

Tax brackets

Budget 2024: A look at various income tax scenarios following the new slabs

» PAGE 2

14%

INFRA. OUTLAY AS % OF BUDGET

Transport, power, telecom spending retained

INFRASTRUCTURE » PAGES 8, 9

5.5%

SOCIAL SECTOR SHARE IN BUDGET

Health, education, social welfare spending dips from FY24 RE

SOCIAL SECTOR » PAGE 7

9.43%

DEFENCE SHARE IN BUDGET

Defence outlay in Budget is lowest in nine years

ECONOMY » PAGE 6

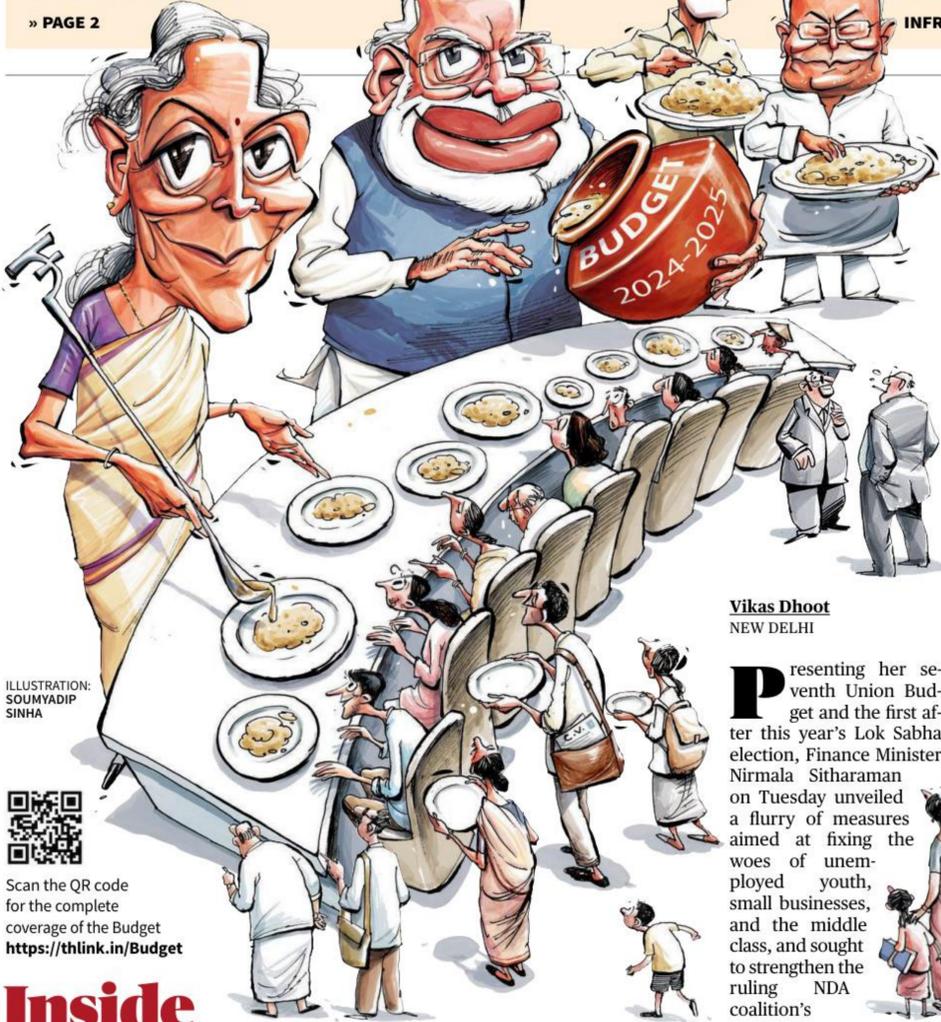


ILLUSTRATION: SOUMYADIP SINHA



Scan the QR code for the complete coverage of the Budget
<https://thlink.in/Budget>

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Stock markets react negatively to capital gain tax proposal

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Agriculture gets more; food, fertilizer subsidies trimmed

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Flagship schemes for women and girl children get a fillip

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Infrastructure

₹10 lakh crore announced for housing scheme

» PAGE 8

Small servings, MANY PLATES

FM signals shift from previous trickle-down strategy to a package of schemes for jobless youth, MSMEs; announces tax cuts for middle class; tightens fiscal deficit target to 4.9% of GDP; unveils projects for Bihar, A.P.

bonds with support for multiple investment projects in Bihar and Andhra Pradesh.

Ms. Sitharaman proposed income tax rate cuts worth up to ₹17,500 a year, putting an extra ₹1,458 a month in the hands of these taxpayers, and hiked standard deductions for salaried taxpayers and pensioners by ₹25,000 and ₹10,000, respectively.

She also vowed to spend ₹2 lakh crore over five years on five schemes which are part of what she called "the Prime Minister's package", aimed at spurring jobs and imparting skills to 4.1 crore youth.



This is a Budget that will take the country's villages, poor and farmers on the path of prosperity. This is for the continuation of the empowerment of the neo middle class

NARENDRA MODI
Prime Minister

This marked a shift in strategy, or rather a frenetic changing of lanes ahead of a roundabout as drivers in the capital are prone to do, from the previous government's preferred re-



Kursi Bachao Budget. Appease allies: hollow promises to them at the cost of other States...

Copy and paste: Congress manifesto and previous Budgets

RAHUL GANDHI
Leader of the Opposition in LS

liance on letting multiplier and trickle-down effects work while avoiding direct handouts to such sections of society. A similar lane change was last seen when Ms.

Sitharaman's predecessor, the late Arun Jaitley, presented his third Budget, for 2016-17.

Trigger for shift

The trigger for the shift could be the BJP's electoral reverses after a decade of outright majority in Parliament, preceded by revelations such as big businesses' poll bond purchases.

At a briefing after her roughly 90-minute speech, which appeared to acknowledge and begin addressing the perceived disenchantment among specific voter groups like the young, the salaried class, farmers, and small entrepreneurs, Ms. Sitharaman made it clear that the overarching theme of Budget was 'EMPLOYMENT'.

Used as an acronym, the theme was spelt out – Employment and Education; Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs); Productivity; Land; Opportunities; Youth; Middle Class; Energy Security; New Generation Reforms; and Technology.

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SHUFFLING THE DECK
» PAGE 10

A.P. to get ₹15,000 cr. for capital Amaravati

Appaji Reddem
VIJAYAWADA

The Union Budget spells a boost to Andhra Pradesh, with a special financial support of ₹15,000 crore for developing its capital Amaravati, besides assistance for the Polavaram irrigation project, grants for backward regions.

"Recognising the State's need for a capital, we will facilitate special financial support through multilateral development agencies. In the current financial year, ₹15,000 crore will be arranged, with additional amounts in future years," Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman

said in her Budget speech on Tuesday. She said the government has made concerted efforts to fulfil the commitments in the AP Reorganisation Act. Ms. Sitharaman said the Centre would come up with a plan named 'Purvodaya' for the overall development of Bihar, Jharkhand, West Bengal, Odisha and Andhra Pradesh.

A few days ahead of the Budget, Chief Minister and TDP chief N. Chandrababu Naidu, a key NDA ally, had appraised the Centre of the "dismal" financial situation in the State.

CONTINUED ON
» PAGE 16

Nitish hails Budget as Bihar gets ₹58,900 cr.

Amit Bhelari
PATNA

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Tuesday announced development projects worth ₹58,900 crore for Bihar in the Union Budget.

While ₹26,000 crore will be allocated for road projects, a 2,400-MW power plant will be set up in Pirpainti at a cost of ₹21,400 crore, and ₹11,500 crore will be used for flood control.

Bihar Chief Minister and Janata Dal (United) chief Nitish Kumar, a key NDA ally, called the announcements a big gift to the State, which was denied

the Special Category Status by the Centre on Monday.

Opposition Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) termed them an eyewash.

"We had proposed that if special status was not feasible for technical reasons, Bihar should receive special assistance from the Centre in another form, which has been announced today," Mr. Kumar said. He evaded a direct reply to a query as to whether he was giving up the demand for special status. Later, Mr. Kumar welcomed the Budget in a post on X.

CONTINUED ON
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CBI to probe death of man forced to sing national anthem by police

Soibam Rocky Singh
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Tuesday ordered the transfer of the probe into the death of 23-year-old Faizan, who was beaten up and forced to sing the national anthem by policemen during the 2020 north-east Delhi riots, from Delhi Police to the Central Bureau of Investigation.

The incident dates back to February 2020 when a video clip had gone viral

A video clip had gone viral showing Faizan, apparently injured, being beaten up by the police during the 2020 riots

showing Faizan and four other Muslim men, apparently injured, being beaten up by the police with batons and forced to sing the national anthem and 'Vande Mataram'. Justice Anup Jairam

Bhambhani questioned the failure to "conclusively identify" the policemen involved in the case even after four years of investigation. "The investigation has been tardy, sketchy, and conveniently sparing of the persons who are suspected to be involved in brutally assaulting the petitioner's son," he said.

'A HATE CRIME'
» PAGE 13
OPPORTUNITIES » PAGE 15

SC declines petitions to cancel NEET

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Tuesday refused to cancel the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (UG) 2024 held on May 5, while observing there is no material on record "at the present stage" to prove that a systemic leak of question papers has destroyed the sanctity of the exam.

FULL REPORT
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LIC KI AMRITBAAL

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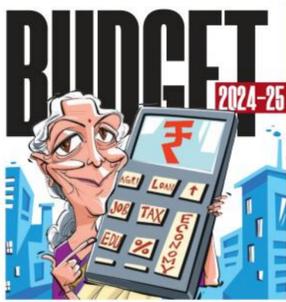
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Taxes



FM Speak

I announce a comprehensive review of the Income Tax Act, 1961, to make the Act concise, lucid, easy to understand



Tax share in GDP stagnates

The Centre's net tax revenue (not including the transfer to States) as a share of GDP at current prices has stagnated. It continues to remain below the 8% mark as shown in the graph

Source: Budget documents, MOSPI



The FM deserves credit for displaying astute financial management by keeping the fiscal deficit target at 4.9% of GDP

Sanjiv Puri, President, CII



VIEWPOINT

NIRMAL JAIN
Founder, IIFL Group



A pathway to inclusive growth

The Union Budget 2024 is a well-rounded strategy to improve the overall quality of life for all citizens

The Union Budget 2024 presented by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman represents a significant milestone in India's ongoing journey towards inclusive growth and economic resilience. With a strategic emphasis on job creation, infrastructure development, support for MSMEs, and affordable housing, the Budget addresses the nation's critical needs while prudently reducing the fiscal deficit to 4.9%.

A cornerstone of this Budget is the ambitious scheme to boost job creation in the manufacturing sector, specifically targeting first-time workers. Key components of this initiative include EPFO contribution incentives for both employees and employers for the first four years of employment; expected benefits reaching 3 million young people, fostering employment across various sectors; government reimbursement of up to ₹3,000 per month for two years for each additional employee's EPFO contributions; [and] an overarching goal to create employment opportunities for 5 million additional people.

Additionally, the introduction of a Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) scheme provides ₹15,000 to new workers registered with EPFO, disbursed in three instalments. This initiative, benefiting 210 lakh youth, is designed to support individuals entering the formal workforce, with eligibility extending to salaries up to ₹1 lakh per month. The Budget places strong emphasis on employment-linked skilling, unveiling schemes as part of the PM's comprehensive package.

A modest rise in the Securities Transaction Tax on Futures and Options is deemed manageable

In a significant boost to the MSME sector, the Budget introduces a new credit guarantee scheme for term loans aimed at purchasing

machinery and equipment without the need for collateral. On the infrastructure front, the Budget allocates ₹10 lakh crore to the PM Awas Yojana Urban 2.0, addressing the housing needs of the urban poor and middle class. An additional ₹2.2 lakh crore initiative focuses on making housing more affordable, reflecting the government's commitment to improving living standards.

Energy security and sustainable development are pivotal elements of this Budget.

Removing angel tax is a very positive step to boost start-up morale. Additionally, simplifying rules and recognition for FDIs aims to facilitate inflow and promote the use of the Rupee for overseas investments. Numerous reforms in tax law operations are introduced to simplify the process for taxpayers and rationalise tax rates, ensuring the system remains straightforward and inflation is controlled.

The market is expected to absorb a slight increase in long-term and short-term capital gains taxes from 10% and 15% to 12.5% and 20%, respectively, which will be balanced by benefits to salaries and the middle class due to lower tax burdens. Similarly, a modest rise in the Securities Transaction Tax (STT) on Futures and Options (F&Os) is deemed manageable.

The government's approach ensures balanced and inclusive development, steering India towards a future of economic resilience and equitable growth.

POCKET | SOUMYADIP SINHA



FM revises personal income tax slabs

With the changes, salaried individuals stand to save up to ₹17,500 in income tax, says Sitharaman; additionally, standard deduction expected to provide relief to '4 crore salaried individuals, pensioners'; no penalty for not reporting overseas movable assets up to ₹20 lakh

Saptaparno Ghosh
NEW DELHI

Altering the structure for taxation of income under the new regime, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Tuesday revised the tax slabs whilst retaining the erstwhile corresponding tax rates other than increasing the standard deductions.

The present slab of ₹3-6 lakh, that is, the preliminary bracket liable to be taxed, would now be revised upwards to ₹3-7 lakh. However, the corresponding rate of taxation remains unchanged at 5%.

No changes were made for individuals with income less than ₹3 lakh (who continue to draw no



Easing tax burden: Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman ahead of presenting the Budget in Parliament on Tuesday. ANI

tax liability), the ₹12-15 lakh slab, and for incomes exceeding ₹15 lakh. The FM said because of the changes, a salaried employee now stands to save up to ₹17,500 in income taxes.

The standard deduction for salaried employees, enrolled under the new tax regime has also been increased to ₹75,000 from the current ₹50,000. Furthermore, Ms. Sitharaman announced an increase in the deduction on family pension for pensioners from ₹15,000 to ₹25,000. The two measures combined, she stated, would provide relief to "about 4 crore salaried individuals and pensioners."

According to Deepshree Shetty, Partner at BDO India, who follows tax and regulatory services, the rejig in slabs was aimed at providing relief to middle-class taxpayers and to further promote the new tax regime. The Finance Minister had stated in her address that more than two-thirds of the taxpayers had opted for the new regime in the previous fiscal year.

'Salaried to benefit' Poorva Prakash, Partner at Deloitte India, who follows personal taxation, explained that the revision in tax slabs combined with the increase in standard deductions would be be-

neficial to salaried employees. The move would facilitate savings of about ₹17,500 on an income of ₹15 lakh, she observed. "This is a good amount [savings] and also serves the primary objective of the new regime to push more disposable income," she said.

About the potential need for the revision in tax slabs, Ms. Prakash explained that taxpayers in the new tax regime cannot claim exemptions citing components such as house rent allowance (HRA).

Therefore, the avenue for incentivisation is limited. Thus, the revision in tax slabs was explored in addition to the standard deduc-

tion for salaried individuals to spur their disposable income.

Among other significant measures with regard to personal finance whilst introducing measures to deepen the tax base, the FM proposed that not reporting movable assets of up to ₹20 lakh would not be liable for penalisation.

Explaining the context, she said Indian professionals working in MNCs get employee stock ownership plans (ESOPs) and invest in social security schemes and other movable assets outside the country. Not reporting such small foreign assets invites penal consequences. Introduction of the ₹20-lakh threshold proposes to address this paradigm.

Income tax scenarios - various income levels

Gross Income in ₹	7,00,000	10,00,000	20,00,000	35,00,000	55,00,000
INDIVIDUAL (UPTO 60 YEARS)					
INCOME	7,00,000	1,00,000	2,00,000	3,50,000	5,50,000
Taxable income as per current concessional tax regime (after standard deduction of ₹50,000)	650,000	9,50,000	19,50,000	34,50,000	54,50,000
Taxable income as per concessional tax regime (after standard deduction of ₹75,000) [Budget July 2024]	6,25,000	9,25,000	19,25,000	34,25,000	54,25,000
Taxable income as per old tax regime (after considering various deductions)	6,30,000	9,00,000	18,00,000	31,50,000	49,50,000
INCOME TAX PAYABLE					
As per current concessional tax regime	—	54,600	2,96,400	7,64,400	13,88,400
As per proposed concessional tax regime	—	44,200	2,78,200	7,46,200	13,70,200
As per old tax regime	40,040	96,200	3,66,600	7,87,800	13,49,400
SENIOR CITIZEN (60 - 80 YEARS)					
INCOME	7,00,000	10,00,000	20,00,000	35,00,000	55,00,000
Taxable income as per current concessional tax regime (after standard deduction)	6,50,000	9,50,000	19,50,000	34,50,000	54,50,000
Taxable income as per concessional tax regime (after standard deduction of ₹75,000) [Budget July 2024]	6,25,000	9,25,000	19,25,000	34,25,000	54,25,000
Taxable income as per old tax regime (after considering various deductions)	6,30,000	9,00,000	18,00,000	31,50,000	49,50,000
INCOME TAX PAYABLE					
As per current concessional tax regime	—	54,600	2,96,400	7,64,400	13,88,400
As per proposed concessional tax regime	—	44,200	2,78,200	7,46,200	13,70,200
As per old tax regime	37,440	93,600	3,64,000	7,85,200	13,46,800
SUPER SENIOR CITIZEN (ABOVE 80 YEARS)					
INCOME	7,00,000	10,00,000	20,00,000	35,00,000	55,00,000
Taxable income as per current concessional tax regime (after standard deduction)	6,50,000	9,50,000	19,50,000	34,50,000	54,50,000
Taxable income as per concessional tax regime (after standard deduction of ₹75,000) [Budget July 2024]	6,25,000	9,25,000	19,25,000	34,25,000	54,25,000
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As per proposed concessional tax regime	—	44,200	2,78,200	7,46,200	13,70,200
As per old tax regime	27,040	83,200	3,53,600	7,74,800	13,36,400

- Rebate u/s 87A under the old tax regime as available for a resident individual having a total income not exceeding ₹5,00,000 per annum
- Rebate u/s 87A under the concessional tax regime is available for a resident individual having a total income not exceeding ₹7,00,000 per annum
- In case of a senior citizen, basic exemption limit is ₹3,00,000 per annum under old tax regime
- In case of a super senior citizen, basic exemption limit is ₹5,00,000 per annum under old tax regime
- Tax figures include health & education cess at 4%
- Eligible deductions and exemptions such as standard deduction, professional tax, section 80C, section 80CCD(1b) and section 80D have been used for the purpose of old tax regime

Graphic text Sudhakar Sethuraman, Partner, Deloitte India

Angel tax on foreign investments in start-ups nixed

Ashokamithran T.
MUMBAI

In a major respite to India's fledgling start-ups, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced scrapping of the contentious angel tax on foreign investments received by such enterprises, a development that is expected to ease their funding woes.

Ms. Sitharaman introduced the measure stating that it would help "bolster the Indian start-up ecosystem, boost the entrepreneurial spirit, and support innovation".

The tax was introduced during the UPA regime, she said in a media briefing on Tuesday while outlining measures the NDA government took for the growth of start-ups.

Replying to queries on the possibility of money laundering due to the abolition, Revenue Secretary Sanjay Malhotra said, "There are other provisions in the Income Tax [Act] itself to find out the source of these funds." The Prevention of Money Laundering Act continued to be in existence. The existing laws were sufficient to cater to it, Mr. Malhotra added.

"We hope that even some of the past investments which are not alrea-

We hope some past investments not already under dispute will have a little more benign outlook from the tax department

ASHISH AGGARWAL,
VP & Head of Public Policy,
NASSCOM

dy under dispute will probably have a little more benign outlook from the tax department," Ashish Aggarwal, VP & Head of Public Policy at NASSCOM, told *The Hindu*.

"This new development will lead to cessation of fresh litigation. Furthermore, funds that would have been tied up in

deposits for cases involving notice issuance cease," said Brijesh Damodaran, Partner at Auxano Capital. The abolition of angel tax assumes significance as it comes at a time when start-up funding fell 60% in 2023 to \$10 billion, according to the Indian Tech Startup Funding Report 2023 by Inc42, a private start-up media and information platform.

The tax was opposed by several industry players as they believed it curbed foreign investment and dented the growth of start-ups.

Unlisted bonds, debentures, debt MFs to attract capital gains tax

Lalendu Mishra
MUMBAI

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman proposed to simplify capital gains taxation in her Budget presentation for the year 2024-25.

As per the proposal, short-term gains on certain financial assets will henceforth attract a tax of 20%, while those on all other financial and non-financial assets would continue to attract the 15% tax rate.

Long-term gains on all fi-

nancial and non-financial assets, on the other hand, would attract a tax of 12.5%. "For the benefit of lower and middle-income classes, I propose to increase the limit of exemption of capital gains on certain financial assets to ₹1.25 lakh a year," she said.

Ms. Sitharaman said listed financial assets held for more than a year would be classified as long term, while unlisted finan-

cial assets and all non-financial assets would have to be held for at least two years to be classified as long term. Unlisted bonds and debentures, debt mutual funds and market-linked debentures, irrespective of the holding period, would attract tax on capital gains at applicable rates.

"Indian founders and promoters will be smiling at the reduction of capital gains tax and foreign inves-

tors are hit where it matters most. Exits would now be taxed at 12.5% as opposed to 10%," said Kalpesh Maroo, Partner and Head, Deal Advisory, M&A Tax, PE, KPMG in India.

"The simplification of capital gains taxation and the introduction of a 20% tax on short-term gains will have multiple impacts. This will reduce volatility, raise tax revenue, and have long-term focus," said Arpit Mehrotra, MD, Office Services, Colliers India.



In tax net: Long-term gains on all financial and non-financial assets would attract a tax rate of 12.5%. VIJAY BATE



FMSpeak

To bolster Indian start-ups and support innovation, I propose to abolish the so-called angel tax for all classes of investors



Markets say "meh"

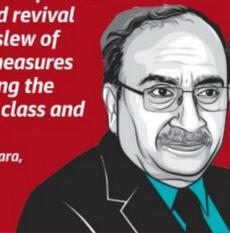
The market did not react well to the budget speech, with stock prices of most sectors declining, except for fast moving consumer goods, which gained considerably. Healthcare, IT and auto sectors too gained marginally. Realty sector recorded the steepest decline

Source: BSE

Sector	% change
Energy	-1.16%
Healthcare	+0.59%
Fast Moving Consumer Goods	+2.48%
Industrials	-1.48%
IT	+0.82%
Auto	+0.19%
Telecom	-0.51%
Finance	-1.27%
Realty	-2.15%
Oil and gas	-1.32%
Capital goods	-2.03%
Power	-0.17%

The Budget is largely focused on private demand revival with a slew of fiscal measures targeting the middle class and MSMEs

Dinesh Khara, Chairman, SBI



VIEWPOINT

KUMAR MANGALAM BIRLA
Chairman, Aditya Birla Group



Placing thrust on infrastructure

Spending on infrastructure has doubled in the past three years, from 1.7% of GDP to 3.4% now

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman accelerated the government's thrust on the crucial infrastructure sector in her seventh successive Budget presentation and the first of PM Modi's third term. A massive expansion in urban housing at an investment of ₹10 lakh crore and a rural roads programme worth ₹26,000 crore are among the major features of the big infrastructure push.

The capex budget for FY25 has been retained at ₹11.1 lakh crore, or 3.4% of the GDP.

Apart from this, the FM announced a brand new power plant for Bihar on top of investments in expressways, medical colleges, airports and new tourist circuits in the State. AP will get a brand new capital with Central assistance of ₹15,000 crore in the first year and development of industrial corridors connecting Chennai-Vizag and Bengaluru-Hyderabad.

The Indian economy's stunning revival from COVID and its emergence as the world's fastest-growing major economy is partially attributed to an infrastructure revival spurred by government spending in the past few years.

This has had a multiplier effect across industries while at the same time improving productivity, connectivity and ease of travel.

It is heartening to see the government's focus on sustaining the infrastructure build-up. Priorities tend to shift sometimes but this government has not swerved from its task of

Priorities tend to shift but this government has not swerved from ushering in world-class infrastructure.

ushering in world-class infrastructure. Spending on infrastructure has doubled in the past three years from 1.7% of GDP to 3.4% now.

The Budgetary measures provide a great opportunity to

India Inc. to participate in this nation-building exercise. We should remember that better infrastructure improves quality of life, ease of living. Along with higher economic growth and rising incomes, it is one of the essential prerequisites for a developed economy.

As the country targets \$5 trillion GDP by end of this decade and seeks to transform itself into a developed economy by 2047, the private sector is faced with a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.

So far, the private sector, especially the large business groups, have stepped up to the challenge and have proposed multi-billion dollar investments in various infrastructure projects. This is a heartening trend, and it is quite possible that smaller companies and groups will also take the plunge in the coming months and years. The buoyant state of capital markets and the healthy balance sheets of banks make financing of large projects a relatively less cumbersome exercise though a lot can be done to improve access to capital.

India's answer to the COVID-induced slowdown was to step on the gas on infrastructure and Tuesday's Budget shows the government is keen to expand and build upon the progress achieved.

Budget 2024 signals the clear intent of the government to focus on the long-term and set the foundation for a Developed India by 2047. The journey for which has well and truly begun. (The writer is Chairman, Aditya Birla Group)

Stocks wobble on capital gain tax plan

The key benchmark indices recovered most of the lost ground in the second half of trading; the reaction came on the proposal to increase capital gains tax, which has been viewed as negative by investors; 'the increase in LTCG and STCG would amount to ₹15,000 crore'

Lalendu Mishra
MUMBAI

Stock markets reacted negatively to the Budgetary provisions concerning additional tax burden on investors and closed in the negative territory led by losses in banking after experiencing high volatility.

The key benchmark indices recovered most of the lost ground in the second half of trading.

The reaction came on the proposal to raise capital gains tax, which has been viewed negatively by investors. The 5% increase in Short Term Capital Gains (STCG) tax may adversely impact short-term investors in the near term.

The BSE Sensex, having



Volatile day: The BSE Sensex, having seen intraday swing of more than 1,500 points, closed with a loss of 73.04 points. ANI

seen intraday swing of more than 1,500 points, closed with a loss of 73.04 points at 80,429.04.

The NSE Nifty 50, too, saw excess volatility and closed with a loss of 30.20 points, or 0.12%, at 24,479.05. Intraday movement was in the range of more than 500 points.

The top losers in the Sensex included L&T down 3.10%, Bajaj Finance (2.18%) and SBI (1.65%).

Heavy profit booking After initial gains, the indices witnessed heavy profit booking on volatility surrounding the Union Budget. However, the mar-

ket managed to digest the negative factors and concluded the day on a marginal negative note, said Hrishikesh Yadve, AVP Technical & Derivative Research at Asit C Mehta Investment Intermediates.

V. K. Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategy, Geojit Financial Services, said the Budget proposals, with the intent of raising tax revenue from capital gains, were slightly negative.

"The increase in STCG tax from 15% to 20% is sharp. The increase in Long Term Capital Gains (LTCG) tax from 10% to 12.5% is only marginal, particularly when seen from the perspective of increas-

ing the LTCG tax exemption limit from ₹1 lakh to ₹1.25 lakh. "The taxation of share buyback income at the hands of the recipients also is a negative. The higher taxes on F&O was expected and being done to reduce excessive speculative trades in the market."

Stating there has been an increase of Securities Transaction Tax (STT) on transactions in derivative trades in stock markets, buyback tax is now charged to individuals as against being paid by the company, Deven R. Choksey, MD, KRChoksey Shares and Securities Pvt. Ltd., said the increase in LTCG and STCG would

amount to ₹15,000 crore. "When the new tax code is introduced next year, simplification in tax rates, unified tax rates will be a reality. It is expected, with simplified tax rates under the new tax code, tax rate will go down. Thus, in preparation of the same, FM increased LTCG by 2.5% to 12.5% (from 10%) and STCG to 20% (from 15%)," he said.

"In FY 25, there will be two tax computations required for arriving at the capital gains levy. One for transactions done between April 1, 2024 to July 23, 2024 and the second will be for transactions done between July 24, 2024 to March 31, 2025. This will create significant hardships for taxpayers."

Top gainers and losers

The BSE Sensex fell as the announcements failed to cheer investors. The benchmark stock index was down 73 points. Graphic depicts the % change on Budget day for specific stocks under each sector. Only top three gainers and losers have been depicted

ENERGY	HEALTHCARE	FAST MOVING CONSUMER GOODS	INDUSTRIALS
▲ SANDUMA +4.72%	▲ ASTRAZEN +13.16%	▲ ITC +5.52%	▲ INDIANHUME +10.7%
▲ HINDOILEXP +2.14%	▲ SMSPHARMA +6.41%	▲ HERITGFOOD +5%	▲ BORORENEW +8.22%
▲ JINDRILL +1.50%	▲ BLUEJET +5.46%	▲ AVANTIFEED +4.6%	▲ RAMKY +7.27%
▼ PETRONET -2.34%	▼ GUFICBIO -3.05%	▼ BECTORFOOD -2.09%	▼ HGINFRA -5.09%
▼ CHENNPETRO -3.96%	▼ APOLLOTYRE -1.37%	▼ BAJAHIND -2.13%	▼ RVNL -5.33%
▼ MRPL -5.29%	▼ HESTERBIO -5.44%	▼ GODFRYPHLP -3.22%	▼ IRCN -7.99%
IT	AUTO	TELECOM	FINANCE
▲ PROTEAN +11.47%	▲ TVSMOTOR +2.06%	▲ MTNL +9.99%	▲ PNBGILTS +7.8%
▲ GENESYS +11.28%	▲ MOTHERSON +1.34%	▲ GTLINFRA +4.71%	▲ DHANI +6.97%
▲ MAPMYINDIA +8.55%	▲ EICHERMOT +1.25%	▲ INDUSTOWER +3.06%	▲ TRU +6.62%
▼ DATAMATICS -2.45%	▼ CUMMINSIND -1.03%	▼ IDEA -3.84%	▼ HUDCO -5.1%
▼ INTELLECT -2.86%	▼ APOLLOTYRE -1.37%	▼ HFCL -4.21%	▼ MANAPPURAM -5.64%
▼ QUICKHEAL -3.66%	▼ TIINDIA -2.61%	▼ RAILTEL -6.11%	▼ NIACL -5.88%
OIL & GAS			
▼ IGL -2%			
▼ ONGC -2.12%			
▼ PETRONET -2.34%			

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Customs Duty on gold, silver reduced to 6%

Lalendu Mishra
MUMBAI

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has proposed to reduce Customs Duties on gold and silver to 6% and on platinum to 6.4% providing big relief to buyers of these precious metals. As per the proposal, duty on gold bars has been cut from 15% to 6%, gold dore from 14.35% to 5.35%, for platinum from 15.4% to 6.4%, for silver bars from 14.35% to 6% and for silver dore from 14.35 to 5.35%.

The significant duty cuts would help reduce smuggling and cost the government an annual revenue loss of ₹28,000 crore based on FY24 import levels, said Ajai Srivastava of Global Trade Research Initiative.

"To enhance domestic value addition in gold and precious metal jewellery in the country, I propose to reduce Customs Duties on gold and silver to 6% and on platinum to 6.4%," the FM said in her speech. For the growth of the diamond cutting and polishing industry the FM has proposed to provide safe-harbour rates for foreign mining companies selling raw diamonds here. "India is a world leader

Duty on gold bars has been cut from 15% to 6%, gold dore from 14.35% to 5.35%, for platinum from 15.4% to 6.4%, for silver bars from 14.35% to 6% and for silver dore from 14.35 to 5.35%

in the diamond-cutting and polishing industry, which employs a large number of skilled workers. To promote the development of the sector, we would provide for safe-harbour rates for foreign mining companies selling raw diamonds in the country."

The Gem & Jewellery Export Promotion Council, (GJEPC), the apex trade body for gems and jewellery hailed the proposals. "The Budget will be game changer for the indigenous gem and jewellery industry, a step closer towards making India a global diamond trading hub," said Vipul Shah, Chairman, GJEPC. "The abolition of equalisation levy and announcement of safe-harbour tax on rough diamond trading will see the growth of India as the largest rough diamond trading centre."

Finance Minister raises STT on F&O trade, shifts buyback levy to investors

Lalendu Mishra
MUMBAI

For deepening the tax base, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman proposed to increase Securities Transaction Tax (STT) on Futures and Options contracts to 0.2% and 0.1%, respectively.

Vipul Bhowar, Senior Director, Listed Investments,

Waterfield Advisors said, "The decision to raise taxes comes amid a dramatic rise in derivative trading volumes, which have grown significantly since 2020. Retail investor participation in derivatives market surged from 2% in 2018 to 41% in 2023.

"Regulators have expressed concerns that this surge in trading is leading to speculative behaviour that could be detrimental to individual investors and the broader economy," he added.

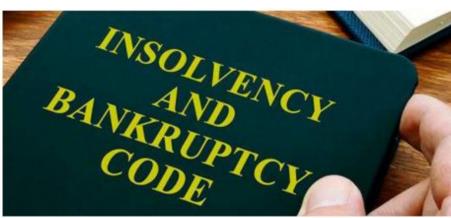
"This change in tax policy should encourage retail investors to shift focus from speculative trading to long-term investments. "The increase in taxes may have a significant impact on trading volumes, potentially affecting market liquidity, dynamics." In another step, income received on companies' share buyback will be taxed in the hands of the recipient. This is also viewed as negative for retail investors.

Budget proposes tech platform to boost IBC, more NCLTs

Lalendu Mishra
MUMBAI

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has proposed to set up an integrated technology platform to improve outcomes under the Insolvency & Bankruptcy Code (IBC) for achieving transparency, consistency, timely settlement and better oversight of all resolution cases.

She also said the government would set up additional National Company



Adding heft: The tech platform will increase the utility and efficiency of CIR process. KSL

Law Tribunals (NCLTs) to expedite resolution of cases under the IBC. "The IBC has resolved

1,000 companies resulting in direct recovery of ₹3.3 lakh crore to creditors. In addition, cases worth ₹10

lakh crore have been disposed off even before admission. We will set up additional tribunals to expedite the resolution of cases, with some dedicated to resolve cases exclusively under the Companies Act," Ms. Sitharaman said.

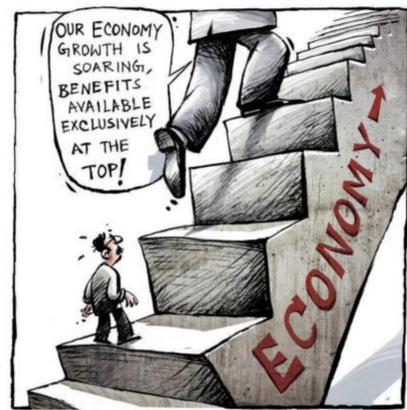
Commenting on this, M. V. Rao, Chairman, Indian Banks' Association (IBA) & CEO, Central Bank of India said, "The mea-

asures to improve the outcomes under the IBC, extending the services of Centre for Processing Accelerated Corporate Exit voluntary closure of LLPs, strengthening of National Company Law Tribunals and establishing more debt recovery tribunals are positive for the banking sector as it enhances speed of recovery processes in the system." "The integration of all

pillars of IBC ecosystem through a tech platform will increase the utility and efficiency of CIR process. The improvement in legislative framework and increased strength of tribunals is expected to bring more efficiency in the process," Anoop Rawat, Partner, Shardul Amarchand Mangaldas & Co. said.

