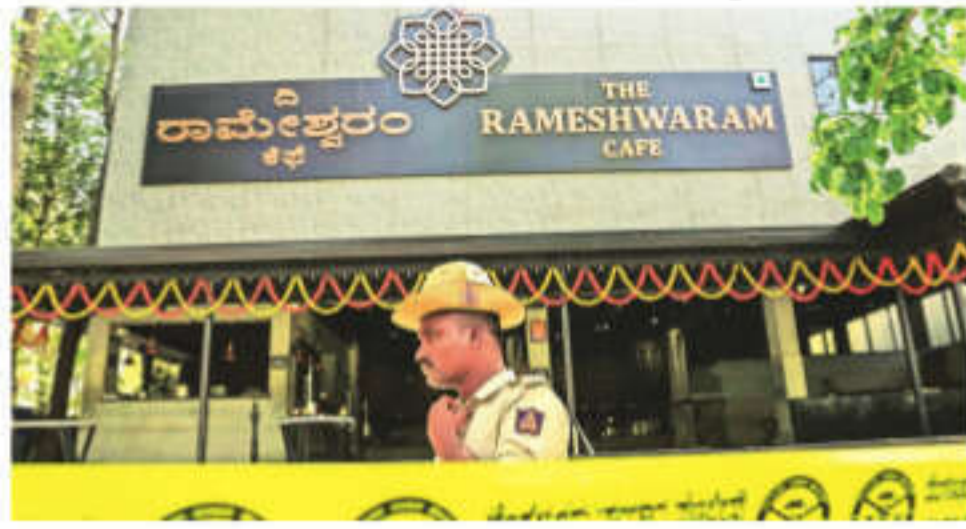
## NIA set to take over Bengaluru cafe blast case, registers FIR

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
BENGALURU, MARCH 4

THE NATIONAL Investigation Agency (NIA) Monday registered an FIR in connection with the March 1 bomb blast at Rameshwaram Cafe in Bengaluru on the directions of the Home Ministry and it is expected to take over the investigation being conducted by the Bengaluru crime branch.

Nine people were injured in the lunch-hour blast at Rameshwaram Cafe in the Whitefield tech hub of Bengaluru. A man who came to the restaurant wearing a cap, glasses, and a mask around 11.30 am, whose images have been captured by CCTV cameras at the cafe, is suspected to have planted an IED in a corner of the cafe. The device exploded at 12.56 pm.

The NIA FIR was registered Monday on the basis of a provision in the NIA Act of 2008, which allows the Centre to order the NIA to register a suo motu case even without a reference or



The Bengaluru crime branch is currently investigating the lunch-hour blast at Rameshwaram Cafe. **PTI file**

receipt of information from the state government.

"There is a provision in the NIA law that allows the registration of a case on the orders of the Central government. This has been done and the case will be formally handed over to the NIA in the next couple of days and until then the Bengaluru police will continue the probe," a senior Karnataka police officer said.

Under Section 6 of the NIA Act, which outlines the rules for

investigation of scheduled offences, and Clause 5, which states "if the Central Government is of the opinion that a Scheduled Offence has been committed which is required to be investigated under this Act, it may, suo motu, direct the Agency to investigate the said offence".

With the Bengaluru police invoking terrorism clauses of the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act (UAPA) of 1967 in an FIR reg-

istered with the HAL police station soon after the blast at the cafe, the case involves a scheduled offence that the NIA is mandated to probe, a senior Karnataka police officer said.

Monday an Inspector General of Police (IGP), a Deputy Inspector General (DIG) and a Superintendent of Police (SP) of the NIA met Karnataka police chief Alok Mohan and Bengaluru Police Commissioner B Dayananda to discuss the case handover to the NIA.

"The NIA has registered an FIR. The Bengaluru police is still conducting the investigations until the formal process of handing over the case is completed. There will be a meeting of NIA and Bengaluru police officers in the next few days to exchange notes on the progress of the investigations since March 1," Dayananda said.

NIA's FIR incorporates the facts stated in the FIR filed by the Bengaluru police at the HAL police station on March 1 under the UAPA law and will take up the case as a new NIA FIR.

## Hiranandani Group founder questioned by ED in FEMA case

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
MUMBAI, MARCH 4

NIRANJAN HIRANANDANI, the founder and managing director of Hiranandani Group appeared before the Enforcement Directorate (ED) at the agency's Ballard Estate office in Mumbai on Monday where officials questioned him in connection with a Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA) violation case.

Leaving the ED office after a 10-hour questioning session, Hiranandani said: "We have answered their questions multiple times. It is related to FDI. There is nothing new."

The central agency had last month conducted searches at Hiranandani Group premises in and around Mumbai. After the searches, the agency summoned Niranjan Hiranandani and his son Darshan for questioning.

Niranjan Hiranandani had earlier skipped a summons citing health concerns, while Darshan Hiranandani had requested the agency to give him



Niranjan Hiranandani at the ED office in Mumbai on Monday. **Amit Chakravarty**

some time to join the probe.

Sources said the accused group routed investments of more than ₹400 crore in the form of FDIs received in group companies with real estate projects in Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu.

A spokesperson for the group stated: "The company representative will remain fully cooperative in submitting required documents as was done previously multiple times and will appear when needed."

## Jharkhand gangrape: HC seeks report, dist judge meets victim

**ABHISHEK ANGAD**  
RANCHI, MARCH 4

THE JHARKHAND High Court Monday took suo motu cognizance of the Spanish woman's gang rape in Dumka district and asked the state government to file a report on the matter.

A division bench comprising Acting Chief Justice Shree Chandrashekhar and Justice Navneet Kumar issued notices to the DGP, chief secretary and the SP of Dumka in this regard.

The court will hear the case again on March 7.

Meanwhile, Anil Kumar Mishra, Dumka's Principal District Judge (PDJ) and Chairman of the District Legal

Services Authority, said the woman is "emotionally shattered" but physically stable. Mishra made the observations in a report to the Jharkhand Legal Services Authority (JHALSA) after meeting the woman. The visit came after JHALSA executive chairman Justice Sujit Narayan Prasad took cognizance of the incident. According to a JHALSA official, the PDJ and his team directed that compensation of Rs 10 lakh be paid to her.

The woman was allegedly raped by seven men on Friday night after she and her partner stopped in Dumka for the night while on a biking trip.

Four people have been arrested, and police are on the lookout for the other accused.

Meanwhile, the Spanish couple posted a picture of the accused on social media and appealed to the public to help the police in finding them. In a post in Spanish, the couple said, "(India) is a great country and worth visiting. It has its good things and its bad things... And thanks to the police and everyone."

On Monday, the High court observed: "The incident of crime of any kind against a foreign national may have serious national and international repercussions including impacting the tourism economy of the country. A sex-related crime against a foreign woman is likely to bring adverse publicity against the country and thereby tarnish the image of India across the globe." - **PTI INPUTS**

## 4-YR-OLD'S MURDER

### Suchana Seth's mental state to be re-evaluated as court allows her father's plea

**PAVNEET SINGH CHADHA**  
PANAJI, MARCH 4

A COURT in Goa on Monday allowed a plea by the father of Suchana Seth, the Bengaluru-based CEO accused of murdering her four-year-old son at a hotel in January, for another medical examination to be conducted by a board of doctors under the Mental Healthcare Act.

Suchana's advocate, Franco, said: "The operative part of the order is that she will have to be referred to a medical board under the Mental Healthcare Act for further assessment. A letter will be issued to the investigating officer concerned to produce her before a board of doctors for an assessment of her mental health condition. The plea also states to look into the history of her illness."

Goa police had earlier told the Children's Court that her mental health assessment did not find any case of psychopathology and that she gave "clear and rational answers" during her medical examination.

Citing a report of the medical examination conducted at the Institute of Psychiatry and Human Behaviour (IPHB) in Bambolim on February 2, Goa police had said that "serial mental status examinations did not reveal any case of psychopathology".

"She (Suchana) gave clear and rational answers in her assessments. She did not report any active death wishes or suicidal tendencies. Her judgement is intact and no psychotic or pervasive mood symptoms were elicited in responses," the report said.

Last month, Suchana's father had moved the court, seeking directions to get her evaluated to assess her mental health.

## Moitra gets fresh ED summons in forex case

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 4

THE ENFORCEMENT Directorate (ED) has issued fresh summons to former TMC MP Mahua Moitra in a foreign exchange violation case. It has asked her to appear for questioning on March 11.

The agency had sent the first summons to her last month, but Moitra sought a few weeks' time.

In the fresh notice, she has been asked to appear at the ED office in Delhi on March 11. "Her

statement will be recorded under the provisions of the Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA) once she deposes. Moitra is being investigated by the CBI too. It is conducting a preliminary inquiry into the allegations against Moitra on the reference from the Lokpal," an official said.

BJP MP Nishikant Dubey, who had levelled the allegations against Moitra, had told *The Indian Express* earlier that the Lokpal had forwarded his complaint to the CBI for investigation.

## Delhi HC seeks Centre response on French journalist's plea against work ban

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 4

THE DELHI High Court Monday sought the Centre's response to a plea by French journalist Vanessa Dognac, an OCI card holder, against the denial of nod to carry out journalistic activities in India.

A single-judge bench of Justice Subramonium Prasad issued notice to the Centre through the ministries of Home Affairs and External Affairs and listed the matter for next week.

In her plea, Dognac said the September 2022 communication from the Foreigners Regional Registration Officer denying her permission for journalistic activity in India was illegal, arbitrary and in violation of the principles of natural justice and due process.

## 17-yr-old girl gangraped in UP's Hathras, 1 held

**AMIT SHARMA**  
MEERUT MARCH 4

A 17-YEAR-OLD girl was allegedly gang-raped by two men when she was returning home after attending a wedding function at a guest house in the Hathras district of Uttar Pradesh in the early hours of Sunday.

The Hathras police arrested one accused and are conducting raids to nab the other. The police said the victim, a resident of the Aligarh district, used to be hired to shower flowers on guests at weddings and on the night of March 2, she performed her duties at the guest house in Hathras.

"At around 3 am on March 3, she came out of the guest house and waited for a transport to take her home when the two men, aged around 22 years, said they would drop her off in Aligarh on their bike. While on the way to Aligarh from Hathras, they stopped the bike and took her to

a desolate place by the roadside where they took turns to rape her," said Hathras Additional Superintendent of Police (ASP) Ashok Kumar Singh.

The police said that the accused fled from the scene after the crime, and she came out onto the road seeking help. A passerby came to her rescue and informed the area police station.

"We have lodged the First Information Report (FIR) and sent her for the medical examination. She told us that the accused were part of the catering team at the wedding function," said the police officer.

Hathras had witnessed a sensational gangrape-murder three years ago. In September 2020, a 19-year-old Dalit woman was allegedly gang-raped in Hathras by four upper-caste men, and she died two weeks later in a Delhi hospital. A court in Hathras in March 2023 convicted the main accused and acquitted three others of all charges in the case.

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
AHMEDABAD, MARCH 4

GUJARAT HAS attracted more than \$55 billion in foreign direct investment (FDI) over the past 20 years, Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel said Monday, adding that the state has become a favourable destination for trade and business.

"In the past 20 years, over \$55 billion in FDI has come to Gujarat. Because of available human resources, better law and order, business-friendly policy and a stable government, Gujarat has become a favourable state for trade and business," the Chief Minister said while delivering a speech at the chief guest at the States of Hope series organised by *The Indian Express* in Ahmedabad.

He said Gujarat has become a policy-driven state under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership. "In our state, we have formulated sector-specific policies that give impetus to the development of various fields." He cited the examples of India's first semiconductor plant that is coming up in Gujarat.



CM Patel at *The Indian Express* event in Ahmedabad, Monday

Highlighting the Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit, Patel said the biennial investment meeting has played an important role in taking Gujarat's development story to new heights. He also expressed confidence that the first Vibrant Summit has emerged as a foundation for making India a developed country by 2047.



## Rethink 5% customs duty on newsprint, INS appeals to govt

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 4

THE INDIAN Newspaper Society (INS) Monday appealed to the government to reconsider the imposition of five per cent customs duty on newsprint. The measure will come as much-needed relief to the print media industry, said the organisation, which counts newspapers, periodicals and magazines across the country as its members.

INS said the factors affecting the price and availability of newsprint — geopolitical uncertainties, logistics, rupee depreciation and customs duty — have created a formidable burden for publishers in the country.

The escalations in West Asian conflicts, as well as the conflict between Russia and Ukraine,

have significantly affected the global supply chain, including for newsprint, the organisation said in a statement Monday.

"Coupled with the Red Sea issue, where cargo ships are being continuously targeted, has further exacerbated the situation, leading to disruptions in the transportation of essential commodities, including newsprint. Resultantly, the newsprint suppliers are cancelling the earlier confirmed orders of the publishers," the statement says.

## Women's Day to see next big BJP push ahead of polls: Modi govt lines up announcements

**LIZ MATHEW**  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 4

WITH PRIME Minister Narendra Modi setting a target of 370 seats for the BJP in the Lok Sabha polls, the party is working out a strategy to put focus on the women voters in major states. PM Modi is likely to make some "big announcements" in this regard on March 8 on the occasion of International Women's Day.

The BJP will make attempts to expand its support base among women in several key states in a bid to overcome perceived disenchantment among a section of people over issues like unemployment, inflation and farm distress, party sources said.

In West Bengal, the BJP's high-decibel campaign over the

Sandeshkhali incidents in North 24 Parganas and PM Modi's attack on the ruling TMC over "atrocities against women of Sandeshkhali" — during his address at Arambagh rally in Hooghly district last Friday — signalled the party's women outreach to increase its Lok Sabha tally from the state.

This has put the TMC on the defensive. Women voters have in the past strongly backed the Mamata Banerjee-led TMC, fuelling its return to power for a third term in 2021.

Significantly, PM Modi is expected to address the national meeting of the BJP Mahila Morcha in Barasat in North 24 Parganas on March 7. Apart from the female beneficiaries of various Central government schemes, several women from



At PM Modi's rally in Chennai on Monday. **PTI**

Sandeshkhali are also likely to participate in this conclave, with the party looking to set the tone for the elections, sources said.

The BJP has asked its leaders across Bengal to campaign heavily on the Sandeshkhali issue and project the TMC and other

Opposition parties as "anti-women" while highlighting the initiatives taken by the Modi government for the welfare and empowerment of women. The BJP's women workers in various cities have been organising protests over the issue.

Some BJP leaders admitted that in the previous Assembly polls, the party could not stall CM Mamata's third term because of the "overwhelming support" the TMC got from women. Women overtook men in voting in the 2021 Bengal elections, which saw a turnout of 81.7% female voters as against 81.4% male voters.

BJP insiders say PM Modi in its interactions with the party leaders often reminds them that women voters are going to be

## 'CASH-FOR-QUERY' HC refuses interim relief to Moitra in 'defamatory' content plea

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 4

THE DELHI High Court Monday dismissed an interim plea by TMC leader Mahua Moitra that sought to restrain BJP MP Nishikant Dubey and advocate Jai Anant Dehadrai from circulating "defamatory" content against her in the 'cash-for-query' row.

A single-judge bench of Justice Sachin Datta observed that the November 9 Lok Sabha Ethics Committee report and its annexure on Moitra's parliamentary login details substantiated that "the plaintiff's (Moitra) parliamentary login credentials were shared by her with Shri Darshan Hiranandani; the said account was regularly and repeatedly accessed from outside India".

"This, coupled with the fact that that plaintiff publicly acknowledged receipt of certain gifts from Shri Darshan Hiranandani, as set out in paragraph 65 of the report of the Ethics Committee of the Lok Sabha, completely discredits the plaintiff's 'denial in toto' to the contents of the defendant No. 2's (Dehadrai) communication dated 14.10.2023," the High Court said.

The court said Moitra had failed to make out a case for interim injunction, while making it clear that its observations are for deciding only the interim plea.

The court said there was nothing preventing Moitra from making a "full disclosure" in her plaint about sharing her login credentials and receiving gifts from Hiranandani.

But it said this omission was "conspicuous" in light of Moitra's own "public statements" and Hiranandani's "sworn affidavit".

Moitra had sought to restrain Dubey and Dehadrai from circulating "defamatory" content against her in the 'cash-for-query' row.





## The Indian EXPRESS

FOUNDED BY

RAMNATH GOENKA

BECAUSE THE TRUTH INVOLVES US ALL

# Shaadi Number One

Publicness of Ambani festivities represents a broader shift in culture



PRATAP BHANU MEHTA

## POINT OF THE SUBSIDY

Objective behind India's foodgrain procurement is to help citizens, ensure food security, not distort global trade

AT THE WORLD Trade Organisation's 13th ministerial conference in Abu Dhabi, Thailand replaced its ambassador, Pimchanok Vonkorpit Pitfield, after the Indian government lodged a protest against her remarks on its public stockholding programme. Pitfield had said that India's rice procurement programme for PDS is not for the people, but for capturing the export market. Thailand is the second biggest rice exporter after India. It is also part of the Cairn Group — a group of 20 nations that includes rice exporters such as Thailand and Vietnam as well as countries like Australia, Brazil and Canada. The group, which pushes for liberalisation of global trade in agriculture, has raised questions in the past as well over India's programme on grounds that it is "distorting" global food prices and "hurting" the food security of other countries. They are missing the point.

The Indian government procures foodgrains for meeting objectives such as its commitments under the National Food Security Act, and other schemes. It is directed towards ensuring food security for a large part of the country's population, not for distorting global food trade. The requirement of rice and wheat under these welfare schemes is not more than 60 million tonnes. Even after making adjustments for an additional quantity for open market interventions, the total requirement is not significantly more. Procurement did rise during 2021-22 and 2022-23 in excess of the requirements for the public stockholding programme. But stocks declined as beneficiaries were given 5 kg of free grain per person per month in addition to their existing quota under the National Food Security Act during the Covid period and because of two poor wheat crops.

In turn, India has legitimate concerns over the manner in which subsidies are estimated at the WTO. The price level at which the calculation is carried out to determine if the product specific support exceeds the specified ceiling of 10 per cent of the total value of production is outdated. The calculation, carried out at 1986-88 prices, tends to overestimate the subsidy. As per the calculations, the value of India's rice production was \$46.07 billion, while the subsidies it gave were pegged at \$6.31 billion. This works out to 13.7 per cent, higher than the prescribed ceiling. As reported in this paper, India and other developing countries are seeking a sustainable solution for the issue of public stockholding for foodgrains. Procurement of foodgrains at the minimum support price and distribution under the NFSA is a pact the Indian government has made with its farmers and citizens. Countries across the world have different ways of helping their farmers. In fact, other countries such as the US and the EU, are estimated to give far more subsidies to the farmer than India.

## A BIG FAT PROBLEM

Lancet report on obesity highlights seriousness of the issue. It should be a wake-up call for policymakers

IN RECENT YEARS, studies and surveys have flagged a distinct shift in India's disease burden. Non communicable diseases such as diabetes, strokes and heart ailments claim more lives in the country compared to infectious diseases. Experts have also underlined the links between these lifestyle-related diseases and obesity. Long thought to be an urban problem, obesity has become a health threat in rural parts of the country in the last decade. Now, a study published in the medical journal, *The Lancet*, has revealed that it also affects children. More than 12 million children (7.3 million boys and 5.2 million girls) in the country, aged between five and 19, were grossly overweight in 2022, up from 0.4 million in 1990. A gender skew also marks the rise in obesity levels: *The Lancet* study found 44 million women and 26 million men aged above 20 in India to be obese, up from 2.4 million women and 1.1 million men in 1990.

WHO defines obesity as an "abnormal or excessive accumulation of fat that poses health risks". Like in most parts of the world, in India too the problem stems from an increase in sedentary lifestyles, improvement in living standards and access to processed foods. The recently released results of the Household Consumption Survey show that Indians are spending less on cereals and pulses and more on beverages, refreshments and processed food. According to a joint study conducted by WHO and ICRIER last year, India's ultra-processed food industry grew at a compound annual growth rate of 13.37 per cent in terms of retail sales value between 2011 and 2021. Unfortunately, the country's nutrition-related policies, such as Poshan 2.0, do not give adequate attention to unhealthy eating habits. The National Programme for Prevention and Control of Cancer, Diabetes, Cardiovascular Diseases and Strokes does recommend screening and early interventions to check the obesity-related risk factors from becoming complicated. The guidelines recommend annual screening for excess weight in children as young as two to six years old. However, a lack of awareness about the seriousness of the issue, including in the medical community, means that these prescriptions are rarely followed.

India is not the only country with an intractable obesity problem. WHO notes that no country is on track to meeting its target of bringing down obesity to 2010 levels by 2025. However, in several parts of the world, conversations have begun on trying to deal with the problem through measures such as higher taxes on unhealthy food and incentives for healthy food, front-of-pack nutrition labelling to guide consumers and awareness programmes. India has been an outlier to such discussions. *The Lancet* report should serve as a wake-up call for policymakers.

## SENSE OF AN ENDING

Merriam-Webster says it is fine to use prepositions to conclude sentences with

THIS IS THE type of arrant pedantry up with which I will not put," Winston Churchill is claimed to have said, rebelling against the autocracy of grammar Nazis insisting that no sentence in the English language take recourse to prepositions as a note to end on. Merriam-Webster seems to have realised the merit in Churchill's argument: In a shock declaration, the publisher of the eponymous American dictionary and reference books has announced that it is perfectly acceptable to do so. "The idea that it should be avoided came from writers who were trying to align the language with Latin, but there is no reason to suggest ending a sentence with a preposition is wrong," it announced on social media, riling up purists who claimed that the venerable institution has little idea about the Pandora's box its verdict would open up.

Truth be told, the preposition dilemma has haunted the English language for long. Like the Oxford comma or starting a sentence with a conjunction, the use of prepositions at the end of the sentence is something that the jury has been unable to agree upon. Merriam-Webster had first waded into the debate in 2020, claiming that the obduracy to embrace prepositions at the end of a sentence was an inherited snobbery, espoused by the 17th century poet and literary critic, John Dryden, who had acquired it himself from the grammarian Joshua Poole. The latter had, in his 1646 treatise, *The English Accidence*, set out "a short, plaine, and easie way for the more speedy attaining to the Latine tongue, by the help of the English". It is this tyranny, Merriam-Webster asserted, that has made miserable the lives of English language speakers, and one whose time had come to be rid of.

Love it or hate it, there's no denying that Merriam-Webster's proclamation helps open possibilities up. After all, what indeed is language if it does not update itself periodically to best represent the time it speaks for. That is a freedom one must not let go of.

THE RELENTLESS ATTENTION to the pre-wedding ceremony of Anant Ambani and Radhika Merchant is a fascinating window into the vast shifts in both the culture and political economy of India. The scripted video releases, and the endless building of an aura around the event, is not surprising. In human terms, the script is enticing: The story has the perfect blend of wealth, power, glamour, family values, piety, with the vulnerability of a personal struggle that not even Sooraj Barjatya could ever conjure. And there is a genuine fascination with the story.

Contrary to what intellectuals are prone to think, these displays of wealth seldom generate resentment or envy. Envy, in any case, is a result of competition with those who are close or adjacent to you. It is not a generalised sentiment towards the wealthy in general. There might be something grotesque and distracting about such displays in a society as unequal as India. But this thought is overshadowed by an admirable sentiment that there is always something disfiguring about resenting someone's wealth and success. If the display of wealth can be gratuitous, resenting it is even more so. As Adam Smith had described it, there is what he called a "peculiar sympathy" with the rich. They represent aspiration more than anything else; and a concrete image of what we might imagine happiness to be. The thought is that if even the rich cannot exercise choices what hope might other lesser mortals have. Which is why publics all over the world have a curious fascination for the rich, a sympathy with their ambition and aspiration, more than resentment at their success.

But there is a slight peculiarity in this instance. Traditionally, the rich parcel out different functions: Some provide the glamour, some industry, some power. In this case, it is the fusion of all these elements that generates interest. But the second is the incredible publicness of it all, a big shift from the traditional reticence of Indian business. The biggest producers of movies have made themselves the movie, the most powerful controllers of the entertainment industry have themselves become part of the enter-

tainment, and the owners of news have become the news.

Some of this may be due to a broader shift in culture: If you don't perform your identity on social media you might as well not exist. Even the most intimate aspects of our identity are acquiring a plebiscitary aspect to them: What friends think of each other, parents of their kids, in-laws of their prospective brides, expressions of love (or hate), seem to be more than half addressed to an abstract public audience rather than to the object of that sentiment. A sense of publicness used to be irrelevant to a whole range of virtues and sentiments like philanthropy, piety, devotion, compassion, love, friendship, familial bonds. Now publicness is becoming constitutive of their meaning. There is often thought to be a tension in social media performances. There is both self idealisation, presenting myself in the most ideal way, and authenticity: This is who I am. When a public script tries to combine both, as the Ambani wedding scripts attempt to do, the result becomes a perfect embodiment of our age.

Doubtless the Ambanis are charming, wonderful and thoughtful people. And doubtless, all the people present had genuine personal affection for the Ambanis. But as a public spectacle, the idea that one can get anyone, no matter how powerful, to show up and make them dance, is quite a show of power. It also explains something of why we put up with overwhelming concentrations of power. A figure that has overwhelming power can cut everyone down to size. You might be secretary of state or the world's greatest star. But you still show up to an event if the Ambanis summon.

