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INSIDE



INVITEES CAN'T ASK QUESTIONS: AJIT TO SHARAD AT MEETING
KERALA: 14-YR-OLD BOY TESTS POSITIVE FOR NIPAH VIRUS
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4 yrs after life sentence for murder, former BJP MLA set for early release



Ex-BJP MLA Uday Bhan Karwariya was convicted in the 1996 murder of SP MLA Jawahar Yadav (right).

MANISH SAHU
LUCKNOW, JULY 20

OVER FOUR years after a court in Uttar Pradesh sentenced former BJP MLA Uday Bhan Karwariya to life imprisonment for the 1996 murder of a Samajwadi Party (SP) MLA, the state government has ordered his premature release, with Governor Anandiben Patel approving his mercy petition, officials said.

The decision was based on recommendations by the Prayagraj SSP, the District Magistrate and a mercy petition committee — as well as Uday Bhan's "good conduct" in jail — the July 19 order stated. It also said that Uday Bhan had spent eight years, nine months, and eleven days in jail as of July 30, 2023 and that he could be released if no other case was pending against him.

The decision comes around a year after the state government ordered the remission of the life terms being served by former minister Amarnath Tripathi and his wife Madhumani Tripathi in a murder case.

On November 4, 2019, a Prayagraj court sentenced Uday Bhan (55), his brothers Suraj

CONTINUED ON PAGE 11



Security forces in Dhaka on Saturday, amid a curfew in response to protests against government job quotas. Reuters

Delhi cautious as Dhaka in siege, over 100 killed in anti-reservation protests

Around 1,000 Indians return, ruling Awami League blames Opp

SHUBHAJIT ROY
NEW DELHI, JULY 20

WITH MORE than 100 killed as protests against job quotas convulse Bangladesh and hold Dhaka in siege, New Delhi has been cautious not to comment on what it calls an "internal" matter. Amid curfew and an internet shutdown imposed by the Sheikh Hasina government, the Indian mission in Bangladesh has facilitated the return of 978

Indians — 778 through land borders and another 200-odd through flights, the Ministry of External Affairs said Saturday. The first batch of 245 Indians returned Friday night and the mission is in touch with more than 4,000 Indian students remaining.

The protests in Bangladesh against the quota for freedom fighters' families in government jobs has escalated over the last week, since Hasina's statement on July 14 — "If the grandchildren of the freedom fighters don't get

quota benefits, should the grandchildren of Razakars get the benefit?" — sparked outrage among young protesters in the country. The bone of contention is the 30 per cent quota reserved for families of Bangladesh freedom fighters in the country's government jobs. Protesters say these are

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SHOOT-AT-SIGHT ORDER, CURFEW
PAGE 14

EXPLAINED Politics of 1971 and job crisis

USING 1971 to push the Opposition into a corner isn't new in the winner-takes-all politics of the Awami League, that's been in power for the last 17 years. All eyes are now on the court in early August for an exit route for the government.

SC TO HEAR MATTER ON MONDAY

City-wise NEET results show 3.5% students got over 600 out of 720

In 109 centres, share of high scorers is 3 times over national avg; 60 in Sikar, Kota

NEET IN NUMBERS		
4,750	23,33,162	CITIES WITH HIGHEST NO. OF 650+ SCORERS
Total centres	Total students	City No. of students
SCORECARD		
A score of over 600 was enough to land a seat in a govt college in 2023		
Marks	Students	% share
Above 700	2,321	0.10
Above 650	30,204	1.29
Above 600	81,550	3.50
Above 550	1,42,114	6.09
Above 500	2,10,162	9.01
(* of total students) All figures approx		

RITIKA CHOPRA & HARIKISHAN SHARMA
NEW DELHI, JULY 20

COMPLYING WITH THE Supreme Court's directions, the National Testing Agency (NTA) Saturday released individual scores of roughly 23.5 lakh candidates who appeared for the NEET-UG 2024 examination. The

exams ran into a controversy after reports of question paper leak. Of the total candidates, a little over 81,000 candidates (or 3.49 per cent) scored 600 and above out of 720 marks in the examination

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CBI NABS NIT GRAD, 2 MBBS STUDENTS
PAGE 9

Poor scrutiny of invigilators, unsafe internet link: Panel flags gaps in exams

MAHENDER SINGH MANRAL
NEW DELHI, JULY 20

OUTSOURCING EXAMS to private labs which don't use "safe" internet connections, use of personal hotspots to download question papers, no proper scrutiny of invigilators, some exam centres located in secluded areas — these are some of the concerns raised by a committee set up to identify shortcomings in testing procedures in the wake of the NEET-UG row.

This committee, comprising officials of the National Forensic Sciences University, National Testing Agency (NTA) and "specialised cyber related departments", is separate from the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

SOCIAL SCIENCE TEXTBOOK FOR CLASS 6

Harappan society is 'Sindhu-Sarasvati civilisation' in NCERT's new textbook

ABHINAYA HARIGOVIND
NEW DELHI, JULY 20

FROM REFERRING to the Harappan civilisation as the 'Sindhu-Sarasvati' and 'Indus-Sarasvati' civilisation, to multiple mentions of the 'Sarasvati' river, including noting its desiccation as one of the reasons for the decline

of the Harappan society, to a mention of India having had a "prime meridian of its own" called the 'Ujjayini meridian' — the new NCERT Class 6 Social Science textbook released on Friday incorporates many new elements. 'Exploring Society: India and Beyond' is the first Social Science textbook released by the NDA government in alignment with

the National Curriculum Framework for School Education 2023. It is intended for use in schools starting from the current academic session. Unlike earlier, when there were separate textbooks for History, Political Science and Geography, the new textbook is the sole resource for Social Science.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 11

MUMBAI HOARDING COLLAPSE CHARGESHEET

Faced pressure from Commissioner to clear hoarding, say two GRP officials

MOHAMED THAYER
MUMBAI, JULY 20

TWO GOVERNMENT Railway Police (GRP) officials, including its in-house law officer, have alleged that the then GRP Commissioner, Quaiser Khalid, put pressure on them to give a favourable opinion on the Ghatkopar hoarding, which collapsed on May 13 killing 17 people.

The statements of the two officials — ACP GRP Shahaji Nikam and law officer Hrushikesh



The collapse on May 13 killed 17 people. File

Shirsat — form part of the 3,299-page chargesheet filed by the Mumbai Police.

Nikam, who signed the approval for the hoarding, has alleged that Khalid said he should be transferred to the control room for giving an adverse opinion. While signing the file, Nikam, in written remarks, indicated that he was doing so as per Khalid's orders.

The land on which the Ghatkopar petrol pump and the hoarding stood was given to the GRP — which reports to the state government — for police welfare by the state welfare and housing

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

WRITES TO CONSULATE GENERAL IN MUMBAI

Trial slow and accused out on bail: Father of Dutch woman assaulted in Goa

PAVNEET SINGH CHADHA
PANAJI, JULY 20

THE FAMILY of a 30-year-old Dutch woman, who was allegedly sexually assaulted and stabbed by an employee of a resort in Goa last year, has appealed to officials at the Consulate General of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Mumbai, requesting their intervention "to speed up the trial" and to enquire about the case with the Indian government, *The Indian Express* has learnt.

The woman's father wrote an email to Bart De Jong, the Consul General of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Mumbai, lamenting that the trial against the accused, who is currently out on bail, was "proceeding very slowly". He said his daughter is still experiencing "day-by-day the effects of the assault" and "the fact that he (the accused) has not been convicted yet does not help the recovery process".

"She was almost murdered and raped by an Indian guy. More

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

BEHIND PSMC-TATA VENTURE

Chip dreams: As Taipei takes a short step forward, Delhi assures a smooth long road

ANIL SASI
TAIPEI, NEW DELHI, JULY 20

THAT TAIWAN and India ought to be strategic partners, especially in chip fabrication, is a steady refrain in Taipei City and New Delhi. Taiwan is an undisputed world leader and India is keen to make late inroads in this domain. On the ground, however, the partnership faces chal-



Hsinchu Science Park, the hub of chip making in Taiwan.

lenges even as there's a shared sense of strategic alignment.

Despite a strong nudge by former President Tsai Ing-wen to Taiwan's chip fabrication giants to consider investing in India, there's only one company that has stepped up — Hsinchu-based Powerchip Semiconductor Manufacturing Corp or PSMC, one of Taiwan's smaller chip-makers that fabricates legacy

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

From the city of diamonds in Gujarat, two table tennis players set sights on Paris Olympics gold

PAGE 1 ANCHOR

ANIL DIAS
SURAT, JULY 20

NOTHING ABOUT Surat screams sport.

Around the railway station, one can overhear people talking about bulls and bears, minutes before stock markets open. As one drives further into the city, past the textile mills and the bazaars full of sparkling diamond shops, two young men in this city

of *dhandho* (business) and diamonds have been obsessing over gold. And they will get their first shot at it later this month in Paris. Surat, a city with practically zero Olympic sports history and negligible infrastructure, will now boast of two Olympian table tennis players — Harmeet Desai, 31, and Manav Thakkar, 24. Harmeet will compete in the singles event and will also be part of the team event at the competition in Manav.

Though both are from Surat, their road to Paris couldn't have been more different. When Harmeet took up table



Harmeet Desai (left) and Manav Thakkar. Anil Dias

tennis at the age of six, Surat didn't have any sporting clubs and the only TT table was at St Xavier's School, near his house.

Luckily for him, his father Rajul loved the game, which he had played at the university level. Harmeet was introduced to TT by his father. "There was a British club where I grew up. When it was closing down, my father managed to get one TT table from there. That's how I fell in love with the sport. Harmeet's love for TT has come from me," Rajul says.

Harmeet's story begins at his old family home, a massive

three-storey blue bungalow that is now a primary school run by his mother Archana. It also doubles up as a TT academy run by his older brother Hraday.

Harmeet was around six when one of Rajul's friends wanted to give away a TT table. Rajul, then a partner in a stock-broking firm, thought it was an opportunity to reignite his passion for the sport. Since space wasn't an issue at his house, he assembled the table on the ground floor, opposite a 12-foot waterfall.

Harmeet's love affair with the game blossomed in this very

CONTINUED ON PAGE 11

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FROM PAGE ONE
NEET-UG results

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this year. In 2023, there were 29,351 such candidates (1.43 per cent of total), and in 2022, there were 21,164 candidates (1.19 per cent of total).

A score of more than 600 was good enough to land a seat in a government medical college in 2023.

According to the city-wise and centre-wise results released by NTA as ordered by the Supreme Court, over 100 centres of the total 4,750 where the entrance test was held this year had more than three times the share of high-scoring candidates (scores exceeding 600 out of 720 marks) than the national average, shows NTA data.

More than half of these 109 examination centres are located in Sikar (44) and Kota (16), which are coaching hubs in Rajasthan. Of the 44 test centres in Sikar with high-scoring candidates, more than half (24) have at least five times (18 per cent and above) the national average (or 3.5 per cent) of candidates who scored more than 600 marks.

This is more or less in line with the analysis of the NEET-UG results by IIT-Madras, which the Centre presented before the Supreme Court to assert there is no abnormality in the results to indicate any large-scale malprac-

tice. A city-wise spread of the top 60,000 rankers in the examination this year showed 3,405 in Sikar, 2,033 in Kota and 1,561 in Patna. Patna had 1,993 candidates in the top 60,000 ranks last year.

The Supreme Court had on Thursday said it wanted to see the end of the matter by Monday. It had fixed the issue for hearing next on July 22.

IIT Madras had, in its analysis, however, acknowledged an "overall increase in the marks obtained by students, specifically in the range of 550 to 720". For instance, this year, 2,321 candidates scored in the 700-720 marks range compared with 350 in 2023, and 99 in 2022. In the 650-699 marks range this year, there were 27,885 candidates, whereas there were 6,939 last year and 4,583 the year before that. IIT Madras had attributed this increase to reduction in syllabus.

The report also attributed Kota and Sikar performance to "these places having many coaching classes". Apart from 24 exam centres in Rajasthan's Sikar, four exam centres, one each in Haryana's Rewari (DAV Public School, Rewari), Hissar (DAV Public School), Bhawani (Delhi World Public School) and Mahendragarh (Rao Prahlad Singh Senior Secondary School) had more than

five times the national average of candidates with 600 marks and above. Patna, Godhra, Latur and Hazaribagh, where test centres are under the CBI's investigation for the alleged leak of the NEET-UG paper, do not show a markedly higher proportion of top-scoring candidates.

For instance, all 70 NEET-UG examination centres in Patna this year have a percentage of candidates scoring 600 and above ranging from 2% to 6%, compared to 3.5% nationally. Of the 54 test centres in Latur, 16 have the proportion of high-achieving candidates between 6% and 8%. In Hazaribagh, all five test centres have 3% to 6% of their total candidates scoring 600 marks or higher.

The Oasis Public School in Hazaribagh (Jharkhand), whose designated exam paper was allegedly leaked, had 23 (3%) of its 701 candidates score more than 600 marks.

On Thursday, the Supreme Court had asked NTA to publish city-wise and centre-wise NEET-UG 2024 results of all 23 lakh candidates, masking their identities, on its website by 12 pm Saturday.

The question before the Bench was whether the leak was confined to only two centres or more widespread.

Chip dreams: Taipei takes a short step forward

logic and memory chips. In the partnership announced with Tata Electronics Pvt Ltd (TEPL), the Taiwanese company is not contributing equity, and restricts its exposure to providing technological expertise on licensing basis.

A reason why this new model is being tried out, said a Taiwanese executive associated with the policy aspects of chipmaking, is because key players want to play it safe. PSMC is a relatively smaller company and so has "negotiated a model where they would not need to put money on the table. I'm not sure how this model progresses," the executive said.

This is unlike the venture the other big player, Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Company (TSMC), is undertaking abroad — the company's new fab in the Japanese city of Kumamoto, two \$40 billion facilities in Phoenix, Arizona, and a commitment to invest nearly \$4 billion to build a fab in Dresden, Germany.

In these new fabs, apart from significant equity investment, TSMC, the ninth-most valuable business in the world, is an equity partner, and has invested in the ecosystem; it has taken along its key vendor base of some 25-30 companies to each of these locations, and is also undertaking large-scale training of manpower on the nuances of chip fabrication, a high tech-intensive job.

In the Tata-PSMC venture, much of the heavy lifting is done by the Tatas, who have no real chipmaking experience. "Part of the reason for a lack of response by TSMC or United Microelectronics Corp (UMC), the other big Taiwan chipmaker, is because they were all busy with investment pledges in the developed world," the Taipei-based executive said.

The government, however, is keen to address the apprehensions of the industry. A senior government official was in Taipei this month to speak with them on issues ranging from the absence of ancillaries or an ecosystem to tech gaps and dearth of talent. "The Tatas are a very serious player and that both sides have enough skin in the game," the official said.

Tata Electronics has maintained that the partnership with PSMC provided it "access to a broad technology portfolio in leading-edge and mature nodes including 28nm (nanometre), 40nm,

55nm, 90nm & 110nm and also collaboration for high volume manufacturing". Randhir Thakur, CEO & MD, Tata Electronics had said in February during the launch of the Dholera facility in Gujarat that the venture would help the company "serve our global customers' requirements for supply chain resilience and meet the growing domestic demand".

Since the escalation in US-China tensions, a number of companies, including those from Taiwan, have looked to diversify from Beijing and consider alternate destinations for their supply chains. India has rolled out a \$10-billion chip incentive scheme, which has found some success in attracting the one foundry investment so far (TEPL, with technical assistance from PSMC).

The fact is, for TSMC to be successful outside Taiwan, it takes more than just its expertise. It takes its suppliers along so an ecosystem develops locally for the construction expertise, material supplies, and equipment deliveries.

Contrast that with India, where PSMC may offer the technology knowhow, but the task of assembling the intricate supply chain network or training talent pool is left to the Indian partner. "It might be tough for the Tatas to manage this on their own. There was a team from the Tatas that was here recently to be trained by PSMC. They (TEPL) do not yet have the experience in the basic steps in chip-making, such as designing a clean-room layout. Chipmaking requires many more engineers working across different fields," a person aware of the exercise said.

MeFTY officials have, however, maintained that India has the "talent and deep expertise" to become a global player in the semiconductor value chain and that more interest is expected to come in from global players in fab investments.

From a Taiwanese perspective, there are also some gaps in the perceived policy support extended by New Delhi. "For chipmaking, we need to have a comprehensive ecosystem with every company located within two hours of driving time. So if anything goes wrong, any of the suppliers, the engineers, or the support people can physically come to the plant and resolve the problem in less than two hours, even in the dead of night. In India, the facilities are not

necessarily being envisaged together, the fab might be in one place and the packaging plant is being planned somewhere else. There could be political considerations for this kind of planning," the person quoted above said.

"The other worry from Taiwan's perspective is the lack of clarity on India's ability to deliver on the supporting infrastructure, including round-the-clock electricity supplies, continuous and pure water availability, and high grade silicon," said this person.

In terms of policy, Taiwanese players share two major concerns: the fact that MeFTY, the nodal ministry for overseeing the chip push, is not in-charge of the skilling effort, which is under a different ministry. The other issue is India's unpredictable trade policy, where duties and new licensing norms are imposed overnight, and the direction of the tariff lines is broadly moving upwards.

Further, India is not part of any major multilateral trade deal, which makes it that much more difficult to be part of the global value chain, an imperative for an item such as semiconductor chips. There is the concern that India is focused on tracking its balance of trade with individual countries. If a Taiwanese company were to fabricate chips in India, a lot of inputs would be imported, at least initially, an expert said. There are concerns this could lead to a trade imbalance, which could trigger a sudden duty imposition.

Finally, there are warning signs being drawn from the Foxconn-Vedanta deal, touted as the first chipmaking project before falling by the wayside.

Kristy Tsun-tzu Hsu, the director at Taipei-based policy think-tank Taiwan ASEAN Studies Center at the Chung-Hua Institution of Economic Research, described India as an increasingly important country for Taiwan. She, however, told *The Indian Express* that much ground has to be covered by New Delhi to convert this interest into actual physical relocations of Taiwanese production bases from China in view of Washington's trade dispute with Beijing, and the Chinese military's muscle-flexing around Taiwan. She said: "In Chinese, there is a saying: when you start to wash your hair, you have to finish the job. They (PSMC) have not even wet the hair yet."

Delhi cautious as Dhaka in siege

discriminatory as they benefit families of ruling Awami League which dons the mantle of the freedom movement. Protestors want the quotas to be scrapped.

Significantly, about 4 lakh candidates apply for some 2,000-3,000 government jobs every year. But the large-scale mismatch in demand and supply in the job market in Bangladesh is one aspect of the challenge.

At the heart of the protests lies the contestation between those aligned with the Awami League and those who are not. This is linked to the politics of history and identity in Bangladesh divided along the deep faultline of descendants of freedom fighters and the 1971 Liberation war veterans and those who oppose the ruling Awami league, led by Hasina.

Hasina has defended the quota system, saying that veterans deserve the highest respect for their contributions to the war, regardless of their political affiliation. There have been claims by the Awami League that some of the protesters are backed by the Opposition BNP and the banned Jamaat-e-Islami Bangladesh. Using 1971 to push the Opposition into a corner isn't new in the winner-takes-all politics of Bangladesh. But Hasina, whose government has cracked down on the Opposition over the last 17 years in power, is also dealing with the reality that an estimated two-thirds of the population was born after 1971. So, for the vast majority, the 1971 liberation war and the freedom struggle that started with the 21st February language movement is part of history and their parents' memory. That's why Hasina's invoking of history and the Awami League's lacks resonance among the youth who have hit the streets.

That is the conflict which the Bangladesh government finds itself with the protesters, who are questioning the legacy of the freedom fighters. And they have owned the "Razakkar" label — with the slogan "chaito gelam Adhikar, hoye gelam Razakkar" (we sought our rights, we became Razakkar). However, a senior official in the Bangladesh government told *The Indian Express* that only 10% of jobs under the 30% quota for the freedom fighters' families get filled, the rest goes to the merit-based system.

In all, 56% of government jobs were reserved for various quotas: 30% for families of freedom fighters, 10% for women, 10% for people from underdeveloped districts,

5% for indigenous communities, and 1% for persons with disabilities. In 1996, as the number of freedom fighters' quota claimants dwindled, the government extended the quota to include children of freedom fighters and, in 2009, it was expanded to include grandchildren of freedom fighters.

In 2018, amid protests by job-seeking students, the Hasina government scrapped all quota facilities for first-class and second-class government jobs.

On June 5, the High Court ruled that the 2018 government circular abolishing the quota system was illegal, effectively reinstating the quota system.

The government appealed the decision, and the Appellate Division issued a status quo on the High Court order. Following this, students again protested demanding reform of the quota system.

Protests have escalated since Hasina's statement on July 14, and there were violent clashes between the protesters and the police. Now, the Bangladesh government has brought in the Army to impose a curfew and a complete internet shutdown so much so that media outlets are unable to even update their websites.

Bangladesh soldiers, a *Reuters* report said, patrolled the deserted streets of Dhaka Saturday during a curfew. A suspension on internet and text message services has remained in place since Thursday, cutting off Bangladesh from the world. Overseas telephone calls mostly failed to connect while websites of Bangladesh-based media organisations did not update and their social media handles remained inactive.

For Dhaka, the best case scenario will be the Supreme Court's decision to scrap — or, at least, stay — the quotas, which can become a face-saver for the government. That is likely to be a possible scenario, according to observers.

India's mission in Dhaka has asked Indians living in Bangladesh to avoid travel. It has been careful not to comment on the turmoil since Hasina is one of the "most reliable" leaders in the neighbourhood — she was the first head of state to visit India in the third term of the Modi government.

So, while it is quietly trying to assist its own nationals and their repatriation to India, MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal described the violent protests in Bangladesh as an "internal" matter. Around 15,000 Indians including 8,500 students are currently residing in Bangladesh.

Poor scrutiny of invigilators, unsafe internet link

high-level committee of experts chaired by former ISRO chairman K Radhakrishnan set up by the Education Ministry.

According to sources, following the recent controversies over exams including the NEET-UG, Cabinet Secretary Rajiv Gauba and Union Home Secretary Ajay Bhalla held several meetings with Central agencies to discuss remedial measures.

"At one of the meetings, it was decided to constitute a committee, comprising officials of the National Forensic Sciences University, NTA and cyber units, to identify the shortcomings, so that a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) can be issued for proper and safe conduct of national-level examinations," sources told *The Indian Express*.

After the committee was set

up in the last week of June, it sent teams to visit some of the centres of two exams held subsequently 3 the Foreign Medical Graduate Exam (FMGE) on July 6, and the National Common Entrance Test (NCET) on July 10.

According to sources, multiple teams visited "10-15" centres across "two-three states" during the FMGE, which is conducted by the National Board of Examinations under the Health Ministry. These teams reported that private labs to which the exam had been outsourced were not using "safe" internet connections, with personal hotspots being used to download questions papers in some cases.

"There are no checks-and-balances regarding invigilators — in some centres, the same invigila-

tors had been coming for the last five to seven years; in other centres, the invigilators were just 21-22 years old. Moreover, there were no proper security arrangements at the centres. Some exam centres were found to be compromised in terms of security and situated in secluded areas," sources said.

Sources said multiple teams also visited several exam centres during the NCET, conducted by the NTA under the Education Ministry for admission to the integrated teacher education programme. Besides the other issues, these teams also reported gaps in the procedure to identify candidates.

"The committee members have started preparing their report and are likely to submit a preliminary report to the Centre in the coming days," said a source.

Dutch woman

than a year ago, the accused was taken into custody, but after two months, he was free to go on bail," he wrote on June 21.

"In the meantime, the accused is free and we heard that he is working somewhere else, where he could commit the same offence... this is unacceptable. We think because we are not present in India, the case itself has not enough priority. We request your involvement in asking the Indian government the reason for the delay and trying to speed up the trial," he wrote.

He told *The Indian Express*: "Since the incident, my daughter is suffering from trauma and is undergoing therapy. She is unable to sleep properly. She is triggered when she sees scars on her body or if she spots a knife. She is only able to work a few days in a week. Her main concern is that he (the accused) will get away without any consequence."

In the reply to the woman's father, Bart De Jong, the Consul General, wrote on July 2, "It must be very frustrating for your daughter and yourself to not see any progress in your case. Although India has a sound rule of law, the judiciary can be very slow. In similar cases of protracted proceedings, Indian government authorities point to the independence of the courts and that they cannot interfere in the legal process."

The Consul General said:

"Nevertheless, what we will do is inform the public prosecutor and the court in Goa about the status of the process. It will demonstrate that the case has our continued attention and might help in speeding things up. We will keep you informed of any reaction..."

The Indian Express reached out to Bart De Jong via email on whether they have approached the Indian government, but did not receive a response.

The woman arrived in Goa for a yoga retreat on March 28, 2023 and checked into a resort. Around 2 am that night, the 28-year-old accused, a bartender-cum-waiter at the same resort, allegedly barged into the woman's tent and tried to sexually assault her. When she shouted for help, the accused allegedly stabbed her multiple times in the abdomen and upper back. Eureka Dias, who lived nearby and had rushed to help, was also stabbed multiple times.

Goa police had arrested the accused, who is from Uttarakhand, the next day. The accused was charged under IPC sections including attempt to murder and assault with intent to outrage modesty. On September 16, 2023, he was released on bail by a sessions court. The court said since the probe was complete and the accused was in judicial custody, he could be released on bail. The court had directed the accused not to leave Goa without permission.

Mumbai hoarding

department. According to sources, since the land belonged to the state government, the BMC rules, which limit a hoarding to a maximum size of 40X40 feet, should have applied and the operator of the hoarding was liable to pay tax to the BMC.

In his statement to the Crime Branch, GRP law officer Shirsat said that when his legal opinion was sought in May 2021, he submitted an initial draft report stating that the BMC's permission would have to be taken. But Khalid allegedly cited the opinions of a legal firm and a retired Judge, who said that as per the Railway Act, the land would come under the Railways. This ensured that the hoarding size could increase and no tax was payable to the BMC. The hoarding operator, Ego Media Private Limited, paid a monthly rent to the GRP for its welfare activity, as per the norms. Shirsat alleged that Khalid asked him if he knew more than the legal firm and the retired Judge, and instructed him to set aside his initial report and prepare a fresh report in line with these opinions.

The Crime Branch found that the law firm was paid by Ego Media director Bhavesh Bhinde, instead of GRP for the report. The police pointed out that in legal matters, opinion is sought from the law and justice department or other such government departments, not a private firm.

When contacted, Khalid, who has since been suspended, told *The Indian Express*: "The Crime Branch probe should be about the hoarding which collapsed. These issues like whom the land belonged to should not be part of their probe. While seeking the opinion of the retired judge and the law agency, I had specifically mentioned that the land belonged to the state government and sought opinion on whether under Section 232 of the Indian Railways Act, 1989, it would come under them. There is no question of concealing this information."

Asked what prompted him to seek legal opinion on whether tax had to be paid to the BMC, Khalid said: "If it was Railways' land, then we would get more funds for welfare from the company as they wouldn't have to pay BMC tax."

In his statement, Nikam has said that in November 2022, he wrote — on the file for setting up

the hoarding — that permission would have to be sought from the DGP's office. He alleged that Khalid admonished him, and told him to sign the approval. Eventually, Nikam signed the document, but indicated, in his written remarks, that it was done as per the Commissioner (Khalid).

Responding to this, Khalid told *The Indian Express*: "We knew the land belonged to the state government. His opinion was sought on whether the hoarding should be taxed by BMC. He did not apply his mind to what was written on the file. Now, everyone is creating alibis to protect themselves."

Khalid has alleged that the hoarding was constructed after he was transferred. "It was my successor, Ravindra Shisve, during whose tenure the hoarding was constructed and rent was accrued. There were complaints during his tenure but he didn't act," he claimed. As per records, a total of six complaints, including two from BPCL, were received during Shisve's tenure. While Shisve refused to comment, records indicate that within days of him taking charge on December 19 last year, the GRP had received complaints from BPCL. When the complaint was finally put before him in January by his staff, Shisve noted on the file: "Very shocking and surprising that this is put up before me after 40 days."

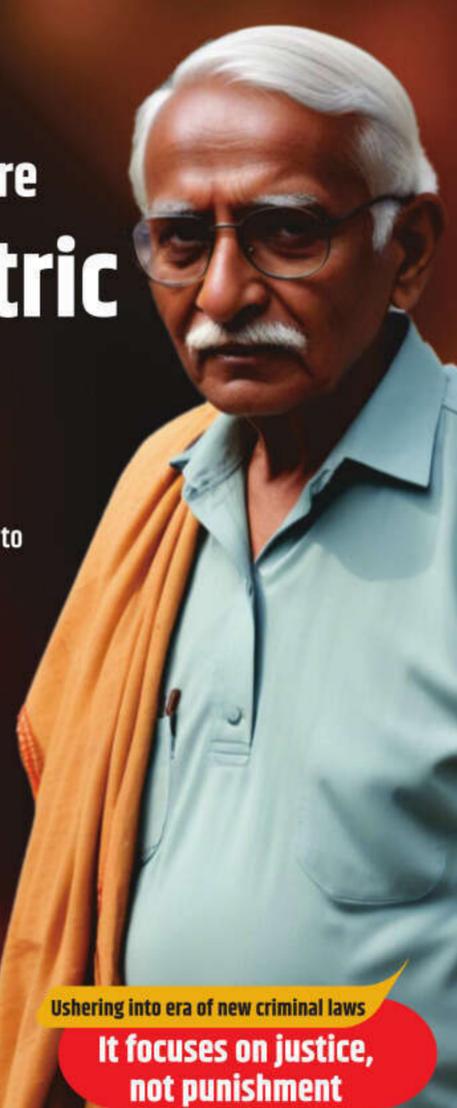
In April, he wrote to the DGP's office, suggesting that the hoarding should be given post-facto regularisation. The DGP's office responded that the hoarding didn't comply with its policy. It said it was not correct that Shisve was recommending the hoarding be regularised when it had rejected a similar proposal earlier (during Khalid's tenure). Shisve then wrote to the DGP office, saying he had suggested regularisation as the hoarding had already been cleared during Khalid's tenure. He, however, said the final decision was with the DGP. The DGP office did not respond to this.

In its chargesheet, the Mumbai Police SIT has named four persons, including Bhavesh Bhinde, the current owner of Ego Media, its former owner, an architect who gave safety certificate, and the person who constructed the hoarding. The SIT has told the court that its investigation is on and it may file a supplementary chargesheet.



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Gajendra Singh Shekhawat

Minister for Culture and Tourism

Audrey Azoulay

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Rao Inderjit Singh

Minister of State (IC), Ministry of Statistics & Programme
Implementation, Ministry of Planning and MoS Culture

Event Highlights

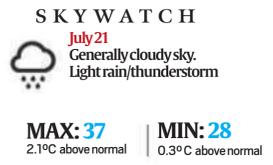
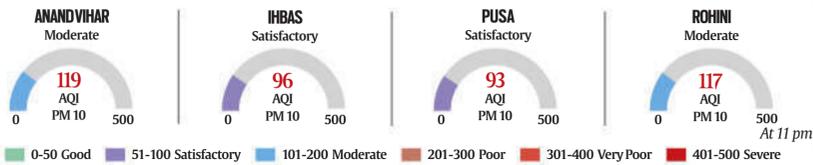
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BRIEFLY

Police arrest man a year after he stole Rs 60 lakh

New Delhi: The Delhi Police's Crime Branch arrested a man after he absconded with around Rs 60 lakh that he had allegedly stolen from his employer. Police said that the accused, Mangal Tiwari (24), had been evading arrest since the case had been filed a year ago. "Mangal had been pulling rickshaws since then in Rohini and said that he had bought a car, some jewellery and some household items using the money," said DCP (Crime) Satish Kumar. **ENS**

NDMC begins 3-day drive to clean bell mouths of drainage ducts

New Delhi: The New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC) Saturday launched a three-day drive to check and clean all the bell mouths of drainage ducts along its roads to prevent waterlogging due to rains. The NDMC has 8,704 bell mouths along all its main roads under the six divisions of Road Engineering Service. The six road divisions are headed by executive engineers who report to the superintendent engineers, a statement said. **PTI**

'WARNING' NOTICES PASTED ACROSS PREMISES

Sewage leaking from ceiling, unclean toilets: Noida's top paediatric hospital in shambles

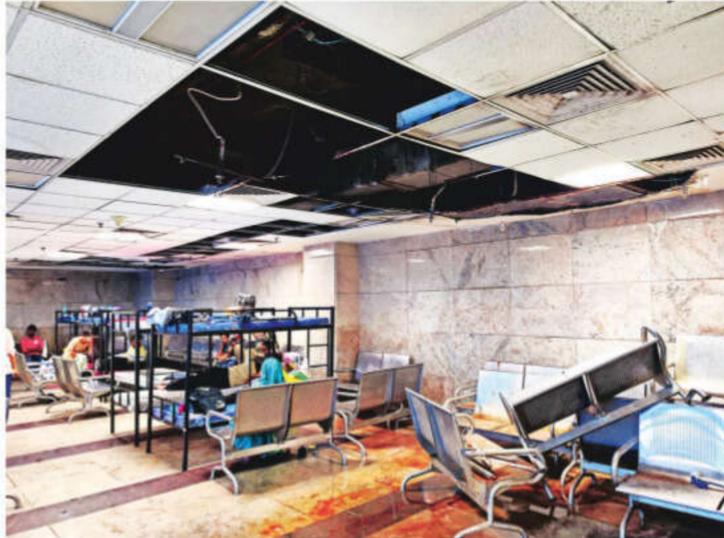
NEETIKA JHA
NOIDA, JULY 20

"PLEASE MAINTAIN a safe distance while visiting. The screw bolts of stone slabs of all towers of the main building of the institution and other residential buildings have loosened." These public notices were pasted across Noida's Super Speciality Paediatric Hospital, a warning to patients and their families issued by the institute's director as the building is in shambles.

The 240-bed hospital, spread over 50,000 sqm in Sector 30, is the only such facility in Delhi-NCR and the only government hospital in Noida that treats cancer in children. Around 150 children visit the OPD every day. The hospital also caters to patients from Rajasthan, Bihar and Madhya Pradesh.

Last Thursday, when *The Indian Express* visited the hospital, water was seeping from the ceiling, filling the visitors' room. The washrooms were filthy and the stench was so strong that it reached the visitors' room. The bathroom for women has been locked permanently while the doors of other washrooms cannot be locked from the inside. Among the 11 elevators in the hospital, only four were functional. The dispenser for clean drinking water wasn't functional. Rats were roaming around everywhere.

Nearly two weeks ago, a portion of a false ceiling had collapsed in the visiting room of the children's NICU



(Neonatal Intensive Care Unit) after which the area was

blocked using steel chairs.

"The hospital building is in a dilapidated condition," said hospital director Dr Arun Kumar

Singh. "It is because the quality and planning of the entire construction is faulty."

The director added, "In our building (hospital), the sewage water goes to the minus 2 basement, and is then brought up to the ground floor using pumps. There is a lot of leakage and sewage water seeps through. This is why the walls, roof, everything is falling."

The facility was constructed by the Noida Authority in 2015. It was planned by the then BSP government in 2008 and inaugurated by former UP Chief Minister Akhilesh Yadav.

"When I personally informed him (CEO Noida Authority, Lokesh M) a few months ago, he deputed two of his officers to visit the hospital," Director Singh said. "But ever since then, there is silence," he claimed.

CEO Lokesh M could not be contacted despite repeated attempts.

Singh also said the AHUs (Air Handling Units) are installed on the second floor, which leak water and lead to seepage in important areas where the operation theatre and ICUs are located. "This is heavy machinery and cannot be shifted," he said.

The hospital administration had, in fact, raised the issue with the department concerned a year ago which had asked for a map. "Once we gave the map, they said there is no proof the building was built according to it. If it was a matter of repair of Red Fort or Jama Masjid, would anyone ask for a map? You come and physically verify," Dr Singh emphasised.

Dr Singh said the hospital's maintenance budget is around Rs 10 to 15 crore per year. "This includes sewage, electricity, diesel requirements, laundry and other outsourcing," he said.

Inside the hospital, families of patients said the situation is alarming.

"It is scary to be here," said Vishakha Sharma, 24. "But I am here for the sake of my child. It feels like this building might fall any time." Sharma is the mother of a one-month-old girl, who has been admitted here for the last two days for "difficulty in breathing", and has come from Khoda in Ghaziabad.

Gautam Chaudhary, 27, who works in a private construction company in Noida's Sector 70, has been here with his three-month-old son for nearly a month. "The smell in the visitors' room is unbearable. You can see for yourself," he said. "The washrooms are flooded with water. The AC has not been functioning for the entire month I've been here," he claimed.

Sima Chauhan, 21, from Noida's Sector 49, said nobody would stay inside this building if they had an option. "My one-month-old girl is admitted here," she said.

"Nothing works here. The lifts are defunct. The water keeps dripping from the ceiling."

An official said sewage water has been seeping from the roof for the last two years.

"I have been seeing this for the last two years. Despite multiple complaints to authorities, nothing has changed," he said.

Mayor seeks allocation of Rs 10,000 crore from Centre ahead of Budget

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JULY 20

DAYS BEFORE Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman is set to present the Union Budget, Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) Mayor Shelly Oberoi Saturday claimed that "step-motherly" treatment has been meted out to Delhi.

The Mayor's remarks come a day after Delhi Finance Minister Atishi made similar remarks in an attack on the ruling BJP.

In a letter to Sitharaman, Oberoi asked for "a fair and equitable" share of the Centre's funds for development and maintenance of the Capital. "Despite numerous appeals from the Delhi government, no substantial action has been taken to address the issue of disparity in funds," she said.

The MCD Mayor in her letter further said, "Delhi, as the national capital and one of the highest contributors to the national economy, pays a substantial amount in taxes. In the fiscal year 2023-24, Delhi paid a staggering Rs 2.07 lakh crore in income tax and Rs 25,000 crore in CGST (Central Goods and Services Tax). Yet, the MCD has been facing extremely unjust behaviour over the last few years, receiving nothing from the central government."

Uttar Pradesh's ULBs (urban local bodies) receive Rs 13,432 crore annually, Maharashtra gets Rs 7,000 crore, and Bihar receives Rs 6,000 crore, she said. "It is of utmost importance that the ULBs are supported with sufficient financial resources... the MCD caters to 2 crore residents, providing essential services such as primary education, healthcare facilities, and solid waste management, similar to ULBs in other states," she said.

The Mayor requested an allocation of Rs 10,000 crore from the central government, "representing a mere 5% of Delhi's total tax contribution". Giving a break-up, Oberoi said Rs 5,000 crore will be utilised to enhance sanitation and cleanliness, funds to the tune of Rs 3,000 crore will be used to repair and upgrade roads in residential colonies, and funds worth Rs 2,000 crore will be used to beautify and maintain colony parks.

The MCD Mayor also addressed a joint press conference Saturday with Atishi, where the Delhi Minister continued to lash out at the central government.

On Friday, Atishi's remarks drew a sharp response from Delhi BJP chief Virendra Sachdeva. "It is shameful that Ms Atishi, who is demanding Rs 10,000 crore in the budget, is hiding the fact from the public that the central government spends more than Rs 11,000 crore each year solely on the Delhi Police," he had said.

New criminal laws pose fresh challenge for veteran lawyers: Learning each section afresh

NIRBHAY THAKUR
NEW DELHI, JULY 20

FOR BOTH the judiciary and the public, the crime of murder was once synonymous with *dafa* (section) 302. But that is no longer the case. Under the new Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), which has replaced the colonial-era Indian Penal Code (IPC), 'murder' is now Section 103.

"*Chaar sou Bees*" or 420 (the IPC section) referred to fraud or cheating. However, these crimes now come under Section 318 of the BNS.

Rape incidents — earlier under Section 375 of the IPC — are now booked under Section 63.

Since July 1, when the three new criminal laws came into force, Delhi's veteran lawyers said they were facing a new and unexpected challenge after decades of legal practice: learning every section afresh.

Apart from BNS replacing IPC, Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS) has replaced the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC), and Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam (BSA) has replaced the Indian Evidence Act.

"All the provisions were at our fingertips," said senior advocate Pramod Dubey. "Now we will have to double-check every time we prepare for an argument in court. It will take years to memorise the new sections," he added. "The government shouldn't have changed the sections. It would have been easier to have the same numbering," he added.

K C Mittal, former chairman of the Bar Council of Delhi, also expressed discontent. "Nobody has learnt the new sections yet... This will increase the work of judges as well as advocates," Mittal, who has been practicing law for over 52 years, said.

"Advocates with many years of practice will have to go back to law college," he added, stressing that there is going to be "total chaos" in the courts for some time.

Referring to the increase in the maximum period of police custody to 90 days, he claimed that the new laws give "unbridled powers to police". "We could be heading towards a police state," the veteran said.

On the provision of Zero FIRs,



(From top) Former Chairman of Bar Council of Delhi K C Mittal; Senior Advocate Pramod Dubey; Advocate Rajiv Mohan

wherein police stations anywhere in the country can register an FIR irrespective of the location of the occurrence of crime, Mittal said quashing an FIR will now be difficult for the accused. "Imagine that an offence takes place in Delhi and the Maharashtra Police files an FIR. The FIR would be transferred to the police station of jurisdiction but for the quashing of the FIR, the accused might have to travel to Maharashtra," he said.

He further added that the provision of time-bound investigations under the new laws is "redundant". "In other Acts too, there exists a provision for completion within a time-period... for example the Industrial Disputes Act. Trials in those cases are not being completed on time at all. This is just an eyewash," he said.