"Technological integration will help in identifying sources of delay and corrective measures needed for improving efficiency."

POCKET | SOUMYADIP SINHA



Economy



FMSpeak

India continues to be the shining exception while the global economy is still in the grip of policy uncertainties



Most sectors shed pandemic blues

Growth of Gross Value Added (GVA) accelerated across most sectors, except agriculture, in Q4FY24. Growth in agriculture stagnated, recording the lowest figure in over five years in Q4FY24 (considering only the last quarter). In contrast, manufacturing and industry sectors posted significant growth. Table shows y-o-y% increase in GVA

Source: CMIE

Quarter	Agriculture	Industry	Mining	Manufacturing	Electricity	Construction	Services
FY18Q4	7.8	9.5	-8.9	11	11.2	14	5.9
FY19Q4	-0.9	3	0.4	1.7	5.1	6.6	7.7
FY20Q4	8.8	-2.1	-1.2	-4.7	2.8	2.3	5.6
FY21Q4	3.3	16.3	-2.9	19.6	2.7	19.4	1.3
FY22Q4	5.5	2.3	1	-0.3	7.2	7	5.3
FY23Q4	7.6	3.4	2.9	1	7.3	7.4	7.2
FY24Q4	0.6	8.4	4.3	8.9	7.7	8.7	6.7

Capex of ₹11 lakh crore will have a strong multiplier effect and reduce the cost of doing business

T. V. Narendran,
CEO & MD,
Tata Steel



VIEWPOINT

JAIRAM VARADARAJ
MD, Elgi Equipments



Govt. keeps focus on critical areas

The Budget has placed emphasis on infrastructure development, MSMEs, skill development, and job creation

The world is witnessing unprecedented disruptions and uncertainty. India, however, presents the promise of growth, stability, and opportunities for investment.

To avail of these opportunities, multiple steps were necessary: strong capital expenditure and infrastructure push by the Indian government; significant support to small and medium enterprises; job creation and skill development; and enhancing the purchasing power of both urban and rural Indian consumers.

There are several positive announcements in the Budget 2024 focused on some of these critical areas. A continued focus on infrastructure development is welcome, with high budgetary allocations for roads, railways, and urban infrastructure, covering tier-two and tier-three cities too. This is crucial for enhancing connectivity and supporting the growth of manufacturing hubs across the country.

For MSMEs, the credit guarantee scheme for acquiring plants and machinery and the announcement to formulate financing packages for technology support are laudable.

Another aspect that has attracted adverse attention in the past has been the underwhelming skill levels of the workforce, and lack of job creation. The Budget places these among the key priorities. Announcements of schemes such as the First Timer, Manufacturing

Jobs Assistance, and Support to Employers, will support employment generation. The Finance Minister has also highlighted that youth will get internship opportunities in the top 500 companies

Extending the 15% corporate tax rate to newer investments is an aspect worth considering

in the next five years, emphasising the importance of quality of experience.

There are a couple of areas that may merit further consideration by the government in its post-Budget deliberations. In implementing production-linked incentives (PLIs), the government has followed a sectoral approach to promoting private investments in manufacturing. This is important, but what will also be welcome are general fiscal measures, whose benefits are not limited to select products/value chains.

It was only for five years that the window for claiming a 15% corporate tax rate was open for manufacturers. Several of these years were lost to COVID. Extending this rate to newer manufacturing investments is an opportunity worth reconsidering.

India has been embedding itself in manufacturing supply chains, but it has faced competition from Vietnam, Thailand and others. The government is rightfully moving on the trade agreement front. Accelerating this agenda needs to be supplemented with incentives for Research and Development. It is R&D that can move Indian manufacturers from their legacy of great execution skills and cost-arbitrage to becoming product innovators.

The Budget 2024 marks the start of a journey that has begun well, with several headwinds globally and Indian economic needs balanced with finesse.

Five new schemes to aid job creation

Centre will implement three schemes for 'employment-linked incentive' as part of the Prime Minister's package, says Finance Minister; the upgrade of a thousand Industrial Training Institutes and a scheme for internship opportunities to give focus to skill development

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Amid the increasing unemployment rate and job and wage losses, the first Budget of the third Narendra Modi government has proposed taking a prioritised approach in the fields of employment and skilling. The Union Budget has proposed five schemes with an outlay of ₹2 lakh crore to generate jobs for the youth.

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said the Centre will implement three schemes for "employment-linked incentive" as part of the Prime Minister's package. "These will be based on enrolment in the Employees' Provi-



Big push: The Budget has allocated ₹2 lakh crore for schemes addressing employment and skilling. FILE PHOTO

dent Fund Organisation (EPFO), and focus on recognition of first-time employees, and support to employees and employers," she said.

The scheme will provide one-month wage to all newly employed workers in all formal sectors. "The

direct benefit transfer of one-month salary in three instalments to first-time employees, as registered in the EPFO, will be up to ₹15,000. The eligibility limit will be a salary of ₹1 lakh per month," she said, adding that it will benefit 210 lakh youth.

In 2016, the Ministry of Textiles announced a special package for the apparel sector to generate one crore jobs in three years. One of the features of the package was the government bearing the entire employer's contribution of 12% under the EPFO for new employees earning less than ₹15,000 a month for the first three years. While some of the large-scale units did invest under the package, it did not benefit the small- and medium-scale manufacturers much. Chairman of the Southern India Mills' Association S.K. Sundararaman said such schemes need consistency and should be implemented for a longer

period to be successful.

The second scheme proposed will incentivise additional employment in the manufacturing sector, linked to the employment of first-time employees with respect to their EPFO contribution in the first four years. "The scheme is expected to benefit 30 lakh youth entering employment, and their employers," she said.

The third scheme will cover additional employment in all sectors and the government will reimburse employers up to ₹3,000 per month for two years towards their EPFO contribution for each additional employee.

The fourth scheme is to

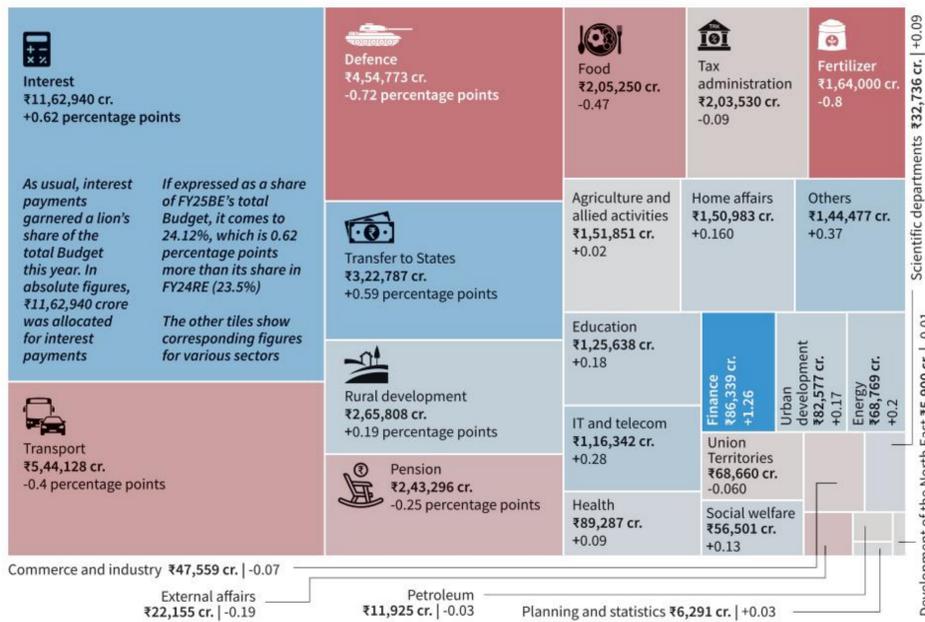
skill 20 lakh youth over a five-year period. "A thousand Industrial Training Institutes will be upgraded in hub-and-spoke arrangements with outcome orientation," she said.

Under the fifth scheme, one crore youth will get internship opportunities for 12 months in 500 top companies in the next five years. The government will provide an internship allowance of ₹5,000 per month and a one-time assistance of ₹6,000.

Trade union leader Amarjeet Kaur said the proposals were for ease of doing business and would help corporate houses. "The focus is on skilling and not on jobs for millions who are already skilled but without jobs."

Budget breakdown

The outlay for the transport sector (apart from interest payments) formed the bulk of the expenditure in FY25BE. However, transport's share in total Budget came down by 0.4 percentage points from last year (11.69% in FY24RE to 11.29% in FY25BE). The graphic depicts budgeted expenditure (₹ crore) and the change from FY24RE in percentage points



SOURCE: THE FIGURES ARE SOURCED FROM "THE EXPENDITURE OF MAJOR ITEMS" PAGE WHICH FEATURES IN THE "BUDGET AT A GLANCE" DOCUMENT

Centre slashes customs duty on certain inputs for textile and leather industries

The Hindu Bureau
COIMBATORE

The Union Budget presented on Tuesday has announcements related to the reduction of customs duty on some items in the textile and leather sectors.

The import duty on Methylene Diphenyl Diisocyanate (MDI) will be reduced to 5% from 7.5%.

"To enhance the competitiveness of exports in the leather and textile sectors, I propose to reduce BCD on real down-filling material from duck or goose. I am also making additions to the list of exempted goods for manufacture of leather and textile garments, footwear



and other leather articles for export," Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said.

The duty on wet white, crust, and finished leather for manufacture of garments, footwear, and other leather products for exports will be brought down to nil from 10%. It will also be nil

on some of the additional accessories and embellishments for manufacture of textile and leather garments, leather and synthetic footwear, or other leather products for exports. The duty on real down-filling material from duck or goose for use in the manufacture of garments for exports will be reduced to 10% from 30%.

POCKET | SOUMYADIP SINHA



Credit support for MSMEs; Mudra loan limit raised to ₹20 lakh

M. Soundariya Preetha
COIMBATORE

The Union Budget has a package of support measures for the micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) and the labour-intensive manufacturing sector.

According to the Economic Survey tabled on Monday, the contribution of MSMEs to all-India manufacturing output in FY22 was 35.4% and the share of MSME-made products in

exports in FY24 was 45.7%.

"This Budget provides special attention to MSMEs and manufacturing, particularly labour-intensive manufacturing. We have formulated a package covering financing, regulatory changes, and technology support for MSMEs to help them grow and also compete globally," Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said.

The Budget proposes a credit guarantee scheme that will work on pooling



Many of the proposals focus on credit assistance.

of credit risks of MSMEs to facilitate term loans for purchase of equipment without collateral or third-

party guarantee. A separately constituted self-financing guarantee fund will provide, to each applicant, a guarantee cover up to ₹100 crore, while the loan amount may be larger. The borrower will have to provide an up-front guarantee fee and an annual guarantee fee on the reduced loan balance.

Public sector banks will build in-house capabilities to assess MSMEs for credit.

They will take the lead in developing a new credit assessment model, based on the scoring of digital footprints of MSMEs in the economy so that those without a formal accounting system are also covered.

The limit of Mudra loans will be enhanced to ₹20 lakh from ₹10 lakh for those who have repaid previous loans under the 'Tarun' category.

E-commerce export

hubs will be set up on public-private-partnership mode so that MSMEs and traditional artisans sell their products in the international markets.

An investment-grade energy audit of traditional MSMEs will be done in 60 clusters and financial support will be provided to shift them to cleaner forms of energy. Rental housing with dormitory type accommodation for industrial workers will also be facilitated on PPP mode.



FMSpeak

India's inflation continues to be low, stable and moving towards the 4% target. Core inflation (non-food, non-fuel) currently is 3.1%



Agriculture allocation stagnates

In FY25BE, allocation to agriculture remained stagnant at around 3.1% of the total budget. Allocation to the flagship schemes — PMFBY and PM-KISAN — declined in FY25BE

Source: Budget documents

Year	Agriculture#	PMFBY*	PMKISAN*
FY17	2.54	0.56	
FY18	2.46	0.44	
FY19	2.73	0.52	0.05
FY20	4.19	0.47	1.81
FY21	3.83	0.40	1.74
FY22	3.78	0.36	1.76
FY23	3	0.25	1.39
FY24RE	3.13	0.33	1.34
FY25BE	3.15	0.3	1.24

RE: Revised; BE: Budgeted

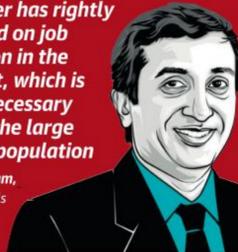
Figures in %

*Scheme to stabilise farmers' incomes by providing comprehensive insurance cover against the failure of crops

*Aims to provide farmers from lower income groups with a payment of ₹6,000 in three quarterly instalments of ₹2,000

The Finance Minister has rightly focused on job creation in the Budget, which is very necessary given the large youth population

Srivats Ram, MD, Wheels India Ltd.



₹1,000-cr. venture capital fund for space start-ups

Vasudevan Mukunth
CHENNAI

The Department of Space received a marginal rise (0.02% points) as a share of outlays in the 2024-25 Union Budget, but an 18% rise in allocation compared with Revised Estimates of FY24. The bulk of the absolute increase goes toward the development of space technologies. The allocation increased marginally for space applications, decreased for space sciences, and almost halved for INSAT satellite systems over the budgeted amount in 2023-2024.

Ms. Sitharaman also announced a pool of ₹1,000 crore, or around \$120 million, as venture capital funding for space start-ups, with the goal of "expanding the space economy by five times in the next 10 years".

However, this announcement was met with mixed reactions. Many called it a "pittance" and said the pool had to have been "10-100 times bigger". Arup Dasgupta, Distinguished Professor in the Academy of Geoinformatics, Bhaskaracharya Institute of Space Applications and Geoinformatics, Gandhinagar, called the pool "a start" but added that "somewhere down the line, the government has to realise that globally governments are anchor financiers and customers".

Susmita Mohanty, director-general of think-tank Spaceport Sarabhai, said that the allocation is out of step with the Finance Minister's ambitions considering "the total funds raised in 2023-2024 by all our space start-ups combined was a paltry \$134 million".

Marginal rise for farming; fertilizer subsidies trimmed

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman allocates ₹1.52 lakh crore for farming and allied sectors; she says enhancing productivity and resilience in the agriculture sector is her priority

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Maintaining that enhancing productivity and resilience in agriculture is her priority, Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman allocated ₹1.52 lakh crore for farming and allied sectors in the first Budget of the third term of the Narendra Modi government on Tuesday. However, fertilizer and food subsidies were decreased, inviting flak from farmer organisations.

Ms. Sitharaman announced that the Centre will review the agriculture research set-up to bring focus on raising productivity and developing climate-resilient varieties. "New 109 high-yielding and climate-resilient varieties of 32 field and horticulture crops will be released for cultivation by farmers," the Minister said.

In the next two years, one crore farmers across the country will be initiated



Food for thought: A major announcement was the implementation of the Digital Public Infrastructure for Agriculture, and a digital crop survey of kharif crops in 400 districts. R. RAGU

into natural farming supported by certification and branding.

Another major announcement was the implementation of Digital Public Infrastructure for Agriculture, and digital crop survey of kharif crop in 400 districts. The Centre will provide financial support for setting up a network of Nucleus Breeding Centres for shrimp broodstocks through NABARD.

Union Minister of Agri-

culture Shivraj Singh Chouhan said the total allocation for the Department of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare is ₹1,22,528.77 crore.

In the Revised Estimates for 2023-24, the amount was ₹1,16,788.96 crore. This included an allocation of ₹500 crore for Namu Drone Didi Scheme.

The bulk of the allocation is for the PM Kisan Nidhi. For the Department of Agricultural Research

and Education, ₹9,941.09 crore has been allocated. In the revised Budget of last fiscal, it was ₹9,876.60 crore.

The allocation for the Fertilizers Department is ₹1,64,150.81 crore. In the Revised Estimates in 2023-24, the amount was ₹1,88,947.29 and the actual expenditure incurred in 2022-23 was ₹2,51,369.18 crore.

Farmer organisations expressed concern over this cut of about 34.7% in allocation for fertilizers.

The Department of Food and Public Distribution also saw a decrease in its allocation at ₹2,13,019.75 crore. In the last Revised Estimates, the amount was ₹2,21,924.64 crore and the actual expenditure in 2022-23 was ₹2,83,744.53 crore. To control the rising prices of essential commodities, the Budget has allocated ₹10,000 crore to the Price Stabilisation Fund. In the last Revised Estimates, the allocation was a mere ₹10 lakh.

MGNREGS allocation lower than last year's actual expenditure

Sobhana K. Nair
NEW DELHI

Notwithstanding the BJP's significant losses in rural constituencies in the 2024 Lok Sabha election, the first Budget of the new NDA government did not contain any directional shift for the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS), its flagship programme for rural India.

For the financial year 2024-25, ₹86,000 crore has been allocated for the MGNREGS.

This may be ₹26,000 crore more than last year's allocation of just ₹60,000 crore, but it is still ₹19,297 crore less than the scheme's actual expenditure of ₹1.05 lakh crore in the financial year 2023-24, according to data available on the website of Union Ministry of Rural Development.

As per an analysis by The Hindu data team, this year's allocation

for the MGNREGS is just 1.78% of the budgetary allocation, a 10-year low in the scheme's funding.

According to another analysis by The Hindu data team, the BJP lost 53 Lok Sabha constituencies that can be categorised as rural seats this year, in comparison with its 2019 tally.

Every year, the rural jobs scheme has been

dogged by this problem of under-allocation of funds. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has argued that it is a demand-based scheme and

that the government offers more money as and when the requirement arises. But activists have argued that the lower allocation artificially suppresses the demand for work under the scheme. "Not only is the allocation for FY25 less than the expenditure in FY24. It also does not take into account the increased demand in the first quarter of this financial year," said Chakradhar Buddha of Lib-Tech India, a consortium of academics and activists.

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FMSpeak

This Budget provides special attention to MSMEs and manufacturing to help them grow and compete globally



Defence outlay down; science allocation up

In FY25BE, defence expenditure as a share of total Budget declined to 9.43%, the lowest in at least nine years. In fact, defence expenditure in absolute terms has also declined. Allocations to the Department of Space have stagnated, while the Science and Technology ministry's share in total Budget has improved slightly to 0.17%

RE: Revised estimates, BE: Budget estimates
Source: Budget documents

Year	Expenditure on defence (%)	Department of space (%)	Science and technology ministry (%)
FY17	12.75	0.40	0.21
FY18	12.91	0.43	0.21
FY19	12.56	0.48	0.21
FY20	11.86	0.48	0.2
FY21	9.69	0.27	0.14
FY22	9.66	0.33	0.14
FY23	9.52	0.24	0.11
FY24RE	10.15	0.25	0.11
FY25BE	9.43	0.27	0.17

Overall, the Budget is a step in the right direction, particularly driving job creation which is the need of the hour

Arundhati Bhattacharya,
Chairperson & CEO, Salesforce



VIEWPOINT

R. DINESH, Chairman,
TVS Supply Chain Solutions Limited



A blueprint for job generation

This Budget has addressed issues of the MSME sector, not only for the short-term but also for the long-term

While each of the nine tracks highlighted in the Budget have many areas to appreciate, the focus on employment generation will be a big boost, and provide the thrust for the growth of the economy. The support for the manufacturing sector, a package for employment generation, and the skilling and upskilling for 4.1 crore youth across sectors, are some of the key highlights of this Budget. This, coupled with the allocation of ₹1.48 lakh crore for education, employment, and skilling, underscores the government's commitment to harnessing India's demographic dividend.

Logistics as a sector is a significant employment generator and therefore, will be a beneficiary of the employment incentives.

The upgrade of 1,000 industrial training institutes, with a focus on aligning course content to industry needs, is a welcome move. This initiative will bridge the skill gap in the manufacturing sector, while the introduction of new courses for emerging needs will prepare our workforce for the industries of tomorrow.

This Budget has specifically addressed issues of the micro, small and medium enterprises (MSME) sector, not only for the short-term but also for the long-term. The continued support for a credit guarantee scheme for MSMEs in the manufacturing sector, providing substantial funding, without collateral, will help the sector.

This will significantly ease access to term loans for machinery and equipment purchases, fostering modernisation and expansion. This, along with support to the MSMEs during their stress period, will help MSMEs in

Support for the skilling and upskilling of 4.1 crore youth across sectors is one of the key highlights

the immediate term.

However, the focus on developing a different methodology to assess the MSMEs for their credit requirements, including usage of private sector data, is an even more important step. The focus on leveraging data, not only from publicly available information but also from other private sources, will help in providing access to finance from formal finance channels, and also provide capital for growth. The focus on the future of energy transition of MSME firms through energy audits and financial support to help MSME clusters shift to cleaner energy sources is a positive step. I believe that going forward, more clusters will be added besides glass and ceramic.

This Budget continues its comprehensive approach to enable India to become 'Viksit'. The preparation for the next-gen reforms, productivity focus, coupled with the actions on employment generation and skill development, will help sustain India in its growth path. This will also address issues on the cost of doing business. The growth of the MSMEs will provide a strong foundation to further enhance this.

Prudent fiscal deficit management not only provides headroom to face the challenges of the global economy, but also gives comfort to investors to plan for the future and invest with confidence. Budget 2024 sets the agenda for the next one year, and at the same time gives a vision for how India can continue to accelerate on its growth journey.

POCKET | RAVIKANTH



Defence funds decline, BRO gets backing

The allocation of ₹6.22 lakh crore for the Defence Ministry is slightly lower than the Revised Estimates of financial year 2023-24; Defence Minister says the funding for the Border Roads Organisation will promote development of strategic infrastructure in the border areas

Dinakar Peri
NEW DELHI

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has allocated ₹6.22 lakh crore for the Defence Ministry in 2024-25, which is almost the same as in the interim Budget presented in February. At approximately 12.9% of the total Budget, the fund earmarked for the Defence Ministry is a full percentage point lower than last year's outlay.

"The capital outlay of ₹1,72,000 crore will further strengthen the capabilities of Armed forces. Earmarking of ₹1,05,518.43 crore for domestic capital procurement will provide further impetus to *Atmanirbharta*," Defence Minis-



Increasing connectivity: BRO personnel pave the way for commencement of the Shinkun La tunnel, in Ladakh in March. PTI

ter Rajnath Singh said on 'X'. He said he was pleased that the Border Roads Organisation (BRO) had got a 30% increase in allocation. This allocation of ₹6,500 crore to the BRO would further accelerate border

infrastructure, he stated.

For different sectors
The allocation of ₹6.22 lakh crore for the Defence Ministry is slightly lower than the Revised Estimates (RE) of FY24. Of this, a

share of 27.66% goes to capital, 14.82% for revenue expenditure on sustenance and operational preparedness, 30.66% for pay and allowances, 22.7% for defence pensions, and 4.17% for civil organisations under the Defence Ministry.

While maintaining the allocation made to the Ministry during the interim Budget, the government has made an additional allocation of ₹400 crore on innovation in defence through the Acing Development of Innovative Technologies with iDEX (ADITI) scheme, the Ministry said. "Through this scheme, MoD is engaging with startups/MSMEs and innova-

tors to develop Def-Tech solutions and supply the Indian military with innovative and indigenous technological solutions." A grant of up to 50% of Product Development Budget with enhanced limit (Max) of ₹25 crore per applicant will be awarded as per extant iDEX guidelines.

On the allocation to the BRO, the Ministry said it will promote strategic infrastructure development in the border areas, while boosting socio-economic development in that region. This will help fund projects such as the Nyoma Airfield in Ladakh at an altitude of 13,700 feet, a permanent bridge connecti-

ty to the southernmost panchayat of India in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, the 4.1 km strategically-important Shinkun La tunnel in Himachal Pradesh, the Nechiphu tunnel in Arunachal Pradesh and several other similar projects, the Ministry said.

For the Coast Guard

The allocation to the Indian Coast Guard for FY2024-25 is ₹7,651.8 crore, which is 6% lower than that of RE FY24. "Out of this, ₹3,500 crore is to be incurred only on capital expenditure, adding teeth to the arsenal of ICG for addressing the emerging maritime challenges and providing humanitarian assistance to other nations," the statement added.

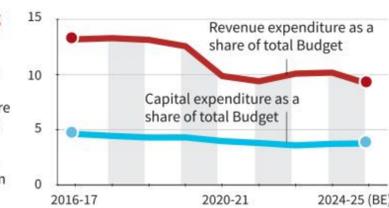
Marginal capex push

Though the outlay for defence sector in the Budget declined considerably, the share of revenue expenditure dropped marginally while that of capital expenditure improved correspondingly. Outlay for all schemes under space sector have stagnated as a share of total budget

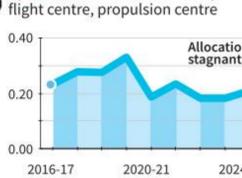


Revenue vs capital spending

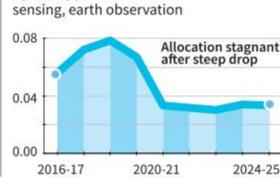
The graph shows the share of capital and revenue expenditure as a share of total Budget in the defence sector. The share of capital expenditure has marginally increased from 3.74% to 3.78%. The share of revenue expenditure in total Budget dropped from 10.16% to 9.12%



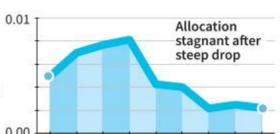
Space tech: Includes human space flight centre, propulsion centre



Space applications: Includes remote sensing, earth observation



Space science: Includes missions such as Aditya-L1, Chandrayaan-III, X-Ray Polarimeter Mission and Space Docking Experiment Mission. Includes expenses for research in sensor payload development/planetary science programme, climate and atmospheric programme



SOURCE: BUDGET DOCUMENTS

Customs duty reduced on mobile phones, chargers, and electronic components

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Union government on Tuesday slashed basic customs duty on mobile phones, chargers, and some components as part of the Budget.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said that duties on "oxygen free copper for manufacture of

resistors", hitherto set at 5%, would be eliminated.

Duties on mobile phones, chargers, and printed circuit board assemblies (PCBAs) were reduced from 20% to 15%. Inputs for connectors used in transistors have been exempted completely. Duties on rare earth metals as well as

lithium, copper, and cobalt, some of which are used in telecom equipment manufacturing, have also been eliminated or slashed. Meanwhile, PCBAs intended for telecom equipment have had their duties raised from 15% to 20% to "promote domestic manu-

facturing", Ms. Sitharaman said.

Pankaj Mohindroo, chairman of the India Cellular and Electronics Association, welcomed the announcements, stating that "[o]ur proposal for tariff slab rationalisation, [which Ms. Sitharaman said would] be taken up in the next six months, will further embolden the industry."



Jacob Koshy
NEW DELHI

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman's Budget speech has, for the first time, signalled that polluting industries such as iron, steel, and aluminium will have to conform to emission targets.

"A road map for moving the 'hard to abate' industries from 'energy efficiency' targets to 'emission targets' will be formulated. Appropriate regulations



To be held accountable: Smoke rises from a coal-powered steel plant at Hehal village near Ranchi in Jharkhand. FILE PHOTO

for transition of these industries from the current 'Perform, Achieve, and Trade' mode to 'Indian

Carbon Market' mode will be put in place," Ms. Sitharaman said in her address. While emission norms

have usually applied to large industries, her Budget address suggests a tightening of norms for even small and micro-scale industries. "An investment-grade energy audit of traditional micro and small industries in 60 clusters, including brass and ceramic, will be facilitated. Financial support will be provided for shifting them to cleaner forms of energy and implementa-

tion of energy efficiency measures. The scheme will be replicated in another 100 clusters in the next phase," Ms. Sitharaman said. These directives come in the backdrop of the proposed India Carbon Market that has been in the works for a few years. A carbon market or an emission trading scheme works as a trading platform where carbon

Budget gives fresh impetus to clean energy schemes

Jacob Koshy
NEW DELHI

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman's Budget address on Tuesday gave a fillip to several commitments made in the interim Budget to incentivise clean energy but stopped short of announcing new schemes.

The Pradhan Mantri Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojna, which aims to provide subsidised rooftop solar installations to one crore households, has been allocated nearly ₹10,000 crore this year. This is more than twice the ₹4,970 crore that was spent as part of the solar power (grid) last year.

The scheme offers 300 units of free electricity and, as *The Hindu* reported, households interested in availing the scheme's benefits will have to pay a minimum of ₹20,000 depending on the power capacity of the installed system, though this could be defrayed by a low-interest, collateral-free loan. Only houses with a suitable roof and an existing connection to the grid will be eligible for the scheme and consumers will still have to pay for all the net power supplied and consumed via the grid.

Ms. Sitharaman said the

scheme has generated a "remarkable response", with more than 1.28 crore registrations.

Nuclear energy boost

The Minister underlined investment in construction of small modular nuclear reactors (SMRs).

"Nuclear energy is expected to form a very significant part of the energy mix for Viksit (developed) Bharat. Towards that pursuit, our government will partner with the private sector for setting up Bharat Small Reactors, research and development of Bharat Small Modular Reactors, and research and development of newer technologies for nuclear energy. The R&D funding announced in the interim Budget will be made available for this sector," she said.

SMRs are compact versions of nuclear reactors and provide up to 300MW of power. The Minister also restated a proposal from 2018 to develop an Advanced Ultra Supercritical (AUSC) thermal power plant via a collaboration involving the National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC) and Bharat Heavy Electricals Ltd. (BHEL). However, no specific budgetary allocations were mentioned.



Emission standards may be imposed on polluting industries

Jacob Koshy
NEW DELHI

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman's Budget speech has, for the first time, signalled that polluting industries such as iron, steel, and aluminium will have to conform to emission targets.

"A road map for moving the 'hard to abate' industries from 'energy efficiency' targets to 'emission targets' will be formulated. Appropriate regulations



To be held accountable: Smoke rises from a coal-powered steel plant at Hehal village near Ranchi in Jharkhand. FILE PHOTO

for transition of these industries from the current 'Perform, Achieve, and Trade' mode to 'Indian

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tion of energy efficiency measures. The scheme will be replicated in another 100 clusters in the next phase," Ms. Sitharaman said. These directives come in the backdrop of the proposed India Carbon Market that has been in the works for a few years. A carbon market or an emission trading scheme works as a trading platform where carbon

credits, created as a consequence of preventing carbon emissions, can be bought and sold on negotiated prices on a portal. The system only works if an industry is required to curb annual emissions.

Currently, industry in India has no curbs on emissions in lieu of carbon credits but are incentivised to achieve energy efficiency targets via a scheme called Perform, Achieve, Trade that has been operational since 2015.





FMSpeak

PM's package of ₹2 lakh crore will facilitate employment and skilling for 4.1 crore youth over 5 years



Social spending declines

In FY25BE, allocations for various social sectors such as health, rural development and education as a share of total budget either stagnated or declined, with social welfare sector being the only exception. Allocation for social welfare improved to 1.17% of the total budget in FY25BE

Source: Budget documents

Year	Health	Rural Development	Higher Education	School Education	Social Welfare
FY17	1.97	5.77	1.47	2.18	1.61
FY18	2.47	6.3	1.57	2.18	1.75
FY19	2.35	5.74	1.38	2.09	1.89
FY20	2.36	5.30	1.37	1.96	1.66
FY21	2.28	6.1	0.92	1.48	1.07
FY22	2.22	6.03	0.88	1.23	1.07
FY23	1.75	5.69	0.92	1.40	0.97
FY24*	1.76	5.32	1.27	1.61	1.04
FY25*	1.85	5.51	0.99	1.51	1.17

*: Revised estimates, *: Budget estimates

The continued emphasis on fostering investment will facilitate growth in the manufacturing and automobile sectors

Dheeraj Hinduja, Executive Chairman, Ashok Leyland



VIEWPOINT

R. NANDINI
Chairperson of CII-Southern region



A progressive and inclusive vision

The allocation of ₹1,48,000 crore for education, skilling, and employment underscores the govt.'s commitment

The Union Budget presented by the Finance Minister on Tuesday embodies an inclusive and progressive vision, effectively addressing the diverse concerns of various sectors of the economy. It not only recognises a significant portion of the recommendations put forth by economic advisers and experts but also places a strong emphasis on key stakeholders, especially youth and women.

The Economic Survey tabled in the Parliament on July 22 points out that the rising youth and women participation in the workforce presents an opportunity to tap the demographic and gender dividend. It also lists six key areas as the growth strategy for *Amrit Kaal*. One of it is bridging the education-employment gap.

Addressing unemployment

One of the critical challenges facing the government in recent years has been the issue of unemployment. The budget adeptly tackles this by emphasising the importance of creating employment opportunities. Incentives for first-time job seekers is set to benefit approximately 2.1 crore youth across the country. The allocation of ₹1,48,000 crore for education, employment, and skill development underscores the government's commitment to this essential sector.

As we aim for "India @ 100," a skilled workforce is the need of the hour.

The plan to upgrade 1,000 Industrial Training

The government has proposed a new scheme to support the skilling of 20 lakh youth over the next 5 years

Institutes (ITIs) is a pivotal step toward enhancing the skill-sets of our future workforce. The government has proposed in the budget a new scheme to support the skilling of 20 lakh youth over the

next five years, ensuring that our young population is equipped for the challenges of tomorrow.

I am particularly heartened by the allocation of over ₹3 lakh crore for women-led development initiatives, including provisions for accommodation through working women hostels, which will greatly benefit the women workforce, especially those in the manufacturing industries.

The Budget 2024 reflects a holistic approach to national development, placing education, women empowerment, skill development, and research at its core. As the nation navigates the complexities of a post-pandemic world, these allocations represent more than just financial figures; they symbolise India's vision for a more equitable and prosperous future. With strategic investments in these critical areas, India is poised to emerge stronger, fostering a society where every individual has the opportunity to thrive.

In conclusion, this budget signals a transformative phase for our economy, addressing pressing challenges while laying the groundwork for sustainable growth. By prioritising the needs of our youth, women, and the entrepreneurial spirit of MSMEs, we are not just investing in the economy but also in the fabric of our society.

POCKET | SOUMYADIP SINHA



Women-friendly schemes get a push

Minister announces ₹3 lakh crore for schemes benefiting women and girls; a significant portion of the allocation, ₹25,848 cr., is directed towards Central schemes; properties purchased by women to attract lower duties; Vatsalya, a new pension scheme, set to be rolled out

Sreeparna Chakrabarty
NEW DELHI

The first Union Budget of the new Modi government saw a concerted effort at women-led development, with the Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman announcing more than ₹3 lakh crore for schemes benefiting women and girls, and promised a look at further lowering duties for properties purchased by women.