But there is also a deeply political aspect to this. Adam Smith, who did not think envy was a potent sentiment, worried about the political power of the rich. For this reason, the rich, while conspicuous in their consumption, always operate in the shadows; the façade that wealth did not shade into other forms of power had to be kept up. By any measure India is a grotesque plutocracy. But it is striking the degree to which the plutocracy is now so transparent, a feature to be flaunted, not a bug to be regretted. The fascinating thing about the event is not the conspicuous consumption. It is the show of power.

What has changed to make this power now a matter of display? Three things come to mind. They who allocate capital allocate power is an old adage. But what has changed is the myth-making around the capabilities of big capital, not just the system of capitalism. There is the construction that an Ambani (or potentially an Adani), can execute and deliver like no other organisation might. If you want big refineries, ports with fast turn-around times, cheap telecom, global champions, big capital is your only bet. Never mind

the regulatory manipulations, to use a polite word, that make this possible: Behold the grandeur of outcome. In some ways, these events also become a hallmark of execution capabilities. Second, in the Ambani case, there is the spectacle of the world showing up: From the Emir of Qatar to Rihanna. This is, in a vicarious way, the world paying obeisance to India. So what if India is not rich. At least it has the world's richest.

It also counts as being Number One in something. This is a projection of national power, without embarrassment. The third is a perfect ideological alignment between Indian capital and the project of Hindu nationalism. Capital has to be visible in that project; it has to make a public show of its devotion to the cause. Capital, in turn, can be recast as a nationalist project, and no better vehicle for it than a perfectly sanskari capitalist family. All these three make this also a perfect nationalist moment.

Doubtless the Ambanis are charming, wonderful and thoughtful people. And doubtless, all the people present had genuine personal affection for the Ambanis. But as a public spectacle, the idea that one can get anyone, no matter how powerful, to show up and make them dance, is quite a show of power. It also explains something of why we put up with overwhelming concentrations of power. A figure that has overwhelming power can cut everyone down to size. You might be secretary of state or the world's greatest star. But you still show up to an event if the Ambanis summon.

Or in politics, you might think you are an important leader. But you can be cut down to size by the Biggest One in a matter of seconds. So we are quite happy to have One Big Leader cut down everyone to size. Only the ONE is above us. Everyone else, even the most powerful, have to pay their respects. There is something perversely democratic about the idea that we are all beholden to power, be it from state or capital. The point of these public displays is to demonstrate the truth we hide from ourselves.

The writer is contributing editor, The Indian Express



RINKU GHOSH

## A REBEL, AN ICON

Iris Apfel's unique style defied fashion's ageist, conformist standards

IF ONLY COLOUR, as the late Iris Apfel said, could bring the dead back to life. For, if there was one word to define the American style icon and designer, who died at 102, it would be just that — "colourful". A free thinker and an all-embracing inclusivist, above all else, Apfel blurred many lines — between what's fashionable and unfashionable, between the elite and the plebian, youth and old age and, most importantly, between please-all uniformity and a self-loving individuality.

In fact, her life was all about extending possibilities and drinking it to the lees. Some would call her style hedonistic, although Apfel was anything but that. The secret lay in her beady eyes, behind her much-imitated owl glasses, which had weathered many a storm in life. Apfel was born in 1921, during the Great Depression, when a lack of resources challenged creativity. Having studied art history at the New York University and art at the University of Wisconsin, she interned with an interior designer. With her husband, she set up a firm that restored curtains, upholstery and other fabrics, including at the White House, while quietly challenging the limits of textile design.

Apfel's line of work sparked her interest in collectibles, antiques and odds and ends, such as porcelain cats, dolls, gilded mirrors, bejewelled vases and fruits and stuffed

birds — all of which found representation in the clothes she made and wore. She also collected clothes during her travels, developing a deep respect for native weaves and traditions. That's how Apfel's baroque excess harmonised into an original masterpiece. Nothing was an oddity or insignificant; everything fell in place. And there was always a method to the madness.

So be it an haute couture gown in metallic hues or the brightest reds and yellows, a feathered cape or a silken scarf, Apfel could accessorise anything with multicoloured bangles from a flea market, a long necklace of street-side beads and a designer choker of precious stones worth over a million. As she walked down the streets of New York City in high boots, with her fingers covered in tribal rings, the pantomime costume would turn into the latest benchmark of boho-chic. She democratised and re-purposed fashion, made it eclectic, gender agnostic, accessible and breathable. "Life is grey and dull. You might as well have some fun dressing up," she had said in a documentary on her life by Albert Maysles.

It is by breaking the ageist stranglehold on an industry that equates glamour with youth and good looks that this silver-haired genius convinced everybody that "it's nice to be old". Her exuberant presence in fashion week front rows was not about compulsive reverse-ageing, but about the right of everyone to express themselves with abandon. She was not a mere rebel, or 'a whacko' as some critics pointed out — she believed that even old people had a right to the fullness of being, rather than being seen as a geriatric liability.

reverse-ageing, but about the right of everyone to express themselves with abandon. Iconoclasm comes easy to celebrities but Apfel gave that right to everybody and became a cultural icon in her 80s, more so after the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York showed her wardrobe in an exhibition called 'Rara Avis' at its Costume Institute in 2005. In 2018, at 96, she inspired a line of Barbie dolls mirroring her fashion sense. The following year, at 97, she signed a modelling contract with IMG at the insistence of Tommy Hilfiger and at 100, she collaborated with H&M for a fashion line. She was not a mere rebel, or "a whacko" as some critics pointed out — she believed that even old people had a right to the fullness of being, rather than being seen as a geriatric liability.

As a woman, Apfel had broken many moulds, choosing not to have children without explaining why and adopting fluid lines that didn't pressure women to get into shape and conform to classic cuts.

Apfel died in the middle of Paris Fashion Week. Perhaps to remind us to fight for the front row with originality of ideas rather than unquestioning acquiescence. That alone would make people sit up and take notice. As would her last book, due in August. Aptly, it's called *Colourful*.

rinku.ghosh@expressindia.com



## MARCH 5, 1984, FORTY YEARS AGO

### AFSPA IN PUNJAB

THE PUNJAB GOVERNMENT declared the districts of Amritsar, Gurdaspur and Kapurthala, as disturbed areas under the Armed Forces (Punjab and Chandigarh) Special Powers Act, 1983, for three months. The order vests vast powers with the police and paramilitary forces, including powers to arrest and search premises without a warrant. This action comes in the wake of the unabated spate of violence in these areas.

### PM ON INDIA-US TIES

PRIME MINISTER INDIRA Gandhi has said

that the global strategy of the US administration does not find a place for India. "Although there is a lot to talk about democracy and freedom, I think that the people in Washington are really a little irked when we do assert our freedom of judgement, assessment and action, which so many other countries don't," PM Gandhi said.

### JANATA ELECTIONS

REPORTS ON THE Janata Party presidential poll indicate that the current president, Chandra Shekhar, has received overwhelming support. The counting will take place in Delhi on March 6 for the party's first-ever pres-

idential elections. Shekhar's lone rival, Subramaniam Swamy, was expecting support from Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Gujarat. But reports suggest otherwise.

### VIOLENCE IN NIGERIA

NEARLY 1,000 PEOPLE have died in a week of religious violence in the northwest Nigerian city of Yola where fighting is still raging, the government-owned *New Nigerian* newspaper reported. Hospital sources gave a figure of 250 and a government official said that 137 people had died. The newspaper said about 500 bodies had been removed from the Yola hospital for a mass burial.



# 11 THE IDEAS PAGE

## Let Pakistan be

Bilateral engagement is a high-cost and low-reward exercise. The costs are higher in Pakistan, where the new government is weak and hobbled by multiple domestic challenges



RAJA MANDALA  
BY C RAJA MOHAN

AS SHEHBAZ SHARIF takes charge as the Prime Minister of Pakistan this week, the focus inevitably turns to the prospects for ending the current freeze in bilateral relations with India. However, the expectations for a new beginning must be tempered for several reasons.

For one, improving bilateral relations is not an urgent priority for India or Pakistan. For Delhi and Islamabad, bilateral engagement is a high-cost and low-reward exercise. In addition, the higher the ambition for a productive bilateral relationship, the greater the political costs of organising it. The costs are higher in Pakistan, where the new government is weak and hobbled by multiple domestic challenges. PM Narendra Modi, expected to begin a third term at the end of May following the general elections, is in a much better position to take risks in engaging Pakistan. Still, he also insists on terms of his own.

Under Modi, Pakistan has dropped down the list of India's foreign policy priorities. He has demonstrated that India can live with the freeze in bilateral relations. He has also helped India break free from the terms of engagement with Pakistan that were negotiated in the early 1990s when India was at one of its most vulnerable moments.

Pakistan, in contrast, continues to be obsessed with India but has tied itself in knots over bilateral relations. It has put pre-conditions on the engagement. In public, Pakistan insists that India must roll back the 2019 changes in the constitutional status of Kashmir. This is asking for the impossible from the Modi government.

There might be some room for finesse here; but not too much. In essence, any resumption of talks would need Pakistan to get off the high horse it had climbed onto in August 2019. In February 2021, the then Pakistan army chief, General Qamar Jawed Bajwa, when negotiating the ceasefire on the border, was signalling some flexibility on Kashmir. But Imran Khan had vetoed any steps towards the normalisation of relations without Indian concessions on Kashmir. It is unclear if General Asim Munir and PM Sharif have enough political capital to move forward with India amidst their bitter battle with the immensely popular Imran Khan. Any positive movement in Pakistan on relations with India would involve swallowing the bitter pill that Kashmir cannot be the main focus of engagement with India. Can Pakistan continue to throw good money after bad in promoting the Kashmir insurgency? Does it have the political room to normalise ties with India by putting the Kashmir issue on the back burner?

In his first speech, Sharif talked about improving ties with neighbours but also referred to "freeing" the people of Kashmir. It is not easy for Pakistan's leaders to shed the "ideology" of liberating Kashmir even as that goal looks ever more unrealistic. For Pakistan, the real challenge is coming to terms with the shifting balance of power with India. While Pakistan has always seen itself as equal to India, the last three decades have magnified the rapid divergence in



CR Sasikumar

their relative power in favour of India.

India's aggregate GDP at \$3.7 trillion is now 10 times larger than Pakistan's, struggling at barely \$350 billion. This gap will continue to expand in the coming years. If success breeds success, failure tends to beget failure. While India celebrates its status as the fastest-growing major economy, Pakistan is brooding over its relative economic decline.

In his first address after being elected as Prime Minister, Sharif underlined the need for "deep systemic surgery" in Pakistan. According to Sharif, the stark choice is to "get rid of the life in debt" or forever keep the head down "in shame". He insisted that the new government will help Pakistan rise and stand on its own feet. But talk is cheap; serious economic reform is hard even in the best of circumstances. India, which began its reform and opening up at the turn of the 1990s, took over a decade to stabilise and grow its economy. In theory, Pakistan could do the same. However, the Sharif government lacks the political legitimacy to embark on a serious reform programme. Nor is it clear if it has the policy competence.

Imran Khan's supporters, who form the largest bloc in the National Assembly, brand the government as a "mandate thief". The populist Pakistan People's Party, one of the coalition partners, wants to dissociate itself from the pain-inducing reforms. Cynics could argue that army backing is more important than popular legitimacy or political support. Still, the fact is that long overdue reforms will inflict enormous economic pain on the people. Army Chief Munir is all in favour of reform. But the army-led deep state in Pakistan is arguably at one of its weakest moments, and questions remain about its ability to persist with reform.

Unfavourable balance of power is an unforgiving condition. It demands internal change and external reorientation. Rawalpindi is struggling to navigate between China and the US — Pakistan's two friends — now at each other's throats. Its traditional friends in the Gulf — Saudi Arabia and UAE — are now best friends with India. Four decades of Pakistan's investment in controlling Afghanistan has gone awry, with the US withdrawing from the country and the Taliban returning to power. Put starkly, Pakistan's problems with Khorasan are a lot worse and more immediate than its historic grievances against Hindustan.

History does not offer much reassurance — Pakistan has rarely completed reform programmes negotiated with the International Monetary Fund. But there is always a first time, and Pakistan may get it right this time. There will be consequences — intended or unintended — whether Pakistan succeeds or fails in its internal reform plans.

Unfavourable balance of power is an unforgiving condition. It demands internal change and external reorientation. In the past, external geopolitics often created enough space for Pakistan to defer and delay serious internal reform. Today, Pakistan finds itself in an unfavourable situation. Rawalpindi is struggling to navigate between China and the US — Pakistan's two long-standing friends — now at each other's throats. Its traditional friends in the Gulf — Saudi Arabia and UAE — are now best friends with India. Four decades of Pakistan's investment in controlling Afghanistan has gone awry, with the US withdrawing from the country and the Taliban returning to power. Put starkly, Pakistan's problems with Khorasan are a lot worse and more immediate than its historic grievances against Hindustan.

Pakistan has headaches other than those generated by India. Delhi, then, has no option but to continue with a minimal engagement with Pakistan. What Delhi could build on, though, is a very counter-intuitive development in Pakistan — the grudging admiration for PM Modi. Reconnecting with the divergent social, political and economic formations of Pakistan could serve India well if and when Rawalpindi is ready to try out a positive approach to Delhi.

The writer is a contributing editor on international affairs for The Indian Express

## WHAT THE OTHERS SAY

"The WTO needs reform. It requires a better system to resolve trade disputes... to make it simpler for smaller countries to use... But abandoning the WTO would be a grave mistake, leaving the world without a multinational cop to keep countries trading fairly."  
— THE WASHINGTON POST

## Why minerals are critical

Lack of access to them may be the biggest roadblock to India's net-zero goal



SOMIT DASGUPTA

TWO IMPORTANT STEPS have been taken by the government in the past year on the subject of critical minerals. The first was to identify a list of 30 critical minerals (apart from rare earths, which are clearly identified in the periodic table) in July 2023 and the second was to amend the existing mining laws in November 2023 to allow private sector participation in the auction of 20 blocks of critical minerals/rare earths. Critical minerals have no particular definition and countries identify the minerals critical to them using their own criteria. The US has identified 50 minerals while Japan has identified 31. Critical minerals and rare earths should not be used interchangeably as is done very often. India has identified 30 critical minerals depending upon their disruption potential, substitutability, cross-cutting usage across different sectors, import reliance, recycling rates etc. The states/UTs which house these 30 identified critical minerals are Bihar, Gujarat, Jharkhand, Odisha, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Jammu and Kashmir.

Though one needs critical minerals for decarbonisation, it is not limited to just that. They are also required for fertilisers, construction, magnets for industries, transport, consumer electronics, defence, etc. As far as decarbonisation is concerned, one may note that when it comes to building a solar PV plant or a wind farm or electric vehicles, they require more minerals than their fossil fuel counterparts. An electric car needs six times the mineral input when compared to a conventional car and an on-shore wind plant requires nine times more mineral resources than a gas-fired plant. The International Energy Agency (IEA) has estimated that in order to meet the Paris Agreement targets, the share of clean energy technologies in the total demand for critical minerals over the next two decades would be over 40 per cent for copper and rare earths, 60-70 per cent for nickel and cobalt and 90 per cent for lithium. In general, mineral demand for clean energy technologies would rise by at least four times by 2040 to meet the climate goals.

This massive surge has certain implications for this sector. These resources are concentrated in a few countries and, in the case of lithium, cobalt and rare earths, the world's top three producing nations control well over three-fourths of global output. Specifically, Australia has 55 per cent of lithium reserves, China has 60 per cent of the rare earths, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) has 75 per cent of cobalt, Indonesia has 35 per cent of nickel, Chile has 30 per cent of copper reserves.

When it comes to critical minerals/rare earths, China needs a special mention. Not only does it have a major share of rare earth reserve, it has also completely monop-

olised the processing capacity of these minerals. China processes 35 per cent of the world's nickel, 50-70 per cent of lithium and cobalt and nearly 90 per cent of rare earths. Not just that, Chinese companies have made investments in Australia, Chile, Indonesia and the DRC, among others, to source those minerals which it is not endowed with sufficiently. China has also monopolised the manufacture of finished products as it supplies 78 per cent of cathodes, 85 per cent of anodes, 70 per cent of battery cells and 95 per cent of permanent magnets made from rare earths. It would be pertinent to add that the Mountain Pass Mine, a rare earth mining company based in the US, exports a major part of their output to China since they do not have processing capacity within the country. In the past, the US was happy to have the processing done in China since it was cheaper and because processing is very energy intensive and leads to a lot of carbon emissions.

China, incidentally, has been using its monopoly position on rare earths to settle political scores with countries like the US and Japan by restricting their exports and also the related technology. China's dominant position in the business of critical minerals and its willingness to arm-twist other countries has clearly rattled the world community. It has led to the formation of the US-led Minerals Security Partnership (MSP). India, too, has joined the MSP. The aim of the MSP is to bolster the critical minerals supply chain. The MSP includes countries like Australia, Canada, Sweden and Norway, which have deposits of critical minerals, and also countries like Japan and South Korea which have access to processing technology. It would, however, be interesting to note that the MSP does not include countries like Chile, DRC, Indonesia etc. (which are rich in certain critical minerals), raising concerns about its effectiveness. The basic premise of MSP is "friend shoring", meaning moving manufacturing away from authoritarian states (read China) to allies.

As far as India is concerned, the availability of critical minerals (and rare earths) is crucial as it has massive plans for decarbonisation and to become net-zero by 2070. By 2030, India wants to set up 500 GW of non-fossil fuel power generating capacity. It also wants 30 per cent of private cars, 70 per cent of commercial vehicles and 80 per cent of two/three wheelers to go electric. All this will not be possible without a steady source of lithium and other minerals required to manufacture batteries. As of now, India is completely dependent on imports for most of the critical minerals. India has signed an agreement with Australia to jointly explore for lithium and cobalt assets in Australia. The problem is that the availability of the minerals is not enough. One needs to process it and manufacture the final product which also means access to technology. What we are looking at is a gestation period of about 15 years or more. There is a big fear that lack of access to critical minerals may be the biggest roadblock to India's march towards decarbonisation.

The writer is senior visiting fellow, ICRIER and former member (Economic & Commercial), CEA. Views are personal

## The image of a leader

Bharat Jodo Yatras have failed to establish Rahul Gandhi as a political force



BADRI NARAYAN

WHEN IT COMES to public figures, especially politicians, there is the reality and the image. A politician will come to a place, meet people, address meetings and rallies and move on. In the emptiness of their departure, the image — their representation and memory — remains. These images evolve and reshape themselves, and may well become detached from the actual person — their views, values and competence. This happens through oral traditions, conversation and representations in print and electronic media. Through a combination of imagination, memory and what it sees, the public forms its version of the politicians.

In the digital age, particularly, the image and narratives around a politician have become essential to their appeal. That is why, perhaps, most leaders are either trying to build a hegemonic image or to undermine their opponents.

It is now clear that, despite some hiccups, it is the image of Rahul Gandhi that is coming to be primarily associated with the INDIA grouping. However, given the Opposition and Rahul Gandhi's recent record, there has been a concerted attempt

to enhance and reshape his image ahead of the 2024 general elections.

One strategy in this regard seems to be the use of "pad yatras" to engage with the public and build a political image of trustworthiness. Rahul Gandhi is currently engaged in the Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra from Manipur to Mumbai, which started on January 24 and will end in March. This is the second such endeavour by Rahul Gandhi — the first Bharat Jodo Yatra took place between September 2022 and January 2023. The team surrounding Rahul Gandhi as well as Congress leaders have tried to portray the Yatras as breakthrough moments, a mechanism through which his image — long static — has been rejuvenated.

The pad yatras certainly offer many opportunities for videos, photos and slogans to be recorded and even go "viral" on social media. There is also the fact that constant coverage on TV news channels and reports and debates in print media can affect the public imagination.

It is no one's case that the Bharat Jodo Yatras do not serve other functions, such as creating pressure on the government on various public grievances or framing the

Opposition's politics. The focus of this article, however, is on Rahul Gandhi's politics of image creation. In this regard, Team Rahul's aim seems to be to project him as a pro-people, sensitive politician who is raising issues of Dalits, OBCs, the poor and other marginalised sections. But no public image is created in a vacuum. Rahul Gandhi's image-making exercise has to contend with the larger-than-life figure of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who has successfully captured the hearts and minds of a large portion of the public. Over the last decade, PM Modi has constantly been at and inaugurated various sites of political importance and tried to establish a direct connection with the masses through various initiatives.

Back to Rahul. The Yatras may well have reduced the negativity around him prevalent for long and even helped craft a new public persona. But on the slightest examination, some clear contradictions emerge between what Rahul Gandhi is trying to project and the aspirations of the people.

Talking to young people on the Yatra route, it is clear that many want to see in Rahul a sensitivity and softness that was

once associated with his father, Rajiv Gandhi. They do not want an "angry young man". But often, his abrupt, seemingly ill-thought-out statements end up undoing any good work in terms of his image. Take his recent statement implying that there is alcoholism among the youth in Varanasi. It gave fodder to the BJP and damaged Rahul's image as a "youth icon".

Then there's the fact that his lineage, once an asset to Rahul Gandhi's image, is now increasingly becoming a liability. PM Modi's attacks on *parivaarvad* — dynastic politics — are an example of how this asset is being ruptured.

The fact is that the image sought to be created through the Bharat Jodo Yatras is rife with internal contradictions. People want a coherent message from political leaders. The BJP has failed in that regard.

PM Modi has managed to project himself as "beyond politics". He is seen by many also as a social, cultural and even religious leader. Rahul Gandhi is yet to cement his image even as a political leader.

The writer is director, G B Pant Social Science Institute, Allahabad

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### PROBE THE THREAT

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'The Bangalore blast' (IE, March 4). The temptation to turn a grave threat to the safety of the nation into a political talking point must be resisted. Beyond giving a free hand to the investigative agencies, the people of Bangalore must be assured that their safety is the primary concern so that normalcy can return. It is heartening to see the hotel association taking proactive steps to ensure the safety of all in their establishment. A collaboration between civil society organisations and the security establishment can help create a strong and secure safety net.  
Anany Mishra, *Bhilai*

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'The Bangalore blast' (IE, March 4). The bomb blast in Bangalore could turn things uglier if it is politicised. The selfish and corrupt eyes of political parties should not prey on this event to win elections because that would be a morally despicable act towards the people and Indian democracy. I also hope that the government and the concerned authorities do not see this blast as an isolated episode. A detailed inquiry should be conducted to unearth the intentions of the culprits, and necessary precautions should be taken. The onus also lies on the Supreme Court to ensure justice is delivered quickly and effectively by directly taking the matter into its hands. Let the painful lessons learnt from the infamous Mumbai terror attack (2008) guide us forward.  
Udi Gupta, *New Delhi*

### NATO'S LIMITATION

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'Macron vs Putin' (IE, March 4). Emmanuel Macron's proposal for NATO to send troops to Ukraine has sparked controversy within the alliance, particularly from Germany, and faced strong opposition from President Vladimir Putin who warned of dire consequences, including nuclear escalation. Europe is at a critical juncture as it navigates its responsibility in defending Ukraine. Many European nations are hesitant due to fears of escalation and unpreparedness for the fallout of a potential Russian victory. The ongoing debate showcases Europe's struggles in defending its territory and bolstering military capabilities.  
Naomi Roy, *Bengaluru*

### CRIME AND POLITICS

THIS REFERS TO the article, 'Strongman of Sandeshkhali' (IE, March 4). The lawlessness in Sandeshkhali has become a new epithet for the well-known nexus of money and muscle in Indian polity. No political party is free of this malaise. This is evident from their act of circumventing the Supreme Court's directions dated February 13, 2020, asking parties to give reasons for the selection of candidates with criminal histories. The standard response is that the candidate in question is popular and that the criminal cases are politically motivated. The ADR (Association for Democratic Reforms) November 2023 report on recently held elections in five states is revealing.  
LR Murmu, *New Delhi*





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If there are questions of current or contemporary relevance that you would like explained, please write to [explained@indianexpress.com](mailto:explained@indianexpress.com)

THIS WORD MEANS

**SUPER TUESDAY**

Super Tuesday is an important day in the Presidential elections process of the US. Here's what happens

RISHIKA SINGH  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 4

TODAY IS 'Super Tuesday', a landmark day in the ongoing US Presidential elections process. On this day, supporters of the Democratic and Republican parties in 15 states will vote for their preferred candidate in the Presidential race.



Nikki Haley has challenged Trump as the Republican Party's Presidential candidate. Reuters

**How US polls work**

Super Tuesday is part of a round of polls that are conducted before the Presidential election, held in November. American voters, who usually have a strong affiliation with either of the two major political parties — Democratic Party and Republican Party — vote in the primary and caucus polls to zero in on their Presidential candidate.

party's will, although some have criticised the process for not letting voters directly choose their candidate.

**Super Tuesday**

This year, states will hold their primaries and caucuses from January to June. In March or February, one Tuesday sees multiple states going to polls the same day, and is called Super Tuesday. March 5 will see polls in 15 states, including Alabama, Alaska, California, Massachusetts, and Texas. The results of a Super Tuesday have often indicated the candidate who will eventually be chosen as the party nominee for the Presidential polls.

In primaries, voters go to polling stations and check the box against the name of their favoured candidate. For example, Republican voters will have Donald Trump and Nikki Haley as their options.