Senior Advocate Pramod Dubey pointed out some "inconsistencies" in the provisions of

the BNSS. He referred to Section 223 of the BNSS, which says that "no cognizance of an offence shall be taken by a magistrate without giving the accused an opportunity of being heard".

"If the accused is given a right to be heard before trial and if cognizance is still taken against him, this means that his defence was rejected by the court — what then is the purpose of trial?" he asked, adding that this could lead to accused persons going to higher courts as well," he added. Mittal also flagged an additional sub-section to Section 153B of the IPC — 'imputations, assertions prejudicial to national integration' — in the BNS.

In the IPC, 153B had three sections. This, in the BNS, is now Section 197 (1). It has four sub-sections. The additional section, 197 (1)(d) of the BNS, adds a section in the offence titled "makes or publishes false or misleading information, jeopardising the sovereignty, unity, and integrity or security of India".

"Any media person writing an article can be accused of providing misleading information and tried. Earlier, there was no such provision. This could have a chilling effect on the overall freedom of expression," Mittal said. Rajiv Mohan, who has been practicing as an advocate for 30 years, further complained, "There has been no proper training of lawyers regarding the new criminal laws."

"It is correct that the bulk of provisions of the old laws have been retained in the new laws and every section is re-numbered... but if a few changes were required in the existing laws, they could have been achieved through amendments," he said. Calling the new laws "police centric", he asked, "Who will police the police and judge the judge?"

However, lawyer Ashok Aggarwal, who has been practicing for 48 years, said, "We are all used to such changes. A lawyer or a judge has to read the provisions of law repetitively and this is required to understand and apply the law and there is no need to memorise the provisions of the law."



UNUSUAL COMMUTE

People cross the Hindon river on boat while going to work in Noida, Saturday. *Gajendra Yadav*

Rs 4 cr 'power bill' leaves Noida resident in shock, discom says 'system error'

NEETIKA JHA
NOIDA, JULY 20

AT 11.29 AM on Thursday, Noida resident Basant Sharma was shocked to see an SMS from the Uttar Pradesh Power Corporation Limited (UPPCL) stating that his electricity bill for the last three months was a whopping Rs 4 crore.

Sharma, a resident of Shramik Kunj in Sector 122, is an employee with the Indian Railways and is currently undergoing official training in Shimla. The bill, he said, was issued in his wife Priyanka Sharma's name. "I was shocked to see the bill," he said.

Sharma said that for all other months, he received a bill of Rs 1,490. "My house is on rent and after seeing the bill, I called up my tenant and informed them of the SMS. They told me they have been using only basic appliances," said Sharma.

The SMS stated that his electricity bill is Rs 4,02,31,842 crore. It also mentioned that if the bill was paid on or before July 24, he could avail of a discount of Rs 2,84,969.88.

UPPCL Executive Engineer Shiva Tripathi said there was no

such bill. "It was only a system-generated message because of some technical error in the computer system," he clarified. "In our system, the bill was on hold."

He also said there was no complaint from Basant in this regard. "We were informed of the bill by the head of the Residents' Welfare Association after which the bill was rectified on Thursday and a fresh bill of Rs 26,000 was sent to him," Tripathi said.

RWA head Umesh Sharma said that two days ago, he received a call from Basant. "He informed me that his electricity bill was over Rs 4.02 crore and his house is rented. We also got worried, hearing this," Umesh said. "Then we contacted the electricity department and asked them to figure this out," said Umesh.

He also requested the electricity department to fix these errors so residents do not face any problems in the future.

AAP steps up attack on Delhi L-G, protests over 'illegal Ridge massacre'

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JULY 20

IN WHAT it described as the "illegal Ridge tree massacre", the ruling Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) Saturday staged a protest, accusing Lieutenant Governor V K Saxena of allegedly ordering the felling of trees in the eco-sensitive area of Satbari in South Delhi's Chhatrapur. As controversy continues to simmer over the matter, the Delhi Congress also demanded the constitution of a special committee, comprising environmental experts, to look into the "reckless tree felling" at the protected Ridge.

Outside its Rouse Avenue office, AAP leaders and workers formed a human chain with those who were part of the protest. Wearing masks with the L-G's pictures, the demonstrators brandished replicas of saws and trees for a symbolic hacking.

"The Supreme Court has been repeatedly asking the Delhi Development Authority on whose orders it cut down 1,100 trees illegally. But DDA officers were busy concealing the truth behind this... none of them told the Supreme Court the L-G visited Ridge area and gave verbal instructions to cut the trees," Delhi minister Saurabh Bharadwaj alleged.



AAP stages a protest outside its Rouse Avenue office, Saturday. *Praveen Khanna*

"If they had taken about 5-10% of land from every farmhouse, then the road could have been widened without harming the trees but instead of doing this, the trees of the Ridge were cut to benefit the owners of the farmhouses," he further claimed.

In response, a senior government official contended that "it was not the L-G's permission, that was misread by the DDA." The official also said "notification for exemption was issued by the Department of Environment and Forests on 14.02.243. Permission was issued by Tree Officer on 15.02.24."

Meanwhile, Delhi Congress president Devender Yadav, de-

manding the constitution of the special committee, alleged that the erosion of the city's tree cover was responsible for extreme changes in climate profile of the Capital. "The probe should also cover how trees have been transplanted under a policy decision taken in 2018... the Sheila Dikshit-led Congress government had imposed a strict policy against tree felling and took great pains and initiative to enhance the Capital's tree cover," he said.

Alleging there was "huge corruption" behind the unauthorised tree felling in the area, Yadav said "a scam was at play" as he demanded action against everyone involved.



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Domestic help steals jewellery to buy DSLR for YouTube channel, arrested

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JULY 20

A WOMAN, who worked as a domestic help in Delhi, aspired to expand her digital footprint on YouTube and Instagram by producing "high-quality" video content after leaving her "abusive" husband behind in Rajasthan. To fulfill her dream, she allegedly stole gold and silver jewellery from her employer's house in Dwarka to buy an expensive camera and was arrested, police said on Saturday.

On July 15, Prashant Rana, a resident of Dwarka's Sector-12, filed a police complaint, alleging that a pair of gold bangles, a silver chain, and a pair of silver anklets went missing from his house the day before. The domestic help was the only outsider to visit his house on the day the theft happened, he further alleged, adding that the maid was hired just four days back.

The address of the accused was tracked down using her mobile number but she wasn't found there, said police. While her mobile was switched off, officials added, police recovered the society's CCTV footage. Officials noted that she took an e-rickshaw from the society's gate on the day of the theft after leaving Rana's house. She got off the rickshaw in Dwarka's Sector-6 and took another one to Rajapuri Chowk, as per officials. The rickshaw driver was tracked down as the area where she boarded the rickshaw did not have CCTVs installed. "The

driver then took the police to the house where he dropped the suspect. Police found her at the house, packing her bags to leave Delhi," said Ankit Singh, DCP Dwarka, Delhi.

Initially refusing to accept the charges, the accused eventually broke down, police said. The Anti Burglary Cell of Dwarka district arrested her.

Questioning revealed that Neetu, 30, the accused, is from Behrod village of Rajasthan where she lived with her husband. But her husband, an alleged drug addict, used to beat her, she told police.

For a better life, she left him and came to Delhi some years ago. She started working as a domestic help, and opened her own YouTube and Instagram accounts, police said. After making some videos and reels, she was told by someone to get a professional DSLR camera to produce high-quality video content.

As she realised that the camera would cost her lakhs of rupees, she approached her family members for a loan but to no avail, police was told.

After being employed at the complainant's house some days back, she allegedly noticed some gold and silver jewellery in the house.

On July 14, she allegedly stole the jewellery to sell it off and fund her aspirations.

Police said the jewellery has been recovered, and an FIR under section 305 (theft) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) was registered at Dwarka north police station.



STUDENTS' VOICE

AYUSH students stage a protest demanding exemption from the National Exit Test (NEXT) for old batches, at Jantar Mantar, in New Delhi, on Saturday. *Praveen Khanna*

Many health facilities employing unqualified staff: Medical body

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JULY 20

FLAGGING THAT many health facilities, including hospitals and nursing homes, were employing unqualified or under-qualified medical staff to deal with patients, the Delhi Medical Council (DMC) Saturday asked the managements of such establishments to verify the credentials of their employees.

The Council's notice comes in the wake of action by the Delhi Police against 22 persons, including a doctor employed at a prominent private medical facility and Bangladeshi nationals, for their alleged involvement in the operation of a kidney racket.

"It has come to the notice of the Delhi Medical Council that many hospitals, nursing homes and other clinical establishments using modern medical sciences (allopathy) are employing doctors/medical staff who are either unqualified/under-qualified or qualified in other branches for the treatment of patients," the public notice, issued by DMC president Dr Arun Gupta and Registrar Dr

Girish Tyagi, read.

"This is against the law and a punishable act. Therefore, it is requested that all hospital owners check the credentials of employees," the Council stated.

It also advised visiting doctors to "make sure that your patient is under the care of qualified persons only".

It further added that such doctors would be held responsible for any deficiency of services to their patients.

The council further asked all hospitals, nursing homes and clinical establishments to "check the facilities available with them and admit patients accordingly only", adding that health facilities must make sure that all regulations required by the law, including fire safety, were complied with.

Six newborn children had died in a blaze at the Baby Care New Born Hospital in East Delhi's Vivek Vihar on May 26. In addition to not having an NOC from the fire department, the facility was also found unfit on several mandatory counts including structural issues.

It had also employed an Ayurvedic doctor for allopathic procedures.

Dhaba owner, waiter stabbed over delay in serving salad

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NOIDA, JULY 20

A WAITER and the owner of a dhaba in Greater Noida were allegedly stabbed with a knife by two customers after there was a slight delay in serving salad, said police. Both the accused have been arrested.

The incident took place at around 10 pm on Thursday at 'Vishal Hotel' in Achchheja in Badalpur police station area, said officials. The two accused have been identified as Amit Kumar and Sanjay Singh.

Rajpal Nagar, the dhaba owner, said that Amit and Sanjay came to the roadside eatery in an inebriated state. "After they asked for a side of salad, the waiter got a bit late. Impatient, they took a knife and stabbed him," he claimed. "I rushed to save him, but then they attacked me with the same knife. I received stitches in my hand," he added. The waiter is also recovering after suffering injuries.

The accused also allegedly abused them and threatened to kill them. Badalpur SHO Amresh Singh said that both the men were arrested immediately after receiving the complaint.

'WILL A PERSON DELIBERATELY BE SICK?': ATISHI L-G expresses 'concern' over CM's health, flags 'wilful low-calorie intake'

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JULY 20

ARVIND KEJRIWAL'S health and dietary intake behind bars became the focal point of yet another political tussle on Saturday with the ruling Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) accusing the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) of hatching a "sinister plot to kill" him.

The AAP's fresh attack prompted the BJP's allegation that the AAP convener was deliberately consuming low-calorie food to "lose weight and gain sympathy" to be able to secure bail. This was after Lieutenant Governor VK Saxena's office wrote to Chief Secretary Naresh Kumar, expressing concern over the "non-consumption of prescribed medical diet and medications" by the Delhi Chief Minister in jail.

Calling his statement unfortunate, Delhi Minister Atishi hit back saying, "Does the L-G think that any person will deliberately make himself sick like this?"

In the letter, the L-G's office stated, "This Secretariat is in receipt of a report of Superintendent (Prison) regarding the Health Status of Hon'ble Chief Minister..."

"The report brings out the fact that there are several instances of wilful low-calorie intake...despite sufficient home-cooked food being provided to him."

"The diet monitoring chart indicates that between 6th June, 2024 and 13th July, 2024, the Hon'ble CM had not fully consumed the prescribed diet for all three meals of the day. The report also suggests loss of weight (now 61.5 kg which earlier was 63.5 kg on the date of surrender-2nd June, 2024). Prima facie, it appears to be due to less calorie intake," it added.

On June 18, as per Saxena's letter, insulin appeared to have



diet specified by the dieticians, given that he has a history of Type-II Diabetes Mellitus underlining the need to establish "strict protocol" of monitoring his blood sugar levels "to avoid any ambiguity" in this regard.

In retaliation, senior AAP leader Atishi underlined that the Chief Minister's sugar levels had "dangerously dipped below 50 multiple times, risking coma and brain stroke".

"This is a conspiracy of the BJP. The BJP knew that Arvind Kejriwal would get bail from the Supreme Court which is why they forcefully got him arrested by the CBI. They know that the longer he stays in jail, the more his health will deteriorate," she added.

Countering Atishi's claim, Delhi BJP chief Virendra Sachdeva alleged that the refusal to take insulin in jail was "a conspiracy by Kejriwal".

"The Tihar Jail Superintendent's letter clearly states that Arvind Kejriwal, who was given home-cooked food, as per the Supreme Court's directive, was deliberately consuming low-calorie food between July 6 and July 13 to lose weight to gain sympathy in the bail matter before the court," Sachdeva alleged.

"Arvind Kejriwal is a very cunning person and is aware of the legal grounds on which he can get bail. Hence, he was continuously trying to lose weight deliberately so that he could claim before the court that his weight is decreasing in jail, and therefore, he should be granted bail," he added.

GMDA to upgrade water boosting tanks to provide quality supply

Gurgaon: The Gurugram Metropolitan Development Authority (GMDA) has begun upgrading all water-boosting tanks under their and the Municipal Corporation's jurisdiction to provide high-quality drinking water in the city, an official said. Following this, the Chief Executive Officer of GMDA, A Sreenivas, met a delegation from the South Korean Company Hansamkora Limited. They discussed the proposal of providing all tanks with stainless steel lining.

PTI

BRIDGE

Dealer: South Vulnerable: East/West

NORTH		EAST	
♠ J7	♠ 10 8 3	♥ Q J 5	♦ 9 5
♥ 7 6 3	♥ Q J 5	♦ 9 5	♣ 9 8 7 6 4
♦ Q J 10 6	♦ 9 5	♣ 9 8 7 6 4	
♣ A K 5 3			
WEST		SOUTH	
pass	3D♦	pass	10♦
pass	pass	pass	3NT

Your partner leads the five of spades and dummy's jack wins the trick. At trick two declarer leads the queen of diamonds from dummy. This goes around to your partner's king. He returns the two of hearts and you play the jack. It wins. What choices are you considering?

Either you return your partner's original lead, spades, or you return his last lead, hearts.

It is clear to lead a heart back. Your partner liked spades initially but you could not help him. West has changed suits. What you need to do is discern if West is leading a heart because he likes them better than spades or because he wants you to lead a spade back to him. If he had the AQxx of spades, he might well wish for you to return a spade.

When your partner switches suits in the middle of the defense, look at the card he led in the new suit.

If it is a big card, it implies no interest in the suit. He is hoping you can get in and lead back his original suit. If it is a little card, he is saying he likes this new suit and wishes to work on it, not his first suit.

The West hand: S-Q9652 H-K1042D-AKC-102
The South hand: S-AK4H-A98D-87432C-QJ

East continues with the queen of hearts and that gets your side two diamonds and three hearts. Only a heart switch by West and a heart continuation by East will do the job here.

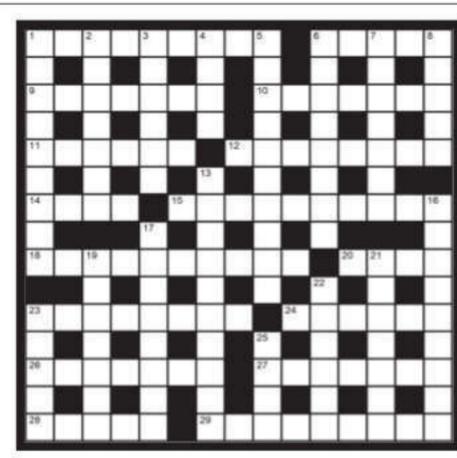
Dealer: South Vulnerable: Both

NORTH		SOUTH	
♠ AKQ64	♠ 52	♥ AJ10985	♥ AK3
♥ Q	♥ AK3	♦ 865	♦ 72
♦ 865	♦ 72	♣ J854	♣ 72
♣ J854	♣ 72		
WEST		SOUTH	
pass	1S♠	pass	1H♥
pass	3C♣	pass	2H♥
pass	4H♥	pass	3H♥
pass	pass	pass	pass

South plays in 4H after North's well-justified raise to game on the fourth round. A nice choice. West leads the jack of diamonds, threatening to set up a diamond trick. South takes his ace and considers his play. Should South get rid of some club losers on the spades?

SUNDAY CROSSWORD 2487

- QUICK CLUES**
- ACROSS**
- Unmistakably (9)
 - The conductor's wand (5)
 - Assembly (7)
 - Connecting (7)
 - Dusk (6)
 - Driver (8)
 - Playback singer ___ Narayan (4)
 - Not shortened (10)
 - Court game (10)
 - Polish (4)
 - Emphasised, repeated embarrassing facts, etc. (6,2)
 - Chatter or idle gossip (6)
 - Pig out (7)
 - Tract of grassland (7)
 - Way in (5)
 - Disprove (9)
- DOWN**
- Failed explosive (4,5)
 - Capital of Tamil Nadu (7)
 - Nonsense (6)
 - Hounds (4)
 - Choler (10)
 - Geniality (8)
 - Striving or slaving? (7)
 - Period of darkness (5)
 - Made drunk or intoxicated (10)
 - Not the same (9)
 - In a harsh and austere manner (8)
 - Branch of knowledge (7)
 - Spoke (7)
 - Market in India (6)
 - River at Lyons (5)
 - Chooses or selects (4)



- Half bids small in islands of Alice Town (6)
- Discharge large quantity of bombs perhaps (3,4)
- A sign of confusion (3,4)
- Agreed with the two boys (5)
- Place to avoid in the old west? (5,4)

- One incomplete game, or one outside game with paper? (7)
- Central unit of measurement about 500500 (6)
- They may be smoked in peace! (5)
- Grand to be free of lines all over the map! (4)

- CRYPTIC CLUES**
- ACROSS**
- Commanding officer was deprived of liquor, it's mother's milk to us! (9)
 - Go to university and make it more lively (3,2)
 - Telephoning or going round (7)
 - Insects display five hundred ripe transmigrations on a ship (7)
 - Cathy's rocking the boats (6)
 - No occasion for generosity in the interim? (8)
 - Youthful wild ones maybe going down when given porridge (4)
 - He was to a relatively large extent on the watch (3,7)
 - It takes the father and mother of a mind to produce it! (5-5)
 - Gangs require a doctor qualified in surgery (4)
 - Capital, fellow (8)

- DOWN**
- Grooming tool will spice search (9)
 - Injured lion snubbed for this art work (7)
 - Angry enough to take one's coat off? (6)
 - Scraps enjoyed by students (4)
 - Stymie which golfers danced with rags? (6,4)
 - Nag Point off this Devon resort (8)
 - 'Urrinate on half-a-dozen?'
 - 'Quiet!', quoth the querulous (7)
 - Where ski-loving German is in training (5)
 - Overbearing attitude of one surrendering? (10)
 - Uneasily, I've style - right? Wrong! (9)
 - In a manner of speaking, one may give a single weapon like this (4,4)
 - Dressed for a foray, we hear (7)

- Solutions to 2486**
- QUICK CLUES** Across: 1 Stinky, 4 Predator, 10 Catmoss, 11 Desktop, 12 Tote, 13 Enterprise, 15 Salver, 16 Decrypt, 20 Patella, 21 Averse, 24 Originally, 26 Vayu, 28 Madeira, 29 Convict, 30 Absolute, 31 Oncall
Down: 1 Shortest, 2 Interalia, 3 Keep, 5 Redeemed, 6 Disapprove, 7 Tutti, 8 Ripped, 9 Sling, 14 Beneficial, 17 Per capita, 18 Pleasant, 19 Rebuttal, 22 Mombaa, 23 Click, 25 Indus, 27 Iron.
CRYPTIC CLUES Across: 1 Candle, 4 Stabling, 10 However, 11 Imagism, 12 Bout, 13 Masked ball, 15 Tannoy, 16 Treated, 20 Car door, 21 Heroes, 24 Brain-child, 26 Spilt, 28 Ill-fame, 29 Gruyere, 30 Espresso, 31 Lyceum
Down: 1 Cohabits, 2 New Guinea, 3 Lave, 5 Trickery, 6 Board-games, 7 Ibiza, 8 Gamely, 9 Freak, 14 Golden gate, 17 Eco-sphere, 18 Loch Ness, 19 Isotherm, 22 Oblige, 23 Clogs, 25 All-up, 27 Duty

If its your Birthday

Sunday July 21
Your lunar alignments mesh perfectly with the beginning of your personal solar year. Today's stars favour impulsive invitations and unexpected journeys and a lively lies ahead.

Monday July 22
This is the time to venture forward, putting new irons in the fire and signalling your commitment to a new way of doing things.

Tuesday July 23
Success is all a question of the carrot and the stick, and you need to offer people incentives as well as penalties when you get them to do as you wish.

Wednesday July 24
Colleagues and close companions will support your opinions - just for a change. But, then, you might learn something beneficial from their criticisms.

Thursday July 25
The Moon dominates everything about your life over the next few days, setting you on edge in a positive way but also encouraging you to bring your precious goals to fruition.

Friday July 26
It's a sensitive moment, and you may find it very easy to be preoccupied with your own needs. Yet, you will become aware of a partner's hopes and desires.

Saturday July 27
The stars indicate nostalgia for passions past, yet don't fall into the trap of judging the present according to what happened long ago.

YOUR WEEK AHEAD

ARIES (Mar 21 - Apr 20)
There may have been confusion around domestic relationships, but with Mars so energetic this should begin to clear up. If you handle emotional affairs with confidence, you'll be able to take a more enlightened approach with partners.

TAURUS (Apr 21 - May 21)
Enthusiasm is your major strength. For that simple truth you can thank optimistic, vivacious Venus, or you can take pride in your own ability to think positively. Do, though, carry on with all those little essentials that get you through your daily routine.

GEMINI (May 22 - June 21)
Spend as much time as you need considering the practical consequences of your actions. What you believe to be true may be as important as what is true. Will others agree? It might work out if they don't.

CANCER (June 22 - July 23)
This is no time to sit at home wondering what to do next. Mars, the most energetic planet by far, advises you to get out and actively seek opportunities. You might even agree to take part in pursuits which you once thought were way beyond your capabilities. News which was mislaid finally arrives.

LEO (July 24 - Aug 23)
The current jovial planetary picture brings hope, optimism and the will to create a better future. Life gets better as the week progresses, so make full use of offers and opportunities that come your way. Professional passions should be exercised to the full, by the way, for enthusiasm will always impress employers.

VIRGO (Aug 24 - Sep 23)
Consider travel plans, especially if foreign parts are beckoning. The point is that you crave change - and somewhere, somehow, your life needs added interest from a dose of something utterly different. Family pressures must be settled, as you can't leave any emotional loose ends lying around.

LIBRA (Sep 24 - Oct 23)
The Moon is aligned with your business zones so, in spite of justified caution, your financial prospects should improve. You'll be able to think clearly for a change, but must understand that the facts make no sense when taken out of context.

SCORPIO (Oct 24 - Nov 23)
The Moon is setting up emotional challenges, giving partners the advantage. There might not be too much point in forcing issues, if there doesn't seem to be any way that you can win. Co-operation is the key.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov 24 - Dec 23)
You're on a twelve-year cycle, so the main word of advice is to work hard and not to expect instant results. From the seeds you sow now, great things should result in even twelve months' time. You might have to ask a partner to delay domestic plans, at least just for now.

CAPRICORN (Dec 23 - Jan 20)
The tide has turned and everything is now moving your way. This happy fact means that, strange as it may seem, even apparent difficulties and obstacles are conspiring to create welcome results: sometimes good fortune comes about in a curious guise! Make very sure that others share any benefits.

AQUARIUS (Jan 21 - Feb 19)
Intensive lunar alignments with the very foundations of your chart indicate that, if everything is going according to plan, domestic affairs will now be causing fewer problems than in the past. However, the prospect of a major financial change reinforces your need to keep a clear and cool head at all times.

PISCES (Feb 20 - Mar 20)
The stars are smiling on you. A certain amount of movement is taking place in upper reaches of your horoscope, which strongly suggests that you may be called away from your normal pastures, and new vistas could open up. You will almost certainly be able to charm others with your poetic words.

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 clue.
The ocean is a mighty ___ - Wordsworth (9)

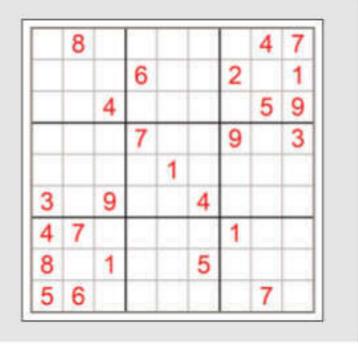
NPAOR	EINPNT
ERRIS	EISTHM

SOLUTION: APRON, RISER, TERNIP, THEISM. Answer: The ocean is a mighty harmonist - Wordsworth

SUDOKU 5628

Difficulty Level 5s
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.

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



SOLUTION SUDOKU 5627



Destination Uttarakhand

STRENGTHENING RURAL ECONOMY, PROMOTING LOCAL PRODUCE

ADVERTORIAL



Under the visionary leadership of Hon'ble Prime Minister Narendra Modi, we are committed to the holistic development of our state, leveraging its natural beauty, rich cultural heritage, and immense potential. Through sustainable policies and strategic initiatives, we aim to foster economic growth, improve infrastructure, and enhance the quality of life for all our citizens. Our goal is to make Uttarakhand a model of progress, where tradition meets innovation, and every individual can thrive in a conducive environment for prosperity and well-being."

Pushkar Singh Dhama
Chief Minister

Uttarakhand's 'organic' tale of success

UOCB has played a vital part in the organic cultivation movement in India, setting up vast supply chains and developing the 'Organic Uttarakhand' brand

Formed on May 19, 2003, under the Societies Registration Act of 1860, the Uttarakhand Organic Commodity Board (UOCB) functions as the nodal agency for boosting organic farming in Uttarakhand. UOCB's mission is to help Uttarakhand develop as the organic capital of India, acquiring sustainable rural growth via organic agriculture methods.

The board's measures span farming and allied sectors, including horticulture, medicinal aromatic plants and herbs, and animal husbandry. UOCB is divided into four key wings: the Technical Cell, the Training Cell, the Certification Cell, and the Marketing Cell. The Technical Cell recognises groups inclined to embrace organic agriculture, forms farmer groups and creates cultivation techniques. The Training Cell furnishes farmers with the required aptitudes via demonstrations, training sessions, and different academic materials. The Certification Cell encourages organic certification for farms and stores, while the Marketing Cell promotes organic produce to B2B customers via exhibits and panels.

In recent years, UOCB's endeavours have demonstrated noteworthy outcomes. In 2019, farmers under UOCB's direction partook in 35 fairs and exhibits, yielding ₹28 lakh in sales and building a market worth ₹210 lakh. By 2020-21, despite the problems posed by the pandemic, farmers still partook in 11 fairs, achieving ₹8 lakh in sales and yielding a market worth ₹85 lakh.

UOCB has played a vital part in the organic cultivation movement in India, setting up vast supply chains and developing the 'Organic Uttarakhand' brand. Their offerings contain different grains and cereals like Dehradooni Basmati Rice, Pusa-1 Basmati, Red Rice, and wheat. The spice range includes bay leaf, black jeera, coriander, ginger, and turmeric. The pulses range includes black chickpeas, black gram, kidney beans, and lentils, along with millets such as barnyard millet and finger millet. Further, they offer apple juice, detergent powder, groundnut, herb oils, honey, mustard oil, soapnut, sugar, temperate fruits, and fresh vegetables.

Driven by the vision of PM Narendra Modi, the Uttarakhand government led by CM Pushkar Singh Dhama has undertaken various initiatives that promote and market the hill state's well-crafted products. A significant step in this direction is the formation of 'House of Himalayas', a flagship brand created to bring Uttarakhand's high-quality, genuine products to both domestic and global markets

House of Himalayas Boosting rural economy of Uttarakhand



CM Pushkar Singh Dhama presenting 'House of Himalayas' brand products to PM Narendra Modi at GIS 2023, Dehradun

Nestled in the lap of the Himalayas, Uttarakhand is well-known for its beautiful landscapes, along with its rich treasure trove of organic and traditionally prepared products. Identifying the untouched potential of these products and the demand to strengthen rural livelihoods, the Uttarakhand government has been working actively by undertaking several schemes.

ABOUT 'HOUSE OF HIMALAYAS'

On December 8, 2023, Prime Minister Narendra Modi founded 'House of Himalayas' during the Global Investor Summit of Uttarakhand, marking it as an unparalleled initiative. This initiative sought to capsule various small-scale brands and products under one strong, cohesive identity. The purpose of House

of Himalayas is to improve the business opportunities of these unique products, which include goods made by Self-Help Groups (SHGs), crafters, individual entrepreneurs, and community-based societies.

The state boasts of a wide range of organic products that are nutritionally rich and have very little chemical impact. While a few private players exist, the majority of these products have not tapped into a broader consumer base. Therefore, House of Himalayas seeks to close this gap by offering a robust platform that ensures quality assurance, provides expert business guidance, and implements effective marketing strategies.

KEY DIFFERENTIATORS OF HOUSE OF HIMALAYAS

Superior Quality: House of Himalayas

distinguishes itself with products that are known for their uncompromising quality and premium craftsmanship, which sets them apart from mass-generated alternatives.

Authenticity Assured: Focused on traditional methods and authentic experiences, the products under this initiative go through rigorous quality controls and hold certifications verifying their exceptional quality.

Community Commitment: Choosing House of Himalayas means supporting the local communities through meaningful social initiatives, and promoting positive change with every purchase.

Open Sourcing: The initiative prioritises complete transparency when it comes to sourcing materials and production processes, thus ensuring consumer trust.

Sustainability Focus: With sustainable sourcing and production practices, the brand caters to buyers who appreciate ethical consumption.

Holistic Brand Experience: A holistic experience is offered by enclosing compelling storytelling, educational insights, and immersive programmes that enhance every consumer journey.

LAUNCH BY PM NARENDRA MODI

The launch of 'House of Himalayas' by Prime Minister Narendra Modi celebrated a noteworthy milestone in Uttarakhand's journey towards economic autonomy and rural advancement. At the Global Investor Summit, the Prime Minister

emphasised the brand's potential to promote Uttarakhand's products to meet international standards of quality. This initiative resonates with his vision of 'Vocal for Local, Local to Global', advocating for the global promotion of local products. By acknowledging the exceptional value of Uttarakhand's organic and traditional products, the Prime Minister highlighted the significance of empowering rural communities and building sustainable livelihoods.

CM PUSHKAR SINGH DHAMA'S E-COMMERCE PUSH

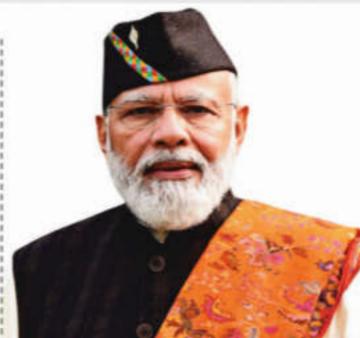
Yet another noteworthy action was taken to increase the visibility and accessibility of the state's products on July 5, 2024. The Chief Minister of Uttarakhand, Pushkar Singh Dhama, in association with Amazon India, initiated House of Himalayas into the e-commerce giant's platform. This initiative is aimed at



CM Pushkar Singh Dhama with Radhika Jha, secretary, rural development, and other officials, signing an MoU with an e-commerce platform for House of Himalayas

making the state's products available to a more expansive consumer base, both within India and the global markets.

At the launch event, held at the secretariat, CM Dhama bought local



I congratulate the Uttarakhand government on the remarkable progress achieved in the last few years. This has been made possible by sustained policy push and focus on key sectors such as tourism and renewable energy. Alongside, the state has made significant strides in infrastructure development, setting new benchmarks for sustainable growth. Uttarakhand's commitment to harnessing its natural resources and promoting tourism has not only bolstered its economy but also showcased its potential on the global stage. I applaud the state's dedication to inclusive development and look forward to its continued success in the years ahead.

Narendra Modi
Prime Minister

products, representing the state's loyalty to sustaining its own. He stressed that the primary objective of House of Himalayas is to take Uttarakhand's local products to an international level. The CM emphasised that most of the processing and production of these products is carried out by self-help groups, thereby strengthening the livelihood of women and rural communities.

Radhika Jha, secretary, rural development, highlighted the strategic categorisation of products under House of Himalayas. These comprise GI-tagged products, organic and food products, and scented products, each undergoing category-wise branding to improve their market presence.

A step to promote local handloom & handicraft

The craftsmanship of Uttarakhand, embedded in age-old practices, has been a significant basis of livelihood for regional people for years

In the domain of conventional craftsmanship, Uttarakhand's handloom sarees maintain a unique position alongside well-known products from other states. The

craftsmanship of Uttarakhand, embedded in age-old practices, has been a significant basis of livelihood for regional residents for years. Realising the prospect of this domain for further job prospects and financial evolution, the Uttarakhand government founded the Uttarakhand Handloom & Handicraft Development Council (UHHDC).

A registered society set up by the government, the UHHDC functions as the apex body for the overall growth of handlooms and handicrafts in the state. Its task is to encourage, direct, and manage the state's craftspeople, enabling sustainable work via the promotion of handicrafts. Under the reputed label 'Himadri', UHHDC has emerged as a hallmark of quality and genuineness for craft products stemming from Uttarakhand. The 'Himadri' label promises that buyers acquire authentic, handcrafted products,

while also assuring appropriate revenue for the crafters' hard work and talent. UHHDC's measures to facilitate Uttarakhand's handloom and handicraft products

spread far beyond the state. Beneath the Himadri brand, these magnificent products are showcased at prestigious occasions such as Craft Bazaars, Dilli Haat, International Trade Fairs, and the Surajkund Mela. Crafters from Uttarakhand have the chance to show their creations to a wider audience, earning praise and fondness for

their craftsmanship. Himadri showrooms are strategically situated in major places such as Dehradun, Uttarkashi, Haldwani, Haridwar, and Uttarakhand Sadan in New Delhi, assuring overall accessibility to these special products.

In addition to physical showrooms, UHHDC has developed a beneficial collaboration with the well-known e-commerce platform Amazon, extending the reach of Uttarakhand's handicrafts internationally. This alliance has resulted in the flourishing sale of handicraft products worth lakhs of rupees, garnering global praise and honour. Via this endeavour, craftspeople are furnished with a forum to showcase their skill to a global audience, assuring their art is valued and cherished on a multinational level.

As the nodal agency of the government, UHHDC diligently puts up multiple art fairs, exhibits, and promotional occasions throughout the year. These endeavours furnish crafters with a venue to exhibit their dexterities as well as play a vital part in maintaining and elevating Uttarakhand's rich cultural legacy.



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Doon Silk: Empowering artisans, reviving tradition

Doon Silk is a label under the Uttarakhand Cooperative Silk Federation (UCRF) and is committed to maintaining and restoring the ancient silk-weaving customs of Uttarakhand

Highlighting the usage of natural fibers, Doon Silk is dedicated to protecting our surroundings and ecosystem while providing magnificent handloom products. The brand's offerings contain silk, wool, cotton, bichhua (nettle), and hemp, all selected for their minimal environmental effect.

Each Doon Silk product is a testament to the talent and artistry of Uttarakhand's farmers, reelers, weavers, craftspeople, and dyers. The label's detailed craftsmanship assures that each article maintains the highest measures of quality, gaining the confidence and respect of buyers globally. By concentrating on handloom methods, Doon Silk maintains conventional techniques as well as furnishes sustainable job prospects to more than 6,000 people in Uttarakhand. Doon Silk's dedication to purity is depicted in its 100% natural fiber guarantee. This commitment to quality has helped the brand achieve a firm foothold in both national and global markets. With products such as silk sarees, coats, stoles, and shawls, Doon Silk caters to a myriad clientele, assuring that these timeless articles stay available at unbeatable costs. The global market has especially

adopted Doon Silk, with considerable exports to Europe and the US. The label's products have acquired overwhelming reactions, additionally fueling the need for Uttarakhand's conventional silk weaving. By selecting Doon Silk, buyers get excellent products and contribute to the financial empowerment of proficient craftspeople in Uttarakhand.

In nature, Doon Silk is a crusade committed to maintaining legacy, encouraging sustainability, and empowering residents. By means of its uncompromising dedication to quality and custom, Doon Silk persists in making a deep mark, one beautifully prepared product at a time!

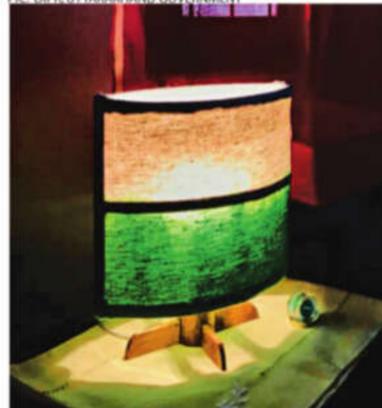
#ExploreUttarakhand



@DIPR_UK

Uttarakhand Bamboo and Fiber Development Board: Saga of Himalayan sustainability

PIC: DIPR, UTTARAKHAND GOVERNMENT



The Uttarakhand Bamboo and Fiber Development Board stands as a testament to nature's grace and sustainability, presenting a range of bamboo and nettle products that emphasise the best offerings of the Himalayan province. Among their beautiful innovations are bamboo and nettle lamps, carefully prepared by traditional crafters from Uttarakhand. These lamps, featuring tender cuts, splits, and complex weaves, are made using nettle fiber fabric obtained from the Himalayan foothills. The oval lamps emit a gentle, warm glow, effortlessly mixing natural radiance with grace, enriching any indoor area with their light.

Underscoring an eco-friendly and sustainable lifestyle, the board also offers a series of bamboo bottles. Each bottle is enveloped in a high-quality bamboo shell with a long-lasting stainless-steel interior, assuring

Objectives and Vision

The primary objective of the ODTP scheme is to boost the traditional and craft industries of Uttarakhand. By identifying and developing local products, the scheme seeks to place these products on the national and international stage, thereby enhancing their marketability and economic value. This initiative aligns with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of sustainable rural development, which emphasises the importance of promoting local products to spur economic growth

durable performance while reducing plastic waste. This sleek product flawlessly illustrates the synergy of fashion and sustainability.

The board's foray into eco-textiles is characterised by the introduction of Himalayan nettle, a unique natural fiber. Flourishing between heights of 1200 to 2900 meters in the temperate and sub-tropical Himalayas, this perennial plant presents manifold opportunities. Conventional apparel made from nettle fiber, which dates back thousands of years, is undergoing a revival. Nettle fiber fabrics, known for their intrinsic thermal characteristics, antimicrobial features, and resistance to wrinkling, redefine convenience and fashion.

The Uttarakhand Bamboo and Fiber Development Board helps the environment and sustainable living as well as empowers crafters and encourages marginal tribal communities through promoting nettle fiber products.

8 GOVT & POLITICS

Budget Session begins tomorrow, how an assertive Opp is preparing to outflank Govt

All-party meeting today, Opp parties to provide wish list of topics they want to discuss in House

LIZ MATHEW
NEW DELHI, JULY 20

LAST MONTH, the Opposition adopted an aggressive approach in the first session of the 18th Lok Sabha, leading to continued disruptions even during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's address to the Lok Sabha. This is likely to continue in the Budget Session beginning Monday with the Opposition looking to corner the government on various issues, from recurring railway accidents to NEET to militant attacks in Jammu and Kashmir.

With the first session that began in June being a brief one, the coming session will be the real litmus test for the successful functioning of the new Lok Sabha. Opposition leaders have expressed their desire to "discuss and debate"

but only "if the government is willing to let Opposition voices be heard in Parliament".

The customary all-party meeting before a Parliament session will be held on Sunday during which the Opposition will list the topics it wants to discuss in the session and also bring up the issue of the election of Deputy Speaker. Though the Budget, to be presented on Tuesday, will be the focus of the three-week-long session, sources said the Congress-led Opposition would prefer to use the floor of the House to discuss unemployment and rural distress too. The continuing crisis in Manipur, the issue that triggered vociferous protests in the first session, is also likely to have an echo in the coming Session, they

EXPLAINED

added. Days after visiting the violence-hit state on July 8, Leader of the Opposition Rahul Gandhi had said that the Congress and the INDIA alliance would raise the need for peace in Manipur "with full force in Parliament" to pressure the government.

The Opposition may prefer to focus on education and railways — two areas on which they can put the government on the mat — during the department-related discussion on the Budget.

Although the Opposition is armed with a range of issues over which to grill the government, the ruling party said it expects its rivals to allow Parliament to function smoothly. "Traditionally and generally, the Budget Session is only to discuss the Budget and it is not derailed.

Budget is the most important thing and the country cannot run without it. So, I expect the Opposition to be constructive and pass the Budget without any chaos," Nishikant Dubey said.

Congress MP Manickam Tagore said, "We all expect the Opposition voices also to be heard. We just do not want to be disrupted by the ruling benches; we are ready to discuss people's issues. We want the session to be more productive."

Some Congress MPs said Birla's statement on Emergency immediately after his re-election in the previous session — a move seen as an attempt to single out the Congress and divide the Opposition — had already left a bad aftertaste. Congress MP Hibi Eden said: "We were ready to speak, the Leader of the Opposition spoke. But whenever

the right of a member is curtailed, we would be forced to intervene. The Manipur member was not allowed to speak and that is when we went to the well of the House. We wanted a discussion on NEET. We are ready to cooperate... But unfortunately, the provocation was always from the Treasury benches. People who are part of the government shout slogans in the House. The remark on the Emergency, from the responsible higher authority, is something we cannot accept. It was unnecessary."