She announced a new pension scheme named 'Vatsalya'. A contributory pension scheme, this will have contributions from parents and guardians. On the child attaining the age of majority, the plan can be converted seamlessly into



Big effort: The announcement of setting up of special working women's hostels aims to facilitate women's employment. FILE PHOTO

a regular National Pension System (NPS) account.

The announcements include the setting up of special working women's hostels and creches in collaboration with industries to facilitate women's employment, and promot-

ing women-specific skilling programmes and support for women's self-help groups.

Marginal dip

According to an analysis by *The Hindu's* data team, the allocation for the Ministry

of Women and Child Development has actually seen a dip, though very marginal, of 0.03%. While the Budget estimate for 2024-25 is ₹26,092 crore, the revised estimate in 2023-24 was ₹25,448 crore.

The allocations for schemes coming under the Women and Child Development (WCD) Ministry, including 'Samarthya' (supporting projects such as women's hostels), 'Swadhar Greh', and 'Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana', have also been increased slightly.

A significant portion of the Ministry's allocation is directed towards Centrally Sponsored Schemes, which received ₹25,848 crore.

The flagship schemes under the Ministry, including Saksham Anganwadi, POSHAN 2.0, Mission Vatsalya and Mission Shakti, have been given substantial funds to continue their efforts in improving nutrition, child protection, and women's empowerment.

What activists find encouraging though are the doubling of the upper limit of Mudra loans to ₹20 lakh to promote entrepreneurship in the country as, according to them, nearly 60% of entrepreneurs in the micro, small and medium enterprises (MSME) sector are women, and they are desperately in need of formal loans. The credit guaran-

tee scheme for MSMEs is also likely to be beneficial for women, they feel.

"The MSME sector has the maximum number of women who struggle to get collateral-free loans. These efforts made in the Union Budget would be hugely beneficial to them as we have observed in our work with communities," Kalpana Ajayan, regional head, South Asia, Women's World Banking, and Member, Gender Committee, Reserve Bank Innovation Hub, said.

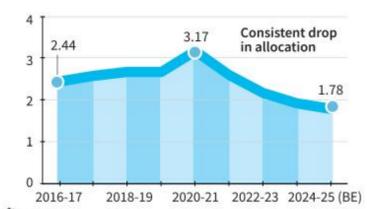
She said that the Union Budget missed out on the need for gender-aggregated data to be placed in the public domain in order to see how women have benefited from gender-budgeting over the years.

The social sector pie shrinks

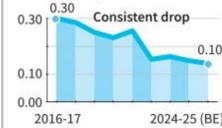
Outlays to most schemes under the rural development, education and health heads, as a share of total budget expenditure, have either declined or stagnated in FY25BE. The Ayushman Bharat scheme's allocation has remained more or less the same in recent years after a sharp increase seen in FY23.

SOURCE: BUDGET DOCUMENTS

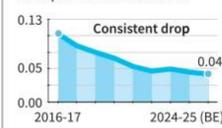
MGNREGS: Outlays on the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) as a share of budget is the lowest in nine years in FY25BE. The scheme offers 100 days of guaranteed wage employment to rural households



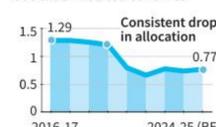
Old-age pension: Assistance of ₹200-500 per month



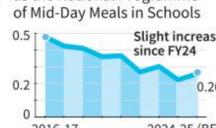
Widow pension: Assistance of ₹300 per month to widows



Samagra shiksha: A combination of three education related schemes



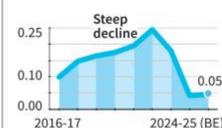
PM-POSHAN: Earlier known as the National Programme of Mid-Day Meals in Schools



Ayushman Bharat: Cashless and paper-less insurance



Swasthya Suraksha: Tertiary healthcare in remote areas



Meagre increase in funds allocated for minority affairs; most schemes see cut

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Ministry of Minority Affairs has seen a mere 2.7% increase, from funds allocated in the previous year's Budget Estimate (BE), for the financial year 2024-25 in the Union Budget presented on Tuesday.

This allocation is around 22% of the Revised

Estimate (RE), but monetary allocation in schemes like coaching and education loans have been slashed.

This year's BE show that the Ministry is getting 0.07% of the government's total outlay, which amounts to a mere 0.01% more than last year's share of the total outlay. The BE

for the coaching and allied schemes for minorities has been slashed from ₹30 crore in 2023-24 to ₹10 crore in 2024-25. The RE for this scheme in 2023-24 was ₹14 crore.

The BE for the interest subsidy on educational loans for overseas education for minorities

has also been reduced from ₹21 crore to ₹15.30 crore. The RE for this scheme was ₹7 crore.

The BE for Pradhan Mantri Jan Vikas Karyakram has seen a massive increase from ₹600 crore in 2023-24 to ₹910 crore in 2024-25.

The revised budget for this scheme last year was ₹550 crore.

Glass both half-full and half-empty for science Ministries

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

The allocations for the traditional science Ministries and departments in the Union Budget presented by Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Tuesday present a dull picture against the 2023-24 figures. However, the picture brightens up a bit if their continuing under-utilisation is taken into account.

The Department of

Science and Technology (DST) received ₹8,029 crore, a marginal increase over the ₹7,931 crore from last year, but nearly two-thirds more than its utilisation of ₹4,891.78 crore.

Revenue expenditure under other scientific research accounts for the bulk of these numbers. The allocation for the National Quantum Mission jumped from zero last year to ₹427 crore this year. This Mission "aims to seed, nurture, and scale up scientific

and industrial R&D and create a vibrant and innovative ecosystem in quantum technologies". The Union Cabinet approved it in April 2023 with a total outlay of ₹6,000 crore over eight years.

The allocation for the Department of Biotechnology (DBT) has been cut from ₹2,683.86 crore to ₹2,275.7 crore this year, yet it had more than ₹1,000 crore in unspent funds last

year. Notably, its allocation under biotechnology R&D has dropped from ₹1,345 crore last year to ₹1,100 crore this year and under 'other scientific research' from ₹2,472.97 crore to ₹2,087.26 crore this year as against a utilisation last year of ₹1,508.07 crore.

Little hike for labs

The Department of Scientific and Industrial Re-

search (DSIR), which oversees the more than three dozen DSIR laboratories around the country, tells a different story. It overspent its allocation last year by 8% but has received only a 2% hike over that. The hike brings its allocation this year to ₹6,323.41 crore.

The Ministry of Earth Sciences has been given ₹3,064.80 crore – a modest increase over its actual expenditure of ₹2,879.02 crore last year but a 7.6% cut from the budgeted va-

lue. The capital outlay on oceanographic research has increased by ₹53 crore to ₹280 crore whereas that for meteorology has dropped to ₹276.20 crore.

Including the respective allocations and utilisation by the Departments of Space and of Atomic Energy, the total increase across all these departments and Ministries over the budgeted allocation last year is -1.3% whereas over the revised expenditure is +20.85%.

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

As part of the new loan scheme announced by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman while presenting the Union Budget for 2024-25, e-vouchers will be given to one lakh students every year to secure loans up to ₹10 lakh to pursue higher education in domestic institutions. The annual interest subvention will be 3% of the loan amount.

Educationists say the move will help in reducing the financial burden on students and promoting enrolment in domestic institutions.

"This initiative will undoubtedly empower many aspiring students to pursue their academic goals without the burden of financial constraints and increase job opportunities," Professor Mahadeo Jaiswal, Director, Indian Institute of Management, Sambalpur, said.

Barring supporting loans for higher education, the Budget speech did not contain any major proposals on education.

The allocation for the Ministry of Education at ₹1.2 lakh crore has seen a slight increase at 7.14% as compared with last year's ₹1.12 lakh crore.



This initiative will undoubtedly empower many aspiring students to pursue their academic goals

MAHADEO JAISWAL
Director, IIM, Sambalpur

However, compared with the Revised Estimates for 2023-24, which stand at ₹1.29 lakh crore, this year's Budget Estimates have decreased by 6.97%.

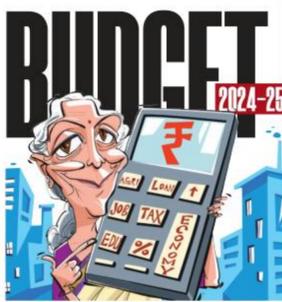
Revamped scheme

The Budget also announced that the Model Skill Loan Scheme will be revised to facilitate loans up to ₹7.5 lakh with a guarantee from a government-promoted fund. This measure is expected to help 25,000 students every year.

Official sources in the Ministry of Skills told *The Hindu* that this scheme is a revamped version of the Skill Loan Scheme that was launched in 2015, but later discontinued.

As per information provided by the Indian Banks Association with respect to 21 banks, a total skill loan of ₹29.06 crore was disbursed during the year 2018-19.

Infrastructure



FMSpeak

Significant investment by the Centre in building infra has had a strong multiplier effect on the economy



Roadways outlay remains above 5%

In FY25BE, allocation to the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MORTH)'s share in the overall Budget continued to be high, crossing the 5% mark. Allocations for the telecom department in FY25BE has increased compared with FY24RE and has also consistently remained high over the 2% mark. Outlay for power sector has also increased in FY25BE compared with FY24RE

Figures in %
Source: Budget documents

Year	MORTH	Telecom dept.	Power
FY17	2.64	1.20	0.56
FY18	2.85	1.11	0.65
FY19	3.34	0.89	0.67
FY20	2.91	1.06	0.57
FY21	2.83	1.21	0.30
FY22	3.26	0.84	0.57
FY23	5.18	2.84	0.22
FY24*	6.15	2.19	0.39
FY25^	5.77	2.32	0.43

* Revised estimates; ^ Budget estimates



VIEWPOINT

D. LAKSHMINARAYANAN
MD, Sundaram Home Finance



A big boost for the home finance sector

Budget will lead to a growth spurt in affordable housing, which will benefit cement and steel sectors

The Indian real estate sector has been experiencing a significant boom in recent quarters, driven by factors such as rapid urbanisation, policy reforms, increase in disposable income and a continuous growth in consumer sentiments. Last year, the sector registered remarkable progress, consolidating its position among various other sectors.

And indeed, the Finance Minister has given a big boost to this segment in the Budget, with a huge allocation of ₹10 lakh crore for both rural and urban areas under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojna credit-linked subsidy scheme.

This also sends a strong message of the continued focus and thrust on driving the growth of affordable housing in the country, consistent with the Union government's stated intent of 'Housing for All'. I see a growth spurt in the affordable housing sector on the back of this announcement, which will also boost the cement and steel sectors, and create additional employment.

Long-term impacts

Another positive for the real estate sector has been the announcement of a lower duty for women purchasing property. This is an initiative to enhance property ownership and financial security for women, and is likely to drive the growth of more first-time home buyers.

In the long run, this is likely to diversify ownership, provide financial independence to women, and reduce the age of first-time home buyers. The digitisation of land records – in both urban and rural areas – is a welcome development and will improve transparency, boost revenue compliance, and improve overall credit flow. This, in turn, will have a positive effect in the long run on the demand for housing.

Priorities: jobs and MSMEs

This Budget is a very focussed one, which addresses two major priorities of the economy: employment generation, and micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs). The move to provide funds to first-time employees, with commensurate benefits to companies, will ensure that there is an incentive to hire more people.

The interests of the MSME sector have been addressed through the credit guarantee scheme and the push for more bank lending. This will also feed into additional job creation and have cascading effects on consumption.

The fiscal deficit has been estimated at 4.9%, compared to the 5.1% indicated in the interim Budget, and it is commendable of the FM and her team to peg it at this level. Also, the size of the Budget has gone up only marginally, by around ₹50,000 crore. This will ensure that the government's borrowing plan will largely remain neutral.

Overall, it is a good Budget for the housing sector, with a number of positive developments, and will provide a fillip to this sector to continue its growth trajectory.

POCKET | SOUMYADIP SINHA



FM allots ₹10 lakh cr. for housing scheme

3 crore additional houses under the PM Awas Yojana in both rural and urban areas have been announced; move to bring in rental housing with dormitory accommodation for industrial workers through public-private partnership mode welcomed by construction sector

N. Anand
CHENNAI

To address the housing needs of the urban poor and middle class families, the Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has announced an investment of ₹10 lakh crore under the PM Awas Yojana-Urban 2.0, including Central assistance of ₹2.2 lakh crore in the next five years.

While tabling the Union Budget 2024-25, the Finance Minister said that a provision of interest sub-



Shelter support: A man walks past a damaged house near a building being constructed under the PMAY in Ahmedabad. REUTERS

sidy to facilitate loans at affordable rates is also envisaged.

The Union Budget 2024-

25 also stated that rental housing with dormitory type accommodation for industrial workers will be

facilitated in public-private partnership mode with viability gap funding support and commitment from anchor industries.

Besides, three crore additional houses under the PMAY in rural and urban areas in the country have been announced, for which the necessary allocations are being made.

"The specific creation of dormitory-style rental housing for industrial workers marks the beginnings of a much-needed

rental housing market in the country. The ₹1.48 lakh crore outlay dedicated to employment generation should play an important role in boosting incomes for home buyers in the affordable housing segment," said Knight Frank India CMD Shishir Bajjal.

The announcement of huge allocation in both rural and urban locations under the PMAY has been welcomed by the construction companies and housing finance com-

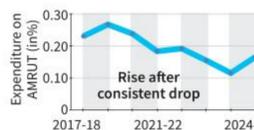
panies, particularly those focused on low ticket housing. They also said that the credit-linked subsidy is a big boost for the affordable housing segment.

"Lower stamp duty for women purchasing property is likely to drive the growth of more first-time home buyers. Digitisation of land records will improve transparency, boost revenue compliance and improve overall credit flow," said Sundaram Home Finance Managing Director D. Lakshminarayanan.

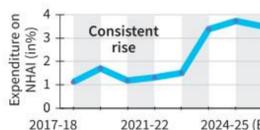
A mixed bag

Outlays to implement housing in urban & rural areas, and other basic amenities in urban areas as a share of total Budget have improved in FY25BE. The allocation to smart city mission as a share of total Budget, on the other hand, has plunged

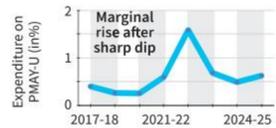
AMRUT: Water supply, sewerage, transport, and parks in urban areas



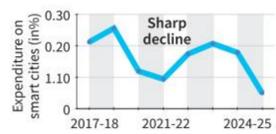
NHA: Responsible for the execution of the Bharatmala Pariyojana



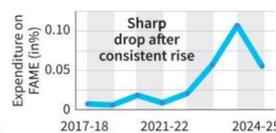
PMAY-U: Aims at providing pucca houses to beneficiaries in urban areas



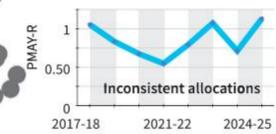
Smart cities mission: Aims at transforming cities through better infrastructure



FAME: Supports the electrification of public and shared transportation



PMAY-R: Aims at providing pucca houses to beneficiaries in rural areas



Urban, rural land reforms by Centre; land records to be digitised with GIS mapping

Vasudevan Mukunth
CHENNAI

The 2024-25 Union Budget presented by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman promised a few reforms related to land and land use in the country ranging from their identification to planning and potentially drawing from multiple domains.

Ms. Sitharaman said "land-related reforms and actions, both in rural and urban areas, will cover land administration, planning and management, and urban planning, usage

and building bylaws". According to her, these activities are to be completed in three years with "appropriate fiscal support".

She added that "rural land-related actions will include assignment of unique land parcel identification numbers or Bhu-Aadhaar for all lands, digitisation of cadastral maps, survey of map sub-divisions as per current ownership, establishment of land registry, and linking to the farmers registry".

On the urban front, the

Minister continued saying: "Land records...will be digitised with geographic information system (GIS) mapping. An IT-based system for property record administration, updating, and tax administration will be established. These will also facilitate improving the financial position of urban local bodies."

Ms. Sitharaman also said that on the back of a successful pilot project, the Centre "in partnership with States will facilitate the implementation of the

Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) in agriculture for coverage of farmers and their lands in three years." This programme will include a "digital survey" of the kharif crop in 400 districts and the land details being brought into a "land registry".

"Incentivising States for action on reforms around land, in both rural and urban areas, is a welcome move," Deepa Jha, who works on land governance issues at the Indian Institute of Human Settlements, Bengaluru, told *The Hindu*.

A sum of ₹1,309 crore has been allocated for the

New scheme to focus on uplift of tribal villages

Abhinav Lakshman
NEW DELHI

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Tuesday announced that the Union government will launch the PM Janjatiya Uन्नat Gram Abhiyaan with the aim of achieving full saturation of basic facilities among five crore Scheduled Tribe families across 63,000 villages in tribal-majority areas and aspirational districts.

The scheme, designed after the PM-JANMAN to achieve saturation of basic facilities for Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups, will be for Scheduled Tribe populations across the country, the Finance Minister said in her 2024-25 Budget speech on Tuesday, without going into the details of how much funds are being set aside for this or how this package would be implemented or overseen.

Tribal Affairs Minister Jual Oram hailed the announcement of the "transformative scheme", expressing gratitude, adding in a social media post that it would "uplift the socio-economic conditions of tribal communities".

This came as the government allocated ₹13,000 crore in the Budget Estimate 24-25 for the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, which showed an increase of 4.31% compared to BE 23-24 even as the Revised Estimate for FY 23-24 had been pegged at ₹7,605 crore.

This transformative scheme will uplift the socio-economic conditions of tribal communities, covering 63,000 villages

JUAL ORAM
Tribal Affairs Minister

The last available Actual Expenditure for the FY 2022-23 showed that the Ministry had spent a total of ₹7,273.53 crore. More than half of the Tribal Affairs Ministry's allocation in this year's BE 24-25 – ₹6,399 crore – has gone to the scheme for Eklavya Model Residential Schools for tribal students.

Meanwhile, BE 24-25 for the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment showed an allocation of ₹14,225.47 crore, which is 1.08% more than BE 23-24.

The Budget Estimate for 2024-25 showed that the National Fellowship for OBC students was allocated ₹55 crore compared to ₹57 crore in BE 23-24 even though the Revised Estimate 23-24 was at ₹90 crore for the scheme.

The Budget documents also showed that the allocation under Interest Subsidy on Overseas Studies for OBC and EBC students had decreased from ₹29 crore in BE 23-24 to ₹25 crore in BE 24-25 – significantly lower than the government's RE 23-24.

Border infrastructure maintenance and capital outlay sees hike

Vijaita Singh
NEW DELHI

With a ₹3,756 crore allocation, the border infrastructure maintenance and capital outlay has seen an increase of ₹211 crore for the 2024-25 Budget compared with ₹3,545 crore last year, under the allocation for the Ministry of Home Affairs.

The allocation for 'rehabilitation and relief for migrants', which includes Sri Lankan refugees and Tibe-

tans, has been increased from ₹301 crore in the 2023-24 fiscal to ₹539.72 crore in 2024-25.

Language platform

In a first, funds of ₹56 crore have been set aside to establish the 'Bhartiya Bhasha Anubhag' (Indian Languages Department) for the "development of a platform to facilitate the translation of various languages into Hindi and vice-versa".

No English translation was provided for the name

of the platform.

As per the Official Languages Act, 1963, Hindi and English are the languages to be used in correspondence between Ministries and State governments.

In 2019, Union Home Minister Amit Shah said that India is a country of different languages, adding, "Today, if any one language can do the work of tying the country together, then it is the most spoken Hindi language."

In 2023, Mr. Shah said

that Hindi played an unprecedented role in uniting the country during the Independence movement, instilled unity in a country "divided into many languages and dialects".

The Hindu reported on July 23 that proceedings of the Lok Sabha will be available in 10 languages in real time, a first in Parliamentary history.

A sum of ₹1,309 crore has been allocated for the

Census survey and the Statistics/Registrar General of India this year, compared with ₹1,564.65 crore in 2023-24. The Census has been indefinitely delayed and it was last held in 2011.

The Budget for the Intelligence Bureau has increased from ₹3,418 crore to ₹3,823 crore.

The Special Protection Group, which only protects the Prime Minister, has seen an increase of ₹73

crore in Budget allocation, up from ₹433.59 crore in 2023-24 to ₹506.32 crore now.

No allocation was made for the Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C) as the scheme ceased to exist from July 1 and the unit is now a part of the MHA, a Home Ministry official said. A total of ₹2,19,643.31 crore has been allocated to the MHA, while the interim Budget of 2024-25 had allocated ₹2,02,868.70 crore to the Ministry.



FMSpeak

Investment in infrastructure by private sector will be promoted through viability gap funding and enabling policies

Railways outlay remains above 5% mark

In FY25BE, the Railway Ministry's share in the overall Budget continued to be over the 5% mark. Though its share has marginally declined when compared with FY24RE, the share still remains high. Allocations for the Aviation Ministry has remained consistently low in recent years. Moreover, allocations for the Aviation Ministry has declined marginally in FY25BE compared with FY24RE. Outlay for Shipping Ministry has stagnated

Year	Railway Ministry	Aviation Ministry	Shipping Ministry
FY17	2.29	0.17	0.07
FY18	2.11	0.12	0.07
FY19	2.37	0.41	0.08
FY20	2.6	0.14	0.06
FY21	3.20	0.12	0.04
FY22	3.56	1.9	0.04
FY23	3.87	0.22	0.04
FY24*	5.42	0.07	0.05
FY25*	5.3	0.05	0.05

* Budget estimates; * Revised estimates
Source: Budget documents

The Budget is growth-oriented and inclusive in nature, with a strong thrust on quality job creation and skilling

Anish Shah,
Group CEO, Mahindra Group



VIEWPOINT

P.B. BALAJI
Group CFO, Tata Motors Ltd.



Driving growth by boosting infra

Focused initiatives will accelerate the pace of infrastructure growth across the country and aid development

The Budget signals policy continuity. The economy and the fiscal situation are in fine fettle. We are targeting real growth rates of 7%+ whilst keeping fiscal deficit at 4.9% for the year gone by and seeking to reduce it further to 4.5% in the coming year. Reassuringly, we are continuing to support investments in infrastructure with almost ₹11 lakh crore of spends allocated. This combination of continuing to drive growth through investments whilst keeping inflation low through tight control on fiscal deficit will augur well in the long run.

Specifically, the Budget focuses on these key priorities – resilient agriculture, promoting skill development, driving employment and inclusivity, accelerating infrastructure development, energy security, fostering innovation and progressive reforms. All of these are relevant and critical areas to focus upon.

From an automotive industry perspective, three key aspects stand out.

The government has earmarked an impressive capital expenditure of over ₹11 lakh crore, equivalent to 3.4% of the GDP, towards infrastructure development. This substantial allocation marks strong conviction on delivering sustainable growth by bolstering the nation's infrastructure. By making available ₹1.5 lakh crore additionally to States in the form of long-term interest-free loans, regional

infrastructure development is also being supported. The introduction of viability gap funding with conducive policies will stimulate private sector participation. These focused initiatives will accelerate the pace

The Auto PLI outlay at ₹3,500 crore in FY25 is a 6X increase over the ₹604 crore allocated last year

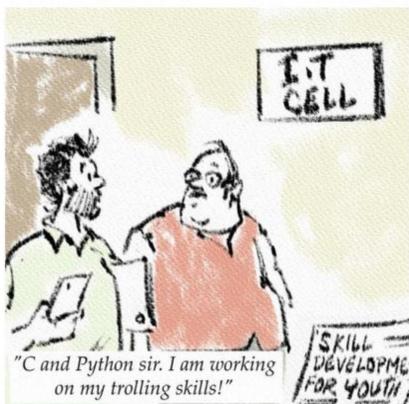
of infrastructure growth across the country and support all round development.

The Auto PLI outlay at ₹3,500 crore in FY25 is a 6X increase over the ₹604 crore allocated last year. This underscores the government's continuing commitment towards building an 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' and its thrust on creating a global hub for manufacturing EVs in line with the larger vision of 'Make in India for the World'. With the outlay being stepped up, we now look forward to early finalising of the procedures for claiming and settling the PLI funds. This can help OEMs focus on driving up EV penetration, enhancing localisation, improve value adds and actualise the holistic benefits of this initiative. This coupled with the much-anticipated FAME 3 scheme will give the next leg-up towards mass adoption of EVs.

With the overwhelming response to the PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojna, the exemption of customs duties on capital goods used for manufacturing solar cells and panels will further reduce the cost of producing solar energy. These targeted actions reiterate the government's pledge to fulfil the country's climate commitments and accelerate the production as well as adoption of green energy.

Overall, it is a budget that inspires confidence that the agenda is set, and we are making strong strides to deliver the same in an equitable, inclusive, balanced manner whilst seizing the future and creating a 'Viksit Bharat'.

POCKET | RAVIKANTH



Fair weather for aircraft, ship leasing

Finance Minister says legislative backing will be offered in a bid to protect airlines from foreign exchange risks; aviation industry demands that banks be allowed to set up individual sovereign entities for the purpose of extending financial support for leasing of aircraft

Jagriti Chandra
NEW DELHI

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman proposed legislative support to financing for leasing aircraft and ships in India in a bid to protect airlines from foreign exchange risks.

"We will seek the required legislative approval for providing an efficient and flexible mode for financing leasing of aircraft and ships," the Minister said in her Budget speech. She said legislative backing for "pooled funds of private equity through a variable company structure" would also be explored.

The Variable Capital Company (VCC) is a new corporate structure in Singapore that was introduced in January 2020 and tailored to address the unique needs of funds. It is considered a game-changer in the world of Singapore's corporate finance. A VCC can be formed as a single standalone fund, or as an umbrella fund with two or more sub-funds,



Looking ahead: Airlines are exposed to foreign exchange risks as key purchases, notably fuel, are priced in U.S. dollars. FILE PHOTO

each holding different assets.

The uncertainty surrounding the level of future exchange rates gives rise to future exchange risks for airlines. Their main foreign currency exposure is often to the U.S. dollar because key cost items, notably fuel, main-

tenance, and overhaul costs, along with aircraft purchase and lease payments, are typically priced in U.S. dollars.

Though the government has tried to promote leasing at Gujarat's GIFT City through tax incentives and regulatory relaxations, most aircraft leases transacted are financial leases (lessee exercises right to retain ownership of aircraft) and not operating leases (lessor retains ownership) as there is little impetus for a vast majority of lessors well established in Ireland to set up a unit in GIFT City. Moreover, while GIFT City aims to attract foreign lessors, experts say there is a need to create an

indigenous ecosystem for aircraft leasing.

The Finance Minister offered partial relief to the maintenance, repair and overhaul (MRO) sector by allowing entities a period of one year, instead of the previous six-month cap, to stock imported goods such as spares and test equipment before exporting them.

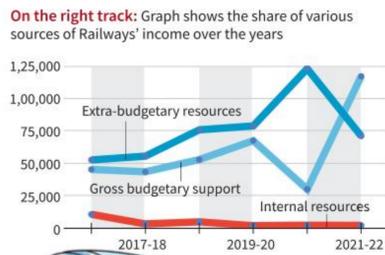
The MRO industry though says there is a need to remove the cap. Additionally, MROs will be able to offer a warranty of five years, instead of three, to their customers overseas as the Minister has proposed to extend the time-limit for re-import of goods for repairs.

Alok Anand, chairman and CEO, Acumen Aviation, said various legal reforms are needed to promote domestic aircraft leasing. The first change that is needed is to allow availability of local capital to allow Indian banks to provide loans by recording aircraft as a collateral, he said. At present, aircraft are not considered adequate collateral, and loans are sought on the basis of the strength of corporate balance sheets, he said.

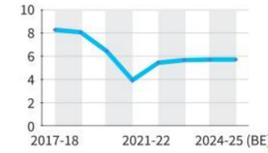
Mr. Anand said banks should be allowed to set up individual sovereign entities for the purpose of extending financial support for aircraft leasing. The Reserve Bank of India does not include aircraft in its list of equipment eligible for finance.

Chugging along well

Not only are the Railways' allocations consistently high, quality of expenditure has also improved. Capital expenses as a share of overall Budget is also up in the recent years. The sector's dependence on extra-budgetary resources has also come down



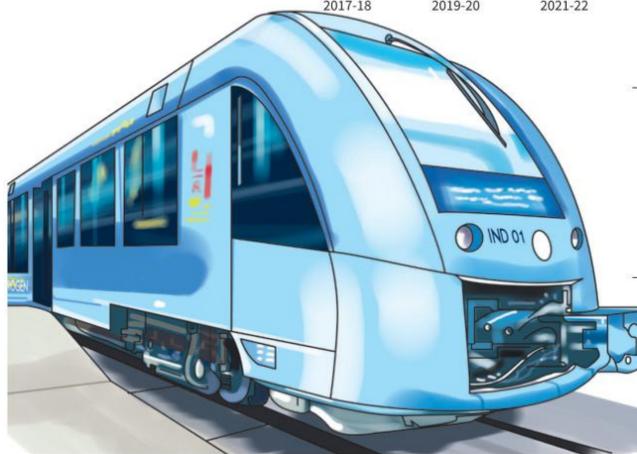
Revenue expenditure: Share in overall Budget remains stagnant



Capital expenditure: Share in overall Budget is consistently high

Telecom and signalling: Share in overall Budget is increasing

UDAAN: Slight dip in outlay for scheme to improve connectivity in remote areas



To implement new criminal laws, forensic infrastructure gets a boost

Vijaita Singh
NEW DELHI

Under the Budget allocation for the Ministry of Home Affairs, funds of ₹700 crore and ₹150 crore have been earmarked for 'Modernisation of Forensic Capacity' and 'National Forensic Infrastructure Enhancement', respectively, which is crucial for the im-

plementation of the three criminal laws that came into effect on July 1.

In June, the Cabinet approved the forensics scheme with a total financial outlay of ₹2,254.43 crore for the period 2024-25 to 2028-29. Another component, the Crime and Criminal Tracking Net-

work Systems, along with the modernisation of State police forces, key to the criminal laws, has seen an increased allocation from ₹264 crore to ₹520 crore in 2024-25.

Meanwhile, funds of about ₹88 crore has been allocated for holistic development of islands in Union Territories.

The Vibrant Villages Programme (VVP) to develop villages along the China border has been allocated ₹1,050 crore in 2024-25. While no separate allocation was done in 2023-24, the Ministry was granted ₹300 crore for implementation of projects under the VVP in 2023-24, revising estimates.



With ₹2.55 lakh cr. outlay, Railways to prioritise safety

Maitri Porecha
NEW DELHI

The Railway Ministry has received a record allocation of over ₹2.55 lakh crore in the financial year 2024-25, a jump of 4.9% from the previous year's ₹2.43 lakh crore, show Union Budget documents.

The outlay for capital expenditure includes ₹2.52 lakh crore from general revenues, ₹200 crore from the Nirbhaya Fund, ₹3,000 crore from internal resources and ₹10,000 crore from extra-budgetary resources, bringing it up to ₹2.55 lakh crore. This amount will be spent on assets, acquisitions, construction and replacement, the Budget says.

In 2014, only ₹35,000 crore was spent towards capital expenditure on the Railways. "Compared with that, current Budget estimates are a record allocation for capital expenditure for Railways. And a majority of this fund will be spent on ensuring safety works," Union Railways Minister Ashwini Vaishnav said.

The operating ratio, or the rupees spent to earn every hundred rupees, of the Railways for the financial year 2022-23 stood at 98.1%. In the Budget Estimates of 2024-25, this has

Union Minister says priority will be on comfort and increasing capacity and infrastructure

gone up a bit to 98.22%.

He said the priority of the Railways would be safety, comfort, and increase in capacity and infrastructure. Having received approvals for Kavach 4.0, the pace of installation of the automatic train protection system would be rapid.

"Kavach consists of multiple components like hardware, software, optical fibre. And India has a diverse network of Railway systems, so the challenge is to combine all networks for deployment of Kavach," he said.

He said there was a major focus on generating employment in the Railways and

38,000 to 40,000 new jobs were being created. "In the first two terms of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, up to five lakh jobs were created," he said. There would be focus on new projects, connectivity with Kashmir, and connecting all capitals of the northeastern States. The thrust would be on procuring new rolling stock, developing Vande Bharat and Amrit Bharat trains and Vande Metro.

Laying the red carpet for tourists to tap the potential of east

Sreeparna Chakrabarty
NEW DELHI

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Tuesday announced development of the Vishnupath temple at Gaya and the Mahabodhi temple in Bodh Gaya, both in Bihar, on the model of the Kashi-Vishwanath temple corridor to turn them into successful tourist destinations.

The Centre will support the development of Nalanda and Rajgir in Bihar as

tourist centres. The Budget also announced an industrial node at Gaya in the Amritsar-Kolkata Industrial Corridor.

Ms. Sitharaman said the States in the eastern part of the country were "rich in endowments" and had "strong cultural traditions" and so the Centre was looking at formulating a plan for Purvodaya for the all-round development of the region covering Bihar, Jharkhand, West Bengal, Odisha and Andhra Pra-



The Mahabodhi Temple in Bihar's Bodh Gaya. FILE PHOTO

desh. "This will cover human resource development, infrastructure, and generation of economic

opportunities to make the region an engine to attain 'Viksit Bharat'," she said.

'Will create jobs'

According to The Hindu Data team analysis, the total increase in outlay for the tourism sector was 0.01 percentage points from FY24RE.

In her speech, Ms Sitharaman said efforts to position India as a global tourist destination will create

jobs and unlock opportunities in other sectors.

The Budget also focuses on development of tourism in Odisha.

Aashish Gupta, Consulting CEO, Federation of Associations of Indian Tourism & Hospitality, said, "While it is encouraging that the Finance Minister announced that India has the potential to become a global tourism hub, it would also have been

nice to see Budget recommendation supporting the same, such as an increase in the marketing and publicity Budget, infrastructure status support to hospitality, abolishment of TCS on travel and reduction in GST rates on tourism travel and hospitality. The support given to spiritual tourism through corridor development and cruise tourism through tax adjustment on foreign ships in Indian shores will support these sub sectors."