In caucuses, voters attend meetings at public places such as school gymnasiums, churches, and community centres, debate candidate preferences and openly raise their hands for their choice of vote.

**Why this matters**

For candidates, winning a primary or caucus means winning the support of the several "delegates" that are assigned to each state. Delegates are the parties' members or local supporters of a candidate.

These delegates later vote to select the official party nominee at the Democratic and Republican National Conventions, held in the summer.

Delegates are seen as representing the

**The scenario this year**

No surprises are likely. From the Democratic Party, US President Joe Biden is seeking re-election and he does not have significant challengers.

Among Republicans, a crowded field that initially included Florida Governor Ron DeSantis and entrepreneur Vivek Ramaswamy has now thinned to Trump and Haley.

EXPLAINED LAW

# When lawmakers take bribes

Supreme Court has overturned the 26-year-old verdict in the JMM bribery case. What did it rule?

## How top court interpreted the privilege of legislators

APURVA VISHWANATH & AJOY SINHA KARPURAM  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 4

A SEVEN-JUDGE Constitution Bench of the Supreme Court, headed by Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud, ruled that lawmakers facing bribery charges in connection with their speech and votes in the House cannot be immune from criminal prosecution. In doing so, the Court held that claims to parliamentary privilege by lawmakers can be subject to judicial review, and only Parliament cannot have the last word on the issue.

Apart from CJ Chandrachud, Justices AS Bopanna, M M Sundresh, P S Narasimha, J B Pardiwala, Sanjay Kumar and Manoj Misra were part of the Bench.

**What the law says, what top court had to decide**

Article 105(2) of the Constitution states: "No member of Parliament shall be liable to any proceedings in any court in respect of anything said or any vote given by him in the Parliament or any committee thereof, and no person shall be so liable in respect of the publication by or under the authority of a House of Parliament of any report, paper, votes or proceedings."

Article 194(2) provides identical protections to members of state Assemblies. Before the seven-judge Bench was essentially the interpretation of this provision. This provision was previously interpreted in the 1998 JMM Bribery ruling, so the correctness of that ruling had to be tested.

**Interpreting the law on privileges of MPs and MLAs**

Tracing the history of parliamentary privileges in India, the SC said that unlike the House of Commons in the UK, India does not have 'ancient and undoubted' rights vested after a struggle between Parliament and the King. These rights in India, even during colonial times, have flown from a statute, which after independence transitioned to a constitutional privilege. This the court cited as reason to interpret privilege in a way that fits with the larger ideals of the Constitution.

There are two components of parliamentary privilege. One is what the House exercises collectively — which would include the power to punish for its contempt, the power to conduct its own affairs, among others. The second is for individual rights — say exercise of free speech by each member. This, the court said, has to pass a test.

The ruling cited the "necessity test", which means that for a member to exercise a privilege, the privilege must be such that without it "they could not discharge their functions." Naturally, accepting bribes cannot be said to be necessary to discharge one's functions as a lawmaker, unlike, for example, having the right to free speech.

The court also said that the Constitution envisions probity in public life. "Corruption and bribery of members of the legislature erode the foundation of Indian Parliamentary democracy. It is destructive of the aspirational and deliberative ideals of the Constitution and creates a polity which deprives citizens of a responsible, responsive and representative democracy," the ruling stated.

**A corrupt vote or a vote of conscience by MPs?**

The court also had to decide if a lawmaker gets immunity if he accepts a bribe but votes as per his conscience or party line and not as per the request of the bribe-giver. Essentially, without a quid pro quo, can accepting money still be equated to graft?

The Court analysed Section 7 of the Prevention of Corruption Act, which deals with "offence relating to public servant being bribed".

"The mere 'obtaining', 'accepting' or 'attempting' to obtain an undue advantage with the intention to act or forbear from acting in a certain way is sufficient to complete the offence. It is not necessary that the act for which the bribe is given be actually performed," the court said.

## Recalling 1998: Majority's reading of Art 105 and 194

AJOY SINHA KARPURAM  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 4

THE SUPREME COURT on Monday overturned its 1998 judgment in *P V Narasimha Rao v State (CBI/Spe)*, in which a five-judge Bench held by a 3-2 majority that legislators were immune from prosecution for taking a bribe in connection with their vote in the House. What was the reasoning of the court in 1998?

**A no-confidence motion and allegations of bribery**

At a time of economic and political upheaval in the country, Ajoy Mukhopadhyay of CPI(M) introduced a motion of no-confidence against Prime Minister P V Narasimha Rao in Lok Sabha on July 26, 1993.



Former PM Narasimha Rao on the way to appear in the JMM case in the trial court in Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi, in Nov 1996. Archive/Virendra Singh

Article 105(2) of the Constitution states: "No member of Parliament shall be liable to any proceedings in any court in respect of anything said or any vote given by him in the Legislature or any committee thereof, and no person shall be so liable in respect of the publication by or under the authority of a House of such a Legislature of any report, paper, votes or proceedings."

Article 194(2) provides identical protections to members of state Assemblies.

Pointing to the intended purpose of the Article, Justice Bharucha said that MPs must be allowed to exercise their freedom of speech in Parliament without fear of reprisal through court proceedings, and that their votes must be treated as an extension of this freedom. He held that in order to protect the independence of MPs, the phrase "in respect of" in the Article must be given a "broad meaning" to protect the MP from all civil or criminal proceedings that have a connection with anything they may have said or voted for in Parliament.

However, the court refused to extend the same protections to Ajit Singh, since he had neither made a speech nor cast a vote. It also refused to extend protections to bribe-givers. Justice G N Ray agreed with this interpretation of Article 105(2) in his concurring opinion.

**Dissent: accepting a bribe is separate from vote or speech**

Justice SC Agarwal authored the minority opinion for himself and Justice Dr A S Anand. This dissent had a major bearing on the SC's decision to overturn the 1998 ruling. Justice Agarwal observed that immunity from prosecution for bribery charges would place legislators above the rule of law, which is not the purpose of Article 105(2).

If an MP who "has bartered away his independence by agreeing to speak or vote in a particular manner in lieu of illegal gratification (bribe)" is protected from criminal prosecution, MPs thereon "would only be seeking a licence to indulge in such corrupt conduct", Justice Agarwal said.

The majority's interpretation of the "in respect of" phrase would create an "anomalous situation", Justice Agarwal said. In such cases, MPs could be prosecuted for bribery only if they did not speak or vote in accordance with the purpose of the bribe, but would be immune from prosecution if they did give the necessary speech or vote, he said. Justice Agarwal proposed that the phrase "in respect of" should be read as "arising out of" so that the legislator is protected from any civil or criminal liability that follows the speech or vote given.

This would also allow legislators to be held accountable for criminal acts that precede the vote or speech by recognising that these acts are independent and separate from legislators' actions in Parliament or a Legislative Assembly.

Justice Agarwal stated that the offence of bribery is complete the moment a bribe is accepted, and that it is irrelevant to consider if the purpose of the bribe was carried out — including when the purpose was a speech or a vote by a legislator.

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# Study reveals how star dunes are formed, how long it takes

THEY ARE among the wonders of our deserts: star dunes, the vaguely pyramid-shaped sand formations up to about 1,000 feet (300 meters) tall with arms stretching out from a central peak.

Scientists on Monday unveiled the first in-depth study of a star dune, revealing the internal structure of these geological features and showing how long it took for one of them to form.

The study focused upon a star dune in eastern Morocco called Lala Lallia, situated within the Sahara Desert.

The researchers used ground-penetrating radar to peer inside the dune and employed luminescence dating to determine how long Lala Lallia has taken to form, a method based on the amount of energy trapped inside the grains of sand.



PAPER CLIP

NEW RESEARCH

The answer: about 900 years, accumulating roughly 6,400 metric tonnes annually as wind blows sand through the desert.

Star dunes make up just under 10% of the dunes in Earth's deserts and are the tallest ones, surpassing other types such as crescent-shaped barchan dunes and straight and lengthy linear dunes. They also have been spotted on Mars and on Saturn's large moon Titan.

"Star dunes are formed in areas with complex wind regimes, which means winds blowing from different directions, and net sand accumulation, points within the desert where big piles of sand can be blown around to form giant dunes," said Birkbeck University of London sedimentologist and study co-author Charlie Bristow. REUTERS

**Drishti Judiciary**  
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# India's 'happy' leopard story: what headline number does not show

JAY MAZOOMDAAR  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 4

THE 2022 Status of Leopards survey has put the population of the spotted cat in India at 13,874 (between 12,616 and 15,132), a 75% increase of 7,910 (between 6,566 and 9,181) over the 2014 estimate.

However, a more realistic comparison should consider the figure from 2018, when the number of camera points (26,838) was increased to almost three times the 2014 number (9,777). As a result, the number of leopards photographed increased to 5,240 in 2018 from 1,647 in 2014, which enabled a more realistic overall estimate of numbers.

The 2022 study, the results of which were announced by Environment Minister Bhopender Yadav last week, deployed cameras at 32,803 locations, and reported an 8% increase over the 2018 estimate of 12,852 (between 12,172 and 13,535) cats.

In the areas that were covered by both surveys, leopard numbers have risen by a modest 4.4%.

The small growth in numbers may suggest stability in the leopard population. But the cat is still not out of the woods — be-

cause that is where it is, literally.

**In tiger reserves and outside**

Every third leopard estimated in the 2022 survey is inside protected areas — national parks, sanctuaries, or tiger reserves. According to Jacobson *et al.* (*Leopard (Panthera pardus) status, distribution, and the research efforts across its range*: 2016), protected areas account for only 11% of the leopard's range in India. This means 33% of the estimated leopard population is in 11% of its range. Areas outside these protected islands report a lower density — 67% of the population in 89% of the leopard's range.

But leopards in the peripheries of protected forests also make use of those areas. Data on leopards that are either inside or using each of India's 44 tiger reserves offers a window to understand the contrasting fortunes of two distinct leopard populations — one that uses the country's most protected forests, and those in fringe or non-forest areas away from tiger reserves.

The 2018 study found 5,325 of the estimated 12,852 leopards in and around tiger reserves. In 2022, the number of leopards in and around tiger reserves climbed by 21% to 6,440. In contrast, the number of leop-

**GAIN AND LOSS IN LEOPARD NUMBERS**

	Total	Using TRs*	Rest
2018	12,852	5,325	7,527
2022	13,874	6,440	7,434
Gain	1,022	1,115	-93

Tiger reserves\* Source: WIJ, NTCA



ards away from tiger reserves fell by 1% from 7,527 to 7,434 (Table above).

The "all-India" surveys are in fact limited to tiger states, and do not account for potential leopard areas such as Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, J&K, Ladakh, and arid areas of Rajasthan. But the general trend is unmistakable — and underlines the impact of conflict and poaching on leopards in unprotected areas, where the bulk of the population is.

**Leopard's shrinking pawprint**

The most widely distributed big cat, the leopard's historical range spanned across 3,50,00,000 sq km — almost a fourth of the Earth's land surface, covering all of sub-Saharan and north Africa, and nearly all of Asia and the Russian Far East.

In India, the leopard was once found everywhere except the Thar desert and the Sundarban mangroves. Over time, it surrendered around 70% of its Indian range and experienced, as the latest survey report notes, a substantial human-induced population decline over the last decade.

Against severe odds, the uniquely adaptable cat is still found outside protected areas in agro-pastoral landscapes, plantations, and near human habitations in both rural and urban settings. The Indian leopard population (subspecies *Panthera pardus fusca*) remains the largest surviving outside Africa.

But the very adaptability that has enabled leopards to live in closer proximity to humans than any other big cat has also made them vulnerable to poaching and conflict.

**Poached and moved around**

According to Raza *et al.* (*Illuminating the Blind Spot: A Study on Illegal Trade in Leopard Parts in India (2001–2010)*: 2012), four leopards were being poached weekly in the preceding decade. Seizure data from 2010 to

2012 accounted for at least 466 leopards and 66 tigers — a 1:7 ratio. Those seizures would amount to at least 4,000 kg of bones, which are in high demand as traditional Chinese medicine, and fetch a higher price than pelts in the international market.

Records maintained by the Wildlife Protection Society of India show that more than 5,500 leopards have been poached since 1994. The count for the last five years (since 2019) exceeds 800. Occasional mega seizures suggest that only a fraction of poached animals are ever accounted for.

For example, a rare haul in 2000 at Khaga in Uttar Pradesh's Fatehpur district included 70 leopard skins and 18,000 leopard claws, which would account for at least 1,000 poached animals. The numbers of tiger skins and claws recovered in the raid were four and 132 respectively.

Because they are a threat to livestock, leopards are often poisoned and electrocuted. More frequently, they are captured under public pressure either to be locked up in cages or be released in faraway forests where they are supposed to belong. Like all cats, the translocated leopards head home through unfamiliar territories, running into humans and triggering fresh conflict.

In the early 2000s, Maharashtra triggered several human and animal casualties by randomly capturing leopards and shift-

ing them around. And a 2023 study showed that on 834 occasions over a decade, Gujarat captured and released a total 263 leopards into the wild around Gir National Park.

According to a 2020 study, 357 leopards were captured in Karnataka during 2009-2016, primarily for livestock depredation (38.1%), anxiety caused due to sightings near human habitations (13.7%), and entering human dwellings (10.9%).

**The cat's precarious ninth life**

Besides poaching and conflict, habitat fragmentation caused by activities such as the development of linear infrastructure and mining without adequate mitigation measures poses significant threats to leopards, the latest all-India survey report notes.

A study published in 2020 reported that leopard populations fell by 90% in the Deccan plateau, the Shivalik belt, and the Himalayan Terai roughly around the beginning of the twentieth century, and the Western Ghats population took a 75% hit two centuries ago. Nevertheless, the species retains high genetic variation across India.

The leopard has long been a master of the art of survival. But trends in the all-India surveys suggest that its future outside protected forests hinges on human perceptions of conflict, and policies of the government to protect it against development and poaching.



# 13 ECONOMY

<b>GOLD</b>	<b>USD RATE</b>	<b>OIL</b>	<b>SILVER</b>
₹64,200	₹82.89	\$83.00	₹73,800

Note: Gold, silver rates at Delhi spot market, gold per 10g, silver per 1 kg; Crude oil (Indian basket) as of March 1

SENSEX: 73,872.29 ▲ 66.14 (0.09%) NIFTY: 22,405.60 ▲ 27.20 (0.12%) NIKKEI: 40,109.23 ▲ 198.41 HANG SENG: 16,595.97 ▼ 6.53 FTSE: 7,644.22 ▼ 38.28 DAX: 17,722.50 ▼ 12.57

International market data till 1900 IST

## RBI bars IIFL Finance from disbursing gold loans

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU MUMBAI, MARCH 4

THE RESERVE Bank of India (RBI) on Monday barred IIFL Finance Ltd from sanctioning or disbursing gold loans or assigning, securitising or selling any of its gold loans in the wake of several regulatory violations by the company.

The company can, however, continue to service its existing gold loan portfolio through usual collection and recovery processes, the central bank said.

According to the RBI, certain material supervisory concerns were observed in the gold loan portfolio of the company, including serious deviations in assaying and certifying purity and net weight of the gold at the time of sanction of loans and at the time of auction upon default.

The RBI also noticed breaches in Loan-to-Value ratio, significant disbursement and collection of loan amount in cash far in excess of the statutory limit, non-adherence to the standard auction process and lack of transparency in charges being levied to customer accounts.

"These practices, apart from being regulatory violations, also significantly and adversely impact the interest of the customers," the RBI said.

## INDIA'S PETROLEUM EXPORTS TO EUROPE JUMPED 124% FROM JAN LEVELS

# India's fuel exports to Europe recover in Feb; take longer route around Africa

SUKALP SHARMA NEW DELHI, MARCH 4

AFTER PLUNGING to the lowest level in a year-and-a-half in January due to the Red Sea troubles, India's petroleum product exports to Europe registered a swift recovery in February, latest ship tracking data shows. Notably, even as some cargoes did take the seemingly perilous Red Sea route to Europe from ports on India's west coast, the majority of the tankers took the much longer and costlier, albeit safer, route around Africa via the Cape of Good Hope.

India's petroleum product exports to Europe in February jumped nearly 124 per cent from January levels to over 295,500 barrels per day (bpd), according to ship tracking data from commodity market analytics firm Kpler.

Diesel exports to Europe trebled month-on-month to over 164,600 bpd, while jet fuel exports were 68.5 per cent higher at nearly 131,000 bpd. Europe's share in India's petroleum product exports was around 22 per cent in February, against just 12 per cent in January, but still substantially lower than last year's export spree when 32 per cent of India's product exports went to



The majority of the tankers took the much longer and costlier route around Africa via the Cape of Good Hope. File

Europe. In January, European buyers appeared inclined towards buying fuels—mainly diesel—from the United States (US) instead of India due to the Red Sea crisis. This was primarily because the alternative shipping route around Africa makes the voyage from India to Europe significantly longer, and considerably inflates freight costs as well. However, with supplies from the US hit due to weather-related disruptions and maintenance shutdowns, Europe evidently turned to India.

"Europe is in a way forced to look at Indian product imports

again. European buyers have only started to buy US diesel instead of Indian/Middle Eastern...the cold snap in the US and then the heaviest maintenance schedule in years led to huge gaps in US diesel production, meaning US Gulf Coast refiners could no longer meet Europe's demand needs.

Consequently, India, firing on all cylinders with its own refining...was there to tap into," said Viktor Katona, Lead Crude Analyst at Kpler.

Of India's petroleum product exports to Europe in February, nearly 170,500 bpd were shipped

via the Cape of Good Hope route, while the rest took the Red Sea route. Prior to the Red Sea security crisis, tankers hauling fuels from India to Europe rarely opted for the longer route around the African continent.

"Commercially, the Cape of Good Hope (route) is still a sub-optimal solution, but for Europe there are not that many options left with Russian diesel sanctioned and other suppliers producing less," Katona said, adding that given the lucrative economics of the Red Sea trade route, some fuel importers in Europe now seem willing to opt for it despite the associated risks. As per trade sources, taking the Cape of Good Hope route instead of the Suez Canal raises the freight cost by roughly \$1 million and adds 15-20 days to the voyage.

Over the past two-three months, a number of cargo ships have come under attack from the Iran-backed Houthi rebels of Yemen around the Bab el-Mandeb strait, which leads to the Red Sea and Suez Canal, forming the shortest, albeit narrow, route to the Mediterranean Sea and beyond from the Arab Peninsula, North-East Africa, and the Arabian Sea. The route is seen as an important artery of global goods and en-

ergy supplies. The Houthis have so far claimed that they are targeting vessels with links to Israel and its allies in view of its military offensive in Gaza. The security situation in the Red Sea region has forced a number of major shipping lines and Western oil companies to shun the route and instead take the much longer route around Africa via the Cape of Good Hope. Higher risk premiums and longer voyages have hit movement of goods between Asia and Europe, and Asia and North America in terms of significantly higher freight rates.

India was traditionally not the biggest of fuel sources for Europe, with the continent depending heavily on Russia for energy imports. However, in the aftermath of Moscow's February 2022 invasion of Ukraine, as Europe started shunning Russian crude oil and fuels, India emerged as the largest buyer of Russian seaborne crude and also a major fuel supplier to Europe with all such shipments passing through the Red Sea.

Interestingly, the movement of Russian oil through the Suez Canal-Red Sea route has largely been immune to the prevailing crisis as Russia is perceived as Iran's ally and the Houthi rebels appear to be backed by Tehran.

## After advisory backlash, govt clarifies: AI startups don't need IT Ministry approval

SOUMYARENDRA BARIK NEW DELHI, MARCH 4

THE IT Ministry's recent advisory to generative artificial intelligence (AI) companies which needed them to seek permission from the government before deploying "untested" AI systems only applies to big technology companies and not to startups, Minister of State (MoS) for Electronics and IT Rajeev Chandrasekhar has clarified.

The advisory had faced backlash from some startups in the generative AI space, including those invested in the ecosystem abroad, over fears of regulatory overreach of the yet nascent industry by the Indian government. Aravind Srinivas, founder of Perplexity AI, called the advisory a "bad move by India", while Martin Casado, general partner at the US-based investment firm Andreessen Horowitz, had termed the move a "travesty", which was "anti-innovation" and "anti-public".

On Monday, Chandrasekhar said in a post on X: "(The) advisory is aimed at the significant platforms and permission seeking from MeitY is only for large platforms and will not apply to startups... it is aimed at untested AI platforms from deploying on Indian Internet." He said that the process of seeking permission, labelling of platforms that are under testing and consent-based disclosure to users is an "insurance policy to platforms who can otherwise be sued by consumers".

At the time of issuing the advisory, the government had not explicitly mentioned that the conditions will only apply to bigger companies and not smaller businesses — it was sent to all online intermediaries.

However, since the government's advisory was in many ways to limit the impact content from such platforms could have on the upcoming Lok Sabha elections, it is unclear why an exemption to start-ups has been offered, given that their systems are also prone to generating inaccurate information. The Indian Express had recently reported about Ola's beta generative AI offering Krutrim's hallucinations problems.

With Lok Sabha elections set to be announced soon, the IT Ministry had on Friday sent an advisory to generative AI companies like Google and OpenAI and to those running such platforms — including foundational models and wrappers — that their services should not generate responses that are illegal under Indian laws or "threaten the in-

tegrity of the electoral process". Platforms that currently offer "under-testing/unreliable" AI systems or large language models to Indian users must explicitly seek permission from the Centre before doing so and appropriately label the possible and inherent "falsibility or unreliability of the output generated".

As per the advisory, the government also wants these platforms to add in a traceability requirement by adding an identifiable marker to content they generate in a way that can be traced back to the person who has instructed the service to create pieces of misinformation or deep-fakes. The advisory had drawn sharp criticism from founders and investors in the generative AI space. Pratik Desai, founder of KissanAI, which built the agriculture large language model Dhenu, had tweeted, "I was such a fool thinking I will work bringing GenAI to Indian Agriculture from SF (San Francisco). We were training multimodal low cost pest and disease model, and so excited about it. This is terrible and demotivating after working 4 years full time bringing AI to this domain in India."

After Chandrasekhar's clarification, Desai said, "Not for startups! A good start... The next step would be defining revenue and user base numbers to classify a startup, which would clear the uncertainty cloud for many of us."

At the heart of the disagreement is a tussle between lawmakers and tech companies over the future of safe harbour protections to generative AI platforms like Gemini and ChatGPT. It is also as much about the government's view of outputs generated by some of these platforms and if it disagrees with them, even if they may or not be entirely unlawful.

Google's AI platform Gemini had recently come under fire from the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) for answers generated by the platform on a question about Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Although, it should be noted that outputs generated by such platforms depend on a number of factors, including the underlying training data scraped from vast swathes of the Internet and algorithmic filters added on top of that, a number of instances of errors — called hallucinations — generated by these platforms have been reported across the world can typically be attributed to shortcomings in these factors.

FULL REPORT ON [www.indianexpress.com](http://www.indianexpress.com)

## India-EFTA trade deal: Pharma, food processing to be part of investments

RAVI DUTTA MISHRA NEW DELHI, MARCH 4

THE EUROPEAN Free Trade Association (EFTA) has agreed to invest \$100 billion in India over 5 years in sectors including pharma, food processing, engineering and chemical sector as part of the free trade agreement (FTA) with India that is likely to be announced within a month, a senior government official has said.

The government officials pointed out that the deal will help India diversify its pharma and chemical imports away from China, dependence on which has been a long standing concern for the country. India primarily de-

pends on Chinese imports in strategically important sectors such as chemical and pharma sectors to fulfill domestic demand and fulfill export orders. It imported \$3.4 billion worth of medical and bulk drugs worth nearly \$7 billion, as per commerce and industry ministry data.

As Switzerland chiefly exports better standard pharma and medical devices to India, duty elimination under the deal could help EFTA countries compete with Chinese products that will continue to face high tariffs, hence helping India diversify away from cheap quality Chinese products.

India's average tariffs are among the highest in the world

at over 18 per cent. The elimination of the duty under FTA tends to give significant advantage to the FTA partner countries.

The investment commitment that has been agreed will largely come from provident funds (PFs) in EFTA countries that comprise Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland, in exchange of market access into India.

However, trade experts pointed out that the investment commitment is a crucial gain as India runs a high trade deficit from Switzerland which could widen after India eliminates duties following the deal.

FULL REPORT ON [www.indianexpress.com](http://www.indianexpress.com)

## FM Sitharaman asks GST officers to leverage tech to plug loopholes

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA NEW DELHI, MARCH 4

FINANCE MINISTER Nirmala Sitharaman on Monday asked GST officers to leverage technology to plug loopholes and provide better taxpayer services.

Inaugurating the first-ever National Conference of Enforcement Chiefs of the State and Central GST Formations, Sitharaman advocated for sharing of the emerging best practices, emphasising the need for seamless coordination across states in the larger national interest.

"The Union Finance Minister urged all the GST formations to leverage technology to plug the



loopholes as well provide better taxpayer services," an official statement issued after the meeting said. She also stressed that clarity on the classification of related issues should be looked into at the earliest through appropriate channels.

Sitharaman also exhorted the GST officials to engage with stakeholders to understand their concerns, enhance compliance, streamline processes, and work collaboratively towards making the tax system more transparent and efficient.

