

स्लीमगार्ड ५ साल
स्वच्छता बढ़ाओ, तंदुरुस्ती बढ़े

स्लीमगार्ड बड़ी तोड़फोड़ + दीवार को लीकेज से बचायें

जगह बचाये

स्लीमगार्ड फ्लश टैंक कहाँ..?



Vinesh Phogat and Bajrang Punia with Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge and party MP KC Venugopal in Delhi. PTI

Vinesh joins Cong, gets a ticket; Bajrang a post: 'Understood our pain'

ASAD REHMAN
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 6

HOURS AFTER they joined the party, the Congress on Friday fielded Olympian Vinesh Phogat from the Julana Assembly constituency in Jind district for the October 5 Haryana Assembly elections and appointed Olympian Bajrang Punia the All India Kisan Congress's working chairman.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

BUSINESS AS USUAL
By UNNY

Wrestling permits symbolic stops on VVP faces.

RELATED REPORT P6

Let people decide if there is God in you, says RSS chief

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
PUNE, SEPTEMBER 6

RASHTRIYA SWAYAMSEVAK Sangh (RSS) chief Mohan Bhagwat has said that no one should proclaim himself as God and it should be left to the people to decide if there is God in you.

Addressing an event late Thursday at Jejuri in Pune to mark the centenary year of Shankar Dinkar Kane — popularly known as Bhaiyyaji — who worked in Manipur towards children's education, Bhagwat said that when people praise him as a holy figure or a national icon, he ensures that it does not get into his head.

"If one has to rise to such a height, one should make efforts. We should not consider ourselves as God. Let people decide if there is God in you," he said.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

THE CITY

ON SIGNING FILES, SC ASKS: IS THERE ORDER RESTRAINING DELHI CM PAGE 3

CBI TO COURT ON FORMER R G KAR COLLEGE PRINCIPAL

Nexus: 'Ghosh favoured vendors, security aide's wife for contracts'

ATRI MITRA & SWEETY KUMARI
KOLKATA, SEPTEMBER 6

THE CBI, which is probing the rape and murder of a junior doctor and alleged financial irregularities at the R G Kar Medical College and Hospital in Kolkata, has told a special court that its investigation showed that Sandip Ghosh, principal of the college at the time of the rape-and-murder incident on August 9, had a

EXPRESS NETWORK



SC REJECTS GHOSH PLEA; ED SEARCHES HIS RESIDENCE
PAGE 9

"criminal nexus" with "other co-accused" for "wrongful gain".

It also claimed that two vendors, who Ghosh knew from the time he was posted at the Murshidabad Medical College and Hospital, benefited from the award of hospital contracts after he moved to Kolkata.

A firm belonging to his security aide's wife was also awarded a cafe contract by the R G Kar Medical College and Hospital (RGKMCH), the agency alleged.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Olympians Manu, Lovlina are guests at Adda today

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 6

PARIS 2024 might not go down as India's best-ever Olympics. Yet, it was historic no less. For the first time in the 100-plus years of the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



Shooter Manu Bhaker and boxer Lovlina Borgohain

RELIGARE Values that bind

Presents

The Indian EXPRESS AQDA

Co-presented by

POSTIMA Business School

Associate Partners — Hydration Partner — Wellness Partner — Hospitality Partner

pnb | DeVANS | BRITON | Kairali | MERIDIEN

FIRST AFTER WITHDRAWAL

A thaw in chill: Delhi, Male hold defence talks

Defence Secy-level dialogue touches on bilateral military exercises

AMRITA NAYAK DUTTA
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 6

FOR THE first time since India withdrew its uniformed military personnel from the Maldives early this year, New Delhi and Male held a defence dialogue here Friday at the level of top officials where they discussed "ongoing defence cooperation projects" and "forthcoming bilateral military exercises".

This is significant since a chill has gripped bilateral relations since President Mohamed Muizzu assumed office last year on the plank of his "India Out" campaign.

The last defence cooperation dialogue was held in March last year in Male when then President Ibrahim Solih was in office, months before Muizzu took over as President.

According to an official state-

EXPLAINED Renewal roadmap

TALKS ARE a bid to renew the Delhi-Male defence co-operation after the strain in ties following Muizzu's India-Out campaign. Over the years, India has given equipment, trained personnel and is working on strategic projects in the island nation.

ment by the Defence Ministry on the 5th Defence Cooperation Dialogue between India and the Maldives, the Indian delegation was led by Defence Secretary Giridhar Aramane while the Maldivian delegation was headed

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

ATTENTION LIC POLICYHOLDERS

Your Policy Money could be waiting for you

Receive your Policy Money in 2 steps*:

1. Update your Bank details
2. Submit your KYC

Our WhatsApp No. 8976862090 Say 'Hi'

Call Centre Services (022) 6827 6827

Visit: licindia.in

LIC भारतीय जीवन बीमा निगम LIFE INSURANCE CORPORATION OF INDIA

Har Dil Aapke Saath

*Can also be done online, Conditions apply

For details, contact your Agent/Nearest LIC Branch or SMS YOUR CITY NAME to 56767474

Follow us: LIC India Forever | IRDAI Regn No.: 512

Beware of SPURIOUS PHONE CALLS AND FICTITIOUS / FRAUDULENT OFFERS. IRDAI is not involved in activities like selling insurance policies, announcing bonus or investment of premiums. Public receiving such phone calls are requested to lodge a police complaint. For more details on risk factors, terms and conditions, please read sales brochure carefully before concluding a sale.

THANK YOU

Bank of India Relationship beyond banking

CELEBRATING 110th FOUNDATION DAY

TIMELESS FOUNDATION TO A TRANSFORMATIVE FUTURE

THANK YOU INDIA FOR MAKING US WHAT WE ARE TODAY.

Central Bank Digital Currency App | Merchant App | MSME THALA | RuPay Signature Credit Card | Star Samruddhi Home Loan

Toll-free number: 1800 103 1906 | Visit: www.bankofindia.co.in | Follow us on

Improvised rockets rock Manipur after drones: Attack on ex-CM's home, 1 killed

JIMMY LEIVON & SUKRITA BARUAH IMPHAL, GUWAHATI, SEPT 6

A 70-YEAR-OLD man was killed and at least five persons were injured in a fresh escalation of violence in Manipur on Friday, with improvised rockets fired at villages in the Bishnupur district from nearby hills.

This comes days after the use of drones to drop crude bombs on villages in Imphal West began in which two people were killed and several people were injured. The attacks using improvised rockets began early Friday in Tronglaobi in Bishnupur district, destroying two structures there.

According to police, rockets were fired from elevated positions in the adjoining Kuki-Zomi majority Churachandpur district towards the low-lying residential area of Tronglaobi.

In the afternoon, such projectiles were fired at Moirang Mairambam Leikai in the same district around 3.30 pm, killing one person, identified as 70-year-old RK Rabei Singh.

He was killed after a rocket exploded at the residence of the late Mairambam Koireng, former Chief Minister of Manipur. Mairambam Kelvin, an eyewitness, said the rocket hit the wall of the late Chief Minister's residence and exploded instantly, killing Rabei Singh on the spot. The incident occurred while the family of the late former CM were preparing for the asthi (funerary) ceremony of a family member, said Kelvin.

nerary) ceremony of a family member, said Kelvin.

"It happened so fast. A screaming sound was heard before the explosion. When we realised there was an explosion, we found Rabei lying on the floor covered with blood," he said. Police also recovered the remains of the rocket with the tail portion intact. The injured have been evacuated to Imphal's Regional Institute of Medical Sciences (RIMS) hospital.

A security source stated that these "rockets" appear to be improvised projectiles made using galvanised iron pipes attached to explosives.

The official stated that the sound of such projectiles or rockets were first heard North West of Mohpheitamp in Bishnupur district around 4:30 pm after which security forces mobilised and started moving towards the location.

"West of Moirang in a place called Laikamolsau we encountered blockades of boulders and trees. While clearing this, the forces came under fire and retaliated. When they moved ahead after that, the projectile had already landed at Tronglaobi," said the official.

Security forces came under fire from the hills again at 10:30-11 am in Bunglon and Mausing in Moirang. "Police forces from both Bishnupur and Churachandpur came to carry out operations and sanitised the area, overseen by senior officials of both police and Army," said the official.

Ex-corporator's murder: High Court transfers case to CBI, flags 'lapses'

Mumbai: The Bombay High Court Friday ordered the transfer of the Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Abhishek Ghosalkar murder case to the CBI, observing several lapses in the Mumbai Police investigation. The court's decision follows a plea by Tejasvee Ghosalkar, wife of the former corporator, who alleged that crucial aspects of the case were inadequately explored.

The HC directed the CBI's zonal director to appoint an IPS officer, not below the rank of SP, to conduct an "impartial" probe.

Abhishek Ghosalkar, 41, was shot on February 8 in Borivali, Mumbai, during a live social media broadcast. The prime suspect, Mauris Noronha, 47, allegedly died by suicide after the killing.

FROM PAGE ONE FULL REPORTS ON WWW.INDIANEXPRESS.COM Thaw in chill: Delhi, Male hold defence talks

by Chief of Defence Force, Maldives National Defence Force General Ibrahim Hilmy.

"The meeting provided both sides with an opportunity to discuss the matters related to bilateral defence cooperation. This, inter alia, included expediting the implementation of various ongoing defence cooperation projects," the statement said.

"The two sides also deliberated on few other areas of common interest such as high-level exchanges and capability development projects. The aspects of participation in forthcoming bilateral military exercise were also discussed," it said.

The statement said that the entire range of talks was "productive" which will advance shared interests of both the nations in the near future and bring stability and prosperity in the Indian Ocean Region.

The tone and tenor of the statement is important since bilateral ties suffered a setback late last year.

Soon after coming to power in November 2023, Mohamed Muizzu, seen as pro-China, requested India to withdraw its military personnel from his country. Muizzu had defeated incumbent Solih on the "India Out" plank.

Faced with a deadlock, the two countries agreed on February 2 this year that between March 10 and May 10, India would pull out 80-odd military personnel stationed in the



Defence Secretary Giridhar Aramane with Chief of Defence Force, Maldives National Defence Force General Ibrahim Hilmy in New Delhi on Friday. PTI

Maldives.

The Ministry of External Affairs said that the two helicopters and a Dornier aircraft in the Maldives would be operated by "competent Indian technical personnel" who would replace the "present personnel".

After the replacement of personnel was completed, Maldives Foreign Minister Moosa Zameer visited India in May this year.

A month later, President Muizzu attended the swearing-in ceremony of PM Narendra Modi's government as it began its third term.

In August, in the first high-level visit to Maldives since Muizzu came to power, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar

went to Male to discuss bilateral cooperation.

He framed Maldives as "one of the cornerstones of our 'Neighbourhood First' policy... one of our Vision SAGAR, as well as of our commitment to the Global South. To put it succinctly in the words of my Prime Minister Narendra Modi - for India, neighbourhood is a priority and, in the neighbourhood, Maldives is a priority. We also share the closest bonds of history and kinship".

The Defence Secretary-level talks is a step towards cementing the ties, after the withdrawal of uniformed personnel from the island nation.

While there is no official

word on the projects that are being implemented, India and Maldives have enjoyed robust defence cooperation in the past. In 2020, India had gifted a Dornier aircraft to Maldives and in 2019 handed over a patrol vessel. Last year, New Delhi had also given a coastal radar system to Male.

Last year, Defence minister Rajnath Singh and his then Maldivian counterpart, Mariya Didi, had laid the foundation stone for the Coast Guard 'Ekatha Harbour' at Sifavaru in Uthuru Thila Falhu (UTF) atoll, which is among the biggest Indian grant-in-aid projects in Maldives.

The facility was aimed at strengthening capabilities of the Maldivian Coast Guard and facilitating regional humanitarian assistance and disaster relief efforts.

A year earlier, Modi and then Maldives President Solih kick-started the Greater Male Connectivity Project (GMCP)—a \$500-million project financed by India. PM Modi had also announced that India will provide 24 vehicles and a naval boat and will build police facilities on 61 islands of the country.

In December 2023, however, the Muizzu government decided not to renew a 2019 MoU with India for hydrographic surveying. Following the pact, the Indian Navy and the Maldives National Defence Force (MNDFF) had conducted three joint hydrographic surveys.

• 'Ghosh favoured vendors'

These submissions were made by the CBI before the special court in Alipore on September 3 when Ghosh was produced there along with three others — Biplab Singha, Suman Hazra and Afsar Ali — following their arrest. All four are in CBI custody.

Ghosh was at the Murshidabad Medical College and Hospital from 2016 to 2018. Towards the end of 2018, he was transferred to the Calcutta National Medical College and Hospital. He remained there until February 2021 when he took charge of RG Kar Medical College and Hospital. In September 2023, he was moved back to the Murshidabad institute. He returned to the RG Kar campus within a month and continued there until the August 9 incident. He resigned on August 12 and was immediately posted to the Calcutta National Medical College and Hospital. The next day, the Calcutta High Court stepped in and made him go on leave. Following his arrest by the CBI, he was suspended.

In its submissions to the court, the CBI said: "Evidences collected during investigation conducted so far have revealed that Dr Sandip Ghosh, in criminal nexus with other co-accused persons, by way of illegal means, caused wrongful loss to the Government and corresponding wrongful gain to himself and other accused persons."

"That investigation has revealed that vendors Shri Biplab Singha and Shri Suman Hazra are close acquaintances of Shri Sandip Ghosh. Shri Sandip Ghosh has known Shri Biplab Singha since the time when Shri Sandip Ghosh was posted as HoD (head of department) at Murshidabad. Shri Biplab Singha was working as a vendor there," it said.

According to the CBI, Singha and Hazra continued their relations with Sandip Ghosh when he was transferred to the Calcutta National Medical College and Hospital (CNMCH).

"After his transfer to RGKMCH, (Ghosh) brought both these vendors to RGKMCH where they started and continued with supply of materials. It is revealed that they all have been frequently in touch with each other which corroborates the allegation of criminal nexus as in the FIR," the CBI said.

"That investigation has revealed that M/s Maa Tara Traders, owned and operated by its proprietor Biplab Singha, had a close relationship with Dr. Sandip Ghosh. During searches conducted and evidences gathered thereafter, documentary and oral evidences have surfaced which prima facie reveal that Biplab Singha controlled and operated many firms run by himself, his friend, family members, staffs, etc. through which he used to participate in tenders by way of submit-

ting quotations from the firms controlled and operated by himself. It is revealed that Biplab Singha used to submit quotations and other documents of above firms to make the bids competitive and finally used to get work orders in the name of one of the above firms, mostly in the name of Maa Tara Traders, M/s Baba Loknath and Tiasha Enterprises. He used to participate in different tenders through his own firms," it said.

"Investigation has prima facie revealed that the process adopted by Dr Sandip Ghosh, the then Principal, in the award of contract to M/s Maa Tara Traders was not transparent," it said.

According to the CBI, letters of work order used to be addressed to different officers of R G Kar Medical College and Hospital, but these were never handed over to them. "The award of work letter used to be shared with the other staff of R G Kar College and Hospital only when the same was to be cleared by the Accounts section," it said.

This, the agency claimed, pointed to "serious lapses in the award of tenders and contracts to M/s Maa Tara Traders and its associate companies, run and operated by Biplab Singha".

"That investigation has prima facie disclosed that M/s Hazra Medical, controlled and operated by Suman Hazra, had patronage of Dr. Sandip Ghosh. On the similar footing as of Maa Tara Traders, M/s Hazra Medical was also awarded multiple contracts from R G Kar Medical College and Hospital keeping similar modus operandi," it said.

"Investigation has also disclosed that many works were awarded to Hazra Medical which were not related to supply of medical equipment, such as sofa set, refrigerator etc. Investigation has disclosed prima facie that after joining the nexus with Dr Sandip Ghosh, Suman Hazra's firm's business rose three times from 2021 to 2022."

The CBI, in its submission to the court, also described how Ghosh favoured his security aide Afsar Ali. "Dr. Sandip Ghosh favoured his close aide Afsar Ali Khan in the award of contract of a cafe on the premises of RGKMCH. The said contract was signed between RGKMCH and M/s Eshan Cafe. Nargis Khanum w/o Afsar Ali Khan is the proprietor of this firm. However, Afsar Ali Khan manages all the affairs of this firm. Contract to M/s Eshan Cafe was awarded in a predetermined manner as it was the only eligible firm fulfilling the technical criteria to participate in the tender out of the total 4 bidders," it told the court.

The CBI is also investigating the role of Ali in the alleged sale of biomedical waste. Ali, it said, used to contact vendors to sell such waste.

• Vinesh joins Cong, gets a ticket; Bajrang a post: 'Understood our pain'

Phogat, while being inducted into the Congress on Friday afternoon, said she was happy to represent a party that "understood our pain" during the wrestlers' protests last year. Phogat and Punia were at the forefront of the demonstrations against then Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) chief and former BJP MP Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh who was accused of sexual harassment.

"I thank the Congress. Because they say you get to know who is your own in your bad times. When we were being dragged on the streets, apart from the BJP, all the parties of the country were with us. They understood our pain. I feel proud that I am with a party that is standing with women. It is ready to fight from the streets to Parliament," Phogat said at a press conference at the All India Congress Committee (AICC) headquarters. Senior party leaders such as Congress general secretary (organisation) K C Venugopal, Haryana Congress chief Uday Bhan, and AICC's Haryana in-charge Deepak Babaria welcomed the two wrestlers into the party. Thanking the Congress leadership, Punia said, "The BJP IT Cell

is saying that our eventual goal was to do politics. I would like to say that we had sent a letter to all BJP female MPs, but they didn't come. They didn't stand with those girls. The Congress stood with us on their own. We now know the atrocities on daughters at Jantar Mantar. I can say only the BJP supported it, while all other parties stood with us."

By bringing the two on board, the Congress is looking to expand its support base among women, sportspersons, and the youth, apart from consolidating Jat votes. Julana, where Phogat's in-laws are from, has a significant Jat population and is currently represented by Amarjeet Dhanda of the Jannayak Janta Party.

At the press conference, targeting the BJP, Phogat said, "I could have given up on wrestling at Jantar Mantar (during the protests). Because the BJP IT Cell tried to prove that our wrestling career was over, people were believing it. They said I could not compete in the national championship and I did it. They said I did not want to give the trials. I did it. They said I did not want to compete in the Olympics. I did it and reached the finals." The wrestler said she hoped

that athletes in the future would not have to face what she and her fellow protesters had to go through. "Maybe they get some courage. That the parties in power may not stand with them, but they have brothers and sisters who will be there," Phogat said. On the court case against Brij Bhushan Singh, she said: "That fight is ongoing, and we won't back out. The case is going on. We will win the case and win the battle of life too."

Earlier in the day, Phogat resigned from her Railways job. The Congress alleged that both she and Punia had received a show-cause notice from the Railways after their meeting with the Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, Rahul Gandhi, on Wednesday. Railways officials, who did not wish to be identified, confirmed that show-cause notices had been sent to the two on Wednesday. An official said the notices asked them to clarify their position on joining a political party.

"Vinesh resigned from her job today," K C Venugopal said at the press conference. "Is it a crime to stand with the Leader of the Opposition of the country? They didn't join, or tell any-

body. The Railways is running behind rumours. They are saying there is news that you are going to contest elections."

He added, "Their only crime is that they met the LoP. What is the thinking of the Railway authorities? I am generally reminding the Railways authorities. The entire country will be with these two players. Don't play politics on these issues. They have already resigned from the posts. Do the formalities quickly and relieve them."

On the protests that Phogat and Punia led last year, the Congress leader said, "Not only did they stand for their field, but they also stood for the farmers of the country. When the farmers' agitation happened, they were there. Then, they fought for Agniveers."

He added, "Leaders will come through movement and these two persons came through the biggest movement of this country. Now somebody is criticising that this is a Congress conspiracy. So many athletes and Olympians are in different parties. Is that also part of a conspiracy?"

Venugopal said Punia had prominently advocated the cause of farmers and wanted the responsibility to work for them.

• Medalists Manu, Lovlina are guests at Express Adda today

country sending its athletes to the biggest sporting event, India had a multiple-medal winner at a single Olympics.

On Saturday, the athlete who pulled off the previously-unthinkable feat, Manu Bhaker, will be the guest at the Express Adda in New Delhi. Joining the 22-year-old will be world champion, Tokyo Olympics bronze winner and Asian Games medallist boxer Lovlina Borgohain, a trailblazer in her own right. They will be in conversation with Mihir Vasavda, Deputy Associate Editor, The Indian Express, who has covered three Olympics apart from three Commonwealth Games.

The athletes have been at the centre of a change in Indian sport, becoming two of the faces of the rising women power not just in their discipline but the whole

ecosystem.

Three years ago in Tokyo, Lovlina — inspired by Mohammad Ali — ensured India's return to the Olympic podium in boxing after a barren Rio Games. In doing so, the 26-year-old became only the second Indian woman to win a boxing medal after the legendary MC Mary Kom.

Lovlina went from strength-to-strength in the years that followed, despite being forced to change her weight category due to the rules of the international federation. She became a world champion on home soil last year and followed it up with a silver medal at the Asian Games in China. At the Paris Olympics, she came close to repeating her Tokyo show but lost in the quarterfinals. If Lovlina won a medal in

Tokyo and could not in Paris, it was the other way round for Manu. The Tokyo Olympics for her ended in tears. Back then, Manu competed in the three events — 10m air pistol, 25m pistol and 10m air pistol mixed team. However, the shooter could not qualify for the final in any of the events.

Heading into the Paris Games, her coach Jaspal Rana vouched that the preparation had been better and she had "matured" as a shooter. That was seen on the shooting ranges of Chateauroux, some 300 km from Paris. Manu not just reached the final of all her events, but she showed it is possible to win not one but two medals in a single campaign. With some luck, it could have been an unprecedented hat-trick. Out of the six medals India

won, Manu was responsible for two — both bronze, in the 10m air pistol and 10m air pistol mixed team, along with Sarabjot Singh.

As India's athletes put the Paris Games beyond them and shift their focus to the Los Angeles Olympics in 2028, Manu and Lovlina will remain the favourites to return to the podium.

The Express Adda is a series of informal interactions organised by The Indian Express Group and features those at the centre of change. Previous guests at the Adda include External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar, Tata Sons Chairman N Chandrasekaran, Olympic gold medallist javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra, cricket icons Virat Kohli, Rohit Sharma and Jasprit Bumrah and chess legend Viswanathan Anand.

TN motivational speaker talks of 'karma' in school, faces action

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA CHENNAI, SEPTEMBER 6

A MOTIVATIONAL and spiritual speaker stoked controversy with his remarks on karma and re-birth, and allegedly blaming children for their struggles in life on Teachers Day, prompting the Tamil Nadu government to take action against him.