Shuffling the deck

The Budget sought to be many things to many people, but fiscal responsibility remained in focus

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman's first Budget of the BJP-led NDA government's third consecutive term in power is a distinct attempt to tell India's voters that it has heard the angst-ridden message from the country's unemployed youth loud and clear. With the BJP having suffered reverses in the general election in the face of a concerted Opposition campaign that spotlighted issues agitating young voters such as a palpable lack of jobs, the Minister was keen to redress matters ahead of the slew of State elections later this year. Asserting that the poor, women, youth and farmers were the four 'castes' that this government was focused on serving, Ms. Sitharaman stressed that this year's Budget laid particular emphasis on "employment, skilling, MSMEs, and the middle class". As a part of this effort, a package of five schemes and initiatives have been proposed with a view to facilitating employment, skilling and other opportunities for 4.1 crore youth over a five-year period with a central outlay of ₹2 lakh crore. The centrepiece is a scheme to provide a month's wage as subsidy to all persons newly entering the workforce in a formal sector job, which would entail the employer registering the employee at the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO). The direct benefit transfer of one-month salary, subject to a cap of ₹15,000, would be made in three instalments to first-time employees. The key caveat is that the employer would have to refund the subsidy if the first-timer's employment ended within 12 months of hiring. Other schemes are an incentive support for job creation in the manufacturing sector, one offering direct support to employers who boost the number of jobs registered with the EPFO, and another, a skilling programme in concert with States, and the private sector that leverages the existing network of ITIs to boost the employability of the youth. The fifth in this quiver of schemes, predictably credited as being under the aegis of the Prime Minister, is an interesting move to facilitate internship opportunities to the youth in 500 top companies. The scheme, which appears to mirror a similar proposal contained in the Congress manifesto, entails the interns being paid a monthly allowance of ₹5,000 and a one-time assistance of ₹6,000, with the participating corporates expected to bear the training cost for the 12-month period as well as 10% of the internship allowance from CSR funds. Targeted at unemployed persons aged between 21 and 24 who are not engaged in full-time education at the time of applying, the Minister said this scheme would, over a five-year period, potentially provide one crore youth with a chance to gain exposure to a real-life business environment and varied professions. All these schemes will, however, need to be weighed against the backdrop of the fact that India needs to, on average, generate 78.5 lakh non-farm jobs annually until 2030, as the Chief Economic Adviser highlighted in his Economic Survey, largely to absorb the workforce exiting agriculture.

In yet another acknowledgment of the primacy of the political economy in policy making, Ms. Sitharaman has sought to quell the strident Opposition charge of being too cosy with large corporates by making a concerted bid to address some of the challenges faced by the lynchpin MSME sector. Beginning with a credit guarantee scheme to help MSMEs in the manufacturing sector obtain loans to finance their purchases of machinery and equipment without collateral or a third-party guarantee, the Budget's proposals for the key employment-providing sector have been tailored to ease their access not only to debt financing and working capital, but also to business opportunities as potential suppliers to a wider pool of central public sector enterprises and large corporates. MSMEs, however, may wait to see the outcome of yet another Budget assurance by the Minister – that the government will work to further simplify the GST regime and rationalise the tax structure – before cheering, given the difficulties they encounter with the indirect tax system. For the middle-class, Ms. Sitharaman's menu of offerings is focused almost entirely on tax relief for the salaried. In a bid to entice more taxpayers to wholeheartedly embrace the new Income-Tax regime, the standard deduction has been raised and the tax slabs with their relevant tax rates revised so as to leave a little more money in the hands of the salaried, post taxes. Pensioners are also set to benefit by a marginal increase of ₹10,000 in the deduction allowed on family pensions.

Ms. Sitharaman's Budget for 2024-25 yet again sticks to the government's fiscal consolidation path, with the Fiscal Deficit proposed to be pared to 4.9% of GDP. To achieve this fiscal goal, the Minister has quietly set about paring spending on several social sectors including school and higher education that saw cuts in their shares of Budget outlays. The most egregious reduction though must be the cut in share of spending on the rural job guarantee scheme – MGNREGA – with the Budget Estimate pegging the spending on the scheme at a nine-year low share of 1.78% of overall outlay, down from 1.92% in the Revised Estimates for 2023-24. Subsidies too across the board, from fertilizers to food and petroleum have been pared. And glaring in its absence in Ms. Sitharaman's speech was any mention whatsoever of what was once the country's single-largest employer, the Indian Railways. Political compulsions, as expected, resulted in significant allocations for Bihar and Andhra Pradesh, the States with the BJP's crucial allies in power. All told, Ms. Sitharaman seems to have balanced the political and fiscal compulsions to some extent.

Just before Nirmala Sitharaman presented her seventh consecutive Budget as Union Finance Minister of a coalition led by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), which managed to gain power for the third time on an overwhelming mandate, signals from the government seemed to suggest what its thrust may be. The Economic Survey 2023-24 made clear that while India's industrialists and business elite were "swimming in excess profits", the priority of the government was not to tax away that excess for developmental purposes, but to ease the burden of regulation on business and goad the private sector into generating productive jobs out of "enlightened self-interest". Business must lead the march to Viksit Bharat 2047, and the job of the government is to persuade the private sector not to shy away from leadership.

Outside government, speculation was rife on two matters. The first concerned the possible response of the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) to the signal from the parliamentary elections that the strategy of sidestepping core economic problems – varying from rural distress and widespread unemployment to inflation, especially food price inflation – could prove costly. The second related to the scale and the structure of the pay-off to allies, the Telugu Desam Party (TDP) and the Janata Dal (United), or the JD(U), from Andhra Pradesh and Bihar, respectively, who are crucial to keep the post-election coalition government led by the minority NDA in power.

Initiatives and their slotting

The speech did not disappoint by sidestepping these issues, though the beneficiaries of the schemes meant to address them are likely to be disappointed by their scale and efficacy. Embarrassed perhaps by the hordes applying for the few half-decent jobs available, Part A of the Budget speech spent much time on the means to increase employment, especially for the educated unemployed. Multiple initiatives were announced, which broadly fell in two buckets.

One contained schemes that amounted to providing employment subsidies, either directly or indirectly to employers. The scheme to provide ₹15,000 in three instalments to all new employees with salary up to ₹1 lakh a month appears to be directed to those employed in the formal sector. But it is more than likely that the availability of this benefit would influence the compensation package offered by companies attempting to internalise that subsidy. Another set of subsidies, such as the ₹3,000 a month contribution for two years to be made by the



C.P. Chandrasekhar

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The mismatch between the problem at hand and what the Budget offers is stark be it on welfare or even taking care of key political allies

government against provident fund subscriptions, accrues directly to employers.

A second bucket consists of schemes, varying from subsidised internships and interest subvention for educational loans, which attempt to 'skill' workers largely at state expense, in ways that are expected to make them more employable. The assumption is that it is not inadequate and inappropriate growth, but a skill set mismatch between what job aspirants have to offer and industry needs, that is responsible for unemployment.

Combine this with direct tax concessions for foreign firms and indirect tax adjustments to favour domestic manufacturing, and the picture that emerges is that the unemployment problem is sought to be tackled by persuading private capital with transfers to hire the unemployed in "productive" jobs. The underlying perception, which misses why high growth does not deliver more jobs is that business wants to hire but finds the available labour force too expensive or unsuited, skill-wise.

This mismatch between the problem at hand and what the Budget offers is even more stark when it comes to agriculture. While peasants unable to make both ends meet because crop production is economically unviable have been demanding procurement at a legally guaranteed minimum support price, the Budget promises to implement a long-term programme to raise productivity and production. Farmers who have been on the streets for years now are unlikely to be impressed.

What the key allies have got

The disappointment is likely to be greater among the NDA's allies. The JD(U) in Bihar has been promised a combination of sundry transport, power, education, sports and religious tourism infrastructure as an implicit quid pro quo for political support, which is a far cry from the large sums that it was expected to receive if granted the special status it demands, but has been denied. The TDP has been offered support to build its new capital at Amravati, on which Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu has staked his prestige and fortunes. But what is shocking is that these promises have not been backed up by significant financial support from the Centre, with much or almost all of the spending to be financed with borrowing, especially from the multilateral development banks (MDBs), facilitated by the Centre. Why the MDBs should listen to the NDA leaders is not clear. But even if they do so, this would only increase the debt burden of these States. Moreover, given the restrictions that have

been placed on borrowing by the States, it is unclear how debt for these purposes could be "additional" to what the State may have in any case chosen to incur.

Preoccupied with propaganda aimed at concealing the little that has been done in these politically-sensitive areas, the government in its first year in power has chosen to completely ignore the welfare schemes it made much of in the run-up to the election. Thus, total expenditure for the National Social Assistance Programme covering pensions and disability benefits, which stood at ₹9,652 crore in 2023-24 as per the revised estimates, has been allocated exactly the same amount in the Budget for 2024-25. That is the fate of the National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme, as well, where the allocation for 2024-25 is exactly the same as the revised estimate for expenditure in 2023-24. Despite the extension of the free foodgrain allocation under the National Food Security Act, the food subsidy is budgeted to fall from ₹2,12,332 crore (RE 23-24) to ₹2,05,250 crore (BE 24-25). It is only in the case of the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY) that there is evidence of backing grandiose statements in the Budget with some increase in allocation.

The 'secret source' of funds

So, is there any larger ambition reflected in the Budget? There are two elements that stand out. One is the obsession with fiscal consolidation, with the fiscal deficit expected to come down from 4.9% of GDP in 2023-24 to 4.5% this year, and a promise of staying on that path subsequently. The other is the claim now made every year that the BJP-led government is taking capital expenditure to new heights, especially on infrastructure. Capital expenditure that rose from ₹7,40,025 crore in 2022-23 to ₹9,48,506 crore in 2023-24, is budgeted to rise further to ₹11,11,111 crore in 2024-25. With tax revenues not expected to register any special buoyancy, how are these conflicting targets expected to be achieved? The well known 'secret source' is once again dividends and surpluses from the Reserve Bank of India and leading public financial institutions, which, having risen from ₹39,961 crore in 2022-23 to a huge ₹1,04,407 crore in 2023-24, are budgeted to spike again to ₹2,32,874 crore in 2024-25. But even these funds garnered through transfers within the state are not available for welfare spending or meaningful support for allies on whom the government depends. Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his advisers have either not learnt their lessons or believe there is none to be learnt.

A message of fiscal stability, growth continuity

The FY25 Union Budget has sent out a strong message under the new administration – there remains an unequivocal focus on stability (fiscal) and continuity (of sustainable growth impulses) amidst a new chiselled focus on providing growth a more inclusive character in India.

Focus on 'weaker building blocks'

The 8.2% GDP growth in FY24, while commendable, was driven by an uneven K-shaped segmentation. The premiumisation of consumption, as seen in the robust demand for luxury cars, houses and goods, coincided with stagnant wages, low fast-moving consumer goods sales and (food) inflation continuing to vociferously bite those at the bottom end of the income pyramid. The fiscal deficit, at 5.6% of GDP in FY24, still high compared to pre-COVID-19 pandemic levels, provided the needed growth impetus via capital spending at a time when the private capex cycle remained much on the sidelines. Against this background, the FY25 Budget, through a panoply of measures, has addressed the weaker building blocks, viz. to improve the quality of employment, fortify agriculture and bring in the micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) into a meaningful roleplay in India's manufacturing renaissance. This will pave the path to establish a Viksit Bharat by 2047.

From an agriculture perspective – currently a key priority – promotion of Atmanirbharta in pulses and oilseeds, a focus on agriculture research (bearing in mind the realities of climate change), large-scale clusters for vegetable production, and Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) in agriculture for coverage of farmers and their lands, are all likely to support the *Anmadata* (i.e., farmer). A thriving agriculture sector will allow the government to deliver on its promise of



Yuvika Singh

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Shubhada M. Rao

Founder, QuantEco Research

The strong message from the Union Budget is about giving growth in India a more inclusive character

foodgrains under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY), now extended for five years.

On employment generation

The Budget entailed an energised focus on employment generation, for the youth especially, within the ambit of the formal workforce. A new scheme offering incentives to employers as well as employees who join the workforce for the first time, was announced at an outlay of ₹10,000 crore through the Ministry of Labour. Other fresh schemes incentivising internships with an outlay of ₹2,000 crore, and for skilling youth in collaboration with State governments and industry were envisaged. This somewhat resonates with the tripartite compact (between Centre, States, private sector) that the Economic Survey had recommended on the eve of the FY25 Union Budget to deliver on the rising aspirations of Indian youth.

Outlay towards housing saw a massive jump in the FY25 Budget. For urban Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY), the government allocated 37% more funds in FY25 versus FY24, which though impressive, pales into some degree of insignificance when compared to the 70% jump budgeted for the rural counterpart of the scheme. Housing for all remains a key hallmark of the government, which now embarks on its version 2.0.

The PLI Scheme too got a handsome raise of 75% in the FY25 Budget, driven by higher allocation to the auto sector. This was accompanied by tweaks to sectoral custom duties in a bid to support domestic manufacturing and deepen local value addition. Financing constraints, typically faced by MSMEs, were addressed via promise to facilitate term loans to MSMEs for purchase of machinery and equipment without collateral. To facilitate

improved and undisrupted lending, banks will now be allowed to develop in-house credit assessment and a facilitation backed by the government to continue to extend credit to MSMEs even during stress times.

Most of these measures will dovetail handsomely with the macro focus of pushing a job-led growth in the medium term. Commendably, the government has succeeded in maintaining the fiscal discipline whilst extending a wide gamut of measures to stimulate the economy.

Looking ahead

Compared to the interim Budget's fiscal deficit estimate of 5.1% of GDP, the government pruned the FY25 headline deficit target to 4.9%. It kept the intended 70 Basis points consolidation over FY24 intact, as in the interim Budget. This allows for a smoother transition to 4.6% fiscal deficit to GDP in FY26.

The display of intent to continue to consolidate its fiscal position well beyond FY26, preserves the trust that this government has earned from economy watchers in the last few years, despite facing the pressure of new demands by regional partners.

While the capex target was left unchanged at ₹11.1 trillion, the gains from the Reserve Bank of India's transfer of a record high dividend of ₹2.1 trillion earlier this year were divided between higher welfare spends and a reduction in fiscal deficit.

All this will serve India well, at a time when domestic bonds have embarked on a maiden journey of getting included in global bond indices. In the face of greater scrutiny of India's fiscal metrics by international agencies, now more than ever, an adherence to fiscal discipline prepares the groundwork for the possibility of a sovereign rating upgrade in the future.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Union Budget 2024-25

Contrary to the previous Budgets, it is quite appreciable to note nine priority items have been framed for focused attention and to ensure overall development. E-vouchers and financial support to students for a sum of up to ₹10 lakh for higher education in domestic institutions and upgrading 1,000 ITIs as a hub and spoke model are novel steps. Budgetary support for early completion of the Polavaram project, aid for a capital in Andhra Pradesh

and other infra-related works under the A.P. Reorganisation Act will be a bonanza for the State. The announcements on large infrastructure projects in Bihar is another nod to a key coalition partner at the Centre. The expectations that senior citizens had about relief on tax deducted at source on their interest income have been belied. The Budget remains quite silent on the railways sector, which is quite unusual and surprising. **R.V. Baskaran**, Chennai

The full Budget presented in Parliament yesterday is deeply disappointing. There was no mention of the Railways, especially with its safety record sullied by a trail of consequential accidents. The Budget also mirrors political partisanship as evident from the flagrant neglect of the non-BJP-ruled States. Incidentally, the present Budget justifies the need for a separate railway budget. **N. Sadasivan Pillai**, Guntakal, Andhra Pradesh

The Union Budget appears to disincentivise the old

regime of taxation. The need is to link income-tax threshold as well as slabs to the Consumer Price Index so that exemptions will be automatic and realistic and not be subject to the whims of bureaucrats. Taxpayers should raise their voice against injustices. **A. Shreevas**, Chennai

The Budget is a huge disappointment, especially for government employees and pensioners. The income-tax structures, of the old and the new, can only lead to confusion.

There is no mention of frozen DA. Small-scale savings and the interest earned by the common man on hard-earned savings of a lifetime need a thorough review. The subject of medicines and taxation is another area that needs scanning. **Balasubramaniam Pavani**, Secunderabad

Driven by a compelling instinct of political survival, a much chastened Prime Minister has made the Union Finance Minister announce a flurry of disproportionately generous

monetary help and projects to Andhra Pradesh and Bihar. The poor whose real income has been falling and made worse by galloping food inflation, have been ignored. Equally conspicuous by its absence was any mention of a comprehensive plan for rail safety or a road map to meet the needs of a majority of rail passengers. **S.K. Choudhury**, Bengaluru

Letters emailed to letters@thehindu.co.in must carry the full postal address and the full name.

The rationale for the tax proposals

Tax announcements in the Budget can be divided into two parts – proposals to provide incentives for specific sectors and general proposals



R. Kavita Rao

Director, National Institute of Public Finance and Policy

The 2024-25 Budget is not just an account of receipts and expenditures for the financial year; it also sets the stage for several years in terms of expectations. Taking off from the analysis in the Economic Survey, the Budget identifies priority areas for government intervention. Key among these are employability and employment, and productivity and resilience in agriculture and infrastructure. The expenditure side of the Budget addresses many of these priorities. The proposals on taxes play a limited role in addressing these priorities. This article looks at the rationale behind a few of the tax proposals.

Two kinds of tax proposals

Tax announcements in the Budget can be divided into two parts – proposals to provide incentives for specific sectors and general proposals. The former is largely limited to announcements on changes in customs duties. For each of these announcements, the rationale is to protect domestic industry or encourage competition within it. One driver for this approach seems to be to create “national champions”. Information on the

policy framework for determining sectors and activities for such support could provide a predictable policy environment. The Finance Minister’s announcement to undertake a comprehensive review of the rate structure provides comfort in this context.

Regarding the general proposals, two sets pique interest – first, those relating to capital markets and second, those relating to the differences between the old and new tax regimes.

The debate on personal income tax in India has often centred on the number of citizens who file returns and pay taxes. It has been argued that too few people pay taxes in India. Another emerging notion is the impact of growing income inequality on tax collections. A proposal for wealth tax of 2% on billionaires has been offered for discussion in the G20 summit in Brazil. The Economic Survey articulates this concern in terms of differential taxation of capital and labour income. The Budget proposes to address this concern through changes in taxes on capital gains. It proposes increase in both short-term and long-term capital gains. Further, on buyback of shares too, the receipts are now



Illustration of a citizen paying tax. GETTY IMAGES

to be taxed in the hands of the recipient as dividend.

High returns in capital markets, especially in the Futures and Options segments, have been flagged as a source of concern by the Reserve Bank of India and the Economic Survey. Apart from the uncertainty faced by retail investors, high returns are likely to induce a shift away from banking to capital markets. The Budget has proposed an increase in securities transaction tax on derivatives transac-

tions. The revised regime on taxation of capital market transactions with all its components is likely to tone down the irrational exuberance in capital markets in the short term. This might be helpful in stabilising the market as a tool for raising resources for real investments.

Old and new tax regimes

Reform programmes of tax regimes have identified broadening of the tax base and elimination or

reduction of tax incentives as primary elements, along with rationalisation of the rate structures. The inter-temporal nature of incentive regimes often renders elimination of tax incentives difficult. To address this concern, the government introduced the option of a simplified regime, where taxpayers do not have access to a range of exemptions and concessions with the advantage of a lower rate of tax. They have been offered a choice between the two regimes. It is hoped that over time, the old regime would become redundant.

In order to nudge taxpayers towards the new regime, the Budget introduces a few changes in tax policy. For individual tax payers, the standard deduction in the new regime has been raised from ₹50,000 to ₹75,000. This provision does not apply to the old regime. Similarly, the slabs associated with different income classes in the new regime have been expanded. In corporate income tax as well, there is a proposal to allow higher deduction of Provident Fund contributions by employers opting for the new regime, provided they adopt the National Pension System too.

The Finance Minister mentioned that 58% of corporate tax and over 66% of the returns in personal income tax came from the new regime. These are impressive numbers. There are two alternative numbers to consider. The share of the old regime in total income reported for corporate income tax increased from 38% in 2021-22 to 43% in 2022-23. Further, in the case of personal income tax, the ratio of revenue foregone to total revenue collected in 2021-22 was 24% and reduced only marginally to 23.33% in 2022-23. These numbers suggest, as one would expect, that taxpayers are choosing the lesser of the two taxes in choosing a regime. While it is benevolent of the government to provide such options, it would appear that the voluntary transition to the new regime could be fiscally costly, if repeated nudges in the form of reduced tax liabilities need to be offered. It is possible to argue that a prospective terminal date could be announced for the old regime, with limited options for grandfathering existing incentives. More so since alternative regimes do not simplify the choice architecture: for taxpayers, it is one more decision to consider.

For the social sector, it is old wine in an old bottle

There are decreased allocations in real terms in the Budget for a number of social sector schemes



Dipa Sinha

a development economist

Budget 2024 is no different from previous years as far as allocations for the social sector are concerned. This is despite the fact that the youth, farmers, women, and the poor are identified as the main focus groups. The Economic Survey has a chapter called ‘Social Sector: Benefits that Empower’, which states, “India’s high and sustained economic growth in recent years is being accompanied by social and institutional progress, underpinned by transformational and effective implementation of Government programmes with an empowering edge that has become the hallmark of a transformed approach to welfare”. It seems as if this approach is characterised by decreasing allocations in the Budget for a number of social sector schemes (in real terms).

Disappointing allocations

The allocation for school education has increased by a nominal ₹5,000 crore and that for higher education has seen a minor increase of ₹3,000 crore. In both cases, the estimated ‘recoveries’ are substantially higher compared

to previous years, indicating higher fees and self-financing schemes in educational institutions. The allocation for the Department of Health and Family Welfare has barely increased by ₹1,500 crore compared to last year. The allocations for MGNREGA is the same as the revised estimates (RE) for last year. Although this is a demand-driven scheme, the allocation gives a message to the States on how much is available. The availability of work on the ground gets calibrated accordingly. There is hardly an increase in food subsidy too, despite the need for expanding coverage to current population levels (the PDS continues to use 2011 Census population figures) as well as the anticipated increase in the economic costs of foodgrains.

Smaller, yet critical, schemes that address vulnerable populations also have not got much attention. There is a slight increase from BE 2023-24 of ₹11,600 crore to ₹12,467 crore for the POSHAN scheme (school mid-day meal). This is, however, less than the actual expenditure on this scheme in 2022-23 (₹12,681 crore). The Saksham Anganwadi scheme for children under six years, pregnant



File photo of MGNREGA work in Villupuram district, Tamil Nadu. THE HINDU

and lactating women, and adolescent girls has got a budgetary allocation of ₹21,200 crore (BE 2023-24 was ₹20,554 crore). There is clearly no hope for higher salaries for Anganwadi workers (which have not been revised since 2018), or for higher honorarium for mid-day meal cooks, or for higher allocations for the supplementary nutrition given to children.

The allocation for Samartha, which includes maternity entitlements (Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana, PMMVY) and the creche schemes, has reduced to

₹2,517 crore compared to BE 2023-24 of ₹2,582 crore. The PMMVY is known to exclude at least half the eligible women, and the amount of ₹5,000 per pregnant woman has remained unchanged since the inception of the scheme in 2017. The budget for the National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP), which gives social security pensions to the elderly, single women, and disabled, remains unchanged at ₹9,652 crore. Once again, this is a reduction in real terms and does not leave any room for either increase in coverage or in the

amount to even adjust for inflation. The central contribution to these social security pensions has been ₹200 per person per month since 2009.

To be clear, these reductions cannot be justified on account of better schemes having taken their place. If at all, for some of these benefits, the focus of the government seems to be shifting more to contributory schemes, such as the Atal Pension Yojana in the case of pensions. In other instances, such as in the case of education or health, the shift is towards privatisation and commercialisation with a greater emphasis on ‘cost-effectiveness’ in social spending, which the Economic Survey calls one of the “pillars of the new approach to welfare”. Such an approach does not adequately take into account either the problems with applying market principles to these social services or the returns to the economy in the long run of improving human development outcomes. Importantly, equity considerations are ignored.

The employment challenge

On the other hand, there is a lot of expectation from the private sec-

tor to respond to the employment challenge. The ‘Prime Minister’s Package for Employment and Skilling’ includes government-sponsored internships, formalisation of jobs through incentives for EPFO enrolments, and skill-development programmes. These schemes do not seem very impressive when one looks at the budgetary allocations. This entire package has an allocation of ₹2 lakh crore over a period of five years, with much of it linked to the response of the industry. Further, the private sector is required to spend money towards this package from CSR funds. By allowing this, the CSR funds through which companies contribute back to society in some minimal way, are now mandated to be used towards subsidising wages for themselves.

Rather than discussing dampened demand, stagnant wages, and what can be done to revive employment, the announcement only includes supply-side schemes towards incentivising the private sector to increase employment. Different versions of this have been tried earlier and have failed. Whether this package will be any different remains to be seen.

A convoluted approach to job creation

Incentivising private sector employment through wage subsidies and skill development to solve the unemployment crisis reflects a dogmatic mindset out of sync with ground realities



Prasenjit Bose

economist and activist

The chapter on employment in the Economic Survey starts with the observation: “Employment is the crucial link between growth and prosperity, and its quantity and quality determine the extent to which economic output translates into better quality of life for the population.” This “crucial link” between growth of economic output, measured by official GDP estimates, and gainful employment, especially decent jobs in the formal economy, has become increasingly tenuous.

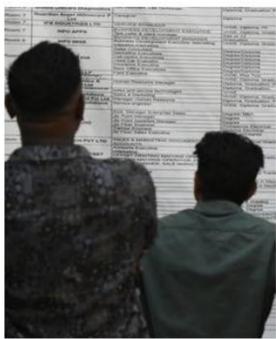
The Survey cites official data to corroborate the jobless growth experience. Factory jobs in manufacturing have grown only by 32 lakh between 2013-14 and 2021-22, with only three States (Tamil Nadu, Gujarat and Maharashtra) accounting for 40% of total factory sector employment in India. There was an overall reduction of 16.45 lakh in total employment in unincorporated non-agricultural establishments in manufacturing and services (2015-16 to 2022-23).

India’s total workforce was estimated at 56.5 crore in 2022-23, of

which over 57% were self-employed with average monthly earnings at ₹13,347. Over 18% worked as “unpaid workers in household enterprises”. The proportion of the workforce engaged in agriculture increased from 44% in 2017-18 to almost 46% in 2022-23. In this backdrop, the Survey has estimated that the economy needs to generate an average of nearly 78.5 lakh non-farm jobs annually until 2030 to cater to the rising workforce.

Supply side incentives

The Finance Minister has attempted to address the challenge of employment generation by unveiling three ‘employment linked incentive’ schemes. The first proposes to provide the first month’s wage to all first-time employees, registered in the EPFO, up to a ceiling of ₹15,000. The second scheme is also a wage subsidy for first-time employees in the manufacturing sector, to be paid partly to the employer and partly to employees. The third scheme is for employers providing additional jobs, envisaging a reimbursement of ₹3,000



Job seekers in Kerala. THE HINDU

per month in EPFO employer contribution for two years.

Additionally, 1,000 Industrial Training Institutes are to be upgraded with a total outlay of ₹60,000 crore in five years, where the Union government’s expenditure would be half and the rest to be borne by the State governments and CSR funds. Further, a 12 months ‘Prime Minister’s Internship’ with a monthly allowance of ₹5,000 per month plus one-time assistance of ₹6,000 has been an-

nounced, with youth aged 21 to 24 being eligible.

The government has announced an outlay of ₹2 lakh crore for five years on a ‘Prime Minister’s Package for Employment and Skilling’ and claims that 4.1 crore youth would emerge as “beneficiaries”. It is clear that this has been designed to meet the 78.5 lakh to 81 lakh annual non-farm jobs requirement in the next decade.

The flaws with this approach

Whatever incentivisation occurs through these schemes, the jobs created under them in the short run are unlikely to last beyond the subsidy period. Large-scale job shedding in the medium run can further complicate the situation. The incentive schemes based on EPFO enrolment can also turn out to be conduits for siphoning off public funds by fudging payrolls and misreporting wages.

If the government can spare ₹2 lakh crore for creating employment opportunities, why is it not attempting to generate employment directly by expanding MGNREGA to urban areas and in-

creasing its entitlement beyond 100 days? Why not expand capital expenditure by the profit-making Central PSEs in labour intensive sectors of the economy?

The fundamental flaw with this supply side incentive-based strategy lies in the presumption that labour demand in the non-agriculture sector is already sufficient to absorb around 80 lakh first-time employees annually, and only wage subsidies and skill development of labour would nudge small and large businesses to expand payroll employment, without any concern for market conditions and profitability.

The problem here partly lies with the government’s dogged insistence on the accuracy of the official GDP estimates, whose veracity has been questioned by many. The latest provisional estimates of India’s GDP shows real growth in 2023-24 at 8.2% while nominal growth is estimated to be 9.6%; which implies an annual inflation rate of 1.4% only. The combined Consumer Price Index, however, shows retail inflation at 5.4%. This glaring discrepancy, arising out of

the disproportionate weightage given to a carelessly estimated wholesale price index, is just one of the several problems in India’s official GDP estimates.

The point is that the economy is not growing as fast as the official GDP estimates suggest. The absence of dynamism in private consumption and investment has been described in the Survey. Economic growth in the past few years has been largely caused by fiscal stimulus, which has resulted in a significant rise in the public debt to GDP ratio. Both the Survey and Budget presume that a reduction in the fiscal deficit and provision of supply-side incentives would spur a virtuous investment cycle led by private corporations.

The deep corporate tax cut in 2019 did little to enhance capital expenditure of the non-financial private corporate sector. The Budget’s reliance on a similar supply side strategy of incentivising private sector employment through wage subsidies and skill development, to solve the unemployment crisis, reflects a dogmatic mindset out of sync with ground realities.

Union Budget has betrayed Tamil Nadu, disappointed the middle class, says Stalin

CM says the Budget felt more like an agreement with the 'rulers' of Bihar and Andhra Pradesh for 'political reasons', reiterates demand to allocate funds to State; 'intentionally boycotted T.N.'

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

Describing the Union Budget 2024-25 as "huge betrayal" of Tamil Nadu, Chief Minister M.K. Stalin on Tuesday said it appeared as though the Budget had "intentionally boycotted" the State.

It is against the integrity of the country to deceive the people of Tamil Nadu, Mr. Stalin said, reiterating his demand to allocate funds to the State. The Union Budget did not seem to cover all of India, and was more like "an agreement or alliance" with the "rulers" of Bihar and Andhra Pradesh for "political reasons", the Chief Minister said in a statement.

States like Tamil Nadu, which have been majorly contributing towards the country's development, were being targeted because they "have been con-



Stalin said that the major schemes announced by the Union government were only a 'photocopy' of the State budget. File photo

sistently rejecting communal politics," Mr. Stalin said, adding that such acts were against the ideals of democracy and federalism. "It is painful that the BJP-led Centre is using the Union Budget to settle electoral scores. It will affect the people of Tamil Nadu," he said, pointing out that there was "no specific project" in the Budget for Tamil Nadu. The announcement that three crore houses would be constructed over five years

without increasing the unit cost would only "increase the burden on the State governments", he said, adding: "It is not enough if you just name the scheme after the Prime Minister. We want the funds to be allocated accordingly..."

According to the Chief Minister, the major schemes announced by the Union government were only a "photocopy" of the State budget. He referred to schemes being implement-

ed by the State government such as Thozhi working women hostels, and accommodation for workers in factories. "The Union Finance Minister has taken a photocopy of many successful schemes being implemented in Tamil Nadu, and used them in the Union Budget. But, why did she not announce even a single project for Tamil Nadu in gratitude...?" Mr. Stalin said.

Referring to the announcement that the Centre would encourage States to consider lowering stamp duty, he said, "There was no announcement on how to compensate for the revenue loss. The Centre should grant compensation for the revenue loss...." The Budget is a "huge disappointment" to the middle class, and even the few relaxations announced do not apply to those in the old income tax regime, he added.

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Badal dissolves SAD's core committee; party rebel calls order 'dictatorial'

Press Trust of India
CHANDIGARH

Facing rebellion in his party, Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) chief Sukhbir Singh Badal on Tuesday dissolved its core committee, the outfit's highest decision-making body.

Rebel Akali leader Gurbaj Singh Wadala slammed the move and said instead of showing "a sense of renunciation", Mr. Badal issued a "dictatorial order" aimed at sidelining those who want a "change" to strengthen the party. Several senior party leaders, including some from the core committee, had last month demanded Mr. Badal's resignation from the post of party chief following the debacle in the recently concluded Lok Sabha election in Punjab.

The leaders who had



SAD chief Sukhbir Singh Badal

raised the banner of revolt included former MP Prem Singh Chandumajra, former Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee chief Bibi Jagir Kaur, Mr. Wadala, a former MLA, and former Ministers Parminder Singh Dhindsa and Surjit Singh Rakhra.

Mr. Chandumajra, Mr. Wadala and Mr. Rakhra were among the members of the core committee.

Senior party leader Daljit Singh Cheema said that the working committee of

the party has authorised Mr. Badal to reorganise the party organisation.

"In this regard the party president discussed in detail with his senior colleagues in a meeting held at Chandigarh today. It was decided to dissolve the core committee of the party. It will be reorganised shortly..." said Mr. Cheema in a post on X. The SAD had reconstituted the core committee in November 2022.

Rebel Akali leaders had on July 15 launched a platform, 'Shiromani Akali Dal Sudhar Lehar', to "strengthen and uplift" the 103-year-old outfit. On July 1, the rebel leaders appeared before the Akal Takht Jatheedar, highest temporal seat of Sikhs, and apologised for the "mistakes" that were committed when their party was in power in the State.

'Aarakshan Bachao': VBA chief invites Pawar to yatra

The Hindu Bureau
MUMBAI

Vanchit Bahujan Aghadi (VBA) founder Prakash Ambedkar on Tuesday wrote a letter to Nationalist Congress Party (Sharadchandra Pawar) chief Sharad Pawar, requesting him to join his 'Aarakshan Bachao Yatra' on July 26.

Mr. Ambedkar's rally, to begin on July 25, will be the third such campaign on the issue of reservation.

While Maratha quota activist Manoj Jarange-Patil recently launched his sixth hunger strike at Antarwali Sarathi village in Jalna district, demanding the implementation of reservation for Marathas as Kunbis, a sub-caste under Other Backward Classes, the OBC resistance group headed by Laxman Hate has been touring the Marathwada region to ensure that their quota remains unaffected.

'Faizan's death a hate crime, unlawful actions of police driven by religious bigotry'

Soibam Rocky Singh
NEW DELHI

Transferring the probe into the death of 23-year-old Faizan to the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), the Delhi High Court on Tuesday said the "unlawful actions" of the policemen were "motivated and driven by religious bigotry".

"It is extremely important to note that this case presents allegations of gross violation of human rights, in as much as the unlawful actions of the policemen who are yet to be identified, were motivated and driven by religious bigotry and, therefore, would amount to a 'hate crime'," the court said.

Delivering the verdict on a petition filed by Faizan's mother, Kismatun, seeking a court-monitored Special Investigation Team (SIT) probe into her son's death, Justice Anup Jairam Bhambhani said, "What is worse is that the suspects were entrusted to act as custodians of the law, and were in a position of power and authority, but seemed to have been driven by bigoted mindsets."

In the 33-page judgment, the High Court took note of the existence of two sets of video footage, one, which shows Faizan alone being encircled and beaten up mercilessly by policemen; and the second, which shows several young men, including Faizan, lying in an injured



The court said that mob violence does not cease to be so merely because it was perpetrated by policemen. FILE PHOTO

state on the road near Khardampuri bridge and 66 Foota Road, and being surrounded and brutally assaulted by policemen.