## Moody's raises '24 growth forecast to 6.8%

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA NEW DELHI, MARCH 4

GLOBAL RATING agency Moody's on Monday raised India's growth forecast for 2024 calendar year to 6.8 per cent on "stronger-than-expected" economic data and said that the country will remain the fastest growing among G20 countries.

In its Global Macroeconomic

Outlook for 2024, Moody's said with global headwinds fading, the Indian economy should be able to register 6-7 per cent real GDP growth comfortably. For 2025, the GDP growth is estimated at 6.4 per cent. Moody's had projected a 6.1 per cent growth for 2024 earlier.

"India's economy has performed well and stronger-than-expected data in 2023 has caused us to raise our 2024 growth esti-

mate to 6.8 per cent from 6.1 per cent. India is likely to remain the fastest-growing among G-20 economies over our forecast horizon," Moody's said. India's real GDP expanded by 8.4 per cent year-on-year in the fourth quarter of calendar year 2023, resulting in a 7.7 per cent growth for full-year 2023. The GDP grew by 8.2 per cent in the April-June quarter and by 8.1 per cent in the July-September quarter.

## Interoperable payment system likely to be launched this year: RBI Governor Das

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU MUMBAI, MARCH 4

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Governor Shaktikanta Das on Monday said interoperable payment system for internet banking is likely to be launched during the current calendar year.

"We have given approval for

implementing such an interoperable system to NPCI Bharat BillPay Ltd (NBPL). The new system will facilitate quicker settlement of funds for merchants," Das said at the Digital Payments Awareness Week celebrations.

"In our Payments Vision 2025, we had envisaged an interoperable payment system for internet banking transactions,"

Das said. Interoperability is the basic ability of multiple digital systems, applications and databases to connect and communicate with each other. Payment platforms leverage financial technology to connect and share data among ecosystem partners like banks, payment gateways, payment processors, merchants and consumers.

### BRIEFLY

#### Sovereign wealth fund ADIA buys shares: SpiceJet

New Delhi: SpiceJet on Monday said Abu Dhabi's sovereign wealth fund ADIA has acquired shares of the airline from the open market. However, the carrier did not disclose specific details. Abu Dhabi Investment Authority (ADIA) started buying shares in late February, a source said. The no-frills carrier is in the process of raising funds. "ADIA has acquired shares of the airline from the open market," a SpiceJet spokesperson said on Monday. PTI

#### Apple hit with \$2bn EU antitrust fine

New Delhi: The European Union (EU) levied its first antitrust penalty against Apple on Tuesday, fining the latter nearly \$2 billion for breaking the bloc's competition laws by favouring its music streaming service over rivals. PTI

## India can easily navigate oil supply situation: Puri

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU NEW DELHI, MARCH 4

INDIA IS not perturbed by major oil producing nations extending or deepening production cuts and should be able to easily navigate the supply situation as there is "enough oil available in the world" and new suppliers are coming in, Petroleum Minister Hardeep Singh Puri said Monday.

Puri's comments came a day after the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and its allies — the larger grouping called OPEC+ — agreed on Sunday to extend their voluntary crude oil production cuts by another quarter till June-end.

OPEC+ in November had agreed to the voluntary cuts totalling about 2.2 million barrels per day (bpd) for the January-March quarter.

The cuts are part of the group's efforts to support oil prices by regulating production in the face of rising output from other producers and concerns over oil demand outlook.

## Tata Motors to demerge CV, passenger businesses

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU MUMBAI, MARCH 4

THE BOARD of directors of Tata Motors Limited (TML) on Monday approved the proposal of demerger of the company into two separate listed companies.

While the commercial vehicles (CV) business and its related investments will be one entity, the passenger vehicles businesses, including PV, EV, JLR and its related investments will be hived off as

another entity. "The demerger will be implemented through an NCLT scheme of arrangement and all shareholders of TML will continue to have the identical shareholding in both the listed entities," the company said.

"Over the past few years, the commercial vehicles (CV), passenger vehicles (PV+EV), and Jaguar Land Rover (JLR) businesses of Tata Motors have delivered a strong performance by successfully implementing distinct strategies," TML said.

## JSL launches its first green hydrogen plant

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU NEW DELHI, MARCH 4

THE FIRST commercial-scale green hydrogen plant in India's stainless steel sector was inaugurated on Monday at Jindal Stainless Ltd's (JSL) manufacturing unit in Haryana's Hisar.

The plant, which is expected to start with an initial production of 78 tonnes per year of

green hydrogen, will be owned and operated by green hydrogen facilities developer Hygenco India for 20 years, after which the ownership and operations will be transferred to JSL.

The pact between JSL and Hygenco also marks the first-ever commercial long-term off-take agreement of green hydrogen in India, according to the two companies.

**RAJASTHAN RAJYA VIDYUT PRASARAN NIGAM LIMITED**

**Notice Inviting Bid**

(A) Bid for Construction of 132kV S/C transmission line (on D/C towers) between 132kV GSS Sriyajanagar and Proposed Railway TSS at Kalyankot (Approx. 17 Kms.) (on turnkey basis) (Deposit work of Railway/including survey, supply of all Equipments/Materials, Erection (including civil works), Testing and Commissioning against specification No. RVPN/EHV/BN-9018002333 (UBN: VPN2324WLB02272) invited from interested bidders up to 04:00 PM on 15.04.2024.

(B) Bid for Construction of various Transmission elements (132 KV line on D/C Tower from 132 KV GSS Nawa to Proposed 132/25 KV TSS for RDSO Test Track at Nawa (Distt. Kuchaman-Deedwana) as deposit work of NWR Jaipur (ownership remain with M/S-NWR, Line Length: 12 KMS Approx by utilizing 4.5 KM on Spare Ckt of under construction 132 KV Rly TSS line + 7.5 KM Proposed 132 KV Line from Loc.No.15 to RDSO TSS at Nawa) on Turnkey basis including survey, supply of all equipments/materials, erection (including civil works), testing and commissioning against specification No. RVPN/EHV/BN-9018002334 (UBN: VPN2324WLB02273) are invited from interested bidders up to 04:00 PM on 15.04.2024.

(C) Bid for Construction of various transmission elements (2 Nos. 220 & 03 Nos. 132 kv associated lines for proposed 220 kv GSS Sheo (Distt. Barmer) including survey, supply of all equipments/materials, erection (including civil works), testing and commissioning against specification No. RVPN/EHV/BN-9018002335 (UBN: VPN2324WLB02275) are invited from interested bidders up to 04:00 PM on 15.04.2024.

(D) Bid for Construction of 3-phase 132 KV S/C Line on Double Circuit towers from 132 KV GSS Mandawa to 132/25 KV TSS Kayamsar (Distt. Sikar & Jhunjunu) (28 KM Approx.) with modification of existing 220 KV S/C Khetri-Ratangarh line on Turnkey basis (Deposit work of Railway) in Rajasthan including survey, supply of all equipments / materials, erection (including civil works), testing and commissioning against specification No. RVPN/EHV/BN-9018002336 (UBN: VPN2324WLB02277) are invited from interested bidders up to 04:00 PM on 15.04.2024.

(E) Bid for Construction of LILO of 132 KV S/C Loonkaransar - Chhatargarh Tr. Line at 132 KV GSS Damolai (39KM Approx.) (on turnkey basis) including survey, supply of all Equipments/Materials, Erection (including civil works), Testing and Commissioning against specification No. RVPN/EHV/BN-9018002337 (UBN: VPN2324WLB02279) are invited from interested bidders up to 04:00 PM on 15.04.2024.

Other particulars of the bid may be visited on the procurement portal (<http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in>, <http://sppp.raj.nic.in>) of the state; and <http://energy.rajasthan.gov.in/vpnl> departmental website.

Raj.Samwad/C/2314122 RRVPN/TR-6133/2024 Superintending Engineer (Contracts-I), Jaipur

**RajCOMP Info Services Limited (RISL)**

C-Block, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, Yojana Bhawan, Tilak Marg, C-Scheme, Jaipur

RISL invites e-bids from the eligible bidders for the following:

NIB No./Date/Unique bid no.	Particulars	Estimated Cost/ EMD	Start of sale/Last date
NIB No. F4.6(404)/RISL/Tech/2024/8139	Request for Proposal (RFP) rate contract of cloud-based video conferencing solution under RajVC project through Open Competitive Bidding (e-Tendering).	Rs. 4.00 Cr Rs. 8.00 Lac	01.03.2024 05.04.2024

Details can be seen on the websites <http://sppp.rajasthan.gov.in>, <http://risl.rajasthan.gov.in>, & <http://doit.rajasthan.gov.in>. Bids are to be submitted through <http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in>.

Raj.Samwad/C/2314180 Manager (Technical)

**COCHIN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT LTD.**

**TENDER NOTICE**

CIAL/CIVIL/597A 05.03.2024

Online Item rate composite E-Tenders are invited from reputed contractors for the work mentioned below at Cochin International Airport, Nedumbassery

Name of Work	Estimated Amount (Rs.)	EMD (Rs)	Period of Completion
Construction of Commercial zone SH: Civil & MEP works	12800 Lakhs	128 Lakhs	24 Months

Interested Agencies may register themselves on the online E-Tendering portal <https://etenders.kerala.gov.in> and then download the Tender documents. For more details, visit our website [www.cial.aero](http://www.cial.aero).

Sd/- Managing Director

**Jaysingpur Municipal Council, Jaysingpur (M.S.)**

**E-Tender Notice 2023-24**

Jaysingpur Municipal Council invites E-Tender for various works in Detailed Project Report under Mazhi Vasundhara Abhiyan 3.0 at Jaysingpur, Tal. - Shirol, Dist. - Kolhapur. For more details kindly visit <http://mahatenders.gov.in> from Date 05/03/2024, 11.00 A.M. upto Date -12/03/2024, 5.00 P.M.

Sd/-  
Chief Officer,  
Jaysingpur Municipal Council



# 14 CLASSIFIEDS & TENDERS

## Classifieds

### PERSONAL

**I, R. KRITHIKA W/O R.SANKARANARAYANAN R/O** 491, 1st floor, Sector-5, Vaishali, Ghaziabad, U.P.-201010, have changed my name to S. KRITHIKA for all future Purposes. 0070892268-1

**I, Praveen Kumar Priyadarshi,** son of Shyam Narain Mishra, resident of B 903, Faculty Residence, IIT Delhi, Near Govind Puri Metro Station, Okhla Phase 3, Okhla Industrial Estate, South Delhi, Delhi, 110020, inform that " Praveen Kumar Priyadarshi" and "Praveen Priyadarshi" are names of one and the same person, i.e., Praveen Kumar Priyadarshi. 0070892225-1

**I, Pratibha D/O, Ramesh Chander R/O** Village Rohna (23), Sonipat, Haryana-131402 have changed my name and I shall hereafter be known as Pratibha Jangra. 0040717911-1

**I, Naman Shabharwal S/o** Hitesh Kumar R/o B-69-70, 1st-floor front-Side, Ram nagar, Om Vihar,uttam-nagar, delhi, have changed my name to Naman Sabharwal 0040717859-1

**I, NOOR AFSHAN KHAN W/O SUHAIL ASHRAF R/O C-166, STREET NO. 3, SANGAM VIHAR, WAZIRABAD, BURARI, DELHI-110084** declare that name of mine has been wrongly written as NOOR AFSHA in my minor son HUZefa SUHAIL aged 17 years in his 10th class marksheet and certificate. The actual name of mine is NOOR AFSHAN KHAN. 0070892259-1

**I, Mohd Faiq Faizan S/o** Farooq Ahmed R/o A-2/121, 2nd-Floor, Safdarjung Enclave, Delhi-110029 have changed my name to Mohammad Faiq Faizan for all purposes. 0070892243-1

**I, Mohd Arif Zaman Siddiqui, S/o Mr. Mohammad Masituz Zaman, R/o C-208/A, Abul Fazal Enclave Part-II, Shaheen Bagh, Okhla, Jamia Nagar, New Delhi-110025,** have changed my name from Mohammad Arif Zaman Siddiqui to MOHD ARIF ZAMAN SIDDIQUI for all future purposes. 0040717848-1

**I, Michelle Eric D/o** Sh. Eric Rajan R/o 1560, Tower Romano, Mahagun Mascot, Crossing Republik, Ghaziabad, UP declare that mother's name in my Class X & XII Marks Statement has been wrongly written as MARY ERIC. My mother's correct name is MARY MARGARET. 0040717845-2

**I, MD SHOAB MALIK S/O SHAMSHEER AHMED,R/O-2/3 VISHWAKARMA PARK LAXMI-NAGAR DELHI-92,** have CHANGED MY NAME TO SHOAB MALIK, FOR FUTURE. 0040717863-2

**I, KRITIKA GAMBHIR W/O SAHIL KATYAL R/O-307, AGCR ENCLAVE KARKARDOOMA DELHI-110092** HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO KRITIKA KATYAL. 0040717863-5

**I, Jitender Kumar, S/o** Raj Kumar, R/O C-6/28A, Block-6 Keshav Puram Delhi-110035, Changed my name to Jitender Wadhwa. 0040717953-2

**I, Danesh Pathak S/o** Surinder Pathak R/o D-165, Sec-55, Noida, G.B. Nagar, UP-201301 have changed my name to Dinesh Pathak for all future Purposes. 0070892276-1

**I, Chaudhry Khusrow Rehman S/o** Nasim UR Rahman R/O C-502, Icon Apartment Sector Chi-3, Greater Noida U.P. have changed my daughter name from Ayat Rahman to Ayat Rehman for all future purposes. 0070892263-1

**I, Bhawna D/o** Parvinder R/o Flat No.112,2nd floor,C-Block, Sector-14,Near-Omaxe Galleria Bahadurgarh District-Jhajjar Haryana-124507, changed my name to Bhawna Yadav 0040717953-1

**I, Navita Berry W/O** Nitin Chawla R/O-17/10B, Block,Tilak Nagar, Delhi-110018, have changed my name to Navita Chawla. 0040717924-1

**I, Bhavya Chawla S/o** Sh. Sanjeev Chawla R/O C-72, Vivek Vihar Phase-1, Delhi-110095, have changed my name from Bhavya Chawla to Bhavye Chawla, vide affidavit number IN-DL523517731/1936G, dated-01.03.2024, before notary Shyamla Pal, for all future purposes. 0040717851-1

**I, Baldev Sharma s/o** Chint Ram R/o Flat No.-301, 3rd Floor, A-37, Suraj Vihar, Dwarka, Delhi-110078 have changed my name to DASS BALDEV. 0040717843-1

**I, Abhinav S/O** Krishan Narayan Shukla, R/O D-1, Fourth Floor Hanumant Complex, Shanti Kunj, Chattarpur, South Delhi, Delhi-110074 have changed my name to Abhinav Shukla. 0070892241-1

**I, Abhijeet Kumar Sinha S/o** Late Shashi Kumar Sinha R/O C-504, Golf City, Sector-75, Noida, UP-201301 have changed my minor son's name from ARAV SINHA to AARAV SINHA for all future purposes. 0070892272-1

**I, ABDULL WAHEED, S/o** BHOLU SEKH, ADDRESS:-E-117/13 JHUGGI,SUNDER NAGARI, DELHI-110093, changed my name to ABDULL WAHID. 0040717931-1

**I, CHARANJEET CHAWLA S/O** JASBIR SINGH R/O 6/7, 3RD FLOOR, SWARG ASHRAM COLONY DELHI-110009 HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO CHARANJEET CHAWLA. 0040717931-2

**I VENUGOPAL PRATAP MENON S/O** KOZHIPURATH VENUGOPAL MENON R/O FLAT-NO-E/3 ANTRIKSH GREENS, PLOT-F-7, SECTOR-50, NOIDA, GAUTAM BUDDHA NAGAR UTTAR PRADESH-201301 HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO PRATAP VENUGOPAL FOR ALL FUTURE PURPOSES. 0070892245-1

**I Tejal Singh S/o** Shri Raja Ram R/o 369, Gali Chakki Wali, Kabir Basti, Malka Ganj, Subzi Mandi, Delhi-110007 have changed my name to Tejal for all purposes. 0040717841-2

**I Shaba W/o** Mohd Taki residing at H No-78, Chauhatta, Khurja-203131 Distt- Bulandshahr (U.P.) have changed my name to Saba for all purposes in future. 0040717846-1

**I Rajveer S/o** Simran Kaur R/o E-8/1, Phase-2, Vijay Vihar, Rohini Sector-7, District North West Delhi, Delhi-110085 have changed my name to Rajveer Singh for all purposes. 0040717841-1

**I Neetu charan D/O** Ashok Charan W/O Rodrick Gilbert R/O H.No-H-3/125C, Bengali Colony, Mahavir Enclave, ND-110045 India, that I have changed my name after marriage from Neetu Charan to Neetu Gilbert. I hereby declare that both the names Neetu Charan and Neetu Gilbert Pertain to the one and the same person, that in future my name should be treated as Neetu Gilbert. 0040717858-1

**I Mandela Venkata Krishna Naga Santosh S/o** Narayana Rao R/o 26-7-9, Surya Tejas Nagar, Palakolli, Palakol, West Godavari, Andhra Pradesh-534260, have changed my name to Mandela Santosh K V 0070892236-1

**I Keshav S/o** Sh. Dilip Kumar R/o H.No. G-59, J.J. Colony, Shakur Pur, I-Block, North West Delhi, Delhi-110034 have changed my name to Keshav Pawar for all purposes. 0040717841-4

**I Alim Siddiqui S/O, Md** Iltiaz Siddiqui R/O H.No.65, Street No 3, Prem Nagar 1, Khubram Park, Kirari Suleman Nagar, North West Delhi-110086 have changed my name to Md Alim Siddiqui. 0040717909-1

**I Abdul Rasheed Ansari S/o** Abdul Aziz R/O M-53, Batla House, Jamia Nagar, New Friends Colony, New Delhi-110025 have changed my name to Abdul Rasheed for all purposes. 0040717841-3

**I,MD Shakir,S/o** Mohd Sabir,R/O-B-117,Gali.No.11, Kanti-Nagar Extn,Block-B,Krishna-Nagar,Delhi-110051,declare that name of my Late father has been wrongly written As MOD Sabir in my Passport NO.M5791749.The actual name of my Late father is MOHD Sabir,Which may be amended accordingly. 0040717863-8

**I, Rakesh Kumar, S/O** Suraj Singh, R/O Z-96, 2nd Floor, Dayalsar Road, Uttam Nagar, New Delhi-110059, declare that name of mine has been wrongly-written as Rakesh Thakur in my minor daughter namely Shreya Thakur aged 16 years in her 10th-class marksheet. The actual name of mine is Rakesh Kumar. 0040717931-10

**I, AMARENDRA KUMAR, S/O** BASUDEO SINGH, ADD-PNO-127B, BLOCK-D 1ST FLOOR EDENBURG CITY PHASE-1, SECTOR-91, FARIDABAD, HARYANA-121003, changed my name to AMRENDRA KUMAR, for all future purposes 0040717912-9

**I, Romana Asad w/o** Manazir Asad residing at 9-S, Sector 7, Jasola Vihar, New Delhi-25, hereby declare that correct spelling of my name is ROMANA ASAD which has been mis spelt in my previous passport as RAMANA ASAD 0040717920-1

**I, SANJAY JAIN, S/O** JAGDISH PRASAD JAIN, H.NO-201/4, KRISHNA, GALLI NO-2, MAUJPUR, SEELAMPUR, DELHI-110053 have changed my name to SANJAY KUMAR JAIN, for all future purpose. 0040717912-5

**I, Rohit Kakkar S/o** Parveen Kumar Kakkar R/o 3/113, Ramesh-Nagar, New Delhi-110015, have changed my name to Rohit Kumar Kakkar. 0040717944-5

**I, Riivana Begum, M/o** MD Shakir R/O-B-117 Gali.No.11, Kanti-Nagar Extn.,Block-B, Krishna-Nagar, East Delhi-110051, have changed my name to Rizwana Begum for all purposes. 0040717863-4

**I, Rajeev Agrawal, S/o**-Kishan, R/O-B-12, 1st. Floor, Anand Vihar, East-Delhi-110092, have changed the name of my minor-son Raghav Mittal Aged-13 Years and he shall hereafter be known as Raghav Raj Mittal. 0040717863-7

**I, Raj Kumar s/o** malkeet Singh, R/O, House no-B3/323 third-floor paschim-vihar, Delhi 110063, have change my minor child name Khushi to Khushi Kumar. 0040717931-6

**I, JESSICA D/O** PUSHPENDRA KUMAR, R/O A-7/26-27 SECOND-FLOOR, SECTOR-17, ROHINI NORTH, WEST DELHI-110085, CHANGED MY NAME TO JESSICA SINGH 0040717920-3

**I, Bhavana, w/o** neeraj Verma, Address-7-152 Street.no.7, Gautam Puri, New seelampur, near kids foundation-school Delhi-110053, changed my name to dolly Verma. 0040717931-8

**I, Zeenat Khan W/o,** Mohd Azad R/o, B-28/5-A, Flat-No.201, First-Floor, Sunshine Aptt., Shaheen-Bagh, Abulfazal Enclave-II, Jamia-Nagar, Okhla, New Delhi-110025, have changed my minor-son's name Taha Azad to Taha Azad Khan. 0040717944-4

**I, Veena Rani W/o** Sanjeev Sharma R/o Flat-2301, Tower-2, Lotus-300, Sector-107, Noida (U.P.-201304) have changed my name to Veena Sharma for all purposes. 0040717862-3

**I, Veena Rani Sharma W/o** Sanjeev Sharma R/o Flat-2301, Tower-2, Lotus-300, Sector-107, Noida (U.P.201304) have changed my name to Veena Sharma for all purposes. 0040717862-2

**I, Vandana Kumari Gupta, W/o** Satish Kumar R/o-1449/4-C, S/F Gali No-7 Durgapurli, Nandnagri, Delhi-110093 Have Changed My Name To Vandana Singhal. 0040717944-1

**I, VINOD DHINGRA, S/O, LATE** DAULAT RAM, ADD-19/164C, SARAI ROHILLA ONKAR NAGAR, NORTH, DELHI-110035, changed my name to VINOD KUMAR DHINGRA, for all future purposes. 0040717922-9

**I, Subhan S/O** Mohammad Muqeem, R/O 7193, Gali Garaiya, Quresh Nagar, Delhi-110006, have changed my name to MOHD SUBHAN, for all future Purposes 0040717920-5

**I, Shubham, S/o** Shri Arun Kumar, R/o-65/4, Second-Floor, Near-Bada Gurudwara Gautam Nagar, VTC:Gautam Nagar, PO: Andrewsganj, District:South-Delhi, Delhi-110049, have changed my name to Shubham Singh, for all purposes. 0040717921-9

**I, akash saxena, S/o**-Girish Babu saxena, Address-flat no-305, bharti appointment plot no-Gh 20 part-3, behind sector-21c faridabad, haryana-121001, changed my name to akash saxena 0040717931-7

**I, Shiv Kumar S/O** Ruldu Ram, R/O WZ-89, Ram Nagar ext. Tilak Nagar New Delhi-110018, Have Changed my Name to Shiv Gupta. 0040717863-3

**I, Shipra Meena, W/o** Amit Verma, R/O B-1354 Palam Vihar Gurgaon (Haryana)-120171, have changed my name to Shipra Verma. 0040717931-4

**I, Shekhar S/O** Bhagwan Dass Gulati, R/o Flat No. A-17, Jalvayu-Vihar Sector-30, Gurugram -122001 (Haryana), have changed my name to Shekhar Gulati. 0040717912-4

**I, Sanjeev Kumar S/o** Hari Ram Sharma R/o Flat-2301, Tower-2, Lotus-300, Sector-107, Noida (U.P.-201304) have changed my name to Sanjeev Sharma for all purposes. 0040717862-1

**I, SUSHIL DUMARA, S/O** SHAM SUNDER, R/O H.NO-204 FIRST-FLOOR PLOT.NO-123, NANGLOI EXTENSION-1-B, DELHI-110041, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO SUSHIL KUMAR DUMRA. 0040717921-3

**I, SUNIL KUMAR, S/O** BISHAN CHAND AGGARWAL, R/o-6005, TOWER-MAPPLE, PARAMOUNT SYMPHONY, CROSSINGS REPUBLIC, GHAZIABAD, U.P.-201016, changed my name SUNIL KUMAR AGGARWAL. 0040717922-6

**I, SUBUHI ASIF, W/O** HARI S UL ISLAM KUNWAR, R/O-DUPLEX NO-2, STREET.NO-11, IQRA-COLONY NAR AYSHA MASJID, DHORRA MAFI, ALIGARH, U.P-202002, changed my name SUBUHI HARI S. 0040717922-2

**I, SUBHASH PODAR, S/O** UMESH PUDHAR R/O E-80/559, Jhilmil Colony, Delhi-110095, have changed my name, from SUBHASH KUMAR TO SUBHASH PODAR, for all future purposes. 0040717920-1

**I, SANJAY JAIN, S/O** JAGDISH PRASAD JAIN, H.NO-201/4, KRISHNA, GALLI NO-2, MAUJPUR, SEELAMPUR, DELHI-110053 have changed my name to SANJAY KUMAR JAIN, for all future purpose. 0040717912-5

**I, Rohit Kakkar S/o** Parveen Kumar Kakkar R/o 3/113, Ramesh-Nagar, New Delhi-110015, have changed my name to Rohit Kumar Kakkar. 0040717944-5