State School Education Minister Anbil Mahesh Poyyamozhi assured that action will be taken against the speaker for his controversial speech at a government school here. Members of the DYFI and SFI staged a protest questioning the School Education Department

for permitting spiritual awakening classes in state-run schools, and demanded action against the speaker, Maha Vishnu, who runs an NGO.

In his speech, a video of which has gone viral, Vishnu blamed the British for destroying Gurukulams and claimed that by mere chanting of certain mantras one could cause a rain of fire, cure ailments and even fly. "All these were written as scriptures by our ancestors but the British erased them," he said. "If God was kind, everyone should be born equal. One is born rich or poor, a criminal or a hero. Why such differences? You have been given this life based on what you did in your previous birth."

Five months after firing outside Salman Khan's house, Mumbai police yet to get access to Bishnoi

MOHAMED THAYER MUMBAI, SEPTEMBER 6

NEARLY FIVE months since the firing outside the Bandra residence of actor Salman Khan, the Mumbai police, probing the case, have not yet been given access to gangster Lawrence Bishnoi, whose gang claimed credit for the firing and had threatened the actor in the past. Bishnoi has been lodged at the Sabarmati prison in Gujarat since last year. Earlier this week, the Bishnoi gang claimed credit for firing outside the residence of singer A P Dhillon in Canada. "All legal processes are being

followed in order to get access to him," an officer said. Sources explained that initially they could not directly get his custody as the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), in an order dated August 30, 2023, had restrained for a year Bishnoi's movement in prison under provisions of Section 268 of the CrPC by which the government can direct that any person shall not be removed from the prison in which he or they may be confined or detained.

The crime branch, after obtaining permission from the state Home Department, had sought exemption from the rule so that they could get Bishnoi's custody. The request, however, did not come through and the crime branch had decided to wait till August 30, 2024 when the hold would be lifted. "Attempts are being made. However, so far, we have not received the permission. We would prefer to get his custody and interrogate him in Maharashtra rather than question him in Sabarmati prison. His questioning is crucial to find out how he is operating his gang from behind bars," the officer said. Last year, the NIA, probing a heroin seizure case against him, was granted Bishnoi's custody for five days in September after the restrictive order by MHA was temporarily revoked.

As per the chargesheet filed by the crime branch in the case, the attack outside Khan's residence was carried out at the behest of Bishnoi.

Bishnoi, his younger brother Anmol, suspected to be holed up in Canada, and one Rohit Godara were named as wanted accused in the case. Bishnoi claims that he was targeting Khan as the actor had shot dead blackbucks, revered by his community, in Rajasthan in 1998 during the shooting of Hum Saath Saath Hain movie. The police, however, maintain that Bishnoi is trying to gain popularity by threatening and attempting to attack a popular actor.

Advertisement for PLUTUS IAS UPSC/PCS MATHEMATICS OPTIONAL, LAW AMBITION LAW INSTITUTE, and JUDICIARY (ENGLISH MEDIUM). Includes contact information and website details.

Is there any restraint order on Kejriwal performing his duties from jail, asks SC

'Want to examine the issue as it will affect several cases'

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 6

THE SUPREME COURT Friday asked if there is any restraint on Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal signing official files from jail, where he is currently lodged following his arrest in connection with the Delhi excise policy 'scam' case.

The query came from a bench of Justices A S Oka and Augustine George Masih while hearing a plea filed by a convict who alleged delay in remission of his sentence as the CM was yet to sign it.

The court said it wanted to examine the issue as it will affect several cases.

"Is there any restraint order on... the Chief Minister performing his duties from jail? We want to examine this because this will affect hundreds of cases. So many files would be there as various orders are passed by the court concerning the Chief Minister. Whether there is any restraint on the Chief Minister signing such important files?" asked Justice Oka.

Stating that these matters cannot remain pending, he added that if there is any impediment to signing files in jail, the court may



Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal

have to exercise its powers under Article 142 of the Constitution to prevent further delays.

Article 142 of the Constitution of India empowers the Supreme Court to pass any decree or order necessary for doing complete justice in any case or matter pending before it.

On April 10, the court granted furlough to the petitioner and on May 10, it had asked the state to decide on his request for remission within two months. The time was subsequently extended till July 19.

On Friday, the bench was informed that the process had come to a halt in view of the provisions of the Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi Act, 1991.

Additional Solicitor General Aishwarya Bhati said she would take instructions.

The court will hear the matter next on September 23.

Granting him interim bail in the money laundering case filed by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) in connection with the excise policy 'scam', the SC on July 12 directed that Kejriwal "shall not visit the Office of the Chief Minister and the Delhi Secretariat" or sign official files "unless it is required and necessary for obtaining clearance/approval of the Lieutenant Governor of Delhi".

Kejriwal was arrested by the ED on March 21 in the money laundering case linked to the excise case. On June 26, the Chief Minister was formally arrested by the CBI in the corruption case linked to the "scam". He is yet to get bail in the corruption case.

Opposing Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's bail plea in the excise policy "scam" case, the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) Thursday told the Supreme Court that witnesses from Goa, including those who contested the assembly elections on an Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) ticket, will turn hostile if he comes out of jail.

'MARKSHEETS AND HUMAN BEINGS FUNDAMENTALLY DIFFERENT'

Admit 7 students allocated seats by DU, HC directs St Stephen's

SOHINI GHOSH
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 6

NOTING THAT "marksheets and human beings are fundamentally different and must be treated as such," the Delhi High Court Friday directed St Stephen's College to grant admission to seven students who were allocated seats there by Delhi University but over a seat matrix dispute, were not granted admission by the institution after clearing their Common University Entrance Test (CUET).

Ruling against the contentions raised by St Stephen's, and in favour of DU, the court parted with an oral remark that it hopes the students will now be "able to do well and that they are able to do some good for the college as well".

Deciding on the issue of 5% extra allocation of students and if a decimal point value of less than 0.5 should be rounded off to their lower value or the next higher value, the court of Justice Swarna Kanta Sharma noted that "marksheets and human beings are fundamentally different and must be treated as such." The court said, "The treatment of fractions in the context of human seat allocations cannot be equated to their treatment in mathematical calculations for marks on a marksheet... humans cannot be divided into fractions, and rounding off to the lower numerical figure would undermine the spirit of the policy." The court also issued guidelines, directing that "in future, the colleges which have any grievances regarding the seat matrix, will send their grievances to the authorities concerned of the Delhi University at least three months prior to the initiation of the admission process." It further said, "The representation so made will be decided by the University within two months..."



St Stephen's and DU were at loggerheads over the issue.

Justice Sharma held that the college's argument that the allocation of students to the college by DU through the Common Seat Allocation System (CSAS) has no statutory backing "is without any merit". It further said, "St Stephen's College, being affiliated to the Delhi University, is bound to follow the rules of CSAS insofar as admissions under non-minority categories and supernumerary categories are concerned."

St Stephen's and DU were at loggerheads over the seat matrix and allocation by the latter, with the college submitting that the university has been allocating more students to it than its permissible intake. This had resulted in seven aspirants moving Delhi HC challenging their denial of admission by the college.

On the issue of whether BA programmes offered by the college are to be treated as distinct programmes or a single programme, the court held that each combination under the BA programme "must be considered as separate and distinct programmes for the purpose of seat allocation and admissions under both the Christian Minority and Unreserved categories." With respect to DU's policy of reserving a seat for single girl child, which the college had opposed, Justice Sharma said the court cannot go into the constitutionality of the quota, as the petitions had been filed by students challenging the denial of their admission, and not the college challenging the constitutionality of the provision.

'Petitioners not at fault'

"In this Court's opinion, the petitioners were not at fault at any point during the process of admission, but had to face undue hardship... This indecision on the part of the College had left the petitioners in a state of uncertainty... The prolonged 'under process' status... blocked their participation in subsequent allocation rounds, causing them to miss out on other potential options for securing a seat," the court concluded.

11-year-old girl 'molested' by self-defence teacher at school; govt orders probe

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 6

AN 11-YEAR-OLD girl was allegedly molested by a self-defence teacher at a government school in Northwest Delhi on Friday, police said, adding the accused has been arrested.

The incident came to light after a PCR call was received in this regard around 12pm at the police station concerned, the officers added.

Education Minister Atishi has ordered an immediate and detailed inquiry into the matter, according to a statement by the Delhi government.

According to the police, the victim accused her teacher of touching her inappropriately while conducting a self-defence class. "An FIR under sections 74 (assault against woman) and 351 (intimidation) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) and section 10 of POCSO (Prevention of

Children from Sexual Offences) Act has been registered and the accused has been arrested. Further investigation is underway," DCP (Outer) Jimmy Chiram said. The counselling of the girl and her medical examination is underway, the police said.

Police said the victim told her father that the teacher touched her in an inappropriate manner and threatened her. The victim's parents and neighbours went to the police station and lodged a complaint, a police officer said.

The victim's father told media persons that he initially went to the school principal and asked her to take action against the teacher, but she supported the accused.

"The most stringent action will be taken based on the findings. The Delhi government remains firmly committed to ensuring the safety and well being of all students," according to the statement by the Delhi government.

Principal among 3 held for ignoring sexual assault complaint of 6-yr-old student

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NOIDA, SEPTEMBER 6

THE PRINCIPAL, supervisor and teacher of a private school in Noida have been arrested for allegedly ignoring a sexual assault complaint made by a six-year-old girl student.

According to police, the girl was allegedly sexually assaulted on September 3 by a man working at an under-construction site

within the school premises. She informed her class teacher about the incident, but the school authorities ignored her complaint, police said.

The accused is on the run. On Friday, Deputy Commissioner of Police, Ram Badan Singh, told *The Indian Express* that police received some information about the main accused and are sending a team to arrest him. "We are hoping to nab the accused soon,"

The girl was allegedly sexually assaulted on September 3 by a man working at an under-construction site on the school premises.

he said. The girl's parents alleged in the complaint that their daughter

was inappropriately touched by a labourer. "The contractor who had hired the accused labourer also played a role in allowing the accused to escape," said a senior officer of the Noida Police.

"The class teacher and principal, in connivance with the school supervisor, tried to hide the incident and helped the labourer escape," the officer added.

A meeting regarding the in-

cident was held between Additional Deputy Commissioner of Police Manish Mishra and Deputy Commissioner of Police Ram Badan Singh Friday.

Meanwhile, a school staffer told *The Indian Express* that the incident may have occurred during recess.

"The labourer was carrying a heap of sand to the terrace of the school where work was going on... We do not know what

happened next... if he touched her inappropriately or was just playing with her," he claimed.

Police said an FIR was registered under Sections 74 (outraging women's modesty) and 263 (obstruction to the lawful apprehension of a person) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita and sections 7 and 8 (sexual assault) of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act.

कार्यालय बरेली विकास प्राधिकरण, बरेली
विकास ज्योति, प्रियदर्शनी नगर, पीसीडी रोड, बरेली (उ.प्र.)
Website : www.bdainfo.org, Email: bda@bda.org, bda@up.nic.in

सार्वजनिक सूचना

एतद् द्वारा सर्वसाधारण को सूचित किया जाता है कि बरेली विकास प्राधिकरण द्वारा समग्र नगर आवासीय योजना के विभिन्न सेक्टरों में व्यवसायिक/दुकान भूखण्ड/गुफ हाऊसिंग/स्कुल/पेट्रोल पम्प/पब्लिक यूटिलिटी व होटल भूखण्डों का आवंटन निविदा-सह-नीलामी पद्धति के माध्यम से किए जाने हेतु दिनांक 03-08-2024 से दिनांक 07-09-2024 तक आवेदन आमंत्रित किये गये हैं। जिसको पंजीकरण पुस्तिका में पृष्ठ सं-09 के क्रमांक-04 पर सेक्टर-8 रिज़ा इंक्लेव में व्यवसायिक भूखण्ड का क्षेत्रफल 2000.00 वर्गमीटर (दो अड़ियाँ) अंकित हो गया है, जिसके स्थान पर उक्त क्षेत्रफल 200.00 वर्गमीटर पक्का व समझा जाये व क्रमांक-11 पर सेक्टर-12 इंद्रप्रस्थ इंक्लेव में पब्लिक यूटिलिटी भूखण्ड का क्षेत्रफल 625.00 वर्गमीटर (तीन अड़ियाँ) अंकित हो गया है, जिसके स्थान पर उक्त क्षेत्रफल 450.00 वर्गमीटर पक्का व समझा जाये। क्षेत्रफल 450.00 वर्गमीटर को धरोहर धनराशि रु०-22,27,500.00 आरक्षित की गई है। अन्य जानकारी प्राधिकरण की वेबसाइट www.bdainfo.org से भी प्राप्त की जा सकती है।

उपाध्यक्ष

NOTICE

A Memorandum of Charges No. XXVII/12/NTRO/2023(3)-322, dated 29.08.2023 was issued to Shri Ashish Kumar Sarkar, Sc. 'D' of NTRO, Government of India, resident of Door No. 02, Next to Airport Police Station, Narsingar, Agartala, Tripura-799015.

2. Shri Ashish Kumar Sarkar is hereby directed to appear in person before the Inquiring Authority on 12.09.2024 at 10:00 Hrs, failing which disciplinary action would be concluded ex-parte.

-Inquiring Authority

CBC 58102/11/0004/2425

Civil Service (IAS) Examination (Mains) 2025 & 2026

Commerce & Accountancy

'Tap the power of your COMMERCE background' 'Quicken your success, aim for higher Rank in IAS'

Our students in IAS/Civil Services Examination 2023 with Commerce & Accountancy

Rankers Classes has delivered dozens of Ranks with Commerce as an optional in top 30 including Ranks 2 by Garima Lohia, Rank 6 by Ravi Dhawan, Rank 9 by Arvind Agrawal, Rank 10 by Khusboo Goyal, Rank 11 by Siddharth Jain, Rank 13 by Sonal Goyal, Rank 13 by Namit Mehta, Rank 13 by Ronak Agrawal, Rank 15 by Shivani Goyal, Rank 22 by Mandeep Kaur, Rank 22 by Saloni Rai, Rank 22 by Nitesh Kumar Jain, Rank 24 by Rahul Jain, Rank 24 by Abhishek Jain, Rank 25 by Shilpa Gorisaria, Rank 25 by Shubham Agarwal, Rank 26 by Himanshu Nagpal, and so on.

During past 22 years we are proud to have more than **280 Ranks** to our credit. Every year more than 80% of the finally selected Commerce optional candidates belong to us.

To provide benefit of our knowledge and experience to the commerce fraternity, today, we offer various courses that suit requirements of everyone. We have separate courses for graduates (Foundation Course) & professionals (Advanced Course).

Prepare Commerce & Accountancy in 4 Months, 6 Months, 8 Months matching your learning need and speed!
(With minimum 12 Months recorded class availability)

Commerce Advanced Course
For professionals: like CA, CS, CMA, MBAs and graduates having good commerce knowledge, who prefer faster syllabus coverage with deep focus on mentorship & answer-writing. Starting 26th September 2024. 3pm to 5:30pm. Duration: 4 Months (6 day/Week Classes), 8 Months (3 day/Week Classes)

Commerce Foundation Course
For graduates: who need to strengthen basics to advanced, with Personal Attention, Logical & Paced Teaching, Graded Concept Building & Regular Answer Writing Practice. Starting 26th September 2024. 11am-1:30pm. Duration 6 Months (7 day/week classes), 8 Months (5 days/week classes)

Mentorship-cum-Intensive Test Series
For those doing self-study or revising Commerce: who prefer disciplined & regular study, timely syllabus coverage & building marks-fetching answer-writing capabilities. Mentorship sessions every Saturday. Chapter Tests Every Mon & Friday. Starting 26th September.

To-the-point & Enriched Study Material:
with green fonts and quick revision PODCASTS
For those doing self-study or revising Commerce: for better, one-source & exam-relevant content. Available on demand.

Content Improvement Material & Quick Revision PODCASTS free with all courses

For more details of course contents, visit us at: www.rankersclasses.in

18/1, 2nd Floor, Above Muthoot Finance, ORN Market, Delhi-60.
Call: 9818464467, 9818368018.

RANKER'S CLASSES
...COMPETE CIVIL SERVICES EXAM WITH COMMERCE

4 THE CITY

ANAND VIHAR Moderate 109 AQI PM 2.5	DTU Satisfactory 85 AQI PM 10	PUSA Satisfactory 53 AQI CO	ROHINI Moderate 151 AQI At 10 pm
---	---	---	--

SKY WATCH
 September 7
 Generally cloudy sky.
 Light to moderate rain/thundershowers
MAX: 32 **MIN: 24**
 1°C below normal 2°C below normal

'WILL INTENSIFY STRUGGLE FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE OF BAHUJAN SAMAJ'

MLA Gautam quits AAP to join Congress, thanks CM Kejriwal

SAMAN HUSAIN
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 6



(From left) DPCC chief Devender Yadav, MLA Rajendra Pal Gautam, Congress leader Rajesh Liothia and Congress general secretary K C Venugopal. Amit Mehra

AAM AADMI Party (AAP) MLA Rajendra Pal Gautam Friday resigned from the ruling party and joined the Congress, saying he wants to "intensify the struggle for social justice and participation of the Bahujan Samaj in all sectors".

Addressing a press conference, the two-time MLA from Seemapuri said, "My fight is not for a position as MLA, MP, or minister, that has never been my life's mission. AAP leaders are aware of this. My struggle is to achieve social equality and justice, which is why I have joined the Congress today."

In 2022, Gautam resigned from his ministerial post after a video showing him attending a religious conversion event surfaced on social media. The BJP had accused him of insulting Hindu gods and goddesses, after which Gautam posted his resignation letter on X. Prior to this, he was heading Delhi government departments of Social Welfare, SC/ST Welfare, Registrar of Cooperatives and Gurdwara Elections.

Reacting to the move, the AAP said it is just another "chapter in the shifting tides of politics". The Delhi BJP, on its part, said by including Gautam in the party, the Congress had con-

firmed that it is "a sanctuary for opponents of Sanatan Dharma".

Expressing his gratitude to Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal for the opportunity to serve as an MLA twice, Gautam also accused the AAP government of turning a blind eye towards issues faced by the marginalised sections, particularly SC, ST, OBC, and minorities. "I won both elections with huge majorities, for which I thank him. But my fight lies elsewhere. When it comes to social justice, AAP often stays silent, especially on issues related to caste, class, and minorities. This deeply hurt me."

"Had Kejriwal been serious, he would have ensured reservations in the CM Fellows Programme. Today, most programmes for SCs,

for social justice."

K C Venugopal, Congress general secretary, welcomed Gautam and said: "This is a proud moment for us. Gautam, a prominent figure in the country's political spectrum and a true Ambedkarite, has joined the Indian National Congress. His decision to join Congress gives us even more happiness as it shows the ideology he has followed all his life is being upheld by our party."

AAP state vice-president Kuldeep Kumar said, "When tickets are in doubt, some jump ship... People change sides, come and go. The AAP gave all due respect to Gautam. The party entrusted him with significant responsibilities by appointing him as a minister... I wish him all the best in his future political endeavours."

Delhi BJP president Virendra Sachdeva accused the Delhi CM of allegedly "asking his friends in the Congress" to induct Gautam to "safeguard his political future".

"Gautam has been a very ordinary-level MLA in Delhi, and in the 2020 elections, he was able to retain his seat only due to the Kejriwal government's free electricity and water schemes. Over time, due to his outspoken opposition to Sanatan Dharma, he became a political liability for AAP, leaving Congress as his only political option," he alleged.

Dalit leaders quitting a concern for party

JATIN ANAND & SAMAN HUSAIN
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 6

IN A setback for the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) ahead of the Delhi Assembly polls, former Social Welfare Minister Rajendra Pal Gautam switched sides to the party's INDIA bloc ally Friday.

A prominent Dalit leader, the two-time Seemapuri MLA said Rahul Gandhi's ideology had pushed him to join the party. He also said the AAP tends to "stay quiet" on issues of "social equality, social justice, bhagidari and hissedari (share in power and resources)".

"To accelerate the struggle for social justice and participation and involvement of Bahujan Samaj in all fields, I am resigning from all the posts and membership of the Aam Aadmi Party. Jai Bheem!" Gautam posted on X along with his resignation letter addressed to AAP national convener and CM Arvind Kejriwal.

Gautam's exit from the AAP and almost immediate induction into the Congress comes in the middle of cracks in alliance talks between the two parties in Haryana, said sources.

According to senior Congress leaders, Gautam's entry was in the works "for days".

A senior AAP leader claimed that Gautam's decision stemmed from the "negativity" around his image as a legislator

in his constituency. "He knew he was unlikely to get a ticket from AAP in the Delhi Assembly elections for the third consecutive time," the leader said.

A senior Congress leader said Gautam's induction was as much an indication of the party's "political resurgence in the Capital" after being relegated to its margins for more than a decade as well as its thrust on "pro-backwards politics" that helped revive the Congress's fortunes in the recent Lok Sabha elections.

Gautam is the second Dalit face to quit the AAP this year after his former replacement in the Delhi Council of Ministers, Raaj Kumar Anand. Anand unsuccessfully contested the Lok Sabha polls on a Bahujan Samaj Party BSP ticket before joining the BJP.

Two prominent Dalit leaders now left in AAP are Mangolpuri legislator Rakhi Bidlan, who is also Deputy Speaker of the Delhi Assembly, and Kondli MLA Kuldeep Kumar who unsuccessfully contested from the East Delhi parliamentary constituency in the Lok Sabha polls.

Gautam was born and brought up in Northeast Delhi's Ghonda. He started as an activist and became a lawyer. He has served in the seven-member Delhi Cabinet as Minister of Social Welfare, SC/ST/OBC Welfare, Women and Child Development, Water, Tourism, Art, Culture and Language in addition to other departments.

AAP MLA HELD IN WAQF BOARD 'SCAM' CASE

ED doesn't have fresh material against me: Amanatullah in court

NIRBHAY THAKUR
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 6



The court extended Khan's ED custody by 3 days. PTI

THE ENFORCEMENT Directorate (ED) had no fresh material to arrest AAP MLA Amanatullah Khan, argued his counsel before a Delhi court Friday.

Special Judge Vishal Gogne of Rouse Avenue Court was hearing a money laundering case related to alleged illegal recruitments in the Delhi Waqf Board in which Khan was arrested earlier this week. While Khan was sent to ED custody for four days on Monday, Judge Gogne extended it by another three days. "... the investigative agency may require extended time to unravel the multi-layered and masked financial transactions which may have been designed to launder a substantial amount of money (Rs 36 crore) into properties fronted by the agents of accused Amanatullah Khan," said Special Judge Gogne in his order.

Meanwhile, the court also cautioned the ED to be "cognizant of the attrition of liberty and the constraints on the individual agency of an accused through the instrumentality of custodial investigation". The agency was further directed to maintain a detailed record of the custodial investigation of the accused during the following three days and present it before court in the next hearing.