"Several policemen present at the spot are clearly seen surrounding, dragging, kicking and striking blows on Faizan and the other young men with batons, abusing them, and ordering them to sing the national anthem while they are lying seriously injured and helpless on the roadside," the High Court said.

While the incident happened on February 24, 2020, the Crime Branch of Delhi Police questioned Ms. Kismatun for the first time only on March 18, 2020.

"The perpetrators of the crime are therefore still at large, though they are all members of the police force in Delhi," the judge said.

"In the present case, apart from the fact that the custodians of the law are themselves accused of hav-

ing committed its breach, the perpetrators of the offence are themselves members of the agency that is investigating them. This situation does not inspire confidence," the High Court added.

The judge reminded that "mob vigilantism and mob violence do not cease to be so merely because these are perpetrated, not by ordinary citizens, but by policemen themselves. If anything, the element of abomination gets aggravated if hate crime is committed by persons in uniform".

Unanswered question

The court said no investigation has been conducted so far in relation to what transpired at the Jyoti Nagar police station after Faizan was brought there from Guru Teg Bahadur Hospital.

It also questioned why the police would keep Faizan at the police station "for his own safety at a time when the police were overwhelmed with responsibility because of the on-going riots".

The court said the question as to whether anything happened to Faizan when he was kept within the confines of the police station overnight and until late the next day, has "remained unacknowledged and unaddressed. That issue appears to have been brushed under the carpet by the police".

Mamata hikes Durga Puja honorarium to ₹85,000

Moyurie Som
KOLKATA

West Bengal Chief Minister on Tuesday announced a hike in the honorarium for community Durga Pujas, increasing it to ₹85,000 per puja committee from ₹70,000 last year.

"Today the Union Budget was presented and West Bengal got nothing," the Chief Minister said at a meeting with puja organisers at Kolkata's Netaji Indoor Stadium on Tuesday. In the same vein, she added that "even amid great adversity, the State government does not ignore festivities".

"I hope this honorarium will be sufficient this year. We are a poor government after all," she added, promising to increase it to ₹1 lakh per puja committee in 2025. The honorarium, which will be granted to over 40,000 community Durga Pujas, will cost the State exchequer more than ₹340 crore.

Opposition parties expressed their disapproval of the government's decision to hike the honorarium. BJP leader Sajal Ghosh said a "secular government" should not give money to religious festivals.

"This lumpen-kari government is spending taxpayers' money on religious festivals at a time when State-run primary schools are shutting down and mid-day meals are being stopped," said Communist Party of India (Marxist) leader Bikash Ranjan Bhat-tacharya.

ENTERPRISE CONNECT

A Business Initiative

Uttarakhand Tourism launches Homestays booking portal

Uttarakhand Tourism Development Board has launched an online booking portal for Homestays in Uttarakhand can now be made through www.uttarakhandstays.com. This is probably the first such initiative by any state tourism department where state sponsored Homestay booking portal has been launched. The Homestay owners can integrate their Homestays on the platform by providing information about the Homestay and signing an agreement for the same. The Homestay owners will not require to pay any integration charges or platform fees or share percentage of their revenue with Uttarakhand Tourism. The portal shall provide authentic information about Homestays to the general public and provide a seamless mechanism to book the Homestays online, users can also rate the Homestays on the platform through which the Homestays will get real time feedback on their services and prompt them to improve the services. This initiative is an effort to provide an online medium for the small Homestay owners for bookings. Uttarakhand Tourism Department is providing subsidy under the Deendayal Upadhyay Homestay Scheme to develop Homestays in the region.

Shri Sachin Kurve, Secretary Tourism/CEO, UTDB mentioned that this three pronged strategy involving government support through subsidy in creating Homestay infrastructure, providing skill base training to Homestay owners and providing marketing support through online portal shall prove to be a milestone in establishing a robust Homestay network in the state. He further stated that all homestay owners are welcome to get their Homestay registered on the portal. The future plan involves linking Homestays with wellness centres in respective areas so that the tourists can avail benefits of the services of wellness centres like Yoga, Naturopathy, Panch Karma, Ayurvedic Massage etc.

Empowering India's Future: Inauguration of NSIC New Training by Ministers of MSME

The Hon'ble Minister of MSME, Shri Jitan Ram Manjhi, and the Hon'ble Minister of State, Sushri Shobha Karandlaje, inaugurated the New Training at the NSIC Technical Service Centre (NTSC) in Okhla, New Delhi. The event witnessed the presence of Shri S.C.L. DAS, Secretary (MSME), Dr. Rajneesh (AS & DC), Smt. Mercy Epao, JS-SME, Sh. Vipul Goel (JS-ARI), and Dr. S.S. Acharya, CMD, NSIC. The inauguration ceremony commenced with a warm welcome by Dr. S.S. Acharya, who emphasized the critical role of skill development in bolstering the MSME sector. He highlighted the NSIC's commitment to providing world-class training facilities to empower the youth and budding entrepreneurs. A pivotal moment of the event was the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Shri Kartikya Sinha, Director (P&M), NSIC, and the CEO of Drone Destination. This MoU aims to integrate advanced drone technology training into the skill development programs, offering MSMEs a competitive edge in a rapidly evolving technological landscape. Shri

K. Sinha expressed his enthusiasm about the collaboration, stating, "This partnership will pave the way for innovative training modules that are aligned with global standards, ensuring our MSMEs are future-ready". Further strengthening the support for MSMEs, another MoU was signed with various banks under NSIC's credit facilitation scheme. This initiative, witnessed by Shri Gaurav Gulati, Director (Finance), NSIC, and other senior officers, aims to enhance the accessibility of financial resources for MSMEs, thereby promoting their growth and sustainability. Sushri Shobha Karandlaje, while addressing the gathering, said, "Our focus is on creating a robust ecosystem that nurtures talent and fosters innovation. These training programs are a step towards realizing this vision." In a heartfelt gesture, appointment letters were distributed to selected NSIC trainees, embodying Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of empowering the youth through skill development. Shri Jitan Ram Manjhi, while distributing the letters, stated, "Today's event marks a new chapter in our journey towards a skilled and empowered India. These young individuals are the torchbearers of our future, and we are committed to supporting them at every step."

IREDA to Invest Rs. 290 Crore in Nepal 900 MW Hydro Projects

Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency Limited (IREDA) has decided to invest in a 900 MW Hydroelectric power project in Nepal. The approximately Rs. 290 Crore investment will secure IREDA up to 10% shareholding in GMR Upper Karnali Hydro Power Limited, Nepal and Karnali Transmission Company Pvt. Ltd., Nepal.

This strategic move, in collaboration with SJVN Limited, aims to support the setting up of the 900 MW Upper Karnali Hydro-Electric Power Project in Nepal. The project will proceed subject to approval from the Government of India and other regulatory authorities. The Board of Directors of IREDA in its meeting held yesterday gave in-principle approval for this equity investment.

Shri Pradip Kumar Das, Chairman & Managing Director, IREDA, said, "This strategic investment aligns with our commitment to expanding renewable energy infrastructure and fostering international collaboration in the sector. The 900 MW project is a significant step towards harnessing Hydropower potential in Nepal, contributing to regional energy security and sustainable development." GMR and the Nepal Electricity Authority, Government of Nepal, are the existing shareholders in M/s. GMR Upper Karnali Hydro Power Limited, Nepal. The inclusion of IREDA and SJVN Limited in the project underscores a strong regional collaboration aimed at enhancing renewable energy capacity and ensuring energy independence.

REC commits Rs. 10 Cr for Mobile Medical Units under its flagship initiative - Doctor Aapke Dwaar

REC Limited has signed a Memorandum of Agreement with the Indian Red Cross Society in the presence of Shri Vivek Kumar Dewangan, Chairman and Managing Director;

Shri VK Singh, Director (Projects); Shri Harsh Baweja, Director (Finance) and other senior officials of REC. The agreement includes a financial commitment of Rs. 10 Cr for the procurement and deployment of nine Mobile Medical Units (MMUs) and covers related operational expenditures for three years. The initiative aims to bring primary health services to the doorsteps of the deprived sections of society across various districts in Punjab and Rajasthan. The Mobile Medical Units will serve as a lifeline for remote and underserved areas, providing essential medical care to individuals who might otherwise lack access to such services. In addition, REC Foundation is currently operating 10 Mobile Health Clinics under the 'Doctor Aapke Dwaar' CSR project in various districts of Chhattisgarh. REC Foundation has supported over 400 projects in healthcare, sanitation, clean water access, education and skill development, women empowerment, sports and environmental sustainability. With over Rs. 1,300 Crore disbursed in CSR funds, REC's cumulative commitment to CSR activities exceeds Rs. 2,000 Crore. The Indian Red Cross is a voluntary humanitarian organization having a network of over 1,100 branches across the country. It provides disaster relief and care for vulnerable people and communities. It is a leading member of the largest independent humanitarian organization in the world, the International Red Cross & Red Crescent Movement.

I.T.S Dental College organized the 20th Annual National Conference

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 and its applications. The commencement of the conference was through conduct of two pre-conference hands on workshops titled "Forensic Dental anthropology: Fundamentals and Practical Approach" by Dr. Jayasankar P. Pillai and "Forensic Facial Approximation: Basics and Beyond" by Dr. Aman Chowdhry, Dr. Deepika Bablani and Dr. Priyanka Kapoor respectively. The dignitaries included Dr. R.P. Chadha, Honorable Chairman, I.T.S-The Education Group, Shri Arpit Chadha, Honorable Vice Chairman, I.T.S-The Education Group, Dr. S. BalaGopal, President, I.AFO, Dr. Ashish B. Acharya, Honorary Secretary, I.AFO, Dr. Devi Charan Shetty, Director-Principal, I.T.S-Dental College, Ghaziabad and Dr. Anshi Jain, Organizing Chairperson, Professor, I.T.S-Dental College, Ghaziabad.

A welcome address was given by Dr. Anshi Jain, Professor, Department of Oral Pathology followed by Introduction to the Programme by Dr. Devi Charan Shetty, Director-Principal, I.T.S- CDSR. Unveiling of the Souvenir of 20th Annual National I.AFO Conference was done by the dignitaries. Dr. S. BalaGopal, President and Founder secretary, I.AFO briefed about the objective, vision and execution of the I.AFO Association. Dr. Ashish B. Acharya, Honorary Secretary, I.AFO presented the annual I.AFO Report.

Timings

WEDNESDAY, JUL. 24		
RISE	05:39	SET 19:17
RISE	21:39	SET 08:31
THURSDAY, JUL. 25		
RISE	05:40	SET 19:17
RISE	22:12	SET 09:38
FRIDAY, JUL. 26		
RISE	05:40	SET 19:16
RISE	22:45	SET 10:42

Delhi Weather	max	min
Delhi City	36	27
Safdarjang	36	27
Palam	35	28

Delhi Palam Today
34°C Day will be warm. Night will be pleasant. Spell of moderate rain and thunder-shower with gusty winds to occur.

Delhi Palam Tomorrow
35°C The weather will be warm with cloudy sky. Spell of moderate rain and thunder-shower with gusty winds will occur.

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THE HINDU

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HC puts on hold Indrani Mukerjea's Europe trip

Purnima Sah
MUMBAI

The Bombay High Court on Tuesday passed an ad interim stay on a special court order that permitted former media executive Indrani Mukerjea to travel to Spain and United Kingdom until July 29. Ms. Mukerjea, who is the prime accused in the alleged murder of her daughter Sheena Bora, is currently out on bail.

A single-judge Bench of the court said the plea filed by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) against the special court order shall be heard on July 29 before the regular Bench of Justice S.C. Chandak.

"Only for a limited purpose and limited period, there will be an ad interim order till July 29, when the regular court will hear the matter," Justice S.V. Kotwal



Indrani Mukerjea, the prime accused in the alleged murder of her daughter Sheena Bora, is currently out on bail. FILE PHOTO

said, adding that it would be better if the regular court hears the matter in detail. Representing Ms. Mukerjea, advocate Ranjeet Sangle contended that his client [Ms. Mukerjea] cannot travel outside India as she does not have her passport with her. However, she requires to update

her bank documents at Banco Sabadell in Spain, pay the local bills and take care of her legal documents such as her will, assets and properties in Spain, Mr. Sangle said.

Ms. Mukerjea's plea before the special court stated that she wants to remove her ex-husband Peter Mukerjea's name from her will. Advocate Sangle also contended that she is a British citizen and it is normal for her to visit the country.

Appearing for CBI, Special Public Prosecutor Shri Ram Shirsath opposed Ms. Mukerjea's plea and argued that she is the prime accused in the case that the case is under trial currently. Allowing her to travel outside India would not be appropriate at this stage of the case, Mr. Shirsath contended.

IN BRIEF

Delhi Police gets ₹11,400.81 crore; allocation down 4.45%

The Delhi Police has been allocated ₹11,400.81 crore in the Budget, which is a 4.45% decrease from the 2023-2024 budget estimate. The police will use the budget to meet its routine expenses and for various schemes, such as developing a model traffic system and communication networks in the city, said a senior officer.

Atishi gets bail in defamation case lodged by BJP leader

A court here on Tuesday granted bail to Delhi Finance Minister Atishi in a defamation case lodged against her by a BJP leader. The Minister appeared before the court and submitted a bail bond of ₹20,000. Delhi BJP spokesperson Praveen Shankar Kapoor had filed the case against Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and Ms. Atishi, citing comments made by the two alleging that the BJP had tried to poach AAP legislators.

'Remove defamatory posts against LS Speaker's daughter'

The Delhi High Court on Tuesday directed Google and X to take down posts alleging that Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla's daughter Anjali Birla cleared the Union Public Service Commission exams due to her father's influence. The court directed the social media platforms to remove the posts within 24 hours.

INDIA bloc meeting: AAP urges Opposition leaders to visit Arvind Kejriwal in Tihar Jail

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leaders flagged the issue of the "failing health" of Delhi

Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal at the INDIA bloc meeting on Tuesday. Mr. Kejriwal is currently lodged in Tihar Jail in connection with the now-scrapped

Delhi excise policy.

According to sources, AAP's Rajya Sabha members Sanjay Singh and Raghav Chadha urged the Opposition leaders to raise

the issue of Mr. Kejriwal's mistreatment. Sources said Mr. Chadha suggested that the INDIA bloc leaders visit the AAP chief in jail to send a message to the country

that the Opposition stands by him.

At an earlier press conference, Mr. Singh had claimed that the Delhi Chief Minister's blood su-

gar level dropped to below 50 mg/dl at least five times in jail. "The aim of the BJP and its government at the Centre is to keep him in jail," Mr. Singh had alleged.

KARNATAKA STATE ROAD TRANSPORT CORPORATION
Central Office Bengaluru (Bangalore Board Secretary Branch)

NOTICE INVITING TENDER No. 02
(E-Procurement Portal Only)

Tenders (Pre-qualification and or commercial offers) through e-procurement portal <http://kppp.karnataka.gov.in> are invited for supply of the following Goods/Services/ Equipment:

Tender Nos as per KPP-Portal	Nomenclature of Items Services/Equipment	Tender Value Crores (Approx)	Last date for Submission of documents Date & Time @ 5:00 pm
KSRTC/2024-25/INDO120	Procurement of U Bolt & Centre Bolt	2.00	26.08.2024
KSRTC/2024-25/INDO121	Procurement of Lubricants for TATA BS VI	0.25	07.08.2024
Short term tender			
KSRTC/2024-25/INDO122	Procurement of tyre, Tube & Flap sets, Tubeless Radial Tyre & Additional Tubes & Flaps	35.00	30.07.2024

Further any addendum/corrigendum in respect of change in calendar of events, specification, scope, other tender terms and conditions etc., will be uploaded/published through e-portal only. NOTE:-Interested suppliers need to register in the e-procurement portal. For further information log into <http://kppp.karnataka.gov.in> In case of further assistance, contact e-procurement cell (Phone No. 0802230960, 080-22234115). Interested suppliers may also contact e-procurement cell for training on bid submission. Mail to Support@eprochelpdesk.com for further information if required. In case of bidders need assistance from KSRTC, can communicate at cosp@ksrtc.org. (contact: 7760990225, 7760990224)

Sd/- Controller of Stores & Purchases
(Tender Inviting Authority)

DIPR/CP/IA/1052/2024-25

WEST CENTRAL RAILWAY
E-AUCTION NOTICE

Sr. Divisional Commercial Manager, Kota Division, West Central Railway invites e-Auction for the contract of "Leasing of Parcel Space". The catalogue has been published on IREPS website (e-Auction Leasing). The details are as under: Catalogue No.: Lease-KTT-33 Type of Contract: Leasing of SLR Contract Duration: 2 Years Date & Time of e-Auction: 06.08.2024 at 12:00 hrs. Detailed information of catalogue is available on website: www.ireps.gov.in

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Open E-Tender Notice No. SRDEE/Gati Shakti/ IZN/Elect/13/2024 Dt. 20.07.2024

E-Tenders are invited by Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer (G)/N.E. Railway/ IZatnagar for & on behalf of the President of India for the following work: S.No. : 01, Description of work : Electrical work in connection with Left over and additional work of various railway station under Amrit Bharat Station Scheme, Approximate tender value in Rs. : 1,74,80,978.04. Earnest Money in Rs. : 2,37,500.00. Cost of tender paper in Rs. : Nil. Date & time of Closing E-tender : 12.08.2024 at 11.00 hours. Completion time from the date of issue of letter of Acceptance : Four Months.

• Manual offers are not allowed against this tender and such manual offer received shall be ignored.

• The tender can be viewed at website <http://www.ireps.gov.in>

• The tender/bidders must have Class-III Digital signature certificate & must have registered on IREPS portal.

• Only registered tenderer/bidders can participate in e-tendering. • All relevant papers must be uploaded at the time of participating in e-tendering.

Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer (G/GS) CPRO/Elect-86 IZatnagar

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TENDER ENQUIRY No. : QQ-1332/PO/C&S dt 23.07.24

Chief Purchase Officer/ MM, Central Purchase Organization, PSCPL, 2nd floor, Multistorey Building, The Mall, Patiala, invites e-Tender for Procurement of 1Cx95 sq.m-180KM and 4Cx95 sq.m-220Km LT XLPE insulated, PVC sheathed, Aluminum Conductor, unarmoured cable, ISI marked as per tender specification No. QQ-1332/PO/C&S dated 23.07.2024. For detailed NIT & tender specification, please refer to <https://eproc.punjab.gov.in> from 23.07.2024(5:00 PM) onwards.

Note: Corrigendum and addendum, if any will be published online at <https://eproc.punjab.gov.in>

C - 476/24 76155/12/3159/2023/35958

SAU student told to vacate hostel for 'spreading rumours'

A student of South Asian University (SAU) here was told to vacate her hostel room for "spreading rumours" and "instigating students" against the institution. University officials did not respond to *The Hindu's* queries on the matter.

Yashada Sawant, a second-year MA student of Sociology, received the notice on Monday and was told to hand over the keys of her room by Wednesday.

She said, "I had a conversation with a few friends about a professor who was said to resign. We were concerned that the

course [being taught by him] would be cancelled. Later the administration called me and said I should not have spoken about it."

The notice, signed by her hostel warden, stated, "It has come to our notice that you are spreading rumours and lies, and instigating students against the university. In this light, you are debarred from hostel accommodation with immediate effect."

The student said she will now have to make arrangements for an alternative accommodation.

Rokeya Collective, a students' group, said, "This is not an isolated incident. The SAU has a history of taking similar arbitrary actions against students."

Ashna Butani
NEW DELHI

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ZOOLOGY BY Pradip Sarkar (17 Yrs. experience in UPSC) & Team

Batch Starting from 30th August
Open Webinar: Zoology, 27th July, 6 pm

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Government of Odisha
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF CONSTRUCTION ENGINEER, KEONJHAR (R&B) CIRCLE, KEONJHAR
No.3154 / Date : 22.07.2024

ORDER

The tender for the work "Construction of E-Type staff quarters for ICDS Officials under W and CD Department at Sundargarh for the year 2023-24" invited vide Bid Identification No C.C.E.K.C., Keonjhar No. 01 / 2024-25 is hereby cancelled as per Letter No. 5390 dt. 06.03.2024 of Additional Secretary to Govt., Department of Women & Child Development, Odisha.

Chief Construction Engineer, Keonjhar (R&B) Circle, Keonjhar. OPR-340331100172425

By E. Mail:-Despatch
E. Mail ID: serw_balasore@yahoo.in; Ph-No-06782/260318, Balia, Balasore

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF CONSTRUCTION ENGINEER, RURAL WORKS CIRCLE, BALASORE
"e"- Procurement Notice for Road Work

Identification No.- Online Tender- Road N.C.B. No.05 for 2024-25
Letter No. - 2647 /WE. Date : 22.07.2024

Procurement Officer	Bid Identification No.	From	To	Last Date & Time of seeking Tender Clarification	Date & Time of Opening of Tender in O/S E.	Technical Bid	Financial Bid
Chief Engineer, Rural Works Circle, Balasore.	NCB No.- 05 of 2024-25	29.07.2024 at 11.00 A.M.	13.08.2024 Up to 5.00 P.M.	12.08.2024 Up to 5.00 P.M.	14.08.2024 at 11.00 P.M.	Will be intimated later	

• Further details can be seen from the website : www.tendersodisha.gov.in
Sd/- N.V.Harihar Rao, Chief Engineer, R.W.Circle, Balasore. OPR-25105/11/0007/2425

Government of Telangana
Telangana Livestock Development Agency (TGLDA), Hyderabad

GEM TENDER NOTICE INVITATION

Online Tenders are invited on GeM portal from the eligible and qualified Manufacturer/ Importer/Authorized Agent for supply of 54 nos of various Machinery and Equipments including Ultrasound Scanner, C-Arm, Multipara Monitor, Ventilators, Posterior Vitrectomy Machine etc., up to 13.08.2024. The details of the tenders, terms and conditions and tender document can be downloaded from the website www.gem.gov.in and also be viewed in www.eprocure.gov.in / epublish/app & www.health.py.gov.in.

Chief Executive Officer
Sd/- Dr.Ch.Malleswari
DIPR No. : 210-PP/CL-AGENCY/ADVT/2024-25
No.127/DIP/AD/Press/2024-25

PUNJAB STATE POWER CORPORATION LIMITED
Reg. Office: PSEB, Head Office, The Mall, Patiala-147001
Dy. Chief Engineer / O&MM-II, GHTP, Lehra Mohabat-151111(Bathinda)
M.No. 96461-17607, Email: se.mm.2.lehra@gmail.com
Corporate Identity Number: U40109PB2010SGC033813
Website: www.pspcl.in

TENDER ENQUIRY No. 82/CHP/HEMC-308-Vol-XI, Dated: 23/07/24

Dy. Chief Engineer, Mechanical Mtc. Circle-II/GHTP, Lehra Mohabat invites E-tender for the work of "AMC to attend various Routine, Preventive and Break-Down Mechanical Maintenance work of all the Heavy Equipment under HEMC/CHP, GHTP, Lehra Mohabat (Wagon Tipplers, Stacker Reclaimers, Primary & Secondary Crushers, Dust Suppression System, Dust Extraction System, Ventilation System and Crusher / Grinder of coal sampling lab of coal handling plant Stage-I&II etc.) on lump sum basis for a period of one year at GHTP".

For detailed NIT & tender specification please refer to <https://eproc.punjab.gov.in> from 23/07/24 at 17:00 onwards.

Note: Corrigendum and addendum, if any will be published online at <https://eproc.punjab.gov.in>

GHTP - 61/24 76155/12/3157/2023/35955

SOCIOLOGY EVALUATORS required.
Send resume to socio2@gmail.com

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is publicly notified that the DUPLEX HOUSE NO.-111, BLOCK-HD, SECTOR-135, NOIDA, U.P. has been allotted in the name of Smt. HARYANA Department of SHRI SUNIL KUMAR R/O 1070, U.E.-II, HISAR, HARYANA-125001, had sold the said property on the basis of GPA & Agreement to sell to the following persons:

A GPA was executed in favour of SMT. MEENU AGGARWAL W/O SHRI GIRISH AGGARWAL, R/O A-701, SARASWATI APARTMENT, PATIPART GANJ, DELHI-110092 executed at Sub-Registrar Noida Vide Book No. IV/ Volume No. 1900 at Document No. 170 on dated 24/3/2011 on pages no. 283 to 294 and Agreement to Sell was executed in the name of SD PROPCON PVT. LTD. Vide Book No. 3/ Volume No. 3218 at Document No. 3550 on dated 24/3/2011 on pages no. 173 to 230. So with the help of this notice it is informed that the self/transfer of the said property goes through GPA in favour of SHRI VINAY KUMAR MISHRA S/O SHRI G. P. MISHRA & SMT. SANDHYA MISHRA W/O SHRI VINAY KUMAR MISHRA BOTH R/O HD-B, SECTOR-135, NOIDA, U.P. if any one/above partners has/have any objection he/she may submit his/her objection in the Housing Department of Noida Authority along-with sufficient proofs within 15 days of the publication of this notice and after 15 days No claim will be considered in any manner and we shall proceed to complete sale transaction with the above owners.

(VINAY KUMAR MISHRA)

KSG
An Institute For IAS Exam...
www.ksgindia.com
99990 999707

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(VINAY KUMAR MISHRA)

कार्यपालक अभियंता का कार्यालय
भवन निर्माण विभाग, भवन प्रमंडल बक्सर
शुद्धि-पत्र

इस कार्यालय के ज्ञापक 891, दिनांक- 13.07.2024, एवं सूचना एवं जन समर्पक विभाग द्वारा प्रकाशित अति अल्पकालीन सार्वजनिक/स्पर्धा पुर्ण ई0-निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना संख्या-03/2024-25 पी0आर0संख्या 003965 (भवन) 2024-25 दिनांक-17.07.2024 जो पंचायत सरकार भवनों के निर्माण कार्य से संबंधित है जिसका प्रकाशन दैनिक समाचार पत्रों में हुआ है को अपरिहार्य कारणवश निम्नांकित रूप से संशोधित किया जाता है।

संशोधित तिथि

क्रमांक	संशोधन की विवरणी	संशोधित क्र0 सं0 एवं तिथि
1	प्रौबौड मीटिंग की तिथि, समय एवं स्थान	क्रमांक 7 में प्रौबौड मीटिंग दिनांक- 08.08.2024 को मुख्य अभियंता (दो), भवन निर्माण विभाग, बिहार पटना का कार्यालय पढा जाए।

शेष शर्तें यथावत रहेगी।

कार्यपालक अभियंता
भवन प्रमंडल, बक्सर
PR. No. 004447 (BCD) 2024-25

नशामुक्त हो जाए विहार, सुरक्षित रहे घर परिवार।

कार्यपालक अभियंता का कार्यालय
भवन प्रमंडल छपरा
अल्पकालीन ई0 निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना संख्या
03 (S.B.D) / 2024-25
शुद्धि पत्र

इस कार्यालय के द्वारा आमंत्रित अल्पकालीन ई0 निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना संख्या 03/2024-25 जिसका पी0आर0नं0 - 002861 (BCD) 2024-25 है, में पुनः अल्पकालीन ई0 निविदा संख्या 03 (S.B.D) म0प्र0छपरा / 2024-25 के स्थान पर अल्पकालीन ई0 निविदा संख्या 03 (S.B.D) म0प्र0छपरा / 2024-25 पढा जाय।

शेष अन्य शर्तें पूर्ववत रहेगी।

कार्यपालक अभियंता
भवन प्रमंडल छपरा
PR. No.004424 (BCD) 2024-25

उक्त सूचना www.state.bihar.gov.in/prdbihar पर भी देखी जा सकती है।

नशे से बचने का है एक ही उपचार, दृढ़ संकल्प और परिवार से प्यार।

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
DEPARTMENT OF SPACE
INDIAN SPACE RESEARCH ORGANISATION (ISRO)
ISRO TELEMETRY TRACKING AND COMMAND NETWORK (ISTRAC),
CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE GROUP (CMG)
Peenya Industrial Estate, Bengaluru-560 058.**

BRIEF E-TENDER NOTICE

On behalf of the President of India, sealed item rate e-tenders are invited online from contractors of appropriate class for the following work in NIT by Group Head, ISTRAC, ISRO, Peenya, Bengaluru-560 058 (Phone No. 080-28094541, 28094186).

Name of work	Supply, Installation, testing & Commissioning of UPS Systems, Isolation transformers & associated panels at ISTRAC G/S Port Blair.	Supply, installation, testing & commissioning of 500KVA DG set at ISTRAC G/S Port Blair.
E-tenders Notice	ISTRAC/CMG/E/CON/E-Tender 28/2024-2025 Dated: 24.06.2024	ISTRAC/CMG/E/CON/E-Tender 29/2024-2025 Dated:24.06.2024
Estimated Cost put to tender	Rs. 88.67 Lakhs	Rs. 67.18 Lakhs
Tender document details	E-Tenders	E-Tenders
Period of completion in months reckoned from the 15th day of date of issue of work order	06 Months	06 Months
Period during which the tender document can be downloaded	From 16.00 hrs. on 25.06.2024 to 16.07.2024 till 16.00 hrs. Extended up to 06.08.2024 up to 16.00 hrs.	
Bid clarification	From 11.00 hrs. on 26.06.2024 to 17.07.2024 till 16.00 hrs Extended up to 07.08.2024 up to 16.00 hrs.	
Last date and time of reply to bid clarification	18.07.2024 up to 16.00 hrs Extended up to 08.08.2024 up to 16.00 hrs.	
Last date and time for receipt of tenders	19.07.2024 up to 16.00 hrs Extended up to 09.08.2024 up to 16.00 hrs.	
Due date and time of opening of tenders	22.07.2024 after 11.00 hrs Extended up to 12.08.2024 after 11.00 hrs.	
Earnest Money Deposit (EMD)	Rs. 1,77,340.00	Rs. 1,34,360.00

Interested tenderers may please refer Detailed Notice Inviting tender (NIT) for eligibility criteria and other details from website: www.isro.gov.in and download the tender document from www.tenderwizard.com/ISRO

Sd/- Group Head, CMG

MAHANAGAR TELEPHONE NIGAM LIMITED
(A Government of India Enterprise)
Eastern Court, Janpath, New Delhi - 110001

PUBLIC NOTICE
Information for publication i/r/o Compliance to provisions of the Telecom Consumers Complaint Redressal Regulations, 2012

S. No.	Item	For Landline	For Broadband	For FTTH	For GSM
1.	Toll free Customer Care Number(s) at Complaint Centre(s)	198	198, 1504	1507	1503
	Alternate Specific Number Accessible from other networks	xxxx 2198	xxxx 2198, 22221504	22221507	1800111503
2.	General Information Numbers	1500	1504, 1509	1507	1503
	Alternate Specific Number Accessible from other networks	22221500	22221504	22221507	1800111503
3.	URL/Link of Web Based Complaint Monitoring System	Landline and Broadband GSM	https://mtnl Delhi.in		
4.	For any enquiry and complaints, call at Unified Access Number	1130			
5.	Android Phone users may download "My MTNL Delhi" App from Google Play Stores for bill view & payment, loading & tracking complaints, current plans, FUP, usage details, tariff recharge, online registration for e-bill and request for new service related to Landline/ Broadband/ FTTH/Mobile.				
6.	For names of Appellate Authority of MTNL Delhi unit, please visit MTNL website : https://mtnl Delhi.in/				

*xxxx stands for exchange code i.e. first four digits of Landline Telephone number whose complaints is to be booked

PROCESS OF TRACKING OF COMPLAINTS :
<https://mtnl Delhi.in> -> Complaints or Use "My MTNL Delhi" Mobile APP.

CITY UNION BANK LIMITED
Credit Recovery and Management Department
Administrative Office : No. 24-B, Gandhi Nagar, Kumbakonam - 612 001. E-Mail id : crmd@cityunionbank.in, Ph : 0435-2432322, Fax : 0435-2431746

POSSESSION NOTICE (Immovable Property)

Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorised Officer of City Union Bank Ltd., having its Administrative Office at No.24-B, Gandhi Nagar, Kumbakonam - 612001 and one of the Branch Offices at C-53, Ground Floor, Shashi Garden, Phase I, Mayur Vihar, Delhi -110091, New Delhi-Mayur Vihar Branch under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of the powers conferred under Section 13(2) & (12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a Demand Notice Dated 10-04-2024 calling upon the borrowers No.1) Ms. Interior Options, C-399, Sarita Vihar, New Delhi - 110076. No.2) Mr. Zeshan Haider Rizvi, S/o. Mr. Hasan Rizvi, C-399, Pocket C, Sarita Vihar, New Delhi - 110076. No.3) Mrs. Rafat Rizvi, W/o. Mr. Zeshan Haider Rizvi, C-399, Pocket C, Sarita Vihar, New Delhi - 110076 to repay the amount mentioned in the Notice being Rs.70,30,766/- (Rupees Seventy Lakh Thirty Thousand Seven Hundred and Sixty Six only) within 60 days from the date of the said Notice with subsequent interest thereon from 08-04-2024 with monthly rests.

The borrowers above named having failed to repay the amount despite the receipt of the above referred statutory notice, NOTICE is hereby given to the borrowers above named and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the Properties described herein below in exercise of the powers conferred on him under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said Rules on this 20th day of July 2024.

The borrowers above named in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the properties and any dealings with the properties will be subject to the charge of City Union Bank Ltd. for an amount of Rs.72,35,072/- (Rupees Seventy Two Lakh Thirty Five Thousand and Seventy Two only) and interest thereon from 18-06-2024 till the repayment of entire dues.

The borrowers' attention is invited to provisions of Sub-section (8) of Section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.

Immovable Property Mortgaged to our Bank
Schedule - A
Property - 1 : (Property Owned by Mrs. Rafat Rizvi, W/o. Mr. Zeshan Haider Rizvi)
Commercial Shop No.31 (adjoining 496.80 Sq.ft. on Ground Floor, Block No.1, Sector -1, in Panchsheel Wall Bazar at G-1, 6, in Township known as Crossings Republik, Dundaehra, Ghaziabad (UP), Boundaries: North - Shop No.30, South - Others Property, East: Others Property, West: Entrance of the Shop/Open Area/Others Property.
Place : New Delhi-Mayur Vihar, Date : 20-07-2024 Authorised Officer

Regd. Office : 149, T.S.R. (Big) Street, Kumbakonam, Thanjavur District, Tamil Nadu - 612 001. CIN - L65110TN1904PLC001287, Telephone No. 0435-2402322, Fax : 0435-2431746, Website : www.cityunionbank.com

CITY UNION BANK LIMITED
Credit Recovery and Management Department
Administrative Office : No. 24-B, Gandhi Nagar, Kumbakonam - 612 001. E-Mail id : crmd@cityunionbank.in, Ph : 0435-2432322, Fax : 0435-2431746

POSSESSION NOTICE (Immovable Property)

Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorised Officer of City Union Bank Ltd., having its Administrative Office at No.24-B, Gandhi Nagar, Kumbakonam - 612001 and one of the Branch Offices at C - 9 / 115, Sector - 8, Rohini, New Delhi - 110085, New Delhi-Rohini Branch under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of the powers conferred under Section 13(2) & (12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a Demand Notice Dated 22-04-2024 calling upon the borrowers No.1) Mr. Atul Gupta, S/o. Bas Dev Gupta, RZ-5, Gali No.1, Dharam Pura, Phase-I, Najafgarh, South-West Delhi, New Delhi - 110043. No.2) Mrs. Seema Gupta, W/o. Atul Gupta, RZ-5, Gali No.1, Dharam Pura, Phase-I, Najafgarh, South-West Delhi, New Delhi - 110043 to repay the amount mentioned in the Notice being Rs.41,67,57/- (Rupees Forty One Lakh Seventy Seven Thousand Six Hundred and Fifty Seven only) within 60 days from the date of the said Notice with subsequent interest thereon from 18-04-2024 with monthly rests.