**I, Riivana Begum, M/o** MD Shakir R/O-B-117 Gali.No.11, Kanti-Nagar Extn.,Block-B, Krishna-Nagar, East Delhi-110051, have changed my name to Rizwana Begum for all purposes. 0040717863-4

**I, Rajeev Agrawal, S/o**-Kishan, R/O-B-12, 1st. Floor, Anand Vihar, East-Delhi-110092, have changed the name of my minor-son Raghav Mittal Aged-13 Years and he shall hereafter be known as Raghav Raj Mittal. 0040717863-7

**I, Raj Kumar s/o** malkeet Singh, R/O, House no-B3/323 third-floor paschim-vihar, Delhi 110063, have change my minor child name Khushi to Khushi Kumar. 0040717931-6

**I, JESSICA D/O** PUSHPENDRA KUMAR, R/O A-7/26-27 SECOND-FLOOR, SECTOR-17, ROHINI NORTH, WEST DELHI-110085, CHANGED MY NAME TO JESSICA SINGH 0040717920-3

**I, Bhavana, w/o** neeraj Verma, Address-7-152 Street.no.7, Gautam Puri, New seelampur, near kids foundation-school Delhi-110053, changed my name to dolly Verma. 0040717931-8

**I, Raj Kumar s/o** malkeet Singh, R/o House no-B3/323, third-floor paschim-vihar, Delhi 110063, have change my minor-child name vanshika to vanshika Kumar. 0040717931-5

**I, RACHNA JUS ROY, ADD-1-B, GOELA-LANE UNDER HILL-ROAD CIVIL-LINES DELHI-110054,** changed my minor child name PARIDHI JUS ROY to PARIDHI JUS ROY, for all, future purposes. 0040717922-8

**I, Praveen Sharma, W/o**-Late Kamal Kishore Sharma, R/o-1/3437, First Floor, Ram Nagar Extension, Shahdara, Delhi-110032, declares that my name is Praveen Sharma also known as Pinki Sharma. Praveen Sharma and Pinki Sharma both are same and one person. 0040717924-2

**I, Raj Kumar, S/o** Kartar Singh, R/o 353 Bammola Jhajjar (Haryana)-124105, have changed my name to Rajkumar. 0040717912-3

**I, Pooja Sardana, W/O**-Bharat Sardana, R/O-H-91, Ashok Vihar, Phase-1, Delhi-110052, declare that wrongly written my mother name as Meena Sethi in my passport, but original name is Meena Seth. 0040717924-4

**I, POOJA SAHNI, W/O** RAJIV R/O A-433, SHASTRI NAGAR, ASHOK VIHAR, DELHI-110052, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO POOJA BHANDARI. 0040717912-1

**I, PARNEET KAUR NAHAR, D/O** MANMOHAN SINGH, R/O JP-25, WZ-BLOCK, STREET NO.3, JANAK-PARK, HARI-NAGAR, DELHI-110064, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO PARNEET KAUR. 0040717912-1

**I, Neetu Singh, W/o** Bharat Singh, R/o H.No. 829, Sector-9, Faridabad, have changed my name to Beena Devi after marriage. 0040717912-2

**I, NEHA, D/O** BISAN SINGH, R/O 779-80 FEET ROAD, SHALIMAR GARDEN, SAHIBABAD, GHAZIAB AD, UTTAR PRADESH-201005, changed my name NEHA SINGH. 0040717922-7

**I, NEELAM SINGH, D/O**-SHRI KRISHAN SINGH, R/O-A-131, MUNIRKA, NEW DELHI-110067, DECLARE THAT MY FATHER'S NAME MENTIONED AS KRISHNA SINGH IN MY SCHOOL RECORDS BUT HIS CORRECT NAME IS KRISHAN SINGH. 0040717924-3

**I, NARENDER KUMAR JINDAL, S/O** PURAN CHAND R/O POCKET F-24/201-202, SECTOR-3, ROHINI, DELHI-110085, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO NARENDER KUMAR. 0040717931-3

**I, NADIA, W/O** MOHD. IMTIEYAZ AHMAD, ADD-P-90, 1ST-FLOOR GALLI.NO-2, 20-FOOTA ROAD, BATLA HOUS, JAMIA-NAGAR, SOUTH DELHI-110025, changed my name to NADIA ANSAR, for all, future purposes 0040717912-6

**I, Mohsina W/o** Wasim Ahmed R/o H.No.38/14, Gali-No.4A, Aram-Park, Shastri Nagar, East Delhi-110031, have changed my name to Mohsina Begum. 0040717944-3

**I, Mohd. Arif S/o** Mohd. Yaqoob, R/o, B-11/83-C, DDA-Flats, under Lok, North West-Delhi -110035, That in my Driving-License and in my Voter I Card- my name has been wrongly written as Mohd. Arif. Instead of Mohd. Arif which may be amended accordingly, for all future purposes. 0040717920-6

**I, Mod Shakir, S/o** Mohd Sabir, R/O-B-117, Gali No.11, Kanti-Nagar Extn. Block-B, Krishna-Nagar, Delhi-110051, have changed my name to Md Shakir, for all purposes. 0040717863-6

**I, Manisha, D/o** Shri Arun Kumar, R/o-65/4, Second-Floor, Near Bada Gurudwara Gautam Nagar, VTC:Gautam Nagar, PO: Andrewsganj, District:South-Delhi, Delhi-110049, have changed my name to Manisha Singh Chauhan, for all purposes. 0040717921-8

**I, Mahabir Parsad** Aggarwal S/o Harpat Rai Aggarwal R/O 19/312 Block, No.19 Kalyanpuri Delhi 110091, have changed my name to Mahabir Prasad Aggarwal 0040717920-2

**I, MUSTAQE AHMAD, S/O** MOHAMMAD BABUDDIN, ADD-N-72, THIRD-FLOOR, BATLA HOUSE JAMIA NAGAR OKHLA, SOUTH EAST DELHI 110025, changed my name to MOHAMMAD MUSTAQE AHMED, for all, future purposes 0040717912-8

**I, DHIRENDRA CHAUHAN, S/O** AJAY CHAUHAN, H.NO-O-351, GALLI.NO-9, SOURAV VIHAR JAITPUR, SOUTH EAST, DELHI 110044, changed my name to DHIRENDR KUMAR CHAUHAN, for all, future purposes 0040717912-7

**I, MADHU BHATNAGER, W/O**-AWADHESH KUMAR BHATNAGER, R/O-SHARON-1230, GAUR SAUNDARYAM, AMRAPALI DREAM VALLEY, SECTOR-TECHZONE-4, GREATER NOIDA WEST, GAUTAM BUDDH NAGAR, UTTAR PRADESH-201009, changed my name MADHU BHATNAGER. 0040717922-4

**I, KUNWAR HARIS UL ISLAM, HARI S UL ISLAM, S/O** KUNWAR BADRUL ISLAM, R/O DUPLEX NO.2, STREET, NO-11, IQRA COLONY NAR AYSHA MASJID, DHORRA MAFI, ALIGARH, U.P-202002, changed my name HARIS UL ISLAM KUNWAR. 0040717922-1

**I, Kafeel Ahmed Ansari S/o** Hafiz Tajuddin R/O, C-39/1/688, Gali-No.2, Chauhan-Bangar, Delhi-110053 Have changed my name to Kafeel Ahmad Ansari. 0040717902-1

**I, Bharat Bhushan S/o** Ashok Bhatia, R/O B-947, B-Block, Palam Vihar, Sector-23, Gurugram (Haryana)-122017, have changed my name to Bharat Bhatia. 0040717912-2

**I, Baljit Singh, S/O** Hem Singh Sarna, R/O, J-8/65, 2nd-Floor Rajouri Garden, New Delhi 110027, have changed my name to Baljit Singh Sarna, for all purposes. 0040717921-7

**I, BABA GAJINDER SINGH BEDI, S/O** AVININDER SINGH BEDI, ADD-B-2 EAST OF KAILASH, SOUTH DELHI 110065, changed my name to GAJINDER SINGH BEDI, for all, future purposes. 0040717912-10

**I, Akshita D/o** Sanjeev Sharma R/o Flat-2301, Tower-2, Lotus-300, Sector-107, Noida (U.P.-201304) have changed my name to Akshita Sharma for all purposes. 0040717862-4

**I, ASHWANI KUMAR KAPOOR, S/O** MOTI LAL KAPOOR, R/O, C-004, JASMINE SCOTTISH GARDEN, AHINSA KHAND-2, INDIRAPURAM, SHIPRA SUN CITY, GHAZIABAD, U.P.-201014, changed my name ASHWANI KAPOOR. 0040717922-3

**I, ARCHANA KUMARI, W/O** GYAN PRAKASH, R/O N-151, GULSHAN BELLINA, GH-02A, SECTOR-16B, GREATER NOIDA-WEST, NEAR AJNARA LE GARDEN, GAUTAMBUDDHA NAGAR, U.P-201318, changed my name ARCHANA SINGH. 0040717922-5

**I, AJAY KUMAR CHAUDHARY, S/O** Pyare Lal, ADD-A-31/150, GALLI.NO-6, MATA MANDIR MARG, NEAR-SETH BHAGWAN DASS SCHOOL, EAST MAUJPUR, NORTH EAST, DELHI, 110053, have changed my name to AJAY KUMAR CHAUDHRI, for all, future purposes. 0040717920-9

**I, Zubair S/o** Mohammad Umar R/o A-225, Gali No.3, Ziyauddin Pur, New Mustafabad, Delhi-110094, have changed my name to Mohammad Zubair. 0040717944-2

**I, Vinayak Kumar S/o** Sh. Vinay Kumar R/o Flat No.1406, Skytech Merion Residency Phase-1, Crossing Republic, Ghaziabad, UP-201016 have changed my name from Vinayak Kumar to Rudraksh Singh for all future purposes. 0040717845-1

**I, Reena Shah W/o** Vikram Shah R/o Flat No. 1003, Tower-12, Unitech Horizon, Sector PI-II, Greater Noida U.P. have changed my name from Reena Mantoo to Reena Shah for all future purposes. 0070892267-1

**I, Mohd. Arif S/o** Mohd. Yaqoob, R/o, B-11/83-C, DDA-Flats, under Lok, North West-Delhi -110035, That in my Driving-License and in my Voter I Card- my name has been wrongly written as Mohd. Arif. Instead of Mohd. Arif which may be amended accordingly, for all future purposes. 0040717920-6

**I, Mod Shakir, S/o** Mohd Sabir, R/O-B-117, Gali No.11, Kanti-Nagar Extn. Block-B, Krishna-Nagar, Delhi-110051, have changed my name to Md Shakir, for all purposes. 0040717863-6

**I, Manisha, D/o** Shri Arun Kumar, R/o-65/4, Second-Floor, Near Bada Gurudwara Gautam Nagar, VTC:Gautam Nagar, PO: Andrewsganj, District:South-Delhi, Delhi-110049, have changed my name to Manisha Singh Chauhan, for all purposes. 0040717921-8

**I, Mahabir Parsad** Aggarwal S/o Harpat Rai Aggarwal R/O 19/312 Block, No.19 Kalyanpuri Delhi 11009



E - TENDER NOTICE National Sahakari Soot Girani Ltd., Sillod, Tal. Sillod, Dist. Chh. Sambhajinagar. construction of Spinning Mill Building Works online percentage rate E- Tenders in B-1 Form are invited from contractors. Detailed E-Tender information with terms & conditions are available at (https://www.mahatenders.gov.in) from 05/03/2024.

Project Management Unit Jal Marg Vikas Project-II (Arth Ganga) INLAND WATERWAYS AUTHORITY OF INDIA (Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways, Govt. of India)

UJVN LIMITED (An Uttarakhand Govt. Enterprise) RO No. 329 Tender Notice Date : 04.03.2024 The office of Executive Engineer (Generation), Vyasi Power Station, Dakpatri invites sealed bids from interested parties.

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON See Section 82 Cr.P.C. Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused Suchche Singh S/o Surat Singh R/o H.No. 4/110, Gali No. 4, Brijpuri, Delhi has committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence FIR 1046/2014 u/s 33 D. Ex. Ac. P.S. Gokal Puri, Delhi and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said accused person Suchche Singh cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said Suchche Singh has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrants).

राजस्थान स्कूल शिक्षा परिषद् नि. नं. 401/2024-25, राजस्थान स्कूल शिक्षा परिषद्, अजमेर, राजस्थान, पोस्ट नं. 3141-2700459

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON (See Section 82 Cr. P.C.) Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused person namely Karan Sharma S/o Arun Sharma R/o H. No. 234, 3rd Floor, Kohat Enclave, Pitampura, Delhi has committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence in a case vide FIR No. 563/2018 U/s 279/338 IPC registered at P.S. Shalimar Bagh, Delhi and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued stating that the said Karan Sharma could not be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the accused Karan Sharma has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant).

कार्यपालक अभियंता का कार्यालय, राष्ट्रीय ग्रामीण नियोजन कार्यक्रम, पश्चिमी सिंहभूम, चाईबासा Email id-eeprcchaibasa@gmail.com

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER JHARKHAND BHAWAN, GOVT. OF JHARKHAND NEW DELHI-110057

CORRIGENDUM FOR NIT PR 319439 CABINET (23-24) D DATED 20.02.2024 REGARDING TENDER FOR HOUSEKEEPING & CATERING SERVICES IN JHARKHAND BHAWAN, BANGLA SAHEB ROAD, NEW DELHI

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON (SECTION 82 Cr.P.C.) Whereas complaint has been made before me that the accused Sandeep, S/o Ramchander, R/o Village Bayanpur, District Sonapat, Haryana, has committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence in case FIR no. 102/2012, U/s 323/452/506/34 IPC, registered at P.S. Shahbad Dairy, Delhi, and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest there upon issued that the said accused Sandeep, cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said accused Sandeep, has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of said warrant).

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON (See Section 82 Cr. P.C.) Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused person namely Joginder S/o Rajpal R/o House No. 1865, Sanjay Basti, Timarpur, Delhi has committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence in a case vide FIR No. 237/2015 dated 07.04.2015 U/s 324 IPC registered at P.S. Timarpur, Delhi and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued stating that the said Joginder could not be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the accused Joginder has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant).

SEARCH FOR MISSING General public is hereby informed that this man namely Kalua Ram, S/o Karori Lal, R/o B-405, Lal Kuan, Chungi no. 2, Pul Prahlad Pur, Delhi, is missing since 23.02.2024 at about 06:00 AM from his house. In this regard a case vide DD No. 19A, Dated 25.02.2024, has been lodged at P.S. Pul Prahlad Pur, Delhi. Sincere efforts have been made by the local police to trace out the missing man but no clue has come to light so far.

CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER JHARKHAND BHAWAN, NEW DELHI-110057 PR 321380 (Cabinet) 23-24 (D)

SEARCH FOR MISSING/KIDNAPPED General public is hereby informed that one Child boy Namely Md. Sahil S/o Ramjani R/o Khuro Park Patri Hazrat Nizamuddin New Delhi, has been missing/kidnapped from her house. since 10.08.2015. In this regard, a case FIR No. 529/15 U/s 363 IPC., dated 10.08.2015 has been registered at P.S. Hazrat Nizamuddin, Delhi. The description of the missing Child boy is as under.

BRUHAT BENGALURU MAHANAGARA PALIKE Office of the Executive Engineer(Projects-Mahadevapura), Old Madras Road, K.R. Pura, Bengaluru-560 036.

Govt. of Jharkhand OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER Field Survey Division, Advance Planning, Road Construction Department, Nirupan Bhawan, 4th floor, 56-Set Chowk, Doranda, Ranchi-834002

e-Procurement Very Short Notice 3rd Call e-Tender Reference No. -RCD/FSD/AP/RAN/66/23-24 Dated 02.03.2024

Office of the Superintending Engineer 2nd Circle, PWD, Nainital-263002 Phone/Fax:- 05942-235728/232030 E-mail: sepwdnt@rediffmail.com

NORTHERN RAILWAY GOVERNMENT OF NCT OF DELHI OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT MAGISTRATE (SOUTH WEST) OLD TERMINAL TAX BUILDING, KAPASHERA, NEW DELHI - 110037

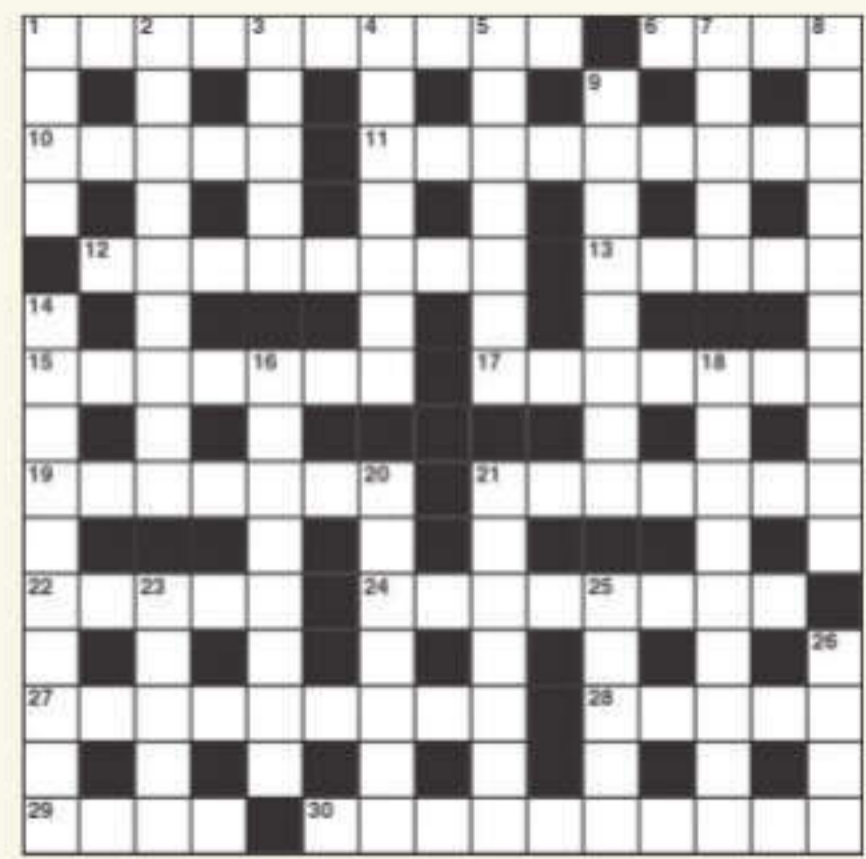
ICICI Bank Regd. Office: ICICI Bank Limited, ICICI Bank Tower, Near Chakli Circle, Old Padra Road, Vadodara, Gujarat. Pin- 390 007

Office of the Superintending Engineer 2nd Circle, PWD, Nainital-263002 National Competitive Bidding (E-Tendering) Superintendent Engineer, 2nd Circle, Public Works Department Nainital on behalf of Governor of Uttarakhand invites e-tender (two bid system) For further details please log on to http://www.uktenders.gov.in from 06-03-2024

कार्यपालक अभियंता का कार्यालय ग्रामीण कार्य विभाग, कार्य प्रमण्डल, गोड्डा। ई-पुनर्निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना(तृतीय कॉल)



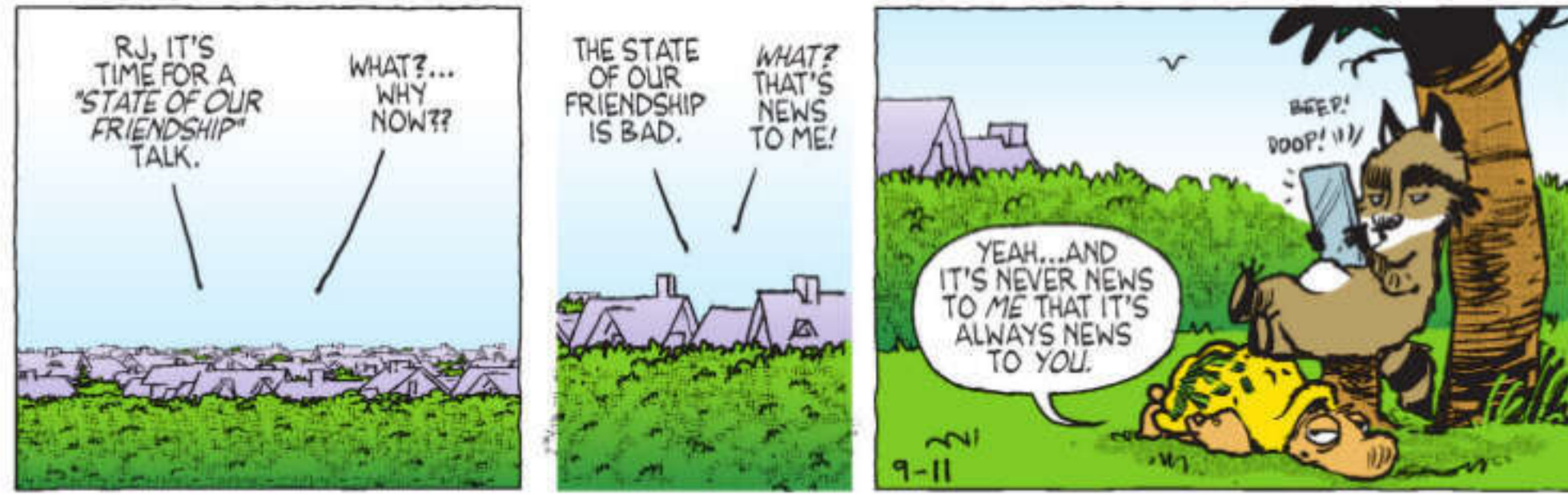
## CROSSWORD 5304



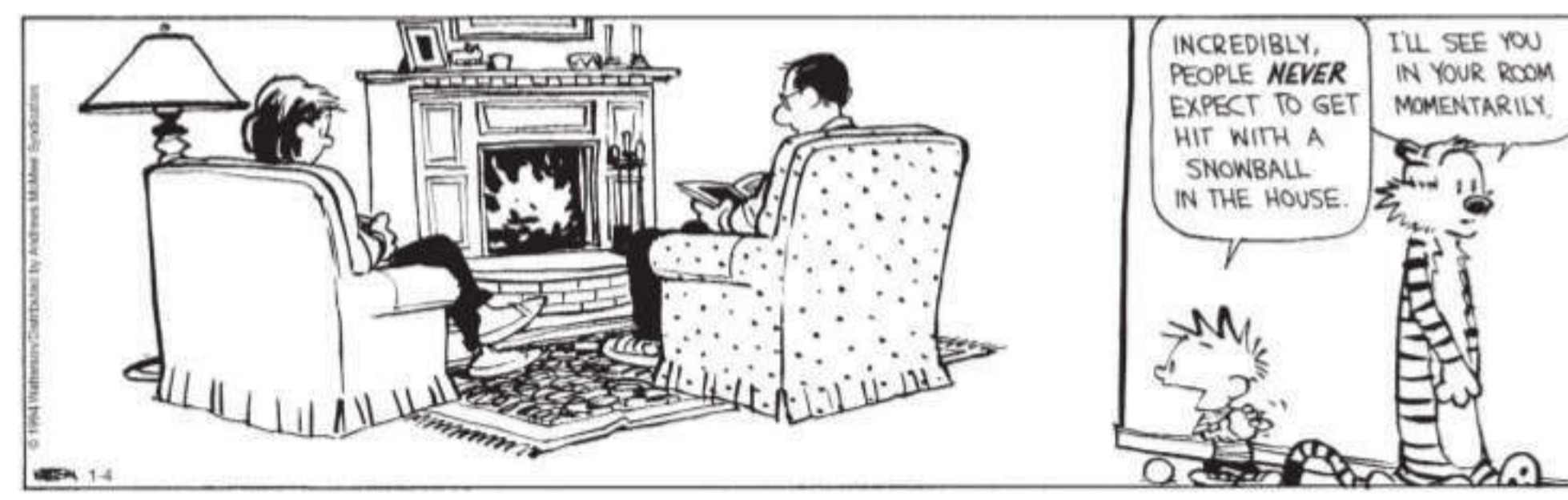
- ACROSS**
- 1 Key man in the canal trade? (4-6)
  - 6 Capital punishment (4)
  - 10 Go-ahead colour (5)
  - 11 Tearful Scottish scenes we get on Christmas cards (9)
  - 12 Honest deal? (8)
  - 13 Deceits that break the rules (5)
  - 15 Wrestled apart and scattered (7)
  - 17 New creator of atomic energy (7)
  - 19 It may get upset over trifles (7)
  - 21 Can turn on speed to make the land more productive (7)
  - 22 Refuse to be put out of operation by Capone (5)
  - 24 A patient compilation (4,4)
  - 27 Displeasing action against the defence (9)
  - 28 Club youth leader's dramatic device (5)
  - 29 Toy that gives you endless repetition (2-2)
  - 30 Sums up the scrambled egg as great (10)
- DOWN**
- 1 Records that may finish up on the fire (4)
  - 2 A number possibly treasure animals (9)
  - 3 Yank goes round about East African republic (5)
  - 4 Not free to wed (7)
  - 5 Builder puts a point to a parson (7)
  - 7 Bull ring? (5)
  - 8 Simple way for affluent living (4,6)
  - 9 Strong law is broken in the beginning (8)
  - 14 Subject for those who have the mind to study (10)
  - 16 Where strain will cause a parting (4,4)
  - 18 You may get carried away by it, in two ways (9)
  - 20 In a hurry to be stylish (7)
  - 21 Central rule can be broken (7)
  - 23 This by itself indicates equality (5)
  - 25 Prone to mendacity (5)
  - 26 One may get one's hooks into them (4)