Eden added, "We have so many questions on development, about NEET, about Manipur and many issues related to people... We want the Treasury benches to cooperate. Now that the Opposition is in good strength, it has a voice and that should be heard."

'WILL FLOAT FRESH TENDER ONCE IN POWER'

Uddhav promises to scrap Dharavi tender given to Adani Realty

Shinde Sena leader says Uddhav trying to create hurdle in slum redevelopment project, making 'baseless allegations'

VALLABH OZARKAR
MUMBAI, JULY 20

FLAGGING SEVERAL flaws and irregularities, Shiv Sena (UBT) chief Uddhav Thackeray on Saturday said the tender awarded to Adani Realty for the Dharavi redevelopment project will be scrapped once their government comes to power and it will then float a fresh tender with revised terms and conditions, and concessions.

He also demanded that the contract be scrapped and a fresh tender floated by the present government.

Speaking at a press conference at his residence, Thackeray said the residents and businesses in Dharavi should not be displaced and asserted that those living there must receive 500 sq ft houses within the locality. "We will scrap the Dharavi slum redevelopment project contract after coming to power and float a fresh tender with revised terms and conditions. The government should give an answer as to why it should not be scrapped now itself. We will not allow Mumbai to be turned into Adani city," he said.

Thackeray alleged the Maharashtra government was giving "extraordinary favours" to the Adani Group. He said Sena (UBT) workers will hit the streets if their demand was not met.

When asked to comment on the allegations made by Thackeray, Valsa Nair, Principal Secretary (Housing), Maharashtra, said, "I am not aware of what was said, hence I cannot comment." She further said the CEO of the project will be the right person to comment. However, despite repeated at-

tempts, the CEO of the project could not be contacted.

While Dharavi Redevelopment Project Pvt Ltd (DRPPL) spokesperson declined to comment on the statements made by Thackeray, Chief Minister Eknath Shinde-led Shiv Sena leader Rahul Shewale termed his allegations as baseless and being made keeping in view the upcoming Assembly polls and for getting donations for the party.

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'No right to raise questions': Ajit silences uncle Pawar at meeting; Sule says pained

MANOJ MORE
PUNE, JULY 20

AT THE District Planning and Development Committee meeting held in Pune city Saturday afternoon, district guardian minister Ajit Pawar, who presided over the meeting, point blank told his uncle and NCP(SP) president Sharad Pawar that he had no right to raise questions. The senior Pawar then kept mum for the next two hours even as the meeting witnessed an exchange of fire between leaders of the two NCP factions.

Ajit Pawar's questioning his uncle's authority to speak at DPDC angered the latter's daughter and Baramati MP Supriya Sule. Moments after the meeting, Sule told *The Indian Express*, "So much to learn from today's DPDC meeting. Sharad Pawar arrived for the meeting five minutes before district



Sharad Pawar (left), Ajit Pawar (right) at the district planning and development committee meeting in Pune. Express

guardian minister Ajit Pawar arrived. When Ajit Pawar came, Sharad got up from his chair as per the protocol. This was an example of real old world politics, which is what Maharashtra is famous for."

Sule said as Sharad asked questions, Ajit Pawar attempted to show him the rules. "He said MPs are only invitees and they should not ask questions. He

well," Sule said.

Sule said Ajit Pawar kept harping on that MPs were special invitees. "The rules make it clear... You are a special invitee by law. The law also gives you the right to participate," she said, producing a copy of a government gazette notification.

Sule said that whatever happened on Saturday at the DPDC meeting, it was "painful to see the change in culture of Maharashtra politics".

After the meeting, Ajit Pawar told reporters, "I just read out the government resolution which stipulates the rules as to who has the right to speak at the meeting. First is the DPDC chairman, the joint chairman and after that members... Many did not even know the rules till date."

When asked why her father kept quiet after Ajit Pawar showed him the rules, Sule said, "My father also plays by the rule book..."

'Real LJP': EC asks Chirag, Paras camps for submissions by July 25

DAMINI NATH
NEW DELHI, JULY 20

AS THE dispute between the two sides for control over the of Lok Janshakti Party (LJP) remains unresolved three years after it began, the Election Commission on July 8 wrote to the two factions, led by Union Minister for Food Processing Chirag Paswan and his uncle, former Union minister Pashupati Kumar Paras, asking them to submit any further documents in support of their claims by July 25, *The Indian Express* has learnt.

After the death of LJP founder Ram Vilas Paswan in 2020, his son, Chirag, and his brother, Paras, had a falling-out. The dispute reached the EC in June 2021 when both sides claimed they were the 'real' LJP.

On October 2, 2021, the EC passed an interim order freezing the use of the name Lok Janshakti Party and the symbol 'bungalow'. It then allotted the name Lok



Chirag Paswan; uncle Pashupati Kumar Paras

Janshakti Party (Ram Vilas) and the symbol of 'helicopter' to the Chirag Paswan group, and the name Rashtriya Lok Janshakti Party and 'sewing machine' symbol to the Paras group after considering their requests for alternate names and symbols till the dispute is resolved.

Both sides have been given many reminders to submit all documents in support of their claim, the EC sources said. A senior EC official said the two sides have sought additional time to submit their documents when asked in the past. The official added that since the dispute had

been registered in the EC under the Symbols Order, the EC would have to take a decision taking into account the relevant facts. Neither side had withdrawn its claim, the official said.

Among the documents that are usually submitted in such cases are proof of support enjoyed by the faction from the party's elected representatives and within the organisation.

When asked for comment, an LJP (RV) source said: "The Election Commission asks for documents on a regular basis and we do submit. This time is also the same. There has been no date set for a hearing."

Paras, who had been inducted into the NDA government as Minister for Food Processing Industries in 2021, resigned from the post in March after the BJP sided with Chirag's faction, LJP (Ram Vilas), giving it five Lok Sabha seats to contest in Bihar and none to his group.

Paras couldn't be reached for a comment.

Signals Mamata is expected to send at TMC's Martyrs' Day event today



First public address after Lok Sabha polls

ATRI MITRA
KOLKATA, JULY 20

HOT ON the heels of its resounding victory in the Lok Sabha elections in West Bengal, followed by a sweep in the Assembly bypolls last week, the TMC is all set for the July 21 Martyrs' Day rally in Kolkata's Dharmatala, the biggest event in its annual calendar.

The rally will see the first public address by party chairperson and CM Mamata Banerjee after the poll triumphs. Apart from the TMC top leadership, including party number two Abhishek Banerjee, Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav is also expected to address the rally. "We invited Akhilesh. If the weather remains okay, he will come," Banerjee said Saturday. Party insiders said the CM had invited BJP leader Tejashwi Yadav too but he is abroad. Some representatives of Uddhav Thackeray's Shiv Sena (UBT) may also attend the event.

Before the rally, Akhilesh is scheduled to meet Banerjee at her residence. "After the rally, Mamata Banerjee, Abhishek Banerjee, and Akhilesh Yadav may hold a meeting on the Opposition's strategy for the Budget Session," said a TMC leader.

For years now, Banerjee has used the rally to set the TMC's roadmap for the next 12 months. "This year, the main focus will be on measures for rectification within the party and the preparations for the 2026 Assembly polls," said a senior TMC leader, adding, "Presence of Akhilesh, other IN- DIA leaders will be good advertisement for the party."

Meanwhile, some sources said former TMC leader Shovan Chatterjee could be a surprise presence on the dais. Chatterjee joined BJP in 2019 but distanced himself after he was denied a ticket for the 2021 Assembly polls.

Sasikanth Senthil's long road from Tiruvallur, and from stories of untouchability

NIKHILA HENRY
NEW DELHI, JULY 20

SASIKANTH SENTHIL, a first-time Congress MP from Tamil Nadu's Tiruvallur, grew up listening to stories of untouchability in Mathur, his father P Shanmugam's home town. Senthil was also taught the values of the Constitution, facets of which had bettered his father's life and that of his own, he says.

"My father, who had faced the brunt of casteism, grew up on benefits for Dalits enshrined in the Constitution. He studied in government schools and colleges, stayed in government hostels and homes, and studied to become a judicial officer," Senthil told *The Indian Express*.

So, when the BJP government abrogated Article 370 of the

Constitution and erased the statehood of Jammu and Kashmir in 2019, Senthil resigned from his role as the deputy commissioner of the Dakshina Kannada district in Karnataka and took a plunge into social service. Five years later, he contested on a Congress ticket from Tiruvallur and won by a margin of 5.72 lakh votes against V Balaganapathy of the BJP.

There was, however, a distinctly informed journey behind his entry into politics, he says.

"My father used to say that one of his sons should work towards betterment of the society and the other should work towards betterment of our household. I am the one for society and my younger brother is the one for our home," Senthil said.

At Senthil's home in Chennai — the city to which his father

moved to get an education and later a job — conversations revolved around caste discrimination that his family had faced in their native village. "This gave me an understanding of how society works," he said.

He began to imbibe social consciousness at a young age, he says, when in 2002 the BJP-ruled Gujarat witnessed riots that killed hundreds. "I was in my 20s and had started observing the politics in Gujarat and knew that the BJP's agenda should be countered. But I had not figured out how," he said.

Senthil went on to study at the National Institute of Technology, Tiruchirappalli, and found a lucrative career in a private software company. Something was, however, amiss. "I still wanted to serve the people. So, I quit my job and taught in a private college for a



NEW HOUSE, NEW FACES

year," Senthil said. He says he discovered himself during this time and decided to apply for the civil service examination because he wanted to be a public servant. Senthil cleared the UPSC, bagging all-India ninth rank and became a Karnataka-cadre IAS officer in 2009.

His journey was not yet complete, he said, as he kept feeling "uncomfortable with the BJP's Hindutva politics" after the party



Had resigned from IAS in 2019

came to power in 2014. He said he was "shocked" when the BJP returned to form the government in 2019, with an overwhelming majority. "During this time people in high offices were mostly silent. But when I resigned from my job, I knew that I was already on my way to opposing the BJP," Senthil said.

While his politics after his resignation revolved around creating awareness about the

Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA) and National Register of Citizens (NRC), he says the 2020 Delhi riots were another turning point. "I realised that the BJP should be countered politically. I went to the Congress office and joined the party," he said.

Over the next four years he worked for the Congress in various states during their Assembly elections — Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Rajasthan and Telangana. Even for the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, Senthil was a part of the Congress war room.

Initially after joining the Congress, Senthil worked with the party's training vertical. In the 2021 Tamil Nadu Assembly elections, he worked at the party's war room in Chennai. As the party was impressed by his work, he was entrusted with the task of liaising between Rahul

Gandhi and civil society members during the three-week Karnataka leg of his Bharat Joda Yatra in September-October 2022.

For the 2023 Karnataka Assembly polls, Senthil headed the Congress's war room and played a key role in formulating the narrative against the former Basavaraj Bommai-led BJP government. Senthil helped conceive a series of anti-corruption campaigns targeting the BJP, especially centred around its "40% commission government" plank. The most innovative of these was the "PayCM" campaign, with posters featuring a QR code and a photograph of CM Bommai titled "PayCM" springing up across Bengaluru.

During the recent Lok Sabha elections, since he was working for other candidates, he only had

trying to create hurdle in the project and making false allegations against Adani. "The EC recently allowed the Sena (UBT) to accept donations and hence baseless allegations are being made today regarding the Dharavi redevelopment project. The allegations are being made to get donations for the party," he said.

Shewale also said the decision to give 350 sqft houses to Dharavikars in the redevelopment project was taken after taking Thackeray into confidence. "Uddhav was also aware of the fact that a house larger than 350 sqft cannot be given to Dharavi dwellers considering all aspects of CRZ and air traffic regulations. Still, the unrealistic demand of 500 sqft house has been brought up just to create confusion..." he said.

Karnataka inks pact with Premji foundation for midday meal eggs

Bengaluru: Under a special nutrition food drive, students of all the government schools in Karnataka will now be served eggs in midday meals six days a week.

The move came after the Karnataka government and Azim Premji Foundation on Saturday signed an MoU to provide eggs four days a week at all government and government-aided schools — as part of the midday meal programme. The state government at present provides eggs in midday meals two days a week.

The Foundation, under the MoU with the state's primary and secondary education department, will allocate Rs 1,500 crore for three years to fund this egg distribution initiative for 55 lakh school students from classes 1 to 10. Chief Minister Siddaramaiah lauded the Foundation for its "historic" initiative and stressed that "quality food is important for mental health and good education."

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BJP WORKING COMMITTEE MEETING IN RANCHI

Jharkhand: Shah promises White Paper on demography to protect tribals' rights

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
RANCHI, JULY 20

UNION HOME Minister Amit Shah on Saturday claimed that rampant infiltration has led to the shrinking of the tribal population in Jharkhand, and said that if the BJP forms the government in the state, it will bring out a 'White Paper' on demography to protect their lands and rights.

The BJP is confident of forming a government in Jharkhand as the lotus has already bloomed in 52 of 81 assembly segments in the 2024 Lok Sabha polls, Shah said while addressing party workers at Prabhat Tara Ground here during the saffron party's extended executive committee meeting.

"After forming a government in Jharkhand, we will bring out a White Paper on demography to protect tribal people, their lands, reservation and rights," Shah said.

Without naming Hemant Soren, he alleged that Jharkhand's tribal CM was instrumental behind "Love Jihad" and "Land-Jihad" in the state due to his "vote bank and appeasement policy", causing demographic changes.

He alleged that infiltrators were entering Jharkhand, marrying tribal women, obtaining



Union Home Minister Amit Shah with Union Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan, former union minister Arjun Munda, Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma and Jharkhand BJP chief Babul Marandi during BJP's extended working committee meeting, in Ranchi on Saturday. PTI

certificates and buying land. He also attacked INDIA bloc and Congress leaders, including Rahul Gandhi, for "showing arrogance" despite losing the Lok Sabha polls as "they are unable to accept defeat".

"INDIA bloc and Congress leaders are showing arrogance

for indulging in scams worth Rs 12 lakh crore, appeasement, dynastic politics and playing with national security," he alleged.

"The BJP got more seats in this Lok Sabha election than Congress's combined numbers in 2014, 2019, 2024 polls," he said, adding that the JMM-led al-

liance was one of the most corrupt governments in the country and it was time to show it the exit door.

BJP leaders including Union minister Annapurna Devi, Laxmikant Bajpai and Arjun Munda were also present on the occasion.

Intimidating rape victim: Marandi aide booked, BJP calls it vendetta

ABHISHEK ANGAD
RANCHI, JULY 20

JHARKHAND POLICE has booked Jharkhand BJP chief Babul Marandi's political adviser Sunil Tiwary for "criminal intimidation" on the complaint of the victim of a 2021 rape case in which Tiwary is an accused and currently out on bail.

The FIR was registered at Arghora police station on July 16 following the rape victim wrote to the public prosecutor on June 26 that she was being criminally intimidated at the behest of Tiwary. Ranchi Police has already filed the chargesheet in the 2021 rape case against Tiwary and others under the SC/ST Prevention of Atrocities Act, among others.

The July 16 FIR, quoting the rape victim's complaint, stated: "...The bail was granted (to Tiwary) on the condition that he would not influence the witnesses and would fully cooperate with the police, but on the contrary, Sunil Tiwary has been plotting against me for almost 3 years and is trying to implicate me in false cases." The FIR also stated that Tiwary was also intimidating a woman, who is supposed to depose against Tiwary in the rape case.

L-G Sinha, Army Chief chair high-level security review meetings in Jammu

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, JULY 20

AMID A spurt in terror activities and cross-border infiltration, J&K Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha and Army Chief General Upendra Dwivedi chaired high-level joint security review meetings with top officers of the Army, Intelligence Bureau (IB), Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF) and police in Jammu on Saturday.

During the meeting at the Raj Bhawan and police headquarters, the Chief of Army Staff (COAS) and the L-G reviewed the security situation across the Union Territory, an official said. IB Chief Tapan Deka, RAW Chief Ravi Sinha, BSF Director General Nitin Agarwal, CRPF DG Anish Dayal Singh and J&K Police DG R R Swain also attended the meetings.

On Saturday, the Army Chief visited Jammu for the second time in less than three weeks since taking the charge of the COAS on June 30. He had visited Poonch district on July 3 to attend a security review meeting in Jammu.

"We must launch meticulous and well-planned counter-terrorism operations with greater



J&K Lt Governor Manoj Sinha chairs a meeting with Army Chief General Upendra Dwivedi in Jammu on Saturday. ANI

synergy between all the agencies to wipe out terrorists and those aiding... them," the L-G said.

These meetings came in the wake of the killing of nine soldiers in two terror attacks in Kathua district's Badnota village near Machedi on July 8 and in Doda district's Desa forests on July 15.

Since the June 9 terror attack on a bus carrying pilgrims in Jammu's Reasi, Jammu has seen a surge in militant activities and at least 10 security personnel have been killed and several others injured in encounters in Jammu di-

vision's Doda, Reasi and Kathua.

On July 16, the Army said all formations of Udhampur-based northern command are committed to eliminate the scourge of terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir. The Army has been conducting a series of joint and coordinated operations with the J&K Police to eliminate foreign militants who have infiltrated from across the border and are moving in the upper reaches of Doda, Udhampur, and Kishtwar districts in the Jammu region and, thereafter, to Kashmir, said officials.

21 ARRESTS MADE IN 6 CASES

NEET-UG leak case: CBI arrests 'mastermind', 2 more MBBS students

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JULY 20

THREE PERSONS, including an alleged mastermind and two medical students, have been arrested by the Central Bureau of Investigation in connection with the NEET-UG paper leak case.

"The two MBBS students arrested on Saturday are from a medical college in Rajasthan's Bharatpur and are in the second and first year. They were present in Hazaribagh on May 5, the date of NEET UG examination, and allegedly acted as solvers for the paper stolen by an engineer who was arrested earlier," a source said.

The alleged mastermind has been identified as a graduate from the National Institute of Technology, Jamshedpur.

With the fresh arrests, the total number of people held so far by the investigation in six cases related

to the alleged irregularities has now reached 21.

According to official sources in Rajasthan, the two medical students were arrested from Bharatpur on July 18, while the alleged mastermind was arrested from Patna.

As reported earlier, four students of AIIMS Patna, who have also been arrested, had allegedly travelled to Hazaribagh to solve the leaked question paper, it is learnt. The CBI had also arrested a student from Ranchi's Rajendra Institute of Medical Sciences.

According to CBI sources, the four students allegedly sent the solved paper to the 'Solver Gang' — an interstate network which allegedly sold the solved question paper. This gang allegedly made four examinees from Bihar, also arrested in the case, memorise the answers at a playschool on outskirts of Patna on May 4 night — a day before NEET-UG examinations.

UPSC chairperson Manoj Soni quits post, cites personal reasons

LEENA MISRA
NEW DELHI, JULY 20

UNION PUBLIC Service Commission (UPSC) Chairperson Dr Manoj Soni has resigned from the top post five years before his tenure that would end in 2029, citing "personal reasons".

Soni, 59, an alumnus of Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, Vadodara confirmed to *The Indian Express* Saturday that he had resigned from the UPSC as chairperson. The resignation comes at a time when the commission has booked a criminal case against probationary IAS officer Puja Khedkar for faking her identity to avail attempts in the civil services examination.

PTI quoted sources as saying that Soni's resignation is "not in any way connected to controversies and allegations surrounding the UPSC after probationary IAS officer Puja Khedkar issue".

Considered close to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Soni



UPSC Chairperson Manoj Soni

took over as a member of the Commission on June 28, 2017 and took oath as chairperson on May 16, 2023.

He has served as vice-chancellor of the Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar Open University, Gujarat for two terms from August 1, 2009 to July 31, 2015, and one term as VC of his alma mater The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda from April 2005 to April 2008.

A student of Political Science, Soni taught International Relations at Sardar Patel University Vallabh Vidyanagar between 1991 and 2016. His doctoral research is on the "Post-Cold War International Systemic Transition and Indo-US Relations" under his guide Prof Harbans Patel of SPU, completed in 1995.

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Chairman

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Melakottaiyur, Vandalur - Kelambakkam Road, Chennai - 600 127, Tamil Nadu, India

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Last date for submission of online application is 16 Aug 2024 (05:00 PM).

Detailed advertisement and procedure for applying online are available at Institute website www.iiitdm.ac.in

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BSF officer, constable die due to 'extreme weather' in Kutch

Rajkot: A BSF officer and a head constable died on Friday allegedly after "suffering a heat stroke" while patrolling India-Pakistan border in the desert area of Gujarat's Kutch district, officers said on Saturday.

Bhuj, the district headquarters of Kutch had Saturday recorded 35.5 degree temperature, the highest in the state. The deceased were identified as assistant commandant Vishwa Deo and head constable Dayal Ram. The incident took place when they along with three others were patrolling the border north of Harami Nala in Kutch on foot.

SALUTE THE SOLDIER

CENTRAL RESERVE POLICE FORCE ARUNACHAL PRADESH 12 July 2001

Shaheed Constable Deen Mohd. On 12 July 2001, CRPF troops from the 124th Battalion at PS Khonsa, Tirap district, received intelligence about insurgent movement in the area. They quickly set up a checkpoint. Shortly after departing, their vehicle was ambushed by insurgents who detonated an IED and opened fire. Despite sustaining injuries, the troops held their ground and retaliated, forcing the insurgents to flee. In the fierce gunfight, Head Constable Amir Hussain and Constable/Dvr Lakhbir Singh were martyred on the same day. Constable Deen Mohd, who was severely injured, succumbed to his injuries on 21 July, making the ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty.

CENTRAL RESERVE POLICE FORCE PUNJAB 21 July 1989

Shaheed Constable Soma Sundaram The 18th Battalion of CRPF was deployed in the Ferozepur district of Punjab to assist the state police in anti-terrorist operations. On 21 July 1990, a team was assigned to cordon and search Jogewala village in Zira tehsil, where militants were suspected to be hiding. After securing the village, the team began searching the houses. As they approached one house, militants inside opened fire. The troops immediately returned fire, but the militants managed to escape into the sugarcane fields. Constable Soma Sundaram, who took the brunt of the fire, sustained severe bullet injuries and made the ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty.

Jogewala village in Zira tehsil, where militants were suspected to be hiding. After securing the village, the team began searching the houses. As they approached one house, militants inside opened fire. The troops immediately returned fire, but the militants managed to escape into the sugarcane fields. Constable Soma Sundaram, who took the brunt of the fire, sustained severe bullet injuries and made the ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty.

LIFE INSURANCE CORPORATION OF INDIA LIC. Notice for Empanelment 2025-2028. Applications are invited from reputed firms/individuals for empanelment at Delhi Divisional Office-1.

Notice for Empanelment 2025-2028. Applications are invited from reputed firms/individuals for empanelment at Delhi Divisional Office-1. For complete details please log on to our website www.licindia.in and go to "Tenders" and click on the link "Notice for Empanelment Delhi Division-1, 2025-2028".

NORTHERN RAILWAY TENDER NOTICE. Invitation of Tenders through E-Tendering (E-Procurement System). Table with columns: S/Tender No., Name of work with its location, Approx. Cost of work, Amount of Earnest Money, Completion period of the work, Date & time for submission of tender & opening of tender.

SEVERING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE. 2213/2024

GOVERNMENT MEDICAL COLLEGE

Rampur Road, Haldwani, (Nainital), Uttarakhand. Tel. & FAX: 05946-255255, 255926, 282578, FAX: 05946-282578, Website: www.gmchld.org

REQUIREMENT. "Walk-in-Interview" for the post of SENIOR RESIDENT will be held on every working Friday starting from 26th July 2024 (Friday) to 30th August 2024 from 11:00 am to 02:00 pm at "Office of the Principal", Government Medical College, Haldwani (Nainital) Uttarakhand.

Notice Inviting Tender (NIT)

SATNA CITY TRANSPORT SERVICES LTD. REGD. OFFICE:- OFFICE OF MUNICIPAL CORPORATION, SATNA (SWAMI VIVEKANAND BHAWAN, DIVERSION ROAD, SATNA, MADHYA PRADESH)

Website- www.mpurban.gov.in, Tel No. - 07672-228818. NIT No. 01/01 & 01/02/Transport/Municipal Corporation Satna, Dated 19.07.2024

"Selection of Bus Operators for Bus Transport System in Satna city (on cluster basis) on Operate and Maintain Basis For Cluster 'B and C'"

Satna city transport services Ltd. Satna has envisaged to improve and facillit the scenario of Intra and Inter City Public Transport in the state of Madhya Pradesh. The Recipient hereby invites proposals from reputed and eligible firms through the Request for Proposal (RFP) issued by the CEO, SCTSL Satna titled "Selection of Bus Operator for Bus Transport System in Satna city on Operate and Maintain Basis For Cluster 'B and C'".

Interested bidders may submit their duly filled proposals in the prescribed format available on e-procurement website no later than Dated: 20/08/2024. Further details of the services can be referred from the RFP/Terms of Reference which can be downloaded from e-procurement website: www.mptenders.gov.in of Government of Madhya Pradesh.

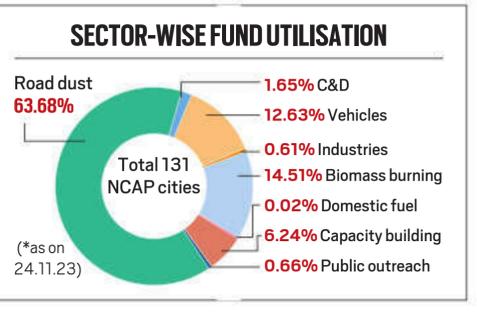
Amendments to NIT/RFP, if any, would be published on e-procurement website only, and not in newspaper. SCTSL/Municipal Corporation, Satna reserves all the rights to accept or reject any or all tenders without assigning any reasons.

'Need more focus on PM2.5': Study says dust mitigation draining clean air scheme funds

NIKHIL GHANEKAR NEW DELHI, JULY 20

ROAD DUST mitigation works undertaken to reduce particulate matter 10 (PM10) pollution is draining a lion's share — 64% — of funds under the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP), said a new study by Centre for Science and Environment (CSE) while recommending a shift of focus on curbing the finer, more lethal PM2.5 pollution.

"We need to worry about combustion sources rather than dust. Dust is not the main pollutant. When it gets coated with other pollutants, it becomes bad for your body," said Sunita Narain, Director, CSE. The CSE report has appraised efforts to curb air pollution under the national scheme through the lens of fund utilisation, city level per-



formance in improving air quality and implementation gaps. The heavy focus on PM10 pollution under NCAP has meant that road paving and widening, pot-hole repairs, water sprinkling, procurement of mechanised sweepers has accounted for a dominant share in the expenditure under NCAP, the report said. A review of the sectoral pat-

ternal scheme in a suo matter is appraising expenditure under NCAP across 53 cities. The NCAP was launched in 2019 to improve air quality in 131 cities, which were selected on their record of poor air quality for five consecutive years.

These cities, known as non-attainment cities for not meeting pollution standards, have to cut their pollution levels by 40 per cent by 2025-26 with 2019-20 as a base year. Public records with the Ministry of Environment show that as of May 2024, approximately Rs.10,566.47 crore was released to 131 cities between 2019-20 and 2023-24 financial years. Of the 1,615.47 crore released for 82 cities only 51 per cent or Rs.831.42 crore has been used. Meanwhile, 42 cities with a million plus population got Rs.8,951 crore of which 67 per cent or Rs.5,974.73 crore was spent. FULL REPORT ON: www.indianexpress.com

Illegal mining probe: ED arrests Haryana Congress legislator

VARINDER BHATIA CHANDIGARH, JULY 20



THE ENFORCEMENT Directorate (ED) early on Saturday arrested Congress MLA Surender Panwar in a case of alleged money laundering and illegal mining in Haryana and Rajasthan — the arrest coming two days after the federal agency conducted searches at the premises linked to another Congress MLA Rao Dan Singh and his family members.

Panwar, a first time legislator from Sonipat in Haryana, was taken into custody in the early hours in Gurgaon. He was produced before a special Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) court in Ambala which sent him to the custody of the Enforcement Directorate till July 29. The court also directed the ED to allow the MLA's lawyer to meet him for half an hour daily and provide him medicines prescribed by doctors.

Panwar first contested the Assembly polls from Sonipat as an Indian National Lok Dal (INLD) candidate in 2014. He finished a distant third by getting 24.04% of the votes. The election was won by Kavita Jain of the BJP, who had a 45.8% vote share. He switched over to Congress ahead of the 2019 Assembly polls and won as Congress nominee, defeating Jain.

In July 2022, Panwar resigned from the Assembly

over threatening calls that he and his family members allegedly received. It was only after Haryana Speaker Gia Chand Gupta assured him of adequate security and safety that Panwar withdrew his resignation after four days. "My son has been getting death threats, but since you have assured me that adequate security will be provided to us, I am withdrawing my resignation," the MLA wrote in his letter to Gupta, withdrawing his resignation.

Panwar first came under the ED's radar in January, when his premises were raided. The central agency conducted searches for more than 40 hours. In parallel raids, INLD's former MLA Dilbagh Singh's premises were also searched.

The ED at the time claimed it had seized Rs 5 crore in cash, foreign-made weapons, liquor, and "incriminating documents" from Dilbagh Singh's residence. During the searches at Panwar's residence, the ED claimed to have seized several "incriminating documents" indicating money laundering and allegedly illegal mining operations.

Meanwhile, senior Congress leader Ashok Mehta called Panwar's arrest "politically motivated"

WESTERN RAILWAY-RATLAM SUPPLY INSTALLATION AND COMMISSIONING OF LIFT

Tender No. 83246175. Date: 19/07/2024. E-Tenders are invited by Divisional Rail Manager (Store), Ratlam, Western Railway, for the following Store work. Name of work: Supply Installation and commissioning of Lift. Approximate cost of work: ₹70,40,999.82. Earnest Money deposit: ₹140,820. Completion Period: Withing 90 days thereafter. Time & Date for closure for submission of E-Tender Document: 11:00 Hrs on 23/08/2024. Time & Date for opening of E-Tender: 11:30 Hrs on 23/08/2024. Validity of Offer (Days): 120. The tender can be viewed online at E-Tender Portal www.ireps.gov.in and offer must be submitted on same E-Tender Portal.

WESTERN RAILWAY-RATLAM ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT E-TENDERING NOTICE

W/623/51/INIT. Date: 19.07.2024. The Divisional Railway Manager (W/A) Ratlam invites "Open Tender" through e-tender on website www.ireps.gov.in in the details as under: Tender No. - RTM-2024-25-7-R. Name of work: Zone No. 6 - Ratlam (Excl.) to Nagda (Incl.) Km 651/05-06 to km 698 & km 0/00 to 1.25 under section Engineer (Works) Nagda. Approx. value: ₹73,39,938.38/- Earnest Money: ₹1,46,800.00/- Completion period: 12 Months. Similar type of work: Any civil Engineering work. Date of uploading on website: 15.07.2024. Date of opening of Tender: 07.08.2024. Detailed tender notice eligibility criteria and terms and conditions are available at Website www.ireps.gov.in.

NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY Notice of Invitation E-Tender

Divisional Railway Manager, N.W. Ry. Bikaner for and on behalf of President of India invites sealed open tender for the following works on the date shown as below: Tender No: S&T/BKN/ET 293R; Name of Work with its Location: "Replacement of overaged existing IPS and augmentation of under capacity data loggers system at 06 stations of KLYT-PLC Section over Bikaner Division". Approx Cost of Work: 5167069.72; Bid Security: 103400.000; Date & Time for submission of Tender & opening of tender: Up to 15:00 Hrs. on 08.08.2024; Website from which complete Tender details can be seen & download: www.ireps.gov.in 831-AN/24

NORTH EASTERN RAILWAY E-Tender Notice

On behalf of the President of India, acting through Chief Project Manager/Gati Shakti, N.E. Railway, Izatnagar invites the following E-Tender: S.No.-1, E-Tender No.: CPM-GS-IZN-2024-05, Name of Work: Construction and Development of Land scape, Green patches (Horticulture work.) and Mural works in the jurisdiction of Dy. Chief Engineer/Gati Shakti/Izatnagar under Amrit Bharat Station Scheme. Approximate Value: ₹ 1,62,91,323.67. Earnest Money (Rs.): ₹ 2,31,500.00. Cost of Tender Form (Rs.): 0.00. Completion Period: 6 (Six) Months. Bidding start date on 29.07.2024. Last date of submission of above E-Tender up to 15:00 hrs. on 12.08.2024. Date of opening of above E-Tender 15:30 Hrs. on 12.08.2024. Detailed tender notice, eligibility, criteria, terms & conditions is available on website https://ireps.gov.in. In case any disparity arises between Hindi and English version of tender notice, English version will hold good and will be followed.

NORTH EASTERN RAILWAY E-TENDER NOTICE

On behalf of the President of India, acting through Chief Project Manager/Gati Shakti, N.E. Railway, Izatnagar invites the following e-Tender: S.No.-1, E-Tender No.: CPM-GS-IZN-2024-04, Name of work: Request for Proposal (RFP) for Appointment of General Consultant for Gati Shakti Unit, Izatnagar Division, North Eastern Railway. Approximate Value (Rs.): ₹ 1,48,10,404.52. Earnest Money (Rs.): ₹ 2,24,100/-, Cost of Tender Forms (Rs.): Nil, Completion Period: 12 (Twelve) Months. Bidding Start Date: 29-07-2024. Last date of submission of above E-Tender up to 15:00 hrs. on 12-08-2024. Date of opening of above E-Tender 15:30 Hrs. on 12-08-2024. Detailed tender notice, eligibility, criteria, terms & conditions is available on website https://ireps.gov.in. In case any disparity arises between Hindi and English version of tender notice, English version will hold good and will be followed.

PUBLIC NOTICE GOVERNMENT OF HARYANA EXCISE & TAXATION DEPARTMENT

NOTICE FOR INVITING e-TENDERS FROM GENERAL PUBLIC FOR ALLOTMENT OF REMAINING RETAIL LIQUOR ZONES IN TWELVE (12) DISTRICTS IN THE STATE OF HARYANA FOR THE EXCISE POLICY YEAR 2024-25. The district wise detail of zones available for e-bidding is as under:-

Table with 3 columns: Sr. No., Name of District, Zone Code. Includes districts like Faridabad, Gurugram (East), Gurugram (West), Hisar, Bhiwani, Jind, Kurukshetra, Narnaul, Panipat, Rewari, Rohtak, Sirsa.

Starting date and time for placing e-tenders: From 22nd July, 2024 9:00 AM. Closing date and time for placing e-tenders: Till 22nd July, 2024 (04.00 PM). Evaluation of e-tenders: 22nd July, 2024 (5.00 PM).

The reserve price and quota of these 19 zones for the purpose of e-tendering has been decided as per the provisions of clause 2.16 and other relevant provisions of the Haryana Excise Policy 2024-25.

The zone-wise detail of reserve price and quota of these 19 zones shall be displayed in the excise arrangement.

The e-tenders for these zones can be submitted online through the official website of the department i.e. www.haryanatax.gov.in. The remaining terms and conditions of e-tenders and allotment of zones shall be same, as informed vide the Public Notice, published in leading newspapers on 18th May, 2024, for inviting e-tenders for allotment of retail liquor zones of all districts in the State of Haryana. The copy of Public Notice dated 18th May, 2024 is also available on the official website of department i.e. www.haryanatax.gov.in.

The detailed procedure of registration for participation in the allotment process and submission of e-tenders is also available on the official website.

The excise arrangements of these zones containing number of vends, liquor quota, location of vends, command area as applicable and reserve price thereof, as well as the venue for evaluation of e-tenders shall be conspicuously displayed in the office of DETCs (Excise) and DETCS (ST) of the districts concerned. These details shall also be available on the official website i.e. www.haryanatax.gov.in.

All allotment(s) and grant of licence(s) shall be subject to the provisions of the Haryana Excise Act, 1914, the rules framed thereunder, orders/instructions issued by the competent authority and the Excise Policy for the year 2024-25. Any clarification regarding the procedure may be obtained from the office of DETCs (Excise) in any of the districts. The copy of Haryana Excise Policy for the year 2024-25 is available on official website of the department.

All allotments of licenses are subject to the approval of the Excise and Taxation Commissioner (Financial Commissioner). The ETC (FC) may reject, without assigning any reason, any allotment in public interest as the case may be, within 10 days of the date of allotment. In case no decision of Excise and Taxation Commissioner (FC) is conveyed within the stipulated period of ten days, the allotment shall be deemed to have been approved by the ETC(FC).

Excise and Taxation Commissioner, Haryana. No.-28039/HRY

विशेष शाखा पुलिस मुख्यालय मध्यप्रदेश भोपाल

क्रमांक- विसा/स्टोर/2024-25(237), दिनांक 15/07/2024. निविदा सूचना का शुद्ध पत्र (Corrigendum). विशेष शाखा पुलिस मुख्यालय की निविदा सूचना क्रमांक SB/Store/2024- 25 (207), Bhopal, Dated 19-06-2024 द्वारा Monocular & Other 3 Items के क्रय हेतु निविदा सूचना जारी की गई है। उपरोक्त आमंत्रित निविदा के माध्यम से क्रय किये जाने वाले उपकरण के समय-सारणी में "आंशिक संशोधन" के संबंध में "शुद्ध पत्र" (Corrigendum) जारी किया गया है जो website https://mptenders.gov.in/nicegp/app पर तथा विचार की वेबसाइट www.mppolice.gov.in पर उपलब्ध है।

Office of the Superintending Engineer 3rd Circle P.W.D. Pithoragarh. E-mail: sepwdpth@rediffmail.com

Letter No. 3227/ 458CB-03/ 2024 Dated: 19-07-2024

National Competitive E- Tender Notice

The Superintending Engineer 3rd Circle, Public Works Department Pithoragarh invites tender through E-Tendering (Two Bid System) on behalf of Hon'ble Governor of Uttarakhand for following works. All other information will be available online from date 22-07-2024 at 5.00 PM onward on website http://www.uktenders.gov.in.

Table with 7 columns: S. No., Name of Work, Earnest Money (in Lac), Cost of Tender (in Rs.), Validity of Tender (day), Period of Completion (months), Contractor's category of registration. Includes work for P.D. PWD Champawat.

Goa cargo ship fire kills one, firefighting efforts underway



A merchant vessel caught fire off Goa. PTI

FIRE-FIGHTING operations continued for the second straight day Saturday to contain a major fire that broke out on the Panama-flagged cargo merchant vessel 'MV Maersk Frankfurt', with the Indian Coast Guard confirming that one crew member had been killed.

Sources from the Coast Guard said one Filipino seaman may have been killed in an explosion caused by the fire while trying to put it out on Friday. The vessel, which was going from Mundra port in Gujarat to Colombo in Sri Lanka, had a crew of 21 on board.

The fire is believed to have been caused by a short circuit. "The fire has not been completely doused, but it has come down to a controllable level. Since the fire is around the metal containers, it gets reignited... We are now air-dropping 150 kgs of dry chemical powder bags to control the fire," one officer said, adding that the rest of the crew is safe.

In a statement issued at 3 pm Saturday, the Coast Guard said the vessel was 17 miles from Karwar, Karnataka.

"The fire in the forepart of the vessel has been suppressed, but heavy smoke continues to emanate and the fire has reignited in the midship area. ICG ships Sachet, Sujet and Samrat are actively engaged in fire-fighting operations. A Coast Guard Dornier aircraft has conducted an aerial assessment of the situation. Additionally, an advanced light helicopter Dhruv helicopter was launched from New Mangalore for Goa, to conduct an assessment of the vessel enroute and evaluate the feasibility of deploying dry chemical powder bags," the statement said, adding that a specialised pollution control vessel, Samudra Prahari, is being deployed to provide further assistance.

At present, there is no requirement for the evacuation of the crew, the statement said.

14 more Indians rescued in Cambodia: Embassy

New Delhi: The Indian Embassy in Cambodia said on Saturday that it has rescued 14 Indian nationals, who had been duped on the pretext of jobs.

The Indian Embassy in Cambodia said, on X: "In close cooperation with the Cambodian authorities, the Embassy has facilitated the rescue and repatriation of over 650 Indian citizens, who had fallen victim to these scams. Most recently, the Embassy provided specific leads to the Cambodian police, leading to the rescue of 14 additional Indian victims. These individuals are currently being cared for by an NGO working in coordination with Cambodia's Ministry of Social Affairs." As first reported by The Indian Express on March 28, over 5,000 Indians are suspected of being stuck in Cambodia and forced to carry out "cyber frauds".

SP leader 'stabbed to death' at Gonda

Gonda: A local Samajwadi Party leader was allegedly stabbed to death in Gonda district and a BJP councillor and his three sons, among five, have been booked, police said on Saturday.

Om Prakash Singh was attacked with sharp-edged weapons at his house on Friday night. A post-mortem was conducted, and Singh's body was handed over to the family, who staged a protest on Saturday morning. They placed Singh's body on the road and said that last rites would be performed only after the accused were arrested, police said. Singh (45) was killed on Friday night after some people broke into his house in Parsapur town and attacked him with a sharp-edged weapon, they said.

Govt cautions AIIMS, PGI on Science Congress body

ANKITA UPADHYAY
NEW DELHI, JULY 20

THE DEPARTMENT of Science and Technology (DST) has asked some of the topmost medical institutions in the country, including all the AIIMS, not to allow any representative from the Indian Science Congress Association (ISCA) to sit on their Boards or committees for the time being.

It has also told the Health Ministry to "invariably" seek a no-objection certificate from the DST before nominating any office-bearers of ISCA on any of the governing body/ Council or committee not just in these three medical institutions but in any of the other autonomous organisations functioning under its domain.