The borrowers above named having failed to repay the amount despite the receipt of the above referred statutory notice, NOTICE is hereby given to the borrowers above named and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the Properties described herein below in exercise of the powers conferred on him under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said Rules on this 20th day of July 2024.

The borrowers above named in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the properties and any dealings with the properties will be subject to the charge of City Union Bank Ltd. for an amount of Rs.42,38,057/- (Rupees Forty Two Lakh Thirty Eight Thousand and Fifty Seven only) and interest thereon from 02-07-2024 till the repayment of entire dues.

The borrowers' attention is invited to provisions of Sub-section (8) of Section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.

Immovable Property Mortgaged to our Bank
Schedule - A
Property - 1 : (Property Owned by Mrs. Seema Gupta, W/o. Atul Gupta)
All that piece of the Property No.RZ-5, Land Area measuring 62.70 square meters (i.e.75 square yards) out of Kharsa No.22/10, situated in the area of Village Najafgarh, in the colony known as Dharampura Colony, Najafgarh, New Delhi-110043 and bounded as under: East - Property No.6, West - Property No.4, North - Road 20 ft., South - Other Property.
Place : New Delhi-Rohini, Date : 20-07-2024 Authorised Officer

Regd. Office : 149, T.S.R. (Big) Street, Kumbakonam, Thanjavur District, Tamil Nadu - 612 001. CIN - L65110TN1904PLC001287, Telephone No. 0435-2402322, Fax : 0435-2431746, Website : www.cityunionbank.com

**झारखण्ड सरकार ग्रामीण कार्य विभाग कार्यपालक अभियंता का कार्यालय
कम्पाईण्ड बिल्डिंग, प्रथम तल्ला, एल0सी0 रोड, धनबाद
ई-अति अल्पकालीन पुनर्निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना**

ई-निविदा संख्या:- 06/RWD/DHANBAD/24-25 दिनांक :- 22.07.2024
कार्यपालक अभियंता, ग्रामीण कार्य विभाग, कार्य प्रमण्डल, धनबाद द्वारा निम्न विवरण के अनुसार e-procurement पद्धति से निविदा आमंत्रित की जाती है।

क्र0 सं0	आई-एनटी फिकेशन संख्या/पैकेज संख्या	प्रणण्ड	कार्य का नाम	अंक में	अंतर में	कार्य समाप्ति की अवधि	टेण्डर कोल संख्या
1	RWD/DHN/DMFT/01/2-4-25	दुण्डी	मिरेडोई मेन रोड से दुरजगपुर माया डिग्री कोलेज कॉम्प्लेक्स रोड तक पथ निर्माण कार्य (लम्बाई-1.475 कि0मी0)	147.50		एक करोड़ बीसति लाख नवसठ हजार	08 माह
2	RWD/DHN/DMFT/02/2-4-25	दुण्डी	अरवाटोई मोड से संधालडीह तक पथ निर्माण कार्य (लम्बाई-2.350 कि0मी0)	223.841		दो करोड़ बीसति लाख बीसती हजार एक सौ	12 माह
3	RWD/DHN/DMFT/03/2-4-25	दुण्डी	घघकोटीड़ से सलेया माया डुमकरुड तक पथ निर्माण कार्य (लम्बाई-3.30 कि0मी0)	292.162		दो करोड़ नवसठ लाख सौहजार दो सौ	12 माह

वेबसाईट में निविदा प्रकाशन की तिथि:- 29.07.2024
ई-निविदा प्राप्ति की अंतिम तिथि एवं समय:- 06.08.2024 अपराह्न 5.00 बजे तक।
निविदा खोलने की तिथि एवं समय:- 08.08.2024 अपराह्न 3.30 बजे।
निविदा आमंत्रित करने वाले पदाधिकारी का नाम एवं पता:- कार्यपालक अभियंता, ग्रामीण कार्य विभाग, कार्य प्रमण्डल, धनबाद, पिन- 826001
ई-निविदा प्रकोष्ठ का दूरभाष सं0:- 0326-3554757
विस्तृत जानकारी के लिए वेबसाईट jharkhandtenders.gov.in में देखा जा सकता है।

कार्यपालक अभियंता
ग्रामीण कार्य विभाग, कार्य प्रमण्डल, धनबाद।

PR 330412 Rural Work Department(24-25D)

Office of Superintending Engineer, 9th Circle Himachal Pradesh Public Works Department
Address:- 9th Circle, HPPWD, Nurpur. Mail ID hpkan2@nic.in Phone No. 01893-220098

NOTICE INVITING TENDER (NIT)

List of Important Dates of Bids for Construction/Upgradation of Road using New Technology "Cement Treated Base" under Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana and their Maintenance for five year. Accordingly Superintending Engineer 9th Circle, HPPWD, Nurpur on behalf of Governor of Himachal Pradesh invites Percentage rate bids, in electronic tendering system for construction of below mentioned roads:-

Package No. NCTB-01

Sr. No.	Name of Employer for Execution of Contract Bond	District	Package No.	Name of work	Period of completion	Estimate Cost Excluding of GST (in lacs).	Total cost excluding GST (in lacs).	Bid Security (in lacs).
1.	Chief Engineer(KZ) HPPWD D/shala.	Kangra	HP04-355	Up-gradation of Kopra to Hasol road Km. 0/0 to 8/200. (CTB Work).	12 months	661.95	49.31	711.26
Package No. NCTB-02								
2.	-do-	-do-	HP04-327	Up-gradation of Indora via Kursain to Kathgarh road Km 0/0 to 7/160. (CTB Work).	18 months	1980.53	99.27	2079.80
			HP04-326	Up-gradation of Makroli to Changrara Km. 0/0 to 9/350. (CTB Work).				41.60
Package No. NCTB-03								
3.	-do-	-do-	HP04-323	Upgradation of Bain Indorian Miani Milwan to Barota road Km. 0/0 to 12/850. (CTB Work).	18 months	1849.60	77.27	1926.87
Package No. NCTB-04								
4.	Chief Engineer(KZ) HPPWD D/shala.	Kangra	HP04-325	Up-gradation of Ganagth Ghetra road Km. 0/0 to 8/700 (CTB Work).	18 months	1601.01	135.89	1736.90
			HP04-324	Up-gradation of Madholi Tappa Indpur Plahghat road. Km. 0/0 to 13/900 (CTB Work).				34.74
Package No. NCTB-05								
5.	-do-	-do-	HP04-322	Up-gradation of Ghandran to Rehan via Moki road. Km. 0/0 to 20/600. (CTB Work).	18 months	2175.11	123.87	2298.98

2. Date of Publishing of e-procurement notice through News Papers:-01-08-2024, 3. Publishing date of Bid on-line:-01-08-2024 (10.00 AM), 4. Start Date of downloading of bids :-02-08-2024 (11.00 AM), 5. Deadline for submission of bids:-26-08-2024 (5.00 PM), 6. Date of opening of bids:-17-08-2024 (11.00 AM). Pre-bid meeting on dated 07-08-2024 at 11:30 AM. For further details please log on to <https://pmsys.tendershp.gov.in>

HP/0981/24-25 Superintending Engineer, 9th Circle, H.P.P.W.D, Nurpur-176202, Email: hpkan2@nic.in, 01893-220098.

JHARKHAND URJA SANCHARAN NIGAM LIMITED
(CIN: U40108JH2013SGC001704)
(GOVERNMENT OF JHARKHAND UNDERTAKING)
OFFICE: General Manager, Contracts & Materials, Multi-Lateral Funding Projects, JUSNL Building, Kusai Colony, Doranda, Ranchi - 834002 (Jharkhand)
Email: pijusnl@gmail.com Visit us on: www.jharkhandtenders.gov.in

E-Tender Cancellation Notice
Due to unavoidable circumstances, the following NITs are hereby cancelled:-

NIT No.	Name of work (Request for Bid (RfB))
28/PR/JUSNL/2024-25	Design, Engineering, Supply, Installation, Testing & Commissioning of 220/132 kV Grid Substations at Jadugoda and additional 132 kV Bays at Dhalbhumgarh GSS along with dismantling Works)
29/PR/JUSNL/2024-25	Design, Supply, Installation, Testing & Commissioning of 220 kV Double Circuit Transmission Lines (1)Transmission line from Chaibasa (PGCL) - Jadugoda (New) (47.7 km) (2)Transmission line from Chandil (New)-Jadugoda (New) (51.3 km)
30/PR/JUSNL/2024-25	Design, Engineering, Supply, Installation, Testi ng & Commissioning of 132 kV Double Circuit Transmission Lines from Jadugoda(New)- Dhalbhumgarh (63.4 km)

स्वीकृत एवं राष्ट्र हिंद में कर्जा बचाने। कृपया अपनी सिकवतों को PR No. 326276
दिल की सं 1800 345 6570 पर दर्ज कराएं।

Sd/-
General Manager
C&M, MLFP, JUSNL, Ranchi

PR 330425 (Jharkhand Urja Sancharan Nigam Ltd) 24-25 (D)

HIMACHAL PRADESH PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT (INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB) (e-Procurement Module)

The Executive Engineer, Chamba Division, HPPWD Chamba H.P. on behalf of Governor of H.P. invites the item rate bids, in electronic tendering system, from the eligible class of contractors registered with HPPWD for the works as detailed in the table.

Sr. No.	Name of work	Estimated Cost (Rs.)	Earnest money (Rs.)	Cost of tender (Rs.)	Class	Compl-ition period
1	Land slide mitigation measures for protection of land slide disaster on Pucca Tala Ghar on link road to Chamba Town to Baloo (SH- Shot creting, PCC Breast wall and PCC Drain)	1,12,77,422/-	2,25,600/-	5000/-	C&B	Six Months
2	Construction of Chungari to Fanela road Km. 0/0 to 1/500 (SH- Balance work of formation cutting at RD 0/460 to 0/570)	4,99,174/-	10,000/-	350/-	D & C	One Month

2.KEY DATES: 1. Starting Date for downloading 23/07/2024 at 10.00 AM
2. Deadline for submission of Bid 31/07/2024 at 11.00AM
3. Date of Technical bid opening 31/07/2024 at 11.30 AM

The undersigned has right to extend or cancel the bids without declaring any reasons there-of.

The Bidders are advised to note other details of tenders from the department website www.hptenders.gov.in

Executive Engineer,
Chamba Division, HPPWD Chamba
Pin-176310 Tel.01899-222229
Email:-ee-cha-hp@nic.in

On behalf of Governor of Himachal Pradesh
HP / 0945/24-25

कार्यालय अतिरिक्त मुख्य अभियंता, सार्वजनिक निर्माण विभाग, संभाग, अजमेर
क्रमांक:- अम/अ/अ/स/क/एफ-2 (30ए/निविदा/खे-1246 दिनांक: 15.07.2024
NIB No. :- PWD2425A0728

राजस्थान के राज्यपाल महोदय की ओर से सीआरआईएफ योजनाअंतर्गत वर्ष 2023-24 के तहत छ. सड़क कार्य के लिए उपयुक्त श्रेणी में सार्वजनिक निर्माण विभाग राजस्थान में पंजीकृत सवैदको एवं केन्द्रीय/ राज्य सरकार व उनके अधिकृत संगठनों, केन्द्रीय लोक निर्माण विभाग/ उच्च एवं दूर संचार विभाग/ रेलवे इत्यादि में पंजीकृत सवैदको, जो कि राजस्थान सरकार के एए श्रेणी के सवैदको के समकक्ष हो, से निम्नांकित पत्र में कुल 06 कार्यों जिनकी लागत राशि र. 17496.38 लाख है, के लिए ई- टेंडरिंग प्रक्रिया हेतु लाईन निविदाओं आमंत्रित की जाती है।

निविदा फार्म डाउनलोड एवं अपलोड करने की तारीख एवं समय मंगलवार 16 जुलाई, 2024 प्रातः 9.30 बजे से मंगलवार 06 अगस्त, 2024 प्रातः 6.00 बजे तक।

निविदा से सम्बन्धित समस्त विवरण वेबसाईट www.dipronline.org पर एवं निविदा दस्तावेज का विवरण वेबसाईट <http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in> एवं sppp.raj.nic.in पर देखा जा सकता है। सम्पूर्ण निविदा प्रक्रिया <http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in> पर ऑनलाइन सम्पादित की जायेगी।

UBN No.:-
PWD2425WLOB02789 PWD2425WLOB02790 PWD2425WLOB02791
PWD2425WLOB02792 PWD2425WLOB02793 PWD2425WLOB02794

DIPR/C/6132/2024 (वो. के. जैन), अतिरिक्त मुख्य अभियंता, सार्वि. संभाग, अजमेर

RAIPUR DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
Bhaktia Mata Karmia Complex, New Rajendra Nagar, RAIPUR (Chhattisgarh) 492006
Website : <https://rda.cgstate.gov.in>, Email : coordinator@gmail.com, Tele Fax : 0771-2536188

NIT No. 17, Dated: 22.07.2024, System Tender No.-156498 Date 22.07.2024
3rd Call NIT for Balance work for construction of 253 Units EWS (2BHK) Row Houses in Sector-01, 02, 8A, 8B, 10, 11B 14A and 14B of TDS-04, Kaushalya Mata Vihar, Raipur (C.G.)

Raipur Development Authority (RDA) invites "Percentage Rate" Form "A" tenders from eligible contractors registered in Class D & above under unified registration system in CGPWD with valid UIN or Equivalent Registration in any state Govt. Dept./Central Govt. Dept./PSU and qualifying the Pre-qualification Criteria as detailed in the tender document. The tender documents can be downloaded from <https://eproc.cgstate.gov.in> from 5:30 PM on 22.07.2024 to 03:30 PM on 02.08.2024 & Last Date of Physical Submission is 05.08.2024 upto 03:30 PM. Date of opening of Technical proposals is 06.08.2024 11:00 AM onwards. Probable Amount of Contract is Rs 1392.21 Lakhs, EMD Rs. 10.00 Lakhs & Cost of Tender Document Rs. 30,000/- & Processing Fee Rs. 311/- at office of the Chief Executive Officer, Raipur Development Authority, Raipur Chhattisgarh. Any amendments(s)/Corrigendum (s) shall be posted only on the website <https://eproc.cgstate.gov.in>

Superintending Engineer

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Director

OBRIANIAB
National Institute of Animal Biotechnology
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National Institute of Animal Biotechnology
An Autonomous Institute of Department of Biotechnology, Ministry of Science & Technology, Govt of India
Sy. No.37, Opp. Journalist Colony, Extended C City Road, Near Gowildfordi, Gachibowli, Hyderabad-500032. Tel: +91 40 2312 0103/115; Email: admin@niab.org.in; Web: www.niab.res.in

Advt. No. 21/2024

NIAB, an autonomous institute under the aegis of the Department of Biotechnology, Ministry of Science & Technology, Government of India, is aimed to harness novel and emerging biotechnologies and create knowledge in the cutting edge areas for improving animal health and productivity. NIAB invites applications from Indian citizens for the following position:

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For more details, please visit NIAB website www.niab.res.in
Date of commencement of online applications: 22nd Jul 2024
Last date for submitting online applications: 23rd Aug 2024

Sd/-
DIRECTOR, NIAB

GOVERNMENT OF ASSAM
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER, PWD(R&B), HAFLONG CIRCLE HAFLONG

Memo No. CS-5/05/2024-25/2

PRESS NOTICE INVITING TENDER

The Superintending Engineer, PWD (R&B) Haflong Circle, Haflong invites bids on behalf of Governor of Assam from approved and eligible Contractors registered with PWD, Assam for the work "Construction of approach road to EMRS, Ardaoipur in Dima Hasao" for a Total Amount of Rs.159.089 Lakh(Approx)

Details for the work can be seen from 30.07.2024 at website www.assamtenders.gov.in. Amendment / Addendum to the SBD, if any, and further notifications shall appear in this website and also at the office of the undersigned during office hours. The contractor / bidder must be registered with the Electronic Tendering System (ETS) of PWRD, Assam website www.assamtenders.gov.in.

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

Sd/-
Superintending Engineer, PWD (R&B), Haflong Circle, Haflong

Janasanyog /CF/827/24/24-Jul-24

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JAIPUR DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
Indira Circle, Jawahar Lal Nehru Marg, Jaipur-302004

No.: JDA/EE-8/2024-25/D-273 Date : 15.07.2024

NOTICE INVITING BID
NIB No.: EE-8/02/2024-25

Online Bids are invited up-to 6:00 PM of 05.08.2024 for the work of "Engineering and Architectural Consultancy for Designing of Flyover and Elevated Road in Jaipur", of Rs. 498.98 Lacs. The last date for applying bid and making online payment on JDA portal is up to 6:00 PM dated 05.08.2024. Details may be seen in the bidding document at our office or the website of State Public Procurement Portal website www.sppp.rajasthan.gov.in, www.eproc.rajasthan.gov.in and www.jda.rajasthan.gov.in. UBN No. JDA24255LOB00139

To participate in the bid, bidder has to be :-

- Registered on JDA website www.jda.rajasthan.gov.in for participating in the Bid, the Bidder has to apply for the bid and pay the Bidding Document Fee, RISL Processing Fee online only. The Bid Security may be deposited through online or bank guarantee (BG).
- Registered on e-Procurement Portal of Government of Rajasthan www.eproc.rajasthan.gov.in for online e-Bid submission.

Executive Engineer-8

No.: JDA/EE-11/2024-25/D- Date : 15.07.2024

NOTICE INVITING BID
NIB No.: EE-11/01/2024-25

Online Bids are invited up-to 6:00 PM of 05.08.2024 for the work of "Consultancy (Engineering and Architecture) for preparation of Detailed Project Report (DPR) for the work construction of grade-separator for traffic improvement at Riddhi-Siddhi Junction, Mahapura bypass Road, Zone-5 area and 200ft & 250ft road junction near Gopalindra SEZ Zone-11 area, JDA, Jaipur", of Rs. 243.00 Lacs. The last date for applying bid and making online payment on JDA portal is up to 6:00 PM dated 05.08.2024. Details may be seen in the bidding document at our office or the website of State Public Procurement Portal website www.sppp.rajasthan.gov.in, www.eproc.rajasthan.gov.in and www.jda.rajasthan.gov.in. UBN No. JDA24255LOB00140

To participate in the bid, bidder has to be :-

- Registered on JDA website www.jda.rajasthan.gov.in for participating in the Bid, the Bidder has to apply for the bid and pay the Bidding Document Fee, RISL Processing Fee online only. The Bid Security may be deposited through online or bank guarantee (BG).
- Registered on e-Procurement Portal of Government of Rajasthan www.eproc.rajasthan.gov.in for online e-Bid submission.

Executive Engineer-11

No.: JDA/EE-14/2024-25/D-808 Date : 15.07.2024</

From Page One

Small servings, many plates

Her speech referred to 'employment' 23 times, up sharply from three mentions of the word in the 2023-24 Budget, and seven (four of which were about past achievements rather than the future) in the interim Budget presented this February. Similarly, there were three references to the middle-class, from just one mention in the interim Budget and two in 2023-24.

References to growth slipped to 10, from a combined 34 mentions in the last two Budget speeches. Mr. Jaitley's third Budget had also slashed growth references, but the similarities with that speech don't end there. While he had released a plan to 'Transform India' based on action points around nine pillars, Ms. Sitharaman on Tuesday laid out nine priorities for generating ample opportunities for all. Five of those are, in fact, similar to Mr. Jaitley's list that led with the promise to double farmers' incomes in five years. Ms. Sitharaman said that her first priority would be to raise productivity and resilience in agriculture, followed by employment and skilling, inclusive human resource development and social justice.

Infrastructure and next generation reforms also figure in the priorities, with the Minister promising more details about the latter through an economic policy framework to be formulated later, with a focus on fixing factors of productivity, including land, labour, capital, and entrepreneurship. She also announced a review of the Income Tax and Customs Acts, a simplification of Foreign Direct Investment norms, and a financial sector vision document for five years.

The Finance Minister did provide some indirect support to private investments by accelerating the fiscal consolidation process, armed with a ₹2.1 lakh crore surprise dividend from the central bank. The fiscal deficit target for this year has been pegged at 4.9% of GDP from the 5.1% projected in the Interim Budget, and the 5.6% of GDP achieved last year. A reduction in the government's market borrowings would facilitate a reduction in policy interest rates and encourage private investment, EY's chief policy advisor D.K. Srivastava pointed out.

Among the PM's employment package schemes is a plan to provide one year internships in 500 top companies to one crore youth over five years. It is not clear if this will subsume the Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana 4.0 that was announced in the last Budget to "skill lakhs of youth within the next three years" with an on-the-job training component.

As is the case with many initiatives of this Budget, more details will emerge over time. But, Ms. Sitharaman will be hoping that the lens change reflected in the Budget's focus areas will not be lost on voters gearing up to cast their ballots in the upcoming State Assembly elections.

A.P. to get ₹15,000 cr. for capital Amaravati

Blaming the past government of "irregularities", he sought substantial financial support for developing Amaravati, the Polavaram project and other projects in the State.

Ms. Sitharaman said the Centre is also fully committed to financing and early completion of the Polavaram irrigation project.

This apart, she has also ensured the promotion of industrial development, and funds for essential infrastructure such as roads, water, power and railways. As part of it, the Kopparthi Industrial Node, the corridor between Visakhapatnam and Chennai, will be developed on a priority basis. Grants for backward regions of Rayalaseema, Prakasam and north coastal Andhra Pradesh will also be provided.

The State is also expected to benefit from the funding plan that will cover 53,000 tribal villages across the country.

Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu thanked Prime Minister Narendra Modi on X for the allocations to the State. "This support from the Centre will go a long way towards rebuilding Andhra Pradesh. I congratulate you on the presentation of this progressive and confidence-boosting Budget."

Nitish hails Budget as Bihar gets ₹58,900 cr.

"Special attention has been paid to the needs of Bihar and special funds have been provided for road projects, power projects, airports and medical colleges. Special assistance has been announced for the development of tourist places in the State and a big announcement has also been made to protect Bihar from floods," Mr. Kumar posted on X.

The road connectivity projects announced for the State include the Patna-Purnia Expressway, the Buxar-Bhagalpur Expressway; Bodh Gaya, Rajgir, Vaishali and Darbhanga spurs; and a two-lane bridge over the Ganga at Buxar.

The Centre will support the comprehensive development of the Vishnupad temple corridor and Mahabodhi temple corridor, as well as Nalanda, to develop them as tourist destinations.

Leader of the Opposition in Bihar Assembly Tejashwi Yadav called the Budget disappointing. Bihar Congress Legislature Party leader Shaheel Ahmad Khan said the Modi government had cheated the people of Bihar and there should not be any compromise less than the SCS. (With PTI inputs)

Budget will help empower all sections of society: Modi

The Prime Minister highlighted new schemes, job incentives, and infrastructure development plans in the Budget, emphasising their role in driving economic growth and creating jobs

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi praised the Union Budget presented by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Tuesday as one that will empower all sections of society.

"This is a Budget that will take the country's villages, poor and farmers on the path of prosperity. In the last 10 years, 25 crore people have come out of poverty. This Budget is a Budget for the continuation of the empowerment of the newly emerged, neo-middle class," he said.

Highlighting the announcements regarding tax, he said a "decision had been taken" on the reduction and simplification of tax and rules on tax deduction at source (TDS).

MSME sector

The Prime Minister dwelt at length on the provisions made for the micro, small and medium enterprises (MSME) sector, stating that these would provide a new path of progress for small traders and MSMEs. "A new scheme to increase ease of credit has been announced in the Budget. Announcements have been made to take the export and manufacturing ecosys-



Future forward: Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressing the media on the first day of the Budget session at the Parliament House, in New Delhi, on Monday. R.V. MOORTHY

tem to every district. This Budget will bring new opportunities for start-ups and the space economy," he said.

"The MSME sector of the country is connected to the middle class. This sector provides maximum employment to the poor. This Budget will give a new scale to education and skills," he said.

Employment boost

A major part of the Budget was on providing incentives for youth employment. "In this Budget, the government has announced 'employment-linked incentive' schemes.

This will help generate many employment opportunities. Under this scheme, the government will give the first salary to those who are newly entering the workforce. Youth from villages will be able to work in the country's top companies under the apprenticeship programme," he said.

He said the development plans of 12 new industrial nodes, new satellite towns and transit plans for 14 big cities would enable the development of new economic hubs in the country and create numerous jobs.

Touching upon the schemes for poverty alle-

viation and empowerment of the poor, he highlighted the measures to build three crore houses for the poor and the 'Janjatiya Unnat Gram Abhiyan', which will link five crore tribal families to basic facilities with a saturation approach.

The Budget brings numerous opportunities for India's start-ups and innovation ecosystem, Mr. Modi said, referring to the ₹1,000-crore corpus fund to vitalise the space economy and the decision to abolish the angel tax. "Record high capex will become a driving force of the economy," he added.

States ruled by non-NDA parties ignored, says Opposition; CMs to boycott NITI Aayog meet

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Opposition slammed the Union Budget calling it an exercise in political juggling to appease the BJP's two key allies, the Janata Dal (United) and the Telugu Desam Party, while doing little to address issues such as high rate of unemployment and inflation. The States ruled by non-National Democratic Alliance parties, the Opposition said, have been ignored.

The DMK and Congress have decided to protest against the "discriminatory" Budget. Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin and the three Congress Chief Ministers, Karnataka's Siddaramaiah, Telangana's Revanth Reddy and Himachal Pradesh's Sukh-



Divided views: Mallikarjun Kharge with Rahul Gandhi, K.C. Venugopal and Sharad Pawar, in New Delhi, on Tuesday. ANI

vinder Singh Sukhu, will skip the Governing Council meeting of NITI Aayog on Saturday. The decision was taken at a meeting of the INDIA bloc on Tuesday evening. Trinamool Congress president and West Bengal CM Mamata Banerjee will attend the NITI Aayog meeting to air the

State's grievances.

The Congress, which claimed that the internship programme announced by Finance Minister was modelled on the "apprenticeship" scheme in its 2024 election manifesto, called it a "copycat" Budget.

In a post on X, Congress president Mallikarjun

Kharge said, "The Modi government's 'copycat Budget' could not even copy the Congress's Nyay Patra properly! The Modi government's Budget is distributing half-hearted 'freebies' to dupe its coalition partners so that the NDA survives."

Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi dismissed the Budget as an exercise to save the government. He said it sought to "appease allies" by making "hollow promises" to them at the cost of other States.

Former Finance Minister and Rajya Sabha member P. Chidambaram said unemployment is the "biggest challenge facing the country" and the government's efforts are "too little and will have only little impact on the grave situa-

No line of poetry in a paean to political pragmatism

NEWS ANALYSIS

Nistula Hebbar
NEW DELHI

In a Budget speech sans poetry but filled with political pragmatism, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman kept her focus on addressing youth unemployment, while also offering special packages to keep crucial allies — the Telugu Desam Party governing Andhra Pradesh, and the Janata Dal(U) in power in Bihar — on her side.

Rising unemployment, the lack of avenues to government jobs, and the leakage of question papers for recruitment exams even when vacancies were announced were all issues that weighed heavily on the BJP in the recent Lok Sabha election. In the Union Budget, this sector has been addressed via a series of incentive schemes.

The TDP and the JD(U) wholeheartedly welcomed the allocations to Andhra Pradesh and Bihar, respectively. The two parties, with 16 and 12 Lok Sabha members, respectively, are both crucial to the stability of the BJP-led NDA government. For Andhra Pradesh, the goody bag included a financial assistance package of ₹15,000 crore, more funds to complete the Polavaram

project, and special packages for backward area development for Rayalaseema, Uttarakhand and Prakasam districts. The Union government has also promised to enforce the guarantees made in the AP Reorganisation Act, 2014, to provide special assistance to nodes in the Visakhapatnam-Chennai industrial corridor, and to develop the industrial centres of Kopparthi and Orvakallu, with a special project for Andhra Pradesh through the Purvodaya scheme.

Bihar will get ₹26,000 crore to develop roads and highways, including the Patna-Purnea expressway, the Buxar-Bhagalpur highway, the Bodh Gaya-Rajgir-Vaishali-Darbhanga highway, and a two-lane bridge over the Ganga in Buxar. The Union government will provide funds for building schools and hospitals and has approved the development of the Vishnupad Temple corridor and the Maha Bodhi temple corridor along the lines of the Kashi Vishwanath corridor. Nalanda and Rajgir will also be developed, Ms. Sitharaman announced.

Both Chief Ministers — N. Chandrababu Naidu of Andhra Pradesh, and Nitish Kumar of Bihar — rained praises on Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Mahayuti govt. hails Union Budget; MVA unhappy

The Hindu Bureau
MUMBAI

The Mahayuti government on Tuesday welcomed the Union Budget for allocating funds and projects worth over ₹8,000 crore for Maharashtra, while the Opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) criticised it for focusing mainly on Andhra Pradesh and Bihar, States ruled by allies of the BJP-led NDA.

Shiv Sena president and CM Eknath Shinde said the PM has brought relief to the common man by making major changes in the tax structure.

Shiv Sena (UBT) leader and MLA Aaditya Thackeray questioned why the State, despite being the largest taxpayer, received less allocation.

West Bengal received 'big zero' in budgetary allocations, says Mamata

The Hindu Bureau
KOLKATA

Alleging that West Bengal has been deprived in the Budget presented by Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, State's Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Tuesday dubbed it as a "politically biased Budget".

"It is an anti-poor, anti-people, and politically biased Budget," she said.

The Trinamool Congress chairperson accused the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance government of "being envious of West Bengal", and said that the State received a "big zero" in the budgetary allocations. "This Budget is totally directionless, anti-people, with no vision, only a political mission in mind. I



MAMATA BANERJEE
Chief Minister

don't see any light. It is dark, dark, and dark," Ms. Banerjee said.

Flood relief

She raised questions on the Centre's proposal to provide flood assistance to neighbouring Sikkim.

In her Budget speech, Ms. Sitharaman referred to the devastating flash floods and landslides that wreaked havoc in Sikkim and added that the government will

This budget is directionless, anti-people, with no vision, only a political mission in mind. I don't see any light. It is dark, dark, and dark

provide assistance to the State.

"If Sikkim gets and West Bengal is deprived, this is not good," she said. She said that the people of Darjeeling and Kalimpong should bear in mind that while seeking votes the BJP promises everything but does not deliver.

The BJP had won most of the seats in north Bengal, including the Darjeeling Lok Sabha seat.

In her Budget speech, the Finance Minister referred to the Amritsar Kolkata Industrial Corridor and said the government will support development of an industrial node at Gaya. The Chief Minister said she had made provisions for the Dankuni Amritsar corridor long ago in 2009 and what the Finance Minister was promising was old wine in a new bottle.

Party general secretary Abhishek Banerjee reacted saying that Bengal has been constantly deprived by this BJP government. "Has there been a positive outcome of 12 BJP MPs who are elected from Bengal? No! The net result is zero because Bengal has been constantly tortured & deprived..." he said.

'Budget disregards Punjab's interests'

The Hindu Bureau
CHANDIGARH

Punjab Finance Minister Harpal Singh Cheema on Tuesday criticised the Union Budget presented by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Tuesday and accused the BJP-led government at Centre of "disregarding" the interests of Punjab.

Mr. Cheema said, "The

Budget fails to provide additional, targeted support for Punjab's farmers, who grapple with distinct challenges such as water management, crop diversification, and sustainability."

He said the Budget has neglected in allocating substantial and specific funds for flood management and irrigation projects that cater to the State's unique requirements.

APPEAL



WELFARE SYNDICATE is exempted under 80G IT.

Two years old Vinusha is advised to undergo Open Heart Surgery at The Madras Medical Mission, Chennai. The total expenditure is Rs. 2,35,000/-. My family is very poor and cannot afford this huge cost. Please help me to undergo the surgery and lead a healthy life. The donations sent through ChD/D/NEFT Transfer & GOOGLE PAY (Canara Bank, Nungambakkam Branch, A/C. No: 60182010063310, IFSC No: CNRB0016018) favouring WOMEN'S WELFARE SYNDICATE is exempted under 80G IT.

All correspondence is done through WWS, Regd Public Charitable Trust, Flat No. GF 1, Corddel Apartments, O.No.13, N.No.29, Pycrofts Garden Lane, Chennai-600006. Ph: 044-42137401/2825324/7338978027. E-mail ID: womenswelfare.org@gmail.com. Website: www.womenswelfare.org. WWS

SC declines pleas to cancel NEET, says no evidence to prove systemic leak

Three-judge Bench observes that there is no material on record 'at the present stage' to prove that a systemic leak of question papers has destroyed the sanctity of the exams held annually for medical admissions across the country

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Tuesday declined to cancel the undergraduate National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET-UG) held on May 5, while observing there is no material on record "at the present stage" to prove that a systemic leak of question papers has destroyed the sanctity of the exams held annually for medical admissions across the country.

"At the present stage, there is an absence of material to show that the result of the exam stands vitiated... Data produced city-wise, centre-wise and comparison of results in 2022, 2023 and 2024 do not show a systemic leak of question paper which indicate a destruction of the sanctity of the exam," Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud, heading a three-judge Bench comprising Justices J.B. Pardiwala and Manoj Misra, reasoned.

The judgment seemed to agree with the arguments of the government and the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), both



Expressing discontent: Activists staging a protest demanding the re-conduct of the exam, in New Delhi on Tuesday. SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

represented by Solicitor-General Tushar Mehta, that the leaks "so far" looked "localised" to Hazaribagh and Patna in Bihar. An ongoing CBI probe has led to several arrests.

But the lead counsel for the petitioners seeking a re-test, senior advocate Narendar Hooda, countered that the main accused of the gang behind the paper leak was yet to be arrested. Mobile phones used to relay the leaked question papers had not been recovered. He said the government's confidence that the leak was limited to Patna and Hazaribagh was unfounded.

He urged the court to hold true to its principle that the sanctity of an exam was lost even if one student had benefited from an illegality.

The Chief Justice responded that an entire exam cannot be cancelled, putting the future of over 23 lakh students who appeared for NEET-UG across 571 cities in peril, on the mere hypothesis of the petitioners that the leak was not confined to Hazaribagh and Patna.