**Solutions Crossword 5303 Across:** 1 Asphalt, 5 Hopes, 8 Provision, 9 Tug, 10 Arch, 12 Doubles, 14 Chased, 15 Cotton, 17 Wildfire, 18 Hyde, 21 Eft, 22 Easy-going, 24 Dress, 25 Resolve Down: 1 Alpha, 2 Pro, 3 Axis, 4 Tailor, 5 Handbook, 6 Patiently, 7 Signs on, 11 Charlotte, 13 Leaflets, 14 Cowherd, 16 Eraser, 19 Eagle, 20 Ages, 23 Ill

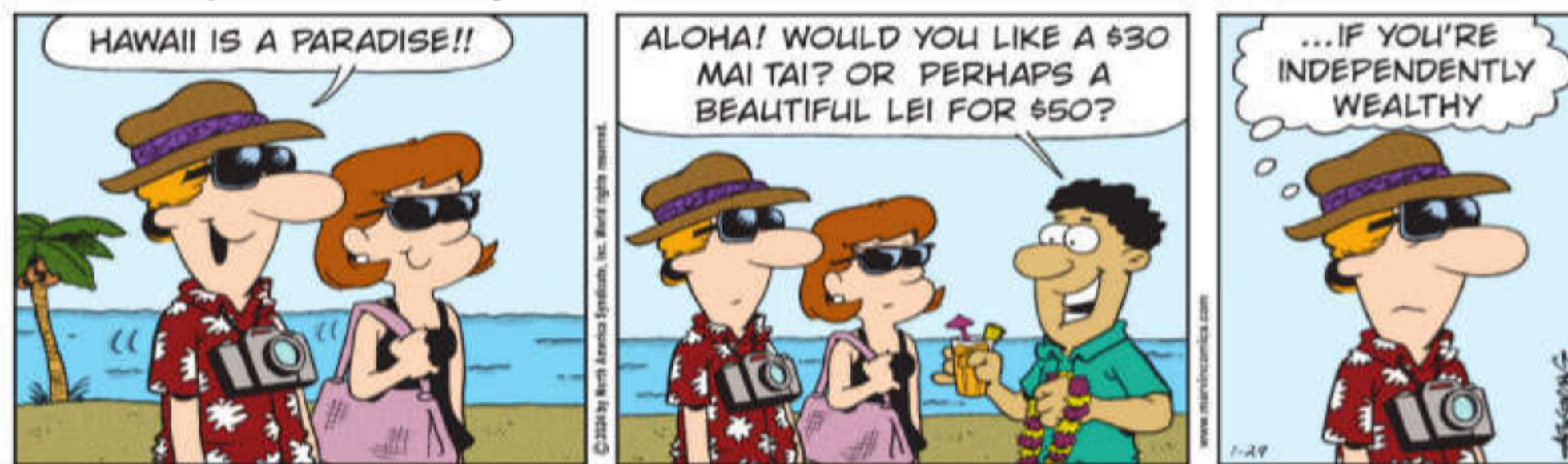
## OVER THE HEDGE by Michael Fry & T Lewis



## CALVIN & HOBBS by Bill Watterson



## MARVIN by Tom Armstrong



## 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.

One's happiness depends less on what he \_\_\_ than on what he \_\_\_ - Liberty Hyde Bailey (5,5)

DGEEEO DEFOFN  
HOLSS OOTWKW

Answer: One's happiness depends less on what he knows than on what he feels - Liberty Hyde Bailey

## Difficulty Level 3s

**Instructions**  
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.

SUDOKU 5492

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

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

SOLUTION SUDOKU 5491

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

**GOVERNMENT OF ANDHRA PRADESH SAMAGRA SHIKSHA**

Request for proposals are invited through e-procurement platform for Selection of Service Provider to provide Training Facilities, Residential Facilities and Support Services for implementing Capacity Building Program for School Teachers of Government of Andhra Pradesh.

RFP downloading starts from: 05.03.2024 @ 03.00 PM  
Last date for RFP: 19.03.2024 @ 03.00 PM  
Note: Further details can be viewed at <https://tender.aeprocurement.gov.in> or contact: 80741 75258, 95155 81396

Sd/-  
R.O.No.2752PP/CL/ADVT/1/1/2021-22 for State Project Director

**PSPCL Punjab State Power Corporation Limited**

Regd. Office.: PSPCL Head Office, The Mall, Patiala  
CIN: U40109PB2010SGC033813; Website: [www.pspcl.in](http://www.pspcl.in)  
(Contact No. 9646118754)

**Tender Enquiry No. 317/HPs/ED-I/S-428 Dated: 01.03.2024**

Dy. CE/ Hydel Projects, PSPCL, Shed A-3, Shakti Vihar, PSPCL, Patiala invites E-Tender for Repair of one no. 132/11KV, 3 Ø, 6 MVA Power Transformer Make Technical Associates Ltd. bearing Sr. No SO0000168 along with Erection/Fitting, Testing and Commissioning. For detailed NIT & Tender Specification please refer to <https://eproc.punjab.gov.in> from 05.03.2024 (11:00 AM) onwards. Note: Corrigendum and Addendum, if any will be published online at <https://eproc.punjab.gov.in> C193/24 33197/PB

## OFFICE OF SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER AGRA CIRCLE, P.W.D AGRA Short Term Notice inviting E-Tender

**Letter No. 952 / 14M-AC/2024 Dated: 22.02.2024**

1. The Superintending Engineer, Agra Circle, P.W.D. Agra on behalf of Governor of Uttar Pradesh invites the Percentage rate bids from the eligible and approved Contractors registered with UP, P.W.D. Bridge work. The Bidder may submit bids for any or all of the works. Bidders are advised to note the minimum qualification criteria specified in Clause 4 of the Instructions to Bidders to qualify for the award of the contract.

Sr. No.	District	Name of Work	Estimated cost (Rs. in Lacs)	Maintenance Cost (5 year)	Total Cost (Rs. in Lacs)	Bid Security (Rs. in Lacs)	Cost of Document (in Rs.)	Time of Completion	Address of Executive Engineer executing the work	Address of Superintending Engineer	Address of Chief Engineer	Category of Contractor
1	Agra	Construction work of bridge (Span 2x18) and access road on Karan river near Subapur in District Agra district.	392.56	11.52	403.88	22.19	RS. 3000/00 STC +900/00 TC= 60/00 GST =2360/00	12-Months	Executive Engineer, Construction Division-2, P.W.D., Agra	Superintending Engineer, Agra Circle, P.W.D., Agra	Chief Engineer, Agra Zone, P.W.D., Agra	Class A
2	Agra	Work of new construction of bridge (Span 2x18) on Karan river of Sheer Kila to Sheer Ghat, Subapur road of Agra district.	397.85	12.06	409.91	22.50	RS. 3000/00 STC +900/00 TC= 60/00 GST =2360/00	12-Months	Executive Engineer, Construction Division-2, P.W.D., Agra	Superintending Engineer, Agra Circle, P.W.D., Agra	Chief Engineer, Agra Zone, P.W.D., Agra	Class A

- Time allowed for completion is including Rainy Season.
3. Bid document with detailed terms and conditions will be available online on website <http://tender.up.nic.in> and Prabhari (<http://wms.upppwd.gov.in/Prabhari>) From 06-03-2024 to 12-03-2024. Bids must be submitted online only at e-tendering portal of <http://tender.up.nic.in> and Prabhari App with all documents as per GO No 14/2020/879(1)/ 23-7/2020/176(IK0)/06 Dt 25-08-2020 on or before 12:00 pm Dt. 12-03-2024. Technical Bid received online will be opened on 12-03-2024 at 12:30 pm.
5. The prospective bidders who do not possess Digital Signature Certificate (DSC) must get the same issued from approved agencies before submission of bids.
6. The Defects Liability Period will be Five year calculated from the Completion Date.
7. Similar work experience of work.
8. The cost of maintenance will be given at 7.50 percent of the cost of Additional Approach Road the work value.
9. Contractor should Quote their rates without G.S.T. which shall be paid extra as per applicable at the time of payment.
10. Labour Cess @ 1.00% will be deducted from contractor's bill at the time of payment.
11. Original MM-11 forms proof of royalty shall have to be produced at time of every running bill in accordance to Principal Secretary, Directorate of geology & mining under Pradesh Letter No-2146/86-2019-52(IK0)/2019 Dt. 30.09.2019, G.O. No- 115(1)/86-2020 dated 15.01.2020 and other relevant Government orders, circulars for all the materials procured from the quarries.
12. The bidders are required to submit Original receipt of Internet Banking of E-tender portal Account as per GO. No.-742/78-2-2018-42 I.T./2017 T.C., I.T. & Electronics Section-2 Dated-03-12-2018 follows as :  
(1) Online Tender Cost towards the cost of bid document (As per Column 8) by Internet Banking of E-tender portal Account (Non Refundable).  
(2) Online Bid security (As per Column 7) in favour of designation of Column 11 by Internet Banking of E-tender portal Account.  
(3) Original affidavit regarding correctness of information furnished with bid document as per provisions of Clause 4.4 B(ii) of ITB as per G.O. No.-3070/78-2-2018-42I.T./2017(22)I.T. & Electronics Section-2 Dated- 03-01-2018.

(G.K. Varshney)  
Executive Engineer  
CD-2 P.W.D., Agra  
UPID-205053 Dt. 03.03.2024  
[www.up.gov.nic.in](http://www.up.gov.nic.in)

(Anand Kumar)  
SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER  
AGRA CIRCLE, P.W.D, AGRA

**Government of Odisha**  
**Office of the Chief Construction Engineer,**  
**Rural Works Circle, Sambalpur**  
E-mail Id [serwicirclesbp@yahoo.com](mailto:serwicirclesbp@yahoo.com)  
Bid Identification No. Bridge tender Online RWCSBP- 70/2023-24  
No. 927 Dated: 01.03.2024

The Chief Construction Engineer, Rural Works Circle, Sambalpur on behalf of Governor of Odisha invites online percentage rate Bid from experienced & eligible bidders for 01 (One) no. of Bridge work under Biju Setu Yojana for the year 2023-24.

- 1 Name of work : Bridge works under BSY for the year 2023-24.
- 2 No of works : 01 (One) no of Bridge works Details as per DTCN.
- 3 Estimated cost : Approximately cost Rs. 409.93 lakhs
- 4 Class of Contractor : "A" Class
- 5 Cost of tender paper and mode of deposit : Rs. 10,000/- per set. (to be deposited On-line) in favour of concerned Executive Engineer.
- 6 Mode of submission of tender : Tender should be submitted only On line in website [www.tendersorissa.gov.in](http://www.tendersorissa.gov.in). (<https://tendersodisha.gov.in>)
- 7 EMD and mode of deposit : 1% of estimated cost of the work to be remitted online as mentioned in DTCN.

8 Summary of key dates are provided below :

Procurement Officer	Bid Identification No.	Availability of Tender on-line for bidding		Last date & time for seeking clarification	Date & Time of opening of tender	
		From	To		Technical Bid	Financial Bid
Chief Construction Engineer, Rural Works Circle, Sambalpur	Bridge Tender Online-RWCSBP-70/ 2023-24	06.03.2024 from 11.00 A.M.	20.03.2024 upto 5.00 P.M.	18.03.2024 upto 5.00 PM	21.03.2024 at 11.00 A.M.	To be intimated later

\* Further details can be seen from the e-procurement portal [www.tendersorissa.gov.in](http://www.tendersorissa.gov.in). (<https://tendersodisha.gov.in>)  
\* Subsequent modification/corrigendum/Addendum if required shall appear in website only.  
\* The amount put to bid is exclusive of GST.  
\* Bidder should inspect the road before bidding and quote his rate accordingly.

Sd/-  
Chief Construction Engineer,  
Rural, Works Circle, Sambalpur  
OIPR-25091/11/01062/2324

**कार्यालय, कार्यपालन यंत्रि**  
**म.प्र. लोक निर्माण विभाग संभाग शिवपुरी (म.प्र.)**  
Web Site: [www.mp.gov.in/pwdmp](http://www.mp.gov.in/pwdmp) email: [cepwdshivpuri@mp.nic.in](mailto:cepwdshivpuri@mp.nic.in)  
Phone 07492-233353 (O), Fax-07492-233644

निविदा क्रमांक 31/2023-24 शिवपुरी, दिनांक: 26.02.2024  
मध्यप्रदेश के राज्यपाल की ओर से निर्माकित कार्य हेतु नवीन निविदा प्रपत्र 2.10 पर आमंत्रण की सूचना क्रमांक 31/2023-24 शिवपुरी दिनांक 26.02.2024 द्वारा प्रचलित सड़क कार्य की दर अनुसूची दिनांक 25.03.2022 एवं निविदा दिनांक तक संशोधनों सहित पर निविदा लोक निर्माण विभाग में केन्द्रीयकृत पंजीकृत टेकेदार श्रेणी हेतु आमंत्रित की जाती है। जिसका सम्पूर्ण विवरण <http://mptenders.gov.in> पर देखा जा सकता है। विभाग तकनीकी समस्याओं के लिए जिम्मेदार नहीं होगा एवं किन्हीं कारणों से की जाने वाली परिवर्तन की सूचना वेबसाइट पर ही देखें। पृथक से प्रकाशित नहीं की जावेगी।

क्र.	टेण्डर आई.डी.	कार्य का नाम	(1) टेके की अनु, लागत राशि (2) अमान राशि	टेण्डर फार्म की राशि (रूपये में)	कार्य पूर्ण करने की समयवधि	पंजीवन श्रेणी
1	2024_PWDRB_337683_1	वैलेन्स वर्क ऑफ कन्स्ट्रक्शन ऑफ अमोला सिस्टीम खान रोड लम्बाई 3600 मीटर अण्डर डिवाजन शिवपुरी जिला शिवपुरी (म.प्र.)	(1) 431.80 लाख (2) 4,31,800/-	15,000/- + (पोर्टल चार्ज)	09 माह वर्षाकाल सहित प्रथम पंजीकृत आमंत्रण	लोक निर्माण विभाग में पंजीकृत टेकेदार

ऑनलाईन निविदा जारी व डाउनलोड करने की आरम्भ तिथि : 27.02.2024 प्रातः 10:30 बजे से।  
ऑनलाईन निविदा दर प्रस्तुत करने की अंतिम तिथि : 12.03.2024 साय 17:30 बजे तक।  
ऑनलाईन निविदा दर खुलने की तिथि : 14.03.2024 प्रातः 11:00 बजे।  
उक्त कार्य की ई.एम.डी. एवं समस्त दस्तावेज जो पूर्व में भौतिक रूप से संभाग कार्यालय में जमा किये जाते थे। उन्हें प्रमुख अभियंता लोक निर्माण विभाग भोपाल के आदेश क्रमांक/401/सा/ ई-टेण्डरिंग/09/1088 दिनांक 05.11.2020 के निर्देशानुसार ऑनलाईन ही मान्य किये जावेंगे। यदि ई.एम.डी. एवं समस्त दस्तावेज ऑनलाईन प्रस्तुत नहीं किये जाते हैं, तो ऐसी निविदाओं पर कोई विचार नहीं किया जावेगा।  
निविदा फार्म ऊपर दर्शित वेबसाइट पर (Online System) ऑनलाईन भुगतान कर ही क्रय किये जा सकते हैं तथा सम्पूर्ण जानकारी पोर्टल पर प्राप्त कर सकते हैं। किसी भी विलम्ब एवं अन्य समस्याओं के लिये विभाग उत्तरदायी नहीं होगा।  
नोट :- निविदाकारों से अग्रह है, कि Bid Data Sheet की कंडिका 22 का विस्तृत अवलोकन करने के पश्चात ही निविदा दर का आकलन करें।

कार्यपालन यंत्रि  
लोक निर्माण विभाग संभाग  
शिवपुरी (म.प्र.)  
G-25363-23

**Govt. of Bihar**  
**Public Health Engineering Department.**  
(Bihar State Water and Sanitation Mission)

Vishweshwaraiya Bhawan Complex, Bailey Road, Patna:800015  
Web: <https://state.bihar.gov.in/phed> and <http://bswsmptatna.org>

**CORRIGENDUM**

Notice No.: PH/BSWSM/GST Consultant-105/2023/

**Name of work:** Service of Tax consulting firm for taxation related advisory for Public Health Engineering Department for filing, monitoring & verification of GST payments & IT returns to Contractors/ Vendors, etc. & Settlement of VAT & GST claims.

Reference: P.R.No.-014802 (PHED)/2023-24 and P.R. No.- 15730(PHED) 2023-24

**The Schedule of bidding vide corrigendum 1 published on 23.01.2024**

- Date and Place of sale of Bid Documents : From 19/02/24 to 05/03/24 eproc 2.0
- Last date and time for submission of Bid : 06/03/24 up to 3:00 PM
- Time and date of opening Technical Bid : 06/03/24 at 4:00 PM
- Time and date of opening Financial Bid : to be decided by authority
- Date and place of pre bid meeting : 09.02.24 at 12.00 PM in the office of Engineer-in-chief cum Special Secretary.

**Revised schedule of bidding.**

- Date and Place of sale of Bid Documents : From 05/03/24 to 01/04/24 eproc 2.0
- Last date and time for submission of Bid : 02/04/24 up to 3:00 PM
- Time and date of opening Technical Bid : 02/04/24 at 4:00 PM
- Time and date of opening Financial Bid : to be decided by authority

Engineer-in-Chief cum Special Secretary  
PR- 18864 (P H E D) 2023-24 Public Health Engineering Department, Bihar, Patna

विहार में शराब का व्यापार, विक्री एवं सेवन अद्वेष है।  
संबंधित शिकायत इस नंबर पर दर्ज करायें आपकी जानकारी गुप्त रखी जाएगी।  
**टॉल फ्री नं- 15545 या 1800 345 6268**

**GOVERNMENT OF HARYANA TENDER NOTICE**

Sr. No.	NAME OF BOARD/ CORP./AUTH	NAME OF WORK NOTICE TENDER	OPENING DATE CLOSING DATE (TIME)	AMOUNT/EMD (APPROX.) IN RUPEES	WEBSITE OF THE BOARD CORP./AUTH	NODAL OFFICER/ CONTACT DETAILS/EMAIL
1.	MICAD DIVISION JHAJJAR	DNIT FOR REHABILITATION OF WATER COURSE AT OUTLET RD 22600-R PATUWAS	01.03.2024 07.03.2024	89.43 LACS	<a href="https://tenders.hry.nic.in">https://tenders.hry.nic.in</a>	01251-299175 xenjhaajarcad1@gmail.com
2.	MICAD DIVISION JHAJJAR	DNIT FOR EXTENSION OF WATER COURSE AT OUTLET RD-6500-L LAKARIA	02.03.2024 07.03.2024	14.74 LACS	<a href="https://tenders.hry.nic.in">https://tenders.hry.nic.in</a>	01251-299175 xenjhaajarcad1@gmail.com

25572/HRY FOR FURTHER INFORMATION KINDLY VISIT: [www.haryanaeprocurement.gov.in](http://www.haryanaeprocurement.gov.in) or [www.etenders.hry.nic.in](http://www.etenders.hry.nic.in)

**Bhopal Municipal Corporation**  
Swachh Bharat Mission (Civil)  
Hnd Floor, Kushabhau Thakre Inter-State Bus Terminal (ISBT) Campus, Ambedkar Marg, Near Chetak Bridge, Bhopal (M.P)

Ref No.: 430 Bhopal, Date: 04/03/24  
Tender for online submissions are invited on website [www.mptenders.gov.in](http://www.mptenders.gov.in) in under "Live Tender" and Department Name "Bhopal Municipal Corporation" for following work. Detailed NIT, Tender Schedule and other information can be seen on the website [www.mptenders.gov.in](http://www.mptenders.gov.in).

S. No.	Tender ID	Name of Work	Tender form cost rs.	EMD Cost Rs.
1	2024_UAD_340501_1	APPOINTMENT OF AGENCY FOR COLLECTION AND DISPOSAL OF DOMESTIC HAZARDOUS WASTE AT BMC	12,500/-	1,00,000/-
2	2024_UAD_340468_1	APPOINTMENT OF AGENCY FOR COLLECTION AND DISPOSAL OF DOMESTIC SANITARY WASTE AS PER BIO-MEDICAL WASTE MANAGEMENT RULE AT BMC	12,500/-	1,00,000/-
3	2024_UAD_340511_1	EMPANEMENT OF AGENCIES FOR CREATING AWARENESS IN ALL WARDS OF BMC	15,500/-	2,12,000/-

Corrigendum and Amendment for above NIT shall not be issued separately in newspapers & correction if any, would be Published on website only.

Sd/-  
Executive Engineer (SBM)  
Municipal Corporation, Bhopal  
T.N. 1747/023/024



# 17 SPORT

## JAISMINE OUT OF OLYMPIC QUALIFIERS

*Busto Arsizio*: India's dismal run at the first World Olympic Boxing Qualifier continued as Commonwealth Games medallist Jaismine Lamboria made an opening round exit here. **PTI**

## Another slow turner likely for fifth Test

DEVENDRA PANDEY  
DHARAMSALA, MARCH 4

THE CENTRE wicket at the Dharmshala Stadium looked like a blank sheet of brown paper. Unseasonal rain prevented the ground staff from doing a lot on it for the past few days but clear weather on Monday allowed curators to get down to work.

Over the next few days, the curators, in consultation with the Indian team management, will decide what type of pitch to provide, but it looks like England will once again be confronted with a slow turner at the picturesque venue.

Such tracks have helped the home team bounce back after losing the first Test in Hyderabad to win three games on the bounce to clinch the series ahead of the final match.

The Indian team management has realised what type of pitch plays to its strengths and is keen to stick to the tried and tested formula, and spinners are expected to come into the game under the Dhauladhar range as well.

Unseasonal rain left the stadium outfield a bit damp and now it looks like a carpet rolled across the ground.

The Himachal Pradesh Cricket Association (HPCA) had to give up a Test match against Australia in March as the outfield wasn't ready and the Indian board had to shift the game to Indore at the eleventh hour.

However, since then, the venue has hosted several 50-over World Cup games last year and also staged a few Ranji Trophy games to ensure that they don't face any criticism over the outfield.

The HPCA aims to make the final Test of the series a grand one and is expecting more than 5,000 travelling English fans for this game despite the hosts already winning the series.

### Rohit, Dravid for inauguration?

Meanwhile, posters around Dharamsala talk of India captain Rohit Sharma and coach Rahul Dravid inaugurating the third edition of the Khel Mahakhumbh in Bilaspur district along with union sports minister and former BCCI president Anurag Thakur. According to a source, the duo are likely to fly down in a helicopter.

While addressing local media, BJP state secretary Narendra Atri said that various sporting activities will be conducted for the next few days at Luhnu ground, including kabaddi, volleyball, cricket, basketball and athletics. The road leading to the stadium has posters 'welcoming' Thakur, a former HPCA president, and his brother Arun Dharmal, the chairman of the IPL governing council.

Meanwhile, the Indian team had a rest day on Monday when they had a photo shoot for the T20 World Cup probables, who might be flown to the West Indies and USA in June. Players like Rinku Singh, who is not part of the Test team, were flown to Dharamsala and were seen posing for shutterbugs at the stadium.

The Indian team will have its first practice session before the fifth Test on Tuesday afternoon.



Rinku Singh is not in the Test team but was flown to Dharamsala for a T20 World Cup shoot. **X/BCCI**

SANDEEP DWIVEDI  
DHARAMSALA, MARCH 4

THERE'S THIS old hill-lore about the scenic Dharamsala stadium. The narrator is the IPL chairman and Himachal Pradesh's seasoned cricket administrator Arun Dharmal. It's about former Test wicket-keeper Syed Kirmani's first visit here.

While walking past the front porch and the reception area, Kirmani got busy answering a phone call. That is till he reached the stands. It's when he froze. Dharmal says Kirmani cut the call and exclaimed: "Kya mai jannat mein aa gaya hu? (Have I reached heaven?)"

South Africa has Cape Town and the magnificent Table Mountain, Sri Lanka flaunts its historic Galle Fort, New Zealand's hidden gem is Queenstown next to Lake Wakatipu – all famous for their screen-saver-quality breathtaking beauty. But the competition gets unfair when Dharamsala points to its backdrop – the Himalayas. If stadiums had a beauty pageant, Dharamsala would be the popular choice to get the Miss World crown.

This week, like Kirmani, thousands will cut calls, slump in chairs at the first sight of the landscape – painting like pinkish-red strawberry shade pavilion posing against the pristine white backdrop of the imposing Dhauladhar range, a part of the Middle Himalayas.

The 5th India-England Test, starting here from March 7, is a dead rubber but still a large group of fans, stuffed in their cars, will suffer traffic jams and undertake the long uphill trek.

After two days of hail and thunderstorm, Monday was a dry day, the fragile sunlight frequently peeping through the crowd.