Advocate Rajat Bharadwaj, appearing for Khan, questioned the need to arrest the Okhla MLA: "Khan appeared before the ED on April 18. He was enquired for 13 hours. In four-day ED custody (which started on Monday), same questions were asked again."

Calling the ED's investigation "unfair", Bharadwaj said the material in this case already existed with the agency in 2023 and that Khan is not named as an accused in the chargesheet filed by the agency this January.

On the other hand, Special Public Prosecutor (SPP) Manish Jain, representing the ED, sought 10-day custody of the accused, stating he had to be confronted with material against him — this included a diary owned by a co-accused and statements of co-accused and witnesses.

"The accused is saying he

doesn't understand English and only understands Hindi. We need to translate statements of the witnesses to confront him," said Jain.

Bharadwaj, however, argued that all evidence — including the diary and the statements — existed with the agency since last year: "... they can't arrest me to confront me with statements which existed in 2023... kuch to nayala aate. Kuch bhi nahi hai inke paas (they have to bring new material... they have nothing against me)."

Bharadwaj also argued: "They could have shown Khan statements of witnesses on April 18 (when he was questioned)."

Addressing the ED, Judge Gogne said: "A substantive part of your confrontation is over it seems. Other accused persons have also already been questioned and confronted."

It was, however, Jain's case that there were new witnesses who will be named in the supplementary chargesheet that will be filed and Khan is yet to be confronted with their statements.

"... the examination of the case diaries by the court today suggests the possibility that statements or material collected from about 48 witnesses... who are not part of the first prosecution complaint may be required to be confronted to the accused," the court said in its order.

The ED case against Khan stems from two FIRs: one filed by the CBI concerning alleged irregularities in Waqf Board appointments, and another by Delhi ACB regarding an alleged case of disproportionate assets. In the CBI case, Khan was granted bail as he wasn't arrested. Bharadwaj argued that the ED had ignored the CBI's chargesheet in this case. "In the CBI chargesheet (against Khan), it is said that there were administrative irregularities and not corruption," he said.

Amid AAP-BJP war of words over DSEU, here's how its courses fare

SOPHIYA MATHEW
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 6

A FEW days after the Delhi Skills and Entrepreneurship University (DSEU) decided to discontinue B Tech courses in three of its campuses, Vijender Gupta, the Leader of Opposition in the Delhi Assembly, accused the Delhi government of a "massive recruitment scam" at the varsity. Among the criticisms, which included charges of corruption, poor infrastructure, inadequate teaching staff and allegation of an "overall collapse" of the varsity, the BJP leader also alleged there were no takers for several courses in the 2024-2025 academic session.

Hitting back, the AAP, which runs the Delhi government, accused the BJP of "reckless disregard for students' lives" as it alleged "a catastrophic mismanagement in education" in some BJP-ruled states. "While the Delhi government dedicates an impressive 24% of its annual budget to education, BJP-ruled states such as Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, and Haryana show a disgracefully low commitment (to education)," according to a statement by the party.

Amid the war of words, here

is a look at how different courses at the varsity are faring:

■ **UG PROGRAMMES:** More than 50% of the seats remained vacant in 17 out of the 21 undergraduate programmes offered by the varsity this academic session, an official from DSEU said on condition of anonymity. BS Digital Marketing and Data Analytics, BS Medical Laboratory Sciences, BS Digital Media Design, and BA (Honours) Fine Arts were the only UG programmes where enrollment exceeded 50%.

■ **DIPLOMA PROGRAMMES:** The DSEU has received an all-time low response for applications to its various diploma programmes this year compared to data of previous years, according to sources. The varsity has received around 9,500 applications for diploma programmes in 2024-25. An RTI request revealed 13,518 applications were received in 2023-24. The courses where the seats are almost full are Diploma in Pharmacy (111 out of 120 seats) and UG Diploma in Electronics (34 out of 40 seats) respectively.

■ **BTECH COURSES:** Artificial Intelligence (AI), Computer Science Engineering (CS), Electronics and Communication Engineering (EC) and Data Analytics (DA) are the only B Tech



GRIDLOCK
Vehicles stuck in a traffic jam on National Highway 24, in New Delhi, Friday. PTI

SC accepts CEC advice on customised module to enhance Delhi's green cover

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 6

THE SUPREME COURT Friday accepted a set of recommendations made by the Central Empowered Committee including creating a customised module which would contain data on details of projects requiring cutting of trees, number of trees to be felled or translocated, and compensatory plantation to tackle dwindle

ling green cover in the Capital.

The apex court was hearing a matter regarding enhancing the green cover in Delhi and creating a mechanism for it.

In its report filed in the top court, the CEC recommended creation of a customised management information system (MIS) module on which data shall be uploaded by the project proponents on a regular basis for ensuring proper and timely compliance of orders passed by the court on

MLAs, workers stage protest against BJP

VAISHNAVI MISHRA
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 6

ACCUSING THE BJP of politics of hooliganism and dictatorship, AAP workers Friday staged a protest against the arrest of AAP MLA Amanatullah Khan by the Enforcement Directorate (ED).

Around noon, a group of AAP workers started a demonstration outside the party's old office on Pandit Deendayal Upadhyay Marg and raised slogans against the BJP-led Centre.

The protest rally, which was supposed to head towards the BJP office a kilometre away, was halted by Delhi Police officers. Workers later called off the demonstration.

AAP MLAs Dilip Pandey, Kuldeep Kumar, Haji Yunus, along with the party's national spokesperson Priyanka Kalkar, were present during the protest.

"The BJP is afraid of us in the electoral arena, and, hence, by misusing the investigating agencies, it conspiratorially arrests our leaders to defame us. The central government wants to scare us by misusing its ED-CBI and wants to stop our work," alleged Kalkar.

Delhi BJP spokesperson Praveen Shankar Kapoor called the protest an "eyewash", asserting that AAP leaders are well aware that Khan is "deeply involved in property and funds "misappropriation".

Vaishnavi Mishra is an intern at The Indian Express



The AAP protest, which was supposed to head towards the BJP office, was halted by Delhi Police officers Friday. PTI

Told to vacate in five days, residents of colony near Old Barapullah bridge set to lose decades-old homes

SOPHIYA MATHEW
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 6

SINCE THE 1970s, migrants from Tamil Nadu have been living in a colony adjacent to the Old Barapullah Bridge which dates back to the 17th Century. On Thursday, those residing in this settlement got a notice to clear out of the area — and their homes — in five days.

The notice was issued by the Public Works Department (PWD) to remove encroachments on government land near the bridge. For the families living in more than 500 jhuggis, it has caused sleepless nights and stressful days.

Revathi, 50, a domestic worker, said the news of eviction evoked memories of the hardship her family endured to settle here. "We did not have a proper house, we used to live under a tarpaulin... I remember the nights were so cold and our parents used to huddle us... We survived those difficult times with no food, no proper house and no money. Today when they tell us suddenly to leave... I cannot help but remember this time... and what our



At the colony adjacent to the old bridge. Express

parents did to protect us and settle here," she said.

Their plight is worsened by economic conditions. "Almost every woman here works as a domestic worker. Even if they work every day, they will not be able to earn more than Rs 15,000... our earnings after working in a house can range from Rs 3,000 to as low as Rs 500 so no one here is capable of paying house rent."

While her generation is illiterate, she said, they have dreams to educate their children. "We are uneducated but our only dream has been to educate our children and to see them succeed. Some children here are in their final year of college... some are in Class X, and some in nursery. What will happen to their futures?" she asked.

On Friday, Murugesan, 64, who claims to be one of the earli-

est settlers in the area, said, "What will we do in five days? Without a shelter, where will we go? We residents are meeting on Saturday to discuss what to do next."

For mothers in the area, the colony has become a "convenient and trustworthy" place to live. Sumadhi, 48, who has lived here for 25 years, stays with her 22-year-old daughter, who is speech-and-hearing-impaired.

"This place is so safe... everyone here is like family... I do not fear for my daughter's safety here. Even if we are offered a big house, we will still prefer this... the market, schools, railway station — everything is close by," said Sumadhi, who works in four to five houses as a domestic worker.

Around 3 pm, school vans and buses stopped near the vegetable market and scores of students got out. Among them is 15-year-old Priyanka, who shared her anxiety of losing her home. "They told us that they will remove the jhuggis here. But where will we go? I have my Class X board exam this year... If I cannot stay here, what will I do? We also have financial issues... but they are insisting we leave immediately."

DCP (Southeast) Rajesh Deo cited the High Court's judgment on July 8, when asked about the issue. PWD officials also cited the judgment in the writ petition titled, "Shabnam Burney Vs Union of India & Ors", which directed that encroachments have to be removed from drains.

Nirmal Gorana Agni, convener of Mazdoor Awaz Sangarsh Samiti, said, "This is a human rights violation... this trend to give a maximum of only seven days to people for vacating has been increasingly observed... no temporary shelter arrangement or food and water facilities, which are basic rights, are provided. We will challenge the HC on this soon."

Anil Goswami, secretary, Jangpura Residents' Welfare Association, who has been part of a drive to clean the drain for years, said it is crucial to prevent flooding in the Capital. "... there is the issue of human displacement for those living in the area for decades... but it is very complicated," he said.

He said the dumping of construction and demolition material by the government for various projects has damaged the drain.

BRIEFLY

Worker dies as overloaded garbage tractor falls on him
New Delhi: A sanitation worker Friday died when a tractor trolley filled with garbage allegedly overturned on him while he was working in South-west Delhi's Najafgarh. The deceased, Surendra, worked as a sanitation worker with the MCD in ward 129 of Najafgarh Zone. The MCD announced a financial aid of Rs 5.42 lakh for his kin, besides providing a job to one of the family members as a daily wage worker. PTI

Prostitution racket busted
New Delhi: The Delhi Police arrested a man Friday in Shahdara's East Krishna Nagar after they received a tip-off regarding a prostitution racket being run from a flat in a residential building in the area, said police. ENS

15 killed in bus-van collision in Hathras

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE LUCKNOW, SEPTEMBER 6

FIFTEEN PEOPLE including children were killed when a state bus and a van collided on the Aligarh-Agra highway in Uttar Pradesh Hathras district on Friday evening.

Fourteen people were injured in the incident, which occurred at around 6 pm in the Chandpa area when the van, a Tata Magic, attempted to overtake the bus, said police.

Most of the victims were travelling in the van.

Hathras Circle Officer Himanshu Mathur said that the cause will be determined after an investigation. "So far, 15 people, including children, have died in the accident," he said.

The injured people were taken to a hospital. Four of them are in critical condition, said doctors. Police are working to confirm the identities of some victims.

A police team rushed to the scene and transported the injured people to the hospital.

Senior police and administrative officials also arrived to assist.

The bus was heading toward Aligarh while the Tata Magic was returning from Agra. The Tata Magic's occupants had gone to Agra to attend a function, said a police officer.

Police said a case is being registered. The identities of the drivers of both vehicles are yet to be confirmed.

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath announced compensation of ₹2 lakh each for the families of the deceased and ₹50,000 each for those seriously injured.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi condoled the deaths in the accident and wished a speedy recovery to the injured. The local administration is providing all possible help to the victims under the supervision of the state government, he said on X.

President Droupadi Murmu condoled the loss of lives in the accident and prayed for a speedy recovery of the injured.

Bihar: Police book 19, arrest 2 for attacking man on beef suspicion

Patna: Police in Bihar's Samastipur district have booked 19 people and arrested two of them for allegedly assaulting a Muslim man on the suspicion that he was selling beef.

A video of the assault had been shared widely on social media.

According to the FIR, Sarjulom Qureshi, 54, a resident of Rahimabad village, was returning home on August 16 after selling mutton. Qureshi told police he had been assaulted and the ₹6,500 he was carrying was

snatched. A police officer lodged a suo motu FIR against 19 people on August 17. The accused were identified through the viral video and booked under sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita pertaining to murderous assault.

Police said the two men who were arrested on August 26 are as Raja and Roshan Kumar Jha. Most of the accused are either self-employed or unemployed, and are not associated with any cow vigilante group. ENS

NATIONAL FERTILIZERS LIMITED (A Government of India Undertaking) NANGAL UNIT, NAYA NANGAL (PUNJAB) 140 126 NOTICE INVITING TENDER

COEP Technological University Pune (Formerly College of Engineering Pune) Shivajinagar, Pune - 411 005.

Admission Notification for University / Institute level Spot Round

Table with 3 columns: Sr. No., Programmes, SPOT Round Dates. Includes entries for First Year B. Planning, First Year B.Tech, Direct Second Year B.Tech, etc.

रेल विकास निगम लिमिटेड Rail Vikas Nigam Limited (A Government of India Enterprise)

NOTICE OF 21st ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, BOOK CLOSURE, RECORD DATE AND INFORMATION ON E-VOTING

CENTRAL UNIVERSITY OF KASHMIR Tulumulla, Ganderbal - 191131

BUREAU OF INDIAN STANDARDS Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution

Kerala HC calls for regulating tourist flow in hills, assessing carrying capacity

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, SEPTEMBER 6

A DIVISION bench of the Kerala High Court on Friday called for the state government to conduct a carrying capacity assessment of hill stations and submit a report by October 25.

The bench of AK Jayasankar Nambiar and Syam Kumar VM, in a suo motu case initiated after the Wayanad landslide, observed that there is a need to regulate the inflow of tourists into hill stations. Carrying capacity assessment of hill stations can be done to guide policy makers and administrations to devise a system of management of tourist areas in the interest of ecology.

The court observed, "The hill stations in Kerala are among the most sought after tourist destinations in India, and the increasing number of tourists and the corresponding unscientific infrastructure development in response to the same, pose a grave danger to the hill stations."

Punjab & Sind Bank (A Govt. of India Undertaking) Zonal Office: Delhi-I

VIVIID GREEN (PoA Design Consultation) Viviid Green invites all relevant stakeholders to participate in our upcoming workshop to discuss the Design and Development of a proposed Programme Of Activities (PoA) to include different categories of renewable energy projects in India, to be considered under GS Mechanism.

Public Notice (PoA Design Consultation) Viviid Green invites all relevant stakeholders to participate in our upcoming workshop to discuss the Design and Development of a proposed Programme Of Activities (PoA) to include different categories of renewable energy projects in India, to be considered under GS Mechanism.

APPEAL Dear citizens of Delhi, Election Commission of India has ordered updation of electoral roll of NCT of Delhi with reference to 01.01.2025 as the qualifying date by conducting Special Summary Revision (SSR) of the Electoral Rolls. The schedule of the SSR is as under:

Table with 2 columns: Event, Date. Includes Publication of Integrated Draft Roll (29.10.2024), Period of receiving Claims and Objections (29.10.2024 to 28.11.2024), Disposal of received claims and Objections (By 24.12.2024), Final Publication of Electoral Roll (06.01.2025).

As part of the preparatory activities for SSR, a crucial House-to-House verification exercise is being conducted across NCT of Delhi wherein Booth Level Officers (BLOs) will be visiting your home to verify the elector details and assist you in filling up relevant forms.

What you can do during this House to House verification :

- Verify your existing electoral details during the BLOs visit to your house and if any modification like address updation, correction, issuance of replacement EPIC, PwD marking, linking of Mobile Number is required, please fill Form-8. Inform about: a. Un-enrolled eligible voter (completed 18 years of age by 01.10.2024) and fill Form-6 immediately. b. Un-enrolled eligible voter (completing 18 years till 01.01.2025) and fill Form-6 during SSR. c. Prospective electors (completing 18 years between 02.01.2025 to 01.10.2025) and fill Form-6 during SSR. These advance applications will be processed in the respective quarter. d. Expired/Permanently Shifted/Multiple entries and apply in Form-7 for deletion of names.

During the BLOs visit, your cooperation is highly solicited by allowing access to him/her specially in gated Societies and High Rise Buildings. It is also requested to provide accurate information to ensure your records are updated correctly.

To fill the forms online, download the Voter Helpline App (VHA) or visit www.voters.eci.gov.in. For other assistance or information, you may call Voter Helpline Number 1950.

I strongly appeal to all the people of Delhi to take full advantage of the House to House voter verification campaign being conducted by ECI and help in improving the health of Electoral Roll by giving correct information to BLOs.

Chief Electoral Officer Delhi Mere holding of EPIC is not enough. Name in the updated Voter List is essential to cast the Vote.

www.ceodelhi.gov.in | Follow us on: [Social Media Icons] | ceeodelhioffice | www.voters.eci.gov.in

इंडियन बैंक Indian Bank SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES

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

Table with 6 columns: Sl. No. & Branch, Name of the Account, Description of the Charged/Mortgage Property, Name of the Mortgagor(s)/Guarantor(s), Amount of Secured Debt, Reserve Price (in Rs), Earnest Money Deposit.

1. M/s Maiyaji Cold Storage Pvt. Ltd., Village-Khorapakar, P.O & P.S. Amnour, Block-Amnour, Dist-Saran, Pin-841401. 2. Sri Arjun Kumar Singh S/o Sri Raj Kishore Singh (Director & Guarantor), Vill-Pokharpur, P.O & P.S-Parsa, Block-Sahu at present Sudhdeo Sahu, E-Ram Krit Parsa, Dist-Saran, Pin-841219. 3. Sri Sunil Kumar Singh S/o Late Birendra Kumar Singh (Director & Guarantor), Vill-Pokharpur, P.O & P.S-Parsa, Block-Sahu at present Sudhdeo Sahu, E-Ram Krit Parsa, Dist-Saran, Pin-841219. 4. Those Members, who shall be present in the AGM through VC/OAVM facility and have not casted their votes on the resolutions through remote e-voting and are otherwise not barred from doing so, shall be eligible to vote through e-voting system during the AGM. The members who have casted their vote by remote e-voting prior to the AGM may also attend/participate in the AGM through VC/OAVM but shall not be entitled to cast their vote again. 5. The Company has engaged the services of National Securities Depository Limited ("NSDL") as the agency to provide e-voting facility. M/s Kumar Naresh Sinha & Associates, Company Secretaries has been appointed as Scrutinizer for conducting the e-voting process in a fair and transparent manner. Members are requested to read the instructions pertaining to e-voting as printed in the AGM Notice carefully. In case of any query, you may refer to the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) for Shareholders and e-voting user manual for Shareholders available at the download section of www.evoting.nsdl.com or call on 022-48867000 or send a request to Ms. Pallavi Mhatre, Sr. Manager, (NSDL) at evoting@nsdl.com



Detail of encumbrance, Outstanding Dues of Local Govt, Electricity, Property tax, Municipal Tax, etc. if any known to the Bank: Not Known Last Date & time for Registration and Submission of EMD amount: 24.09.2024 through https://www.ebkraj.in Till 5.00 PM. Date & Time of e-auction is 25.09.2024 from 10.00 AM to 5.00 PM at the platform of https://www.ebkraj.in with unlimited extension. Bid incremental amount is Rs.10,000/- (Rupees Ten Thousand Only). For further details and Terms & Conditions, Contact: Shri M.P. Singh (Chief Manager) Mob.: 8017007632 For downloading further details and Terms & Conditions, Please Visit: (i) https://www.ebkraj.in *Applicable tax to be borne by the bidder. Bidders are advised to visit the website (https://www.ebkraj.in) of our e-auction service provider PSB alliance Pvt. Ltd to participate in online bid. For Technical Assistance please call PSB alliance Pvt. Ltd. and other help line numbers available in service providers helpdesk. For Registration and EMD status with PSB alliance Pvt. Ltd., please contact support.ebkraj@psballiance.com. For property details and photograph of the property and auction terms and conditions please visit: https://www.ebkraj.in and for clarifications related to this portal, please contact PSB alliance Pvt. Ltd., Contact No. 829120220. Bidders are advised to use Property ID Number mentioned above while searching for the property in the website with and https://www.ebkraj.in.

Place : Patna Date : 05.09.2024 Authorised Officer Indian Bank (erstwhile Allahabad Bank)

6 DECISION 2024

HARYANA • JAMMU & KASHMIR



BJP TRENDS CAREFULLY

Vinesh, Bajrang in Cong: Singed by wrestler protest, BJP expects no further damage

Party leaders say it is "proof" that Cong instigated the protests

VARINDER BHATIA & VIKAS PATHAK
CHANDIGARH, NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 6

THE BJP is treading carefully on the matter of wrestlers Vinesh Phogat and Bajrang Punia joining the Congress, aware that any criticism of the two could prove costly for the party so close to the Haryana Assembly elections.

On Friday, its barbs were directed more at the Congress, accusing the latter of "trapping" Phogat and Punia, who had been at the forefront of protests against BJP leader and former Wrestling Federation of India president Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh over the sexual harassment charges against him. Some BJP leaders said it was proof of their belief that the protests had the Congress's backing.

Talking about Phogat, former Haryana home minister and senior BJP leader Anil Vij told reporters: "Agar woh desh ki beti sey Congress ki beti banana chahti hai, to hamein kya aitraz hai (If Vinesh wants to become the Congress's daughter instead of being the whole country's daughter, what objection can we have)?"

But, Vij added, this was proof that "it was because of their (the Congress's) instigation that the protests (against Brij Bhushan



Punia and Phogat with Congress leader K C Venugopal at party office on Friday. PTI

were going on". "The Congress was trying to bring these players to its side from the very first day," he said.

Another BJP leader said that with the agitation having already taken "a political turn", there was nothing surprising in the wrestlers' decision.

BJP Haryana president Mohan Lal Badoli claimed to *The Indian Express* in a recent interview that the Congress had "used" the wrestlers for its politics, "gaining strength from their protest but not empowering them in return".

The strongest statement linking Phogat and Punia's affiliation with the Congress to the wrestlers' protest had earlier come from Manohar Lal Khattar, who was the CM at the height of the farmer and wrestlers' agitation. Recently, after the two met Congress leader Rahul Gandhi in New Delhi, Khattar, who is now

a Union minister, said "the athletes had got trapped in a political maze" during the protests.

"These people (wrestlers) are seeking a ticket from the Congress. This means that there is a nexus. If it wasn't clear then, it is absolutely clear now."

While refusing to talk much on the issue, Brij Bhushan told reporters that what he had said at the time of the protests was convincing. As per a PTI report, attending an event held at a private school in Gonda in Uttar Pradesh, he said: "Senior Congress leaders from Haryana Deepender Singh Hooda and Bhupinder Singh Hooda are hatching a conspiracy against me. Whatever I had said on day one, I stand by it. And today, the same thing is being said by the entire country."

A BJP leader from Haryana said that, nevertheless, they did not apprehend Phogat's entry into the Congress to cause them

any serious harm given the damage already caused to the party in the state due to the farm agitation and wrestlers' protests.

In fact, the leader said, people might not take kindly to Phogat's decision to plunge into politics so soon after she had been celebrated as a national hero for the way in which she had been denied an Olympic medal. But that didn't mean that those people would vote for the BJP, the leader admitted.