The Kolkata-based ISCA, the oldest association of scientists in the country, is known mainly for organising the Indian Science

Congress every year, the first of which was held way back in 1914. It is one of the 26 autonomous institutes — one among the five bodies of science professionals — administered by the DST.

ISCA President for 2023-24, according to its website, is Arvind Kumar Saxena, who is Executive Director, Institute of Basic Science, Bundelkhand University. Its Executive Committee has 19 members, and its Council has 79 members including past-presidents of ISCA. But ISCA has had a troubled relationship with the DST in recent years, over issues of alleged financial irregularities and misappropriation of government funds, charges denied by it.

ISCA has gone to court against the government, and the matter is still to be resolved. For the first time in its history, the Science Congress, a permanent fixture on the Prime Minister's calendar, could not be held this year.

In a recent letter to the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, DST said that since it did not recognise the current Executive Council of ISCA, and had suspended all current office-bearers of the organisation, ISCA representatives must not be allowed on the boards of medical institutions like AIIMS or PGI Chandigarh.

"ISCA has representations in all the AIIMS, PGIMER (Post Graduate Institute for Medical Research, Chandigarh) and JIPMER (Jawaharlal Institute of Postgraduate Medical Education and Research). It is brought to your notice that DST has suspended all office bearers and does not recognise the Executive Committee or Council of ISCA. It may be noted that a number of lapses and financial irregularities and misappropriation of government's funds by the previous office bearers of ISCA are under scrutiny and probe," the DST said in its letter on May 22.

"Hence their (ISCA's) representation in these organisations (medical institutions) is deemed unlawful, and they are to refrain from participation as representatives of ISCA in any of the Board of AIIMS or other autonomous bodies."

The letter also asked the Health Ministry to obtain a no-objection certificate from DST before nominating any office-bearers of ISCA to any of its autonomous organisations in future. A senior scientist, who did not wish to be named, said many a time members of the ISCA are deputed as ex officio members of governing bodies in different institutions such as AIIMS Delhi, AIIMS Patna etc. "Now the government is saying you should get its clearance if ISCA wishes to nominate any of its members to such institutions. This suggests they want to take everything under their control," he said.

The letter to the Health Ministry follows DST's decision in March not to accept the new Executive Council constituted by ISCA. In a letter to ISCA on March 27 this year, DST said it would not accept the new office-bearers because the elections were not held in accordance with the established by-laws and were against previous directives of the Department, thereby rendering them "unlawful and unacceptable". Then in May, DST restrained ISCA from holding a meeting of the newly constituted Executive Council on similar grounds.

But the problems began more than 15 years ago, mainly because of a noticeable decline in the standards of discussions at the Science Congress. With most leading scientists keeping away, the event had been reduced to a gathering of mostly university and college teachers with little scientific credentials or experience. Many within the scientific community itself had begun asking for reform or even a complete discontinuation of the event.

The DST pays the salaries of ISCA's permanent secretarial staff and also provides a grant every year to enable the holding of Science Congress.

In September last year, the DST withdrew its funding support for the Science Congress citing "financial irregularities" and also amended the by-laws, which among other things, put more restrictions on how government funds could be utilised. Some office-bearers of ISCA challenged the amendments in Kolkata High Court, which is where the matter currently resides.

These troubles were the main reason why the Science Congress could not be held this year. The Science Congress had to be abandoned in 2021 and 2022 as well but those were because of the disruption caused by Covid pandemic.

ACUTE ENCEPHALITIS SYNDROME

9 of 78 cases since June due to Chandipura

Sent multidisciplinary team to assist Gujarat, says Union Health Ministry

SOHINI GHOSH & ANONNA DUTT
AHMEDABAD, NEW DELHI, JULY 20

EXPLAINED
E **Deadly vector**

THERE HAVE been 78 cases of Acute Encephalitis Syndrome — inflammation of the brain, usually due to an infection — since June this year in Gujarat, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh, with 28 resulting in death. Amid a suspected outbreak of the Chandipura virus, a vector that is among the causes of AES, at least nine cases in Gujarat, five of whom died, were found positive for the deadly pathogen.

According to data provided by the Union Health Ministry, so far, there have been 75 cases of AES reported from Gujarat, two from Rajasthan and one from Madhya Pradesh. The National Institute of Virology, Pune, tested 76 samples and confirmed Chandipura virus in nine, all from Gujarat.

The Ministry said a panel of experts that reviewed the AES cases in the three states concluded that infectious agents contributed to only a small proportion of them and emphasized the need for comprehensive "epidemiological, environmental and entomological (insect) studies". This will help in understanding the factors that have led to the outbreak and stop the proliferation of the vector to prevent further infections. It said a multidisciplinary central team — from National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC), Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) and Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying (DAHD) — has been deployed to assist Gujarat with the probes.

CHANDIPURA VIRUS — first isolated in Maharashtra in 1965 — is transmitted by sandflies and is known to cause fever, headache, and encephalitis leading to convulsions, coma, and death. The pathogen is known to affect children below the age of 15 years most severely. With no specific treatment, the mortality can be as high as 56% to 75% as seen in Gujarat and Andhra Pradesh in 2003 — India's worst Chandipura outbreak that killed 322 children.

The panel comprised Dr Atul Goel, DG of health services and Director of NCDC; experts from AIIMS, Kalawati Saran Children's Hospital and NIMHANS, and officials from the central and state surveillance units.

Dr PK Singh, CDHO in Gujarat's Rajkot, where there are suspected Chandipura cases, said that the outbreak this year may be due to migration of sandflies. "Sandflies are broadly absent in Saurashtra but it is possible that migration is aiding the spread along with environmental factors with the start of the monsoon. It might be possible that the weather may have triggered this," Singh said.

An NIV scientist said that Chandipura is always considered as a differential diagnosis in cases of children with AES. However, testing remains an issue.

Govt prematurely retires third Class I officer 'in public interest' in a month

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
VADDARA, JULY 20

STATING THAT the decision has been taken "in public interest", the Gujarat government on Saturday notified the premature retirement of a Class I officer, Pankaj Barot, who was serving as the chief officer of Petlad Municipality until afternoon. Barot became the third Class I officer to be prematurely retired "with immediate effect" within one month.

In a notification signed by Deputy Secretary (Urban Development and Urban Housing) Manish Shah, the government said that in exercise of the powers conferred by Rule 10(4) of the Gujarat Civil Services (Pension) Rules, 2002, and in pursuance of the government resolution issued on September 29, 2023, the state, "in public interest", prematurely retires Barot, municipal chief officer Class I of Petlad Municipality, with immediate effect from July 20, 2024.

"He shall be paid an amount equivalent to three months' salary and allowances, calculated at the same rate he was drawing immediately before the issuance of this notification," it added.

Criminal appeals after July 1 must follow BNSS provisions: Kerala HC

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, JULY 20

THE KERALA High Court has recently held that an appeal in a criminal case filed after July 1 should be under the provisions of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS).

The single bench of Justice PG Ajith Kumar held that for convictions and sentences passed before July 1, appeals should be filed as per the provisions of BNSS, which replaced the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973. The clarification was given when the court was hearing a criminal appeal from a sentence passed by a special PCSO (Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act) court in Manjeri, Malappuram on June 12. The appeal was made on July 10 under provisions of Section 374(2) of the Code of Criminal Procedure.

"A question arises whether this appeal could be filed under the provisions of the CrPC or should have been filed under the provisions of BNSS. Section 415 of the BNSS corresponds to Section 374 of the CrPC," the court observed. The petitioner argued that the trial was held under the CrPC

and so he had the right to appeal under the same code, and could not be forced to invoke the BNSS. The court wondered whether Section 374(2) of the CrPC or Section 415(2) of the BNSS governs the appellant's appeal.

"A similar question would arise when an application is filed in a pending appeal that was filed before July 1..." it said. Holding that the July 10 plea should have been under Section 415(2) of the BNSS, the court directed the petitioner to file an amendment/ correction of the memorandum of appeal.

The Kerala HC did not agree with the July 11 ruling of a single bench of the Punjab and Haryana HC that if a defect in a plea filed on or before June 30 is cured after July 1, that appeal/ plea will not be maintainable. The Kerala HC judge said: "Mere misquoting of a provision or mistake in the nomenclature shall not fail a plea." The Kerala HC, however, agreed with the other HC ruling on the point that "no new/fresh appeal or application or revision or petition can be filed under Code of Criminal Procedure on or after July 1" and that "any appeal/ application/ revision/ petition filed on or after July 1 is to be filed/ instituted under the provisions of BNSS".



ON KANWAR ROUTE

A Kanwariya walks past a sweet shop displaying names of the proprietor and an employee, following the administration's order, in Uttar Pradesh's Muzaffarnagar on Saturday. PTI

Promoted organic farming all her life, Padma Shri Kamala Pujari dies at 76

SUJIT BISOIY
BHUBANESWAR, JULY 20

KAMALA PUJARI, a tribal woman from Odisha known for her contribution to organic farming and preserving over hundreds of indigenous varieties of paddy which earned her the prestigious Padma Shri award, passed away on Saturday while undergoing treatment. She was 76.

A native of Patraput village in Koraput district, Pujari was admitted to the district headquarters hospital on Tuesday for fever and age-related ailments and later moved to the SCB medical college in Cuttack after her condition deteriorated. Hospital sources said she died of cardiac arrest early this morning.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Odisha CM Mohan Charan

Majhi and Leader of Opposition Naveen Patnaik, during whose tenure Pujari was nominated as the state planning board's member, expressed their condolences.

"Pained by the passing away of Smt. Kamala Pujari Ji. She made a monumental contribution to agriculture, particularly boosting organic agricultural practices and protecting indigenous seeds. Her work in enriching sustainability and protecting biodiversity will be remembered for years. She was also a beacon in empowering the tribal communities. Condolences to her family and admirers. Om Shanti," Modi said in a post on X.

Majhi spoke to Pujari's son over the phone. The state government announced her funeral will be held with full state honours.

Born to a poor tribal family, Pujari held a fascination for traditional paddy varieties. She had



Kamala Pujari was conferred the Padma Shri in 2019.

been a leader in the participatory research programme started by the M S Swaminathan Research Foundation in Koraput in 1994, which led to breeding of the high yielding and high-quality rice variety, 'Kalajeera'. She has preserved rare varieties of paddy

like 'Tili', 'Machakanta', 'Ghnatia' and 'Phula'. Pujari also motivated hundreds of tribal women in her locality to shun chemical fertilisers in farming. Due to her efforts, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) declared Koraput a globally important agriculture heritage site (GIAHS) in 2012.

Koraput was also selected by the UN for the Equator Initiative Award, which was presented to Pujari during the Earth Summit held at Johannesburg in South Africa in 2002. For her contribution to agriculture, she received the prestigious Padma Shri award in 2019 from then President Ram Nath Kovind. The Odisha government had honoured her with Best Woman Farmers award in 2004, while a girls' hostel of Odisha University of Agriculture and Technology was named after her.

FROM PAGE ONE

FULL REPORTS ON
WWW.INDIANEXPRESS.COM

• Harappan society is 'Sindhu-Sarasvati civilisation'

The book explains that Social Science has many sub-disciplines, but students "need not feel intimidated by all these terms". Instead, the book is divided into five themes: 'India and the World: Land and the People'; 'Tapestry of the Past'; 'Our Cultural Heritage and Knowledge Traditions'; 'Governance and Democracy'; 'Economic Life Around Us'.

In a departure from the past, the textbook makes multiple references to the 'Sarasvati' river in the chapter pertaining to the beginning of Indian civilisation. The old History textbook, 'Our Past I', mentioned the river only once in a section on the Rig Veda, where it is included among the rivers named in the hymns in the Vedas.

In the new textbook, the river finds a prominent place in a chapter on the 'Beginnings of Indian Civilisation', where the Harappan civilisation is referred to as the 'Indus-Sarasvati' or 'Sindhu-Sarasvati' civilisation. It says the 'Sarasvati' basin included major cities of the civilisation —

Rakhigarhi and Ganweriwala — along with smaller cities and towns. The river, according to the new textbook, "today goes by the name of 'Ghaggar' in India and 'Hakra' in Pakistan (hence the name 'Ghaggar-Hakra River')", and is now seasonal. In two maps in the book — one that marks out some of the rivers of the sub-continent, and another showing the main settlements of the 'Indus-Sarasvati civilisation' — the river has been marked out along with the Indus and its tributaries.

The river also plays a key role in a section on how the Harappan civilisation declined. It says that two factors are agreed upon: one is "climate change" which caused reduced rainfall, and the other is that the "Sarasvati river dried up in its central basin; suddenly, cities there, such as Kalibangan or Banawali, were abandoned".

A chapter titled 'Locating Places on the Earth' says that the Greenwch Meridian "is not the first prime meridian" and that "many centuries before Europe,

India had a prime meridian of its own" which was called the "madhya rekha (or 'middle line') which passed through the city of Ujjain. "The Ujjaini meridian became a reference for calculations in all Indian astronomical texts," it says.

Like in the old Political Science textbook, the new one too has a chapter on diversity, but has left out references to caste-based discrimination and inequality. In the old textbook, there was an explanation of the term Dalit and a section on B R Ambedkar and his fight for rights of Dalits. The chapter, 'Unity in Diversity, or Many in One', in the new textbook focuses on diversity in terms of food, textiles, festivals etc.

The word 'caste' finds a single mention in chapter 7 on 'India's Cultural Roots', in a quote by sociologist André Beteille which reads: "The thousands of castes and tribes on the Indian subcontinent have influenced each other in their religious beliefs and practices since the beginning of history and before."

• Ex-BJP MLA

Bhan and Kapil Muni, and their uncle Ram Chandra, to life imprisonment for the murder of the SP's Jawahar Yadav, also known as Jawahar Pandit. In 2018, the same court had rejected the state government's plea to withdraw the murder case against the brothers.

Suraj Bhan is a former Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) MLC and Kapil Muni is a former BSP MP. They are currently in Prayagraj's Naini Central Jail along with Uday Bhan.

A senior official of the Prisons Department said: "The government has directed Uday Bhan to deposit two sureties of equal amount to the satisfaction of the DM, along with a personal bond of the same amount."

The SPMLA was killed in 1996 when a group of people fired on his vehicle with AK-47 rifles in Prayagraj's Civil Lines area. Two others, including Jawahar Yadav's driver Gulab Yadav, also died in the attack. A police investigation found the murder was the result of political and business rivalry.

Uday Bhan won the 2002 and 2007 state polls on a BJP ticket.

• From diamond city, table tennis players eye Olympic gold

room, where he spent countless hours with his father and brother — at times even his mother — playing table tennis. Today, the room has been converted into a "museum" of sorts, with Harmeet's medals, trophies and tournament accreditation cards.

His first coach Shabbir Bengali says Harmeet's craze for TT grew with every positive result. "No one played TT professionally then and there were no coaches as such. I trained children at a school and in societies but there was nobody as dedicated to the sport as Harmeet," Bengali said.

Seeing Harmeet practice for hours, his mother thought his craze was "just a phase". She only realised that it wasn't a craze when Harmeet, then eight, travelled to Ajmer for trials at the Petroleum Sports Promotion Board (PSPB) Academy with his father. His mother was shocked when his father returned alone. Having been selected, Harmeet had chosen to stay back.

The year he spent at the academy changed Harmeet forever. In hindsight, he says, it changed him

for the better. "I went to a couple of national ranking tournaments and won a title in the under-10 category but I missed home and decided to come back," he says.

The immediate problem he faced was the level of competition in Surat. His brother, who he struggled to beat earlier, was no longer his competition. There was nobody he could spar with that was better than him. This meant he had to travel to other TT hubs in the country in search of quality partners and facilities. "I must have practised at every major training facility in India," he says.

His parents spared no expense. Besides getting him dozens of bats, balls and other equipment — none of them cheap — they would also hire coaches from other cities to train him in Surat, at times paying ₹2,000 per day, excluding travel.

After cementing his place in the Indian team in the past decades, Harmeet, following in 10-time national champion Sharath Kamal's footsteps, went for training stints in Germany. He was instrumental in India's his-

toric team championship bronze at the 2018 Asian Games and gold medals at the Commonwealth Games.

He was also inspiring an entire generation of players from Surat. Manav being one of them.

"When I was playing at city and state meets, everyone would talk about Harmeet and how he was winning national titles. "I wanted to play like him," says Manav, who is ranked among the top-60 in the world.

As a child, while he did well in cricket and was a talented skater, he kept losing in TT. And when his parents asked him to pick one of the three sports, he chose TT just because he kept losing. What Manav didn't know then was that his coach Vaheed Malubhai was making him play against state champions in his academy, which had just one table.

Like Harmeet, Manav too went to the Ajmer academy. Only Manav was 12, old enough to adapt to the conditions better. The academy proved to be a game-changer for him too. Manav is now seen as the heir

of men's table tennis in India, after the trio of Sharath, G Sathiyan and Harmeet move on.

"The basics remain the same, but at the highest level, you have to keep changing your game so the opponent doesn't know which side is going to show up," Manav tells *The Indian Express* at his new apartment overlooking the Tapi.

When Harmeet started playing almost 24 years ago, there wasn't a single academy in Surat. Now, there are over 20 quality academies and more than 30 centres for TT coaching. Competition in the sport has become so robust that Surat is expected to do well in state-level competitions.

A live-in TT academy opened last year on the outskirts of Surat. The Tapi Valley International School is now home to top paddlers from Gujarat. It boasts of all modern facilities. Recently, it got the biggest stars too. Both Harmeet and Manav have shifted to Surat to train at the academy.

"Why go anywhere when we have the best facilities here? Everything is monitored, including our diet," says Harmeet.

Across THE AISLE



PCHIDAMBARAM

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Look for things that you may not find

LIKE MANY other earnest well-wishers of the economy, I always read, reflect and write on the eve of the annual Union Budget — and leave Parliament House often disappointed on Budget day.

Afterwards, I go back to the people and speak to persons from different walks of life including MLAs, economists, businesspersons, farmers, women, youth and, above all, party activists. The last-named give me feedback from the ground, especially the chatter in the local markets. In practically every year during the last 10 years, I found that the Budget 'announcements' vanished without a trace in 48 hours, and the chatter ceased.

DAUNTING CHALLENGES

The main reasons for the disappointing outcome are because the Budget makers lose touch with reality and fail to make an objective assessment of the economic situation. Let's take 2024-25 for which the Budget will be presented on July 23, 2024. An objective assessment of the economic situation will reveal that:

■ **Unemployment** is the biggest challenge to youth, families and social peace. For a few dozen vacancies or a few thousand posts, millions of candidates apply and write an examination or appear for an interview. Question papers leak. Bribes are paid. Some examinations or interviews are cancelled at the last minute causing great distress. These are the direct consequences of an explosive unemployment situation. According to CMIE, the all-India unem-

ployment rate is 9.2 per cent. So-called jobs have increased in Agriculture (really, disguised unemployment), Construction (irregular) and the gig economy (insecure).

Youth want regular jobs with a modicum of security of tenure and fair wages. Such jobs are available in the government and government-controlled bodies. At the beginning of 2024, there were 10 lakh vacancies in such posts but there is no evidence that the central government is keen to fill the vacancies. Such jobs can also be created in a vibrant manufacturing sector and in high-value services like financial services, information technology, shipping, air transport, hospitality, healthcare, education, and research and development. Manufacturing output has stagnated at 15 per cent of GDP because Indian promoters have shown extreme reluctance to invest. The rapid expansion of manufacturing and high-value services requires a radical re-set of economic policies and a bold embrace of foreign investment and foreign trade.

■ **Price rise or inflation** is the other major challenge. Wholesale price inflation, as measured by the government, is at a high of 3.4 per cent. CPI inflation is 5.1 per cent and food inflation is 9.4 per cent. Since India is not a common market with free flow of goods and services to every part of the country, the rates vary from state to state and, within a state, from well-connected districts to poor and remote districts. Except perhaps the top 20-30 per cent of the population, every family has been hurt by inflation. Some are grumpy,

most are angry.

Based on your degree of satisfaction that the Budget speech and the allocations have outlined credible steps to tackle unemployment and price rise, you may allot up to 50 marks.

TWO OTHER CHALLENGES

The remaining 50 marks may be allotted under the heads of **education, healthcare** and other **people's priorities**. India will not become a developed country as long as we have sub-standard education and healthcare. **Education**, especially school education, is undoubtedly widespread but of poor quality. The reality is that a child spends, on average, 7 to 8 years in a school. Nearly one-half of the children are unable to read or write a simple text in any language and are numerically challenged. They are not fit for any skilled job. There are thousands of one-teacher schools. The schools have huge deficiencies of classrooms, toilets and teaching aids, not to speak of libraries or laboratories. The central government must drive — and help — the states to address these fundamental problems and not waste its resources and time on pushing a controversial NEP or a scandal-ridden NTA/NEET.

Healthcare is better but not sufficient. Public healthcare is growing quantitatively but not in quality. Out of pocket expenditure is still about 47 per cent of total health expenditure (NHA, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare). Private

healthcare is growing both in quantity and quality but is absolutely beyond the reach of the vast majority of people. Overall, there is a grave shortage of doctors, nurses, medical technicians, and diagnostic equipment and machines. The central government's expenditure on healthcare has declined to 0.28 per cent as a proportion of GDP and to 1.9 per cent as a proportion of total expenditure (Tol dated July 15, 2024). Public satisfaction with public healthcare is low.

HARD, HARDER SLAP

Other **people's priorities** are stagnant wages, rising household debt, falling consumption of wage goods, legal guarantee for MSP, burden of education loans and the **Agnipath** scheme. These challenges have **solutions**: minimum wage of Rs 400, legally guaranteed MSP, education loan forgiveness, and abolition of **Agnipath**.

Neglect, bordering on derision, of these issues caused the disastrous slide in the number of seats won by the BJP in the Lok Sabha elections of 2024. The BJP is not repentant. Nor, going by public statements, is it willing to reconsider its model: crony capitalist, trickle-down, capital biased and protectionist. The people gave the BJP a harder slap in the 13 Assembly by-elections in July: the I.N.D.I.A. bloc won 10 of them and increased their vote share dramatically (The Hindu dated July 17, 2024). Will the Budget respond to the warnings on the wall? Keep your fingers crossed.

Fifth COLUMN

TAVLEEN SINGH

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Leaders must listen

IN RECENT days, I have found myself wondering more than once if the higher echelons of the Bharatiya Janata Party have mysteriously become completely deaf. There seems to be no other reason why the message that voters sent in the Lok Sabha elections is being ignored. The sharpest rebuke came from Uttar Pradesh and it has remained completely unheard. Last week, the Chief Minister's Deputy made his rebellion against the senior leadership loud and public. He reminded those at the top that there was a need for some deep introspection about the state of the party.

The rebellion was quickly squashed. But then the RSS chief made a speech last week, in which he said men should not think they were gods because this would lead to them thinking that they were God himself. Were they listening in the BJP headquarters? Apparently not. They appeared to convey to the Prime Minister that they were certain it was panic created by the opposition's 'false narrative' that was to blame for the party returning to power without a full majority. They should ask themselves why the opposition parties were successful in convincing voters of their narrative and why the BJP failed.

Instead, they decided that the way to take on the 'false narrative' about the Constitution being changed was to commemorate the Emergency by declaring June 25 as 'Samvidhaan Hatya Diwas'. They forgot that it was through a provision in the Constitution that Indira Gandhi suspended democracy. It might have been more appropriate to celebrate the end of the Emergency instead. What commemorating 'Murder of Constitution Day' indicates is that the BJP's top leadership has not realized that it was more than fears of the Constitution being changed that turned voters hostile.

At the top of my list is the atmosphere of hatred and fear that has become normal since Narendra Modi became prime minister. This is evidently something that nobody has told him or there would not have been that sickening edict in Uttar Pradesh last week that orders shopkeepers to write their names outside their shops. Ostensibly, this was done because of the Kanwar Yatra in which Hindus trek hundreds of kilometres to the Ganga to carry home pots of its sacred water. Ostensibly, this is to ensure that there is no communal tension along the route of the pilgrimage. But this Yatra has taken place for decades without trouble, so why this monstrous new edict?

Monstrous because it recalls Germany in the thirties, when a similar edict by the Nazis set off the events that led to the Holocaust. Muslim leaders have pointed out the ominous similarity, and they are right. For me, it was both chilling and sad to see 'Anif Fruit' scrawled in shaky letters on the side of a pavement shop that will certainly ensure that Hindu pilgrims avoid buying Muslim mangoes. The owner of the rickety barrow probably makes enough to survive the day and the pilgrimage would have helped hugely. The Hindu owner of a dhaba was reported on social media to have been ordered to suspend his Muslim employees for the period of the pilgrimage. This is shameful. But is anyone up there listening?

There has been an orchestrated economic boycott of Muslim businesses for ten years now. And one message that Uttar Pradesh voters tried to send was that people were sick of the hatred and fear that seemingly has official backing. This time, it is a pilgrimage that is the excuse. There is always some excuse. Before this Yatra, it was beef, cow slaughter and 'love jihad'. The wounds left by this campaign of hate are deep.

It is not as if BJP chief ministers cannot find better things to do. One of the biggest failures of the past decade has been the failure of Modi's chief ministers to improve government schools. They are so bad that in most countries they would not be considered schools at all. They churn out students who are barely able to read and count, and this handicaps them when they seek higher education and jobs. Unless there is revolutionary reform, there is no chance at all that India will benefit from our vaunted 'population dividend'.

If the BJP wants to win the state elections that happen in the next few months, its leaders will need to show that they have heard the message that voters sent by denying the party a full majority this time. This can best be achieved by BJP chief ministers showing that they can bring real change in the lives of ordinary people by improving schools and healthcare, and by showing that they can govern better. There is much constructive change needed and it is needed desperately.

Why then is the Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh allowed to continue poisoning the communal atmosphere in his state? Has he not noticed that it was his state that was most responsible for the Prime Minister being denied a full majority in his third term? It truly is as if the top leaders of the BJP have suddenly become hard of hearing or as if they are pretending to be deaf. That is worse still. Modi may have managed to become prime minister for a 'historic' third time, as he likes to tell people on his foreign travels, but he must know that things have changed for him. A little introspection will go a long way.

Watching the American polls, one debate at a time

Dalitality

SURAJ YENGDE

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SITTING IN the US, in my apartment, I saw the live debate between US presidential candidates Joe Biden and Donald J Trump. Biden's performance was unimpressive. I was expecting the debate to be more animated since it included Trump. I remember his past presidential debate with Hillary Clinton in 2016. I was in Chicago, visiting a Telugu Dalit family of business folks. The hosts, who favoured the woman candidate, saw Clinton being ripped to shreds by Trump's scathing attacks.

As he attacked, it was clear that he was not going to play by the rulebook. He presented himself as the captain of the boys' club who treated anything that challenged his whimsical views as an affront. Though he began his speech on July 18 — his first since surviving an assassination attempt on July 13 — by striking an unusually conciliatory tone amidst calls for national unity, he quickly veered towards familiar territory by raising the bogey of "invasion" from the southern border and talking of how Biden would usher in World War III. Thus, so far, it's the same ol' Donald vs the same ol' Joe.

The architect of Trumpian appeal is former White House Chief Strategist Steve Bannon, who noticed a striking gap in the conduct of American politics, which he identified as "elite" and "alienated". He was later thrown out by Trump from his administration. Bannon was recently interviewed by New York Times columnist David Brooks. Bannon introduced his movement as the "Army of the Awakened" who are trained online and go after the elites on social media. Bannon has also created the nationalist appeal of America First. While almost every country in the world prioritises its own citizens, one thing that America does fantastically is to merge the global image of self-sustenance with local resources.

Bannon holds the view that the visa regime is exploited by foreign students, particularly those from India and China. Besides wanting them to return within a couple of weeks after completing their coursework, he wants to reduce foreign student intake by 50%. He pitched this against the lack of rep-

resentations of Black and Hispanic groups. He is sensational but shortsighted. When the David Cameron-led UK government tried to restrict foreign student access, the burgeoning middle class in developing countries sent their pupils to the US, Canada and Australia, instead.

Liberal White friends from Massachusetts came over for dinner. One was an attorney, the other a professor. Both are retired and had houses in a plush neighbourhood in Greater Boston. They hated Trump's guts and his unflattering remarks on various groups they considered needed protection. They said that no matter Biden's performance — they thought of him as "incapable" in his current state — they swore they wouldn't switch to the Republican side.

After the debate, a senior journalist living in the Boston area told me that he was concerned about Biden but cautioned against playing too much into Trumpian attacks. Still, the journalist was consistent in his support as an "anti-Trump candidate". Ever since the debate three weeks ago, a lot has changed. All of a sudden, Biden's promise to lead a second term is being met with suspicion. Even the donor class of the Democrats has started questioning his ability to win. His strongest supporters, former President Barack Obama and ex-Speaker Nancy Pelosi, who would pop up in YouTube ads daily asking for a donation of \$5, have urged him not to run again.

Ironically, his rival Bernie Sanders endorsed him in an op-ed in the New York Times. While the endorsement was like a lifeline for the Biden poll panel, one can certainly reckon that he himself is ready to call it quits. Two candidates could win the baton — Vice-President, Kamala Harris, and Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer. We cannot say for sure what the future holds, as we prepare for the next couple of months to decide the fate of this messy economy that is in the hands of leaders with bureaucrats who are hated by the Republican vote bank and an autocratic leader with the impulse control of a toddler.

But I am not going to think about it, as I am currently in Kenya. The tribal caste groups here and their animosity over caste nepotism held by President Ruto is being challenged by Gen-Z. We should see what happens here.

Suraj Yengde, author of 'Caste Matters', curates Dalitality, and has returned to Harvard University

history HEADLINE

ANAND MOHAN J



IN THE heart of Madhya Pradesh's Dhar city, around 250 km from Bhopal, lies the tomb of Chishti saint Kamal al-Din, a follower of Farid-al Din Ganj-i-Shakar and Nizam al-Din Auliya. Adjacent to this tomb stands a spacious hypostyle mosque constructed primarily from "reused" temple parts.

The Bhojshala Temple-cum-Kamal Maulla mosque complex in the district has been at the centre of a dispute dating back to the demolition of Babri Masjid in Uttar Pradesh's Ayodhya in 1992. While Hindus regard the Archeological Survey of India (ASI)-protected complex in Dhar as a temple dedicated to Goddess Vagdevi (Saraswati), Muslims consider it the site of the Kamal Maulla mosque.

An ASI survey report on the disputed site, submitted in Madhya Pradesh High Court on July 15 this year, stated that its scientific investigation had revealed the "existing structure was made from parts of earlier temples". The report was submitted following a PIL filed before the High Court by the 'Hindu Front for Justice' that had challenged an ASI order dated April 7, 2003, that permitted puja at the complex on Tuesdays and namaz on Fridays.

The July 15 report was met with much enthusiasm by the state's Right-wing outfits, which have been demanding the closure of the Kamal Maulla mosque, a ban on Friday namaz and installation of a Saraswati idol in the Bhojshala complex since December 1992. Right-wing groups here have also claimed that Paramara dynasty's Raja Bhoja — who has become their potent symbol of late — built the temple at the disputed complex.

The Kamal Maulla mosque at the disputed site has been referred to in the writings of English author John Malcolm in 1822 and Major General William Kincaid in 1844. While they documented popular legends associated with Raja Bhoja, they never identified the 'Bhojshala'.

According to a 2012 research paper by Michael Willis, published by the Royal Asiatic Society, the Bhojshala (the Hall of Bhoj) was a centre for Sanskrit studies associated with Raja Bhoja. Willis noted that the mosque adjacent to Kamal al-Din Chisti's tomb had been identified as the Bhojshala since the early 20th century, turning it into "a focal point of religious, social, and political tension".

In his paper, titled "Dhar, Bhoja and Sarasvati: from Indology to Political Mythology and Back", Willis traced the first reference to Bhoja by Alois Anton

A find, a conundrum & naming of a Bhojshala



The Kamal Maulla mosque at the disputed site. Wikimedia Commons

Fuhrer, a German Indologist, who worked for the ASI. Fuhrer travelled to Central India in 1893 and recorded the mosque complex using the term "Bhoja's school". However, he was dismissed from his position in the ASI after an investigation uncovered an enormous degree of bad scholarship.

On the invention of the term 'Bhojshala', Willis had argued that a small archeological department office was established in Dhar in 1902 by the British government under the charge of Superintendent of State Education K K Lele. At that time, Lele had found "two serpentine inscriptions giving the alphabet and grammatical rules of the Sanskrit language". This posed a conundrum for Lele who, in a bid to explain the mosque at Kamal al-Din as a "reused" Hindu building with a Sanskrit basis "invented" the term Bhojshala, since Sanskrit refers to educational institutions as *vidyalaya*, *vidyapeeth* or *janpith*.

Known for the love story of Malwa's King Baz Bahadur and shepherdess Roopmati, Dhar soon came under the shadow of communal politics that continues to surround Bhojshala even now. Tensions first broke out at this site in 1952, when Hindus decided to celebrate Bhoja Diwas. This prompted the Muslims to celebrate an *urs* (the death anniversary of Sufi saint Moinuddin Chishti) in 1953. Over the next few decades, Muslims would continue to offer namaz at the site on Friday, while Hindus gathered there to celebrate Basant Panchami.

After the demolition of Babri Masjid, Right-wing outfits in Madhya Pradesh started demanding opening of the site for Hindu worship. In 1994, on the second anniversary of the demolition of Babri Masjid, a curfew was imposed in the district after the VHP threatened to hoist a

flag on the monument. In years that followed, local peace committees worked out a formula to ensure both communities gained access to the site, and even worked out an agreement on the Tuesday and Friday prayers.

This agreement was flouted in 1997. Once again, a curfew was imposed in the district after the VHP threatened to hoist a flag atop the site. In 2003, an election year for the state, around a dozen policemen were injured in Dhar and several police vehicles torched by a mob protesting against the alleged "high-handedness" of the district administration in handling the Hindu Jagran Manch's plan to enter the site on Basant Panchami. In February's Lok Sabha session that year, the controversy found its way to Delhi, where senior BJP leaders called for the opening of the Bhojshala. Former CM Shivraj Singh Chouhan, then an MP from Vidisha, informed the Lok Sabha that "the State government had banned the entry of Hindus in Bhojshala by suppressing the feelings of Hindus".

In March 2003, the Atal Bihari Vajpayee-led NDA government waded into this controversy after Union Tourism Minister Jagmohan Malhotra asked the Digvijaya Singh-led Congress government to allow Hindus to pray at the site from sunrise to sunset, and to permit Muslims to offer namaz between 1 pm and 3 pm on Fridays. This differed from the formula set by the Congress government, which stipulated that Hindus would be allowed to offer prayers at the site for two hours on Tuesday.

In 2003, the disputed site became a campaign issue for the state BJP unit. Uma Bharti, then the BJP campaign incharge for Madhya Pradesh, had in the run-up to the polls trained her guns on the Digvijaya government that had tried to troubleshoot this hotspot for past communal incidents. The Hindu Jagran Manch meanwhile mobilised voters in the region on the Bhojshala issue. These events gave Bharti the momentum she needed to unseat the Digvijaya government. She would take over as CM in December 2003. In 2022, the Shivraj-led BJP government promised to bring back the Saraswati idol from the British Museum, further fueling the political discourse.

Decades later, even as Bharti, now sidelined by the BJP, did not contest the 2024 Lok Sabha polls, the Bhojshala remained an election issue in Dhar, where Right-wing outfits still dream of turning the site into MP's Ram Janmabhoomi movement.

She SAID

SHALINI LANGER



HOW DOES one continue to love Alice Munro? But, how does one not?

How does one reconcile she, the chronicler of women's invisible everyday lives, with she, the enabler of her daughter's sexual assaulter? But, really, can we not? Munro's biggest crime for the world will always be that she remained silent. However, how many of us are not guilty of that very same failing, in one way or another, and live daily with this knowledge?

Like the memory seared in me of the oily ponytail of the Sanskrit teacher at my school, proudly wearing his Brahmin ho-

Alice Munro, her silence and ours

liness on that little tuft of hair, as he stood in front of me and made loaded innuendos, while I shrank further and further into my chair. No, I did not speak; and neither did anyone else in that classroom.

Like the recollection of every detail of being grabbed out of the blue while walking down the street by a young man, part of a laughing group, or in a crowded public bus by a leery co-passenger. The public assault left me stunned, and feeling all alone, though also teaching me a lesson to instinctively lean back on, on how to "safely" navigate such spaces.

Like the betrayal of being groped by an uncle in my own home, trying to raise the issue and being told to forgive this "momentary lapse". Years have passed, but I live it every time he genially joins us

for family events. Does he remember, as I do? And how can I see him in ever kinder light, like I do now? What does it make me?

My silence, or ours, doesn't in even a tiny little way absolve Munro's abandonment of her daughter Andrea Skinner, in her own words, at every stage of her life — from when she was nine to when she became a mother with young children of her own. Neither does it hide the shock one feels, particularly as a mother, that Munro could choose to love and live with a man who had harmed a child so utterly defenceless.

No, this is only an effort to understand the author who understands us so acutely, and an admission that — like her — very few among us are not complicit in

silences. And were Munro's women not all about that? Bound by silences that allowed some to do what they wanted, and others to not do anything at all?

Yes, the world has moved on. Only a couple of days ago, all it took was a thread of social media posts to bring down a corporate honcho accused of molestation. However, not all of us have it in us to be avenging heroes. The omertà we choose after all is part of our lifelong endeavour for "normalcy", to push our boundaries and still have our feet on solid, unshakable grounds.

I even find myself questioning if this social media trial is not mob justice in another form, playing judge, jury and executioner. And then wondering if all this has to do with my guilt regarding my own si-

lence, and the failure to do anything about it.

I want to believe — and I do — that Munro carried that weight too, and particularly the weight of the fact that she couldn't deny her love for the man who had assaulted her daughter.

Women aren't supposed to make that choice, especially mothers. But Munro's women have told us all along to look, look beyond. Her women were never perfect moms, wives, daughters, or girlfriends, just people carrying on the best they knew how, with what little they had.

So we judge her the harshest, and not other adults around Andrea who also chose to carry on with their lives, brushing past an abused nine-year-old. And that there is another silence.

13 ECONOMY

BRIEFLY

Yes Bank Q1 net profit surges 46.7%

New Delhi: Private sector lender Yes Bank on Saturday reported a 46.7 per cent growth in net profit to Rs 502 crore for the June 2024 quarter, helped by a reduction in provisions. The city-headquartered bank's core net interest income rose 12.2 per cent to Rs 2,000 crore. Its net interest margin stayed flat at 2.4 per cent. The deposits, on which a good part of the system is struggling, were up by over 20 per cent. The other income line grew 5.1 per cent to Rs 1,141 crore during the quarter. Its overall provisions declined 41.2 per cent to Rs 212 crore, and a senior official credited the same to the recoveries on bad assets, which were transferred to JC Flowers Asset Reconstruction Company. **PTI**

EPFO adds record 19.5 lakh net members in May

New Delhi: Retirement fund body EPFO has recorded the highest net addition of 19.5 lakh members in May 2024, the Labour Ministry said on Saturday. The addition during the month is the highest since the first payroll data was issued in April 2018, the ministry said in a statement. The ministry stated that year-over-year analysis showed a 19.62 per cent growth in net member additions compared to May 2023. This surge in membership can be attributed to numerous factors, including increased employment opportunities, a growing awareness of employee benefits, and the effectiveness of EPFO's outreach programmes, it stated. **PTI**

BPCL sees further cuts in oil OSPs

New Delhi: Bharat Petroleum Corp., India's third-biggest refiner, expects Middle Eastern producers to cut the official selling prices (OSPs) of their crude in coming months to reflect lower margins on fuel sales, its head of finance said on Saturday. Lower fuel cracks are hitting the profitability of refiners globally. Complex refining margins in Asia have dropped by half to \$4.10 per barrel as of July 19 compared with about \$8.20 per barrel in February. "Compared to April-May the OSPs are moderate and these OSPs will be further moderated because cracks are on lower side," Vetsa Ramakrishna Gupta said during an analysts call. **PTI**

M&M to unveil 'Thar Roxx' SUV on August 15

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU
MUMBAI, JULY 20

MAHINDRA & Mahindra (M&M) will launch its much-awaited five-door Thar vehicle, called 'Thar ROXX', on August 15, the company said on Saturday.

"The Mahindra 'Thar ROXX' will further strengthen the already strong Thar brand, empowering customers to 'explore the impossible' with luxury and be a part of the Thar lifestyle," it added.

Veejay Nakra, President, Automotive Sector, M&M Ltd, said the 'Thar ROXX' with its distinctive design, premium quotient, advanced technology, enhanced performance, sophistication, and safety is 'the SUV'. "While retaining the core attributes of the iconic Thar, the 'Thar ROXX' represents the larger-than-life personality of a rockstar and will disrupt the SUV category," he added.

Thar ROXX is expected to have more features than the existing three-door off-road version and may come in both petrol and diesel versions.

MICROSOFT OUTAGE

Only 11 trading members, 5 AMCs faced IT disruptions

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU
MUMBAI, JULY 20

ONLY 11 stock market trading members and five asset management companies (AMCs) in the country were affected by the recent IT outage due to disruption in Microsoft Corp's cloud services. On Friday, a major global outage of Microsoft systems caused disruptions across various sectors from airlines to healthcare to financial services, globally, including India.

However, the issues at the affected trading members and AMCs or mutual fund houses in the country were resolved on the same day.