Despite the weather, for the Test romantics, the pull is too strong to withstand. If the game gets boring, there's always the snow-capped mountains to brood at – the sight best enjoyed with a cup of hot piping tea and that extra spicy pahadi dhaba style Maggi. Dharamsala does host IPL games and white-ball cricket but they can't match the Test experience. What's cricket at Dharamsala when Himalayas have a blanket of darkness over it.

The fame of Dharamsala's beauty has spread wide. Though Bazball has been called out, the away fans have kept their promise, close to 5000 have already reached the venue at 1500 meters height.

"Last year when England was here for the World Cup game against Afghanistan, the schedule for this Test series was announced. That's when the Barmy Army executive came to me to tell me that he had started to get calls, English fans are very excited to be here," says Arun.

Suckers for the game's oldest format, admirers of small scenic village grounds; for many from England – as cricketer turned journalist Michael Atherton mentioned in his recent column – a trip to here is a tick mark on their bucket list. Dharamsala, meaning a resting place of pilgrims, continues to live up to its name.

Dharamsala didn't just happen overnight, it took a decade for this landscape to grow into an international facility. It was pretty much a labour of love for the local cricket association and an architect who believed in subtlety, proportion and blending his creations seamlessly into nature.

More than two decades back, the one-time BCCI secretary and present Sports and I&B Minister Anurag Thakur at 25 was the HP cricket chief. On an extensive state-wide reconnaissance search for a clearing in the hills that could be turned into a cricket ground, he reached Dharamsala.

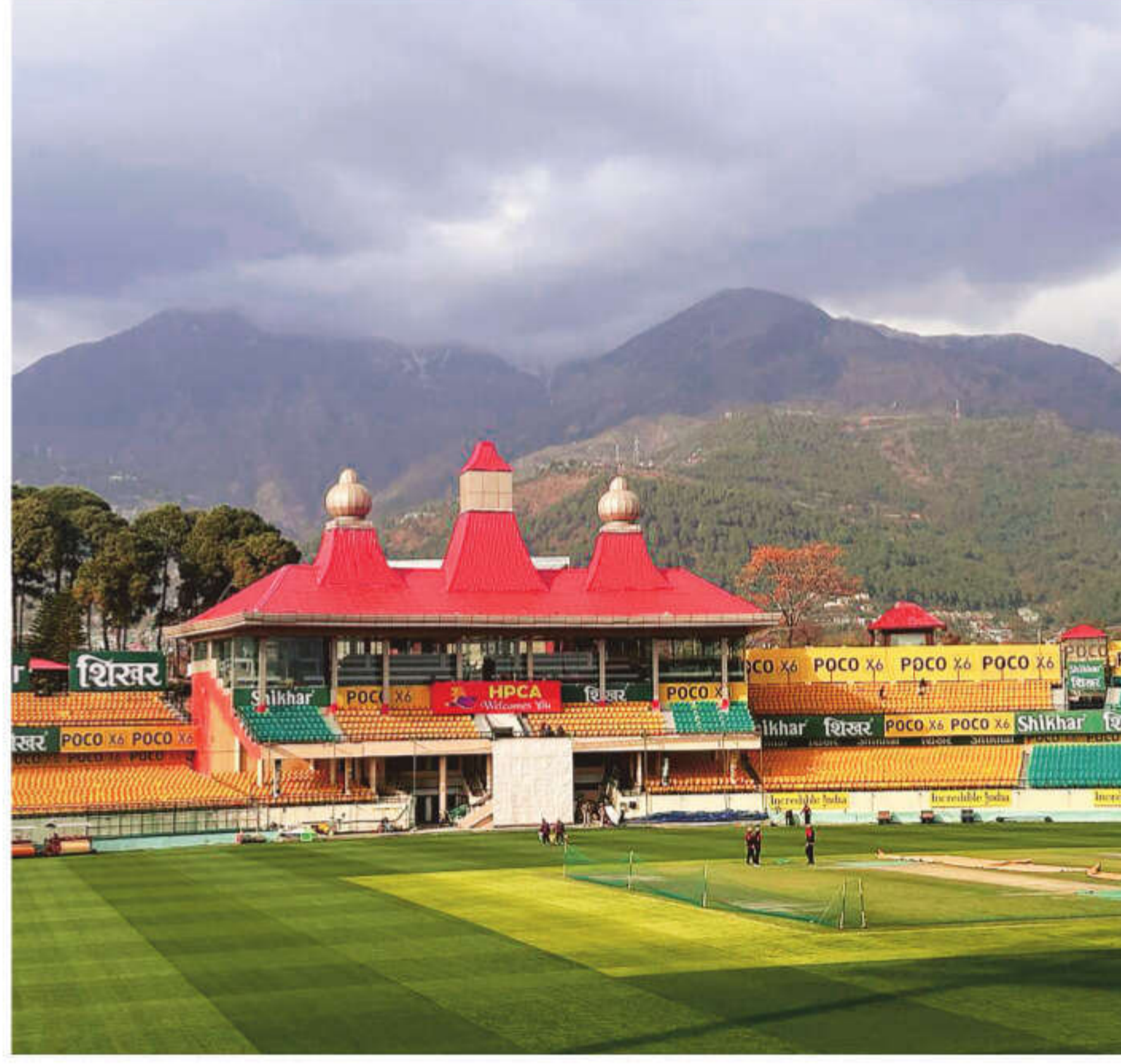
Arun says his elder brother Anurag, on a hunch, had gone off the beaten path and that's when he experienced a moment of pure serendipity. In front of him was the breath-taking mountain range and a highly uneven rocky field next to a college where cattle gathered to graze and students converged with their date. This is it, Anurag would say.

Enter Arun Loomba, a Chandigarh-based architect with experience of designing sports

## HPCA STADIUM, DHARAMSALA 1457m ABOVE MEAN SEA LEVEL

# How a stadium, with a view to die for, was born

A rocky field where cattle once grazed was transformed into a Test venue with a backdrop of breathtaking beauty – a Himalayan range



(Top) The HPCA Stadium in Dharamsala, the venue for the 5th Test match. (Left) The land before the stadium came up. (Above) The stadium in its early days. **HPCA**

"The challenge was to create an architectural genre that was colonial, pahari and Tibetan. The north pavilion has roof elements derived from Tibetan Gompas."



ARUN LOOMBA,  
ARCHITECT OF HPCA STADIUM

"When England was here for a World Cup game, the schedule for this Test series was out. The Barmy Army executive came to tell me that he had started to get calls."



ARUN DHARMAL,  
IPL CHAIRMAN & VETERAN HPCA OFFICIAL

complexes. Today at 71, he has built sports stadiums in Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, UP and the all-new cricket complex at Mullanpur, Chandigarh.

Back in 1999-2000, Dharamshala was one of Loomba's early assignments. He was excited but he wasn't tempted to put together a modern steel and glass structure or

an outlandishly asymmetrical stadium complex. Didn't he think of a Lord's like press-box? He chuckles. "My first thought was, whatever I design should merge into the site of the stadium, it should gel with nature," says the architect.

Not surprisingly, the roof of the pavilion has the shape and colour scheme of the several houses mounted on the rambling hills. The stadium doesn't shout for attention. In the rural setting, this is no city scraper, more of a vast town square.

Among East India Company's early conquests in India, Dharamshala is the home of Tibet's government-in-exile and the seat of the Dalai Lama.

The foreign influence that has its stamp on the town's landscape can be seen at the stadium too.

Loomba explains: "The challenge was to create an architectural genre that was colonial, pahari and Tibetan. The north pavilion has roof elements derived from Tibetan Gompas," he says.

Architects are in a way screen-writers. When drawing building plans they also look to add an element of suspense and drama. The approach road to Dharamsala stadium doesn't prepare you for the jaw-dropping sight that is just minutes away. "The concept was once you enter the stadium, nature should expose itself to you and hit you," says Loomba. This is an architect of sober sensibilities speaking. Actually, the sight of Dhauladhar hits you like a thunderbolt from the skies.

After Loomba had painstakingly put together the drawings of the stadiums – AutoCad hadn't yet reached India – he would realise the difficulties of the project. Earth-movers would cry in agony, what with the excavation throwing up giant boulders.

Once the stadium started taking shape, other problems cropped up too. Getting big games was still an issue. The place didn't have quality hotels where teams could stay. "HPCA would then get land from the government on commercial lease to build a hotel which we would later give to hoteliers Radison to run. There were no flights here also that too was an issue," says Arun.

A lot has changed since then. Dharamsala is now a top-tourist spot with several five-star properties – Taj, ITC and Hyatt. It also has one of the busiest airports in the state.

Even when there is no game, tourists flock to the stadium that they have longingly watched on their television screens. YouTube is flooded with amateur vlogs recorded on shaky cameras by awestruck tourists who manage cliches like "adbhut nazara", "kudrat ka ajuba" and "dharti pe swarg" to describe their Kirmani moment.

"Every day we have footfalls of close to 3000 to 4000. We have now plans to come up with a museum and eateries," says Arun.

Loomba also has ideas about developing the stadium. They are grand. He dreams of building a revolving restaurant where over lunch from starter to dessert one can get a 360 view of "heaven."

Back in the day, he had made a proposal to light up Himalayas for match days and with D-H-A-R-A-M-S-A-L-A written on Dhauladhar like H-O-L-L-Y-W-O-O-D on Mount Lee.

Along with its captivating landscape, it's the warmth and hospitality of the hill-folks that add to Dharamsala's USP. Last year, New Zealand during the World Cup had Dharamsala as their base camp. During the stay they were sighted in remote villages interacting with the locals and exploring the hills.

"Rachin (Ravindra) told me he was bowled over by the beautiful place and wanted to be here when he next visits India. Then there was the England team. They too were here. After their game, they were at the bar till 5 a.m., after that they would go for a trek, and after that straight to the airport," says Arun.

But there happens to be one cricketer who can never forget this venue. In 2005, Dharamsala hosted a Pakistan vs Board President XI tour game.

Those were the days when the venue had rudimentary facilities. Shahid Afridi reportedly told the locals – "How to play cricket here. *Bus idhar chai piyo aur vaadiyan dekho.*"

The moodiest of the lot, skipper Inzamam ul Haq too had complained about the hotel. This was the first week of March and the time of the Pakistan great's birthday. In an inspired move, the Himachal officials thought of making the day memorable for the tourists.

"We got a cake and made Inzamam cut it. We also ordered 10,000 laddoos and distributed them to everyone. I still remember Inzamam was so touched by the gesture, he leaned towards Anurag ji and was in tears. He got very emotional," says Arun. "He said 'Aisa birthday toh Pakistan mai bh nahi maate' I will always remember this," he said.

## NURSERY OF INDIAN BATTING

# Takes a city like Mumbai (not Delhi) to shape a batsman like Jaiswal

SANDEEP DWIVEDI

HERE'S A request. While applauding India's bright new star Yashvi Jaiswal's runs and his technical correctness, do give a hat-tip to his city Mumbai that has dutifully conserved its cricketing heritage like a precious family heirloom. Cricket's original Indian home hasn't allowed the wild winds of change to uproot the foundation of the game. Had it not been for Mumbai, Yashvi wouldn't have happened.

His is a barely believable true story. As an 11-year-old son of a small-time shopkeeper in Bhadohi in UP, he had travelled all alone to the city that Bollywood keeps telling the world fulfils every dream. Yashvi wanted to play for India, he was driven and focused. He eventually did. There was help from coaches, mentors and guardians but if one zooms out, a more heartening bigger picture emerges.

Yashvi, the outsider with raw talent, was adopted by a system that still works on meritocracy. Unlike the erstwhile cricketing heavyweight Delhi, Mumbai still cares for its cricket and young cricketers. Had the young Yashvi undertaken the shorter trip from home and reached Delhi, chances are the 22-

year-old would have been still dragging his kit-bag to Kotla for some u-23 trials.

Over the years, like everything, the maidans have been commercialised over, but they are still inhabited by those anonymous benefactors, former players who love talking cricket, unsung coaches and unbiased selectors who take pride in grooming the next generation of cricketers. Passing the baton is not an obligation, nor a transaction, for many it remains a responsibility. This has ensured that pictures of batting prodigies with their whites soiled by the maidaan red clay still make it to the front pages of Mumbai papers.

The one-time nursery of Indian batting, the most successful first-class side has an abundance of expertise. In his book *Sunny Days*, Gavaskar talks about a visitor who had come to his home to deliver a wedding invite but ended up giving him a batting tip that stayed with him all through his career.

"One day when I was leaving home to play a match, my father stopped to introduce me to Mr Kamal Bhandarkar, a former Maharashtra player who is always prepared to coach ... He had come to invite us for a wedding... He asked me to show him my forward defence. When I did so, Mr Bhandarkar



Yashvi Jaiswal moved from Bhadohi in UP to Mumbai as an 11-year-old son of a small-time shopkeeper. **PTI**

pointed out that my bat was at an angle and there was the danger of the ball being deflected towards the slips," writes Gavaskar. Mr Bhandarkar, he goes on to add, was the kind who was prepared to sit "all night to dis-

cuss cricketing problems one might have".

For someone like Yashvi, the dedicated coaches like Mr Bhandarkar were crucial to his growth. Unlike Gavaskar, Yashvi didn't have a Test cricketer uncle like Madhav Mantri, whose India cap he could gaze at and dream. Nor did he have an elder brother like Ajit Tendulkar. His peers – Prithvi Shaw, Sarfraz Khan, Arman Jaffer – had "Cricketer Fathers" who calibrated every step they took on a cricket field. For the teenaged migrant, who shared the maidaan tent with ground staff, sold *pani puri* to make ends meet, there was a big-hearted city and its very giving cricket community.

The insatiable hunger for runs that Yashvi shows too is part of the Mumbai batsman's DNA. With intense competition and the bar extremely high, a mere hundred would be fine for those who wish to play Kanga League all their lives. To make the office-goers at Churchgate stop and peek through the fence to watch a batsman play at Azad Maidaan, one needs Grand Daddy hundreds. It's that hunger that made Yashvi score two double hundreds in his first home Test series.

Focus and concentration is another trait

the city inculcates in its batsmen. Gavaskar would stand in slips so that his brain doesn't wander. He would even read books with bigger font size and avoided watching movies as he was told that this would affect his eyesight. When you have plans to bat flawlessly for days, you need to keep an eye on the devil that hides in the details. Yashvi is a very safe slip-catcher. His first big story, done by *The Indian Express* reporter Devendra Pandey, has a stand-out quote by Mumbai's u-19 coach. It is about the teenager's "extraordinary game sense and unflappable focus."

Like most migrants, Yashvi's dream wasn't confined to owning a house in Mumbai. He wanted a place of his own in the neighbourhood of batting greats. That's again a Mumbai trait. Tendulkar was barely 13, when he knew that he would surely play for India. So like those great men, Yashvi didn't see a Mumbai cap or the Rs 4 crore per year "retained star" status at Rajasthan Royals as a destination. Like all Mumbaiers, he also sweated it out to reach those Test cap goals.

His off-season isn't about enjoying his earnings. Far away from the glitz and distracting possibilities that Mumbai offers, he packs

off to Wardha district's Talegaon, a village near Nagpur where his franchise Rajasthan Royals have a training facility. It has comfortable accommodation with perks of a budget hotel and canteen food that's fresh and hygienic. As for night-life there's not much in the town that has been in news for farmer suicides and is famous for ironsmiths who make deadly daggers. The cricket facilities are a Mumbai batsman's dream – pitch of every kind and unending supply of net bowlers.

Yashvi's batting numbers and anecdotal evidence show that he has logged in those crucial 10,000 hours – it's the number acclaimed author Malcolm Gladwell has come up with. He says those many hours of training puts an athlete on the path to greatness. But in modern sports, even for Mumbai batsmen, a rider needs to be added. Having seen the fate of one double hundred scoring left-hander from Mumbai, that too against England, who was Tendulkar's close friend, greatness isn't that easy. To be a true great, along with those 10,000 hours, a sportsman needs to have handled those mandatory 1000 days of stardom. For Yashvi, which means 'successful' in Sanskrit, with this England series, that countdown has started.



# Mandhana shines as RCB go third with win over UPW

**RAHUL PANDEY**  
MARCH 4

THERE HAVE been quite a few positives from the first half of WPL 2024. But perhaps none has been more eye-soothing than Smriti Mandhana's onside play. It was almost unfair that for the longest time in her career, a batter of her caliber hadn't fully embraced the leg side. A reservation of the RCB captain seems to have left behind in the ongoing WPL season.

While her first fifty hadn't been enough to see through a 195-run chase last week, Mandhana once again took centre stage on Monday, leading RCB to a crucial 28-run win against UP Warriorz midway through the league stage. One that sees them make the top three ahead of the Delhi leg.

It was the elegant southpaw who had set the tone. Losing their last two games after winning as many to open their campaign had left RCB vulnerable, Mandhana admitted later. The message after losing the toss was clear, "to show the intent straightaway." And the left-hander walked the talk, fashioning a couple of maximums early in the power-play. The second highlighted the ease with which she has taken down the bowlers on the leg side this season: clearing her front leg, bending on her back leg and hoisting it over wide long on.

Apart from the renewed strength of her onside play, another tweak Mandhana has made to her batting has been staying deep in the crease to the spinners more often. The off-spinners have been her Achilles heel for a while, and Chamari Athapaththu had almost got her stumped with a quicker one.

So Mandhana targeted the region behind square on either side of the field for her boundaries. Against Athapaththu in the same over, she scooped her over fine leg. Off Sophie Ecclestone, she used the width on offer from the left-arm spinner to gently dab down third man.

Mandhana put together her highest WPL score - 80 off 50 - eclipsing the 74 against Delhi last week. Accompanying her for the majority of her innings was Ellyse Perry, who scored her first fifty this season, breaking the sponsor's car window with a six in the process.

Even 199 looked chaseable as captain Alyssa Healy held the fort for UPW despite wickets tumbling at the other end. Unlike her counterpart, it was advancing too far down her crease that was the undoing of Healy as Richa Ghosh flashed the bails in time to put RCB at the favorable end in the points table.

**BRIEF SCORES:** Royal Challengers Bangalore 198 for 3 (Mandhana 80, Perry 58, Ecclestone 1-22) beat UP Warriorz 175 for 8 (Healy 55, Asha 2-29, Molineux 2-29) by 23 runs



RCB skipper Smriti Mandhana after reaching her half century. PTI

# TN no match for 'khadoos' Mumbai

Kishore-led side reflects on wrong decisions, as Shardul and Co revel in making it to yet another final

**MIHIR VASAVDA**  
MUMBAI, MARCH 4

"THE MATCH was lost at 9 am." Sulakshan Kulkarni, Tamil Nadu coach who boasted he had Mumbai cricket 'on his fingertips', knew his team's fate was sealed the moment his captain decided to bat on a damp, green wicket at the toss on Day 1.

It was the first in a series of blunders the veteran domestic coach listed that saw his team succumb to an innings-and-70-run defeat. Kulkarni's former team, Mumbai, reached their 48th Ranji Trophy final where they will play either Vidarbha or Madhya Pradesh starting Sunday. Tamil Nadu's sorry semifinal ended the same way it started: Their batsmen staring at the pitch as if it had demons that danced only when they were in the middle, a look of disbelief plastered on their faces and reluctant walks back to the dugout.

When they look back, one cold stat will bare it all: Over two innings, Tamil Nadu managed 308 runs, only 36 more than Mumbai's last three batsmen in the first innings. Amusing, because Sai Kishore said after the second day that he trusted his batsmen to score 300-400 runs. Unless he meant a combined tally of both innings, Sai Kishore grossly overestimated his teammates in these conditions.

Kulkarni said he'd provided his captain with all the inputs from his years of experience of playing and working in Mumbai. "But I can only lead a horse to water, can't make it drink," Kulkarni said. "I even explained to them Mumbai's mindset." The other day, after his hundred, Thakur fell back on the age-old cliché to describe Mumbai's attitude. "Khadoos," he said. There are many connotations to this over-used adjective. Aggression, in-your-face, arrogance... but Thakur was alluding to grit, especially of their lower order that virtually took the game away from Tamil Nadu with another stellar batting performance.

Thakur personified Mumbai's grittiness. Never more so than during this match.

After the win, the 'khadoos' Mumbaikar was more self-deprecating. "I started my journey as a fat kid," Thakur joked. Eleven years have passed since and Thakur, who quickly added he's a lot leaner now, began Tamil Nadu's demolition with a fabulous counter-attacking ton, his first in this format, on Sunday. He returned Monday morning to land a one-two punch, with two early wickets, that put the visitors out of their misery. In doing so, he also sounded out the selectors.

As much as a meeting of domestic cricket's two heavyweights, the semifinal was also where India discards and hopefuls crossed roads. Prithvi Shaw and Musheer Khan, Shreyas Iyer and Sai Kishore, Sai Sudharshan and N Jagadeesan.

Thakur was in the proverbial no-man's-land. Not in the scheme of things now but not told explicitly that he isn't needed anymore. His performance, a century with two wickets in each innings, is a reminder but will the pow-



Mumbai defeated Tamil Nadu by an innings and 70 runs on Monday. PTI

## RATHOD LEADS VIDHARBA CHARGE AGAINST MP

An unbeaten 97 by Yash Rathod helped Vidarbha script a superb fightback and reach 343 for six in their second innings against Madhya Pradesh on the third day of their Ranji Trophy semifinal here on Monday. Rathod, who faced 165 balls, received excellent support from his captain Akshay Wadkar (77, 139b) and the pair added 158 runs for the stubborn sixth wicket stand as the hosts recovered from a shaky 161 for five. Vidarbha, now, lead by a handy 261 runs. The first hint of resistance came when Dhruv Shorey (40, 65b) and Aman

Mokhadde (59, 100b) made 84 runs for the third wicket after Vidarbha lost nightwatchman Akshay Wakhare in the second over of the day after resuming from 13 for one. However, left-arm spinner Kumar Kartikeya broke the alliance when he induced an edge from Shorey to press Himanshu Mantri into action behind the stumps. Vidarbha were 90 for three then, and from there they lost Mokhadde and Karun Nair. **BRIEF SCORES:** Vidarbha 170 & 343/6 (Y Rathod 97\*; A Agarwal 2/68) leads Madhya Pradesh 252 by 261 runs.

ers-that-be remember this performance when India next play a Test series in the second half of the year? Thakur wasn't too optimistic about that. Maybe, there was a realisation that he was aided by some baffling Tamil Nadu decisions. It started with the toss. Kulkarni hinted that the decision, made against the team's gameplan as captain Sai Kishore chose to go with his 'instincts', threw the batsmen off guard a bit.

It provoked a shuffling of the batting order. In the first chapter, Washington Sundar came at Number 7 and Pradosh Paul at one-down while Sai Kishore promoted himself to four. In the second innings, the batting order was shuffled with Sundar walking in at three, Paul dropped to number 5 and Sai Kishore bringing himself on at 7. The tinkering also affected how they played, with Kulkarni pointing out that in the first innings, when the pitch

got easier to bat in the afternoon and evening sessions, Tamil Nadu batsmen embarked on a blockathon that yielded no result.

Increasingly through the match, Tamil Nadu have an impression of being a one-man army, with Sai Kishore as the front and centre of everything, especially with the ball.

This was in stark contrast to Mumbai, where in different times of adversity a new player put his hand up and delivered. Thakur's innings is an example of it but so was the support he got from Tanush Kotian and Tushar Deshpande, the best No.9 and 10 with the bat in the country at the moment.

The same grittiness could be seen with the ball. Thakur provided the breakthrough by dismissing openers Sudarshan and Jagadeesan. When Pradosh Paul and Baba Indrajith offered resistance, Kotian stepped in to break the partnership. What followed was a procession with Shams Mulani scalping four. When Iyer caught the last man, Sandeep Warrier, to round off Mumbai's fine team show, there was still an hour and a half left to play on the third day. It didn't matter, for in Kulkarni's words, Tamil Nadu had lost the match on the first morning itself.

**BRIEF SCORES:** Tamil Nadu 146 & 162 (Indrajith 70; Mulani 4-53) lost to Mumbai 378 (Thakur 109; Kishore 6-99) by an innings and 70 runs.

# HC wants govt, WFI to respond to wrestlers' plea against election

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 4

THE DELHI High Court on Monday issued a notice to the Centre on a plea by grapplers Bajrang Punia, Vinesh Phogat, Sakshi Malik and Satyawart Kadian to set aside the Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) elections held in December 2023.

A single-judge bench of Justice Sachin Datta issued the notice to the government through the sports ministry, WFI and the ad-hoc committee appointed to run the federation. The court granted time to the Centre's counsel to seek instructions in the matter and listed the matter for hearing on March 7.

Senior advocate Rahul Mehra, appearing for the petitioner wrestlers, argued that they have sought directions against the "illegal action" of the "suspended" WFI to conduct selection trials for the Senior Asian Wrestling Championships 2024 and Asian Olympic Games Qualifier, notified through its circular dated February 26, going against the directives of the ad-hoc committee.

The plea also seeks that the December 21 election held by the WFI be declared illegal and void ab-initio, the ad-hoc committee be directed to continue administering the day-to-day affairs of the WFI, or in the alternative, a retired Supreme Court judge be appointed as an administrator to take over the affairs of the federation.