One person who hinted at being disappointed was Sakshi Malik, the third face of the wrestlers' protest along with Phogat and Punia.

Malik said: "From my end, the agitation continues. I too had received offers, but I wanted to take what I started to the end. Unless the (Wrestling) Federation is cleaned up and the exploitation of women ends, my fight will continue."

More head for exit in BJP Haryana unrest

VARINDER BHATIA
CHANDIGARH, SEPTEMBER 6

A DAY after some senior BJP leaders in Haryana rebelled because they were overlooked in the first list of candidates for the Assembly elections, more discontent came to the fore on Friday.

The party's former state president and four-time MLA Rambilas Sharma called a meeting of his supporters in Mahendragarh on Friday. Sharma expressed unhappiness at not being named in the first list.

"I struggled for 55 years, nobody has the courage to finish me", Sharma said. Despite Sharma being among the BJP's senior-most Haryana leaders, the party did not declare its Mahendragarh candidate in the first list.

"We are the people who planted seeds of the party here (in Haryana). If anybody tries to fiddle with the saplings we sowed, it hurts," Sharma said.

In 2014, when the BJP created history by forming its first government in Haryana after winning an outright majority in the polls for Haryana's 90-member Assembly, Sharma was among the front-runners for the Chief Minister's post. But the party instead chose Manohar Lal Khattar, who contested and won his debut Assembly poll from Karnal. In 2019, Sharma lost in

Mahendragarh to the Congress's Rao Dan Singh.

Aditya Chautala, former PM Devi Lal's grandson, was among the other unhappy BJP leaders. On Friday, he quit as the chairman of a corporation in Haryana and resigned from the party after he was overlooked by the party for its Dabwali seat. Aditya, who lost the seat in 2019, is now likely to rejoin his former party Indian National Lok Dal (INLD) rather than the Dushyant Chautala-led Jannayak Janta Party, which has already announced the former Deputy CM's cousin Digvijay Chautala as its candidate there.

In Kalka too, former BJP MLA Latika Sharma was visibly upset with her party after it fielded former Union minister Venod Sharma's wife Shakti Rani within three days of her joining the party. Latika won the Kalka seat in 2014 but lost to the Congress candidate five years later. Addressing her supporters in Kalka, she was seen wiping tears and giving an emotional speech. "I shall be having a discussion with my supporters and then take a decision on my future course of action," Latika said.

In Gurgaon, the BJP faced more resignations over ticket allocation. BJP leader and Faridabad in-charge G L Sharma quit on Friday along with his supporters after being denied the Gurgaon ticket, with sources saying he is expected to join the Congress.

Cong plays safe in first Haryana list, all sitting MLAs in



Kharge and Sonia at the Haryana CEC meeting on Friday. X

VARINDER BHATIA & SUKHBIR SIWACH
CHANDIGARH, SEPTEMBER 6

THE CONGRESS re-fielded all its sitting MLAs in the first list and an addition announced by it late on Friday. With a majority of them loyalists of Congress Legislature Party leader Bhupinder Singh Hooda, the old warhorse has a head start on rivals.

The list covers 32 Assembly seats, including 28 sitting MLAs of the Congress. PCC chief Uday Bhan, wrestler Vinesh Phogat who joined the party on Friday, a former Jannayak Janata Party (JJP) MLA who has moved to the Congress, and an MLA who won as an Independent in 2019 are on the list.

This is a complete opposite to the BJP strategy, as part of which the ruling party has changed even its Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini's seat, in a bid to beat anti-incumbency.

Around of talks is planned by the Congress on Saturday to discuss the remaining 69 names. The Congress high command is keen on a tie-up with INDIA allies, including the Aam Aadmi Party and Samajwadi Party, which had delayed the release of the first list. The Congress's state unit, led by Hooda, is pushing back against a tie-up as it is confident of a win.

Among the big names, while Hooda will be contesting from his stronghold Garhi-Sampla Kilo, Congress sitting MLA Mewa Singh will take on CM Saini from Ladwa. Newcomer Vinesh Phogat has been fielded from Julana. PCC chief Bhan, who lost from Hodal (SC) in 2019, shall be contesting from the same seat again. Sitting MLA Amit Sihag will defend his Dabwali seat against JJP leader Digvijay Chautala.

Some staunch loyalists of Hooda's rival Kumari Selja who managed to get a nod in the first list include Shamsher Singh Gogi (Assandh), Renu Bala (Sadhaura SC-reserved seat), and Pradeep Chaudhary (Kalka).

The ex-JJP MLA who figures in the Congress first list is Ram Karan, re-fielded from Shahbad, while Dharampal Gonder will fight from Nilokheri, which he won as an Independent in 2019.

Three aides of Hooda who are facing Enforcement Directorate (ED) probes but managed to get tickets include Rao Dan Singh (Mahendragarh seat), Dharam Singh Chhoker (Samalkha) and Surender Panwar (Sonapat).

MLA Mamman Khan, who was arrested by investigating agencies for allegedly instigating the Nuh riots last year in which at least six persons lost their lives, has been retained by the party as its Ferozpur Jhirka nominee.

'Article 370 history now': Shah at J&K BJP manifesto release



The BJP issued 25 guarantees in its manifesto. PTI

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, SEPTEMBER 6

THE BJP on Friday released its manifesto for the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly elections, providing 25 guarantees, including issuing a white paper to ensure accountability for acts of terrorism, besides restoring 100 "ruined temples" in Kashmir and announcing sops for students, the youth, farmers, and women.

Releasing BJP's manifesto, Union Home Minister Amit Shah promised to transform J&K from a "terrorist hotspot to a tourism hotspot" and said "Article 370 is history now" and "will never return". "Since Independence, the issue of Jammu and Kashmir has remained important for our party, and we have always tried to keep this region with India," he said.

Criticising the National Conference's (NC) manifesto, Shah said, "It (Article 370) will never return and we will not allow it to happen ... This is the Article that gave weapons and stones in the hands of the youth and facilitated them to tread the path of terrorism."

Shah said there had been a 75% drop in terror-related incidents after the abrogation of Article 370 and organised incidents of stone-pelting and *hartal* calls had ceased since 2022.

"The party promises to sustain this progress by bolstering security measures, strengthening border security, and engaging communities to create a "terror-free Jammu and Kashmir", Shah said.

The BJP's promises include laptops, tablets, and Rs 3,000 annual travel allowance for students; five lakh jobs for the youth; a 50% reduction in electricity tariff rates for the agriculture sector and Rs 10,000 to farmers under PM Kisan Samman Nidhi; Rs 18,000 annually to the eldest lady in each family under the "Ma Samman Yojana"; additional 1,000 new seats in medical colleges; and metro services in Jammu and Srinagar.

Shah also promised a "very detailed" scheme for the rehabilitation of Kashmiri Pandits. "We have already started working in this regard by either returning their properties or providing the amount for their properties," Shah said.

IMAGE OF THE DAY



AAP IN THE RING: Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann addresses a public meeting at Kaithal, part of the Kalayat Assembly seat, on Friday for the AAP's Haryana Assembly election campaign. PTI

CAMPAIGN TRAIL

Poll winds sweep aside cloud of militant attacks in Jammu

ARUN SHARMA
JAMMU, SEPTEMBER 6

WITH VOTING in the eight Assembly segments of the Chenab valley in Jammu division now 12 days away, the area that has recently been shaken by a series of militant attacks is now resonating with campaign noises – slogans, drums, even *shehnaai*, as enthusiastic party workers roll out their best for Assembly polls happening after a decade.

In the past few days, the area has seen rallies of Congress leader Rahul Gandhi (Banihal) and BJP national general secretary Tarun Chugh (Bhaderwah).

Since June, Bhaderwah has been the site of terror attacks and encounters, with security forces seizing sophisticated guns and ammunition. In the incident at Chhattargala in Bhaderwah, six security personnel were injured. Adjoining Doda district has been the site of nearly a dozen terror attacks since June, leaving five Army men including two Captains dead.

On Wednesday, slogans like "Parihar sahab aagey badho, hum tumhare saath hain" (Parihar sahab move ahead, we are with you) rent the air as BJP Doda West candidate Shakti Parihar took out a rally in Dassa's Ghai and Gutta villages. It was near here that militants killed four soldiers including an Army Captain on July 16.

In villages like Angnol, Sinoo and Daline with a combined population of nearly 2,500-3,000, which lie in close vicinity to the June 26 encounter site in which three suspected foreign militants were killed, a security clampdown by the administration had followed. Now, every other house bears a flag or banner of a political party while people are coming in large numbers to hear candidates or their representatives, says Abdul Majid Angnol, a social activist.

Calling the "hustle-bustle" a novelty in these hilly areas, where large sections can't be accessed by vehicles, Angnol says: "When Democratic Progressive Azad Party (DPAP) candidate



BJP national general secretary Tarun Chugh addresses a rally in the Bhaderwah constituency on Friday. Express

Mohammad Aslam Goni filed his nomination papers from Bhaderwah Assembly constituency, people crowded into more than half-a-dozen vehicles to go support him."

With Ghulam Nabi Azad declaring that he is unwell and won't campaign, among the candidates of his party who have dropped out is Goni.

The security cover provided

to each contesting candidate is more than double that in past elections in J&K given the stakes, a senior police officer said, adding that security forces are not only dominating the heights, but have also set up *nakas* and pickets in inhabited areas.

Refusing to come on record, several candidates denied fear of militants, attributing it to the increased presence of security

forces and police. However, as a precautionary measure, they inform security agencies in advance about their political programmes.

Pritam Thakur of Ghai village talks about the stark contrast from just days ago when even during daytime, in view of the movement of militants in nearby forests, the area wore a deserted look. "Now, there are huddles till late evening with people discussing the elections and the respective candidates and parties."

Campaigning has also picked up in areas along the Mughal Road in the border Rajouri and Poonch districts, which saw recently a spurt in militant attacks on security forces for the first time since 2021.

Last week, the BJP's Iqbal Malik and supporters took out a car rally over 15 km from Darhal to Thanamandi, says an excited Abdul Aziz, former sarpanch of the Pangai panchayat, from where nearly half-a-dozen youth were picked up by security forces following the killing of four soldiers in an ambush by militants in

December 2023.

Another candidate active on the ground is former National Conference leader and retired judge Muzaffar Iqbal Khan, who is contesting from Thanamandi as an Independent.

"People are happy as they think there will be at least someone at whose doorsteps they can knock for help with their grievances," says Noor Ahmed of Topa Pir village. Three youths picked up from the village following the December 2023 killing of soldiers had died in the custody of security forces.

In Badnota village near Machedi, where militants ambushed an Army convoy killing five personnel in early July this year, the contesting candidates are going door-to-door.

Among them is the BJP's Jivan Lal, who is seeking re-election from Bani seat for the second time. Gouri Shanker, who has stayed on in the race from Bani in Kathua district on the DPAP ticket, says the response from the people is "very good".

FOR MORE LOG ON TO INDIANEXPRESS.COM/ELECTIONS

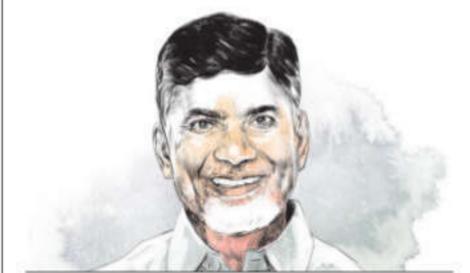


● A SLUGFEST IN J&K

NC, PDP ARE USING EX-MILITANTS IN THEIR CAMPAIGNS, RAM MADHAV SAYS



DELHI CONFIDENTIAL



FLOOD WARNING

AMID UNPRECEDENTED torrential rain and floods in Andhra Pradesh, Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu is personally supervising the relief measures in the districts. He is stationed in a flood-hit region, wading through the water and riding on boats to reach the affected people. Political observers say the flood is a wake-up call for Naidu who has been projecting Amaravati as the state's capital. The low-lying areas of the city were the first to go under once it started flooding.

PHOTO FRAME-UP

A CONGRESS leader from UP's Rampur is learnt to have got an earful from a senior at the AICC headquarters on Friday. The UP Congress leader was allegedly seen hobnobbing with a BJP MLA — a photograph of the two leaders together was shared on social media — bringing it to the attention of the party's leadership. The Rampur leader defended himself saying he was a "devoted" Congress man and that "someone was misinforming" the party leadership against him.

TICKET RUSH

AFTER THE press conference for induction of Olympians Vinesh Phogat and Bajrang Punia on Friday, several Congress leaders as well as the two wrestlers were stranded at the AICC headquarters as a group of people from Haryana's Barwala constituency held a protest outside the office over candidate selection for the seat. The protesters, who were demanding ticket distribution "purely on merit", blocked the cars of some of the party leaders, following which security personnel were called in to help them leave the premises.

Uttarakhand lifts curb on govt staffers taking part in RSS events

AVANEESH MISHRA
DEHRADUN, SEPTEMBER 6

NEARLY TWO months after the central government ordered the removal of Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) from its list of political organisations, the Uttarakhand government allowed state employees to participate in its programmes.

An order issued by Additional Chief Secretary Anand Bardhan Thursday stated that participation in RSS's shakha meetings as well as cultural and social programmes will not be considered a violation of conduct rules.

"Concerning the above subject, after due consideration by the Government, it has been decided that participation by any State employee in Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) Shakha (Morning or Evening Sabha) and other cultural or social activities will not be considered a violation of Uttarakhand State Employees Conduct Rules, 2002 (as amended from time to

time)," mentioned the letter issued by Bardhan.

The letter further said that a state employee could participate or contribute in RSS shakha and other cultural and social activities "only if this work does not cause any hindrance to his or her official duties and responsibilities".

"Such participation or contribution can be done only before and after the official office hours... All Government orders issued earlier in this regard shall be deemed to be invalid," it added.

The RSS is the ideological fountainhead of the Bharatiya Janata Party, and the move is likely to cause a row.

The Opposition had previously criticised the removal of the RSS from the list of political organisations, seeing the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT) order dated July 9 as an attempt to politicise "government offices and employees".

Significantly, several BJP-ruled states across India have lifted these restrictions, although some others still have the curbs.

Delegation of govt officials seeks Chirag intervention for cadre review

New Delhi: A delegation of Central Secretariat Service (CSS) officials Friday sought the intervention of Union Minister Chirag Paswan to take up the issue of a pending cadre review with Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Members of the CSS Forum, which represents around 13,000 of the department officials, met Paswan and demanded the implementation of the CSS cadre review report, which has been in the works since October 2022. **ENS**

Amid worry over Dalit shift, Mayawati renews 'appeal' to cadre after 10 years

LALMANI VERMA
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 6

SAMAJWADI PARTY (SP) president Akhilesh Yadav was so upset with the 2019 Lok Sabha election result in Uttar Pradesh that he "stopped taking calls" from leaders of his then ally Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) — including its chief Mayawati.

This claim has been made by Mayawati in a long "appeal" that she has made to BSP leaders and cadre to prepare them for multiple challenges facing the party.

Mayawati's 59-page message was distributed to the BSP rank and file at the party's national executive meeting in Lucknow on August 27. There, she was elected

the party president for the sixth consecutive term.

In her appeal, Mayawati highlighted her "bad alliance experience" with the SP, tracing it from 1993 when they had forged it for the first time. Referring to the 2019 Lok Sabha polls, Mayawati stated that the Akhilesh-led SP urged her party to "forget the past misdeeds of his party" and join hands to "stop the BJP".

Under their seat-sharing pact, out of 80 seats the BSP contested 38 seats, bagging 10, while the SP contested 37, winning only five.

In her message, Mayawati claimed that Akhilesh was so upset by the results that he shut their lines of communication. "Maintaining its self-respect, BSP then parted ways with SP," she

Arunachal govt staff who joined dam protests get notices

JAY MAZOOMDAAR
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 6

THE DEPUTY Commissioner (DC) of Upper Siang district in Arunachal Pradesh has issued notices this week to several government employees for allegedly joining protests against the Siang Upper Multipurpose Project (SUMP) and supporting the anti-dam movement.

They have been asked to show cause why they should not face disciplinary action for insubordination and misconduct under the Central Civil Services (Conduct) Rules, 1964.

Under the CSC Rules, government employees are barred from going on strike or criticising policies of the government.

The administration's move in the tribal-dominated district has

triggered concerns about "manufacturing consent" for the Upper Siang project which will require a go-ahead from the local gram sabhas under the Forest Rights Act, 2006.

Earlier, on August 30, the DC office directed government officials and Gaon Buras (village-level functionaries) not to take part in any demonstration, strike or activities against government policies and programmes.

The order came after NHPC Limited sought security clearance from the state government for mobilising drilling machines etc to commence survey work to prepare the Pre-Feasibility Report (PFR) for the Siang Upper project near Geku village on July 20 and the state government initiated a security threat assessment on August 19, official records show.

The Extra Assistant Commissioner of the Geku circle issued the order on August 30, prohibiting anti-government activities. Asked what necessitated the order, the officer said: "The DC, in his wisdom, issued the order which applies to the entire district. I have only issued a replicate order for Geku."

Speaking to *The Indian Express* over the phone on September 2, DC Hage Lailang described the order as "a routine reminder" for the staff. On why the Gaon Buras were included, he said: "They are paid by the government."

On Friday, he did not respond to queries on the total number of show-cause notices issued since Monday.

According to the Assam Frontier (Administration of Justice) Regulations, 1945, the Gaon Bura is the most important

village-level functionary of the government in Arunachal Pradesh. As representatives of the government, an official in Itanagar said, all Gaon Buras are bound by all instructions issued from time to time.

Among those who have been served the show-cause notice is a school teacher. Speaking to *The Indian Express*, he claimed that he was never involved in any anti-dam protest.

"I neither have any knowledge of nor any opinion about such issues. Last month, I went to attend a panchayat meeting where the project was to be discussed but the meeting was called off because there were not enough people," he said.

Others, however, pointed out that their right to dissent as members of local indigenous communities was not subject to

any service rules.

"Under the FRA (Forest Rights Act, 2006), no project can come up without our (gram sabha) consent. The educated members of our tribal communities are mostly in government jobs. Should we be forced under service rules to say yes to the dam? This is an attempt at manufacturing consent," said an activist employed with the government.

Envisaged as a strategic project to counter China's hydropower ambitions, the 12,500-MW Upper Siang Multipurpose Project faces strong opposition from the local Adi community. In the run-up to the Assembly elections, the state BJP leadership assured that the mega-dam project would go ahead only after consultations and obtaining consent of the people.

However, following a meeting chaired by the Arunachal

Pradesh Chief Secretary on July 18, an Action Plan for PFR with an Execution Schedule for core drilling work was finalised.

To mobilise machinery by August 31 "subject to consent/Security Clearance from" Arunachal Pradesh, NHPC sought "round the clock security at all work sites."

On August 19, records show, the Special Branch (HQ) decided to "assess the security threat for survey and investigation/drilling works for the finalisation of PFR" of the project by August 21.

On August 31, the day after the DC's order, hundreds of people joined a protest organised by the All Adi Welfare Society, the Siang Indigenous Farmers' Forum, and the Magong Banggo Students' Union at Dite Dime, one of the three proposed project sites in the district.

Ahead of polls: Soyabean prices fall in Maharashtra, Centre steps in to procure

HARIKISHAN SHARMA
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 6

WITH SOYABEAN prices in the market falling below the minimum support price (MSP), the Centre is set to procure 13 lakh metric tonnes of the oilseed from Maharashtra, which is a major producer of the crop and is scheduled to go to Assembly polls soon.

The Union Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare has approved the procurement of one-fourth of Maharashtra's total estimated soyabean production of 52 lakh metric tonnes in 2023-24.

Two government cooperatives — the National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India Limited and the National Cooperative Consumer's Federation of India Limited — will complete the procurement under the Centre's Price Support Scheme (PSS).

Apart from Maharashtra, the Centre has also cleared soyabean procurement from Telangana and Karnataka under the PSS.

"We have approved procurement of about 15 lakh tonnes of soyabean across three states — Maharashtra (13 lakh tonnes), Telangana (0.56 lakh tonnes) and Karnataka (1 lakh tonnes) — under the PSS. The NAFED and the NCCF will soon start procurement in these states," an official told *The Indian Express*.

On August 30, the Centre had

MONTHLY AVERAGE SOYABEAN PRICE

	(\$/metric tonne)
Sep-23	619.04
Oct-23	529.57
Nov-23	553.05
Dec-23	547.43
Jan-24	547.38
Feb-24	519.75
Mar-24	487.49
Apr-24	477.3
May-24	490.22
Jun-24	479.72
Jul-24	469.63
Aug-24	400.13

Source: World Bank Pink Sheet, September 2024

written a letter to four major soyabean-producing states — Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Gujarat and Rajasthan — urging them to undertake the PSS operations if the price of soyabean continues to remain below the MSP. On September 5, the Agriculture Ministry officials held a meeting with NAFED and NCCF officials to discuss the necessary steps to ensure procurement operations, said the official.

On June 19, 2024, the Centre fixed the MSP for soyabean at ₹4,892 per quintal in 2024-25 — ₹292 higher than the previous season's ₹4,600 per quintal.

However, the model whole-

sale prices of soyabean are below this MSP in mandis across the states. For instance, the model price of soyabean was recorded in the range of ₹3,800 to ₹4,675 per quintal in Maharashtra on September 5, according to the government's AgMarket database. In Madhya Pradesh, the prices were in the range of ₹2,450 to ₹4,760 per quintal. In other major soyabean-producing states like Gujarat, Karnataka and Rajasthan, the mandi prices were even lower.

Now, the NAFED and NCCF will procure soyabeans at the MSP rate, the official said.

A kharif season crop, soyabean is used as feed and for oil extraction. It is sown in June-July and harvested in September-October. In Maharashtra, where Assembly polls are due later this year with the current government's term ending on November 26, soyabean is cultivated in 28 of the state's 36 districts. Marathwada is a major soyabean-producing region — of the top 10 districts for soyabean production in 2022-23, seven fall in the Marathwada region.

The slide in soyabean prices had contributed to ruling Mahayuti alliance's woes while giving fresh ammunition to the Maha Vikas Aghadi alliance in the Lok Sabha polls.

The Agriculture Ministry is also learnt to be considering recommending a hike in the duties on soyabean oil to check the decline in prices in the domestic market.

Jaishankar: IMEC will be cornerstone of global connectivity, add to growth

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 6

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS Minister S Jaishankar on Friday said the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC) will be a cornerstone of global connectivity with the potential to add to growth and resilience across the world.

Addressing the CII India Mediterranean Business Conclave, Jaishankar said the IMEC — announced during the G20 summit last year — has opened new possibilities.

"The IMEC is to become a cornerstone of global connectivity, providing a robust frame-



MEANWHILE: External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar meets former Japan PM Shinzo Abe's wife Akie Abe in New Delhi. **PTI**

work for boosting trade and other flows across critical regions. By integrating innovative logistics and sustainable practices, it holds the potential to sig-

nificantly contribute to both growth and resilience," he said.