"In India, all exchanges and clearing corporations functioned without any impact. Out of the 1400+ trading members ecosystem, there were 11 trading members who reported disruptions to their operations, which were either resolved during the day, or are being resolved," the stock exchanges said in a joint statement. Overall, exchanges and clearing corporations have not witnessed any significant impact to the trading and clearing activities in the Indian securities mar-



Overall, exchanges and clearing corporations have not witnessed any significant impact to the trading. **File**

ket, the statement said. Clearing corporation is an entity associated with a stock exchange to handle the confirmation, settlement and delivery of transactions.

Separately, Association of Mutual Funds in India (AMFI), which is an association of mutual funds across the country, said all the Asset Management Companies (AMCs), their mutual funds and Registrar and Transfer Agents (RTAs) functioned without any impact.

"Out of the 44 AMCs, there

were 5 AMCs who reported disruptions to some important functions, which were resolved during the day and did not have any material impact on operations," the AMFI statement said. Overall, the Indian mutual funds industry did not witness any significant impact to the daily activities, it said.

RTAs help mutual fund houses in maintaining accurate records of investors, their transactions, and ensuring compliance with regulatory requirements.

Flights near normal; only 75 cancelled

Mumbai: Airline and airport services affected Friday due to the global tech outage due to a system crash at Microsoft were back to near normal on Saturday, though the industry continued to face cancellation of scheduled flights. Ticket booking and web check-in services resumed, while Digi Yatra was still down at a few airports.

On Friday airlines had asked flyers to avoid making multiple booking attempts online after consumers complained of unsuccessful transactions. As per aviation data provider Cirium, India witnessed 75 cancellations of a total of 3,612 scheduled flights till 5.30 pm on Saturday.

SWARAJ BAGGONKAR/FE

UNION BUDGET 2024-25

Likely winners and losers across sectors

The Union Budget on July 23 will be the first major policy announcement of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's third five-year term, which could usher in changes to economic priorities

After the election result, the government is expected to boost consumption in Asia's third-largest economy by lowering personal taxes or increasing spending on consumer-focused areas. While that could benefit consumer goods makers, real estate and housing finance firms as well as infrastructure and auto companies, some sectors could also stand to lose, said brokerages.

HERE ARE SOME OF LIKELY WINNERS AND LOSERS:

RURAL-LINKED SECTORS

■ The government is expected to allocate more funds for rural schemes to stimulate consumption, according to Citi

■ A less than 5%-7% increase in tobacco taxes could be a positive for ITC, according to Jefferies

REAL ESTATE

■ The government is likely to allocate more funds for affordable housing, benefiting developers, Citi said.

■ Moreover, the introduction of an interest subsidy scheme for urban housing would boost financiers, said Jefferies.

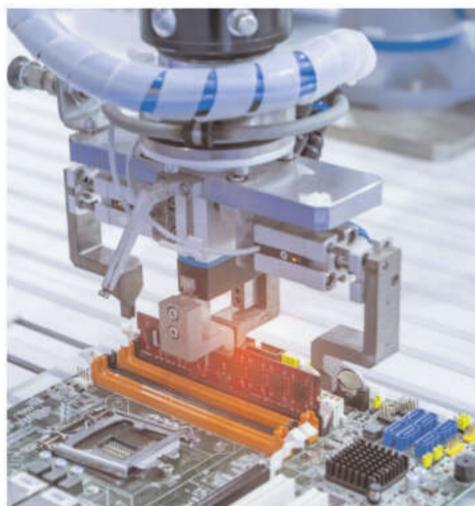
AUTOMAKERS

■ India doled out subsidies worth Rs 115 billion rupees over five years to drive the adoption of electric vehicles and Macquarie expects the government to retain both the quantum and tenure in its latest scheme

MANUFACTURING

■ The push on production-linked incentive schemes is expected to continue, according to HSBC.

■ That will help manufacturers of technology hardware, telecom equipment, electronics and medical devices among others



TRADING

■ Any change in capital gains tax — either by raising the holding period or tax rate could be a dampener for equities, Morgan Stanley said, though it says such moves are unlikely

■ But, if enacted, they would increase the tax burden on equity and mutual fund investors, eroding the tax advantage they enjoy over investors in other asset classes

Source: Reuters

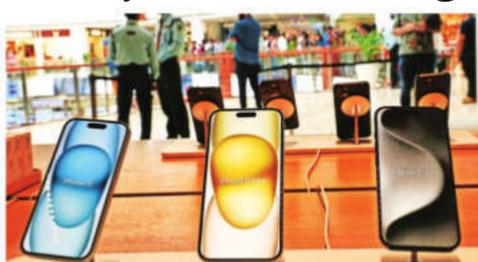
SALE OF ELECTRONICS ON AMAZON

How Prime Day deals fare against street prices

SOUMYARENDRA BARIK
NEW DELHI, JULY 20

AMAZON'S YEARLY major discount sale, Prime Day, is live this year, offering products at lower costs than those in physical shops. Apple products, known for their aspirational value and higher costs compared to competitors, often see significant discounts during such sales. E-tailers offer lucrative deals on products like the iPhone, iPad, and MacBook. Other companies' smartphones, including Samsung and OnePlus, also feature in the sale.

A comparison of discounts for key Apple, Samsung, and OnePlus products available at Amazon's Prime Day sale shows that Amazon generally offers slightly steeper discounts compared to physical retailers. With the exception of the iPhone 15, most Apple products were cheaper on Amazon's Prime Day compared to physical store prices. The OnePlus 12 is priced the same on Amazon as it is at retailers. However, it's worth noting that Amazon did not offer deals across the entire Apple product suite, with only a handful of products discounted. Here are some electronics-re-



Most Apple products were cheaper on Amazon's Prime Day compared to physical store prices. **File**

lated deals available during Amazon Prime Day (at the time of publishing), compared to their prices at retailers and e-commerce offerings:

IPHONE 15 (128 GB):

AMAZON: ₹70,900
STREET PRICE: ₹70,645 (calculated as an average of prices on Croma and Vijay Sales websites)

Currently part of the latest iPhone series (before the next generation launch in September), the iPhone 15 is the only Apple product where the street price is slightly cheaper than Amazon's sale price. It's considered the best non-Pro iPhone currently available and could be a good option

for those upgrading from older models or switching from Android. However, waiting for the next-generation iPhones might be advisable for many users.

SAMSUNG GALAXY S24 ULTRA (512 GB):

STREET PRICE: ₹1,39,999

For those in the Android universe, the Galaxy S24 Ultra offers a solid choice with arguably the best zoom camera on any smartphone currently available. Samsung has also introduced several artificial intelligence features in its operating system, enhancing user experience.

ONEPLUS 12 (256 GB):

AMAZON: ₹59,999
STREET PRICE: ₹59,999

OnePlus continues to impress with great performance at a discounted price. The OnePlus 12 model is priced the same on Amazon and at retailers.

IPHONE 14 (128 GB):

AMAZON: ₹61,790
STREET PRICE: ₹66,040

The iPhone 14 is a good choice for those not needing the latest technology from Apple. It will likely receive security updates for the foreseeable future and provides a smooth user experience for everyday tasks. Though not the latest in Apple's lineup, the iPhone 14 is more than capable for most users. It's also worth noting that the iPhone 14 is available for Rs 60,990 on Vijay Sales, which is cheaper than Amazon's price. However, the street price is higher due to Croma not offering any discounts on this model at the time of publication.

IPHONE 13 (128 GB):

AMAZON: ₹48,799
STREET PRICE: ₹52,040

For those looking to save more, the iPhone 13 is a viable option. It's the only Apple model with several deals on Amazon, indicating strong demand for

older versions in the price-sensitive Indian market.

older versions in the price-sensitive Indian market.

Agricultural production and trading is becoming increasingly volatile. What are some of the key drivers behind this trend?

What we've been observing in the last few years is that because of climate change disruptions, but also geopolitical events, we're seeing a lot of volatility in the market. We do see weather events becoming more unpredictable. We will always have good years and bad years, it's a part of our business. But what we are observing is that these events are becoming more difficult to predict. When you look at our role in trading, we basically help solve supply and demand imbalances. If you're able to predict what the weather is going to be like, you do your crop forecasting, your supply and demand forecasting, then our job becomes a bit easier.

We also see an escalation in a lot of geopolitical tensions and countries are focusing a little bit more on their own food and fuel insecurity. I think that's a hot topic in India, but you can see that across a lot of the countries where we're present. This is leading to fragmentation of trade, which is here to stay. In a globalised world, moving commodities from one place where you have a surplus to places where you need it should function very well.

If India has an exportable surplus of rice, you are going to export that to countries where you don't have enough of it. But because you have countries looking a little bit more inwards and focusing on food or fuel security, that basically disrupts how the trade should normally work. When I talk about fragmentation of trade, what it means is deglobalisation.

As a global agricultural

CRUDE WATCH

OIL SETTLES AT ONE-MONTH LOW

Houston: Oil prices settled over \$2 lower on Friday at their lowest level since mid-June as investors eyed a possible ceasefire in Gaza, while a strengthened dollar drove values down further. **REUTERS**

'Geo tensions, food insecurity driving fragmentation of agri trade; domestic presence key'



THE EXPRESS
INTERVIEW

WITH
RUBENS MARQUES
HEAD OF SOUTH AND SOUTHEAST ASIA, LOUIS DREYFUS COMPANY

commodities trader, how do you plan to adapt to fragmentation of trade?

The fragmentation of trade is reshaping the industry and also driving some of our strategic initiatives — you need to start becoming more of a domestic player. You need to start looking at opportunities, especially in key countries like India.

To facilitate those import and export flows, which is still very much our bread and butter, but also build more of a domestic presence, going further downstream, and reaching out more to our customers. That's what we are doing with our edible oil business in India, through the Vibhor brand.

We aim to double our distribution presence by 2026, especially in northern India. We're also upgrading facilities, investing in technology, and improving efficiency to ensure competitive pricing in the Indian market, which is very price-sensitive.

Coffee futures have been on the rise lately. What are the factors behind it and what's the outlook?

The coffee market has been a little bit disconnected. In Brazil, the production was actually okay. But then, you had issues in Vietnam — a part of that was because of El Niño and these weather events. That created a little bit of an imbalance, and because of logistics, you couldn't really solve that imbalance so easily.

Normally, if you have prices skyrocketing in Asia but have enough coffee in the Americas, then the function of the market is to bring that coffee into Asia.

But because of logistic disruptions, the market couldn't really do that fast enough. On top of that, demand continues to increase. So, it was a double whammy and ended up pushing the prices higher. We do see that prices are stabilising now, with El Niño behind us and the monsoon on track.

In India, there has been increasing emphasis on self-sufficiency in food production. How would you assess the demand-supply dynamics in the domestic market?

When you look at the supply and demand dynamics in India, you don't have too many imbalances. You have an exportable surplus of coffee and we are a top player in coffee. You have a deficit of vegetable oils and we have about 25 per cent market share of edible oils that come from South America into India. But largely, we do see India as a very well-balanced market and that's why being a domestic player is so important. We want to continue to grow in India but we cannot rely so much on deficits and surpluses. Because, as I mentioned, India is actually doing a fairly good job at becoming more self-sufficient.

Improving agricultural productivity is seen as a key step towards boosting production and sustainability. How do you see this happen in India?

We partner with people that can bring innovation and new technologies. What we do is gap training by bringing in experts from within India or from other countries to train farmers on how they can achieve more with the same amount of land. The adoption of technology is super important. We're very concerned about the next generation of farmers in India. The younger population wants to move into the bigger cities and they want to get jobs in tech, let's say. We're very concerned. We run our business based on farmers, and we know that it's in our mission to provide sustenance to a growing population. We can only do that if farmers are there, and they're happy and successful.

Some of the projects that we have, like a vocational project in Indonesia, for example, are very much focused on how we can retain this next generation of farmers by training them on some of these new technologies, like precision agriculture, drones, having visibility on how their business is performing, etc. You need to make it interesting so that this new generation of farmers will remain in the farms.

HDFC Bank's Q1 net up 35%, interest income surges 26%

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU
MUMBAI, JULY 20

THE COUNTRY'S largest private sector lender HDFC Bank reported a 35 per cent jump in its stand-alone profit after tax (PAT) at Rs 16,174.75 crore in the quarter ended June 30, compared to Rs 11,951.77 crore in the year-ago period. On a sequential basis, the bank's net profit fell by 2 per cent in the April-June 2024 quarter.

Net interest income (NII), which is interest earned less interest expended, grew by 26.4 per cent to Rs 29,840 crore in Q1 FY2025, as against Rs 23,600 crore in the same quarter of last fiscal.

Net interest margin (NIM) stood at 3.7 per cent based on interest-earning assets, and at 3.5 per cent on total assets.

In the reporting quarter, operating expenses increased by 18.2 per cent to Rs 16,620 crore, as against Rs 14,060 crore during the corresponding quarter of the previous year. The cost-to-income ratio for the quarter was at 41 per cent, the bank said.

In July last year, HDFC Ltd got merged with HDFC Bank.

Gross non-performing assets

(GNPA) were at 1.33 per cent of gross advances as on June 30, 2024 (1.16 per cent excluding NPAs in the agricultural segment), as against 1.41 per cent on a pro forma merged basis as on July 1, 2023 (1.25 per cent excluding NPAs in the agricultural segment). Net non-performing assets were at 0.39 per cent of net advances as on June 30, 2024.

The lender's provisions and contingencies stood at Rs 2,600 crore billion as against Rs 2,860 crore for the quarter ended June 30, 2023. The total credit cost ratio was at 0.42 per cent, as compared to 0.70 per cent for the quarter ended June 30, 2023.

In the three-month ended June 30, 2024, the bank's total balance sheet size stood at Rs 35,67 lakh crore as against Rs 25,02 lakh crore in the year-ago quarter.

Total deposits grew by 24.4 per cent to Rs 23,79,100 crore as in June 2024, from Rs 19,13,100 crore in the year-ago quarter. Current Account Savings Account (CASA) deposits grew by 6.2 per cent with savings account deposits at Rs 5,96,400 crore and current account deposits at Rs 2,67,300 crore.

FULL REPORT ON

www.indianexpress.com

14 THE WORLD

AT LEAST 114 PEOPLE KILLED SINCE TUESDAY

Bangladesh imposes shoot-at-sight order after deadliest day of protests

Supreme Court to hear case on reservation system today; internet services remain suspended

REUTERS
DHAKA, JULY 20

SOLDIERS PATROLLED the deserted streets of the Bangladesh capital Dhaka on Saturday and the government ordered all offices and institutions to stay closed for two days after at least 114 people were killed this week during student-led protests against government job quotas.

With the toll climbing and police and other security forces unable to contain the protests, authorities imposed a national curfew and deployed the military, who were given orders to shoot on sight if needed.

At least four people died, according to hospital data, during sporadic clashes on Saturday in some areas of Dhaka, which has been the centre of the protests, and where security forces set up road blocks to enforce a curfew. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's government declared Sunday and Monday as "public holidays" due to the situation in the country, with only emergency services allowed to operate. Authorities had earlier closed universities and colleges from Wednesday.

Nationwide unrest broke out following student anger against the quotas for government jobs, which included 30% reserved for the families of those who fought for independence from Pakistan.

Hasina's government had scrapped the quota system in 2018, but a court reinstated it last month. The Supreme Court suspended the decision after a government appeal and will hear the case on Sunday after agreeing to bring forward a hearing



Members of the Bangladesh Army sit on an armoured vehicle along with police during a curfew in Dhaka on Saturday. Reuters

scheduled for August 7.

The demonstrations - the biggest since Hasina was re-elected for a fourth successive term this year - have also been fuelled by high unemployment among young people, who make up nearly a fifth of the population.

Internet and text message services in Bangladesh have been suspended since Thursday, cutting the nation off as police cracked down on protesters who defied a ban on public gatherings.

Overseas telephone calls mostly failed to connect while websites of Bangladesh-based media organisations did not up-

date and their social media accounts remained inactive.

"To take a country of nearly 170 million people off the Internet is a drastic step, one we haven't seen since the likes of the Egyptian revolution of 2011," said John Heidemann, chief scientist of the networking and cybersecurity division at USC Viterbi's Information Sciences Institute.

Reports vary on the number of people killed Friday, with Somoy TV reporting 43. The Dhaka Medical College Hospital received 27 bodies between 5 pm and 7 pm on Friday.

WITH AP INPUTS

EXPLAINED
In talks, students demand reforms

Representatives of the government and the protesting students met late Friday in an attempt to reach a resolution. At least three student leaders were present and demanded the reform of the current quota system, the reopening of student dormitories shut by the police following the clashes and for some university officials to step down after failing to protect campuses from the violence. Law Minister Anisul Huq said late Friday the government was open to discussing their demands. The Bangladesh Nationalist Party has backed the protests, vowing Friday to organize its own demonstrations as many of its supporters joined the students' protests.

BRIEFLY

SPAIN
Dozens of migrants arrive on Canary beach

San Bartolome De Tirajana: Dozens of exhausted migrants arrived in a wooden boat on a beach in Spain's Canary Islands early on Friday amid sharp rise in crossings from Africa, with emergency personnel and beachgoers rushing to help. The boat with 64 people made it to the Las Burras beach by its own means, officials said. **REUTERS**

VIETNAM
State funeral for top leader to be held next week

Hanoi: Vietnam will hold a state funeral next week for Nguyen Phu Trong, the highest leader of its ruling Communist Party who died on Friday, the government said on Saturday. There will be two days of national mourning on July 25-26, a government statement said, with the state funeral on the second day. **REUTERS**

60 MISSING IN SICHUAN FLASH FLOODS, RESCUE OPS UNDERWAY

11 dead, over 30 missing as bridge collapses in northwest China

K J M VARMA
BEIJING, JULY 20

AT LEAST 12 people were killed in a bridge collapse and more than 60 others went missing in flash floods in China's Shaanxi and Sichuan provinces, officials said on Saturday.

The highway bridge collapse triggered by torrential rains in northwest Shaanxi Province killed 12 people and left 31 others missing, local authorities said.

The bridge in Zhashui County in Shangluo City, partially collapsed around 8:40 pm on Friday due to a sudden downpour and flash floods, according to officials.



The collapsed bridge in China's Shaanxi province Saturday. AP

So far, rescue workers have found 12 dead bodies and rescued one person, said the Communist Party. Separately, more than 30 peo-

ple remained missing after flash floods struck Xinhua Village in Sichuan Province at around 2:30 am Saturday, authorities said. **PTI**

Gunman kills Ukraine ex-MP as Russian airstrikes on Kharkiv kill two civilians

Kyiv: A Ukrainian former lawmaker best known for her crusade to promote the Ukrainian language has died after being shot in the street by an unknown assailant. Iryna Fariion, 60, initially survived the assault in the western city of Lviv on Friday, but later died from her wounds in a hospi-

tal. A manhunt is currently underway for her attacker, who fled from the scene. Ukrainian officials said an investigation is being carried out and that the attack is being treated as an assassination.

Elsewhere in Ukraine, at least two people were killed and three more injured after a Russian mis-

sile strike on infrastructure in the country's northeastern Kharkiv region. Ukrainian officials also confirmed that the death toll following a Russian strike Friday on the city of Mykolaiv, had risen to four. A child was among the victims, said the city's mayor, Oleksandr Sienkevych. **AP**

Malaysia honours new Sultan in coronation marked by pomp



Sultan Ibrahim at his coronation on Saturday. AP

Kuala Lumpur: Traditional pomp and cannon fire on Saturday marked the coronation of Malaysia's billionaire King Sultan Ibrahim Iskandar, who pledged to govern fairly during the five-year term he will serve under a unique rotating monarchy system.

Sultan Ibrahim, 65, was sworn in on January 31. Saturday's coronation at the national palace formalized his role as Malaysia's 17th king in a ceremony steeped in Malay culture and pageantry.

Nine Malay state rulers take turns as Malaysia's king for five-year terms under the country's rotating monarchy, which began when Malaysia gained independence from Britain in 1957. Malaysia has nine royal families, some which trace their roots to centuries-old Malay kingdoms that were independent states. **AP**

BLOW TO LEFT, HOPES RISE FOR CENTRIST CAMP TO RUN GOVT
FRENCH MPs ELECT MACRON ALLY AS SPEAKER

France's Parliament President Yael Braun-Pivet won a second mandate on Thursday, in a vote that President Emmanuel Macron's camp hopes will boost their chances to run the government. Braun-Pivet scored 220 ballots while veteran communist MP Andre Chassaigne received 207 votes. **REUTERS**

TANKS ADVANCE DEEPER INTO NORTHERN RAFAH

Israel kills over 30 in strikes across Gaza, US says truce talks are 'inside 10-yard line'

REUTERS
CAIRO, JULY 20

ISRAELI FORCES pounded several areas across the Gaza Strip on Saturday, killing at least 30 Palestinians, according to health officials, as US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said a long-sought ceasefire discussions in Cairo were making progress.

Among those killed on Saturday were local journalist Mohammad Abu Jasser, his wife, and two children, in an Israeli strike on their house in the northern Gaza Strip, a medic said.

Israeli strikes across Gaza killed 37 Palestinians in the past 24 hours and destroyed several houses. In Rafah, where Israel said it aimed to dismantle the last battalions of Hamas' armed wing, residents said tanks advanced deeper into northern areas of the city and took control of a hilltop in the west, amid fierce gun battles with Hamas-led fighters.

The army said troops continued operations in Rafah, eliminating many gunmen over the past day in the area of Tel Al-Sultan on the western side of the city.

Meanwhile US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said on Friday a long-sought ceasefire between Israel and Palestinian militant group Hamas was within sight, saying negotiators were



Amid Israeli strikes on a residential building in Nuseirat in the central Gaza Strip on Saturday. Reuters

"driving toward the goal line."

Blinken told the Aspen Security Forum in Colorado that Hamas and Israel had agreed to the ceasefire framework outlined by US President Joe Biden in May after a lot of pushing and diplomacy, but said that some issues needed to be resolved.

"I believe we're inside the 10-yard line and driving toward the goal line in getting an agreement that would produce a ceasefire... There remains some issues that need to be resolved, that need to be negotiated. We're in the midst of doing exactly that," he said.

ISRAEL HITS HOEDEIDAH PORT IN YEMEN: HOUTHIS

Cairo: Israeli airstrikes targeted the Houthi-held Red Sea port of Hodeidah in Yemen, Al-Masirah TV, the main television news outlet run by Yemen's Houthi movement, reported on Saturday. The strikes against oil facilities in the port caused fatalities, Al-Masirah TV added, citing the health ministry. **REUTERS**

AFTER UNIFYING G.O.P. AT MILWAUKEE

Trump to hold joint Michigan rally with Vance, 1st campaign event after shooting

TIM REID
GRAND RAPIDS, JULY 20

DONALD TRUMP will hold his first campaign rally on Saturday since he narrowly escaped an assassination attempt one week ago and fresh from his nominating convention where his takeover of the Republican Party was cemented.

Trump will appear in Grand Rapids, in the battleground state of Michigan, along with his new vice presidential pick, Ohio U.S. Senator J.D. Vance. It will be their first campaign event together as the now official Republican presidential ticket.

Republican Party officials said during Trump's nominating convention in Milwaukee this week that his brush with death last Saturday had changed him, and that when he made his acceptance speech on Thursday night he would call for national unity.

It is unclear what type of a speech Trump will deliver on Saturday, but his diehard supporters typically flock to such events to hear Trump's more traditional inflammatory rhetoric.

Trump and Vance will take the stage in Grand Rapids with



Donald Trump with running mate J D Vance in Milwaukee earlier this week. AP

the Republican Party unified behind them after this week's nominating convention. In contrast, the Democrats are in turmoil and it is no longer certain that President Joe Biden will be the Democratic nominee facing Trump in the November 5 election.

Biden is trailing in opinion polls and is behind in every swing state against Trump. Many Democrats fear he may have virtually no path to victory and that the party needs a new presidential candidate to take on Trump.

The US Secret Service, which is responsible for protecting Trump, declined to comment on security for the Grand Rapids event. An investigation is under way into the security failures at the Butler rally. **REUTERS**

RACE FOR THE WHITE HOUSE

TURKISH CYPRIOTS SEE 1974 INVASION BY TURKEY AS SALVATION, BUT GREEK-SPEAKING POPULATION MARKS IT AS A CATASTROPHE

Celebrations and lamentations coincide 50 yrs after Cyprus's ethnic split

ASSOCIATED PRESS
NICOSIA, CYPRUS, JULY 20

TURKEY'S PRESIDENT on Saturday put a damper on hopes for a quick resumption of talks to heal a half-century of ethnic division on Cyprus, reaffirming his support for a two-state deal that Greek Cypriots dismiss as a non-starter.

Speaking ahead of a military parade to mark the 50th anniversary of a Turkish invasion that split the island along ethnic lines, President Recep Tayyip Erdogan ruled out a peace deal based on a United Nations-endorsed plan for federation. Although Erdogan has previ-

ously rejected the federation plan, Greece and the Greek Cypriots had hoped he would soften his position.

The anniversary is a festive occasion for Turkish Cypriots in the island's northern third, who view the invasion as salvation from the Greek-speaking majority's domination. The invasion followed a coup that aimed at a union with Greece, which was backed by the Junta then ruling in Athens.

In the south, the howl of air raid sirens at daybreak began a solemn day marking what Greek Cypriots remember as a catastrophe that left thousands of people dead or missing and displaced a quarter of the Greek

Cypriot population.

Erdogan's remarks may further complicate U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres' effort to get both sides back to the negotiating table. His personal envoy, Maria Angela Holguin Cuellar, has spent the past six months scoping both sides out.

"We will continue to fight with determination for the recognition of the TRNC (breakaway Turkish Cypriot state) and the implementation of a two-state solution," Erdogan told throngs of Turkish Cypriots lining the parade route in scorching heat in the northern half of the divided capital, Nicosia.

"A federal solution in Cyprus



Cyprus President Nicos Christodoulides at the memorial for the soldiers, killed during the 1974 Turkish invasion. AP

is not possible, this is what we believe... The Turkish Cypriot side, as equals with the Greek side, are willing to negotiate and are ready to sit down and negotiate. If you want a solution, you need to recognize the rights of Turkish Cypriots."

Turkish Cypriot leader Ersin Tatar reiterated that Turkish Cypriots reject "domination" by the Greek Cypriot majority and seek "equal national status" for their breakaway state they unilaterally declared in 1983, which is only recognized by Turkey. He added that there's now "no common ground" for a return to peace negotiations.

Referring to a recent resolution

in the Ankara parliament calling for a two-state solution, Tatar said it "will help us and our cause incredibly." The island's Greek Cypriot President Nikos Christodoulides urged Turkey and the Turkish Cypriots to re-engage in reunification talks if Ankara genuinely seeks regional security and stability and to nudge closer to the European Union.

After numerous failed rounds of peace negotiations, many Cypriots on both sides - although jaded - still hold out a glimmer of hope for a peace deal.

Greek Cypriot commemorations include the unveiling of memorials to fallen heroes, church services and a gathering

late Saturday at the Presidential Palace addressed - for the first time - by Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis.

Erdogan earlier presided over "golden jubilee" events, replete with a visit by Turkey's first amphibious assault ship to carry the country's potent Bayraktar drones, and an airshow.

The European Union, which Cyprus joined in 2004, urged both sides to show "genuine commitment" to a peace deal in line with U.N. resolutions.

"Too much time has been lost," an EU spokesperson said. "A forced division can never be a solution. Hope for a better future, a united Cyprus, still exists."

Classifieds PERSONAL

THIS IS CERTIFIED THAT MY FATHER SERVICE RECORD MY NAME MENTIONED IS VIJAY BUT MY CORRECT NAME IS VIJENDER KUMAR,S/O-RAMESH KUMAR,R/O-176-C-1,BLOCK,SULTAN PURI,NEW DELHI-110086. 0040739498-8

MY NAME POONAM WRONGLY WRITTEN IN BANK PASSBOOK,CORRECT NAME IS PUNAM RANI,W/O-VINOD KUMAR,J-1378 JAHANGIRPURI DELHI-33 0040739488-5

It is for general information that I,MOHD ASHFAQUE KHAN,S/O Khurshed Ahmad,R/o H.No-682,First-Floor,Gali.No-22 Madarse Wali Gali Zakir-Nagar Jamia-Nagar Okhla New Friends-colony South,Delhi-110025,declare that name of my-father has been wrongly written as Mohd Khurshed Khan in my 10th-class and 12th-class marksheet and certificate educational documents.The actual my father name is Khurshed Ahmad,Which may be amended accordingly. 0040739488-7

I,Narendra S/O Late Sh. Jaikaran Singh R/o Village Dallupura, Post Vasundhara Enclave, Delhi-110096, do hereby Solemnly affirm, confirm and declare that Narendra Singh and Narendra is one and the same Person 0070913766-1

I,Vipan Kumar Khera,S/o Gobind Ram,R/o C-3/149, Sector-36,Noida,Gautam Buddha Nagar, U.P.-201301, have changed my name to Vipan Kumar. 0040739488-6

I,UMED PARKASH,S/O BANWARI LAL, ADDRESS-BANWARILAL BHAWAN FAZILPUR JHARSA SECTOR-72,GURGAON, HARYANA-122101,HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO Umed prakash. 0040739472-10

I,UMA DASS W/O ANIMESH KUMAR DAS,R/O M-428 J COLONY,RAGHUBIR-NAGAR NEW DELHI,HAVE CHANGED NAME UMA DASS. 0040739496-9

I,Seena D/o Parmohd Sharma,R/O-A-8/F/Gali No-24,Guru Nanak Enclave,Chander Vihar,Delhi-110041, Have Changed My Name To Seena Sharma. 0040739472-6

I,SRIEETI D/o SH RAJ BHADUR SINGH,R/O X/1394,GALI NO,RAJGARH COLONY,GANDHI-NAGAR,DELHI-110031,have changed my name to PINKI AHARIYA,for all purposes. 0040739472-4

I,SHRADHA AGRAWAL,D/o VISHNU KUMAR AGRAWAL, R/O 3072/CC,8A, Ground-Floor,Ranjit-Nagar, Patel-Nagar, South,Delhi-110008, have changed my name to SHADHA, for all, future purposes. 0040739488-4

I,Renu Gupta,w/o Bal kishan bansal,R/O 4694/21a,Ansari Road,Daryaganj, Delhi-110002, have changed my name from Renu Gupta to Renu Bansal,for all, future purposes. 0040739472-1

I,Ranjeet Singh,S/o Jagdish,R/O H-26,H-Block,South City-2, Sector-49,Gurgaon (Haryana), have changed my to Ranjit Singh. 0040739496-3

I,RITU YADAV,W/O SH.DEVENDER YADAV,R/O 720,GALI.No.11,VEER BAZAR WALI GALI,KAPASHERA,SOUTH WEST DELHI, DELHI-110037, have changed my name from REETU YADAV to RITU YADAV,for all, future purpose. 0040739472-5

I,Purqan,S/O Rais Ahmad Bismil,R/O-A-124, Gali.No.-11,Chauhan Bangar,Delhi-110053, have changed my name,from Purqan to Furqan Ahmad,for all, future purposes. 0040739488-9

I,Pulkit Aggarwal S/o Anil Kumar,R/O 38/13, Shakti Nagar,Delhi,have changed my name to Pulkit Garg. 0040739472-3

I,PRASHANT GUPTA S/O ANIL KUMAR GUPTA R/O-2414/3,WARD-3,NAHAN(T), SIRMAUR,SIRMAUR,HIMACHAL PRADESH-173001,CHANGED MY MONOR DAUGHTER NAME YASHASWANI TO YASHASWANI GUPTA 0040739463-1

I,POOJA BANERJEE,W/O PUSHPLO BANERJEE,R/O-A-501,HRC PROFESSIONAL HUB VAIBHAV-KHAND, INDIRAPURAM GHAZIABAD,UP-201014,HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO PUJA BANERJEE, FOR ALL,FUTURE PURPOSES 0040739488-2

I,Naveen S/O Jai Bhagwan,R/O Village-Alipur (180),Gurgaon(Haryana)-122102, have changed my name to Naveen Dagar. 0040739496-1

I,NEERAJ GARG,S/O VINAY CHAND GARG,R/O-G-903,ADITYA MEGA CITY VAIBHAV-KHAND,INDIRAPURAM GHAZIABAD,UP-201014,HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO NIRAJ GARG,FOR ALL,FUTURE PURPOSES 0040739488-8

I,NALINKUMAR KHUSHALDAS MISTRY,S/O KHUSHALDAS CHAGANLAL MISTRY,R/O VILLA.No.13A,SECOND-FLOOR SS ALMERIA,SECTOR-84,GURGAON (HARYANA)-122004,HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO NALINKUMAR KHUSHALDAS MISTRY. 0040739496-4

I,SHILPI SINGH,W/O-Vivek Kumar Malik,R/O-B2-901,Radicon Vedantam,Gaur City-2,PS-Bishrakh,Tehsil-Dadri, Sector-16C,Dist:-Gautam Buddha Nagar, Greater Noida West, U.P.-201318, have changed my name to SHILPI MALIK for all purposes. 0040739530-1

I,Rajesh Kumar Verma S/O Putti Lal,R/O Kh.No.98/17/18, Gali No.11,Near Pump House,West Kamal Vihar Kamal Pur,Burari, Delhi-110084, have changed my name to Rajesh Kumar. 0040739530-2

I,Munish Kumari W/O-Shri Ajay Pal Singh R/O-E-9/672,Ganesh Nagar-2,Shakarpur,Delhi-110092,Changes my name to Manisha Singh For all purposes. 0040739530-3

I,Manoj Kumar,S/O-Babu Ram,R/O-8/5,Nakul Gali,Vishwas-Nagar,Shahdara Delhi-110032, have changed the name of my-minor son Mohan Lal Aged -14Years and he shall hereafter be known as Mohit Kumar. 0040739472-7

I,KIRAN SHARMA,D/O VILAS LAXMAN GHODKE,R/O FLAT,NO-207,2ND-FLOOR BLOCK-N9 SECTOR-D,NARMADA APARTMENT-VASANT KUNJ,DELHI-110070,have changed my name to KIRAN VILAS GHODKE. 0040739496-5

I,KIRAN SHARMA D/O VILAS LAXMAN GHODKE R/O-FLAT,NO-207 2ND-FLOOR BLOCK-N9 SECTOR-D,NARMADA APARTMENT,VASANT KUNJ,DELHI-110070,have changed my name to KIRAN VILAS GHODKE. 0040739496-5

I,DEVANTI W/O UMED PRAKASH,ADDRESS-BANWARILAL BHAWAN FAZILPUR JHARSA SECTOR-72,GURGAON, HARYANA-122101,HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO Umed prakash. 0040739472-10

I,Brajesh Kumar,S/O Ram Swarop,R/O B-146,Gali No.5, Top-Floor,Left-Side, Chhattarpur Pahari,Near BSES Office,Chhattarpur,South Delhi,Delhi-110074,declare that my name has been written as Brajesh Kumar Ramswaroop Nagar as per Maharashtra state Government policy of introduction of name along with father's name in my divorce decree dated-16/10/2019 passed by Shri K.P.Kshirsagar 2nd Jt.Civil Judge Senior Division,Nagpur. My correct-name is Brajesh Kumar. 0040739488-8

I,Beena Goyal/w/o Beena,S/O Shailender Goyal,R/O H.No.-96, Scheme.No.-1, Arya Nagar, Alwar, PO:Alwar, Dist. Alwar(Rajasthan)-301001,have changed my name to Bina Goyal. 0040739496-2

I,ANURAG AGARWAL,S/O ANAND KUMAR AGARWAL,ADDRESS-B-635,2ND FLOOR, ANSAL ESENCIA,SECTOR-67,GURGAON, HARYANA-122101,HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO ANURAGA AGARWAL. 0040739472-9

I,ADITYA KUMAR,R/O KH-1002,AMRAPALI VILLAGE,NYAY-KHAND-2, INDIRAPURAM,GAZIABAD,UP -201014,HAVE CHANGED NAME OF MY MINOR- DAUGHTER, FROM JIVISHA TO JIVISHA KUMAR, FOR ALL,FUTURE PURPOSES. 0040739488-3

I,Vijendra Singh S/O Hom Singh R/O Flat No.004, UGF, Tower C-1, Prateek Grand City,Siddharth Vihar, Ghaziabad, U.P.- 201009 that my name has been wrongly written as Vijandra Singh in my son's (Pramod Kumar) educational Documents. The actual myname is Vijendra Singh. 0040739399-1

I, Tripti Mishra, W/o Vikas Kumar Srivastava, residence B-1 Sector-20, Noida-201301, have changed my daughter name Meera Srivastava to Meera Mishra for all future purposes. Meera Srivastava and Meera Mishra both are same person. 0070913754-1

I, Sunita Choudhry @ Sunita W/o Sh. Ramchander Shokeen, R/O H.No. 282, Mangolpur Kalan, Delhi-85, have changed my name to Sunita Shokeen for all future purposes. 0040739452-1

I, Shubhra Pandey W/o Raghendra Pandey R/O E-145, Classic Apartments, Plot No 11, Dwarka Sector-22, Delhi-77 have declare that Shubhra Pandey and Shubra Pandey are one and the same person. My actual name is Shubhra Pandey. 0070913796-1

I, Sanjay Kumar S/O Sh. Ramesh chandra Srivastava R/O A-29, Pocket-C-2, Mayur Vihar, Phase-3, Delhi-110096, have changed my name from Sanjay Kumar to Sanjay Kumar Srivastava for all future purposes. Sanjay Kumar and Sanjay Kumar Srivastava both are same and one person. 0040739414-1

I, Sanabanu Mohamed Irfan Shaikh, C/O Mohamed Irfan Shaikh R/O 162, S/F, Pocket-2, Jasola, VTC: Jamia Nagar, PO: New Friends Colony, Sub Defence Colony, South Delhi-110025, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as Sayyed Sanabanu Haider 0070913789-1

I, DINESHA KAMATH KALASA SADANANDA, S/O SADANANDA KAMATH KALASA SUBBANNA, R/O-25, DEEN DAYAL UPADHYAY-MARG, DELHI-110022, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO DINESH KAMATH. 0040739463-2

I, Sourabh S/O Babu Lal R/O F-742, Raghbir Nagar, New Delhi, West Delhi, Delhi-110027, have changed my name to Sourabh Lal. 0130043628-1

I, SHIVPAL SINGH S/O Harpal Singh R/O B-317, Rajiv Gandhi Marg, Swarop Nagar, Delhi-110042, declare that name of mine has been wrongly written as Shiv Pal Singh in my minor daughter namely Arpita Rao aged 16 years in her 10 class marks statement cum certificate educational documents. The actual name of mine is Shivpal Singh, 0040739463-4

I, Ruchi D/o Sh. Ramchander Shokeen, R/O H.No. 282, Mangolpur Kalan, Delhi-85, have changed my name to Ruchi Shokeen for all future purposes. 0040739448-1

I, Ramchander S/o Sh. Jai Narain, R/O H.No. 282, Mangolpur Kalan, Delhi-85, have changed my name to Ramchander Shokeen for all future purposes. 0040739451-1

I, Pratibha W/o Pramod Jain R/O -H No-84, Deewan Estate, Main Kardam Marg, West Jyoti Nagar Delhi -110094 Have Changed My Name Pratibha Jain, For All Purposes. 0050246419-1

I, Om Prakash Yadav S/O Shri Shriram Yadav R/O 165/1, Ravindra Palli Post Indira Nagar, P.S.-Ghaziipur, Lucknow, have changed the name of my minor's daughter Sanskriti Yadav from Sanskriti Yadav to Sanskriti Krishna Yadav for all future purposes. 0090355145-1

I, Neetu Singh Bhati W/o Ravindra Kumar, R/O Flat.No.001, Moon Court, Tower-1, Jaypee Greens, Greater Noida, U.P. have changed my name to Nitu Devi for all future purposes. 0070913757-1

I, Mohit Kumar S/O Sukhbir Singh R/O House.No.10 Shyam Nagar, Okhla Phase-3 New Delhi-110020 have my father's name incorrectly spell SUKHBIR in my brother SC Certificate. The actual name of my father is SUKHBIR SINGH, which may be amended accordingly. 0070913750-1

I, MAHESH MATHUR S/O Ramchandra ji, 302 Mangaldeep Majestic, Opp. Birla School, Vaishali Avenue, Jodhpur Rajasthan-342008 have changed my name to MAHESH CHANDRA MATHUR for all purpose. 0070913758-1

I, KANWARMEET SINGH SEHGAL S/O SARUP SINGH SEHGAL R/O FLAT NO-82A, GROUND-FLOOR, AYODHYA ENCLAVE, SECTOR-13, ROHINI, DELHI-110085 HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO KANWAR MEET SEHGAL 0040739463-3

I, Jagdish Raj S/O Bhagwan Dass R/O Flat-No-214, DDA MIG-Flat, Metro Apartment, Jahangirpuri, Delhi-110033 have changed my name to Jagdish Raj Sharma 0070913759-1

I, Dipanshu Kumar S/O- No-15183300Y, Hav (RST) Deepak Kumar R/O-VIII -Saidpur, PO-Aat, Dist- Nalanda, Bihar-803114. In my father's service record my DOB has been wrongly mentioned as 18-10-2012 instead of 18-10-2013 as in my Birth Certificate & Aadhar Card. It needs to correction. Objections be filled to concern authority. 0020478694-1

I, Daljit Kaur D/o-Harwinder Kaur R/O A-129, Second Floor, Vipul World Sector-48, Gurugram, Haryana-122001 Have Changed My Name to Naishha Bagga for all Purposes. 0070913786-1

I, Bhoomik Mehra S/O Sunil Kumar, R/O D-12, Green Valley that my name has been wrongly written as Sunil Kumar Mehra in my 10th Class Certificate. The actual name of My Father is Sunil Kumar, which may be amended accordingly. 0070913787-1

I, Amandeep S/O Girish Kumar R/O B-210 Ram Park Loni Ghaziabad UP-201102 have changed my name to Amandeep Rana 0040739463-6

Iswati wife of (C/O)Ramesh Kumar, Residence of House no 205, 2nd floor, Ashoka Enclave part-3, vasundhara pocket, sec-35 Faridabad have changed my name to Swati sharma. 0070913728-1

I, Swaran Kanta Kakkar D/o Lachman Dass Dhoopar W/o Yash Pal Kakkar R/o 1-106, Naraina Vihar, South West Delhi, Delhi-110028 have changed my name to Swaran Kakkar for all purposes. 0040739379-1

I, Seema D/o Mohinder Pal and W/o Anil Aneja R/O Assan Kalan, Assan Kalan (21), Panipat, Haryana-132105, have changed my name to Anjali Mishra. 0070913788-1

I, PRASHANT KUMAR GUPTA S/O ANIL KUMAR GUPTA R/O-2414/3,WARD-3,NAHAN (T),SIRMAUR, SIRMAUR, HIMACHALPRADESH-173001,CHANGED MY NAME TO PRASHANT GUPTA 0040739463-2

I, Sourabh S/O Babu Lal R/O F-742, Raghbir Nagar, New Delhi, West Delhi, Delhi-110027, have changed my name to Sourabh Lal. 0130043628-1

Bride wanted BRAHMIN

Match for Brahmin Boy 12/07/1991, 5'-7", Australian PR, own business. Looking for a girl living in Australia. 98775-80977, +61421-597291

SUITEABLE Match for Handsome Yadav Boy 30/185, IT Engineer in MNC, Income 30 LPA, Seeking Educated Hindu Girl, No dowry, Caste No Contact: 9886253418, 8884086991.