The Bench acknowledged the government's viewpoint that cancellation of the exam would have serious consequences

Final NEET results within two days, says Pradhan

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan on Tuesday hailed the Supreme Court's decision on the NEET-UG issue, and announced that the final results of the medical entrance exam would be

declared within two days.

The merit list would be revised according to the observations made by the Supreme Court, he said.

"Satyamev Jayate". Truth has prevailed," Mr. Pradhan said at a press conference here, welcoming the court's decision.

on the 23 lakh students, including disruption of the admission schedule of the medical courses, cascading effects on the course of medical education, prejudicial impact on the availability of qualified medical professionals, besides being a source of serious disadvantage to marginalised students who would have to bear the expenses and logistics of a re-test.

The court made it clear that students identified in future as beneficiaries of the paper leak in the ongoing CBI investigation should not profit from the illegality and be barred from admission. With the

court declining re-test, the counselling process, which was set to begin from Wednesday, may commence. However, the rank tally may undergo a change with the court endorsing a report from the Indian Institute of Technology (Delhi) that an "ambiguous" physics question had only one correct answer and not two "possible answers". The IIT-Delhi panel had concluded that the two answers mutually excluded each other. Over 4.2 lakh candidates who opted the wrong one of the two "possible answers" may now lose the marks awarded to them.

Amid stand-off, Bengal Speaker administers oath to four Trinamool MLAs

The Hindu Bureau
KOLKATA

Amid the ongoing tussle between West Bengal Governor C.V. Ananda Bose and the State government, Speaker Biman Banerjee on Tuesday administered the oath of office to four newly elected MLAs of the Trinamool Congress.

Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, who was present in the Legislative Assembly during the oath-taking, criticised Mr. Bose and accused him of "creating hurdles" in the functioning of the House.

"Why didn't the Governor come to the Assembly to administer the oath of the four MLAs? He was instead delaying the matter. The Governor should act as per law," she said.

Mr. Biman Banerjee said that oath was administered to the MLAs as per laid-down procedure, and added he has informed the President about the recent developments.

The four newly sworn-in MLAs are Supti Pandey from Maniktala, Madhuparna Thakur from Bagda, Krishna Kalyani of Raiganj, and Mukut Mani Adhikari of Ranaghat Dakshin.

The Raj Bhavan had ex-



All smiles: MLAs Madhuparna Thakur, Krishna Kalyani, Mukut Mani Adhikari, and Supti Pandey pose after taking oath on Tuesday. PTI

pressed reservations after two MLAs, Rayat Hossain Sarkar and Sayantika Banerjee, were administered the oath of office during a Special Session of the House by the Speaker on July 5.

According to the Raj Bhavan, the Governor had assigned the task of administering oath to the two MLAs to the Deputy Speaker. The Governor had written to President Droupadi Murmu stating that the Speaker's act of administering the oath was in violation of constitutional principles.

On July 22, the Deputy Secretary, Raj Bhavan, wrote to the office of the Speaker regarding violations in constitutional provisions relating to oath-taking and the mandatory fine

for members who attend the House without observing constitutional proprieties in oath-taking.

The communication from Raj Bhavan added that Article 193 of the Constitution has provisions for levying "penalty for sitting and voting before making oath or affirmation under Article 188" or when not qualified or disqualified.

Legal tussle

The development also comes at a time when Ms. Banerjee and Mr. Bose are embroiled in a legal tussle with the latter filing a defamation case against the Chief Minister. The Calcutta High Court has restrained the Chief Minister from making statements against the Governor till August 14.

Teacher suspended for assault on student

The Hindu Bureau
LUCKNOW

A teacher at a primary school in the Kuladia locality in Bareilly district was suspended on Tuesday and a first information report was registered under Section 352 (intentional insult with intent to provoke breach of peace) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) along with provisions of the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, and other sections for allegedly beating a Class 4 student hailing from a Dalit community who refused to pluck fruits for her on the school premises. The Basic Education Officer in Bareilly suspended the accused teacher, Rani Gangwar, who allegedly locked the pupil inside a classroom and thrashed him.

The mother of the victim alleged that her nine-year-old son was mercilessly beaten by his teacher.

Nepal, Sri Lanka, Seychelles secure more funds under Budget allocation for MEA

Kallol Bhattacharjee
NEW DELHI

India-funded projects in the neighbourhood received the bulk of the allocation for the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) in the Union Budget.

Nepal secured an allocation of ₹700 crore, which is a jump of ₹150 crore from the previous year's allocation of ₹550 crore. Sri Lanka received ₹245 crore, an improvement of ₹95 crore over last year's funding of ₹150 crore. The Seychelles, which had an allocation of ₹10 crore, got a boost with the infusion of ₹30 crore.

Dip in funding

Bhutan, the largest recipient of the annual allocation under the MEA, has seen a dip in funding by ₹332.02 crore. Total funding for Bhutan this year stands at ₹2,068.56 crore. Bhutan and India are



Annual allocation: Dips in funding were seen for Myanmar, Mauritius, Bangladesh, and Mongolia. ANI

close economic partners and Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri visited Thimphu last week, when the two sides cleared 61 projects amounting to ₹4,958 crore.

The slight reduction in the annual allocation therefore does not indicate a reduction in funding for projects in Bhutan.

Dips in funding were seen for Myanmar, Mauritius, Bangladesh, and Mongolia. Conflict-torn Myanmar, which had an allocation of ₹400 crore

last year, received ₹250 crore this year. Mauritius, with an allocation of ₹370 crore, has received ₹90.79 crore less than the previous year. The allocation for Mongolia, which earlier received ₹7 crore, has been scaled down to ₹5 crore.

Allocation for Bangladesh has dropped by ₹80 crore to ₹120 crore. Both Afghanistan and the Maldives, with ₹200 crore and ₹400 crore, respectively, have secured the same allocation as last year.

Cough syrup samples failed quality tests, says CDSCO

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Cough syrup samples from over 100 pharmaceutical units in the country did not pass quality tests, as per a recent report by the Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO). It classified these batches as "not of standard quality" (NSQ) due to issues with diethylene glycol (DEG), ethylene glycol (EG), assay, microbial growth, pH, and volume.

The report, presented to the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, found that out of 7,087 batches tested, 353 were deemed NSQ. Nine batches were particularly problematic due to the presence of diethylene glycol and ethylene glycol. The report said some of these samples contained the same toxins found in cough syrups linked to the deaths of children in Gambia, Uzbekistan, and Cameroon.

SC gives split verdict on validity of Centre's nod for GM mustard

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Tuesday pronounced a split verdict on the validity of the Centre's 2022 decision granting conditional approval for environmental release of genetically modified (GM) mustard crop.

The Bench of Justices B.V. Nagarathna and Sanjay Karol, however, asked the Centre to formulate a national policy with regard to GM crops for research, cultivation, trade and commerce in the country.

The case would now be referred to a three-judge Bench to be constituted by the Chief Justice of India.

On October 18, 2022, the Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee (GEAC) — a statutory body under the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change and regulator of genetically modified or-

The Centre has been asked to formulate a national policy with regard to GM crops for research and other purposes

ganisms in the country — recommended the environmental release.

A subsequent decision was taken on October 25, 2022 approving the environmental release of transgenic mustard hybrid DMH-11, a variety of GM mustard.

On Tuesday, in its judgment, the court said the "national policy shall be formulated in consultation with all stakeholders, such as experts in the field of agriculture, biotechnology, State governments, representatives of farmers, etc".

It said the government should conduct a national consultation with the aim of formulating the policy.

'Won't allow another house to be razed in Lucknow'

Mayank Kumar
LUCKNOW

The Lucknow Bachao Sangarsh Samiti, a forum formed by civil society and political parties, has vowed that it will not allow the State Government to demolish even one more home in Lucknow as part of its urban project. The forum has demanded compensation and rehabilitation for displaced Akbar Nagar residents.

They are to run a campaign from July 26. Over the last six months, demolition drives have been carried out in Akbar Nagar locality, leading to hundreds of houses being destroyed.

Following uproar, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath met residents of Rahim Nagar, Pant Nagar, and Indraprastha Nagar, emphasising that there was no justification for marking homes and alleviating fears of demolition.

New U.K. Foreign Secretary David Lammy arrives today

Suhasini Haidar
Sriram Lakshman
NEW DELHI/LONDON

In the first high-level visit by the newly elected Labour government in the United Kingdom, U.K. Foreign Secretary David Lammy will arrive on Wednesday morning for a day-long visit, where a "full reset" of ties and "economic, domestic and global security" will be at the top of the agenda, the British Foreign Office (FCDO) announced.

Mr. Lammy, who is coming to Delhi on his way to Laos for ASEAN meetings, will hold bilateral talks with External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar.

He is expected to call on Prime Minister Narendra Modi and will hold meetings with National Security Adviser Ajit Doval and Commerce Minister Piyush

Goyal as well before leaving for Vientiane on Thursday morning. Mr. Lammy is also expected to discuss plans for the new U.K. PM Keir Starmer and Mr. Modi to exchange visits.

"I am travelling to India in my first month as Foreign Secretary because resetting our relationship with the Global South is a key part of how this government will reconnect Britain for our security and prosperity at home," Mr. Lammy said in a statement ahead of his departure, calling India the "emerging superpower of the 21st century", one of the fastest growing economies, with the world's largest population.

With his visit, Mr. Lammy will be fulfilling a promise made at an Indian diaspora event shortly before the U.K. election on Ju-



David Lammy will arrive in Delhi for a day-long visit. REUTERS

ly 4 that he would visit India "within the month" if the Labour government was elected. He is expected to put reviving India-U.K. Free Trade Agreement (FTA) talks for an early conclusion at the top of his agenda and will also discuss the next steps in the Strategic Partnership. While most of the FTA ne-

gotiations, which began in 2022, were completed with the previous Rishi Sunak government, they were put on hold earlier this year with both countries heading to general elections. Officials said that a few issues, including the question of business mobility, tariffs and market access for certain goods still remain unresolved.

Shared interests

"Our Free Trade Agreement negotiations is the floor not the ceiling of our ambitions to unlock our shared potential and deliver growth, from Bengaluru to Birmingham. We have shared interests on the green transition, new technologies, economic security and global security," Mr. Lammy said.

According to the FCDO statement, Mr. Lammy's

agenda in India includes a visit to a high-tech facility, meetings with Indian business leaders, and discussions on cooperating on clean energy initiatives, as well as assisting climate resilience projects for small island states in the Global South.

Apart from these bilateral issues, India is expected to discuss its concerns about anti-Indian, pro-Khalistan groups operating in the U.K., which have been raised several times in the past. Officials are expected to bring up the long-pending extradition cases against businessmen Vijay Malloya and Lalit Modi, who are wanted in India.

Mr. Lammy may also raise the continued imprisonment of two British nationals in high-profile and controversial cases: Jagtar

Singh Johal, arrested in 2017 for his alleged role in targeted killings by pro-Khalistan groups in Punjab, and Christian Michel, who India extradited from the UAE in 2017, wanted in India as the alleged middleman in the Agusta Westland corruption case.

In both cases, the U.K. government, the UN and U.S.-based human rights agencies have questioned their continued imprisonment without trial, as well as allegations of torture and arbitrary detention in India.

Mr. Sunak had raised the Michel case with Mr. Modi on the sidelines of the G-20 summit last year. In the case of Mr. Johal, Mr. Starmer, then in Opposition, had himself written to the U.K. government demanding that the U.K. push for Mr. Johal.

Jaishankar to attend ASEAN and Quad meetings this week

Suhasini Haidar
NEW DELHI

Amid the ongoing budget session, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar will be busy with a flurry of bilateral and multilateral meetings this week, including some with his counterparts from U.S., U.K., Japan, Australia, China and Russia. On Thursday, Mr. Jaishankar will travel to Vientiane on Thursday as Laos hosts the annual outreach meetings of the 10-nation Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) from July 25 to 27, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) announced.

In Vientiane, the External Affairs Minister will at-

tend ASEAN-India meet, as well as the East Asia Summit (EAS), which will include Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi and Russian counterpart Sergey Lavrov. He will also attend ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), with more than 25 countries, including Bangladesh, Pakistan and Sri Lanka, and hold bilateral meetings with his counterparts on the sidelines.

On Sunday, Mr. Jaishankar will fly to Tokyo for the Quad Foreign Ministers' meeting (July 28-30) along with U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Australian Foreign Minister Penny Wong, to be hosted by Japanese Foreign Minister Yoko Kamikawa.

BEIJING
Taiwan Strait is not a 'political showground', China tells Japan



China warned Japan that the Taiwan Strait is not a "political showground", and that Japan should be cautious in its words and deeds when it comes to the Taiwan issue. Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi gave the warning during a meeting with visiting MP Hiroshi Moriyama of Japan's Liberal Democratic Party. REUTERS

TULKAREM
Woman and daughter among five killed in Israeli raid in West Bank



An Israeli raid in the occupied West Bank on Tuesday killed five, including a woman and her daughter, while the Israeli military said it "eliminated" a Hamas commander. During the operation in Tulkarem camp, Israeli drones struck and killed the head of Hamas military wing in Tulkarem, Ashraf Nafea, the military said. AFP

ADDIS ABABA
Search for survivors on after 229 people killed in Ethiopia landslide



Local residents on Tuesday searched desperately for survivors after a landslide in a remote area of southern Ethiopia killed at least 229 people, the deadliest such disaster recorded in the Horn of Africa nation. So far, 148 men and 81 women are confirmed to have lost their lives after the disaster struck in the Gofa Zone on Monday. AFP

WASHINGTON
U.S. Secret Service director resigns after Trump assassination attempt



U.S. Secret Service Director Kimberly Cheatle resigned on Tuesday, a day after acknowledging that the agency failed to prevent an assassination attempt against Donald Trump. She was facing calls to step down after a gunman wounded the former Republican President at a July 13 campaign rally in Pennsylvania. AFP

Hamas and Fatah sign declaration in Beijing on ending rift amid Gaza war

14 Palestinian factions agree in the declaration to 'end division and strengthen' national unity; the groups also expressed commitment to the creation of a Palestinian state on lands Israel captured in the 1967 war, according to a joint statement

Associated Press
RAMALLAH

Palestinian factions Hamas and Fatah signed a declaration in Beijing on ending a years-long rift, the groups said on Tuesday, taking a step toward resolving a deep divide which has lingered for years despite repeated attempts at unifying the sides.

The two heavyweights of Palestinian politics signed the Beijing Declaration on "ending division and strengthening Palestinian unity," according to Chinese state broadcaster CCTV, pledging to form a unity government for the Palestinian territories.

The declaration comes at a sensitive time, as the war in Gaza rages on into its 10th month and as Israel



Common ground: Wang Yi, centre, with Fatah's Mahmoud al-Aloul, left, and Hamas's Mussa Abu Marzuk in Beijing on Tuesday. AP

and Hamas are weighing an internationally backed cease-fire proposal that would wind down the war and free dozens of Israeli hostages held by Hamas.

Gaza's post-war future remains in doubt. Israel vehemently opposes any Hamas role in governing

Gaza after the war. It has also rejected calls from the U.S. for the Fatah-dominated Palestinian Authority to run Gaza after the fighting ends.

Israel's Foreign Minister Israel Katz swiftly rejected the agreement on Tuesday, stating that no joint govern-

nance between Hamas and Fatah in Gaza will take place "because Hamas's rule will be crushed".

The two rival Palestinian groups, along with 12 other political factions, met with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi, concluding talks that started on Sunday, according to a post on social media platform Weibo from Chinese TV network CGTN.

China's growing role
The agreement also underscores China's growing role in West Asian diplomacy, with success in the restoration of relations between Saudi Arabia and Iran.

A joint statement issued after the most recent talks in Beijing gave no details on how or when the government would be formed, saying only that it

would be done "by agreement among the factions". According to the joint statement, the two groups are committed to the creation of a Palestinian state on lands Israel captured in the 1967 war with its Arab neighbours.

The agreement signed by the Palestinian factions promised to follow up on previous reconciliation agreements signed in both 2011 and 2022.

"The understanding in China is based on widening the scope of the membership on the PLO (Palestine Liberation Organization) to include other factions who have not joined it" including Hamas, said Jamal Nazzal, a Fatah spokesperson. "It's a long way ahead, and most of it will be implemented after a possible cease-fire," he added.

Harris wins enough support to clinch party nomination

Agence France-Presse
WASHINGTON

U.S. Vice-President Kamala Harris appeared poised to clinch her party's presidential nomination after receiving support from enough Democratic delegates on Monday, as she launched a blistering campaign against Donald Trump.

The formal nomination process for a U.S. presidential candidate occurs when delegates from across the U.S. gather to officially anoint a nominee chosen by voters during the primaries.

But when President Joe Biden dropped out of the race on Sunday, the fate of those delegates, who had been slated to vote for him, came into question.

With the support of a slew of Democratic heavyweights, including Mr. Biden himself, and massive voter donations, Ms. Harris closed in as the Democrat-



Well begun: Kamala Harris has received the support of some of the Democratic heavyweights as well as massive voters donations. AP

ic party's heir apparent, and delegates began to pledge their support.

"Tonight, I am proud to have secured the broad support needed to become our party's nominee," Ms. Harris wrote in a statement, after she had sailed past the number of delegates needed - 1,976 out of nearly 4,000 - to secure the Democratic presidential nomination during voting in the coming weeks. The news came after

Ms. Harris, in her first speech to campaign workers since Mr. Biden's announcement, lashed out at Republican nominee Mr. Trump on Monday at campaign headquarters in Wilmington, Delaware.

She also pledged to focus on the politically explosive issue of abortion, after Mr. Trump praised the Supreme Court's 2022 decision to overturn the long-held federal right to the procedure.

More than 2,500 held in Bangladesh over job quota protests

Agence France-Presse
DHAKA

The number of arrests in days of violence in Bangladesh passed the 2,500 mark on Tuesday, after protests over employment quotas sparked widespread unrest.

At least 174 people have died, including several police officers.

What began as demonstrations against politicised admission quotas for sought-after government jobs snowballed last week into some of the worst unrest of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's tenure.

A curfew was imposed and soldiers deployed

At least 174 have died, including police officers, in the unrest over quotas in government jobs

across the country. A nationwide Internet blackout drastically restricted the flow of information.

The student group leading the demonstrations suspended its protests on Monday for 48 hours, with its leader saying they had not wanted reform "at the expense of so much blood". The halt was extended by another 48 hours on Tuesday evening, taking it to Friday.

Storm is coming



Slippery ground: Motorists ride through a flooded street in Manila on Tuesday amid heavy rains brought about by Typhoon Gaemi. Taiwan, which is set to face the wrath of the storm, cancelled some drills in its annual war games as the typhoon barrelled towards the island. AFP

Sri Lanka apologises for 'cremation only' policy during COVID

Meera Srinivasan
COLOMBO

Sri Lanka on Tuesday apologised for enforcing a "cremations only" policy during the COVID-19 pandemic, going against the religious sentiments of Muslims, as well as expert views that burials were safe.

Issuing a statement on Tuesday, the government said the Cabinet approved a joint proposal from a group of Ministers "to plead an apology on behalf of the government", from all communities affected by the compulsory cremation policy during the pandemic, when President Gotabaya Rajapaksa was in office. The government cited two studies it commissioned later that showed burying the bodies of COVID-19 victims presented no risk of the virus spreading through the water table - the claim that authorities based their policy decision on.

The Gotabaya Rajapaksa administration's policy, which disregarded prevalent opinion of scientists

and global bodies - including the World Health Organization - that victims could be buried or cremated, caused much agony especially to Sri Lanka's Muslim community. They were prohibited from burying their relatives according to their religious beliefs.

Persistent campaign

According to the official statement, a total of 276 Muslims who succumbed to the virus were cremated at that time, despite a persistent campaign from the Muslim community, which makes up about 10% of the country's 22-million population, and rights defenders. Some went to the Supreme Court in 2020, but the top court dismissed the petitions challenging the government's decision that was widely seen as unscientific and discriminatory. The policy, which came into effect in April 2020, was later reversed in February 2021, reportedly after an appeal made by then Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan who visited the island nation earlier that month.



Rushed proceedings: A total of 276 Muslims were cremated during the time of COVID-19 sparking an outcry from the community. AP

Lucie Castets is Left-wing's PM candidate in France

Agence France-Presse
PARIS

Left-wing French parties said on Tuesday they had chosen a little-known economist as prospective Prime Minister, after butting heads for weeks over a name since winning snap elections.

The New Popular Front (NFP) pick Lucie Castets is an economist and senior civil servant with a background in "fighting tax evasion and financial crime" as well as campaigning for public services, the alliance said in a statement.

Blinken, Wang Yi to meet at ASEAN that will discuss Myanmar, South China Sea

Agence France-Presse
VIENTIANE

Southeast Asian Foreign Ministers gather in Laos this week for talks on the disputed South China Sea and the conflict in Myanmar, with top diplomats from China and the United States slated to meet on the sidelines.

The three-day meeting of the 10-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) starts in the capital Vientiane on Thursday.

Antony Blinken will meet Chinese counterpart Wang Yi on the sidelines of the event at which he will



Flash point: The ASEAN grouping, of which Myanmar is a member, has led efforts to resolve the crisis but has made little progress. AP

"discuss the importance of adherence to international law in the South China Sea", according to the U.S. State Department. Also on the agenda in Vientiane is the civil war in Myanmar, sparked by a military coup in 2021. ASEAN, of which Myanmar is a member, has led diplomatic efforts to resolve the crisis but has made little progress.

July 21 hottest day recorded globally, says EU monitor

Agence France-Presse
PARIS

July 21 was the hottest day ever registered globally, according to data published on Tuesday by the EU's climate monitor.

The Copernicus Climate Change Service (C3S) said the global average surface air temperature of 17.09° C on Sunday was the warmest in their record books, which go back to 1940.

The new daily high was 0.01° C above the previous record temperature of 17.08 registered on July 6, 2023.

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Agence France-Presse
PARIS

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FANBOY MOMENT

Shuttler Satwiksairaj meets tennis legend Nadal in Paris



INSTAGRAM/SATWIK_RANKIREDDY

Indian shuttler R. Satwiksairaj had a fanboy moment ahead of the Paris Olympics as he met with legendary Spanish tennis player Rafael Nadal at the Olympics Village. On Monday, Satwiksairaj shared a picture with Nadal on his Instagram story, with him being ecstatic about posing "with the best".

THE DREAM

Hope our athletes give Ukrainians moments of joy, says Dobrynska



FILE PHOTO

Ukraine's 2008 heptathlon Olympic champion Nataliya Dobrynska said the Paris Games can serve as a platform to raise awareness about the war in her country. "Our athletes train and dream of seeing our flag fly high at the Olympics, to give the people of Ukraine moments of joy and distraction from the war," she said.

HOOPSTERS' DELIGHT

Sabally sisters thrilled to represent Germany in the Olympics



GETTY IMAGES

Satou and Nyara Sabally plan on enjoying Germany's first Olympics in women's basketball. "It means everything, I love to share the court with her," said Satou. The sisters helped Germany reach the Olympics by rallying to beat Brazil in a qualifying event. "That was a lot of fun. It's special and comes natural on the court," Nyara said.

GUNNING FOR GLORY

French judo star Riner hopes for another Olympic record



FILE PHOTO

Three-time Olympic judo champion Teddy Riner has his sights set on two more gold medals in Paris as he attempts to become France's most successful summer Olympian of all time. The 35-year-old Riner, twice a gold medallist in the heavyweight category and a winner of the mixed team event, is also a record 11-time world champion.

Indian pugilists capable of landing medal-winning punches

World champion Nikhat, who has been consistent and won honours in international events for over a year, will carry that confidence and form into the ring on Olympic debut; Lovlina has performed better after switching to 75kg two years ago



Y.B. Sarangi

The presence of two World champions, including an Olympic medallist, and two Worlds medallists in the six-member Indian squad brightens up the country's prospects in the Paris 2024 boxing ring.

After the dismal performance of the male boxers in the initial qualifying phase and the loss of the women's 57kg quota place due to Parveen Hooda's missed dope tests, the boxing scene looked better as Amit Panghal (51kg) and Nishant Dev (71kg) notched up two quota places and Jaismine Lamboria reclaimed the 57kg slot.

Olympic debut

World champion Nikhat Zareen (50kg) is a key figure to India's medal aspirations. She has been consistent, winning medals in international events for more than a year and will carry that confidence and form into the ring on her Olympic debut.

Nikhat will have to bank



Super Six: Preeti, Jaismine, Lovlina, Nikhat, Amit, and Nishant have the talent and skill to finish on the podium. INSTAGRAM/BFL_OFFICIAL

on her experience as her weight class consists of several strong boxers including Turkey's Tokyo Olympic silver medallist Busenaz Cakiroglu, China's Asian Games champion Wu Yu, Thailand's two-time Worlds medallist Chuthamat Raksat, and Colombia's Olympic medallist Ingrid Valencia.

Another World champion Lovlina Borgohain, the 69kg bronze medallist in Tokyo, has performed better after switching to 75kg two years back. She must overcome her recent fitness issues and attain peak form in order to secure a second medal.

France's Worlds bronze

medallist Davina Michel, Ireland's European Games champion Aoife O'Rourke, two-time Olympic medallist and Asian Games champion China's Li Qian and Commonwealth Games champion Canada's Tammara Thibeault are some formidable boxers in 75kg.

Former Worlds silver medallist Panghal, who chose to train in India unlike his teammates, will be keen to erase his disappointing memories of Tokyo. His category will have elite boxers, including three-time Worlds medallist Billal Bennama of France, Turkey's European champion Samet Gu-

mus, Thailand's Asian Games silver medallist Thitisan Panmod, Uzbekistan's World champion and former Olympic champion Hasanboy Dusmatov and Kazakhstan's World and Olympic medallist Saken Bibossinov.

Nishant, who impressed by beating Cuban boxer Jorge Cuellar in the World Championships and securing a bronze, is gifted with talent and intent.

The debutant must give his best in a field containing elite boxers such as Serbia's European Games silver medallist Vahid Abasov, Japan's Asian Games champion Sewon Okazawa, Uzbekistan's World

welterweight champion Asadkhujayev, Kazakhstan's Asian Games bronze medallist Aslanbek Shymbergenov and Ireland's Olympic medallist Aidan Walsh.

Asian Games bronze medallist Preeti Pawar (54kg), who was hospitalised with health issues at the camp in Germany, and Commonwealth Games bronze medallist Jaismine will try to make their mark on debut.

The boxing squad: Men: Amit Panghal (51kg), Nishant Dev (71kg).

Women: Nikhat Zareen (50kg), Preeti Pawar (54kg), Jaismine Lamboria (57kg), Lovlina Borgohain (75kg).

Anshu, Antim and Sehrawat have their task cut out

WRESTLING

Y.B. Sarangi

For the first time, women wrestlers have outnumbered men in the Indian squad bound for the Olympics in Paris.

Five women - two-time World championships bronze medallist Vinesh Phogat (50kg), Worlds and Asian Games bronze medallist Antim Panghal (53kg), former Worlds silver medallist Anshu Malik (57kg), Asian silver medallist Nisha Dahiya (68kg) and World under-23 champion Reetika Hooda (76kg) - form the bulk of the six-member squad, while former Asian champion Aman Sehrawat (57kg) is the lone male freestyle wrestler to secure a quota place.

Vinesh, a prominent face in the wrestlers' protest, has dropped down from 53kg to 50kg for her third Olympics. A gritty competitor, Vinesh will face a dual challenge. The 29-year-old needs to cut at least seven to eight kg to fit into the lower weight and overcome several world-class opponents.

Japan's four-time World champion and Olympic champion Yui Susaki, China's Worlds bronze medallist Feng Jiqi, Mongolia's triple Worlds bronze medallist Dolgorjavyn Otgonjargal, USA's Tokyo bronze medallist Sarah Hildebrandt, North Korea's Asian Games silver medallist Kim Son-hyang, Azerbaijan's four-time Olympic medallist Mariya Stadnik are part of the star-studded



High expectations: Antim would be keen to make her maiden Olympics a memorable one. FILE PHOTO

line-up.

Double World under-20 champion Antim is seeded fourth and has got a good draw, in which she would avoid two strong opponents - Japan's two-time World champion and Asian Games champion Akari Fujinami and Sweden's two-time European champion.

In a short career, Antim has medalled in some big events and will be keen to make her Olympic debut successful. The top-half of 53kg draw may pit Antim against Ecuador's Pan-American gold medallist and top-seeded Lucia Yeppez, Greece's three-time Worlds medallist Maria Prevolarakis and USA's 2022 World champion Dominique Parrish.

Anshu will have to recover from her recent shoulder injury to make a mark in her second Olympics. Her category will be packed with proven performers, including Japan's three-time World cham-

pion and Asian Games champion Tsugumi Sakurai, Nigeria's four-time World medallist Odunayo Adekunle and USA's double Olympic medallist and multiple Worlds medallist Helen Maroulis.

Debutants Nisha and Reetika will try to give their best in competitive fields. Sehrawat, seeded sixth, may face tough challenge from Japan's 2016 Olympic silver medallist and former World champion Rei Higurashi, Armenia's three-time Worlds bronze medallist Arsen Harutyunyan and China's Wanhao Zou, who are placed in bottom half of the 57kg draw.

India would like to match its tally of two wrestling medals, won by Ravi Dahiya and Bajrang Punia three years ago, in Tokyo.

The wrestling squad:

Men: Aman Sehrawat (57kg), Cheema (10m air pistol), Anish Bhanwal, Vijayveer Sidhu (25m rapid fire pistol), Prithviraj Tondaiman (trap), Anantjeet Singh Naruka (sneet and sneet mixed team).

Women: Elavenil Valarivan, Ramita Jindal (10m air rifle), Sift Kaur Samra, Anjum Moudgil (50m rifle 3-position), Rhythm Sangwan (10m air pistol), Manu Bhaker (10m air pistol and 25m pistol), Esha Singh (25m pistol), Rajeshwari Kumari, Shreyasi Singh (trap), Maheshwari Chauhan (sneet and sneet mixed team), Raiza Dhillon (sneet).

IOA ropes in BPCL as principal sponsor

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

The Indian Olympic Association (IOA) on Tuesday named Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL) as its official principal sponsor for four years, starting with the Paris Olympics till the 2028 Los Angeles Games.

The collaboration between BPCL, a Maharatna company, and IOA will also encompass the Commonwealth Games, Asian Games, Summer Youth Olympics, Winter Olympics, and Winter Youth Olympics.

As part of this collaboration, BPCL will launch series of campaigns designed to support the Indian contingent heading to Paris.

"We thank BPCL for partnering with the IOA, as a principal partner for a four-year journey starting from Paris Olympics 2024 and for supporting and believing in the potential of Indian athletes," said IOA

Will the 'nucleus of Indian sports' live up to its title?

SHOOTING

Kamesh Srinivasan

The health of Indian sports will largely depend on the contribution of Olympic medals by the shooters in the Paris Games.

It may sound ironical that a sport that has brought nought from the last two Games in Rio and Tokyo, finds itself as the nucleus of Indian sports.

There will be 21 shooters, the best from any country including China, competing for 27 medals. Can quality come from quantity? Can there be another gold medal from shooting, the way Abhinav Bindra won by asserting his mastery in air rifle in the Beijing Games in 2008.

Bindra was building on the strong foundation laid by Rajyavardhan Rathore with the silver medal in double trap in the Athens Games in 2004.

Double trap does not figure any more in the Olympic program, but Vijay Ku-



Eyeing a medal: India will look to begin well with Sandeep, Ramita, Arjun and Elavenil in the air rifle event. A.M. FARUQUI

mar and Gagan Narang had sustained the legacy by winning the silver in rapid fire pistol and bronze in air rifle in the London Games in 2012.

Indian shooting will look to air rifle shooters Sandeep Singh, Arjun Babuta, Elavenil Valarivan and Ramita Jindal to deliver the first medal, as the schedule starts with mixed air rifle on July 27.

The air pistol qualification will also be on the opening day, but this time all finals are scheduled on the day after qualification.

It means a strong qualification will not drain shooters and stop them from being at their best in the finals that start with their scores on zero.

The fact that some of the best shooters have not been able to confirm their

place in the Indian team, despite having won the Olympic quota against stiff competition, should provide a hint about the depth of Indian shooting.

That was proven with rich haul at the last Asian Games in Hangzhou. Whether that can be asserted yet again on the Olympic stage, when the whole world is at its sharpest, remains to be seen.

India will be competing in every event in pistol, rifle and shotgun. It means there is hope right through till August 5. Hopefully, young guns Anish Bhanwal and Vijayveer Sidhu will be able to provide a fitting climax in rapid fire pistol for Indian shooting in Paris. Like Rathore did by winning an Olympic medal on debut, Sandeep Singh may do it in air rifle, as he

replaced the world champion Rudranksh Patil in the team. If you have lived on the Siachen glacier, the way the army jawan has done for six months, competing in the Olympics should be a walk in the park.

Indian shooting has the potential to take Indian sport to the next level in the Olympics in Paris. Let us just sit back and enjoy the firing!

The shooting squad: Men: Sandeep Singh, Arjun Babuta (10m air rifle), Aishwary Tomar, Swapnil Kusale (50m rifle 3-position), Sarabjot Singh, Arjun Cheema (10m air pistol), Anish Bhanwal, Vijayveer Sidhu (25m rapid fire pistol), Prithviraj Tondaiman (trap), Anantjeet Singh Naruka (sneet and sneet mixed team).

IN BRIEF



Asalanka named SL captain for T20Is against India

Charith Asalanka was on Tuesday named captain of the Sri Lankan T20 team for the three-match series against India, starting on July 27, replacing spin all-rounder Wanindu Hasaranga, who stepped down after the team's early exit from last month's T20 World Cup.

The squad: Charith Asalanka (Capt.), Pathum Nissanka, Kusal Janith Perera (wk), Avishka Fernando, Kusal Mendis (wk), Dinesh Chandimal, Kamindu Mendis, Dasun Shanaka, Wanindu Hasaranga, Dunith Wellalage, Maheesh Theekshana, Chamindu Wickramasinghe, Matheesha Pathirana, Nuwan Thushara, Dushmantha Chameera and Binura Fernando.

Indian boys beat South Africa, girls lose to England

India boys beat South Africa 2-0 while the girls lost to England by an identical margin in the 5-8th positions matches of the World junior squash championships team competition in Houston on Monday. The boys will meet England for fifth position while the girls will take on Hong Kong for the seventh in the final round of matches.

The results (5-8th positions): Boys: India bt South Africa 2-0 (Shaurya Bawa bt Connor Earl 12-10, 7-11, 11-6, 11-7; Ayaan Vaziralli bt Judah Phillips 11-4, 11-4, 11-8). **Girls:** India lost to England 0-2 (Shameena Riaz lost to Amelie Haworth 8-11, 4-11, 10-12; Unnati Tripathi lost to Emily Coulcher-Porter 8-11, 12-14, 4-11).