On the conflict in West Asia, Jaishankar said the situation has disrupted shipping routes.



BJP chief JP Nadda with Bihar CM Nitish Kumar in Patna. **PTI**

Won't repeat mistake of joining hands with RJD, Nitish tells Nadda

SANTOSH SINGH
PATNA, SEPTEMBER 6

AMID TALKS of pulls and pressures from ally BJP, JD(U) national president and Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar Friday said he has made the "mistake" of joining hands with the RJD twice, but will not repeat it.

Nitish's statement came at an event where he was sharing the stage with BJP chief and Union Health Minister JP Nadda.

"I have made the mistake of going with them (RJD) twice. But we will now always stay together (with NDA)," he said. Without naming the RJD or Leader of Opposition Tejashwi Yadav, the CM said: "These days, they (RJD) are trying to drumbeat their achievements and have been finding space in newspapers. But have they done anything? Whatever work was done was by us (JD-U and BJP)."

Praising the BJP chief, Nitish said: "JP Nadda was born in Patna. It is a matter of great pride that he is the president of a big national party. He should keep coming to Bihar. When I go to Delhi, I meet him most of the time."

EXPLAINED

Speculation over Nitish, Tejashwi meet

ALTHOUGH RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav has clarified that he had gone to attend a meeting with CM Nitish Kumar as his presence was required in his capacity as the Leader of the Opposition in the Assembly, a section of the media has been speculating on yet another volte face by the JD(U) chief, who has switched sides and returned as CM multiple times over the years.

Nadda, who is on two-day visit to the state, met the Chief Minister at his residence in Patna. The meeting of the two leaders assumes significance in the backdrop of the NDA government at the Centre retracting its decisions on lateral entry and referring the proposed Waqf Bill to a Parliamentary panel following objections by its allies, including the JD(U) which has 12 MPs.

BSF asks Bangla border force to stop infiltration

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 6

THE BORDER Security Force (BSF) has asked its Bangladeshi counterpart, Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB), to prevent illegal entry into India following the fall of the Sheikh Hasina government in August. Since August 12, both border forces have held 722 meetings at various levels, the BSF said after the meeting of a special

committee appointed by the Ministry of Home Affairs, which was held in Kolkata Thursday.

During the meeting, safety of minority communities in bordering districts, was discussed. "...BGB officials have been apprised to prevent Bangladeshi nationals from illegally infiltrating... The BGB has assured to take all steps for the safety of Indian citizens and people belonging to minority communities in Bangladesh," BSF said.

SC stays HC order reviving graft charges against two TN ministers

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 6

THE SUPREME Court Friday stayed the Madras High Court order reviving graft charges against Tamil Nadu ministers KKSSR Ramchandran and Thangam Therasu and their spouses.

Issuing notice to the Tamil Nadu government on appeals filed by the two leaders from the ruling DMK, a bench of Justices Hrishikesh Roy and P L Mishra also stayed the HC order setting aside their discharge by the trial court in the assets cases.

Both HC orders were passed by a single-judge bench of Justice N Anand Venkatesh on August 7. In the SC, appearing for the two ministers and their spouses, Senior Advocates Kapil Sibal, A M Singhvi and S Muralidhar questioned the procedure followed by the HC. They argued that the HC, while exercising suo motu criminal revision, could not have held that the closure reports filed by the state's Directorate of Vigilance and Anti-Corruption were not acceptable. TN Advocate General P S Raman said the state is planning to challenging the HC order.

The cases were instituted in 2011 and 2012, when the AIADMK was in power. This followed inquiries by the DVAC which found that they had amassed disproportionate assets as ministers in the previous DMK government.

Closing YouTube channel as bail condition: SC stays HC order

New Delhi: The Supreme Court Friday stayed the condition imposed by the Madras High Court order asking a YouTuber to shut down his channel as a condition for bail. Issuing a notice to the Tamil Nadu government on the plea by Felix Gerald, a three-judge bench headed by Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud stayed the direction asking Gerald to take down his YouTube channel RedPix 24x7.

Gerald was arrested for hosting on his channel an allegedly "objectionable" interview of YouTuber Savukku Shankar, who made some comments against Madras High Court judges and women police personnel. **ENS**

shown "udarta" (leniency) and that they they "failed in ensuring *jaati unmulan* (eradication of caste) and *samtamulak siddhant* (principles of equality)".

Describing the Congress members as "Gandhi-wadi" and the BJP members as "RSS-wadi", the BSP chief questioned how could they be "manavtawadi and samtamulak Ambedkarwadi (humanitarian and egalitarian Ambedkarites)".

Without naming the Aazad Samaj Party (Kanshi Ram) — led by Chadrashkekhar Aazad, who won from UP's Nagina in the Lok Sabha polls — Mayawati alleged that the Congress and the BJP were encouraging outfits floated by "selfish leaders from Dalit communities" to "divide" Dalit votes.



Mayawati targeted Akhilesh Yadav and Rahul Gandhi in her appeal. **File**

house incident to evoke sympathy for Mayawati ji and expose SP again," said a party leader.

In her appeal, Mayawati said it is necessary to save the Constitution, B R Ambedkar's

Vistara Frankfurt-bound flight from Mumbai diverted to Turkey amid suspected bomb threat

SUKALP SHARMA
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 6

A VISTARA flight from Mumbai to Frankfurt was diverted to the Erzurum airport in Turkey's eastern region Friday owing to a "security concern", the airline said. Vistara did not elaborate, but sources aware of the matter indicated that it was a bomb threat that had forced the diversion.

The sources said the threat appeared to be in the form of a written message, noticed by a cabin crew member in one of the lavatories of the Boeing 787 aircraft.

"Vistara flight UK 27 operating from Mumbai to Frankfurt on 06 September 2024 has been diverted to Turkey due to a security concern that was noted by our crew while onboard. The aircraft has safely landed at the Erzurum Airport. As per protocol, the relevant authorities were immediately alerted and we are fully cooperating with the security agencies to complete the mandatory security checks. At Vistara, the safety and security of our customers, crew,

and aircraft remain our highest priority," said a Vistara spokesperson.

So far, it is unclear if the threat was a hoax. If that turns out to be the case once the aircraft's security inspection is complete, the plane will be allowed to fly on to Frankfurt. Over the past few months, a number of Indian carriers' flights have received fake bomb threats.

As per information available on flight tracking service Flightradar24, the aircraft operating the flight and bearing registration VT-TSQ squawked 7700, which indicates a general emergency, at around 6:20 pm IST. It had taken off from Mumbai a little over five hours earlier and was three-and-a-half hours away from Frankfurt.

After the aircraft landed at the Erzurum airport, passengers were evacuated and bomb disposal teams were dispatched to inspect the plane as per the security protocol, it is learnt. Given that an emergency had been declared at the Erzurum airport, all flight operations from the airport were temporarily suspended.

RULING ON CASE FILED BY TWO HIMACHAL JUDICIAL OFFICERS

High Court CJ can't individually decide on judges' elevation: SC

ANANTHAKRISHNAN G
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 6

THE SUPREME Court Friday ruled that a High Court Chief Justice cannot individually reconsider a recommendation for a judge's elevation and that this is something that can only be done by the High Court Collegium acting collectively.

A bench of Justices Hrishikesh Roy and P K Mishra said this while directing the Himachal Pradesh HC Collegium to again consider for elevation District Judges Chirag Bhanu Singh and Arvind Malhotra, who were passed over for promotion to High Court judgeship.

Singh and Malhotra were recommended by the then HC Collegium on December 6, 2022 for elevation as judges of the Himachal Pradesh HC. On July 12, 2023, the SC Collegium deferred its consideration. On January 4, 2024, the SC resolved that the proposal for their elevation be remitted for reconsideration to the HC Chief Justice. In a letter dated January 16, 2024, the Minister for Law and Justice urged the HC



Recommending a judge's elevation can only be done collectively: Top court

Chief Justice that fresh recommendations be sent for the two officers against the available service quota vacancies in the HC. The HC CJ, however, recommended two other names for elevation. This was challenged by Bhanu and Malhotra before the SC. They argued that if the other two recommended persons are considered for appointment ahead of them, it would amount to ignoring their seniority and unblemished service.

In reply to the SC notice, the HC Registrar General said the SC Collegium "was never received

by the Chief Justice of the High Court". It said that the HC CJ had written to the Chief Justice of India on December 11, 2023 seeking guidance on whether the Collegium of the Supreme Court needed further inputs about the suitability of the two officers for elevation as HC judges. It added that on March 6, 2024, the Chief Justice of the HC "individually addressed a letter to the Supreme Court Collegium on the suitability of the petitioners".

Allowing their writ petition challenging the recommendation of new names, the SC said: "...there was no collective consultation and deliberations by the members of the High Court Collegium. The decision of the Chief Justice of the High Court, on the process of reconsideration as directed by the Supreme Court Collegium, is clearly discernible".

The ruling also said that "there is also a need to protect certain sensitive information in matters involving appointment of judges. While transparency is necessary to ensure fairness and accountability, it must be carefully balanced with the need to maintain confidentiality".

tionaries have a role to play. In our opinion, the language therein by itself cannot be understood as permitting the Chief Justice of the High Court to act on his own, in matters of recommendation or even reconsideration, for elevation to the High Court bench."

The bench said that it was not looking into the "suitability" of the petitioners for elevation.

The court added it "is mindful of the limited scope of interference in such matters. But this appears to be a case where there was no collective consultation amongst the three Constitutional functionaries of the High Court i.e. the Chief Justice and the two senior-most companion judges. The absence of the element of plurality, in the process of reconsideration as directed by the Supreme Court Collegium, is clearly discernible".

The ruling also said that "there is also a need to protect certain sensitive information in matters involving appointment of judges. While transparency is necessary to ensure fairness and accountability, it must be carefully balanced with the need to maintain confidentiality".

Buch received rent from entity linked to company under SEBI probe, claims Cong

Baseless, misleading: Wockhardt Ltd

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 6



Outright case of corruption, says Khera

CONTINUING ITS attack on SEBI chief Madhabi Puri Buch, the Congress on Friday alleged that she received rental income from an entity affiliated with a company that SEBI was investigating for various cases, including insider trading.

The company, Mumbai-based Wockhardt Limited, in a statement called the Congress claims "baseless" and "misleading" and said it "continues to act in compliance with all applicable laws".

At a press conference at the AICC headquarters, Congress Media and Publicity Department chairperson Pawan Khera said, "Between 2018-2024, Madhabi Buch, as a whole time member and later as the chairperson of SEBI, had been receiving rental income amounting to Rs 2.16 crore from Carol Info Services Limited (a firm affiliated to Wockhardt Limited)".

"Wockhardt Limited was under SEBI's investigation for various cases including that of insider trading during the year 2023... This is an outright case of corruption that invokes conflict of interest violating Section 4, 7, & 8 of SEBI's 2008 Code on Conflict of Interests for Members of Board," he added.

Flagging that the SEBI chairperson was appointed "on March 2, 2022 by the Appointments Committee of Cabinet, which the PM heads", Khera said, "Was her appointment cleared on the condition that she could maintain her previous financial relationships, provided she acted in line with

the wishes of Prime Minister and his close associates?"

Pointing out that previous SEBI chiefs went to great lengths to avoid "even the appearance of a conflict of interest, both at SEBI and in their earlier positions", he said: "In contrast, Ms Buch merely transferred her investments to her spouse, which raises concerns about credibility. Why was there no effort to verify whether Ms Buch would follow these established standards? Or was this lack of scrutiny part of a mutually beneficial arrangement?"

Denying the allegations, Wockhardt Limited said: "It has come to our attention there are certain allegations pertaining to payment of rent by Carol Info Services Limited and its connection with certain orders passed by SEBI in relation to the Company. In this regard, we categorically deny these allegations and state that these allegations are completely baseless and misleading. The Company has acted and continues to act in compliance with all applicable laws."

The Congress had on Monday accused Buch of "holding an office of profit at ICICI Bank", and continuing to receive income to the tune of Rs 16.80 crore since she took over the post in 2017. However, ICICI Bank, said the bank or its group companies have "not paid any salary or granted any ESOPs" to Buch after she retired.

BJD RS MP joins BJP, second setback for party in over a month

SUJIT BISOI
BHUBANESWAR, SEPT 6



Sujat Kumar joined BJP in Delhi. ANI

MONTH AFTER Mamata Mohanta's resignation from the Biju Janata Dal and Rajya Sabha, the party faced another setback in Parliament on Friday with another of its members, Sujat Kumar, resigned from the Upper House and joined the ruling BJP.

The BJD's number in the Upper House is now seven.

The development came a day after BJD chief and former CM Naveen Patnaik said there is a "sense of insecurity" among the minorities and announced to oppose the Waqf Bill.

"I do hereby tender my resignation from the Membership of Rajya Sabha today, i.e. 6th September 2024; having taken this decision consciously," said Kumar in his resignation letter to Rajya Sabha Chairman and Vice-President Jagdeep Dhankhar.

The Vice-President's office wrote on X that Kumar's resignation has been accepted "with immediate effect".

Moments after Kumar's resignation from the Rajya Sabha, the party expelled him for "anti-party activities".

A statement issued by the BJD signed by Patnaik said Kumar had let down the party that sent him to Rajya Sabha and the "hopes and aspirations of people of Kalahandi district".

Originally from Bhawanipatna in Kalahandi district, 351 (3) has an MBA degree from Oxford University and a masters' degree in public administration. Before joining BJD, Kumar had also worked with the World Economic Forum and UNDP. Known for his election management strategies, Kumar played a crucial role in preparing BJD's poll plan in as many as 40 seats in the western Odisha in 2014 and 2019 polls.



NATIONAL AWARDEES

Prime Minister Narendra Modi interacts with the winners of National Teachers' Award 2024, in New Delhi on Friday. At a ceremony Thursday, 82 educators were conferred the 'National Teachers' Award by President Droupadi Murmu. PTI

Himanta inaugurates Dibrugarh secretariat, first outside Dispur

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
DIBRUGARH, SEPTEMBER 6

ASSAM CHIEF Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Friday inaugurated the CM's secretariat in Dibrugarh town, the first such facility outside the capital Dispur.

Several key decisions were taken by the chief minister in his first sitting in the new office, official sources said. "Today, I had the privilege to join Hon'ble Union Minister Shri @sarbansandsonwal dangoriya and my other colleagues to dedicate the Chief Minister's secretariat in Dibrugarh. This secretariat is not just a building but illustrates our sustained efforts to bring governance closer to the people," Sarma posted on X.



Assam CM Himanta Biswa Sarma

He maintained that for decades, due to legacy issues, there has been an opinion that people living away from the capital have missed out on development opportunities.

"With the opening of the secretariat, 9 districts surrounding Dibrugarh will have proximity to top-level decision making. I will be spending 4 days a month in this office," he said. "Over the coming months, you will see faster decision making and quicker implementation of projects," he said.

Process is time-taking, but Project Cheetah a success: Union Minister

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 6

THE WORK on Project Cheetah has been a time-taking process but it has been a success, Union Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav said Friday ahead of the project's second anniversary.

"They (cheetahs) had to adapt and set themselves to the local system. We brought 20 cheetahs. Unfortunately, climatic conditions led to mortality. But in two years, we have 26 cheetahs," Yadav said at an exhibition on wildlife photography in the capital.

Yadav's comments come over a week after the death of Pawan, the male cheetah which was found dead on August 27 near a stream in Kuno National Park, Madhya Pradesh. The cheetah, which was translocated from Namibia, reportedly died



In two years, we have 26 cheetahs: Bhupender Yadav

due to drowning. However, the Madhya Pradesh government is yet to rule out unnatural causes such as poisoning.

Recounting the early jitters of field staff, Yadav said that during the project's early stages, forest ranges used to feel apprehensive when the freshly translocated cheetahs moved in their range. "I have seen that forest rangers used to be tense when cheetahs moved in their range. But I reassured them that they should work without worrying as the process in such projects is time taking."

Project Cheetah began with the reintroduction of eight chee-

tahs from Namibia and South Africa in Kuno National Park, Madhya Pradesh. As of now 25 cheetahs — 13 adults and 12 cubs — survive.

The government is currently developing Gandhi Sagar wildlife sanctuary as the second home for the African cheetahs. Prey base of ungulates is being augmented in the protected area and the field staff also has its task cut out on the issue of relocating leopards, who are a competing predator of the cheetahs in the sanctuary.

Meanwhile, the National Tiger Conservation Authority and Project Cheetah steering committee are also deliberating on finalising the source population for importing the next batch of cheetahs for the project. One of the key objectives of the project is to introduce eight to 14 cheetahs annually for five years, subject to availability.



B Mahesh Kumar Goud was unit's working president

OBC face Goud is Cong's new Telangana chief

SREENIVAS JANYALA
HYDERABAD, SEPTEMBER 6

INWHAT is being seen as another instance of the Congress's outreach to the backward classes in Telangana, the party on Friday appointed B Mahesh Kumar Goud as its new state unit president.

Goud, 66, who was the working president of the Telangana Pradesh Congress Committee (TPCC), takes over from Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy, who held the post since June 2021.

Sources said Reddy had "strongly pitched" for Goud in his effort to the consolidate the votes of the OBCs — or BC community as it is known in Telangana — who make up 50% of the state's population. The BCs had largely supported Congress in the December 2023 Assembly elections and the recent Lok Sabha polls.

Reddy's Cabinet currently has only two BC leaders — Ponnann Prabhakar and Konda Surekha. The BC leaders in the party had reportedly expected at least five berths. Goud's elevation is an attempt to soothe the community.

The appointment also comes amidst the demand for a caste census in the state. In October 2023, a delegation of BC leaders had put forth the demand.

Following that, in February, the state government passed a resolution and issued an order to conduct a BC caste survey, but balked at going ahead with it, apprehending conflicts between leading BC groups like Golla Kurumas, Mudirajs and Gouds.

Ravenshaw varsity clash: BJD MLA, 2 others booked

SUJIT BISOI
BHUBANESWAR, SEPTEMBER 6

THE POLICE registered a case against three BJD leaders including party MLA Byomakesh Ray in connection with the clash which broke out outside the Ravenshaw University gate in Cuttack Wednesday between students and ex-students protesting over the proposed renaming of the institution.

The Malgdown police in Cuttack registered the case against Ray, the MLA from Chandabali, BJD spokesperson Lenin Mohanty, BJD student wing leader Bobby Khan and others based on a complaint of Shyama Sundar Sahoo, a research student of the varsity.

The case has been registered under Section 25 and 27 of Arms Act and Section 115 (2) (voluntarily causing hurt to others), 126 (2) (wrongful restraint), 296 (obscene acts), 3(5) (common intention), 351 (3) (threatening to cause injury) of the BNS.

The complainant alleged that Wednesday evening, some non-students led by the BJD MLA and other two accused barged into the university campus and pushed him while he was talking to his friends. The complainant alleged the BJD leaders told him and others to leave the campus because they wanted to hold a rally. The FIR said the non-students became furious and attacked using obscene language and threatened the complainant and his friends with a gun.

Rift in Ayodhya BJP out in open as former Faizabad MP leaves event in a huff: 'Will not share dais with mafia'

MAULSHREE SETH
LUCKNOW, SEPTEMBER 6

BRINGING TO the fore a "rift" within the BJP's Ayodhya unit, former Faizabad MP Lallu Singh abruptly left a press conference that was held to launch the party's membership drive ahead of the Assembly by-elections in Uttar Pradesh, claiming he would not share the dais with a "mafia", apparently referring to a party worker.

Lallu was defeated by Awadhesh Prasad of the Samajwadi Party from Faizabad in the concluded Lok Sabha elections.

The press conference was held on Wednesday a day before

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath's scheduled visit to Ayodhya where the BJP is making all-out efforts to win the Milkipur Assembly seat. The CM himself has taken charge of the constituency and even some ministers have been asked to camp there.

Shivendra Singh, the party worker who Lallu Singh referred to as a "mafia", hit out at him, attributing the party's defeat from the parliamentary constituency to a "will change the Constitution" remark the former MP had made ahead of the Lok Sabha elections. He also pointed to Lallu's alleged association with people with criminal background in the past.

Speaking to *The Indian*



Lallu Singh was at a press meet on the BJP's membership drive

Express, Lallu Singh maintained this would not have any impact on the coming Assembly bypolls but many leaders feel that the party would have to sort out such differences before more dais are drawn.

He said, "It is not about being sidelined. Who will sideline me? It is about decorum and discipline. I had reached the press conference before time and was sitting with journalists. Then some party lead-

ers arrived and headed towards the dais. I saw some wrong people sitting there. I did not deem it fit to sit with such people with criminal background, so I decided to leave quietly."

He further said, "Discipline and decorum are a must for the party. I have been working for the party's ideology for years as a disciplined worker. The party's district unit should be careful about this. Or else, the party will have to pay the price."

Shivendra Singh, district president of the Block Pramukh Association, said he was long associated with the BJP as a member. "I was present on the dais that day. I have long been associated with him in elections but he

never had a problem. I think his statement could be a reflection of his advancing age. It was because of his Constitution remark that the party faced a defeat. He has had photographs with me and with people facing even more serious cases. He should first clarify his criteria for calling someone a mafia," he said.

Shivendra added he has been a student leader and also worked for the party's ideology for years. BJP district president Sanjeev Singh said there is a certain way of raising the party's internal issues.

The Milkipur Assembly seat fell vacant after then MLA Awadhesh Prasad was fielded in the Lok Sabha polls.

ANAND MOHAN J
BHOPAL, SEPTEMBER 6

A FIERCE encounter broke out after several suspected Maoists opened fire on the Madhya Pradesh Police's Hawk Force in an effort to rescue one of their arrested operatives.

Police said they successfully maintained custody of Sajanti, a Maoist operative carrying a Rs14-lakh bounty. She was taken into custody in an operation in the Parasatola-Chichrangpur forest area of Balaghat district on Thursday. The operation to capture Sajanti took place on Thursday, when the Hawk Force received intelligence about the presence of Maoists from the KB

Division in the Parasatola-Chichrangpur forest area near Baihar police station, police said.

"During the search, two suspicious individuals were spotted, and after a brief pursuit, one of them, identified as Sajanti, was apprehended. However, another Naxalite managed to escape," said a senior police officer.

While returning with Sajanti, the "police team came under heavy fire from Naxalites attempting to free their comrade", the officer said. Approximately 30-40 rounds were fired at police, and they fired back, forcing the attackers to flee, the officer said. "A large-scale search operation, involving teams from the CRPF Cobra and Hawk Force, is underway to apprehend the fleeing Naxalites."