PUBLIC NOTICE Information is given to general public at large that my client Mr. Manish Gupta who is the owner of Residential Property No. 120, Block A, situated at Sector-30, Connaught Place, New Delhi-110028, District Capital Budget Nagar, UP by virtue of Mutation Letter dated 05.07.2022 issued by Noida after the demise of Shakti Kumar Gupta and Radha Rani who were the owners of the said property...

PUBLIC NOTICE That my clients MR. MAHENDER KUMAR and MR. DEVENDER KUMAR, both S/O LATE SH. OM PARKASH and LEGAL HEIRS of deceased LATE SH. SURENDER KUMAR, LATE SH. NARENDER KUMAR, LATE SH. RAJENDER KUMAR and LATE SH. VIJENDER KUMAR all S/O LATE SH. OM PARKASH at NEW DELHI, wants to declare that they are selling the property bearing no. 1853, KHARI BAOLI, DELHI - 110006 to MR. SUKHWINDER SINGH, S/O SH. PRITESH SINGH, R/O 3072/CC, 8A, Ground-Floor, Ranjit-Nagar, Patel-Nagar, South, Delhi-110008, have changed my name to Nitu Devi for all future purposes. 0070913757-1

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I, Swaran Kanta Kakkar D/o Lachman Dass Dhoopar W/o Yash Pal Kakkar R/o 1-106, Naraina Vihar, South West Delhi, Delhi-110028 have changed my name to Swaran Kakkar for all purposes. 0040739379-1

I, Seema D/o Mohinder Pal and W/o Anil Aneja R/O Assan Kalan, Assan Kalan (21), Panipat, Haryana-132105, have changed my name to Anjali Mishra. 0070913788-1

I, PRASHANT KUMAR GUPTA S/O ANIL KUMAR GUPTA R/O-2414/3,WARD-3,NAHAN (T),SIRMAUR, SIRMAUR, HIMACHALPRADESH-173001,CHANGED MY NAME TO PRASHANT GUPTA 0040739463-2

I, Sourabh S/O Babu Lal R/O F-742, Raghbir Nagar, New Delhi, West Delhi, Delhi-110027, have changed my name to Sourabh Lal. 0130043628-1

DEATH ANNIVERSARY In Loving Memory of Mrs Krishna Garg (W/o Late Sh. R.S.Garg, Advocate) on her 8th Death Anniversary as well as Birth Anniversary Your life was a blessing, Your memory a treasure. You are loved beyond words & missed beyond measure. Fondly Remembered by: Garg Family, Radhey Krishna Legal Aid Foundation, Ajay Garg Adv (M): 9811109663

RECRUITMENT SITUATION VACANT OTHERS JOIN OUR TEAM AT VISIONIAS INSPIRING INNOVATION POSITION 1. CONTENT DEVELOPER 2. ENGLISH-HINDI TRANSLATOR (PRIOR EXPERIENCE) for GENERAL STUDIES Medium English / हिन्दी Work Mode Offline Only Location: Delhi

PUBLIC NOTICE My client Shri Satish Kumar Kawatra S/O Sh. Sewa Ram and his wife Smt. Kamlesh Kawatra W/o Sh. Satish Kumar Kawatra, R/o H.No.C-146, Sector-11, Rohini, Delhi-110 085 have disowned their son Sh. Mohit Kawatra and daughter-in-law Nikita Dhasar (Gupta), Do Sh. Dinesh Chandra Dhasar and Smt. Sunita Dhasar R/O H.No.46, Laxman Gali, Jhansi Khans, Jhansi City, Mauram Pur, Jhansi, Uttar Pradesh-204 002 disowned from all their movable and immovable property due to their bad behaviors and mental, physical, social and economic harassment as well as creating constrains by clients and their family members will not be responsible for any of their actions. Yogesh Kumar Ramola (Advocate)

PUBLIC NOTICE My clients Shri Raj Kumar Sharma and his wife Smt. Prem Rani, R/o House No. 117, Gali No.3, Durgapuri Extn, Shahdara, Delhi-110093, Have severed all Relations And Debarred their Daughter Namely Smt. Renu Sharma W/o Sh. Vinay Sharma and her both sons namely (1) Sushil @ akash and his wife Nidhi & (2) Gagan from their all movable-immovable properties & assets due to their misconduct, misbehavior & hostile attitude toward my clients. Both my clients will not be responsible for any acts of above named person in future. Sd/- MADHUR TYAGI (Advocate) Chamber No. B-106, BGS Block, Tis Hazari Courts, Delhi-110054

PUBLIC NOTICE My clients Shri Raj Kumar Sharma and his wife Smt. Prem Rani, R/o House No. 117, Gali No.3, Durgapuri Extn, Shahdara, Delhi-110093, Have severed all Relations And Debarred their Daughter Namely Smt. Renu Sharma W/o Sh. Vinay Sharma and her both sons namely (1) Sushil @ akash and his wife Nidhi & (2) Gagan from their all movable-immovable properties & assets due to their misconduct, misbehavior & hostile attitude toward my clients. Both my clients will not be responsible for any acts of above named person in future. Sd/- MADHUR TYAGI (Advocate) Chamber No. B-106, BGS Block, Tis Hazari Courts, Delhi-110054

COURT NOTICE (Order 5, Rule 20 of the Code of Civil Procedure) IN THE COURT OF SH. DINESH BHATT, LD. PRINCIPAL JUDGE (NORTH-WEST FAMILY COURTS, ROHINI, DELHI) Case No.HMA 1008/22 POOJA RANI KOCCHAR VS GIRISH KHURANA To GIRISH KHURANA S/O VIJAY KHURANA R/O HNO. 147/91, TRI NAGAR, DELHI-35. WHEREAS you are intentionally evading service of summons it is hereby notified that if you shall not attend the case on 13.08.24, The day fixed for the final disposal, it will be heard and determined ex-parte. Given under my hand and seal of the Court this 9TH Day of JULY, 2024. Sd/- SH. DINESH BHATT, LD. PRINCIPAL JUDGE NORTH-WEST DISTRICT FAMILY COURTS, ROHINI, DELHI

NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY Notice of Inviting E-Tender Dy. CME /Carriage Workshop, Ajmer North Western Railway acting for and on behalf of The President of India invites E-Tender no. Carriage-13-2024 Date 19.07.2024. Bidders will be able to submit their original/revised bids up to closing date and time only. Manual offers are not allowed against this tender and any such manual offer received shall be ignored. Details are as under: Name of work with its location: "POH of IR-DRO Type Bio Toilets fitted in IR coaches in Carriage Workshop, NWR, Ajmer (As per Scope of Work)". Approx. cost of the work: ₹ 1,04,45,047.92. Tender Document Cost: ₹ 00.00 Earnest Money to be deposited: ₹ 2,02,200/- . Date and time for submission of E-Tender: Submission of E-Tender up to 12.08.2024 at 15.00 Hrs. Website particular: www.irebs.gov.in Eligibility criteria: Applicable. Note: Tender document cost & Earnest Money to be deposited online through payment gateway facility on the IREPS website only. 837-AR/24 Follow us on: NWRRailways NWRRailways

WEST CENTRAL RAILWAY Electrical Department (TRD Branch), Jabalpur e-TENDER NOTICE: No. JBP/TRD/Tender/2024/15 date: 18.07.2024 Senior Divisional Electrical Engineer (TRD) West Central Railway Jabalpur for and on behalf of the President of India invite sealed tenders from the reputed and experienced contractors having valid Electrical License issued in the name of firm by State Government as required under IE rules, 1956 with one of the partners or in his own name if sole proprietor. Name of work: Annual overhauling of Auto Tensioning Device (ATD) of Bina (excluding)-Katni (excluding) section of Jabalpur Division for a period of 2 years. Place of work: Jabalpur Division. Completion period: 24 months. Tender value (Cost of the work): Rs. 92.71,256.80/- (Rs. Ninety Two Lakh Seventy One Thousand Two Hundred Fifty Six and Eighty Paise only). Earnest money: Rs. 1,85,400.00/-. Date & Time for submission/opening of tender: 23.08.2024 15:00 Hrs / 23.08.2024 15:30 Hrs. Website address: https://www.irebs.gov.in, Tenderers are advised to regularly visit IREPS website "https://www.irebs.gov.in" to note any changes/corrigendum. Minimum eligibility criteria as per tender form shall be applicable for this tender. Sr. DEE/TRD/WCR, Jabalpur

WESTERN RAILWAY - VADODARA DIVISION GATI SHAKTI DEPARTMENT e-TENDER NOTICE NO. CPM-GSENGG-BRC-05-24-25 Sealed Tenders for and on behalf of the President of India are invited by Chief Project Manager (Gati Shakti), Western Railway, Pratrapnagar, Vadodara-390 004 for the following works: i) E-Tender No. CPM-GSENGG-BRC-05-2024-25 ii) Name of Work: Vadodara Division: Supplying and installation of GRC cladding elements at old and new Station Buildings at Pratrapnagar Station. iii) Approximate Cost of work: ₹ 1,23,36,264.63/- (Rupees One Crore Twenty Three Lakhs, Thirty Six Thousand Two Hundred Sixty Four and Sixty Three Paise Only) iv) Earnest Money to be deposit: ₹ 2,11,700/- (Rupees Two Lakhs, Eleven Thousand, Seven Hundred Only) v) Availability of online Tender for bidding: From 26.07.2024 at 11:00 Hrs. to 09.08.2024 up to 15:00 Hrs. Opening of Technical Bid Date and time: 09.08.2024 at 15:30 Hrs. vi) Regarding detailed notice containing cost of tender document (non refundable), EMD, eligibility criteria, Similar Nature of work, detailed tender conditions, please visit www.irebs.gov.in Manual offers will not be considered. 129 Like us on: facebook.com/WesternRly

NORTH EASTERN RAILWAY E-Tender Notice Dy. Chief Electrical Engineer/ Colony, N.E. Railway, Gorakhpur/ & behalf of President of India Invites "OPEN" E-Tender through online (e-tendering) for the following work: Sl.No.-1, Tender Notice No. & Description of Work: 09-2024-Colony, Name of work: Provision of IOT devices/intelligent field devices (IFDs) for monitoring & control (Indian Railway Native IOT based yield Analysis Telemetry, Recording and Control-IR-NIYANTRAC) of Electrical General assets like Pumps, Street lighting, Lifts and Substation etc. Approx. Value: ₹ 1,34,25,828/-, E.M.D. Money (Rs.): ₹ 2,17,100/-, Cost of Tender Form (Rs.): Zero, Completion time/Period from the date of issue of acceptance letter-06 Months. E-Tender online will be submitted upto 15:00 hrs. on dated 07-08-2024. Manual offer are not allowed against these tenders and any such manual offer received shall be ignored. For full details and submission of bid please see the Indian Railway IREPS official website http://www.irebs.gov.in Dy. Chief Electrical Engineer/ Colony CPRO/Viduyt-82 Gorakhpur Never travel on roof and foot boards. 839-AR/24 Follow us on: NWRRailways NWRRailways

KERALA WATER AUTHORITY e-Tender Notice Tender No : 20.21.22.23.24.25.26.27.28.29/SE/PHCTSR/2024-25 2.JIM-Desamangalam Pr. Construction of 27.50L GLSR-JJM-WSS to Kandamassery Pr-Construction of 10L OHSR-3, JIM-Construction of 8L OHSR-5 JIM-WSS to Chakkara Construction of 6 m dia intake well cum Pump house, 6. JIM-Construction of 15L OHSR-7,CWSS TO NATTIKA FIRKA. Extension of Pumping main from Mahalakshmi pt boundary to Amador and Pothankal OHSR IN SN Puran pt.8. JIM- WSS to Thiruvalluvar-Construction of 6m dia Intake Well cum Pump house 2.JIM-Construction of 5 L OHSR, and Compound wall to Gramamur, 10.JIM-CWSS TO NATTIKA FIRKA -Extension of Gravity main pipe EIS road to Perinjannam OHSR KHEB-AU/WS to Chalakudy-Refining damaged 400 mm AC gravity main with 400 mm ØP pipe from Vazhakkam Church to Unnabhakam Canal. EMD: Rs. 30,000/-,1,00,000/- Tender fee: Rs. 5,000/-,8,500/- Last Date for submitting Tender : 06-08-2024 03:00pm Phone : 0487-242330 Website : www.kwa.kerala.gov.in www.tenders.kerala.gov.in KWA-JB-GI-6-233-2024-25 Superintending Engineer PH Circle Thrissur

UJVN LIMITED (An Uttarpradesh Govt. Enterprise) H.O. "UJVALMI" MAHARAJ SAHJ, GME ROAD, DEHRADUN-248008, U.P. India. Contact No. 04220102010202030888. Tel:- 0135-2765308, 2763890, Fax: 0135-2763307, website: www.ujvnl.com Tender No.618 Tender Notice Date: 20.07.2024 Office of the Executive Engineer (M&G) Kulhal Power Station, Kulhal, invites sealed tenders from interested parties. Brief summary of tender is given below: Tender No.05/UJVN/LEE (M&G)/KPS/2024-25 "Annual Maintenance Contracts (AMC) for Colony Maintenance work (Elec/Mech) at Kulhal Power Station" Estimated cost: ₹ 24,19,754/- GST Extra Date of availability of bid document on website:

HIMACHAL PRADESH STATE ELECTRONICS CORPORATION LIMITED
 1st & Ground Floor, I.T. Bhawan, Mehli, Shimla -171 013
 Tel. No. 0177-2623259, 2623513, 2626320, 2623513, 2623041, FAX:0177-2626320
 Website: www.hpsedc.in
 File No. HPSEDC/PWMU/2K24-5167
 E-Office File No. 131914
 Dated: 19-07-2024

E-TENDER NOTICE
 e-Tenders are invited from eligible bidders for procurement of Machinery for Plastic Waste Management Unit. Pre-Bid meeting will be held on 29/07/2024 (11:30AM) through Video Conferencing.
 Last date for online e-bid submission is 12/08/2024 (upto 02:30 PM) and shall be opened on 13/08/2024 at 2:30PM. Detailed Tender Document containing Technical Specifications and Terms & Conditions are available on HPSEDC website www.hpsedc.in and <https://hptenders.gov.in>.
 No. 0195/2024-2025 General Manager (Technical)

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER, P.W.D. KANKER CIRCLE KANKER (C.G.)
e-Procurement Tender Notice
 Online tenders are invited for Construction Of Building work, up to Date 06/08/2024

Sr. No.	NIT No.	System Tender No.	Name of Work	Probable Amount of Contract.	Tender Downloaded upto
1	2	3	4	5	6
01	03	156203	Balance Work For Construction of Administrative Cum Academic Building At Polytechnic i/c Water Supply and Electrification work at Kondagaon.	176.93 Lakh	06.08.2024

All Documents related to Tender are to be submitted by Tenderers online only, failing which the tenderer can not participate in the bidding, for tender details please visit <https://proc.cgstate.gov.in>
 Note:- 1st Call
 sd/-
 Superintending Engineer
 P.W.D, Kanker Circle
 Kanker

NORTHERN RAILWAY TENDER NOTICE
 The Dy. Chief Electrical Engineer/Gati Shakti Unit/Delhi. DRM Office, New Delhi-110055 invites e-tender for the under noted work, hence it has been uploaded to IREPS website on date 21.07.2024.

Tender Notice No.	18-R-DyCEE-GSU-DLI-24-25
Name of work and location	Augmentation & Improvement in electrical infrastructure at Freight Examination Points at Tughlakabad & Shakurbasti.
Approximate cost earlier	₹1,90,81,337/-
Earnest Money amount (to be deposited Online) Now	₹2,45,400/-
Date & time for submission of E-tender and opening of tender now	Tenders uploaded on dated 21.07.2024 on IREPS web site i.e. www.ireps.gov.in . The bidders can participate in the tender, the tender will be opened at 11:30 hrs on 12.08.2024.
Detail tender notice & tender document now	The detailed e-tender notice is available on Northern Railway website i.e. www.nr.indianrailways.gov.in and tender document is available on www.ireps.gov.in . Above tender document will be available for submission of offer on IREPS website i.e. www.ireps.gov.in from 27.07.2024 to 12.08.2024. All other terms and conditions in respect of above tenders are given in tender document. The detailed tender notice also can be seen on the Notice Board of the above office.

NIT No.: 18-R-DyCEE-GSU-DLI-24-25 Dated : 19.07.2024 2203/2024
 SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

छत्तीसगढ़ राज्य बाल संरक्षण समिति
संचालनालय, महिला एवं बाल विकास विभाग
 द्वितीय तल, इन्द्रावती भवन, अटल नगर रायपुर, छत्तीसगढ़
 दूरभाष क्रमांक 0771-2234192, 2234188 (Fax) email- dirwed.cg@nic.in
 क्रमांक/4267/ मबावि/मि.रा./ सार/2024-25 रायपुर, दिनांक 19/07/2024

अभिरूचि का प्रस्ताव

फिरोज न्याय (बालकों को देखरेख एवं संरक्षण) अधिनियम 2015 तथा संशोधित 2021 को धारा 41 के प्रावधानों के तहत जिले में प्राप्त होने वाले देखरेख और संरक्षण की आवश्यकता वाले 06 वर्ष से कम आयु के बालकों तथा अनाथ, बेसहारा, पलितक, अश्विनि, बाल शिशु बाल तस्वीर से पीड़ित, शोषण का शिकार, सड़क पर रहने वाले आदि बालकों को संरक्षण प्रदान करने के लिए जिले में बाल देखरेख संस्था तथा विभिन्न दत्तक ग्रहण अभिकरण के संचालन के इच्छुक अनुभव एवं योग्य अशासकीय संस्था/संगठन से जिला बालीक, बलीकबाजार, बलरामपुर, बेमेतर, बीजापुर, धमतरी, गौला-पेण्ड्रा-मवाही, गौराबंद, जाजगीर-चापा, राकि, कोण्डगांव, कोरिया, मनेन्द्रगढ़-चिरमिरी-भलरपुर, मुंरीली, नारायणपुर, सारंगद-बिलाईगढ़, मोहला-मानपुर-अंबागढ़ चौकी, खैरागढ़-मंड-खूंखदान, सुकमा एवं पूरुवापुर (छ.ग.) हेतु आवेदन पत्र आमंत्रित किये जाते हैं।

विशिश्ट दत्तक ग्रहण अभिकरण संचालित किये जाने हेतु शर्तें :-

- संस्था/संगठन संचालन हेतु आवेदन करते समय संस्था/संगठन का सुसंगत अधिनियम, (सोसायटी रजिस्ट्रेशन अधिनियम 1973) के तहत पंजीवन होना अनिवार्य है।
- संस्था / संगठन के पास बाल कल्याण के क्षेत्र में कार्य करने का अनुभव हो।
- संस्था नीति अधिनियम दर्शन पोर्टल पर पंजीकृत हो।
- विशेषज्ञ दत्तक ग्रहण अभिकरण 10 वर्षों को अपना बाली बाल देखरेख संस्था के रूप में संचालित होगा।

जिले में बाल देखरेख संस्था के संचालन हेतु इच्छुक, अशासकीय संस्था/संगठन द्वारा निर्धारित प्रारूप (प्रारूप 27) में आवेदन संबंधित जिले के जिला कार्यक्रम अधिकारी / जिला बाल संरक्षण अधिकारी महिला एवं बाल विकास विभाग के समक्ष आवेदन निर्धारित तिथि 06.08. 2024 तक प्रस्तुत किये जा सकते हैं। आवेदन पत्र प्रारूप (प्रारूप 27) एवं आवेदन के साथ संलग्न किये जाने वाले दस्तावेजों को जानकारी, जिलों का पत्राचार का पता विभाग की वेबसाइट www.cgwcd.gov.in, एवं www.cgstate.gov.in में उपलब्ध है।

(तुलिका प्रजापति)
 संचालक
 संच. महिला एवं बाल विकास एवं संचिब
 राज्य बाल संरक्षण समिति, इन्द्रावती भवन
 नया रायपुर, अटल नगर (छ.ग.)

कार्यपालक अभियंता का कार्यालय
ग्रामीण कार्य विभाग, कार्य प्रमंडल दुमका
ई-निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना
 निविदा संख्या- 03/2024-25/RWD/EE/DUMKA दिनांक- 19.07.2024

1. कार्यपालक अभियंता ग्रामीण कार्य विभाग, कार्य प्रमंडल, दुमका द्वारा निम्न विवरणी के अनुसार E-procurement पद्धति से निविदा आमंत्रित की जाती है।

क्र. सं.	आईडीटीफिकेशन संख्या / पैकेज संख्या	कार्य का नाम	प्रारंभिक (कि०मी०)	प्राक्कलित राशि (रु० में अंक में)	कार्य समाप्ति की अवधि
1	RWD/DUMKA/10/2024-25	निदबोना से छोटी रणबहियार तक पथ निर्माण कार्य।	7.750	9,02,29,800.00	नौ करोड़ दो लाख उनतीस हजार अठार सौ।

- वेबसाइट में निविदा प्रकाशन की तिथि 29.07.2024
- ई-निविदा प्राप्ति की अंतिम तिथि एवं समय 20.08.2024 अपराह्न 5:00 बजे तक।
- निविदा शुल्क एवं अग्रघन की राशि Online के माध्यम से जमा किया जाएगा।
- निविदा खोलने की तिथि 22.08.2024 एवं समय पूर्वाह्न 11:30 बजे।
- निविदा आमंत्रित करने वाले पदाधिकारी का नाम एवं पता- कार्यपालक अभियंता, ग्रामीण कार्य विभाग, कार्य प्रमंडल, दुमका।
- ई-निविदा प्रकोष्ठ का सम्पर्क संख्या- 06434 291033
- विस्तृत जानकारी के लिए jharkhandtenders.gov.in/ नोटिस बोर्ड में देखा जा सकता है।

कार्यपालक अभियंता,
 ग्रामीण कार्य विभाग, कार्य प्रमंडल दुमका
 PR 330158 Rural Work Department(24-25)#D

झारखण्ड सरकार
कार्यपालक अभियंता का कार्यालय ग्रामीण विकास विशेष प्रमंडल, हजारीबाग
ई- अल्पकालीन निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना
ई-निविदा सं० :- RDSPL/SD/HZB/08/2024-25

1.कार्य की विस्तृत विवरणी:

क्र. सं.	आईडीटीफिकेशन संख्या / पैकेज संख्या	प्रणाल्य	योजना का नाम	प्राक्कलित राशि	अग्रघन की राशि	परिमाण विवरण का मूल्य	कार्य पूर्ण करने की अवधि
1.	RDSPL/SD/HZB/08/01/2024-25	बड़कागांव	पंचायत बड़कागांव पहिली अंशगत मण्टीकावा नगर रोड एवं चर्च रोड हेतु हुए किरायागत तक पथ निर्माण।	19480900.00	389700.00	10000.00	6 माह
2.	RDSPL/SD/HZB/08/02/2024-25	बड़कागांव	नरसुला पंचायत भवन से कांवरिया तक कालीकरण कार्य।	38486300.00	769800.00	10000.00	9 माह
3.	RDSPL/SD/HZB/08/03/2024-25	केरौली	पंचायत केरौली के ग्राम केमो में सामुदायिक भवन से लकवाही तक पथ निर्माण।	16704400.00	334100.00	10000.00	6 माह

- वेबसाइट में निविदा प्रकाशन की तिथि - 01.08.2024
- ई-निविदा प्राप्ति की तिथि एवं समय - दिनांक 01.08.2024 को अपराह्न 5:00 बजे तक
- ई-निविदा खोलने का स्थान - कार्यपालक अभियंता का कार्यालय, ग्रामीण विकास विशेष प्रमंडल, हजारीबाग
- ई-निविदा खोलने की तिथि एवं समय - 10.08.2024 अपराह्न 2:00 बजे
- ई-निविदा आमंत्रित करने वाले पदाधिकारी का नाम एवं पता - कार्यपालक अभियंता, ग्रामीण विकास विशेष प्रमंडल, हजारीबाग
- ई-निविदा प्रकोष्ठ का दूरभाष सं० - 9430154806
- परिमाण विवरण की राशि घट-बढ़ सकती है तदनुसार अग्रघन की राशि देय होगी।
- निविदा शुल्क एवं अग्रघन की राशि केवल Online Mode द्वारा स्वीकार्य होगी।
- निविदा शुल्क एवं अग्रघन की राशि का ई-मुगतान जिस खाता से किया जायेगा, उसी खाते में अग्रघन की राशि वापस होगी।
- विस्तृत जानकारी के लिये वेबसाइट www.jharkhandtenders.gov.in एवं कार्यालय की सूचना पत्र पर देखा जा सकता है।

कार्यपालक अभियंता
 ग्रामीण विकास विशेष प्रमंडल,
 हजारीबाग
 PR 330169 Rural Development(24-25)#D

CONFERENCE — NDIM
 NDIM faculty attended the 3rd Cyber Security Conference organized by the Global Counter Terrorism Council, where presiding Chief Guest, Hon'ble V.P. Jagdeep Dhankhar addressed the valedictory session, emphasizing the urgent need for legal aid for cyber crime victims. Acknowledging the rise in cyber crime incidents with the growing digital penetration in the country, Dhankhar pointed out that this is a new concern for agencies, investigators, regulators.

EVENT — AMITY UNIVERSITY
 A high-level Ministerial Delegation from Uzbekistan visited Amity University comprising of Salaev Sanat Kamilovich, DG of Khorezm Region, Head of Delegation, Ambassador of Uzbekistan, Abdullave Bobur Sagguldalievich, Director of Amity University in Tashkent along with 12 other members from various institutions. The aim of the visiting delegation was to explore the areas of collaborative growth and opportunity through joint partnership.

EVENT — NIFTEM-K
 From enchanting performances to electrifying competitions & tantalising culinary delights, there was something to captivate every soul at EDESA, an annual cultural festival of NIFTEM-K. The highlight of the fest was a live performance by Bollywood singer Yasser Desai. Yasir started the programme by singing one of his superhit song 'Hum To Deewane' and enthralled the audience with his melodious voice.

PROJECT — RAMJAS
 Project Waraq, initiated by Enactus Ramjas in 2021. This innovative project produces biodegradable & re-plantable plates made from agricultural waste. These plates are embedded with vegetable seeds that can germinate into plants when sown in the soil after use. This not only addresses stubble burning and plastic waste but also promotes a circular economy. By adopting these sustainable alternative you contribute to healthier communities.

PROGRAM — VELLORE INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
 The Vellore Institute of Technology Chennai campus inaugurated its month-long Freshers' Induction Programme-2024 for undergraduate programmes in CS, Economics, Fashion Design, Law, Management, & Commerce. Dr. G. Viswanathan, Founder-Chancellor of VIT, presided over the ceremony alongside Dr. Sekar Viswanathan, VP of VIT. Dr. T.Thyagarajan, Pro VC of VIT Chennai, delivered the welcome address, emphasizing the institution's commitment to academic excellence and student development.

MOU — TIET
 Thapar Institute of Engineering & Technology recently announced the signing of an MOU & collaboration with NVIDIA to establish the Thapar School of Advanced AI & Data Science, with technical support from the NVIDIA AI Univ. program. We are excited about the opportunity to est. this AI school, in technical collaboration with NVIDIA. This work will not only bridge the gap in AI expertise but also pave the way for cutting-edge research and innovation in this transformative field.

CORPORATE BRIEFS
EDUCATION
WORKSHOP — SUSHANT UNIVERSITY
 In a remarkable initiative aimed at enhancing life-saving skills, Dr. Khalid, a prominent doctor from Max hospital conducted a Basic Life Support & CPR workshop at Sushant University. This practical demonstration, aimed primarily at faculty members, emphasized the importance of immediate response during cardiac emergencies. The session was conducted using a high-fidelity mannequin.

PROGRAM — NIFTEM-K
 National Institute of Food Technology Entrepreneurship and Mgmt, Kundli under MoFPI has launched its 2nd training - cum - internship programme on food technology entrepreneurship devl. This 4 week programme aims to enhance the technical competency of UG students. Dr. H.S Oberoi, Dir., NIFTEM-K emphasized that the programme is designed to bridge the gap b/w academic knowledge & industrial applications.

CONFERENCE — I.T.S. DENTAL COLLEGE
 I.T.S. Gzb organized the 20th Annual National Conference in association with Indian Association of Forensic Odontology under the aegis of Department of Oral Pathology & Forensic Odontology. The conference aimed at comprehensive understanding of forensic odontology & its applications. The commencement of the conference was through conduction of two preconference hands on workshops.

MOU — AMITY UNIVERSITY, NOIDA
 Amity University in collaboration with Bharat Forge Ltd., Pune, organized "Bhartiya Raksha Vimarsha" on the theme "Defence Technology & Integrated Joint Warfighting Perspective". On this historic occasion an MoU was also signed between Bharat Forge Ltd. & Amity University to strengthen the industry-academia partnership in the defence sector. Chief Guest, Padma Bhushan, Shri Baba Kalyani, Chairman and Managing Director Bharat Forge Ltd.

CONFERENCE — PRESTIGE EDUCATION FOUNDATION
 Prestige Education Foundation holds a high level international conference on Quantum Computing, titled Opportunities & Technologies BEYOND VISIBILITY at Hotel Marriott, Indore. This prestigious event gathered global dignitaries & experts from the USA, Israel, Germany & Italy, alongside key representatives from India's Central & State Governments. Three major MOUs were signed with key global companies for putting up *Centre of Excellence for Quantum Computing* which will conduct training & education along with technology projects.

ENGINEERING WORK UNDER TINSUKIA DIVISION
E-TENDER NOTICE NO. TSK/Engg/40 of 2024, dated 18-07-2024. E-tender are invited by the undersigned for the following work. Item No.1; Brief Description of item: Provision of rail crash barrier under the Jurisdiction of Sr. DEN/ITinsukia. Tender Value: ₹1,97,47,957/-; Earnest Money: ₹2,48,700/- Item No.2; Brief Description of item: At Namtiali. Provision of additional loop line with simultaneous reception facilities. Tender Value: ₹1,71,24,571/-; Earnest Money: ₹2,35,600/- E-tender will be closed at 15:00 hrs on 12-08-2024 and opened at 16:00 hrs on 12-08-2024. The complete information with the tender document of above e-tender will be available upto 15:00 hrs. of 12-08-2024 in website www.ireps.gov.in
 DRAM (Work)/Tinsukia
 NORTH EAST FRONTIER RAILWAY
 Serving Customers with a smile

Nivida No.06 of 2024-25 CORRIGENDUM No.2
 Following rectification is made in Tender Notice No.06 of 2024-25 of Executive Engineer, Ver-II Project Division, Vyara PIN CODE NO.394650 Phone No. 02626-222090 Dist: Tapi.

Event	New Date	
1	2	3
1	Last date of Online Tender upload	09/08/2024 Up to 18.00 Hrs.
2	Physical Document Submission of Date	Up to 22/08/2024 at 18.00 Hrs.
3	Pre-bid Conference	Dt.29/07/2024 at 12.00 Hrs. Office of Committee Room, Block No.9 Fourth floor, New Sachivalaya, Gandhinagar. For Online Pre-bid Meeting link Plz. Contact Division Office.
4	P.Q. Bid Opening Date & Time	12/08/2024, at 12.00 Hrs. in the Office of the Superintending Engineer, Ukai Circle (Civil), Ukai

Other conditions remain unchanged. No.: INF-Surat/329/2024

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY
TENDER NOTICE No. AGC-ELG-T-11R2-2024-25 Date : 19-07-2024
E-Tendering Tender Notice
 Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer (General) N. C. Railway, Agra on behalf of President of India invites "Open Tender" through on line only (E-Tendering) for the following works.
Tender No.: AGC-ELG-T-11R2-2024-25] Approx. Cost of work Rs. : 1235674.12
Name of work with its location & Completion Period: (A) Electrification work for Provision of 02 nos. of Borewells at south colony Agra cantt. (B) Electrification work for Provision of 02 nos. Borewell in North Colony Agra Cantt.
Completion period : 08 months
 * For full details and submission of bid please see the Indian Railways website www.ireps.gov.in * Tenders can only be submitted through web portal www.ireps.gov.in up to 15:00 hrs on 14.08.2024. 1261/24 (D)
 North central railways @ www.nr.indianrailways.gov.in @ northcentralrailway @ [CPNRCR](https://cpnrcr)
UJVN LIMITED
 H.O.: "UJJWAL", Maharani Bagh, G.M.S. Road, Dehradun-248006
 Telephone- 0135-2763508, 2763808 Fax 0135-2763507
 CIN No.U40101UR20015G0025866, Website:www.ujvnl.com
 Letter No: 619 e-TENDER NOTICE Date: 20/07/2024
 Office of the Executive Engineer PCM Dhalipur, Dehradun invites online bids from interested parties. Brief summary of the tender is given below:
E-Tender No: 03/EE/PCM/Dhalipur/2024-25
Name of work: Re-furbishment of damaged structures of Syphon located at km 3.25 and km 3.68 of power Channel between Asan Barrage to Kulhal Power House
Estimated value of Tender: Rs. 75,87,354.00 (excluding GST)
Date & Time of availability of bid document on website - From 17:00 Hrs of 22.07.2024
Last Date & Time for submission of tender: Up to 17:00 Hrs 12.08.2024
 For fuller & further details, kindly visit e-procurement portal <http://uktenders.gov.in> Executive Engineer(PCM)
 "AVOID WASTEFUL USE OF ELECTRICITY"

KARNATAKA INDUSTRIAL AREAS DEVELOPMENT BOARD
 (A Government of Karnataka Undertaking)
49, 2nd Wing, 4th & 5th Floor, Khanija Bhavan, Race Course Road, Bengaluru - 560 001. Phone No. 080-22265383, website : www.kiadb.in, email: cdcoe1@kiadb.in

No.IADB/ENGG/PMC/EPTND-EP-06/320/2024-25 Date: 19.07.2024

SHORT TERM NOTICE INVITING TENDER FOR PROVIDING PROJECT MANAGEMENT CONSULTANCY SERVICES
 (Through GOK Karnataka Public Procurement Portal Only)

KIADB is inviting tender under Quality Based Consultancy System (QCBS) as per the Karnataka Transparency in Public Procurement Act 1999 and Rules 2000 through electronic procurement from eligible Consulting Firms under two cover system for the following work:

Name of the Work : Project Management Consultancy Services for the work of Construction of 10MLD Tertiary Treatment Plant near Bidadi at Byramangala Lake on Vrishabhavathi River for Supplying to Bidadi, Shanamangala & Harohalli Industrial Areas, Including Operation and Maintenance for a period of 10 Years (2nd Call).

The last date and time of receipt of tender is : **05.08.2024 upto 16.30 hrs.**
 Applicants May Download Bidding Documents from the E-Procurement Portal <https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in>.
 Sd/-
Chief Engineer-1, KIADB Bengaluru
 DIPRC/P/1005/Zen/2024-25

कार्यपालक अभियंता का कार्यालय
ग्रामीण विकास विशेष प्रमंडल, गोड्डा
ई-निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना
ई- निविदा सूचना संख्या - RWD/SD/GODDA/06/2024-25

1. कार्य की विस्तृत विवरणी-

क्रम / घुच सं०	कार्य का नाम	प्राक्कलित राशि	अग्रघन की राशि	परिमाण विवरण का मूल्य	कार्य पूर्ण करने की अवधि
1	गोड्डा जिला के सुन्दरपहाड़ी प्रखण्ड अनर्गत बड़ा पाकरी पंचायत के पाडीर राजाभिट्टा के बीच पुल निर्माण।	4,01,55,400.00	8,03,500.00	10,000.00	18 माह
2	गोड्डा जिला के बोआरीजोर प्रखण्ड के राजाभिट्टा पंचायत के ग्राम नारायणपुर चरका के पास सुन्दर नदी में पुल निर्माण।	2,94,48,000.00	5,89,000.00	10,000.00	18 माह
3	गोड्डा जिला के सुन्दरपहाड़ी प्रखण्ड अनर्गत बांसजोरी पंचायत के कोआरवाडा सबलपुर नदी में पुल निर्माण।	2,42,65,300.00	4,85,500.00	15 माह	
4	गोड्डा जिला के सुन्दरपहाड़ी प्रखण्ड अनर्गत बमकाहाट पंचायत के मोरवाडी एवं अमरहाट के बीच नदी में पुल निर्माण।	1,72,96,800.00	3,46,000.00	10,000.00	15 माह
5	गोड्डा जिला के सुन्दरपहाड़ी प्रखण्ड अनर्गत बांसजोरी पंचायत के जामडीह एवं सिमलगाव के बीच कपारी नदी में पुल निर्माण।	1,77,79,500.00	3,55,600.00	10,000.00	15 माह
6	गोड्डा जिला के बोआरीजोर प्रखण्ड के डुमरीया पंचायत के ग्राम डुमरीया और तुलसीपुर के बीच नदी पर पुल निर्माण।	1,94,67,000.00	3,89,500.00	10,000.00	15 माह

- वेबसाइट में निविदा प्रकाशन की तिथि - 26.07.2024
- ई-निविदा प्राप्ति की तिथि एवं समय - दिनांक 28.07.2024 से दिनांक 08.08.2024 को अपराह्न 5:00 बजे तक
- ई-निविदा खोलने का स्थान - कार्यपालक अभियंता का कार्यालय, ग्रामीण विकास विशेष प्रमंडल, गोड्डा।
- ई-निविदा आमंत्रित करने वाले पदाधिकारी का नाम एवं पता - कार्यपालक अभियंता, ग्रामीण विकास विशेष प्रमंडल, गोड्डा।
- ई-निविदा प्रकोष्ठ का दूरभाष सं० - 8340110173
- परिमाण विवरण की राशि घट-बढ़ सकती है तदनुसार अग्रघन की राशि देय होगी।
- निविदा शुल्क एवं अग्रघन की राशि केवल Online Mode द्वारा स्वीकार्य होगी।
- निविदा शुल्क एवं अग्रघन की राशि का ई-मुगतान जिस खाता से किया जायेगा, उसी खाते में अग्रघन की राशि वापस होगी। अगर खाता को बंद कर दिया जाता है तो उसकी सारी जवाबदेही आपकी होगी।
- विस्तृत जानकारी के लिये वेबसाइट www.jharkhandtenders.gov.in एवं कार्यालय की सूचना पत्र पर देखा जा सकता है।

कार्यपालक अभियंता
 ग्रामीण विकास विशेष प्रमंडल, गोड्डा।
 PR.NO.330118 Revenue(24-25):D

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF A PERSON ACCUSED
See Section U/S 82 Cr. P.C.
 Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused **Pyali Das W/o Bhaskar Das R/o H.No. D-72, Bhagya Vihar, near Ranikheda, Madanpur Dabas, Delhi** has Committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence in case **CC No. 14028/18 U/s 138 NI Act, P.S. Aman Vihar, Delhi** and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said **Pyali Das** cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said **Pyali Das** have absconded (or is concealing herself to avoid the service of the said warrant).
 Proclamation is hereby made that the said accused **Pyali Das of case CC No. 14028/18 U/s 138 NI Act, P.S. Aman Vihar, Delhi** is required to appear before this Court to answer the said complaint/case on or before **21.08.2024**.