Former PGA Tour winner Carnevale passes away

Mark Carnevale, a former PGA Tour winner who had been calling tournaments for Sirius XM Radio, passed away on Monday, a week after working in his last event, the PGA Tour said. He was 64. The Tour did not disclose a cause, only saying that he died suddenly. Carnevale won the 1992 Chattanooga Classic and was voted PGA Tour rookie of the year. He later won on what is now the Korn Ferry Tour.

India defender Sanatomba Yanglemb signs for FC Goa

FC Goa on Tuesday announced the signing of defender Sanatomba Singh Yanglemb ahead of the upcoming Indian Super League (ISL) season. Yanglemb became the Gaurs' seventh signing before the 2024-25 season gets underway, with others being goalkeeper Lara Sharma, defenders Sangwan and Muhammad Hammad, midfielders Iker Guarrotxena and Dejan Drazic and forward Alan Saji. The 18-year-old Yanglemb, who is a Reliance Foundation Young Champs Academy graduate, has penned a multi-year contract with the club.



Aguirre to coach Mexico; Marquez to be his assistant

Javier Aguirre will coach Mexico for the third time. Rafael Marquez, who played in five World Cups for Mexico and was the coach of Barcelona's reserve team, will be groomed by Aguirre to become the national coach, the Mexican Football Association confirmed on Monday. Marquez will be Aguirre's assistant for two years under a plan for him to take over as head coach for the 2030 World Cup.

LIVE TELECAST

Women's Asia Cup: Star Sports 3 & Hotstar, 2 & 7 p.m.
TNPL: Star Sports 1 (SD & HD) & FanCode, 7.15 p.m.
Olympics 2024: Football (Men), Sports 18-1 (SD & HD) & Jio-Cinema, 11 p.m.

India storms into semifinals after Shafali sets up a facile victory

The unbeaten Women in Blue finish at the top of Group A with six points after crushing Nepal by 82 runs; Deepti shines with a three-for

ASIA CUP

ANI
DAMBULLA

India punched its ticket into the semifinals following a thumping 82-run victory over Nepal in the final game of the group stage of the ongoing Women's Asia Cup on Tuesday at Rangiri Dambulla International Stadium.

The Women in Blue finished at the top of Group A, unbeaten with six points. Following India's win, Pakistan also qualified for the final-four by finishing in the second spot.

Even in the absence of skipper Harmanpreet Kaur and Pooja Vastrakar, India dominated Nepal in all facets of the game.

While defending a competitive total of 178, Indian bowlers outclassed Nepal batters following a combined effort. Some batters got a start in the chase, but failed to convert it into substantial knocks.

Arundhati Reddy, with



Stroke-filled: Shafali's 81-run knock was studded with 12 fours and a six. X@BCCI

her pace, inflicted early blows, and the spin duo of Deepti Sharma and Radha Yadav made short work of the middle order.

Bindu Rawal, with her unbeaten knock of 17, ensured that Nepal didn't get bowled out as the side end-

ed its innings at 96 for nine.

Earlier, the new-looking opening duo of Shafali Verma and Dayalan Hemalatha provided India with a fiery start after they decided to bat.

Shafali resorted to her destructive approach while

her partner continued to play deliveries with a watchful eye. Shafali raced to her fifty in just 26 deliveries, while Hemalatha continued to find the correct timing.

Eventually, Sita Rana Magar brought an end to

SCOREBOARD

INDIA
Shafali Verma st. Kajal b Sita 81 (48b, 12x4, 1x6), D. Hemalatha c Rubina b Sita 47 (42b, 5x4, 1x6), S. Sajana lbw b Kabita Joshi 10 (12b, 1x4), Jemimah Rodrigues (not out) 28 (15b, 5x4), Richa Ghosh (not out) 6 (3b, 1x4); Extras (w-6); Total (for three wkts. in 20 overs): 178.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-122 (Hemalatha, 13.6 overs), 2-133 (Shafali, 15.3), 3-156 (Sajana, 18.3).

NEPAL BOWLING
Kabita Kunwar 2-0-20-0, Sabnam 4-0-41-0, Puja 1-0-13-0, Kabita Joshi 4-0-36-1, Rubina 1-0-14-0, Indu 4-0-29-0, Sita 4-0-25-2.

NEPAL
Samjhana Khadka b Arundhati 7 (7b, 1x4), Sita Rana Magar b Arundhati 18 (22b, 3x4), Kabita Kunwar c Smriti b Renuka 6 (11b, 1x4), Indu Barma c Shafali b

Radha 14 (18b, 2x4), Rubina Chhetry b Deepti 15 (16b, 2x4, 1x6), Puja Mahato run out 2 (12b), Kabita Joshi lbw b Deepti 0 (2b), Bindu Rawal (not out) 17 (19b, 2x4), Dolly Bhatta c Richa b Radha 5 (4b, 1x4), Kajal Shrestha c & b Deepti 3 (7b), Sabnam Rai (not out) 1 (2b); Extras (lb-5, w-3); Total (for nine wkts. in 20 overs): 96.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-8 (Samjhana, 1.4), 2-21 (Kabita Kunwar, 4.4), 3-43 (Indu, 9.2), 4-52 (Sita, 10.2), 5-64 (Rubina, 13.4), 6-64 (Kabita Joshi, 13.6), 7-70 (Puja, 14.6), 8-82 (Dolly, 16.2), 9-93 (Kajal, 19.2).

INDIA BOWLING
Renuka 4-1-15-1, Arundhati 4-0-28-2, Tanuja 4-1-12-0, Deepti 4-0-13-3, Radha 3-0-12-2, Sajana 1-0-11-0.
Toss: India; **PoM:** Shafali. India won by 82 runs.

Men in Blue begin training in earnest



Valuable tips: Gambhir having a word with Samson during a training session on Tuesday. X@BCCI

INDIA IN LANKA

Press Trust of India
PALLEKELE

India's new head coach Gautam Gambhir on Tuesday took charge of the team as the visitors hit the ground running in their first practice session ahead of the three-match T20I series against Sri Lanka.

Gambhir, who replaced the legendary Rahul Dravid at the helm, led the

team to the ground and oversaw the training session which included fielding drills and sessions.

The training session was mostly around running, catching and one-on-one interactions. The new T20I captain Suryakumar Yadav was also involved in an interaction with the players.

Gambhir was seen giving some batting tips to Sanju Samson and had a chat with all-rounder Shivam Dube.

Winning against India will be a shot in the arm for Sri Lanka: Pathirana

S. Dipak Ragav
CHENNAI

Sri Lanka pacer Mathisha Pathirana hopes that a good result in the upcoming three-match T20I and ODI series against India, starting later this month, would be a shot in the arm for the island nation.

"I think it will be a good challenge. India is coming with a new coach and some new players. Their combination will be slightly different. But it will be a good challenge for us because they are world champions," Pathirana told *The Hindu* on Tuesday.

"We have a very good side and a lot of talent. Unfortunately, we didn't do well in the T20 World Cup. But if we can win this series, it will be a confidence-booster for the next three years," he added.

The 22-year-old has risen quickly in the last two



Up for the challenge: Pathirana feels Sri Lanka has the potential to upstage the Indians. GETTY IMAGES

years, thanks to his exploits for Chennai Super Kings in the IPL since 2022. Pathirana said he was thankful for the golden opportunity that has accelerated his career.

CSK a gift from god
"After my under-19s, I was not in any squad in Sri Lanka. But since my debut for CSK, I got those chances

and got selected for Sri Lanka's main team. Playing for CSK is a gift from god for me. Until I played for CSK, not many knew me. Sharing the dressing room with Mahi bhai (M.S. Dhoni) is very special for youngsters like me, especially coming from Sri Lanka."

In a short span, Pathirana has become one of the



We can do something different and better than the last few years. We have a stable group and can give a good fight to do something special

best bowlers, and a captain's go-to man in the death overs. However, the Sri Lankan said he was not content with that tag alone.

"A lot of people say I am good at the death. But that is not enough for me. I want to be good with the new ball and in the middle overs too. If I can get swing and accuracy with the new ball, it will be good for me and the teams I play for," said Pathirana.

(Watch India's tour of Sri Lanka, starting on July 27, 7 p.m. onwards, live on Sony Sports Ten 1 & 5).

Khelo India once again gets lion's share in Union Budget for sports

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

Khelo India, the union government's flagship project to promote sports at the grassroots level, was once again the biggest beneficiary in the Union Budget for the Sports Ministry as it was assigned ₹900 crore from the overall allocation of ₹3,442.32 crore on Tuesday.

Khelo India's share is ₹20 crore more than the revised allocation of ₹880 crore during the previous financial year.

With the Olympic cycle set to come to an end in Paris in August and the Commonwealth Games and Asian Games still two years away, the budget for the Sports Ministry has seen only a marginal increase of ₹45.36 crore from the previous cycle. The budget for the previous cycle was ₹3,396.96 crore for the previous financial year.

The government has in-

vested heavily in Khelo India over the years as the programme continues to unearth talent from all parts of the country.

While Khelo India's actual allocation in 2022-23 stood at ₹596.39 crore, it was increased by more than ₹400 crore to ₹1,000 crore in the 2023-24 budget, before being revised to ₹880 crore.

The government has continued to add programmes ever since the inaugural Khelo India Youth Games (KIYG) were held in 2018.

The ministry added Khelo India University Games in 2020, before also launching the Khelo India Winter Games the same year and the Khelo India Para Games in 2023.

Hundreds of Khelo India State Centres of Excellence (KISCE) have been set up across the country, which aim to provide facilities for athletes with potential. Several Khelo India ath-

letes are currently in India's Paris Olympics contingent.

The government's assistance to National Sports Federations (NSFs) has also seen an increase of ₹15 crore - from ₹325 crore in 2023-24 to ₹340 crore in the latest budget.

The budget for Sports Authority of India, which apart from maintaining its stadia across the country also manages the Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS) to prepare athletes for global sporting extravaganzas, has also been enhanced from ₹795.77 crore to ₹822.60 crore, which is a jump of ₹26.83 crore.

The National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA) and the National Dope Testing Laboratory (NDTL) have received marginal increase in their budgets. While NADA's budget has gone up from ₹21.73 crore last year to ₹22.30 crore, NDTL has got ₹22 crore, up from ₹19.50 last year.

Murray confirms retirement after Paris Olympics as sun sets on golden age

Agence France-Presse
PARIS

Andy Murray confirmed on Tuesday that he will retire after the Paris Olympics, closing another chapter in tennis's golden age.

The 37-year-old, a two-time Olympic champion, is planning to play in the singles and doubles at his fifth Games.

"Arrived in Paris for my last-ever tennis tournament @Olympics," the three-time Grand Slam champion and former World No. 1 posted on social media.

"Competing for Great Britain has been by far the most memorable weeks of my career and I'm extremely proud to get to do it one final time."

The Scot has played with a metal hip since 2019 and suffered ankle damage earlier this year before undergoing surgery to remove a



Final tilt: Murray is planning to play singles and doubles. REUTERS

spinal cyst, which ruled him out of singles at Wimbledon.

Murray famously ended Britain's 77-year wait for a men's champion at Wimbledon when he triumphed in 2013, defeating career-long rival Novak Djokovic in the final.

He added a second title in 2016, taking his career majors total to three after breaking his duck at the 2012 US Open.

Murray won gold at the 2012 Olympics on an emotional day at the All England Club when he defeated Roger Federer just weeks after he had lost the Wimbledon final to the Swiss on the same Centre Court.

Four years later, he defeated Juan Martin del Potro to become the first player, male or female, to win two Olympic singles golds.

Schauffele or Scheffler— a spiced up battle of equals

Both competitors have had stellar performances to present their case and The FedEx Cup could be the clincher for the players' vote for PGA Tour player of the year

GOLF

Associated Press
TROON (UK)

Xander Schauffele is the British Open champion, and the PGA Tour must be thrilled. The FedEx Cup is as meaningful as ever, a three-tournament stretch in August that could go a long way towards deciding who gets the players' vote for PGA Tour player of the year.

Schauffele or Masters champion Scottie Scheffler? Schauffele is only the ninth player in the last 40 years to win two majors in the same year (Tiger Woods did it four times), having won a thriller at Valhalla to claim the PGA Championship in May.

Since the Jack Nicklaus Award began in 1990, only one of those players was not voted Player of the Year. That was Nick Faldo, and there was a reason — he wasn't a PGA Tour member, playing only seven tour-sanctioned events that year.

But, do two majors — Schauffele's only two wins this year — trump the astonishing season that Scheffler has produced? It's easy to look at Sunday at Royal Troon when Schauffele played what he called "the best round of my life."

Turning a 6-foot par putt into a three-putt dou-



Cutting edge: Schauffele could catch Scheffler with points quadrupled to pip the latter by the season ending Tour Championships. REUTERS

ble bogey on the ninth hole effectively knocked him from contention, and then topping a tee shot on 18 that was swallowed up by thick grass just 176 yards off the tee.

But, that would be to forget what Scheffler has done this year, not just last week.

He won the Masters

from ahead and The Players Championship from behind, returning from a neck injury that nearly caused him to withdraw on Friday and erasing a five-shot deficit on Sunday.

His other four victories were all at signature events, with the \$20 million purses and the stron-

gest fields — Bay Hill and Harbour Town, the Memorial and the Travelers.

The six wins are the most in a season since Tom Watson in 1980, and the most before the calendar turned to July since Arnold Palmer in 1962.

But, it's 2-1 in the Majors, and Schauffele has history on his side with

players historically leaning toward the majors.

There is also history on Scheffler's side. He was chosen last year over Jon Rahm, the Masters champion, with four wins to only two by Scheffler.

Statistical advantage

The difference was Scheffler being so statistically powerful that he won the Vardon Trophy for the lowest scoring average. It took him until July to have a result worse than 12th.

Schauffele was the only player to finish in the top 10 in all four majors. Scheffler had three top 10s in the four biggest events.

Scheffler is virtually assured of becoming the first player since Woods in 2009 to start the year at No. 1 in the world and stay there until the end of December.

Schauffele isn't getting enough credit for making the cut in 52 consecutive PGA Tour events. He is assured of getting to 55 through the end of the season, sixth on the all-time list (and just over one-third of the way to Woods' astounding record).

That's what makes the next month a potential deal-breaker for the players. Come the FedEx Cup play-offs. Scheffler will start the post-season at No. 1, but with points quadrupled, Schauffele could catch him by the season-ending Tour Championship.

de Bruyne won't be leaving Manchester City: Guardiola

Agence France-Presse
LONDON

Pep Guardiola insisted Kevin De Bruyne will not leave Manchester City this season after reports that the Belgian star could move to Saudi Arabia.

de Bruyne has just one year left on his current City contract and the midfielder revealed recently he has spoken with wife Michele about his future plans.

"For Michele, an exotic adventure is OK," de Bruyne said in a hint that he could end his successful spell at Premier League champion City.

Saudi Pro League club Al-Ittihad was believed to be interested in de Bruyne.

But English press reports on Tuesday said City manager Guardiola had rejected any thought of the 33-year-old being allowed to walk away this season.

Speaking ahead of City's friendly against Celtic in North Carolina, Guardiola told reporters: "Kevin isn't leaving."



Good run: de Bruyne has been with City since joining from Wolfsburg in 2015, winning 15 major trophies. GETTY IMAGES

de Bruyne returned after missing the first half of last season due to injury and helped City make history with a fourth successive Premier League title.

He has been with City since joining from Wolfsburg in 2015, winning 15 major trophies including six Premier League titles and one Champions League crown.

While Guardiola is adamant his influential playmaker will stay at the Etihad Stadium this term, it remains to be seen if he can persuade the Belgian to remain in Manchester longer than that.

"My eldest (child) is now eight years old and knows nothing but England. He also asks how long I will play at City," de Bruyne said in a recent interview.

Sumit Nagal in second round

TENNIS

Sports Bureau

Sumit Nagal fought his way past qualifier Luks Klein of Slovakia 6-4, 1-6, 7-6(3) in the first round of the €651,865 ATP tennis tournament on clay in Kitzbuhel, Austria.

Meanwhile, Rohan Bopanna and Sriram Balaji opted out of the ATP event in Umag, Croatia, this week, to prepare for the Olympics in Paris.

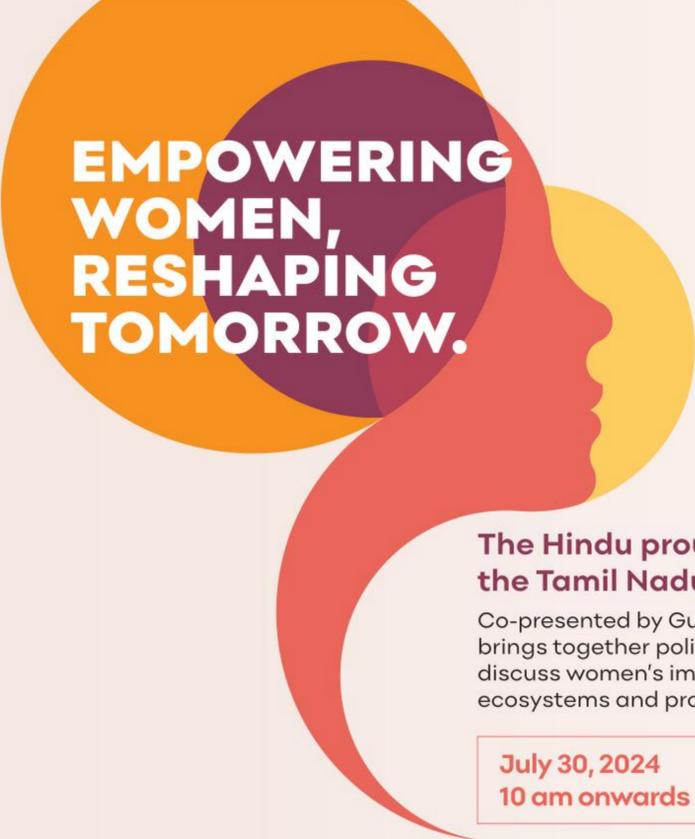
The results: €651,865 ATP, Kitzbuhel, Austria: First round: Sumit Nagal bt Lukas Klein (Svk) 6-4, 1-6, 7-6(3).

\$115,000 WTA, Warsaw: First round: Mai Hontama (Jpn) bt

Ankita Raina 7-5, 6-2.

\$25,000 ITF men, Astana: Doubles: Pre-quarterfinals: Amir Omarkhanov & Vitaliy Zatssepil (Kaz) bt Ivan Denisov & Karan Singh 6-3, 6-4; S.D. Prajwal Dev & Nitin Kumar Sinha bt Dominik Palan (Cze) & Lukas Pokorny (Svk) 6-4, 6-4.

\$25,000 ITF women, Segovia, Spain: First round: Melisa Ercan (Aus) bt Riya Bhatia 6-1, 6-4.



The Hindu proudly presents the Tamil Nadu Women's Summit

Co-presented by Guidance Tamil Nadu, the conference brings together policymakers and thought leaders to discuss women's impact on creating inclusive ecosystems and promoting economic success

July 30, 2024
10 am onwards
ITC Grand Chola, Chennai.
Participation by invitation only.



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KEYNOTE ADDRESS

Tamil Nadu - Champion in women empowerment



Dr T R B Rajaa
Hon'ble Minister for Industries, Investment Promotions and Commerce Government of Tamil Nadu

SESSION LINE-UP

SESSION I: 11:15 AM - 12:15 PM
Women in Manufacturing: Why Tamil Nadu is Ahead of the Curve

SESSION II: 12:15 PM - 1:15 PM
Fostering Gender Equality in STEM Research & Innovation

SESSION III: 1:15 PM - 1:30 PM
Driving Change: Role of Women in Transforming Tamil Nadu's Economy

SESSION IV: 2:30 PM - 3:30 PM
Women in IT: From Coding to Leading

SESSION V: 3:30 PM - 4:00 PM
WISE - Women in Skills and Entrepreneurship

SESSION VI: 4:30 PM - 5:30 PM
Driving Inclusion and Diversity Through Creative Economy

SESSION VII: 5:30 PM - 6:00 PM
Breaking Barriers: Beyond the Sky

Associate Partners



Sustainability Partner



Mobility Partner



Color Partner



Fragrance Partner



Industry Partner



Real Estate Industry Partner



India needs to do well in the first three matches in Paris: Kruis

The Dutchman believes that although Indian hockey, in the last eight years, has taken a very big step forward, the bigger need is to develop coaches at the grassroots level so the basics are taught right; the High Performance Director also stresses on the need for better infrastructure



SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

INTERVIEW

HERMAN KRUIS

K. Keerthivasan

As Hockey India's High Performance Director, Herman Kruis is on a mission to develop Indian coaches. He strongly believes that the future of young players who dream of representing the country depends on the local coaches who train the beginners.

The 68-year-old Dutch felt that it's the responsibility of the coaches to teach the basics right to the young players. "When I see the National u-21 Indian players hit the ball in a wrong manner, I don't blame them I blame the coaches," he said.

On the India men's team's chances at the Paris Olympics, the Dutch said there are 6-7 teams that are medal contenders, and it is imperative that India wins its first three matches and gets a head start before it thinks of winning a medal.

In this conversation with *The Hindu*, the Dutchman, who was in Chennai for a Coaches Clinic during the Tamil Nadu Schools League, spoke on a variety of issues including the need to develop Indian coaches, the need for water-based pitches, and the importance of having a good grassroots structure. Excerpts

How are the teams preparing for the Junior World Cup next year?

The teams are preparing in Bengaluru now. We have around 40 players in each group. We try to make good programs for the teams. We have a lot of plans for the boys and girls. In August, Australian teams will come to India to play a few matches. In May this year, the girls had played with Den Bosh club team in The Netherlands. We will play two matches each with Germany and Belgium and then play with a few club teams in The Netherlands.

When I compare this team with the previous one that played in the World Cup, I see we are closing the gap in technical and physical ways. In my opinion, we have a lot of talent in India. The talent is technically good but not as much with tactical. We are going step by step. Now the game has become physical and the stress is more on physical. Teams like Australia and the ones in Europe are more physical. We don't have to copy them. We need to

take the best from them and get the best out of us.

The Indian men's team at the Junior World Cup finished fourth while the women's team ninth. The Indian men's team also is expected to do well in Paris, after bagging bronze in the last edition of Olympics in Tokyo. Are you under any sort of pressure?

Why should I be under pressure? As the High Performance Director, I try to help everyone, am busy developing and supporting hockey. I expect our staff who are self-supporting, with assistance from me, to improve hockey at the grassroots. It is very easy to say that we have to win a medal in Paris Olympics. I don't understand when people say that Indian hockey has improved. What about the other teams? Do you have a good view about Germany and Belgium? Do you say that they are not as good as India? I watched the Pro League and I can tell you that it will be very close. I don't know why some say, 'we will win a medal'.

There are 6-7 very good teams which can bag a medal. The first three matches are important. If India does well, we put ourselves in a good position. Don't forget we have six very good teams. Especially Germany, who always come to the Olympics prepared. Belgium is an experienced team, and I consider it a developed team. I think it's important that we start well. For me, there are at least six medal candidates at Paris.

What is your assessment of the



I don't know why some say, 'we will win a medal'. There are 6-7 very good teams which can bag a medal.

Indian junior teams?

They are improving. We have to focus more on tactics. I think more about grassroots as that's the base. When an u-10 kid holds the grip in a wrong way, we have a huge problem as it will likely to continue till he comes to the Indian camp. It takes 10 years to become an international player. When I visit Academies across India, I see the need to improve Indian coaches. And I hope that we get a lot of good coaches, some who are also former Internationals who have to teach the basics to our young players. When that is done, we can get u-14, 16, 18 kids who are developed. It is a long-term process. We must do much work in development.

How do you look back on your tenure?

I am not satisfied. When I visit the Academies, I see a lot of enthusiasm across India. I also see the need to close the gap in certain areas. Sometimes I am shocked. We have to change this very quickly.

Like what?

It's bad (artificial) pitches across India. They are so old that it is not good to

play. Indian kids, in general, start learning on natural grass. It is also not healthy. It is so different from water-based pitches. India needs to have more water-based pitches.

You held a three-day Clinic in Chennai recently. How has it been?

The eager coaches are happy to learn. It is important that we at Hockey India inspire our coaches, who in turn inspires the players. When they are inspired, hockey gets a thumbs-up.

What is your blueprint for the future?

I see the players play and discuss it with coaches. I like positive coaching. It is important coaches develop every day. We have to work on the development of coaches. So far, it has been very fruitful. I have given my recommendations to Sekar Manoharan, Treasurer of Hockey India and president of Hockey Unit of Tamil Nadu, and it is not for public consumption.

You have travelled across India. What are your views on Indian coaches?

I already told the need to improve the coaching skills of Indian coaches. We have to do it in the Academies where we go. At schools, hockey is fantastic. When you start at the grassroots, you need a good coaching staff. The need is not just to teach hockey but coach the beginners in the right way. You can see quite a few India u-21 players in

Bengaluru at the camp who don't hit the ball in a correct technical manner. I know that it's not their fault but the fault of the coaches. We need coaches who are inspired and who have fire in their eyes.

C.R. Kumar, who was the coach of the previous Indian junior team when it finished fourth in the 2023 World Cup in Kuala Lumpur, has left. What about the junior women's team, which finished a disappointing ninth in the World Cup last year in Chile?

After the Paris Olympics, we will find a good quality coach for the junior men's team. For girls, at the moment it will be Tushar Khandekar.

You took charge in January 2024 and your tenure ends in September. How has your Indian experience been so far?

I am not new to India. My first coaching was with the Indian women's team in the year 2007. However, it was only for a month. It was the period when players of the calibre of Rani Rampal, Ritu Rani, Helen Mary and Joydeep Kaur was part of the Indian women's team. Actually, in 2005 I was in Chennai for the Champions Trophy as FIH coach. I was in India (New Delhi) for the 2010 World Cup again as a part of FIH coaches group. There is lot more work left.

Indian hockey has seen a lot of changes in the last decade or so. How do you see it?

Indian hockey, in the last eight years, has taken a very big step forward. It is improving now. Earlier, it was struggling. Now, we are able to take the next step.

The academies have to develop and there should be more focus on women's hockey. What we miss is good drag flickers, what we miss is good goalkeepers. We need to start early to spot them. We have our goalkeeper coaches' group, we have our drag flickers coaches group. They visit academies to spot players with potential. They pick and train them and after seven weeks they go back and restart.

We ask the head coach from the academy to be in the session to make video clips and listen to our experts and take it forward. This is the first step. In 1-2 years, we will have a good view of the quality of drag-flickers and goalkeepers.

Drug used to treat clots can protect against cobra venom damage

Researchers found tinzaparin, a drug commonly used to prevent blood clots, significantly reduced damage to human cells caused by spitting cobra venom; the team also found the drug reduced skin damage in mice injected with the venom; the scientists have filed for a patent and may start human clinical trials soon

Sayantan Datta

Irange-red in colour and native to Tanzania, the *Naja pallida* – the red-spitting cobra – is a formidable, 1.2-metre-long foe. When threatened, it raises its hood and hisses loudly. If this display doesn't deter its predator, it will use its most potent weapon, its venom. Muscles around the snake's venom glands squeeze, releasing jets of venom onto the eyes, nose, and mouth of the threat. As the victim's face sears in pain, the cobra takes the opportunity to lunge forward and bite, delivering a massive quantity of venom into the victim's body.

The venom attacks cells in the body and damages the nervous system. For most of the cobra's regular victims – toads, frogs, birds, and other snakes – the only fate is death. A lucky human might be spared, but with a permanent disability.

Bad deal on antivenoms

Encounters with venomous snakes kill about 1.4 lakh people every year, especially in the tropical regions of Africa and Asia. Despite this alarming number, the treatment for snakebites has remained archaic.

Based on the work of French scientists in the late 1800s, antivenom is made today by injecting domestic animals like horses and sheep with small amounts of snake venom. This kicks the animal's immune system into action, producing antibodies to neutralise the venom. Researchers extract these antibodies from the animal's blood and transport them in cold storage to hospitals, where they are injected into the bodies of snakebite victims.

Difficulties in production, storage, transportation, and administration aside, antivenoms are also expensive and can have severe side effects in humans; some of them could be fatal.

That may soon change. In a July 2024 study published in the journal *Science Translational Medicine*, a team of Australian, British, Canadian, and Costa Rican scientists reported that tinzaparin, a drug commonly used to prevent blood clots, significantly reduces damage to cells due to spitting cobra venom. The team also found the drug could reduce skin damage in mice injected with the venom.

According to a press release, the scientists have filed for a patent and may start human clinical trials soon.

According to Kartik Sunagar, an associate professor at the Centre for Ecological Sciences, Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bengaluru, who studies the evolution of snake venoms, "This



Dealing with snakes is a tricky business. Even more dangerous is the task of rearing poisonous reptiles and extracting their venom for medical research. Here, Romulus Whitaker holds a cobra while puncturing a rubber sheet stretched over a cup with its fangs. THE HINDU ARCHIVES

discovery could pave the way for a real-world solution for regions that suffer the highest burden of snakebite morbidity."

How venom kills cells

The venom of the red and the black-necked spitting cobras – the two species whose venom the researchers used in the study – is "poorly understood," R.N.V. Krishna Deepak, who studies snake venoms using computational methods at Azim Premji University, Bengaluru, said.

Our understanding of how these venoms kill human cells is worse, which contributes to the lack of advances in antivenom development.

To address this issue, the researchers first investigated how spitting cobra venom affects human cells. They grew a collection of human cells in the laboratory that had a single gene removed. (They used CRISPR-Cas9, a Nobel-winning genome-editing tool, to build this collection.) When this gene was knocked out, cells that used the genome couldn't manufacture a particular protein – a protein researchers suspected was involved in cells being damaged.

The researchers then treated the cells with the venom of either of the two snakes and selected those that survived. Given that this resistance to spitting cobra venom had been conferred by the absence of a gene, the authors concluded the said genes were involved in facilitating the venom's effects on normal human cells.

Further investigation revealed that



The venom attacks cells in the body and damages the nervous system. For most of the cobra's victims – toads, frogs, and other snakes – the only fate is death. A human might survive, but with permanent disability

many of these genes were involved in the synthesis of a sugar compound called heparan sulphate, which is known to regulate the formation of blood vessels and clots in the human body.

Blood thinner to antidote

The researchers hypothesised that if the venom's toxicity depended on the biological pathway that synthesised heparan sulphate, artificially stopping this pathway could ameliorate the venom's toxic effects.

One way of doing so is to introduce molecules that closely resemble heparan sulphate. As the body senses an excess of these molecules, it shuts down the pathways responsible for heparan sulphate synthesis. One such molecule is tinzaparin, a drug used to treat serious blood clots.

When the team introduced tinzaparin immediately after subjecting cells to the snake venom, the cells survived. Tinzaparin could protect these cells even when it was introduced an hour after the cells had been exposed to the venom. Further experiments revealed that tinzaparin worked by blocking the

interaction between the venom and its receptor in the cell by binding to venom molecules.

When the researchers injected mice with venom from either of the two cobras along with tinzaparin, they found that skin damage resulting from the venom was much less when the mice were provided with the drug versus when they were deprived of it.

'Hiding right under our noses'

Dr. Deepak said the study's use of the "highly efficient CRISPR approach" to a "mighty but neglected problem" could potentially renew the global scientific community's interest in understanding mechanisms underlying snake venom toxicity.

IISc venomologist Dr. Sunagar added that the study is "one of the few research undertakings where the molecular mechanism of how venom causes damage is taken into account to design a targeted therapy." The therapeutic agent itself that the study proposes – tinzaparin – is inexpensive, widely available, and has been "hiding right under our noses", Dr. Deepak said. He added that he is excited to see how different research groups follow up on the study's findings. In the meantime, he hoped the study would garner enough attention to make a case for increased funding that will allow researchers to employ "advanced methods like CRISPR-Cas9 to address snakebite envenoming."

(Sayantan Datta is a science journalist and a faculty member at Krea University. The author tweets at @queersprings.)

THE GIST

Venomous snakes kill about 1.4 lakh people every year, especially in Africa and Asia. Despite this, treatment for snakebites has remained archaic and is still based on the work of French scientists in the late 1800s

Researchers grew human cells that had a gene removed. These cells now couldn't manufacture a particular protein. The cells were treated with venom and those that survived were selected. The authors concluded the said gene facilitated the venom's effects

This gene is involved in the synthesis of heparan sulphate, which regulates blood vessels. Introducing molecules that resembled heparan sulphate led the body to shut down pathways responsible for heparan sulphate synthesis. One such molecule is tinzaparin

BIG SHOT



Palaeontologists from the Federal University of Santa Maria working on a dinosaur fossil discovered in Sao Joao do Polesine, Brazil. The image was released on July 18. Heavy rain that caused historic flooding in southern Brazil brought to the surface a "very well-preserved" dinosaur fossil about 230 million years old, scientists said. AFP

QUESTION CORNER

Inducing sleep with pills

Q: What chemical in tablets causes sedation and how does it work?
A: Barbiturates, derivatives of barbituric acid, are mainly used in tablets to cause sedation and hypnotic activity. The list also includes benzodiazepines and alcohol. They decrease the total REM time and proportion of sleep spent in REM sleep with enhanced amounts of NREM sleep.

REM, or 'rapid eye movement', sleep is characterised by loss of reflexes, intermittent jerky eyeball movements, brief body twitches, and irregular heart beats and blood pressure. Non-REM is a relatively deactivated phase divided into four stages, numbered 1-4.

By most physiological criteria related to the autonomic and central nervous systems, REM sleep is more like wakefulness than non-REM sleep, but drugs that cause arousal in wakefulness, such as amphetamines, suppress REM sleep.

Sedatives cause reversible depression of the activity of all excitable tissues, including the central nervous system. The exact mechanism of the action is not known. However, they are suspected to inhibit neurotransmission in the nervous system. Neurotransmission is responsible for the exchange of information between nerve cells.

In the brain, there are two types of pathways, one that activates and the other that inhibits its activities. The endogenous neurotransmitters of the inhibitory system include gamma amino



Sedatives cause reversible depression of the activity of all excitable tissues, including the central nervous system. GETTY IMAGES

butyric acid (GABA). Sedatives potentiate the action of GABA and thereby inhibit the major pathways of the brain that keep a person awake, thus resulting in sedation or sleep.

In the brain, there are two types of pathways: one that activates and the other that inhibits its activities. The endogenous neurotransmitters of the inhibitory system include gamma-aminobutyric acid (GABA). Sedatives potentiate the action of GABA and thereby inhibit the major pathways of the brain that keep a person awake, thus resulting in sedation or sleep.

Not all drugs are REM-deprivers. Some of the latest drugs reduce stage 4 of non-REM sleep. Most of the stimulants, including amphetamines, and depressants such as barbiturates and alcohol tend to reduce REM activity on an electroencephalogram. (B. Sri Krupa and S. Lalitha, Chennai)

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