9 EXPRESS NETWORK

KOLKATA JUNIOR DOCTOR'S RAPE-MURDER

SC dismisses plea by R G Kar's former principal

No fetters can be put on probe: Court

ANANTHAKRISHNAN G
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 6

THE SUPREME Court on Friday dismissed a plea filed by former R G Kar Hospital principal Sandip Ghosh, challenging the Calcutta High Court order transferring the investigation into alleged financial irregularities at the institute during his tenure to the CBI.

have no locus to intervene in a PIL where the HC is monitoring the probe or has transferred it to the CBI," CJI Chandrachud said.

"I am saying please investigate. But linking the present probe, which is purely on a financial irregularity with the nexus as the HC uses the word with that of the rape is not right," Arora stated.

"I didn't want to say that. But that itself is a matter of investigation," the CJI said. "Yes, both aspects," said Justice Pardiwala.

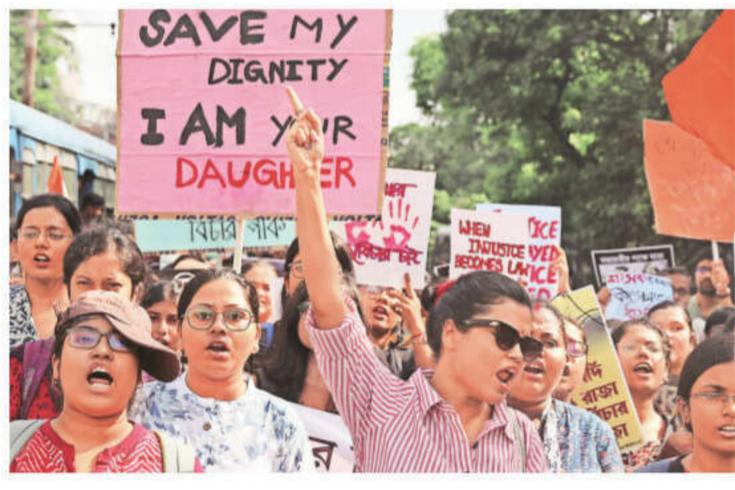
Ghosh's counsel submitted: "When I joined during the Covid period, I made certain changes to the education regime, requiring students to take exams because according to us, at that time, Covid was phasing out and promotions could not be done without exams. The students went on a strike."

A three-judge bench presided by CJI D Y Chandrachud and comprising Justices J B Pardiwala and Manoj Misra said that Ghosh had "no locus standi at this stage" and that "no fetters can be put on investigation". On August 23, the HC had transferred the probe into the alleged financial irregularities from a state-constituted SIT to the CBI after a plea was filed by a former deputy superintendent of R G Kar Hospital Akhtar Ali.

In his plea, Ali requested that ED probe into the alleged financial misconduct — embezzlement of government funds, trafficking of biomedical waste, nepotism and violation of procurement laws — at the institute, since January 2021. Ghosh and three others were arrested by the ED in the case, after which the state government suspended him.

Appearing for Ghosh, Senior Advocate Meenakshi Arora submitted before the bench that "this is a huge miscarriage against me" to connect Ghosh to the rape and murder of a junior doctor at R G Kar Hospital on August 9. Arora said that earlier two identical petitions had been dismissed.

However, the SC did not agree. "It can't be disputed that you (Ghosh) were the principal of the college when the alleged offence took place... So, as an accused, you



At a protest march in Kolkata on Friday. Partha Paul

As ED raids Sandip Ghosh's home, scrutiny on 'farmhouse'

RITU SARIN & SWEETY KUMARI
NEW DELHI, KOLKATA, SEPTEMBER 6

THE ED on Friday conducted searches at several locations in Kolkata and Howrah, including the house of R G Kar Medical College and Hospital's former principal Sandip Ghosh, as part of its probe into alleged financial irregularities at the institute. The institute has been under scanner since the rape and murder of a junior doctor there last month.

Senior ED officials said that during searches, they uncovered evidence of Ghosh allegedly owning a farmhouse. Officials said they are probing an alleged "criminal nexus" between Ghosh and certain "unscrupulous contractors". The possibility of bribes being paid for the award of contracts is under investigation, officials said.

It is learnt that one of the contractors whose premises was searched on Friday has been arrested by the CBI. The pattern of several contractors getting as-



During the ED raid at Sandip Ghosh's house. Partha Paul

signed jobs for which they were unlicensed and thus ineligible was uncovered during a departmental inquiry by the Department of Health and Family Welfare, it is learnt. Earlier, the ED had recorded the statement of Akhtar Ali, former Deputy Superintendent of R G Kar Hospital, in their Prevention of Money Laundering (PMLA) case, following which the names of some "favored" contractors came to light, sources said.

The ED is also understood to have obtained bank statements of several accounts linked to Ghosh and other hospital managers, which are under scrutiny.

The ED team arrived at Ghosh's Belegkata residence at

around 6.30 am on Friday but could not enter as the door was locked from outside. The officials went back and returned later, entering his house at 9.15 am.

Ghosh is already under arrest in an alleged corruption case filed by the CBI. Following his arrest, Ghosh was suspended by the state health department.

On Friday, ED officials accompanied by personnel from the Central Armed Police Forces also conducted searches at the houses of three other people — Biplob Singha, Prason Chattopadhyay and Kaushik Koley.

Singha is associated with a medical equipment supply business and is a hospital vendor. Earlier this week, he was arrested alongside Ghosh, and on Friday, his house in Howrah was among the locations where the ED conducted searches.

Chattopadhyay works as a data entry operator at the National Medical College and is known as Ghosh's close aide. The ED conducted searches at his house in Subhasgram as well as at Koley's residence in Howrah.

Governor refers anti-rape Bill to President Murmu

Kolkata: Governor C V Ananda Bose on Friday referred the anti-rape Bill unanimously passed by the state Assembly to President Droupadi Murmu for her consideration on "receipt of a mandatory technical report" from the West Bengal government, a Raj Bhavan statement said.

"Bengal Governor refers Aparajita Bill for consideration of the President on receipt of a mandatory technical report from the Govt of Bengal, Governor has referred the Aparajita Bill for consideration of the President," Raj Bhavan media cell posted on X.

The Bengal Assembly unanimously passed a Bill called the Aparajita Woman and Child Bill (West Bengal Criminal Laws and Amendment) Bill, 2024, on September 3 that seeks capital punishment for a rape convict if the assault results in the death of victim or leaves her in a vegetative state, and life sentence without parole for other offenders. ENS

Sanjay Roy sent to judicial custody until September 20

Kolkata: A Sealdah court on Friday rejected the bail plea of the key accused in the R G Kar Hospital rape and murder case of a junior doctor, and remanded him in 14-day judicial custody until September 20.

Earlier, the judge expressed displeasure since the CBI's investigating officer and lawyer were initially absent. The CBI is probing the matter after a Calcutta HC order. The CBI counsel reached 40 minutes late, and opposed the bail plea, saying it would hamper their probe. The court, however, emphasised the gravity of the situation and the need for more prompt action from the CBI.

Sanjay Roy, the prime accused, a civic volunteer with Kolkata Police, was arrested on August 10. The CBI has also conducted a polygraph test on Roy at Presidency Jail. ENS

Woman raped on Ujjain footpath, people shoot videos instead of helping

Accused sent to judicial custody

ANAND MOHAN J
BHOPAL, SEPTEMBER 6

THE VIDEO of a woman being raped by a man on a footpath in Madhya Pradesh's Ujjain district has unleashed a war of words between the Congress and the BJP as the opposition party trained its guns over the "deteriorating law and order" in the state pointing out that the crime took place in Chief Minister Mohan Yadav's constituency.

According to police, the woman was raped on a footpath in Koyla Phatak, one of the busiest intersections in the city on Wednesday. The incident was also shot by passersby and yet nobody intervened, police said.

City Superintendent of Police (CSP) Ujjain, Om Prakash Mishra, said: "Yesterday, at around 3:30 pm, a woman came to the police station and reported that she had been raped. Immediately a woman officer was called and her story was heard and an FIR was registered after informing the senior officers."

Police said the woman, in her complaint, revealed the name of the accused, Lokesh. "A team was immediately formed and sent in search of Lokesh, and yesterday itself, within 2 hours of the FIR being registered, we arrested Lokesh. The accused was brought to the police station and questioned, during which Lokesh admitted to committing the crime," Mishra said.

The woman was medically examined and after that, Lokesh was presented before the court which sent the accused to judicial custody.

"Apart from this, the statement of the woman was also recorded before the court today. In which the woman has con-

firmed the incident of rape before the court... A video of this incident was also made which also came to police, we have taken it as evidence," Mishra said.

Police have alleged that the accused Lokesh had "promised to marry her, made her drink liquor, and then raped her on Wednesday".

Some people who were passing by shot videos of the incident instead of stopping the crime, according to police.

State Congress President Jitu Patwari said that while the BJP was protesting across the country over the R G Kar rape case, in Madhya Pradesh, a woman was raped on a footpath in the CM's constituency which has crossed all boundaries.

"BJP is protesting across the country against RG Kar medical college & hospital rape and murder incident... In Madhya Pradesh everyday, 18 women are raped or face some form of harassment. Boundaries were crossed when in the Chief Minister's own constituency a woman was raped on the footpath... Why is MP CM Mohan Yadav, Union Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan, PM Modi silent?... There is a jungle raj in Madhya Pradesh," Patwari said.

State BJP President VD Sharma said the Congress party was politicising the incident.

"Congress party has no issues to corner the Madhya Pradesh government and that's why they try to give such a tone to the incident... The BJP government is the first government to introduce a law to give the death penalty to the perpetrators of these kinds of incidents... The accused has been arrested and the state government will ensure that strict action is taken against them," Sharma said.

Police constable held for rape of student in Raipur

Raipur: The Raipur Police on Friday arrested a police constable for allegedly raping a 22-year-old student. The constable was produced before a court, which remanded him to judicial custody.

According to the woman, she was raped by the constable, 26, in his car and at her house in the intervening night of Wednesday and Thursday. The woman and the accused were known to each other for the past few months.

"The victim needed some help regarding her studies and they had been in touch over the phone for 2-3 months. They are from the same locality," said a police official.

The victim approached the Mana police station on Thursday, after which an FIR was registered under BNS sections 64 and 351(2). The victim's medical test has been conducted.

Bhavesh Gautam, inspector in-charge of Mana police station, said: "We have launched a probe into the incident. He was posted in Chandkhuri police academy. He has been in force since 2015." ENS

On run for 40 days, BJP worker held for rape

GOPAL KATESHIYA
RAJKOT, SEPTEMBER 6

ON THE RUN for almost 40 days after a woman accused him of rape, BJP worker Vijay Radadiya — a trustee of the educational institute at a village in Rajkot where the victim used to study — surrendered before police and was arrested late Thursday.

Radadiya, whose wife Daksha is a sitting member of Rajkot district panchayat, was arrested two days after a court denied his plea seeking protection against arrest in the rape case. Radadiya and Madhu Thadhani, a former village sarpanch, were booked on July 25 after the former student filed a police complaint alleging that the two men raped her on the campus in June 2023. The 21-year-old woman said that Thadhani was friends with Radadiya and the institute's then managing trustee.

Last June, Thadhani and Radadiya allegedly started "winking and smiling" at her. As per the

FIR, around 15 days later, Thadhani called her, asked not to go to college and instead stay put in her room. The two men then allegedly went to her room, threatened her and took turns to rape her. She alleged in the FIR that Thadhani said that the institute's then managing trustee was aware of everything.

She said a few days later, she had to take a few girls of the hostel to a hospital and Thadhani molested her in a room at the hospital. In May this year, she migrated to Surat for further studies but Thadhani met her twice, latest on July 12, and molested and threatened her, asking her to marry him.

Thadhani was arrested in the rape case on August 2, and is in judicial custody. Radadiya, meanwhile, had been on the run. He, however, surrendered before police and was formally arrested at 3 pm on Thursday. Police on Friday produced Radadiya before a court, which sent him to police custody until Monday morning.

FULL REPORT ON www.indianexpress.com

In Sultanpur, how 'encounter' killing after jewellery heist led to political storm

MANISH SAHU
SULTANPUR, SEPTEMBER 6

IT WAS a plan worthy of a heist movie. First, a group of assailants watched a jewellery shop in Uttar Pradesh's Sultanpur for nearly a month. Then, on August 28, another group of five allegedly robbed the shop while a third kept watch outside, ready to provide backup if needed.

A week later, one of the suspects in the case was killed in an alleged encounter that has now sparked a political row in the state.

Early Thursday, 28-year-old Mangesh Yadav from Jaunpur was killed in an alleged encounter involving the UP Special Task Force in Misirpur Puraina village, some 10 km from Sultanpur. Mangesh was one of the five masked men involved in the armed robbery at Bh Ornaments, police claim. But, Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav alleged that the encounter was "staged" and that Mangesh was killed "because of his caste".

According to police, Mangesh Yadav faced nine criminal cases, including charges under the draconian UP Gangsters and Anti-Social Activities (Prevention) Act, 1986, and also carried a bounty of Rs 1 lakh on his head. Police also allegedly seized 4.95 kg of silver, two firearms, ammunition, and a motorcycle from his possession.

According to the account of the shooting given by the UP STF, they got a tip that Mangesh was riding to Jaunpur with an aide and intercepted them at a checkpoint near the Sultanpur bypass. The vike then allegedly sped towards Mishirpur Puraina village, with riders firing at the police team, who retaliated. While Mangesh was fatally wounded in the firing, the aide, whose identity is still not known, escaped, police said.

Inside Bh Ornaments in the busy chowk area of Sultanpur, owner Bharatji Soni (67) sat cross-legged on a mattress on the floor of his now-closed shop while two policemen stood guard outside. "They (the assailants) were here



The jewellery shop in chowk area of Sultanpur. Express

for four minutes," he said. Asked if he would recognise any of them, he said he couldn't "as they had covered their faces with scarves and helmets". The assailants, he said, took away gold and silver ornaments and Rs 3 lakh. Although he did not put a price on the stolen ornaments, police estimated them to cost over Rs 1 crore.

On their part, the UP Police, who have refused to comment on claims made by the SP chief, said 14 people were involved in the heist, all identified through "human intel and surveillance". Among those in custody is "key conspirator" Vipin Singh,

who has 34 criminal cases against him, including charges under the Gangster Act. Vipin Singh had allegedly surrendered in a case on August 29, a day after the heist. Three others — Pushpendra, Tribhuvan and Sachin Singh — were arrested on September 3, after an "encounter", police said.

A police constable was injured in Thursday's shootout, but is now "stable". Sultanpur SP Somen Barma told *The Indian Express*, adding that nine persons were still on the run. But despite police's claims, Mangesh's family in Jaunpur claims that he was taken for questioning on Monday night with the promise to send him back but it never happened.

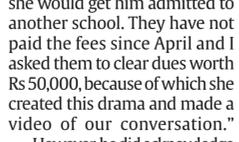
"On Thursday, police came to our house and said that Mangesh had died in an encounter. They asked us to collect his body from Sultanpur. We went there and brought his body," his younger sister Princy Yadav told *The Indian Express* over the phone, adding that the local police had refused to register their complaint.

Storm over biryani in tiffin: 7-yr-old student 'beaten up by principal' in shock, says mother

AMIT SHARMA
MEERUT, SEPTEMBER 6

AMID OUTRAGE over a seven-year-old allegedly being beaten up and expelled from an Amroha school over biryani in his lunchbox, a panel has been formed to look into the incident, with officials emphasising that if the claims are verified, strict action will be taken against the principal.

The Class 3 boy, who faced the alleged ordeal on Wednesday, is still in shock, his mother told *The Indian Express*. On Friday, the management of the private school appeared to backtrack under pressure. Avneesh Kumar Sharma, the principal who is seen in a short video having a heated exchange with the boy's mother, told *The Indian Express*, "The student was not expelled but his mother said



Amroha school principal faces an inquiry

she would get him admitted to another school. They have not paid the fees since April and I asked them to clear dues worth Rs 50,000, because of which she created this drama and made a video of our conversation."

However, he did acknowledge that bringing biryani to school was a point of contention. "Bringing non-vegetarian food in the tiffin is prohibited in the school's code of conduct, but the student had done it thrice despite being warned. He had biryani in his tiffin on Saturday and was offering it to his classmates. Parents of other students objected to this," he said.

The boy's mother told *The Indian Express* that he was not only beaten by the principal, but also confined to an empty room for three hours. She alleged, "The principal said that my son is a terrorist and there is no place for such students, who force others

principal and termed a religious fundamentalist. She also claimed the principal told her that he had struck off the boy's name from the school register," Singh said.

The panel comprises principals of three government schools in Amroha. Two members of the panel, Snehlata and Lalit Kumar, reached the school on Friday and met the parents of 22 students. While they are yet to speak to the boy's mother, Snehlata said they spoke to other students' mothers, who told her the boy "had been acting weird for two months".

Basic Shiksha Adhikari Monica Kumari said: "If the charges levelled by the mother are proved true, the demeanour of the principal is condemnable and strict action will be taken." The principal, however, said: "I haven't beaten him. He was confined to the computer room under the supervision of a teacher.

The boy offered biryani to his Hindu classmates, which parents objected to. I called a parent-teacher meeting on Wednesday but his mother blamed me."

In a video, the principal can be seen telling the woman that the boy's name has been removed from school records. "Char le jayo esse. Aise bachchon ki yahan jaroorat nahi hai (Take him back. We don't need such students)," he is heard saying. However, he claimed this was not the full conversation. "Our conversation was respectful till I mentioned the pending dues," he claimed.

Haji Khursheed Anwar, president of Muslim Committee, said: "We have demanded that the school's recognition be cancelled and strict action be taken against the guilty. We will be forced to launch an agitation if the committee gives a clean chit," he said. The school has 1,050 students.

Kerala court grants pre-arrest bail to Mukesh: 'No mention of force in first statement'

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, SEPTEMBER 6

GRANTING PRE-ARREST bail to actor-legislator M Mukesh in a rape case, the district sessions court in Ernakulam has observed that the complainant had not mentioned any forcible sexual intercourse in her first statement, but alleged the use of force only after initial hearing of the bail plea.

The non-bailable case against Mukesh was one of the rape cases which emerged in the wake of the release of the Justice Hema Committee report. The Opposition parties in the state have been demanding the resignation of Mukesh, a two-time CPI(M) legislator, from Kollam. Apart from Mukesh, the court granted pre-arrest bail to Edavela Babu, a former general

secretary of actors' body AMMA. Judge Honey M Varghese, who examined the veracity of the allegations for considering the pre-arrest bail plea, said, "There's a clear distinction between rape and consensual sex."

The complainant had argued that she was raped by Mukesh in 2010 at his flat in Kochi and the actor had promised her a membership in AMMA. "No element of forcible intercourse was mentioned in the first statement. In the further statement, recorded after the initial hearing of the bail plea, she said that she was subjected to forcible intercourse. Nothing to mention in the statement regarding coercion and instigation. She accompanied him to get membership (in AMMA). The only contention of the woman was that her consent was obtained on the strength of a promise of membership (in AMMA)," said the court.

BRIEFLY

ODISHA
Agni-4 missile successfully test-fired

Balasore: India on Friday successfully test-fired Agni-4, an Intermediate Range Ballistic Missile, from the Integrated Test Range in Chandipur off the Odisha coast, said defence sources. The launch validated all operational and technical parameters. It was held under the aegis of the Strategic Forces Command, they said. PTI

CHHATTISGARH
3 CRPF officers die in lightning strikes in 48 hrs

Raipur: Three CRPF personnel were killed after being struck by lightning amid heavy rainfall in Chhattisgarh over the last 48 hours, officers said. Two constables, S Sahuat Alam and Mahendra Kumar, from the 111th Battalion were killed after being struck by lightning at an anti-Naxalite training centre of CRPF in Dantewada. Another jawan, Kamlesh Hemla, was killed in lightning strike in Bijapur on Thursday — during a domination exercise. ENS

MADHYA PRADESH
Khandwa: Five of family injured in wolf attack

Khandwa: Five members of a family in Khandwa in Madhya Pradesh were attacked by a wolf on Friday, a senior police official said. The incident took place at 2:30 am in Malgaon village, Khalwa tehsil, Harsud sub-divisional officer of police Sandeep Vaskale told mediapersons. This comes at a time when wolf attacks in UP's Bahraich have made headlines. PTI



The Indian EXPRESS

FOUNDED BY

RAMNATH GOENKA

BECAUSE THE TRUTH INVOLVES US ALL

At a strategic crossroads

With uncertainty in neighbourhood and volatility across the globe, India needs statecraft to navigate its way



ARUN PRAKASH

FACING EAST

PM Modi's Singapore visit gives impetus to engagement with South East Asia, underlines ASEAN's central role

PRIME MINISTER NARENDRA Modi's visit to Singapore this week marks a major attempt to reboot one of India's most valuable partnerships in Asia and the world. It is also about giving a fresh impetus to India's engagement with South East Asia and more broadly the vast Pacific region. Before the PM's visit to Brunei — the first bilateral visit to this small petroleum-rich nation and Singapore this week — Delhi had hosted the prime ministers of Malaysia and Vietnam. President Droupadi Murmu travelled to Fiji and New Zealand last month. External Affairs Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar met several foreign ministers in the region and received them in Delhi. These engagements have once again demonstrated the extraordinary goodwill for Delhi in the region and the high expectations from India. The intensity of this Asian diplomatic activity at the beginning of Modi's third term will hopefully translate into concrete outcomes when the PM heads to Laos next month to attend the annual summit meetings with ASEAN and East Asian leaders.

The last few years have seen the growing importance of the Gulf region, leading to speculation that South East Asia has fallen off India's political radar. But Jaishankar has made it clear that both the Gulf and South East Asia are of vital importance to India. The fact, though, is that there has been a shadow over the salience of India's South East Asia policy in recent years. When he took charge in 2014, Modi rebranded India's Look East Policy unveiled by Delhi in the early 1990s as "Act East Policy". At the diplomatic level, this culminated in the presence of ASEAN leaders as honoured guests at the Republic Day celebrations in January 2018. At the geopolitical level, the regional environment had become more complex with the sharpening US-China conflict and Delhi's own deepening troubles with Beijing. India's membership of the newly revived Quad, too, raised concerns in the region. In Singapore this week, the PM made it clear that India and the Quad stand squarely behind ASEAN and its central role in the regional security architecture. Delhi's efforts at reassuring ASEAN have shown a measure of success as the region opens up to more defence and security cooperation with India.

It is in the trade domain, though, that significant questions remain about India's commitment in the region. Delhi's decision to walk out of the regional negotiations on trade liberalisation (RCEP) at the eleventh hour had deeply disappointed many, especially Singapore that had championed India's Look East Policy since the early 1990s. Despite recent calls from the region and the World Bank, Delhi is unlikely to reconsider its rejection of RCEP. It understands the importance of plugging this loophole and is looking to strengthen bilateral trade and investment arrangements with all major economies in the region. Delhi is also looking at new areas such as digitalisation, health, space technology and advanced manufacturing to strengthen regional ties. This new Indian approach has been highlighted by India's "semiconductor diplomacy" with Malaysia and Singapore, both of which have significant capabilities in semiconductor production. It is up to Delhi's economic ministries now to translate the agreements for semiconductor collaboration into ground reality.