By Order
Sh. Apoorv Bhardwaj
 Ld. Metropolitan Magistrate
 Room No. 113, 1st Floor
 Rohini Courts, Delhi
 DP/932/RD/2024(Court Matter)

कार्यपालक अभियंता का कार्यालय
पथ निर्माण विभाग, पथ प्रमंडल, राँची
ई- प्रोक्वोरमेंट सूचना
नेशनल कम्पेटीटिव बिडिंग
अल्पकालीन निविदा
 टेंडर रेफरेंस सं०- पानिावि०/राँची-02 /2024-25 दिनांक :- 20.07.2024

क्र. सं.	कार्य का नाम	कार्य का मूल्य	कार्य पूर्ण करने की अवधि
1.	कारो बगम में गमकाम-राँची रेलवे के बीच कि०मी० 416.770 में मanned L.C.-MH-27 के स्थान पर पथ उत्पत्ती पुल (अर.अ.सी) के निर्माण कार्य एवं 2024-25.	₹0 3275.84914 लाख (बतौर कन्वे पावदार सारा बौरसी हजारी नदी से बीच करीब) मात्र।	18 (अठारह) महीने
2.	अनुमोदित प्राक्कलित राशि (रु० लाख में)	₹0 3278 लाख (रु० 3278 लाख किन्तु सारा हजारी) मात्र।	22.07.2024 02.00 बजे अपराह्न
3.	वेबसाइट पर निविदा प्रकाशन की तिथि	28.07.2024 3.00 बजे अपराह्न	28.07.2024 12.00 बजे अपराह्न तक
4.	निविदा प्राप्ति की तिथि / समय	08.08.2024 12.30 बजे अपराह्न तक	कार्यपालक अभियंता पथ निर्माण विभाग पथ प्रमंडल, मोहनबाड़ी, राँची-834008
5.	निविदा खोलने की तिथि / समय	08.08.2024 12.30 बजे अपराह्न तक	₹051-2361018
6.	निविदा प्रकाशित करने वाले पदाधिकारी का नाम एवं पता	₹051-2401010	

- प्राक्कलित राशि एवं अग्रघन की राशि घट-बढ़ सकती है, जिसे Tender Online Upload में देखा जा सकता है, एवं किसी भी प्रकार का बदलाव <http://jharkhandtenders.gov.in> पर देखा जा सकता है।
- पथ निर्माण विभाग, झारखण्ड सरकार में निविदा के लिये यूकेन (UCAN) निवेदन आवश्यक है।
- नियम एवं शर्तों के लिये वेबसाइट <http://jharkhandtenders.gov.in> पर देखें।

PR 330142 Road Construction Dept कार्यपालक अभियंता
 Road Division Ranchi (24-25)_D पथ निर्माण विभाग, पथ प्रमंडल, राँची

ROAD TO PARIS

The lonely grind of athletes and their journeys that defy all odds; breaking down intricate concepts and capturing the buzz on the ground, *The Indian Express* goes behind the scenes in the build-up to the Olympic Games

IOA MESS

India's Korean archery coach furious after Olympic snub

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
JULY 20

INDIA'S KOREAN archery coach Baek Woong Ki is outraged after being denied accreditation for the Paris Games and said he will not continue once his contract expires on August 30.

He lashed out at the Indian Olympic Association (IOA) for "poor and hasty administration".

According to reports, Woong Ki, who reached Paris with the Indian team after overseeing its preparation in Marseille, said he "was removed from the Olympic coaching role at a critical time" and will now be flying back to India with his return ticket already booked.

"I am a Korean coach who signed a contract to prepare (the Indian archers) for the Paris Olympics. But at a critical time, I was removed from the Olympic coaching role and my flight schedule told me to return home," the renowned coach told PTT. He has been staying in a Paris hotel and was awaiting his Games accreditation.

"I have a contract until August 30 and I signed it for the Olympics. I plan to arrive at Sonipat and calmly prepare for the formalities of entering Korea," he added.

The disappointed Woong Ki clarified that he would not renew his contract.

It's not like Woong Ki is an amateur or upcoming coach. He has guided archery heavyweights South Korea to two gold medals at the 2012 London Olympics.

Appointed two years ago, he had been helping the Indian archers in their quest for a medal in Paris.

He questioned the logic behind not being accommodated despite the IOA investing in him.

"I have been training them (Indian archers) for two years to win a medal at the Paris Olympics. However, foreign coaches were excluded due to the IOA's poor and hasty administration. I don't know why they invested money to appoint a Korean coach. More importantly, it's hitting a major notch just days before the Olympics," said Woong Ki.

Woong Ki further said his presence would have surely boosted India's prospects.

"Korean archers are strong in competition. If Korea and India play in the final, there is a 90% chance they will lose, but if I enter the coach's box, the Korean archers will feel more tension and pressure because of me. Therefore, India's chances of winning increase," said Woong Ki, who is contracted by the Archery Association of India (AAI) and funded by the Sports Authority of India (SAI).



Pics: World DanceSport Federation

DANCE LIKE EVERYBODY'S WATCHING

Breaking down Breaking

New sport is inexpensive to stage, doesn't leave 'white elephants' while connecting with a wide cross-section of people

SHIVANI NAIK
JULY 20

VIEWED FROM a break dancer's imagination, the Statue of Liberty could be the first-ever 'freeze' (a dramatic pause in the middle of a dynamic routine) that travelled from France to the USA.

But Americans didn't bother to keep Breaking (break dance) on their Olympic programme for Los Angeles 2028, though Bronx was the 'OG' epicentre of the art-form in the 1970s.

The free-spirited banlieues (suburbs) of Paris, though, didn't forget their history as the world's second-largest hip hop market, when planning their OG, the 2024 Olympic Games. France will host Breaking's debut at sport's grandest stage. Hip hop and graffiti might've taken off in the block parties of north New York, but Europe has surreptitiously nurtured its own Breaking base, mainstreaming an erstwhile underground subculture.

Paris has taken the lead in liberating sport from its clunky stadium-confines, and brought the Olympics out into the streets. Place de la Concorde, a popular public square at the end of the Champs Elysees, will transform into an urban, no-frills Paris Games venue, hosting other unpretentious sports like BMX freestyle, skateboarding and 3x3 basketball.

The makeshift stage rig will get neatly folded away the morning after and Parisians can go about their lives as usual, with the sport leaving behind none of what sociologist Andrew Zimbalist called the useless 'white elephants' of the Olympics. Breaking, that breaks all elitist shackles, could offer a popular little corner that the city can warm up to.

"Not only is Breaking gender-balanced, youthful and urban, it is also flexible and sustainable in that it can essentially be organised anywhere, without the need for costly new infrastructure, equipment, etc.," Jean-Laurent Bourquin, former senior advisor of World Dance Sport Federation, had said in an interview with *The Indian Express*. Most B-Boys and B-Girls are in fact used to performing on wood, plastic, cardboard and even concrete, with zero cribs.

"Finally, the inclusion of Breaking would help to bring the 2024 Games closer to local communities in Paris and connect with the young people of France," he added. The idea stirred in 2016 in International Olympic Committee corridors.

And a 5cm floor was laid out at the 2018 Youth Olympics in Buenos Aires, and simply removed post the battles, so 3x3 basketball could get on the next day. The huge, vocal crowds in the Argentine capital pierced the resistance from IOC traditionalists, and sheer numbers from the Olympic Channel and social media went dizzy. Bourquin helped fit the competitive structure into the Olympics programme, and saw first-hand how hip hop beats, the emcee and crowd involvement changed perceptions.

"For me, the most satisfying part of this Olympic journey was seeing some of the doubters do a 180 in Buenos Aires. They went from being quite sceptical to becoming some of the loudest proponents of Olympic Breaking," Bourquin said.

THE VOCABULARY

'TOP ROCK' is all that the breaker does standing up, their introduction leading into the first climactic part of the performance.

'DOWNROCK' is the floor work, which includes rhythmical footwork and powermoves

'BLOW UPS' are the developing sets leading into a surprise moment

'FREEZES' are a dramatic pause in the middle of a dynamic dance routine



As many as 1,000 one-minute video entries were received from countries as diverse as Nepal, Rwanda, El Salvador and Lithuania, whose B-Girl Nicka is incidentally a gold favourite at Paris.

Young at heart

Bourquin, who helped pitch Breaking as a sport to the IOC, insists all of Europe has pockets where the explosive sport with the drama of head-to-head 'battles' took off in the 1980s. Youth from Parisian suburbs, though, were some of the earliest to get swept off their feet - and spin on their heads, for good measure.

The sport, which took off with Puerto Rican and Black youth in the Bronx, has always been entwined with assorted cultural blazes borrowed from everywhere. The 'break' in Breaking comes from the percussion-only (non-vocals or other instruments) slot in a song which Jamaican DJ Kool Herc prolonged for dancers to bounce to. Battles began in the 1990s, and cyphers - circles formed within which B-Boys and B-Girls dance - came about thereafter.

German B-Boy Niels 'Storm' Robitzky, now a respected judge and coach, says Breaking of 90s drew from myriad athletic influences - a funk musician, martial art's greatest and sport's mightiest.

"The history of dance personifies a combination of 3 public figures that were pretty important to development: 1. James Brown for the music and drive; 2. Bruce Lee for his

swiftness, the character and standing up for what he believes is right; and 3. Muhammed Ali for his courage and belief," Storm had told *The Indian Express*. While Paris saw an explosion of Breakers riding the hip hop wave, the sport pretty much erupted all over Europe.

It almost died out in 1985, before a resurgence by 1987. "We started to connect the remnants of B-Boying we found to a broader European network. By 1990, we became professional B-Boys," Storm recalls.

Breaking has its own vocabulary, and isn't restricted to just the tricks. The whole routine flows. 'Toprock' is all that the breaker does standing up, their introduction leading into the first climactic part of the performance, the 'drop' - getting down on the floor.

'Downrock' is the floor work, which includes rhythmical footwork and powermoves - which are usually continuously performed spinning and spiralling movements in which the feet don't touch the ground, like flares. Then there's the 'blow ups', which are developing sets leading into a surprise moment. At last, come the Freezes, and their unspoken import. There's a reason Brits, French, Germans, Lithuanians, Ukrainians and Russians, alongside Koreans, Japanese, Chinese and Americans all seamlessly blend into this Breaking universe, even when they 'battle'.

A dancing freeze, an exclamation, needs no dictionary, nor translations, no common language, and Paris gets it. Breakers inhabit a world of their own; the Olympics are merely visiting.

Inclusion of Breaking would help to bring the Games closer to local communities in Paris and connect with young French people"

JEAN-LAURENT BOURQUIN
FORMER ADVISOR, WORLD DANCE SPORT FEDERATION

OLY-XPLAINED

On the dance floor: How will scoring work, what do the judges look for

SHIVANI NAIK
JULY 20

BREAKING WILL be the only sport at Paris Olympics where calling a dancer's set a "dope move" will not be frowned upon. In B-Girl and B-Boy lingo, "Dope" is superlative degree for crazy, awesome, wowsie, mental, brill and super cool. But the sport at the urban venue at Concorde, has its own thorough system of judging its competitors.

B-Boy Ronnie Abaldonado, an All Star at Red Bull BC One, helps decipher what judges actually look for.

What will be the competition format?

16 B-Girls and 16 B-Boys will be divided into groups of four for a round-robin stage, with top two in each group moving into the quarter-finals over August 9 and 10. Every one-on-one battle has 3 alternating 60-second throw down sets by each breaker, where each

competitor takes turns to present their moves.

What is the Trivium Judging system?

Nine judges, who have been esteemed breakers themselves, will decide on one-on-one battles where two performances are directly compared. First you see the performance of one person, then you compare it with the opponent's set. Under the specifically designed Trivium Value System, judging is conducted in real-time based on five criteria: Technique, Variety (or vocabulary), Execution (or performativity), Musicality, and Originality (or creativity).

Judges will move a digital slider to indicate who's their preference in the 1vs1 battles. Each of the five categories accounts for 20% of the final score. Based on the average of the sliders in these five criteria, one breaker is named the winner of each round. They are judged not only on pure technique but also on musicality interpretation, or physical expressiveness.



The Olympics are keen on shattering the misconception that sports only means a ground or stadium.

Are Breakers marked on a score of 10 on each criterion?

In Breaking, nothing is codified and

breakers do not receive a number of points for performing a certain pre-designated move like a Difficulty-score in gymnastics or

figure skating. Two performances are simply compared.

What details do judges look for?

Stage presence, form, posture, mannerisms and foundation are some of the underpinnings that get gleaned. It's not just the moves, as mental and physical conditioning in terms of endurance, accuracy, strength, speed and control are considered. If two breakers stick a similar freeze, who holds steady longer and pauses stronger is compared.

Why does this qualify as a sport?

The Olympics are keen on shattering the misconception that sports only means a ground or stadium. The world wasn't ready, but Paris might change minds like the Youth Olympics at Buenos Aires did in 2018. All sport is sophisticated, niche movement. Breaking is essentially highly-evolved, stylised and skilled physical movement, without pretension. Competition duels have been

around for 20 years now at Freestyle Battle of the Year and Red Bull BC One besides the World Championships. Most importantly, the air flares (torso is swung, the balance alternating between legs and arms) that are now common to artistic gymnastics' floor exercises or pommel horse have drawn inspiration from b-boying, extending validation to the newbie sport and proving it belongs.

How much emphasis is given to creative originality or are they drill moves?

Head spins can be jaw-dropping, but are fairly routine. Signature moves defined and deified as originality in 1vs1 battles can prove tie-breakers. Korean B-Boy Hongten's freeze on two fingers is pretty well known, while Japanese B-Boy Hiro 10 is known to unleash dynamic moves that become viral clips often. American B-Girl Logistix is tipped to be very innovative in laboratories during preparation, while B-Girls Ayumi of Japan and Nicka of Lithuania can spring new moves.

BRIEFLY

Nadal reaches first final since 2022

Bastad: Rafael Nadal reached his first final in two years on Saturday, beating qualifier Duje Ajdukovic 4-6 6-3 6-4 in the semi-finals of the Swedish Open in Bastad as the 22-time grand slam winner continues his preparations for the Paris Olympics. The 38-year-old Spaniard, who was sidelined with a hip injury that required surgery last year, had taken four hours to beat Mariano Navone 6-7(2) 7-5 7-5 in the quarter-finals of the event. "I fought the whole tournament to be where I am today. Matches like yesterday and today help to improve a lot of things on court," said Nadal, whose last final was at the French Open. "It's always a great feeling to be in a final. I won four matches in a row. I wasn't able to make that happen since two years ago." **REUTERS**

Defense the focus for US basketball: Kerr

London: With a roster that boasts the NBA's all-time leading scorer, multiple title winners and the best shooter to lace up a pair of high tops, the points are sure to come for Team USA at the Paris Olympics, coach Steve Kerr said on Friday. The question is whether the U.S. can play the kind of suffocating defense on the other end of the floor that will prevent them from getting into shootouts with their opponents, he said. "Defense, defense, defense," Kerr told reporters at practice in London ahead of the team's showcase against South Sudan. "We're going to score, we have all these guys who can score. It has to be about defense." Kerr's 12-man roster is arguably the greatest collection of basketball talent ever assembled with LeBron James, Stephen Curry and Kevin Durant leading a quest to bring home the team's fifth gold medal. **REUTERS**

Norris takes Hungary pole for McLaren

Budapest: Lando Norris secured pole with teammate Oscar Piastri close behind as McLaren ended a nearly 12-year wait for a front row lockout in a twice-halted Hungarian Grand Prix qualifying on Saturday. Red Bull's Formula One championship leader Max Verstappen qualified third in an eventful session that was red-flagged and then restarted with two minutes remaining when RB's Yuki Tsunoda crashed. Ferrari's Carlos Sainz joined an unhappy triple champion Verstappen, who leads Norris by 84 points in the standings after 12 of 24 races, on the second row at a circuit where overtaking can be tricky. "We are in the best position for whatever the conditions throw at us so I'm looking forward to it," said Norris as he celebrated his third career pole and second in the last four races. **REUTERS**

Shubhankar moves to T-21 at Open Royal

Troon: India's Shubhankar Sharma, who spent three hours waiting to find out whether or not he had made the cut, moved up the leaderboard with a third round 67 at the 152n Open here on Saturday. Taking advantage of the benign course as against the tough and windy conditions on the first two days, Sharma shot a superb 4-under 67 that included an incredible eight birdies against two bogeys and a double bogey. He moved from overnight T-69 to T-21, but the leaders were still on the course. Sharma's best Major finish came last year at Royal Liverpool, where he shot par or better each day and finished tied eighth. **PTI**

Gill's chance to thrive

In less than a year, opener has taken over GT captaincy and is now India vice-captain in T20Is & ODIs

PRATYUSHRAJ
JULY 20

IT'S SHUBMAN Gill's body language that assured the former India batting coach Vikram Rathour that he would make a good leader and that the BCCI has made the right decision in appointing him as the vice-captain of India's T20 and ODI teams.

"Whatever I have seen him, be it for the Gujarat Titans or in Zimbabwe (when Gill led in a T20 series), he did a good job. He has shown terrific body language, which is a must if you are leading a side. Now with the vice-captaincy, the BCCI has given him extra responsibility and I am sure he will thrive in this role," Rathour tells The Indian Express.

Rathour pointed out two episodes involving Shubman that convinced him of his maturity.

The first was when Gill approached the leadership group of Rohit Sharma and Rahul Dravid to tell them that he wants to bat at No.3 in Tests. That this came in a phase when he was struggling for runs - he had gone without a fifty in 12 innings - made Rathour admire him more.

He failed in the first Test against England in February but rallied back with a match-winning hundred in the second innings of the Vizag Test against England in February.

"The talk came from him. He felt that No 3 was an ideal position for him to bat and the management group backed him. It was his decision which was backed by Rahul, myself and Rohit, and he turned it around in the England series," Rathour says.

The other noteworthy factor was Gill's game awareness when he was newer to the Indian team. "When I first saw him in the nets, my first impression was like everybody else's. I saw exactly what a lot of people were talking about and spoke about his special talent. When the first time I saw him playing, the immediate thought that went into my mind was 'whoa this kid is extremely talented'."

"What impressed me the most was his game awareness, which is something you don't generally see in the young cricketers, who are coming through the ranks. He knew his game, he understood how he needs to bat in different situations and never shied away from challenges," Rathour says.

Rathour, who was India's batting coach for five years, feels getting Shubman in the leadership role might prove to be a masterstroke as it will enhance his game.

"I feel captaincy brought the best out of



Shubman Gill's confidence, game awareness have led to him being a part of the India leadership group. *Sportspics*

Virat and Rohit and I feel it will do the same for Shubman. Although, he is not yet the captain, being in the leadership group will bring the best out of him as well. This is I am very sure of. When you are in that role, leading others, it gives you that extra bit of responsibility, which is good and I think is great for a young kid like Shubman, who one day might lead India in all three formats," says Rathour.

Father's advice to Shubman

Shubman Gill's first coach and father, Lakhwinder Gill has only one advice to his son and that is to keep scoring runs.

"When he was appointed the captain of Gujarat Titans and recently for the Zimbabwe tour, I had only given him one piece of advice. 'Stay cool and make sure and never let captaincy hamper your batting'," says Lakhwinder.

His father, who was in Zimbabwe when Shubman stepped out as captain of India for the first time, feels the young team could have won the series easily 5-0.

"They were in the IPL mode. They thought they would just go and swivel their bats and

I feel captaincy brought the best out of Virat and Rohit and I feel it will do the same for Shubman. Although, he is not yet the captain, being in the leadership group will bring the best out of him as well."

VIKRAM RATHOUR
FORMER INDIA BATTING COACH

score runs. Once they acclimatised to the conditions and pitches, you see the way they performed. They played reckless cricket in the first match," he says.

Khushpreet Singh Aulka, who has worked closely with Gill right from their U-14 days, had once revealed his friend's captaincy ambitions to this newspaper.

Vice-captaincy is a fancy designation with no perks, power or immunity

SANDEEP DWIVEDI

PERCEPTIONS IN Indian cricket change in a matter of weeks. And at times it can have nothing to do with the performance of the players. Hardik Pandya went from being T20 World Cup final's game-changer, designated vice-captain, captain-in-waiting to a powerless foot-soldier in new commander Suryakumar Yadav's unit. Shubman Gill, on the other hand, leap-frogged from being a reserve player to being the vice-captain.

So should this be seen as Gill's promotion and Hardik's demotion? Not really, would say those familiar with the power equations of the Indian dressing room. On paper, a captain's deputy is the team's designated No.2 and also the heir apparent. But that's a misconception. Vice-captaincy, as the name suggests, doesn't come with a time-bound captaincy guarantee. Actually, it's far from that.

Like in the simplest popular board games, the snake that waits for the ladder climbers to reach the late 90s to time their bite, many captaincy contenders have got their final throw of the dice wrong. Virender Sehwag, Yuvraj Singh, KL Rahul, Rishabh Pant, Ajinkya Rahane, Jasprit Bumrah and even Hardik have over the past decade come close to sealing their spot at the top, but failed. They have led

Team India in some games or a few odd sessions but they couldn't win the trust of selectors to be long-term leaders. Will Gill buck the trend and become a true blue leader like Dhoni, Virat or Rohit remains to be seen. If he doesn't, the curse will continue.

Cricket needs to be sensitive to the intriguingly amorphous character of the dressing room - the vice-captain. He has the position but no real privilege. He gets to wear the captain's armband occasionally but doesn't have the aura to automatically command respect. Being slightly ahead in the captaincy race by virtue of the official position, he can also be the target of others with leadership ambitions. Many a time he isn't even the captain's sounding board since there are former skippers or other seniors in the team. Being a deputy can get lonely.

Vice-captaincy in cricket is just a fancy designation. It has the limited usefulness of a spare car tyre that spends most of its life in the darkness of the bonnet. And even when he takes the place of the captain on the field, he often merely implements the orders given by the captain and the coach from the dressing room. The deputy plays the waiting game, and for most, the wait is endless.

Selectors have a different rationale when they sit to decide the team's vice-captain. As is the case with Gill, the most popular reason, of



Hardik Pandya has not been chosen as Rohit Sharma's successor. *Sportspics*

course, is the one about grooming a youngster with leadership potential. But there are other reasons too. Sometimes the national selectors have picked the likes of Rahane and Pujara as vice-captains as they didn't have options or they were not sure about the hierarchy among the youngsters.

At this T20 World Cup, Pakistan selectors had faced a similar dilemma. From the team full of super seniors, they had to pick Babur Azam's deputy. In contention were Babur's contemporaries Shaheen Shah Afridi, Shadab

Khan and Mohammad Rizwan. There were also the two seniors making a comeback - Mohammad Amir and Imad Wasim. Naming one would mean undermining the leadership acumen of others. So what did they do? They came up with a novel solution, a typical Pakistan jugaad - they did away with the vice-captaincy position.

For years, the profile or the purpose of a vice-captain to the team wasn't clear. It was arbitrary and ambiguous. In his book *Sunny Days*, India great Sunil Gavaskar mentions what he calls the "most embarrassing incident of my cricketing career". It was from a Deodhar Trophy game and it was about the confusion over the vice-captain in the middle of the game.

It all started with West Zone skipper Ajit Wadekar getting injured. Since Gavaskar was Wadekar's deputy when they played for Bombay, he took charge. And then it happened. "... I led the side for three overs before the 12th man came in and told me that the senior most player in the side, Ashok Mankad, was to act as captain. Kaka, as we called Ashok, was most apologetic about it but took command."

Gavaskar says to this day he shudders to recall the moment. "For me, however, it was most embarrassing to be told to hand over the charge to another player in full view of more than twenty thousand people who must have

Duckett and Pope build up England's lead against Windies

REUTERS
JULY 20

BEN DUCKETT and Ollie Pope shared an unbroken century partnership to lift England to 116-1 and a lead of 75 runs over West Indies at tea on the third day of the second test at Trent Bridge on Saturday.

England lost opener Zak Crawley for three when he was unluckily run out at the non-striker's end after Duckett's drive was parried on to the stumps by the hand of

bowler Jayden Seales.

Duckett struck nine fours in his unbeaten 61 and Pope, who made 120 in the first innings, was 48 not out at the interval on Day three.

England picked up four wickets in the morning and looked set to establish a narrow first-innings lead before Joshua Da Silva and Shamar Joseph combined in an entertaining 71-run last-wicket stand to take the West Indies to 457 all out and leave the match finely poised.

Da Silva steadies ship

Da Silva finished unbeaten on 82, including three sixes, and Joseph hit two sixes, one smashing tiles on the pavilion roof, in his 33 before he was caught by Gus Atkinson off Mark Wood.

Resuming on 351-5, Jason Holder was caught by wicketkeeper Jamie Smith off Chris Woakes for 27 and Kevin Sinclair slashed Atkinson to gully where Harry Brook held a sharp catch.

Alzarri Joseph edged Woakes to Smith for 10 and the experienced England seamer bowled Seales first ball. Shamar Joseph survived the hat-trick delivery but Da Silva moved to his fifth test fifty and found a willing partner in Joseph to give a fluctuating game another twist. England won the first match of the three-test series by an innings and 114 runs at Lord's.

BRIEF SCORES: England 416 and 248/3 (Ben Duckett 76, Harry Brook 71; Alzarri Joseph 2/58) lead West Indies 457 (Kavem Hodge 120, Joshua da Silva 82; Chris Woakes 4/84) by 207 runs.

seen the change".

The team selection processes have evolved over the years but still the vice-captains don't have the perks of an important member of the leadership. They don't have immunity - one match they could be the stand-in captain, the next they could be carrying drinks. Rahane in his long career had seen it all.

Even the game's greats have suffered the same fate. Shane Warne's biography *No Spin* gives a detailed account of the time when he was Steve Waugh's deputy and terribly out of form. Waugh wanted to drop Warne but coach Geoff Marsh was not sure. They decided to ask the long-retired Aussie veteran Allan Border, who was in the West Indies with a tour group. AB couldn't believe what he was being asked. "Jesus Christ, I back Warne every time... we owe him. Think of what he's done for Australian cricket," he said. This pitch would have convinced every captain in the world but Waugh. "No, I appreciate your thoughts, AB, but Warne's not playing." Warne wouldn't be the last vice-captain who would have been shown his place.

Hardik can take heart from the Warne story but the national selectors need to answer a question. How did Hardik, after gaining his batting and bowling form, suddenly become a lesser leader? Maybe, the unshielded, powerless vice-captains don't deserve that courtesy,

LIFE AFTER STIMAC

Manolo Marquez to take double duty as India men's football, FC Goa coach

SHASHANK NAIR
NEW DELHI, JULY 20

FC GOA COACH Manolo Marquez will be the next Indian national men's team head coach while continuing to manage the Indian Super League side simultaneously for another year. After the next year, the Spaniard will take up the Indian job full-time. The All-India Football Federation executive committee, in a meeting on Saturday at the AIFF Football House, made the decision keeping in mind AIFF's financial status.

"Manolo was the ideal choice because he has worked with many of the young Indian players who are a part of the national team. He can take younger overlooked players and make them good. He works with Indian players day in and out in the ISL, and there is a lot of respect these young players have for him," an AIFF official told The Indian Express.

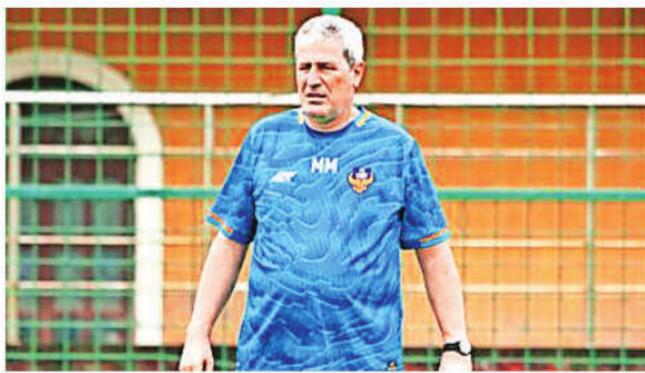
While this will be Marquez's first job as an international team coach, he has had top-flight club experience with Las Palmas in the La Liga where he was coach in 2017. Last season, Marquez's Goa finished third in the ISL and

pushing Mumbai City FC and Mohun Bagan, who finished narrowly above them, despite vastly bigger budgets and better foreign talent.

One of the reasons Marquez's appointment was solidified was due to the AIFF and FC Goa coming to an agreement that the 55-year-old would be coaching the Goan ISL team during the club season, and take up national coach duties during FIFA windows and off-season.

Over the past few years, the AIFF's budget has been slashed and the costs of managing the national team along with the football ecosystem in India has brought about a fund crunch for the national footballing body. One of the reasons for Manolo's hiring, instead of exploring other options like former Vietnam manager Park Hang-seo, was due to these reasons. There was also a consensus that India came close to qualifying for the third round of the World Cup qualifiers and there was a need for a coach who would take these existing players to the next level.

"This season he's going to be in a dual role, and next season onwards he'll be with Indian football full time. A few of the people who had applied were outside our pay structure. Also,



Manolo Marquez will continue working with FC Goa in the 2024-25 season, while also being in charge of the Indian national men's football team. *FC Goa*

we needed someone with Indian experience. We didn't have the time for a coach to come and take a few months to take stock of where Indian football is," said the official. "There are

a lot of cases of club coaches also managing countries. Even Igor Stimac would only be in India during FIFA windows or national camps. Most of the time, players are not available to

the international team coaches."

Marquez is widely regarded as one of the better coaches in the ISL. The Spaniard has coached two ISL teams in Hyderabad FC and FC Goa during his four-year-long coaching stint at Indian clubs and has a track record of having developed young Indian players at the club level - players who have then gone on to represent the national team.

His record as a coach during this time made him a top prospect for the national team job. With Hyderabad, Marquez enjoyed taking a young team of Indian players to the top of the league. At the time, Hyderabad went through a string of injuries to key foreign as well as Indian players. Many of the top Indian players today, like Akash Mishra, and Chinglensana Singh were part of that Hyderabad team that performed above expectations under Marquez, winning the ISL Cup in 2021-22.

Marquez thanked both organisations for being flexible in his hiring. "I am very grateful to FC Goa for allowing us the flexibility to help the national team during the coming season while I am still the club's head coach. I'm grateful to the AIFF for this opportunity and we

hope to do great things for football," Marquez said in a statement.

The executive meeting also ratified the new General Secretary of the AIFF. On the recommendation of AIFF president Kalyan Chaubey, Kerala Football Association General Secretary Anilkumar Prabhakaran was handed the reins for the position. The AIFF also said that Prabhakaran had resigned from the executive committee and other sub-committees ahead of his new role.

Bhuthia resigns from AIFF technical committee

PTI adds: Bhaichung Bhuthia on Saturday told the All India Football Federation's (AIFF) executive committee that he is resigning from his membership of the technical committee, alleging that the panel was "bypassed" while appointing the national men's team head coach.

"It is the job of the technical committee to shortlist the candidates who have applied and recommend the suitable person to become coach. But this time, there was not even a single technical committee meeting to appoint successor of Stimac," Bhuthia said.

eye



SPOTLIGHT, PAGE 2

Bombay Velvet

In his centenary year, remembering playback legend Talat Mahmood, the Frank Sinatra of India



BOOKS, PAGE 3

- Review of TCA Raghavan's *Circles of Freedom*
- Review of Santosh Singh and Aditya Anmol's *The Jannayak Karpoori Thakur: Voice of the Voiceless*
- Review of Poonam Bamba's *Patiala House*

Arun Janardhanan, Kiran Parashar and Vidhatri Rao

FROM SEAT TO STAGE

From mere hero-worshipping to playing an active role in political and social mobilisation, how the equation between stars and fans has changed in the South

KANNADA SUPERSTAR Darshan Thoogudeepa is undertrial number 6016 at the Bengaluru Central Prison, where he has been in custody since June 11 for an alleged murder.

After fans of Darshan — who is called Box-Office Sultan — found out about the number assigned to their favourite actor in jail, Regional Transport Offices in Karnataka got several requests for 6016 to be vehicle registration numbers. This number also started showing up at various spots in the state — on posters in street corners, as stickers on cars and as tattoos on bodies.

In fact, the murder case that has led Darshan to jail involves fans. Police sources say Renukaswamy from Chitradurga, a fan of Darshan, had allegedly sent lewd comments and abusive messages to Darshan's friend Pavithra Gowda on Instagram. Darshan had tracked Renukaswamy with the help of Raghavendra, a member of his fan association in Chitradurga. The police say Darshan told him to get Renukaswamy to Bengaluru. Subsequently, Renukaswamy's body was found near an apartment in the city on June 8. Raghavendra and Gowda are among the accused in the case and are also in custody.

Meanwhile, as Darshan was being arrested, hundreds of his fans gathered to raise slogans in support of the 47-year-old actor who waved at them from a caged police van.

Over the years, fans have moved beyond bursting firecrackers, leading processions, dancing in theatres and worshipping cutouts of their heroes. Be it in Sandalwood or the Kannada film industry, Kollywood in Tamil Nadu or Tollywood in Andhra Pradesh, actors, campaigning for politicians and becoming part of the realpolitik in their respective States, are changing the star-fan equation.

It has moved from mere hero worship to political and social mobilisation, with ample engagement through social media. The fan today is both a troll and a performer. With party-cadre-corporate precision, South Indian fan clubs occupy internet space as soon as the curtains go up. Sometimes, it's earlier, when the film trailers are dropped.

For 34-year-old Raghu Dema, the obsession began in 2001, when as a 11-year-old he watched *Kushi*, a career-defining romantic Telugu film with Pawan Kalyan in the lead. Growing up with his cousins in a small village on the outskirts of Hyderabad, he had a ritual: catching the 4 am show of every Kalyan movie, putting up posters of his favourite star at the local theatre, garlanding it and even doing a *palabhishekham* (ritual of bathing Hindu deities in milk) for Kalyan's posters.

He still remembers meeting his "god" in January 2012. Kalyan, who heads the Janasena Party and is now the deputy Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, was at a film shooting in Jubilee Hills, Hyderabad. "I spotted him on a Harley Davidson. He was wearing blue jeans, a white T-shirt and Ray-Ban. I took 15 minutes to recover from seeing him," says Raghu, a Hyderabad-based software engineer, who works in the US taxation department of a major company.

He slowly connected with other Kalyan fans — who say they subscribe to an ideology called 'Pawanism' — at the star's film-related events and started getting involved with other programmes. "We would collaborate with designers to create display pictures, share and trend them before his films. Leading up to his birthday in 2020, his fans, who are spread out across the country, made a record 65 million tweets of a particular photo of him," says Raghu.

"But I had to do more than celebratory events. I had to mould myself to Pawan Kalyan's social service ideology," he adds. And that's what he did — organising a local blood donation camp and joining hands with other fans for other charitable work in the state.

In Karnataka, Darshan, too, has fan clubs that operate at the village and state levels. The larger DBoss Fans Club has lakhs of members, between the 15 and 35 age group. All of his appearances and movie promotions are entirely handled by his fans on social media.

They owe an intense allegiance to Darshan, who they feel climbed up the ladder on his own merit. It has earned him the moniker 'Challenging Star'. His philanthropy work in various parts of Karnataka, especially in the Old Mysuru region, with the help of his fan club, has solidified his base.

In Tamil Nadu, the link between cinema, fans and politics is legendary. Cinema was one of the mediums through which the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) took its message to the masses. Its founder CN Annadurai championed the use of cinema for political causes, paving the way for influential figures like Karunanidhi as a writer and MGR as an actor to emerge alongside stars such as Sivaji Ganesan. These cinema icons of the 1950s



STAR WARS

(Clockwise from top) Actor Vijay in Neyveli, Cuddalore district, Tamil Nadu; Kannada actor Kichcha Sudeep with fans; megastar Chiranjeevi; a larger-than-life flexi cutout of Pawan Kalyan; Tamil actor Ajith greeting fans from the rooftop; Kannada actor and Rajya Sabha MP Jaggesh (right), who was ambushed and attacked by Darshan fans; prayers offered for a Rajinikanth film

were not just entertainers but 'party actors' whose films served as powerful political messaging tools. Profits and remuneration from their work often supported the party, intertwining art with political activism. When screen icon MG Ramachandran joined the DMK in 1953, he was the party's chief crowd-puller. When he formed the AIADMK in 1972, the fans continued to support him.

Several other actors tried to make that transition to politics, including a star like Rajinikanth. His followers have made a religion of their devotion. MGR, too, had a similar fandom and people killed themselves when he died. It was also political and attached to the Dravidian movement and the ecosystem around that. But Rajinikanth fans revealed a new tribe — when a new film would release, they gathered in thousands, armed with garlands and cans of milk to pour over his cutouts. There were incidents of fans lighting camphor on their palms as they prayed for the film's

success. It was his fans who transformed theatres into temples. While the MGR phenomenon blurred the line between politics and cinema, with Rajinikanth, it was the suspension of reality and cinema.

But now, a new generation is trying to capture the mass euphoria of fans into political dividends. At the forefront is Vijay, the state's largest superstar, whose fan association, the Vijay Makkal Iyakkam (VMI), is transforming into a political force. This fan group, now rebranded and launched as the Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK), Vijay's political party, has evolved over the last 15 years. It was driven by community activities, including charities, educational initiatives, food and wheelchair distributions, blood donation camps and tuition classes for children.

R Ramkumar, the spokesperson of TVK, says that VMI has 75,000 units and 18.75 lakh active members currently. "As we are converting it to TVK, the recent online membership

drive brought in 75 lakh new members, with a target of 2 crore. TVK's structure spans all 234 Assembly constituencies in the state," he adds. While Vijay's films dominate the Tamil box office, he remains an elusive figure to many of his closest supporters. Most TVK office bearers say that opportunities to meet him in person are rare. But his influence is undeniable. A picture of him standing on a compound wall to calm a crowd outside his Neelankarai home last month went viral, proving the fervour of his followers. The twin power of his star presence and his fan club's influence is what Vijay is counting on as he makes his move to politics.

Ajith, known for his intense fan base, follows a different path. He disowns fan clubs, avoiding organised fandom. Despite this, his fans remain fiercely loyal. His private nature and passion for bike races set him apart from his peers, yet his films continue to command a strong market, sometimes even surpassing

Rajinikanth's. Though the Rajini Makkal Mandram (RMM) remains active, its influence is waning. "Our fans are older now, in their 50s and 60s, unlike Vijay's and Ajith's youthful base," says a senior member.

With younger fans joining these clubs, social media engagement has increased. "Our support for Pawan Kalyan grew when he started taking up causes like the kidney ailments in Uppadam, Srikakulam district of Andhra Pradesh. We provided all digital support. Most of the fans, who are in college, realised the importance of social impact and Kalyan's political journey," says Raghu.

There are many such stories of fandoms in the Telugu states of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, where commercial films, their stars and families occupy a central role in society. The most prominent of these is the Akhila Bharata Chiranjeevi Yuvatha, the official fan club of Chiranjeevi, one of the most popular actors in Tollywood and Kalyan's brother. The organisation has a presence in Thailand, Malaysia, the US, Canada and Sri Lanka. R Swami Naidu, who heads the organisation as well as the Chiranjeevi blood bank and charitable trust, says, "I had studied mechanical engineering and moved to Hyderabad from East Godavari for a job. I was posted on night duty and I would spend all my mornings with the one intention of meeting Chiranjeevi *garu*." When he did meet Chiranjeevi, the meeting was as dramatic.

"There was a flood in the coastal districts of Andhra Pradesh in 1996. I went to Chiranjeevi *garu* for help. He immediately stepped in, called medical teams from Hyderabad and distributed blankets. It was almost like a god who was stepping in. He was dressed in all white and was like Venkateshwara swamy (an avatar of Lord Vishnu)."

There are several fans like Naidu who travel long distances on buses and trains, in the hope of meeting their favourite actor. Says Naidu, "We have a wide network in villages, and across states like Karnataka, Odisha and Tamil Nadu. There are 18,000 registered Chiranjeevi fan organisations and, of course, across the globe, too." Diaspora groups are involved with managing the events of Chiranjeevi and his family of actors — which includes son Ram Charan of *RRR* (2022) — when they travel to those countries.

Says Vijay Repalle, a software engineer based in Cincinnati, who handles the US operations of the Akhila Bharata Chiranjeevi Yuvatha, "After winning the Padma Bhushan recently, Chiranjeevi had come to America. We organised his visit. For his 50th birthday in 2014, we held blood donation drives in all 50 states. He appreciates us and our work and reaches out to us on Whatsapp."

But not everything is as celebratory with fans. There have been times when social media platforms have become battlegrounds. A Darshan fan, Chethan, was recently arrested for allegedly abusing producer Umapathy Gowda and actor Pratham for speaking against the Kannada actor.

Online wars are now business. A fan association member, who doesn't want to be named, says it is as organised as a corporate firm. "There are loyal fans who promote their stars and there are some people who indulge in negative campaigns. For established stars, it may not matter to invest in such clubs but for the budding stars, it matters a lot," he says.

He classifies the process into three parts. "The fans who are members of the association are involved in promotions through the year. The intensity increases ahead of a film release. At that time, the marketing section of the production team approaches social media influencers to promote the film. Then there are fan pages involved in negative campaigns who get paid by the actor or the team to put another star in a bad light. It is usually done by using a virtual private network," he says. A content or graphic designer is then roped in by the fans' association head. The message goes to district fans on social media platforms, which is then shared or reposted. And before long, it goes viral.

There was a time that a movie was measured by the days it ran in theatres. Then came the Rs 100-crore collection. Now, prior to the release of a film, the trailer itself gets a million views, much of which come from promotions by fans, and, more often than not, from bots.

Umesh Banakar, vice-president of Karnataka Film Chamber of Commerce, says that there were minor star wars in the 1990s and 2000s but those were unofficially resolved by actors and seniors. Now with the Internet, it is no longer in their control.

However, despite the intensity of attacks among fan associations in Karnataka, it's far less than what it is in Andhra Pradesh, Telangana or Tamil Nadu. "Many of the stars have turned politicians. In Karnataka, stars have not entered politics though they had several offers. Earlier, actors like Raj Kumar and Vishnuvardhan got offers too, but they always stayed away. They were aware of what it could result in and they wanted to remain in the hearts of the people, as artists," says Banakar.