Sanjay Singh, a close aide of former president and BJP MP Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh, was elected president in the election. On December 24, the sports ministry suspended the elected body of the WFI for "blatant disregard for established legal and procedural norms" and had subsequently directed the Indian Olympic Association to set up an ad-hoc committee to run the day-to-day affairs of the WFI. "The petitioners would like to place on record that apart from them, there are many other athletes/wrestlers who are also facing similar harassment owing to their upright/honest stand against respondent no. 2/WFI and its officials over the illegalities by respondent no. 2 in collusion and under instructions of respondent no. 2/WFI former President and member of Parliament from Kaiserganj constituency namely Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh," the plea submits. It also seeks a direction to the federation to "cease and desist" from undertaking any activity pertaining to the sport of wrestling.

It adds that WFI cannot be construed as a "legal, fair, unbiased body" to conduct free and fair trials and unless WFI is specifically restrained to conduct such events, it shall continue to mislead, threaten and create adversities for wrestlers.

The petitioner wrestlers have sought that either a direction be issued to bring WFI within the conformity of the National Sports Code or in the alternative, the elections be declared illegal and WFI be immediately de-recognised.

# Chance for Satwik-Chirag, Prannoy to scope Paris battlefield

**VINAYAK MOHANARANGAN**  
MARCH 4

THE FRENCH Open Super 750 is an event close to Indian badminton fans in recent years, given how well Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty have done in Paris in the past. It's the event where they made their first major breakthrough in 2019, reaching the final with three upset wins. In 2022, they went all the way to win their first Super 750 title.

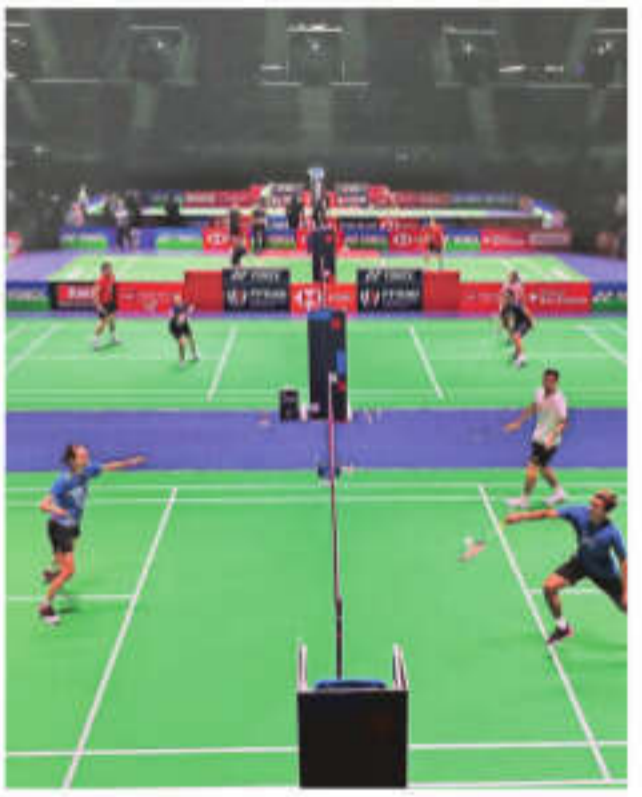
All those results came in October, when the French Open is usually held. But in 2024, the tournament starts on Tuesday, in the middle of March. Why is that significant? The coming week will give the best shuttlers in the world their first look at the badminton venue for the Paris Olympics (and Paralympics).

Contrary to the proverb, in sports, familiarity can breed confidence. And that will be the big aspect of the next few days, not just

for the Indian contingent. Former international Guru Sai Dutt, who will be accompanying HS Prannoy as his coach, said one of the first things he looked for is how many the arena can seat. He points out how there wasn't a test event for badminton before Tokyo because of Covid-19 and it perhaps played a part in many early upsets.

"It is quite important to know where you are actually playing, how it feels to be moving on the court, how the conditions will be, and even to know how it looks from outside and inside," Guru told The Indian Express. "One of the first things I look at is how big the seating capacity is and the size of the hall. The bigger the arena is, slower are the shuttles and playing conditions. Major events in recent times like Asia and Worlds have been in bigger halls, we haven't seen fast conditions mostly anywhere."

Moved from Pierre de Coubertin Stadium to the Adidas Arena at Porte de la Chapelle, 2024's French Open comes at a crucial juncture. It's vital for both earning



Players training in the arena ahead of French Open 2024. ffbad/Instagram

qualifying points to earn a place at the Olympic Games and for those who are all but assured of a spot in the final piece.

This newly set-up facility, with a capacity of 6,700 for badminton, is 2.5km from the Olympic and Paralympic Village. The Indian contingent is staying relatively closer to the venue, in a hotel about 15 minutes away, and as such there are no plans to simulate travel that would be similar during the Games.

"The hall looks big, it feels really good the moment you enter, you feel like getting on the court and playing. They have set it up nicely, it's dark and has an All England feel," Guru said after the contingent had their pre-tournament training session.

The former top 20 player pointed out there is no evident Olympic Games buzz on the streets yet, and it feels like any other BWF tournament in that sense, but to perform well in the tournament will be as important as collecting valuable data.

"It's not just about the one particular

match but the entire tournament, and how things change from day 1 to day 3 and so on. Condition during a match is just one aspect. Things will progressively change and we need to be aware. Sometimes in the morning, the conditions could be fast. And with more people coming in, things change. There could be a partial drift. I need to be aware if a shuttle is going short because of drift from a certain place."

Beyond preparations for the marquee event, a lot is riding on the next couple of weeks for the likes of Lakshya Sen, Ashwini Ponnappa-Tanisha Crasto and Gayatri Gopichand-Treesa Jolly.

Lakshya needs a deep run to push himself into the top 16 in the Race to Paris lists, while the women's doubles pairs are unfortunately pitted against one another right away, as their battle to take up one spot heats up. Meanwhile, Satwik-Chirag (top seeds), Prannoy and PV Sindhu will be looking to fine-tune their preparations as their place in Paris is more secure.

# Praneeth and coach Siyadath Ullah eye greener pastures in USA

**SHIVANI NAIK**  
MUMBAI, MARCH 4

B SAI Praneeth won India a badminton men's singles World Championship bronze in 2019, after a gap of 36 years. And Mohammed Siyadath Ullah was guiding Kidambi Srikanth from the coach's chair when he beat Lin Dan to win the China Open in 2014. The two soft-spoken, high-achieving Hyderabadis, who were at the Pulela Gopichand academy from Day 1, will soon call the USA their home, as they relocate in the coming days, taking up coaching opportunities in the country that hosts the LA Olympics in 2028.

Sai, India's Tokyo Olympian says at 32, he could've plodded on the circuit for another two years, chasing smaller titles, but reckoned the time was right to make the shift. Moving to a club in Cary city of North Carolina, Sai said he was desperate for a change after having "lived the pressure life of an elite athlete for a very long time."

"I was trying, trying, trying the whole last year to revive my playing career, but once you play at a very good level, just winning Super 100s or Challengers isn't satisfying. I was not

able to find form and training for long periods increased injuries, so I just couldn't crack the Top 30s," says the 2017 Singapore Open champion, one of only four MS shuttlers to win a Super title. Playing Challengers also meant two matches a day which further battered his fitness.

"I've done whatever needed to be done as a player. I didn't want to 'just play.' There's a long life of 20-30 years in badminton ahead of me, so I decided to go to the next phase. I knew lots of people in the US and started looking for opportunities, finally going for the best one with good pay for club coaching in Cary," he explained. "There's enough good coaches in India," he quipped.

Planning to move with his family, he also knew it was financially a smart choice. "My wife is an IT professional, so she'll have lots of opportunities too," said, the father of a toddler.

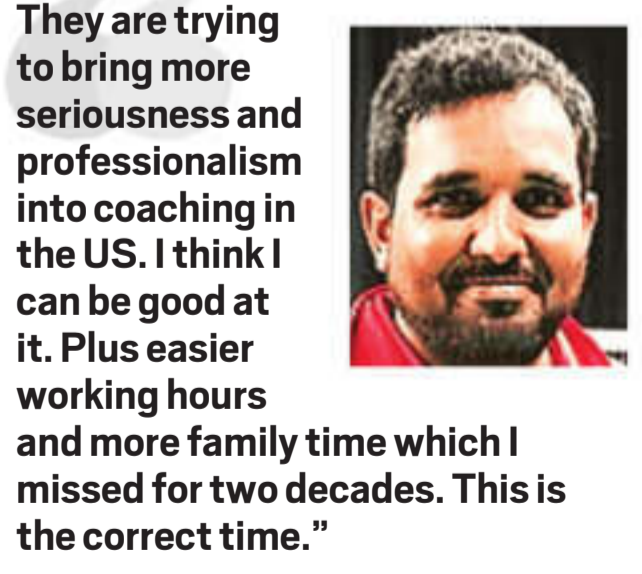
Sai Praneeth was one of Gopichand's first three famous wards in 2003, along with Saina Nehwal and Parupalli Kashyap. "It's not necessary that good players make great coaches, but I really like coaching. So this is a good challenge," he said.

For Siyadath, who travelled from Sindhu



World Championship medallist Sai Praneeth will be relocating to the US to pursue a career in coaching. file

won her first international title at Maldives beating Marin, every last few days at the PGBA have been tearful as he'll miss his first coaching stint. But the Oregon Badminton Club at Portland offered good money. "It's good contract for my family financially, and such good opportunities don't come again and again. It's run by Ajit Joshi, originally from



**MOHAMMED SIYADATH ULLAH**  
COACH

Pune, and he's doing everything to make my stint comfortable," says Gopichand's trusted lieutenant, who devoted his last 20 years as development coach of all of India's top names.

His children are 10, 8 and 2, and after visiting his US cousin two months back, his mind was made up. "It's mostly beginners to train, very few seniors, so I'm good at that as-

pect. They are trying to bring more seriousness and professionalism into coaching in the US. I think I can be good at it. Plus easier working hours and more family time which I missed for two decades. This is the correct time," says the first assistant coach at Hyderabad's centre.

His father recently suffered an accident, and coming from a joint family, Siyadath stresses the money will help him. He will terribly miss the academy. "I have a special attachment with Gopi. He's a good listener, he's ready for change and never fixed on ideas and I learnt new things everyday from him. When I told him, he first asked me to stay back, but then he was happy for my growth. He said I could come back anytime I felt like," he says.

Siyadath, a calm, intelligent brain with wildly funny Telugu colloquial instructions, has been court-side for some important landmarks. When Srikanth won China Open beating Lin Dan, he was heard repeatedly telling him to 'forget he is Lin Dan and take the attack to him.' Siyadath would funnel the inspiring words into Srikanth's mind that he was playing far better than the legend that day, and he ought not to follow him, when he had better speed. Super Dan kept flicking,

but at a crucial juncture, with the coach screaming from behind him, Srikanth would flick the shuttle deceptively into the corner for a famous title victory.

"Helping Srikanth beat Lee Chong Wei at CWG team finals was also a good memory. But I have good equation with all of them. They were very respectful to me," he recalls.

For Sai Praneeth, arguably India's most talented stylish strokemaker, the end of playing days is a mixed bag, though India's MS title wins for the current generation started with him. "There were lots of downs, but the Singapore Open win changed mindsets and confidence of everyone. The World Championships bronze I remember because I won first round and pre-quarters 21-19 both from trailing positions, in the third game," he says. India had been without a men's singles medal for 36 years, and in a masterstroke in the quarters, Sai would switch strategy. "At a crucial time, Gopi sir told me to stop attacking, and let him (Ginting) attack. It took him by surprise," he remembers.

"I'm happy my name is on a small part of Indian badminton history," he says, as he starts a fresh life in a small town in North Carolina, happy with the change.



# THE WORLD

**TOP OF THE WORLD**



Chinese Premier Li Qiang, Reuters

**CHINA**

**Premier's annual press conference ends after 30 yrs**

Beijing: China has scrapped one of the most widely followed events on its economic and policy calendar, the premier's post-parliament news conference, a move seen by some observers as a sign of the country's increasingly inward focus and centralised control. For three decades, during a period when China was opening up, the briefing had offered foreign investors and governments insights into how Chinese policymakers regard the challenges of managing what is now the world's second-largest economy. In a surprise announcement Monday, a spokesman said China's Premier Li Qiang will not brief the media at the close of this year's annual parliament session. **REUTERS**

**THAILAND**

**Court acquits ex-PM Yingluck in govt funds misuse case**

Bangkok: A Thai court on Monday acquitted former Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra, now living in exile, on charges of mis-handling funds for a government project in 2013, the latest legal victory for the powerful family of former premier Thaksin Shinawatra. The action comes shortly after Thaksin, Yingluck's brother, was released on parole for corruption-related offences. **REUTERS**

**IRAN**

**Hardliners retain hold as poll results get out**

Tehran: Iranian hard-line politicians dominated the country's vote for parliament, results released Monday showed, maintaining their hold on the legislature in a vote that saw calls for a boycott and an apparently low turnout. Of 290 races held for parliament, voters decided 245 seats in the first round, and of the 245 politicians elected, 200 were supported by hard-line groups in voter guides published before the election, according to an Associated Press analysis. The analysis identified some 45 incoming lawmakers as being relatively moderate, conservative or independent. **AP**

**JAPAN**

**24 fishermen rescued from sinking ship**

Tokyo: A Japanese coast guard helicopter rescued 24 fishermen as they desperately clung to the deck of a tilting, half-submerged ship being pounded by high waves Monday morning off an island chain southwest of Tokyo. One crewmember thrown from the rocking ship into the rough seas before the arrival of the rescuers was found dead. The Fukuei Maru No. 8 stalled due to an engine failure Sunday evening in the Pacific Ocean, about five hours after it departed the Yaizu Port in central Japan en route to South America. **AP**

**BARS STATES FROM DISQUALIFYING CANDIDATES FOR FEDERAL OFFICE**

## Major relief for Trump as Supreme Court restores him to Colorado primary ballots

**REUTERS**  
WASHINGTON, MARCH 4



Ex-President Donald Trump

THE US Supreme Court handed Donald Trump a major victory Monday, barring a constitutional provision involving insurrection and reversing Colorado's exclusion of him from its ballot.

The justices unanimously overturned a December 19 decision by Colorado's top court to kick the former president off the state's Tuesday Republican primary ballot after finding that the US Constitution's 14th Amendment disqualified him from again holding public office. The Colorado court had found that Trump took part in an insurrection for inciting and supporting the January 6, 2021, attack on the US Capitol by his supporters. But four of the nine justices, in-

cluding the court's three liberal members, faulted the rest of the court for announcing rules limiting how the constitutional provision may be enforced in the future. The ruling was issued on the eve of Super Tuesday, the day in the US presidential primary cycle when the most states hold party nominating contests. The Supreme Court's decision came five days after it agreed to

decide Trump's claim of immunity from prosecution on charges related to trying to overturn his 2020 election loss to Biden. The court acted in a expedient manner in deciding the ballot disqualification issue, benefiting Trump, than it has in resolving the immunity question. Delays in deciding the immunity issue could help Trump by delaying his criminal trial.

The 14th Amendment's Section 3 bars from office any "officer of the United States" who took an oath "to support the Constitution of the United States" and then "engaged in insurrection or rebellion against the same, or given aid or comfort to the enemies thereof."

"We conclude that states may disqualify persons holding or at-

tempting to hold state office. But states have no power under the Constitution to enforce Section 3 with respect to federal offices, especially the presidency," the unsigned opinion for the court stated. The justices found that only Congress provision against federal officeholders and candidates.

"BIG WIN FOR AMERICA!!!" Trump wrote on his social media immediately after the ruling.

He was also barred from the ballot in Maine and Illinois based on the 14th Amendment, but those decisions were put on hold pending the Supreme Court's ruling in the Colorado case. Colorado Secretary of State Jena Griswold expressed disappoint-



**EXPLAINED**  
**Cong could still pose hurdle**

THE RULING says only the Congress can enforce the 'insurrection' provision against federal officers. Trump still faces a threat if he wins the Presidential elections, as the Congress which should certify his win, could disqualify him over the 2021 Capitol incident. The only check in it is the clause "subject of course to judicial review."

ment at this "stripping states of the authority" to enforce the disqualification clause. "Colorado should be able to bar oath-breaking insurrections from our ballot," she wrote in a social media post.

## Israel conducts biggest Ramallah raid in years, kills teen in refugee camp

**REUTERS**  
RAMALLAH, MARCH 4

ISRAELI FORCES raided the Palestinian administrative capital of Ramallah in the occupied West Bank overnight, killing a 16-year-old in a refugee camp during their biggest such operation into the city in years, Palestinian sources said on Monday.

The Israeli military said that during the action, a riot broke out between Palestinians throwing rocks and petrol bombs and the soldiers, who responded with live fire. They said forces held a six-hour-long counter-terrorism operation in the camp, apprehending two, questioning others.

Witnesses in Ramallah said the Israeli forces had driven dozens of military vehicles into the city, the headquarters of the Palestinian Authority (PA) led by President Mahmoud Abbas which exercises limited self-rule over parts of the West Bank.

The Palestinian health ministry said Israeli forces shot and killed 16-year-old Mustafa Abu Shalbak while raiding Am'ari refugee camp. The Palestinian foreign ministry said Israeli occupation authorities were making lives of Palestinians in the West Bank "an unbearable hell" with actions including raids, detentions, warning of "serious risks" of plunging the West Bank into "violence and anarchy".



Palestinians search for bodies, survivors in rubble after an Israeli airstrike in Rafah, Monday. AP

## Harris meet with Netanyahu rival Gantz exposes rift in Israel's wartime cabinet

**ASSOCIATED PRESS**  
WASHINGTON, MARCH 4

PRIME MINISTER Benjamin Netanyahu rebuked a top Cabinet minister arriving in Washington on Sunday for talks with U.S. officials, according to an Israeli official, signaling widening cracks within the country's leadership nearly five months into its war with Hamas. The trip by Benny Gantz, a

centrist political rival who joined Netanyahu's wartime Cabinet following Hamas' October 7 attack, comes as friction between the US and Netanyahu is rising.

An official from Netanyahu's far-right Likud party said Gantz's trip was planned without authorization from the Israeli leader. The official said Netanyahu had a "tough talk" with Gantz and told him the country has "just one Prime Minister." Gantz is scheduled to meet on

Monday with U.S. Vice President Kamala Harris and National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan and on Tuesday with Secretary of State Antony Blinken, according to his National Unity Party.

Over the weekend, Harris issued a forceful call for a temporary cease-fire deal in Gaza, which administration officials say would halt fighting for at least six weeks, and also increased pressure on Israel to not impede the aid that workers

were trying to get into the region. The White House has been advocating for that framework deal for weeks.

"Given the immense scale of suffering in Gaza, there must be an immediate cease-fire for at least the next six weeks, which is what is currently on the table," Harris said during an appearance in Selma, Alabama, on Sunday. "This will get the hostages out and get a significant amount of aid in."

## PM Prachanda dumps Nepali Cong, forms govt with Oli party that ditched him last yr

**YUBARAJ GHIMIRE**  
KATHMANDU, MARCH 4

NEPAL PRIME Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda' Monday severed his Maoist party's 15-month alliance with the Nepali Congress and forged a coalition with the Communist Party of Nepal-Unified Marxist Leninist (CPN-UML) — which itself had withdrawn support to him last February.

Three ministers — one each from the Maoist Centre, CPN-



PM Pushpa Kumar Dahal; former PM KP Sharma Oli

UML and Rashtriya Swatantra Party — took oath of office and secrecy, marking the takeover. The Jananta Samajbadi Party led by Upendra Yadav is also contem-

plating joining the cabinet.

Prachanda's Maoist Centre is the third largest party in the 275-member House of Representatives. Nepali Congress, with 89 members, is the largest, followed by CPN-UML, which has 78 seats. The RSP with 21 members stands fourth in strength. CPN-UML is led by one of Prachanda's fiercest critics, KP Oli.

The coalition of the two big Left parties in Nepal was previously openly supported by China, whereas both India and the US were against it.

There are indications that each party will also have a Deputy PM. The post of Chairman of the Rashtriya Sabha, the Upper House of Parliament, will go to the Maoists as per an eight-point agreement signed by the new coalition leaders Monday.

Prachanda accused the Nepali Congress of being a "reactionary force" that was trying to use him. NC leader and former Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba told his party colleagues that he did not expect this "dishonesty" from Prachanda.

## Abortion now a constitutional right in France

Versailles: France on Monday enshrined the right to abortion in its constitution, a world first welcomed by women's rights groups as historic.

Women have had a legal right to abortion in France since a 1974 law. But the US Supreme Court's 2022 decision to reverse the Roe v. Wade ruling prompted activists to push France to become the first country to protect it in its basic law. Abortion rights are more widely accepted in France than in the many countries, with around 80% backing it as legal. **REUTERS**

**DANISH AUTHORITIES SAY AS MANY AS 4,500 WOMEN AND GIRLS RECEIVED COIL IMPLANTS**

## Forced birth control in '60s, '70s: Indigenous Greenland women sue Denmark

**ASSOCIATED PRESS**  
COPENHAGEN, MARCH 3

A GROUP of Indigenous women in Greenland has sued Denmark for forcing them to be fitted with intrauterine contraceptive devices in the 1960s and 70s, and demanded total compensation of nearly 43 million kroner (\$6.3 million), Danish media reported Monday.

The group of 143 Inuit women say Danish health authorities violated their human rights when they fitted them with the devices, commonly known as coils. Some of the women — in-

cluding many who were teenagers at the time — were not aware of what happened or did not consent to the intervention.

The purpose was allegedly to limit population growth in Greenland by preventing pregnancy.

The population on the Arctic island was rapidly increasing at the time because of better living conditions and better health care.

The small T-shaped device, made from plastic and copper, and fitted in the uterus, prevents sperm from fertilizing an egg.

Danish authorities say that as many as 4,500 women and girls — reportedly half of the fertile



Some of the women — including many who were teenagers at the time — were not aware of what happened. AP

**Purpose was allegedly to limit population growth in Greenland which was rising due to better living conditions and health care**

women in Greenland — received coil implants between the 1960s and mid-1970s.

In September 2022, the governments of Denmark and Greenland launched an investigation into the program.

The outcome of the probe is due next year. But the women's lawyer,



Pakistan's newly elected Prime Minister, Shehbaz Sharif, in the National Assembly in Islamabad on Monday. Former PM Nawaz Sharif is also present. Reuters

## Shehbaz Sharif sworn in as Pak PM for 2nd term

### Takes over premiership amid major economic and security challenges

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA**  
ISLAMABAD, MARCH 4

SHEHBAZ SHARIF on Monday was sworn in as Pakistan's 24th Prime Minister, taking over the reins of the cash-strapped country for a second time since 2022, amidst staggering economic and security challenges.

President Arif Alvi administered the oath to the 72-year-old Shehbaz in a ceremony held at the Aiwan-i-Sadr, the presidential residence. The oath-taking ceremony comes days after the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz and the Pakistan Peoples Party agreed on a power-sharing deal to form a coalition government.

Shehbaz earlier served as prime minister of a coalition government from April 2022 to August 2023.

The ceremony was attended by former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz and other PML-N workers. PPP leader and Sindh chief minister Murad Ali Shah was also present on the occasion.

On Sunday, Shehbaz comfortably won a majority in the newly-elected Parliament amidst sloganeering by the Opposition. **PTI**

**EX-PM GILANI POISED TO BECOME SENATE CHAIR**

Islamabad: Former Pak Prime Minister Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani, who is tipped to become the chairman of the Senate, has submitted his nomination papers to contest the election to be held Friday, according to a media report. Gilani, who won the February 8 election to the National Assembly from Multan in Punjab has vacated his seat and will contest for a Senate seat from Islamabad. **PTI**

**COPS RAID HOUSE OF OPP PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE**

Karachi: Ahead of the presidential polls in Pakistan, authorities in Balochistan have raided the house of opposition presidential candidate and veteran politician Mahmood Khan Achakzai in the provincial capital, Quetta, and reclaimed a piece of government-owned land "illegally occupied" by him. **PTI**

## China to provide free military assistance to Maldives, signs deal

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA**  
MALE, MARCH 4

CHINA MONDAY signed a defence cooperation agreement with the Maldives to provide free military assistance to foster "stronger" bilateral ties, weeks after President Mohamed Muizzu set a deadline for the withdrawal of the first group of Indian military personnel from his island nation.

Defence Minister of the Maldives Mohamed Ghassan Maumoon met with Major General Zhang Baoqun, Deputy Director of the Office for International Military Cooperation of China, to discuss enhancing defence cooperation between the two countries.

Maumoon and Major General Baoqun "signed an agreement on China's provision of military assistance gratis to the Republic of Maldives, fostering stronger bilateral ties," the Maldivian defence ministry posted on X.

The details of the defence cooperation agreement were not provided. Meanwhile, China has also gifted 12 eco-friendly ambulances to Maldives, Edition.mv news portal reported on Monday. In a ceremony held at the Ministry of Health Sunday, Chinese Ambassador to Maldives Wang Lixin presented the letter gifting the ambulances to the Maldives, it said.

The visit of the Chinese military delegation took place days after Male allowed hi-tech Chinese research ship to make a port call for the "rotation of its personnel and replenishment."

On January 5, Sri Lanka, while denying entry to the same ship, said it had declared a moratorium on foreign research ships for a year amid concerns from India over Chinese research vessels docking in its neighbourhood and collecting data from the oceans, including in the Indian Ocean Region, for military purposes, especially for submarine operations.