A DIVERSE PLATE

Changes in food consumption patterns capture important trends, have significant policy implications

A NEW WORKING paper by the Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister that analyses the Household Consumption Expenditure Survey 2022-23 and compares it to results of the 2011-12 survey has found "striking changes in food consumption patterns over the last ten years." The most significant finding is that for the "first time in modern India (post-independence) ... average household spending on food is less than half the overall monthly spending of households". In other words, Indian families are allocating less than half of their monthly budget towards food items. The paper calls it "a marker of significant progress".

This decline has been broad-based — occurring across states and Union Territories as well as both urban and rural areas. Within food items, the share of expenditure on cereals has declined significantly; what's more, the decline in expenditure on cereals is "more substantial for the bottom 20 per cent of the households" both in rural and urban areas. "In all likelihood, this reflects the effectiveness of the government's food security policies, which provide free foodgrain to large numbers of beneficiaries across all states of the country, with a particular focus on the vulnerable bottom 20 per cent of households," the paper says. Arguably, with cereals being provided by the government, households could diversify their diets with increased spending on other items such as milk, eggs and meat. The paper notes that this trend also underscores the improvement in overall infrastructure, transportation, storage etc. that has allowed increased access of such food items to all socio-economic classes across the country.

While crossing the 50 per cent threshold is a marker of sorts, the fact is that this is a long-term trend: As family incomes and expenditures have risen, the proportion spent on food has been coming down. What is more noteworthy are some of the other findings, and the related policy implications. For instance, if diets are getting diversified across India then it may require government policies to further promote diverse crops. This has implications for the debate around Minimum Support Prices (or MSPs), which overwhelmingly target cereal production. Similarly, there's a "significant increase" in the share of household expenditure on "served and packaged processed food" even as there is "significant decline" in cereals' average per capita consumption (amount in kg) across the country. These trends, that affect the health outcomes of Indians, need to be studied to improve public health policies.

A KITTY-CAT BREAK

In the US, a film festival celebrates the cat video. Watching the felines is a lesson and a diversion

FAIR FROM VENICE, where superstars and auteurs of the human variety are taking their bows before adoring audiences and serious cineastes, a film festival of an entirely different kind, featuring some of the world's biggest celebrities of the four-legged kind is on. Currently touring the US, the Cat Video Fest is exactly what it sounds like: Over an hour's worth of some of the world's best cat videos. And it's not the only one of its kind. The NY Cat Film Festival, which opens next month, too will have documentaries, features and animated shorts about felines.

Those familiar with the deep connection that cats have with the history of communication technology are unlikely to be surprised by these developments. This is a connection that goes all the way back to 1894 when Thomas Edison made the world's first "cat video" when he was testing his Kinetograph by filming a pair of feline "boxers" (The Boxing Cats). Cut to the 21st century, when the switch to HTML5 from Flash, which significantly improved the multimedia experience of the internet, is credited to the popularity of cat-related online content. In other words, not only are cats one of the most popular subjects for amateur filmmaking on mobile phones, they've also shaped the way such content is consumed.

The purpose of the Cat Video Fest, as well as the NY Cat Film Festival, is primarily to raise money for cat-related charities. Reports from the former paint a picture of theatres filled with happy, laughing people, relieved of their worries, even if only for an hour, as they watch cats run, sleep, smack each other and goof around. At a time when movie theatres around the world are struggling to draw audiences, could cat film festivals offer a solution? Felines have shown the way before, there is no reason they won't do so now.

EVEN AS THE 31st meeting of the diplomatic Working Mechanism on India-China Border Affairs concluded infructuously in end-August, our gallant jawans prepare for yet another winter in eyeball-to-eyeball confrontation with the Chinese PLA on frigid Himalayan heights. While the man on the street believes that by significant army redeployment, we have been able to checkmate China's nefarious designs, Beijing — playing its own deceitful game — has been busy fortifying military positions in Ladakh and creating "border defence" villages across the Arunachal border.

Apart from propping up "iron brother" Pakistan economically and militarily to function as its effective South-Asian catspaw, China launched multiple other enterprises, aimed at undermining India's position in the Indian Ocean Region. Schemes like the Belt and Road Initiative and Maritime Silk Road touted by Beijing as geo-economic initiatives served to arouse fears of "strategic encirclement" in India. While these fears were not unfounded, straws in the wind were, regrettably, ignored.

The Maldives had, as far back as 2012, cancelled a major airport modernisation contract with an Indian firm in favour of a Chinese company. Over the next decade, the "India First" spirit in Male steadily transmuted into a vociferous "India Out" campaign that brought current President Mohamed Muizzu to power. Similarly, in August, it was an egregious misreading of popular Bangladeshi sentiment that saw the fall of PM Sheikh Hasina's India-friendly regime, catching New Delhi by surprise. Today, our eastern neighbour teeters between rule by theocratic and anarchic forces.

These events, juxtaposed with India's prickly relationships with Nepal and Sri Lanka, raise two pertinent questions about the reasons for this loss of influence in our neighbourhood. One, why is India, despite its self-image of a sagacious and benign "Vishwaguru/Vishwamitra", still perceived as a "big brother/bully" by its neighbours? Two, are we underestimating the adverse impact in neighbouring capitals of divisive domestic politics and unchecked provocative utterances, both aimed at swaying the Indian electorate?

A stable and cooperative neighbourhood is indispensable for India to realise what many see as its "manifest destiny" of achieving great

power status. The outlines of a Viksit Bharat are already visible. The world's most populous nation and a nuclear-armed military power, India is poised to become among the largest economies by 2047. A technological leap could turn it into a manufacturing powerhouse. Hopefully, by 2047, prudent economic management will have overcome the challenges of mass poverty and jobless growth, while improving healthcare and education.

This rosy picture, however, assumes that the ship of state is being manoeuvred with adroit statecraft and strategic wisdom through security minefields. Statecraft is the art of governing and managing a state using a toolbox of political, economic, military, and diplomatic instruments to safeguard national interests. At the core of statecraft lies the concept of national security — a nation's ability to protect itself from internal and external threats impinging on the state's integrity and survival.

Modern statecraft is predicated on comprehensive strategic agendas that serve as roadmaps for diplomats, soldiers and economists. Succinct strategies, preferably committed to writing, enable the evolution of contingency plans, allocation of resources and implementation of responses to emerging threats while advancing national objectives. The capacity to anticipate change and adapt strategies is paramount. For instance, novel security challenges such as hybrid, cyber, and low-intensity, terrorist warfare necessitate innovative approaches leveraging technologies like AI, robotics and unmanned/space-based systems.

India's nuclear-armed neighbours, China and Pakistan, harbour territorial ambitions and have been repeatedly instigating provocations that divert national resources from developmental priorities. Despite claims to a rich heritage of "strategic culture", India's statecraft and military posture have thus far failed to deter these adversaries from seeking their revanchist goals. This 'deterrence failure' can be attributed to the absence of a coherent strategy, as well as a dearth of resolute statecraft. No ambiguity should exist in the minds of decision-makers that the onus of responsibility for national security and strategic decision-making rests squarely on the politician's shoulders, and must receive priority over all other compulsions.

As our "strategic elite" grapples with the

complexities of our security environment, three areas of serious concern deserve early attention. First, even as the spectre of Chinese military and technological dominance looms large, a far greater, economic and strategic vulnerability lies hidden in our ballooning trade deficit (currently, \$85 billion). India's growing dependence on vital imports of electronics, machinery, pharmaceuticals, and rare-earth elements is significantly curtailing its strategic room for manoeuvre vis-à-vis China.

Second, our continuing reliance on defence imports is a serious constraint on our cherished "strategic autonomy" as well as military capabilities. While Russia and Ukraine have been long-standing suppliers of aircraft, warships, submarines, tanks and artillery, Israel has become a source of military-electronics and guided weapons. All three are embroiled in serious conflicts and must not remain the fulcrum of our national defence. Initiatives like Atmanirbharta, though highly laudable, involve significant gestational delays and we must forge partnerships with like-minded nations to establish alternative supply chains.

Third, in the rarely mentioned domain of nuclear deterrence, both our adversaries have gained qualitative and quantitative advantages. China has enhanced the numbers, yield and accuracy of its arsenal and Pakistan's claims have gone from "credible minimum deterrence" to "full spectrum deterrence". If India intends to stand by the tenets of its 2003 nuclear doctrine, it must strategise to stand up to possible nuclear blackmail by neighbours — with threats ranging from Pakistan's sub-kiloton tactical weapons to China's megaton yield multi-warhead missiles.

Strategic alliances are an important tool of statecraft, which can significantly reinforce national security. India needs insurance against hegemony and domination to create space in which to nurture its economy and bridge technology gaps while boosting its military muscle. As it prepares to fight its own battles, India needs to seek external balancing. If realpolitik so demands, it must break old shibboleths and strike new partnerships — keeping national interest supreme.

The writer is a former chief of naval staff

A CHILD AT HEART

Hayao Miyazaki's films invite audiences to look around with wonder and courage



SHAYANTANI DAS

EVERY YEAR, THE Ramon Magsaysay Award recognises the "greatness of spirit shown in selfless service to the peoples of Asia..." One of this year's recipients, Hayao Miyazaki, embodies this spirit. The co-founder of Studio Ghibli, director of 12 animated feature films, and a manga artist, is celebrated as one of the greatest visionaries in animated cinema. Starting with *The Castle of Cagliostro* in 1979, Miyazaki's work has constantly displayed the wisdom of a philosopher, the craftsmanship of an artist, and the heart of a child.

While his films are not exclusively for children, watching a Miyazaki film feels like stepping into childhood. Perhaps it is the delightful beings that populate his narratives: Cat buses that rumble past, castles that float and belch steam, and soot sprites that dance on their tiny feet. Or, it is the courageous young heroes and heroines — a boy with a pig snout flying an airplane, a young girl trapped in a spirit world, a teenage witch in training. The beauty of each frame, from sun-dappled forest to cloud-speckled skies and otherworldly spirit realms, is a testament to his years of apprenticeship as a hands-on animator.

But beyond each frame's beauty lies an ominous darkness, often war and ecological crisis. In *Howl's Moving Castle* (2004), idyllic skies are obscured by smoke from warplanes while in *Princess Mononoke* (1997), the gods and spirits of a forest clash against the humans who drain its resources. The natural world is full of forces both gentle and vengeful. Even

his quietest film, *My Neighbor Totoro* (1988) is set against real-world anxieties that infiltrate a children's world like a parent's illness, loneliness, and change. As a filmmaker, he offers his young audience comfort without talking down to them. His soft world-building invites viewers to fill in the gaps with their imagination, showing deep respect for the emotional complexity and curiosity of children.

A recurring thematic concern in his work is the mixed blessings of technological progress. His characters walk in the air, on brooms, or on the back of winged spirits. But often flights of fancy are replaced by literal aerial adventures. In one of his early films, *Porco Rosso* (1992), the titular character is Marco, a disillusioned fighter pilot turned bounty hunter, who has been cursed to live as a pig. Set against the rise of Mussolini's fascist regime, Marco suffers from survivor's guilt. His meticulously maintained red plane stands both for personal defiance and a gateway to his pre-war memories. Miyazaki is even more explicit in his exploration of this theme in *The Wind Rises* (2013). The film follows Jiro Horikoshi, the aeronautical engineer who designed Japan's Zero fighter plane used in World War II. Jiro dreams of majestic aircraft crisscrossing dream-like skies. He laments to his idol, Giovanni Caproni, that none of his planes ever returned. Caproni's response, "There was nothing to return to. Airplanes are beautiful dreams. Cursed dreams, waiting for the sky to swallow them up," encapsulates the

central dilemma — beautiful things, feats of engineering, technological advances are also tied up with their catastrophic application. Miyazaki's multitudes of lovingly drawn aircraft represent human ingenuity and freedom, but also war and modernity.

These calamitous forces — fascism, war, and ecological collapse — often replace traditional epic villains in Miyazaki's films. These forces are a threat to the world and not just the protagonist. When antagonists do appear, they are often redeemed — not necessarily by their actions, but through the protagonist's acceptance and empathy. In *Spirited Away* (2001), Chihiro never directly confronts the powerful Yubaba, ruler of the bathhouse. Instead, she is clever, resourceful, and kind, and her actions culminate with her calling Yubaba "granny" before her return to the human realm.

Miyazaki's heroes and heroines are brave but not in obvious ways. It is a quiet, hesitant, tentative courage, a mix of stoicism and vulnerability. At 83, *The Boy and the Heron* released last year may be his last. His legacy will not just be his extensive body of work but also his way of seeing. As the world moves towards environmental ruin and gives in to the lure of authoritarianism — threats Miyazaki has long foreseen — his films will continue to invite audiences to look around not just with cynicism but also with wonder and quiet courage.

The writer is assistant professor, Department of English, Hindu College, University of Delhi

SEPTEMBER 7, 1984, FORTY YEARS AGO

HARYANA FLOOR TEST

AFTER A FOUR-HOUR debate, the Haryana Vidhan Sabha rejected by 54 votes to 28 the Opposition's motion of no-confidence against the Bhajan Lal government. Though the Opposition insisted that the motion should be taken up when the non-officials day's business was dispensed, the CM wanted it to be voted immediately after question hour, saying he would not sign files before his government won the confidence of the House.

NTR'S APPEAL

FORMER CHIEF MINISTER N T Rama Rao

asked Andhra Pradesh Governor Shankar Dalal Sharma to evince "personal interest and bestow care" in ensuring safety to legislators supporting him and take adequate steps to conduct the state assembly in a "disciplined manner". He also desired that the House should first consider "assessing the strength of myself and my brother N Bhaskara Rao".

BHANDARI TAKES OVER

ROMESH BHANDARI, SECRETARY West Asia, who negotiated the return of the hijackers in Dubai, will be the new Foreign Secretary. He will take over from Maharajkrishna Rasgotra in January. Rasgotra's term has been extended

till January end to enable him to continue heading the foreign office till the Lok Sabha elections. Rasgotra is likely to be given a key diplomatic assignment after his retirement.

MORE DEMAND FOR TVS

THE DEMAND FOR television sets (both colour and black-and-white) in recent days has risen sharply to far outstrip supply, thanks to the Los Angeles Olympics and the mushrooming TV relay transmitters in the country. Consequently, black-and-white (B&W) sets, the prices of which had declined sharply not so long ago owing to an appreciable drop in demand, are once again in great demand.



THE IDEAS PAGE

Not talking about caste

Our silences and evasions only entrench the existing distribution of cultural and economic wealth



SANJAY SRIVASTAVA

THERE IS A popular idea in some sections of Indian society that describing the caste system actually intensifies its effects and that if you don't talk about caste, it will, somehow, go away. The idea of not talking about caste as a strategy of addressing it has a relatively long history in the modern life of the nation. A 1980s' official history of a famous boys' public school noted that students "lost" their caste identity simply because the "school deliberately plays down these differences by a common uniform, the same food... irrespective of the background of the student". The school had been part of a certain strand within early Indian liberalism and its students went on to occupy important positions in public life.

I remember a conversation with an ex-student of the same school, one that reiterated the point of view that caste is, in some undefined manner, merely a matter of memory, thought and conversation. And that it has no material reality: You just have to think yourself beyond it. After finishing school, my co-conversationalist proceeded to apply for college admissions. "The first shock that I got was when I filled my college form", he narrated with incredulity. "It asked for my caste... I didn't know! There was no discussion of caste at all at my school."

If there is one thing Rahul Gandhi has learnt, it is that one can only afford to forget caste — and think yourself beyond it — if one does not suffer from any of its ill-effects. Those who do not think that caste is important are usually the ones whose life chances have not been affected by it. The ability to forget caste indicates privilege and not the absence of caste.

Caste discrimination operates both formally and informally, visibly and invisibly. There is no such thing as a "caste-free" context in India and caste identity is fundamentally related to one's life chances. Informal discrimination (everyday attitudes, say) lead to low self-worth and formal ones (lack of material resources, for example) define the kinds of activities one is able to pursue and career choices that become available. When Rahul Gandhi speaks of the lack of "lower caste" representation in beauty pageants, he makes a fundamental point about the nature of caste discrimination. The comment is only tangentially about one particular event and much more about the importance of recognising that it isn't just the clearly visible aspects of discrimination that cripple human capacity. The invisible shackles of caste attitude are just as important. There is a deep relationship between informal and formal processes of discrimination and the one reinforces the other.

Rahul Gandhi's comment about beauty pageants is hardly about introducing "reservation" in such an event. Rather, it should force us to ask three questions: "What kinds of attitudes inhibit participation by certain groups?" "What kinds of material resources



CR Sasikumar

are required to take part in them?" And "Which groups possess both the cultural and economic wealth to take part in them and how did they come to have them?" The beauty pageant might seem like an unlikely context for these kinds of questions about the nature of power but, actually, it has much to tell us about the actually existing distribution of cultural and economic resources.

It is relatively easy to track the distribution of economic resources through the discipline of economics hardly has any worthwhile tools for thinking about cultural wealth that is passed down through upper caste families. For this, you need other means.

Conversations in household sitting rooms, university seminar halls and membership-only clubs are good places to get an idea of the nature of distribution of cultural wealth. Over the past few years, I have been talking to a variety of people about the booming land market in southern Haryana that has catapulted many peasant landowners into the league of the super-rich. Whenever I am in the company of middle and upper caste locals and bureaucrats, the discussion almost invariably veers towards descriptions of caste as a biological fact. Such conversations usually begin with establishing how people like "us" — my interlocutor and I — well understand the "genetic" basis of caste. Building upon this line of discussion, one of my co-conversationalists once noted that the history of certain castes was entwined with robbery and those of others with thieving and violence. "That effect", he concluded, "is bound to remain".

Caste as aptitude, inclination and behav-

Rahul Gandhi's comment about beauty pageants is hardly about introducing 'reservation' in such an event. Rather, it should force us to ask three questions: 'What kinds of attitudes inhibit participation by certain groups?' 'What kinds of material resources are required to take part in them?' And 'Which groups possess both the cultural and economic wealth to take part in them and how did they come to have them?' The beauty pageant might seem like an unlikely context for these kinds of questions about the nature of power but, actually, it has much to tell us about the actually existing distribution of cultural and economic resources.

our has a relatively long history. Some of this history — such as that which relates to the nature of the so-called criminal castes and tribes — is of colonial origin. However, the key point is the manner in which it constitutes shared consciousness and cultural wealth among the privileged. Within this way of thinking, specific castes are "genetically" meritorious and inherently suited towards certain activities, while others lack the attributes of merit. As a university colleague and I recently discovered, it is an attitude that is also prevalent among some section of the academic community: An editor of a prominent UK-based academic journal informed us that a certain community had played a prominent role in the 1984 killings of Sikhs in Delhi as violence was in its nature as a caste. That almost every caste and class participated in the 1984 violence went unacknowledged.

Caste hierarchy creates a form of cultural wealth through inventing "meritorious" capacities for "people like us" and violent and uncivilised characteristics for others. It is this that forms the informal means of discrimination that Rahul Gandhi's comments about beauty pageants should direct us to. The absence of "lower castes" from such events results from the persistence of both informal and formal processes of caste discrimination about who can do what. Simply not talking about caste does not make either process disappear. It only entrenches the existing distribution of cultural and economic wealth.

The writer is British Academy Global Professor, Department of Anthropology and Sociology, SOAS University of London

WHAT THE OTHERS SAY

"Mr Zelenskiy's charismatic authority will be deployed to full effect when he travels to Washington this month to meet Joe Biden, a trip that is all the more essential given the uncertainty surrounding November's US election. Ukraine's allies must stand firm in support." — THE GUARDIAN

A silent epidemic stalks

Early use of smartphones, ultra-processed food, lack of exercise are emerging as prime suspects in declining mental well-being among youth



SHAILENDER SWAMINATHAN AND V ANANTHA NAGESWARAN

INDIA IS POISED for rapid economic growth, potentially spurred by a young population driving production and demand. In the process, inevitably, lifestyles are being dramatically altered for the worse. India now reports the highest growth of ultra-processed food consumption among the youth, as well as low levels of exercise and adequate sleep. Cultural changes, including smartphones and a preponderance of English in schools, are also associated with weakened family relationships. Until recently, in the absence of extensive data, the role of these factors on mental well-being, encompassing our full range of mental capability, was not well understood. Recent findings based on a large database of over 1,50,000 individuals in India are beginning to shed light on the correlates of mental well-being among adolescents. The findings are dire. There is a silent epidemic of mental ill-health in India.

Previous studies have found that ownership of smartphones is "frying" the brain. Data also suggests that it is not merely the ownership of a phone but also the early age of access that is associated with worse cognition and mental well-being as young adults. The young brain is developing and must be nurtured. These gadgets are handed to adolescents, presumably more out of convenience than sound logic. There is a legal minimum age for drinking alcohol and driving cars. Presumably, these rules are in place because children do not yet have the maturity to act in moderation. Even without the rules, it is unlikely that parents would hand over the keys of a car to a teenager. It boggles the mind that parents (and some schools) can allow such unrestrained use of handheld gadgets. Analysis of recently collected data suggests that the earlier age of access to smartphones is associated with a lower likelihood of college completion. The American philosopher David Henry Thoreau remarked over 175 years ago, "Technology is an improved means to an unimproved end." This is an extreme position, but one worth mulling.

While smartphones may have economic usefulness, there is no justification for their unbridled use among teenagers. India reports the highest growth in consumption of ultra-processed foods. Some evidence suggests that these foods are as addictive as smoking. Recent data globally and from India shows a strong association between the consumption of ultra-processed foods and poor mental well-being, particularly the capacities for emotional and cognitive control. More research is required to untangle the specific components responsible for these effects. In this context, research and regulation that limits the uninformed and widespread consumption of ultra-processed foods would be prudent. The positive association between physical exercise and mental well-

being is well established, particularly with respect to energy, the experience of pain, and the ability to focus. The challenge is to inculcate a habit of exercise despite constraints such as restricted play areas, the pressure of school exams, addictive lure of the smartphone, and student enrolment in coaching classes.

Finally, data shows that family closeness is strongly associated with better mental well-being, in particular, mood and outlook, and the ability to relate to others. Teenagers responding to the surveys in the regional language report substantially stronger family bonds and a better ability to relate to others than their counterparts responding in English. However, this trend is reversed for older adults, presumably because income levels are higher among individuals who are more comfortable in English. As more schools move to a system where English becomes the medium of instruction even at younger ages, it is important to examine whether this push comes at the expense of weakening family bonds and mental well-being.