DOWN IN JUNGLELAND

RANJIT LAL Author, environmentalist and bird watcher



A DELICATE NETWORK
Structural engineering at its best

RANJIT LAL

Nature's Engineers

What it means to pass Nature's quality control test

RECENTLY found out that during its lifespan of 65 years, the first generation well-loved Volkswagen Beetle underwent over 78,000 'incremental' changes in its design. And it struck me that Mother Nature's engineering departments also work in much the same way, something Charles Darwin and Alfred Russell Wallace discovered and called the 'theory of evolution'.

And it seemed like all of Nature's engineering departments work in harmony to give a product that is better than the previous one and more suited to survival amidst competition and worsening environmental conditions. If you failed her quality control tests, you went extinct. Let's take a look at some of her engineering marvels.

Take chemical engineering. Snake venom evolved from saliva whose main purpose is to make food ready for digestion and make things easier to swallow. Bit by bit, the saliva became venomous. Now, when injected by hypodermic-like fangs — structural engineering enters the picture — it helped kill the victim. Depending on the species of snake, the venom became further specialised. There's venom which destroyed tissue and flesh, that which attacked red blood

imals such as bats and dolphins use ultrasound to either hunt or communicate or evade being eaten. Others, like owls can pick up the faintest sound, even if it emanates from deep under snow. Whales may even use sound as an acoustic weapon while rounding up shoals of sardines, stunning them by sound or simply by slapping their huge tails against the water.

Easily Nature's biggest achievement (worth multiple Nobel Prizes) comes from her solar energy department, where she has developed plant cells called chloroplasts (chlorophyll) which take light energy (photons) from the sun to break down carbon dioxide and water vapour to make food, while giving out oxygen as a 'waste' product.

Birds of prey, like falcons and eagles developed incredible eyes — picking out rabbits from 2 km away, as well as a light framework, and streamlined feather-design needed to enable it to home in on its victim at over 300 kmph. The bones of most birds are structured to form a light, hollow framework. Here, too, Nature's aerodynamic engineering department surpassed itself, streamlining the body shape to ensure minimum resistance and maximum lift. This was even

adapted in creatures living underwater — most fish are as streamlined as birds. And her aerodynamic engineering department 'thought out of the box' while developing 'unsteady aerodynamic' technology to enable insects to fly.

Of course, the R&D goes on, as animals and birds race to outwit each other, because in most cases it's all about sheer survival: Thus gazelles and impala must develop the physical prowess to just outrun the cheetah. Each surviving member has just that tiny incremental physical improvement that enables it to outrun its predator and pass on the know-how to its progeny. Similarly, a cheetah with just that little bit extra in speed and agility will succeed in making a kill and pass on that know-how to its cubs.

All these improvements occur over long periods of time, and sometimes, conditions arise that can exterminate most living creatures either in an instant or over a period of years. There's one rule that all of Nature's engineering departments adhere to strictly, which again we have shamefully ignored: There shall be no waste; everything is to be recycled — whether it is excreta, rotting bodies or even such 'indigestible' substances such as cellulose and keratin. Everything is broken down into its component parts and reused again and again.

Bombay Velvet

In his centenary year, remembering playback legend Talat Mahmood, whose voice remains a salve for the broken-hearted

Suanshu Khurana

KARACHI-BASED Zaheer Alam Kidwai, 84, was seven when his father, a Delhi-based doctor in the Army, decided to leave for Pakistan in the aftermath of the Partition. Before migrating from Bombay to Karachi via boat, the family boarded a train from Calcutta to Bombay. "My father's youngest cousin, Talat Mahmood, the great playback singer, also came to see us off. When people saw him, they rushed towards him... As we boarded the train, we heard people shout, 'This is Talat Mahmood! He is going to migrate, hold him!'," recalls Kidwai in a conversation mentioned in the "1947 Partition Archive", an online document.

But Talat wasn't going anywhere. He had decided to stay back despite most of his family and friends crossing the border, only months after Calcutta, the city he lived in, witnessed the communal riots of 1946. After all, this was the city that had given him his first taste of success — as a ghazal star and as a playback singer.

"There was a lot of respect for his gentle, velvety voice. It was and remains distinct because it came with the Lucknowi *tehzeeb* and sounded, for the lack of a better word, sophisticated. The concept of '*pehle aap*' dripped from that singing voice. For several music connoisseurs, it still remains soul-stirring," says film music historian Manek Premchand, who also penned the singers' biography, *Talat Mahmood, The Velvet Voice* (Manipal University Press) in 2015.

The golden era of Hindi film music turned playback singers — extremely skilled artists — into superstars. If there was the brilliant baritone of KL Saigal on one side, many fell into worshipful silence listening to Lata Mangeshkar. While most male singers of the day, including Talat, began by imitating Saigal, it was his unique texture and tranquil singing that made Talat a household name. Many of Talat's melodies were complex and high-pitched but none ever sounded shrill or pedestrian. They were just right — balanced and elegant, turning him into a master of the ghazal.

Be it a lover's longing in *Seene mein sulagte hain armaan* in the Dilip Kumar-Madhurati starrer *Tarana* (1951), the vagaries of the world philosophised by Shailendra in *Aye mere dil kahin aur chal* pictured on a drunk Dilip Kumar in *Daag* (1952), SD Burman's delicate *Jalte hain jiske liye* in *Bimal Roy's Sujata* (1959), and the plaintive *Shaam-e-gham ki qasam* — a masterpiece by writer Majrooh Sultanpuri



THE HEAVYWEIGHTS

(From left) Talat Mahmood, Mukesh, Lata Mangeshkar, Mohammed Rafi and Manna Dey

and Khyyam in *Footpath* (1953) — Talat's voice, with its immaculate diction, was warmth, melancholy and intimacy all rolled into one. "It felt as if he was singing only for you. The voice was distinct also because it came from a compassionate, genuine person," says Sahar Zaman, Talat's grand-niece, who recently released her book, *Talat Mahmood: The Definitive Biography*, to coincide with his centenary. One may think that the 750 songs in 12 languages that he left behind when he passed away in 1998, aren't in circulation anymore if not forgotten. But Zaman disagrees. She recently came across a European website selling merchandise that said: 'I don't need a therapist because I have Talat Mahmood'.

Born in a conservative family in Lucknow that appreciated music and Urdu poetry, Talat was the third among six siblings. His father, a Gandhian, owned a curio shop. While Talat had access to music, his understanding of it, as he said in his interview to Premchand, came from the time he spent with his aunt (father's sister) Mahlaqa Begum, a writer and connoisseur of music, who would often host musical *bait*haks in her courtyard. While Talat's father appreciated art and culture, he didn't want his "*khandani beta*" to sing professionally. But Mahlaqa Begum persuaded her brother to send Talat to Lucknow's Marris College of Music, which is now Bhatkhande Sanskriti Vishwavidyalaya, on the condition that he would only be a stu-

dent. At 16, Talat tried his luck at All India Radio, where after six months of training, he began to sing Ghalib and Mir's poetry.

Around the same time, HMV was scouting for a new voice, and selected Talat from his college to record in Calcutta in 1941. He recorded three ghazals with composer Kamal Dasgupta. This is when composer and actor Pankaj Mullick offered Talat a contract with the famed New Theatre Productions.

But a 17-year-old Talat asked for three more years to complete his music education. Success came in 1944 with the runaway hit *Tasveer teri dil mera*, a piece composed by Dasgupta and penned by Fayyaz Hashmi, most remembered for his famed ghazal, *Aaj jaane ki zid na karo*. Impressed by the honeyed voice and figuring that it would suit the cadence of Bangla, Mullick asked Talat to sing in Bengali. This is when Bengali singer Tapan Kumar was born. While he sang his Hindi songs as Talat Mahmood, Bengali records came under the name Tapan Kumar. "His Bangla diction was so spot on, that many people thought that he is a *Probashi* Bengali who uses the name Talat Mahmood for his Hindi numbers," says Zaman. This was also when he fell in love and married Latika Mullick, a Bengali Christian actor. Talat's father remained unhappy with his commercial singing but accepted the hushed wedding.

At New Theatres, Talat's good looks and immaculate dressing (always in suit and tie), led to acting assignments. His first was PC Barua's *Rajalakshmi* (1945) followed by 11 others.

The Partition and the formation of East Pakistan massively affected the film industry in Calcutta. Talat's acting career, too, was tanking. This is when he decided to move to Bombay. Here he met noted composer Anil Biswas who had heard his Bengali songs and gave him one of his career's biggest hits — the pathos-laden *Aye dil mujhe aisi jagah le chal in Arzoo* (1951). Biswas was impressed with the tremolo effect, the quiver that made Talat unique and according to Biswas, "hard to copy".

Arzoo's success was followed by *Milte hi aankhen* with Naushad in *Babul* (1950). The '50s threw up some brilliant gems such as *Meri yaad mein* (*Madhosh*, 1951) and *Seene mein sulagte hain*. Talat's fascination for Urdu poetry also drew ghazal king Madan Mohan to him. The two recorded 23 songs together, including the famed *Phir wohi shaam* (*Jahan Ara*, 1964), every intricacy sounding effortless. Talat was a star now. Premchand corroborates the stories of women writing letters in blood and lining up outside his house. His fans also included Mehdi Hassan and a young Jagjit Singh, who often spoke of learning from his records.

Around the same time, Mukesh and Mohammad Rafi had begun to find box-office success. There was an advent of Western sounds in Hindi cinema and a change of pace by composers such as OP Nayyar, who included a lot of Punjabi elements. This was a departure from Talat's polished style.

"Versatility was an issue. Rafi is considered a greater singer in terms of range, quantity and versatility," says Premchand. At this time, even though fewer songs came to Talat, Salil Chowdhury asked him to croon for Bimal Roy's *Madhumati* (1958). But at the time, his friend and singer Mukesh was going through financial troubles and Talat asked for the project to be given to him. One wonders how *Suhana safar* would've sounded in Talat's voice. In these years, Talat also led the three-month collective mic-down protest on the royalty rights of the singers as Secretary of the Playback Singers Association.

But as his film career slid, Talat began doing live shows globally, one of the first playback singers to do so. He was immensely successful till 1992, the last year that he performed. He was given a Padma Bhushan in the same year for his service and passed away in 1998 due to a cardiac arrest. He was 74 and left behind a lasting legacy, songs which still have that transcendental effect and remain etched in memory. "There have been many singers, but there was only one Talat," says Premchand.

A Guru By My Side

On Guru Purnima, it's time to remember the teacher who takes supreme responsibility for everything

Pullela Gopichand

THE DICTIONARY defines the word 'guru' as a teacher, a leader, and an expert. However, for all those who have a guru in their lives, he is all of the above and much, much more. Now, the obvious question would be, what is "much, much more"?

I became a coach almost two decades ago. I've coached numerous athletes to achieve excellence in sport. But would that qualify me to be a guru? No, a person who imparts skill is something else and I think the word guru is too sacred and powerful. A person who becomes someone's guru and accepts them as a disciple has to hold on even if the disciple leaves them — a guru cannot leave their disciple. So that's the kind of responsibility they end up taking. A guru takes a supreme responsibility that extends beyond a lifetime.

I've been very blessed to have found a guru at a young age, an age when I was at my most vulnerable. The year was 1994, and my badminton career was picking up, but a serious knee injury threatened to derail everything. I completely tore my ACL in my left knee. Back in those days, such knee surgery was uncommon, and doctors told me it would be very difficult to recover from a surgery and play badminton. For athletes performing at the highest

level, the biggest challenges injuries bring are not physical in nature; they are psychological. Looking back, I don't think any men's singles player in the sport has had to deal with an injury of that level, and I was just 20 years old, grappling with the fact that I might never play badminton again. It was at this crucial juncture in my life that the presence of Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar helped me manage my mind and even heal my body. Every day I practised the Art of Living's breathing technique called the Sudarshan Kriya. It helped me stay in the present moment and rein in my mind from chewing on worst-case scenarios. I was also dealing with chronic upper respiratory issues. It was a tricky situation given the strict anti-doping rules; I was forced to stay away from medication. The Kriya helped me overcome this issue. Gurudev played the roles of mind coach, psychologist and even a doctor. I can't stress enough how important his words and presence were to me at that time. He had taken complete responsibility for my heart, my mind and my health. And before I knew it, I was back to playing again. I played my best badminton and won the biggest tournaments for my country.

I'd train in Bangalore and I would spend Sundays with Gurudev at the Ashram. The spiritual knowledge that Gurudev imparted connected very deeply with me, but what I



HOLDING THEIR HAND

Pullela Gopichand interacts with children at his badminton academy in Hyderabad

found most surprising was how well his wisdom translated to sports. For an athlete, staying in the present moment is the most important thing. Dwelling too long on a lost point or thinking about the next point will make you lose the point you're playing. And in badminton, as in any sport, a single point can make the difference between winning and losing. In the Bhagavad Gita, Lord Krishna told Arjuna to not focus on the fruit of the action but to put all his effort into the action itself. It is this mindset that all the most successful sportspeople imbibe, whether knowingly or unknowingly. And yet this knowledge was present in ancient Indian scriptures. To remember and recite scriptural knowledge is one thing, but to interpret its correct meaning is another, and to take a disciple from an intel-

lectual understanding of knowledge to an actual experience of that knowledge is totally different altogether. And that's exactly what Gurudev has done for me. He once said that a guru doesn't just give you spiritual knowledge; he makes sure you live the knowledge. And one such opportunity to live the knowledge came to me when I was contemplating my future after retirement from the sport.

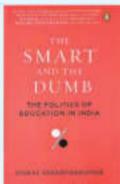
I was travelling with Gurudev to the Art of Living Ashram in Bad Antogast, Germany. I was discussing with him the possibility of coaching after I was done playing. What Gurudev said to me that day, I can never forget. It made my decision very clear and moulded who I am as a coach today. He said with a smile, "Taking responsibility to uplift people is the Art of Living; the more responsi-

bility you take, the more the Divine will support and bless you." Coaching badminton is limited to a few hours a day but what happens in the 16 hours outside the court has a big impact on an athlete's life and performance on the court. And it is here that I try to apply Gurudev's teachings and what I see him do for me and others; which is to take responsibility to not just make my student a better sportsperson but also a better person.

I feel very blessed that in India we have been born with the guru and disciple tradition. But unfortunately, in the last few years, the title of guru has been misused. The recent Hathras stampede tragedy is a prime example of this. So it's very important to understand who is genuine. Because when we call someone guru, we give them our mind and body. Surrender is a big part of being a disciple. And surrendering to someone who does not have your best interests in mind can be catastrophic. In my experience of being associated with a spiritual organisation for 30 years, the authenticity of a movement and organisation can be gauged by looking at the number and experiences of people that have been touched by it. As far as the guru is concerned, I will say this: looking back at the way Gurudev has taken care of every aspect of my life, something that he continues to do so even today, I realised something: it's not just me he's done this for; he's done exactly this for tens of thousands of people across the globe. And that to me is what a guru truly is: someone who takes the supreme responsibility for everything about you, in this life and beyond, without asking for anything in return.

Pullela Gopichand is Chief National Coach, India national badminton team

HOT OFF THE PRESS



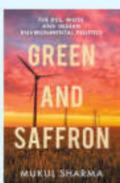
Penguin
200 pages
₹599

THE SMART and *The Dumb* by Vishal Vasanthakumar is an analysis of how caste, class and gender still determine access to education in India, a country that boasts of private schools, colleges and coaching centres with turnovers in hundreds of crores, but fails to reach a majority of its children and young adults. Using data, interviews with students and reporting trips, it seeks to personalise a long-standing policymaking dilemma of independent India — how to use education to transform lives.



Westland
312 pages
₹599

HOW LONG *Can the Moon Be Caged?* by Suchitra Vijayan and Francesca Recchia is an account of many prisoners, activists, artists and academics who have been persecuted by the government in cases related to the 2018 Bhima Koregaon violence and the 2019 Citizenship Amendment Act protests, as well as those who have been branded 'Maoist' or 'Naxalite' terrorists despite internationally acclaimed track records of fighting for the rights of Dalits, Adivasis and Muslims in India.



Orient
Blackswan
404 pages
₹795

GREEN AND *Saffron* by Mukul Sharma explores how Hinduism and environmentalism are not distant from each other in today's India, wherein religion and policymaking often intermingle. Cases which are studied in this revised edition of the 2011 work include activist Anna Hazare's efforts to revive the soil cover of a Pune village, environmentalist Sunderlal Bahuguna's opposition to one of the world's tallest dams in Uttarakhand, and how NGOs worked to check environmental damage in Vrindavan.



Pan Macmillan
100 pages
₹499

ROSARITA by Anita Desai is the first book in over a decade by the thrice-Booker-shortlisted writer, about a woman, Bonita, determined to forge her own path but finding it not what she expected. She has come far away from her home in India to Mexico, where a woman recognises her as resembling her (provincial) mother, who apparently made the same trip decades ago as a painter. Incredible but intriguing, Bonita asks more questions and the tale begins.



Penguin
264 pages; ₹399

A WOMAN ON *a Suitcase* by Shazaf Fatima Haider is the fourth novel by the Pakistani writer, about a newly married woman who is fed up of being repeatedly thrown out of her house by an abusive husband. She decides to leave him and start a journey that takes her from Karachi to London and back, one narrated with Haider's signature styling of middle-class South-Asian homes.

UDBHAV SETH

With Friends, It's Easier

In his new book, TCA Raghavan joins the dots between the personal and the political with rare empathy, telling the story of Md Asaf Ali and the camaraderies that framed the arc of his life

Kaushik Das Gupta

IN AN especially moving scene in the first half hour in Richard Attenborough's *Gandhi* (1982), CF Andrews meets the then-emerging leader of the Indian National Movement, who is awaiting trial for his role in the Champaran Satyagraha. Andrews had been asked by the British government to be a part of the team to investigate the mistreatment of indentured labourers in Fiji. But the former Anglican missionary's heart is clearly in Indian politics. Gandhi, however, persuades him to become part of the Fiji panel. To a disappointed Andrews, he says, "You will always be with us". The friendship between the (not-yet) Mahatma and the evangelist educator-turned-Indophile is one of the lesser-known stories of the Indian freedom movement. It, perhaps, required a film to convey the warmth between the two. Traditional historical scholarship rarely conveys the depth of such emotions.

The history of India's freedom struggle has seldom been seen as a story of friendships and personal ties. Diplomat-historian TCA Raghavan's *Circles of Freedom, Friendship, Love and Loyalty in The Indian Freedom Struggle* is, therefore, a refreshing foray into an area that has been the preserve of a handful of historian-biographers. His work is also noteworthy because it's about a relatively lesser-known figure of the national movement — Mohammad Asaf Ali — and four people who touched his life: Sarojini Naidu, Syud Hossain, Syed Mahmud and Aruna Asaf, his wife, who took a different political path. The couple grew apart, yet Aruna and Asaf cared for each other in their own way. *Circles of Freedom* takes us through momentous episodes of the freedom struggle, from the Khilafat Movement to the Partition. Gandhi, Jinnah, Nehru, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, brothers Mohammad Ali and Shaukat Ali, and Maulana Azad make compelling appearances. So does MA Ansari, who till his death in 1936, was "the go-to-physician for many leaders of the national movement".

Naidu's sister Mrinalini Chattopadhyay introduced the poet-nationalist, who had been published with some acclaim in England, to Asaf Ali, then a young barrister in England. Naidu had a circle of friends in England, which soon included Hossain, a friend of Asaf from his student days. In her letters to her children, Naidu referred to Asaf and Hossain as part of her "special group of friends". Being in Naidu's circle also meant developing ties beyond the literary and the cultural. To begin with, it led to "a closer acquaintance with another star of the Indian diaspora, Muhammad Ali Jinnah".

The experiences in London also led Asaf to gravitate towards nationalists in India. A second stint in England, where he spent most of his time with Naidu and Hossain, cured the Anglophile of his "English fever".



EXPRESSARCHIVE

"Friendships with Mohammad Ali and Ansari had widened his horizons" and the time he spent with Naidu in London "opened them up further".

Asaf received his early higher education at Delhi's St Stephen's College, where Andrews was amongst his teachers. A scholarship to a friend to study in London spurred the young student's ambition for a career in

TO FREEDOM
Asaf Ali

law, and then to the ICS. A friend of his father, an 'Uncle', stepped in and made it possible for Asaf to go to England and study for a career at the Bar or as a civil servant.

Among the many reasons that make Raghavan's account interesting is that it also carries insights into the subtle operations of colonialism. As Asaf was to realise later, the arrangement with 'Uncle' was more trans-

action than generosity towards a friend's son. By his second stint in England, Asaf was no longer the impressionable young man who had stepped out of his home nation. The young nationalist was now aware that his conversations about his fellows with 'Uncle' were actually giving away information to the colonial intelligence services.

After disembarking in Bombay, Asaf's first port of call was Hyderabad to meet Naidu. Historical accounts have bestowed her with a mystique. A firebrand nationalist, poet, a champion of Hindu-Muslim unity. But there is very little we know of her family life. Her letters to her children, writes Raghavan, show her "as a fond and devoted mother and wife and at the same time someone who took it as a given that she was going to play more than these roles". "There is also (a) veil," he notes, that makes "family and personal life opaque for both the contemporary observer and historical excavator".

In detailing the other protagonist of his story, Syed Mahmud, Raghavan brings out another facet of Naidu. Unlike Asaf Ali, who

viewed her as an elder sister, Mahmud was deeply infatuated with Naidu. As the more mature and older woman, she not only nudges Mahmud to temper his feelings, but also arranges to get the young man, almost always in ill-health, treated by her physician husband. The friendships she forged, writes Raghavan, should also be seen in the larger context of Naidu's belief that Hindus and Muslims would make connections "which were more than simply political".

However, she was disapproving when Asaf, nearly 40, fell in "love with a young Bengalee (Aruna) girl of 18 whom he met for two days and is very keen to marry". The objection, writes Raghavan, could be because of the age difference between the two and the chequered trysts of her friends such as Jinnah and Ruttie Petit with inter-religious union. As it turned out, Aruna and Asaf, were to diverge politically and in life — a turn of events that impacted "husband" and "wife" very differently.

Raghavan joins the dots between the personal and the political or social with rare empathy. In doing so, he also nudges the reader to draw links between the past and the present. This makes *Circle of Freedom* a compelling read for anyone who cherishes history and loves a story well-told.

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The People's Leader

A new biography of the socialist icon traces his rise from poverty to become a champion of the oppressed castes

Manoj K Jha



WITH THE MASSES

Former Bihar CM Karpooi Thakur

THE YEAR 2024 happens to be Karpooi Thakur's centennial. While it was long overdue, he was posthumously conferred the country's highest civilian honour, Bharat Ratna, earlier this year. In his almost four-decade-long political career, where he won nearly every Assembly and parliament election except in 1984, Thakur led Bihar as an education minister once, and twice as chief minister, and set the egalitarian vision of social and economic justice in concrete terms. The aftereffects of his politics remain more relevant today than they were during his lifetime. As a result, even political parties with ideologies opposed to his politics refer to his legacy. Like BR Ambedkar, Thakur has been impacting the concerns of social justice goals more after his death than was acknowledged in his lifetime. While writing this review, I also have the biography of George Fernandes by Rahul Ramagundam on my desk and both these books provide detailed and rich accounts of the life and times of people of India through the years they lived in. Hence, I would consider *The Jannayak Karpooi Thakur: The Voice of the Voiceless* by *The Indian Express* journalist Santosh Singh and Aditya Anmol as the biography of all those years as well.

Born in circumstances rife with poverty and discrimination in Pitaunjhia, Samastipur, Thakur developed a radical consciousness and a firm political will through participation in peasants' movements for cultivation rights and land redistribution as well as the freedom movement. He was arguably one of the most doughty, popular, and accessible socialist leaders of his generation. Affectionately called 'Jannayak', or people's leader, Thakur introduced major reforms in several sectors, including free education up to high school. But his enduring legacy is of mainstreaming the concept and political demand for intersectional and proportional access to opportunity. According to the book, he often used to tell his peers that "there are three kinds of pains — an upper caste can be poor but still has his honour intact, an OBC may be monetarily well-off but does not get respect and

the Scheduled Caste suffers from both kinds of pains". This is the kind of insight that makes Thakur a brilliant thinker, agitator, and administrator in equal measure.

Appointed by the Bihar government in 1970, the Mungeri Lal Commission identified and listed 128 'backward communities' in the state in its 1976 report. Ninety four of these 'backward communities' were further marked as 'most backward'. Based on the recommendations of the report, Thakur's government provided 26 per cent reservation in 1978, of which a 12 per cent share was carved out for the OBCs, 8 per cent for the economically backward classes among the OBCs, 3 per cent for women, and 3 per cent for the poor from 'upper caste' communities. The move proved costly for Thakur in the face of widespread resentment and opposition from the privileged castes and classes. Though his government fell shortly thereafter, he had sowed the seeds for a reckon-

ing of backwardness in all its forms. The Karpooi Thakur formula, as it popularly came to be known as, is widely recognised as a precursor to the Mandal Commission report implemented in the 1990s, that recommended 27 per cent reservations for OBCs.

2024 also happens to be the year when another prominent political leader, Lal Krishna Advani, was conferred with the Bharat Ratna. While political-minded readers may readily recall the fraught Mandal-Kamandal political context that shored up the fortunes of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), it bears highlighting once again here. Advani's infamous *rath yatra* was a reactionary response to the revolutionary implementation of the Mandal Commission report. Its sole purpose was to stymie the rising consciousness of deep social inequality among the historically oppressed and marginalised people and the socialist ferment that shaped it into a political programme to pave way for opportunity, participation, representation, and equality. The *rath yatra* was, simply put, an embodiment of the deep anxiety, as well as an assertion of social hierarchy, by those who loathe to yield their power and privilege to the demands of democracy.

There could be no two political leaders as different from each other as Thakur and Advani. Though many tried to mistakenly frame the choice of the two Bharat Ratnas as a masterstroke, it is difficult to reconcile the two, given the history as well as the ongoing struggles for social and economic justice. As the authors remind us, the Jana Sangh constituents of the Janata Party, alarmed by Thakur's empowering agenda, engineered the downfall of the socialist leader's government swiftly in 1979. Even today, the Sangh and the BJP are opposed to the long-standing caste census demand that is essential to update policies for social and economic justice.

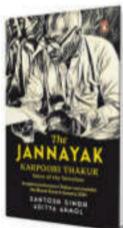
Even as the Bharat Ratna announcements

came on the heels of the news of the *pran pratishtha* of the Ram temple in Ayodhya, it is worth remembering that it was in Thakur's constituency Samastipur (then Tajpur) that Lalu Prasad, a socialist cut from the same cloth as his political guru, Thakur, that Advani was detained during his *rath yatra* to maintain law and order in the state in 1990. Another socialist of yet another generation recently dealt a significant electoral blow to the BJP in Ayodhya in the recently concluded Lok Sabha elections. These are no mere coincidences. It is a fight that continues from the days of anti-colonial struggle between those who participated in it for national liberation and social and economic justice, and those who did not participate as they wanted to preserve their place in the oppressive social and economic order. It is a struggle between political movements that preferred the status quo in the post-Independence era and those who wanted change.

Singh and Anmol's deeply researched book analyses the history of this struggle in an accessible manner through its key figure, Thakur. His legacy, or, as the authors beautifully put it — "the trail of camphor", continues to enliven social justice, secularism, and inclusive development even today.

A seasoned journalist and a young historian writing a book together can only be a good thing. Singh and Anmol draw on archives, academic sources, interviews, and other public and private sources to put together a compelling, powerful, and often endearing portrait of Thakur. The private and public, the personal and the political are delicately balanced. If forced to nitpick, as an academic, I would say that some light editing with regards to consistency in referencing and either thematic or chronological organisation of ideas and narratives would improve the book's readability.

Professor Manoj K Jha is MP, Rajya Sabha, from Rashtriya Janata Dal



THE JANNAYAK
KARPOORI
THAKUR: VOICE
OF THE
VOICELESS
BY SANTOSH
SINGH AND
ADITYA ANMOL
Penguin
371 pages
₹599

SHELF LIFE



JUSTICE (RETD) POONAM A BAMBA

OF GHOSTS AND GAVELS

Main building, Patiala House Court Complex

A Storied Court

FROM A man who posed as Prime Minister Indira Gandhi and tricked a bank official to pay him Rs 60 lakh, to the men who assassinated her, one thing was common — they all had to step foot in Delhi's Patiala House Court before ending up behind bars. Having disposed of over 4 lakh cases, the court has a story spanning more than 100 years, with ghosts, British colonisers and the judiciary all in the mix. That history has been captured, over seven years of work, by former Justice Poonam A Bamba in *Patiala House: From Palace to Seat of Justice*.

In 1926, the court complex was allotted by the British to Patiala's prince Bhupinder Singh, and became one of those Delhi residences which princely rulers visited to pay homage to King George V. During World War II, the complex found use as a British war room and, later, as a regional office for the World Health Organization.

It was only after 1969 that the Delhi High Court started functioning from Patiala House. Today, the 31,000 sqm complex has a motor-accidents tribunal, two family courts, many civil courts, and

special courts designated for matters involving the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act and Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act.

The book has historical anecdotes, like a room rumoured to be haunted by a ghost. "*Raat ke 12 baje tak naachne ki awaz aati hai*" (You can hear people dancing till 12 am)," an old caretaker told Bamba as she researched for the book.

Bamba describes famous trials held in the court — Indira Gandhi's assassination case, the Upkaar cinema fire, Jessica Lal's murder, the Delhi High Court bomb blast, and others. Bamba had three stints in the court, as Additional Sessions Judge (2008–2010), Special Judge CBI (2013–2015), and District and Sessions Judge (2017–2019).

Data for the book was sourced from the Prime Ministers' Museum and Library. Bamba met Kamaljeet Kaur, aunt of former Punjab CM Amarinder Singh, who was a temporary resident of the erstwhile palace for about six years. Kaur told Bamba that migrants from Pakistan also stayed inside.

"I started feeling like a princess... I experienced its royal aura," says Bamba. "Each corner of a place has a tale to tell... but nobody has the time to listen."

NIRBHAY THAKUR



PATIALA HOUSE:
PALACE TO SEAT OF
JUSTICE
BY POONAM A BAMBA
Vistata Publishing
200 pages; ₹2,999

Just Another Skin Colour

Living with vitiligo, a 40-year-old invents camouflage cream and battles stigma

Ankita Upadhyay

This is a colour bias that rarely gets spoken about but can be just as damaging as it affects about two per cent of Indians. Ask 40-year-old Harsha Mukund, a resident of Coimbatore, who has been living with vitiligo, an autoimmune disorder that causes skin cells to lose their pigment. "From being bullied in my teens, ostracised for fear that my condition was infectious and pitied for being an oddball, I have battled body shaming and stigma all along," he says. But now he's founded a company that makes medicated camouflage cream, which not only blends with Indian skin tones but is long lasting and does not become runny in the sun.

Vitiligo has no cure but people manage the patchy appearance of it on the skin with various pigmentation therapies, skin grafts and cover-up concealers. Dr Kanika Sahni, additional professor in the department of Dermatology and Venereology at AIIMS, whom Harsha met after his struggle with body image, feels camouflaging creams are crucial tools in managing the disease. "We did research at AIIMS and found that with all the other treatments remaining the same, if one group received the camouflage, it significantly improved their quality of life, their social interactions and reduced the stigma. That's why we have started emphasising that camouflage be prescribed to all patients of vitiligo," she says.

Harsha recalls his college days when he tried cosmetic cover-ups. "Those were like make-up. By 3 pm, the colour would be gone and I would run to the washroom to re-apply. I would wear mandarin collar shirts as the concealing powder would rub off on shirt

labels. But I felt confident and accepted. Medicated camouflage creams today not only conceal white patches but prevent the skin from sunburn, rashes, blisters and acne that a person affected with vitiligo is more vulnerable to," he says.

WHAT CAUSES VITILIGO?

Vitiligo is a chronic autoimmune disorder that causes patches of skin to lose pigment or colour. This happens when melanocytes — skin cells that make pigment — are attacked and destroyed, causing the skin to turn a milky-white colour. Lack of melanocytes can also expose the skin to the harsher effects of the sun's ultraviolet (UV) rays, leading to sunburns and boils.

Approximately 30 per cent of people with the condition have a family history of vitiligo. Harsha's case is one such though it can happen to anybody. "My uncles had the condition. So when I developed a patch on my chin at age 13, I wasn't too self-conscious. But within a year, my chin was covered with a white patch. Soon the patch enlarged to cover my back," says Harsha. Most cases of vitiligo start small but there is no predicting its progression. "Prompt treatment can improve your chances of slowing progression," says Dr Sahni.

STIGMA IS A BIGGER DISEASE

Harsha never feared the disease as he approached dermatologists from the very beginning. But he feared social abandonment because of his looks till he almost became a recluse, obsessed about his public image, using concealers of every kind. "I became a butt of ridicule among friends at school. A particularly scarring moment was when the parents of one of my classmates asked her to stay away from me, thinking I had leprosy. My father began crying. I had few friends in col-



LIFE POSITIVE

TURNING POINT

Harsha Mukund with his family

lege," he says.

Stigma and social isolation are what led Dr Sahni to form the Vitiligo Foundation of India, where doctors, patients and researchers have created a safe space for discussing stigma besides therapies. "People still confuse vitiligo with leprosy. But it is not an infectious disease and is an autoimmune disorder. That's why we are holding awareness camps so that those affected by vitiligo are not discriminated against and can mainstream themselves better. Patients often face stigma at the workplace. Many of my patients have had to give up their jobs or been asked to leave. At the workshops we do, the affected tell us how they have to miss ceremonies and family functions or are deliberately excluded from those events. Many prefer not to return to their villages where they are almost ostracised with some being asked to move out of their homes. Children are the worst hit and

easily sink into depression," says Dr Sahni.

But the most severe challenge faced by vitiligo-affected people has been marriage. "People hesitate to even formalise alliances when any kin of the bride or groom have vitiligo," says Dr Sahni. However, Harsha was fortunate to find a partner who valued him for who he was rather than his physical appearance. Dr Sahni now offers psychological support alongside medical, surgical and light therapy treatments.

LONG-WINDED THERAPY

Harsha has had a series of surgeries like punch grafting, which involves transplanting skin tissue from the donor area on affected patches. Many patients see a significant return of skin colour and a better look in the treated areas, with success rates ranging between 70 per cent and 90 per cent. He did balloon grafting, which involves implanting

MYTH BUSTERS

Vitiligo is not infectious and doesn't spread by touch.

It is partially genetic but not every affected parent will have a child with vitiligo.

The condition isn't a food disorder. Avoiding curd, milk and fish as advocated by alternative medicine can cause deficiencies.

healthy skin just next to the scarred patch. By injecting a sterile solution into it over time, the healthy skin stretches and gradually encroaches into and covers the scar. Harsha also took PUVA or a phototherapy treatment, which uses light beams to stimulate repigmentation in discoloured areas.

Punch grafting was half helpful because Harsha regained colour in about 15 per cent spots. But it had its negative impact as he developed cobblestone-like patches on the chin. "These treatments are expensive (grafting could go up to Rs 70,000 per session) and may not help every patient equally. In fact, we get many patients who come to AIIMS with side effects because of incorrect advice. They must seek treatment from a qualified dermatologist who is an MD or diploma holder in dermatology at a good centre. With correct procedures, repigmentation is a success with a large number of patients. Now there are advanced therapies like cellular transplants, where cells are extracted from the patient's healthy skin grafts and transferred in a liquid medium," she says. Dr Sahni's guidance helped Harsha, who himself had fallen for many myths. "There was a time I would not consume anything sour, be it pickles, lemons, or even yogurt water," he says.

CAMOUFLAGE CREAMS

Working closely with Dr Sahni and having researched on camouflage creams while working in Australia for 12 years, Harsha set up his own research and development team. His cream is dermatologically certified, is water-resistant for humid conditions, lasts 48 hours and is sun-protective. "Properly applied camouflage techniques can help improve the patient's appearance, self-esteem and body confidence," says Dr Sahni, who sees around 200 patients every month at her vitiligo clinic as awareness drives are helping many people to seek the right therapy. "A patchy skin doesn't matter to them. They just want to be included in society," she adds.



Scan the code to read more health special stories

Travel has always been a passion for me because you learn something new every single day. During the pandemic, when travel was restricted, I decided to channel my curiosity into a daily podcast called 'Know The Unknown'. These bite-sized episodes (less than 3 minutes) were designed to leave listeners thinking and curious. We produced a total of 417 episodes before other work commitments caught up with me. But recording and publishing all 417 episodes was super fun! You can find all episodes on Spotify, Apple Podcasts, JioSaavn, and YouTube. Just scan the QR code below:



So today, I want to share three Know The Unknown stories that sparked my interest and, hopefully, will ignite your curiosity too. We'll delve into the mysteries of who owns Antarctica, why Queen Elizabeth II had two birthdays, and the fascinating fact that India has an active volcano.

Who Owns the Land in Antarctica?

Antarctica, the farthest continent from most places on earth, is often referred to as the coldest continent. I visited Antarctica exactly 10 years ago, and I can tell you from experience that if you ever have the chance to visit this icy land, you might get asked if you saw polar bears. Contrary to popular belief, polar bears reside in the Arctic. Antarctica, on the other hand, is the realm of penguins, killer whales, seals, and many shipwrecks. But more than its wildlife, Antarctica is known for its towering mountains and extreme cold.

So, how does one get to this remote continent? There are three primary ways to reach Antarctica:

1. From South America: The most common route for tourists is to sail through the Drake Passage (if you ask me, this is like a fun roller coaster), known for its

Know the Unknown!

Who Owns the Land in Antarctica? Why Did Queen Elizabeth II Have Two Birthdays? Does India Have a Volcano?

choppy waters, towards the South Shetland Islands of Antarctica.

2. From Australia and New Zealand: This journey can be quite long but offers a different perspective on reaching the continent.

3. From Africa: The fastest way is to take a flight into Antarctica from Africa, although this option is usually reserved for scientists and governmental research expeditions.

The history of human exploration in Antarctica dates back to 1820. Since then, various nations have laid claims to different parts of the continent, leading to a tense situation with multiple countries vying for a slice of this icy land. To resolve these conflicts, on December 1, 1959, twelve countries, including Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Chile, France, Japan, New Zealand, Norway, South Africa, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom, and the United States, signed the Antarctic Treaty in Washington. This treaty declared Antarctica a continent devoted to peace and science, ensuring that it would not become the scene of international discord.

Today, many nations, including India, have established research laboratories in the region. And while flights to Antarctica from Africa are mostly for scientific purposes, the world, through the Antarctic Treaty, collectively owns this vast, icy continent. This agreement has preserved Antarctica as a place for scientific discovery and international co-operation.

Why Did Queen Elizabeth II Have Two Birthdays?

Queen Elizabeth II, the longest-reigning monarch in British history, had the unique privilege of celebrating two birthdays. She was born on April 21, 1926, and celebrated her actual birthday privately with her family. This day was marked by a 41-gun salute in Hyde Park, a 21-gun salute in



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Windsor Great Park, and a 62-gun salute at the Tower of London.

In addition to her actual birthday, Queen Elizabeth II also had an official birthday celebration on the second Saturday of June each year. This day, known as 'Trooping the Colour', involved a grand parade featuring 1,400 military officials, 200 horses, and 400 musicians, starting from Buckingham Palace and parading through the streets of London.

The tradition of having an official birthday in June began with King Edward VII, Queen Elizabeth II's great-grandfather. His actual birthday was in November, a month typically marked by cold and gloomy weather in the UK, which was not suitable for public celebrations. To ensure a more festive atmosphere, he decided to combine his birthday celebrations with the military's summer birthday parade.

With the passing of Queen Elizabeth II, the question arises whether King Charles III will also have two birthdays. The answer is yes. Like his predecessors, King Charles III will celebrate his actual birthday in November and his official birthday in June, continuing this unique royal tradition.

Does India Have a Volcano?

Volcanoes are fascinating natural phenomena, and many of us have dreamed of witnessing an eruption firsthand. There are currently 1,350 active volcanoes in the world, and India is home to one of them. Yes, India does have an active volcano.

Barren Island, located in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, is the site of India's only active volcano. To reach Barren Island, you can take a flight to Port Blair, the capital of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. From there, it's a four-hour sail to Barren Island.

This small, 3-kilometer-wide island has a 2-kilometer-wide caldera surrounded by walls up to 350 meters high. The Indian Ocean covers about 99% of the volcano's surface. The volcano was formed

ADVERTORIAL

1.8 million years ago due to tectonic activity at the boundary between the Indo-Australian plate and the Eurasian plate.

The first recorded eruption of Barren Island took place between 1787 and 1832. After a century of dormancy, the volcano erupted again in 1991. Since then, it has erupted every two to three years. The most recent eruption was reported in 2022, featuring lava flows and lava fountains.

India once had six active volcanoes, but five of them have since gone dormant or extinct. Barren Island remains our country's only active volcano, a testament to the dynamic and ever-changing nature of our planet. Have you ever witnessed this great wonder? Or are you planning to do so? I would love to know what it feels like!

To sum up, these three stories from the 'Know The Unknown' podcast series highlight the fascinating and often surprising aspects of our world. From the shared ownership of Antarctica, the unique royal traditions of Queen Elizabeth II, to the fiery heart of India's only active volcano, there's always something new to learn and discover. And I think travel is the best way to find out about these amazing stories.

It opens our eyes to the wonders of our planet and fuels our curiosity. What are some of the intriguing stories you've come across in your travels? Share them with me at neil@veenaworld.com, so we can spread the wonder and excitement of travel with our entire community. Until next time, keep exploring, keep learning, and never stop being curious.

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