India's quest for development has resulted, in general, in rising income levels and, consequently, a lower percentage of the population now lives in poverty. Alarmingly, however, data suggests that mental well-being among the youth with family incomes less than Rs 1 lakh per year but who exercise frequently, have close families, and/or rarely consume ultra-processed foods is better than that of their counterparts with family incomes greater than Rs 10 lakh per year who live sedentary lives, weakened family relationships, and frequently consume ultra-processed foods. "Back to the roots" makes sense in more ways than one.

India's economic growth is closely tied to the youth, so we must intervene before it's too late. Just two decades ago, adolescents reported high levels of mental well-being, surpassed only by the very old. Today, they report the lowest levels of mental well-being. We are now beginning to understand some of the reasons for this reversal, with early-age use of smartphones, consumption of ultra-processed foods, and low levels of exercise emerging as prime suspects. The time to act is now. Policymakers cannot act unilaterally — schools, parents and medical associations have a role to play.

Above all, the private sector must also reflect on its role — through its products and services — in the spread of the mental ill-health epidemic. Eventually, it will hurt them through an acute shortage of qualified, capable and productive workers and the consequent insufficient demand for their products.

More often than not, the urgent dominates the important in human affairs. But addressing the mental health epidemic is both urgent and important. Otherwise, in a few years, we will realise that the modern lifestyle — smartphones and processed foods — has eviscerated India's demographic dividend.

Note: Data used in this article has been collected by the Sapien Labs Centre for Human Brain and Mind at Krea University.

Swaminathan is Director, Sapien Labs Centre for Human Brain and Mind at Krea University and Nageswaran is Chief Economic Advisor to the Government of India. Views are personal

Insurgency at its end

Government's strong approach to tackling Maoism has yielded results



RAM RAJYA

BY RAM MADHAV

"I CAN TELL you that in the next two to three years — I am giving you an outer limit — the country will be free from the Maoist problems," Union Home Minister Amit Shah told a news agency last month. A couple of weeks later, he was in Chhattisgarh holding a meeting of the security establishment from affected states where he reiterated that the Modi government would wipe out the Maoist insurgency on the same lines as it dealt a severe blow to terrorism in J&K and various insurgent movements in the Northeast.

The five-decades-old Maoist insurgency is indeed on its last leg. Various governments have fought this misguided ideological movement in states and at the Centre. In the last decade, the Modi government has dealt a death blow to its infrastructure. A violent ideological movement based on the teachings of Mao Zedong, Maoism's roots in India can be traced to the peasant uprising in the Naxalbari region of Bengal in 1967-75. When poor peasants forcibly took control of huge land holdings belonging to the landlords leading to violent clashes between the two, a section of the Communist Party of India — Marxist (CPM) leadership, led by Charu Majumdar, Kanu Sanyal and others — extended its support to the rebellion. Expelled from the CPM, Majumdar and Sanyal started the All India Committee of Communist Revolutionaries, which was later rechristened as the CPI (Marxist-Leninist).

Determined efforts by the central and state governments led to the Naxalbari revolt fizzling out soon. But the movement

spread to states like Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh in the next two decades. Around that time, a split in the Communist Party of Nepal led to the creation of the CPN (Maoist) and it launched an armed rebellion in 1996. By the turn of the 21st century, the Maoists started boasting about their "liberation war" from "Pashupathi to Tirupati".

One important feature of Maoism — or Naxalism, as it became popularly known in India — until that time was that it essentially remained a violent political and ideological struggle, with its bases in urban academic centres and remote rural areas. It called itself the "people's war" group and succeeded in building an urban support base of academics, journalists and a few public personalities, who later acquired notoriety as "urban Naxals". For the states, the movement largely remained a law-and-order challenge. In the 1980s and '90s, successive governments in Andhra Pradesh used effective policing measures like large-scale arrests and neutralisation of "dalams", the underground groups of armed rebels, to crush the movement. The Greyhounds, a special police force created by Andhra Pradesh in 1989, played a phenomenal role in eliminating the Naxal menace from the state in just a decade.

The effective counter-terror capability of the state forced the movement's leadership to change its tactics in the early 2000s. In 2004, two prominent Naxal groups — People's War and Maoist Communist Centre — decided to join hands to form CPI-Maoist.

From a radical political movement, Naxalism was transformed into a military movement. Platoons, companies and battalions of well-trained armed guerrillas replaced small and localised "dalams" targeting so-called "class enemies" like government servants and politicians. Area domination, or "liberated zones", became its new tactic and it started engaging with security forces directly.

The Dandakaranya region, a densely forested area covering almost half of the newly created state of Chhattisgarh, and parts of Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and Maharashtra became the Maoists' bastion. At its peak in 2010, the Maoist movement controlled almost 20,000 sq km of territory. With weapons and money flowing from neighbouring countries and domestic loot and extortion, the movement grew into the second-most lethal challenge to the Indian state after terrorism in J&K. The first two decades of the new century saw Maoist terrorism claiming more than 10,000 lives.

The UPA government realised the enormity of the challenge but it lacked the will to tackle it militarily. After the Modi government came to power in 2014, things changed drastically. The three-pronged approach it adopted — strong counterterror measures, effective Centre-state coordination, and a push to developmental activities in Maoist-controlled areas — has yielded major success. Maoist violence has come down by 73 per cent as its influence reduced from 126 districts across 10 states in 2013 to 38 districts in 2024.

More than 30 battalions (30,000 person-

nel) of police and paramilitary forces are engaged in counter-terror operations in Bastar today. Dozens of forward operating bases (FOBs) came up inside the difficult jungle terrain and reduced Maoist control to less than 5,000 sq. km. The Modi government has infused more than Rs 3,000 crore for anti-Maoist operations providing access to the latest weapons and technology. FOBs are helping take roads and other infrastructure inside Maoist-controlled areas, forcing the guerrillas to retreat further. Unable to withstand the pressure or enticed by the rewards offered by the state, more than 2,000 Maoist cadres have surrendered in the last decade.

PM Manmohan Singh once called Maoism "the single biggest internal security threat". Today, it has become considerably feeble, waiting to be knocked out completely through determined state action. It took just a couple of decades for communist extremism to capture state power in Russia and China. However, in India, five decades of armed struggle did not bring the Maoists anywhere close to that objective. The failure of communist ideology globally, coupled with the failure of their operational tactics in India, is causing disillusionment within Maoist ranks.

Having succeeded in the Northeast and J&K in eliminating terrorism, Amit Shah will continue to push for the eradication of Maoism. It is sure to fade away. But "vigilance" should be the watchword.

The writer, president, India Foundation, is with the BJP. Views are personal

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

IMPLEMENT LAWS

THIS REFERS TO the articles, 'Hard and hollow' and 'Stricter rape laws are needed' (IE, September 6). The West Bengal Assembly recently passed an anti-rape bill, 2024, which introduces the death penalty or life-long imprisonment for rape. There's little proof that the death penalty is a deterrent against sexual offences. By stating that "rape is a curse against humanity and social reforms are required to prevent such crimes," CM Mamata Banerjee herself put a question mark on the need for a Bill that rests on legal sanction rather than seeking a change in societal mindsets. Tragically, the cruel death in Bengal has become a political feud between the Centre and the State. The onus is on governments to ensure that laws are implemented well.

Sanjay Chopra, Mohali

THIS REFERS TO the article, 'Stricter rape laws are needed' (IE, September 6). The latest Bill passed by the West Bengal government does not add anything to the existing laws on rape and sexual crimes against women. It prescribes a life sentence without parole for those convicted of rape, and the death penalty for anyone convicted of rape or gang rape if the victim dies or is left in a vegetative state. The Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) also

prescribes the death penalty in rape cases. The IPC, which it replaced, had also provided for the death sentence in certain rape cases. However, the death penalty is not an effective deterrent against any crime, including sexual offences. The basic axiom of criminal jurisprudence is that it is the certainty of punishment, not its severity, that acts as a deterrent against crimes.

Khokan Das, Kolkata

A DISMAL STATE

THIS REFERS TO the article, 'Have you heard the teacher?' (IE, September 6). Teachers are like second parents. But it now seems that the better part of the deal is long gone. The dismal salaries offered to private teachers are not news to anybody. The fewer working hours paraded as an incentive do not factor in the work a teacher does from home and is not paid for. The age of digitisation has become a new bane in teachers' lives. For instance, the CCTVs that are now watching their every move. No wonder teaching is losing its charm. It is also disheartening to note that coaching centres are gaining ground because they aim to score good marks, character development is secondary, if at all important.

Ramanpreet, via email

भारतीय विज्ञान शिक्षा एवं अनुसंधान संस्थान भोपाल
Indian Institute of Science Education and Research Bhopal
Bhopal By-pass Road, Bhauli Bhopal-462066 (Madhya Pradesh)

e-TENDER NOTICE
For complete details and any corrigendum etc. Please visit www.iiserb.ac.in/Tender and www.eprocure.gov.in. e-Tenders can be submitted only on www.tenderwizard.com/iiserb.

Sl. No.	Name of the Item (s)/Work	Tender No.	Due Date
1	Supply and installation of mobile terrestrial laser scanner.	IISERB/SP/2024-25/55 dated 04/09/2024	24/09/2024
2	Supply and installation of bet instrument with accessories for CIF.	IISERB/SP/2024-25/57 dated 05/09/2024	25/09/2024
3	Supply and installation of multi-dimensional coherent spectrometer and detection electronics.	IISERB/SP/2024-25/58 dated 05/09/2024	25/09/2024

Stores and Purchase Officer

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON
See Section 82 Cr.P.C.

Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused **Amit S/o Lal Chand R/o RZ-58B, 1st Floor, Gali No.-10, Ramgopal Market, Kailash Puri, Palam Colony, New Delhi.** has committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence in case **FIR No. 149/2024 U/s 498A/323/306/34 IPC, P.S.: Sagarpur Delhi**, and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said accused **Amit**, cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said accused **Amit**, has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant).

Proclamation is hereby made that the said **Amit**, accused of **FIR No. 149/2024 U/s 498A/323/306/34 IPC, P.S.: Sagarpur Delhi**, is required to appear before this Court to answer the said complaint on or before **15.10.2024**.

By Order
Ms. Isha Singh
DP/11869/SW/2024
Ld. JMFC-03, Room No. 18, First Floor,
(Court Matter) Main Building Patiala House Courts, New Delhi

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY
Date: 05.09.2024

E-Tender Notice

For & on behalf of President of India, Sr. Divisional Mechanical Engineer (C&W), North Central Railway, Prayagraj invites OPEN E-Tenders in prescribed forms, from reputed contractors with adequate experience and financial capability for the under mentioned work up to 15:00 Hrs of Date of closing of tender -

SN: 1 E-Tender No.: **NCR-M-PRYJ-AMC-CCTV-06-24**

Name of work: Proposal for AMC of CCTV Camera in all Coaches including display system in LWLRMs of Train no. 12275/76 PRYJ-NDLS Humsafar Express, Train no. 22437/38 PRYJ-ANVT Humsafar Express, & Train no. 12033/34 CNB-NDLS Shatabdi Express, AMC of CCTV Camera of Coach No. 181899 LOAMS, AMC of CCTV Camera of self-propelled inspection car 190055 'PARAKH', AMC of CCTV Camera of NCRA-01 & NC 961072 CEAC Observation Car with its peripheral equipment and AMC of CCTV Camera including peripheral equipment of mechanized Laundry for Three years.

Tendersystem: Single packet **Tender Value:** 1934298.03

Bid Security: 38700 **Cost of E-tender Form:** Nil **Period of Work:** 03 Year

Date of publishing on IREPS website: 05.09.2024 **Date of closing of tender:** 27.09.2024

Note: 1. The complete information along with tender booklet of above E-Tender will be available since Date of publishing on IREPS website. 2. The online E-Tender can be submitted online only on the IREPS website up to 15:00 hrs on the due date of Tender closing. 3. Bids other than in the form of E-Bids shall not be accepted against above tenders. 4. For this purpose, vendors are required to get themselves registered with IREPS website along with Digital Signature Certificate issued by CCA under IT Act-2000. 5. Minimum Eligibility Criteria: Not APPLICABLE IN THIS TENDER. 6. In case of any difficulty helpdesk available on the website of IREPS may be approached. 1581/24 (D)

North central railways @ CPONCR www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in

Government of Karnataka
(Infrastructure Development, Ports & Inland Water Transport Department)
Karnataka Maritime Board
Office of the Marine Engineer, Department of Ports & IWT, Baithkhol, Karwar- 581302

NO. ME/GNL/CR-04/2023 Dated: 06.09.2024
TENDER NOTICE 4th CALL (Only in E-Procurement) (TWO COVER SYSTEM)

Tender is invited by the undersigned in E-Procurement (KPPP) portal for the below mentioned service. The reputed, bonafide, resourceful & experienced registered firms/ contractors who have executed and are having experience in similar nature of service can participate in the Tender through E-procurement portal. To obtain more information, please visit the website: <https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in> (Tender Indent No. **IDD/2023-24/SE0022/call-4**)

Name of work: (1) Hiring of Pilot Launch with Manning for a period of 3 years at Karwar Port, Uttara Kannada round the clock (24 hrs a day) including Handling, Operation and Maintenance (HOM) charges of Pilot launch, Fuel, Lubricants, Water, Manning Crew, Maintenance, etc., and inclusive of all applicable taxes. Except GST. Amount Put to Tender (Except GST): **Rs. 4,38,00,000.00, EMD: As mentioned in bid document, Last date for Queries: 17.09.2024 @ 17.30 hours, Last Date for receipt of Tender: 20.09.2024 @ 17.30 hours**

For further details and general enquiries, interested firms / contractors may contact the undersigned office E-mail: marineengineerkwr@gmail.com and phone No.: 08382 221402 during working hours, before last date of queries.

Sd/- Marine Engineer, Karwar
DIPR/ADK/KSCMA/329/24-25 dt. 06.09.2024

GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA
Office of the Executive Engineer,
PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT
Special Division, Shivamogga

ಕ್ರಮ: ಕಡಾಂ/ರೋಡ/ಎ.ಎ.ಎ/ಸ.ಎ-01/Environmental Impact Assessment/
ಶಿವಮೊಗ್ಗ/2024-25/ ದಿನಾಂಕ: 03-09-2024.

NOTIFICATION

Competitive Quotation from the eligible agencies are invited for transfer of environmental clearance for construction of Greenfield Airport at Shivamogga (Phase -1), Sogane village limit in Shivamogga Tq, Shivamogga District, Karnataka. Interested agencies can submit the quotation on or before **18.09.2024 at 4.30 P.M.** Quotaion received after the due date will not be considered.

(1) Description: Quotation for Transfer of Environmental Clearance for construction of Greenfield Airport at Shimogga (Phase-1), Sogane village limit in Shivamogga Tq, Shivamogga District, Karnataka, Unit: **1**.

Terms and conditions:

1. Rates quoted are inclusive of GST (inclusive of all applicable taxes).
2. After receiving the work order, the work should be carried out within the stipulated period.
3. The work shall be carried out as per the instructions of the concerned engineers.
4. The bill will be paid on the basis of assurance of fund guarantee issued by the government from time to time.
5. The right to cancel or postpone the quotation is reserved by the undersigned
6. After carrying out the works, the report should be submitted in soft and hard copy (triplicate) to this office.

Sd/-
Executive Engineer, Public Works
Department, Special Division, Shivamogga
DIPR/SMG/No-33.09
Zenkar/2024-25

GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA
(INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT, PORTS & IWT DEPARTMENT)
KARNATAKA MARITIME BOARD
Office Of The Port Officer, Port Office Old Mangalore Port, Dakshina Kannada District, Old Port, Bunder, Mangaluru 575001.
Phone No: 0824-2420374, E-mail: mangaloreport@gmail.com
Website: www.karnatakamaritime.in

No:MMD/CR-48/2020-21 Date: 05.09.2024

PUBLIC NOTICE
Notice of wreck removal under section 14 of Indian Ports Act-1908 to registered owner of the M.V. ASIAN FOREST

It is informed that, M.V. Asian Forest sailed from New Mangalore Port on 17.07.2009 with cargo of iron ore fines. Vessel developed list and on 18.07.2009 sank 6 nautical miles south of New Mangalore Port. Now, as per Govt. notification No: PWD 142 PSP 2011, Dated: 13.08.2013 wreck of the vessel is in Old Mangalore Port limit.

I, Port Officer, Old Mangalore Port, do hereby issue public notice under Section 397 of Merchant Shipping Act to the bona fide owner of M.V.Asian Forest (Flag: Hong Kong, IMO No: 9369112, Callsign: VRCM9) for removal of the wreck of M.V. Asian Forest which sank on 18.07.2009, 6 nautical miles south off New Mangalore Port. The wreck of the sunken vessel is lying within the port limit of Old Mangalore Port and is posing a hindrance to the safe navigation of the maritime traffic passing along the coast of India and also abstracting fishing activities, thereby causing threat to the marine environment and safety of vessels.

The Director General of Shipping issued notice to the registered owners of the sunken vessel directing them to remove the wreck at the earliest. However, even after lapse of 14 years, no action is being taken to remove the wreck.

I, Port Officer, Old Mangalore Port, Competent Authority to receive the wreck within the jurisdiction of Old Mangalore Port direct the Owner of sunken vessel M.V. Asian Forest to immediately take action to remove the wreck within 30 days from the publication of this notice. Failure to comply with this notice within the stipulated period action will be taken under section 14 of Indian Port Act-1908 for removal of wreck and dispose off the same through public auction.

Sd/-
Port Officer, Mangalore & Competent Authority
DIPR / MNG / 579 / MPL / 24-25

ARMY PUBLIC SCHOOL DELHI CANTT
SADAR BAZAR ROAD, DELHI CANTT-110010
www.apsdelhicantt.com

TENDER NOTICE

1. Sealed Tenders are invited from firms/contractor/vendor for providing Security Services with professional expertise at Army Public School Delhi Cantt-10.
2. The above RFPs with specifications can be downloaded from school website www.apsdelhicantt.com. Tender form duly completed in all respect be submitted to APS Delhi Cantt by 27 Sep 2024 at 1030 hrs along with DD (Tender form Fee & EMD) as per RFP in favour of Army Public School Delhi Cantt. For any queries contact APS Delhi Cantt on 25693777 or 25692720.

Presiding Officer

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER
P.H. DIVISION, BHANJANAGAR AT CHATRAPUR
Phone 0681 263909- FAX - 06811 263950,
E-mail - cepchpr@gmail.com

NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING THROUGH e-Procurement
2nd Corrigendum dated 04.09.2024
To Bid Identification No. 36/03/SPH(C)/2024-25 dt. 31.08.2024
Tender Id. 2024_PHEO_104579_1

Name of work- Procurement of 100mm to 300mm size pipes in connection with the work- Improvement of water supply to Digapahandi NAC and Baliguda NAC under AMRUT 2.0 (SWAP-II)

Sl.No	As uploaded in the tender	Revised as per Corrigendum
1	The column for inserting the Bidding rates was locked in the BOQ uploaded in the Corrigendum-1.	The BOQ is hereby reuploaded with necessary correction.

All other terms and conditions in the DTCN remains unaltered.

Superintending Engineer
P.H. Division, Bhanjanagar at Chatrapur
OIPR-13013/11/0006/2425

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF CONSTRUCTION ENGINEER
CUTTACK (R&B) CIRCLE, CUTTACK
("e"-PROCUREMENT NOTICE)

E-mail: sectrb_2006@yahoo.co.in
Tel/Fax: 0671-2301751/2302751

Bid Identification No. CCE. Ctc. (R&B)2/2024-25

1. The Chief Construction Engineer, Cuttack (R&B) Circle, Cuttack on behalf of Governor of Odisha invites on Percentage rate basis bid in double cover system in **ONLINE MODE** from eligible contractors for Building work as mentioned below.
2. No. of work : 01 No.
3. Nature of work : Building work
4. Class of contractor : 'A' Class
5. Tender paper cost : Rs. 10000/- (online)
6. Available of bid document : From 11.09.2024 to 17.30 Hours of 23.09.2024
7. Date of opening of Bid : Dt.24.09.2024 at 11.00 Hours
8. The Bidders have to participate in **ONLINE** bidding only. Further details can be seen from the website: <https://tenderodisha.gov.in>. Any addendum/corrigendum/ cancellation of tender can also be seen in the said website.

Sd/-
Chief Construction Engineer
Cuttack (R&B) Circle
OIPR- 34012/11/0003/2425

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON
See Section 82 Cr. P. C.

Whereas a complaint has been made before me that accused person namely **Mohit Sehrawat @ Mukhiya s/o Anoop Singh R/o 1147-D, Kanjhawala Road Bawana Delhi.** have committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence under **FIR No. 442/23 U/S 302/34 dt.03.11.2023**, has been registered at **P.S.Kanjhawala Delhi** and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest there upon issued that the said, **Mohit Sehrawat @ Mukhiya** cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said, **Mohit Sehrawat @ Mukhiya** has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant).

Proclamation is hereby made that the said accused, **Mohit Sehrawat** under **FIR No. 442/23 U/S 302/34 dt.03.11.2023**, registered at **P.S. Kanjhawala Delhi** is required to appear before this court to answer the said complaint on or before **07.10.2024**.

By Order
Sh.Rajinder Kumar, ASJ-05,
(NW) Rohini Court, Delhi
DP/11860/RD/2024

Govt. of Bihar
North Bihar Power Distribution Company Limited, Patna
(Regd. Office: Vidhyut Bhawan, Bailey Road, Patna)
TIN VAT No.10011248088 TIN CST No. 10011132165 CIN-U40109BR2012SGC018920
Contact No: 7763818751, 9264438936 Email-cecivil.nbpdc@gmail.com
(DEPARTMENT OF CIVIL)
NOTICE INVITING TENDER
NIT No. **75/PR/NBPDC/2024**
(Through e - procurement mode only- www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in)

Online e-Tenders are invited by Chief Engineer (Civil), from eligible and experienced Agency/Firm/Company/State or Central Govt. Undertaking, for the work noted below:

Sl. No.	Name of Work	Estimated Cost	Earnest Money Deposit (EMD)	Tender Fee	Tender Processing Fees	Completion time
1.	Construction of new boundary wall for 33/11 KV PSS Balua under Electric Supply Division, Raghopur.	₹ 77,68,800/-	₹ 1,55,400/-	₹ 11,800/-	₹ 3,450/-	4 (Four) Months

Bid submission Start Date and Time: From **10:00 AM** of **20.09.2024**
Bid submission End Date and Time: To **01:00 PM** of **04.10.2024**
Date of opening of Technical & Commercial Part: After **3:30 PM** of **04.10.2024**
Date of opening of price part: To be notified after Technical Bid Evaluation (www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in)
Pre-Bid meeting: From **2:00 PM** To **4:00 PM** on **24.09.2024**

For complains regarding corruption Vigilance Help Line No.- 9431821485, 0612-2504969 Consumer can deposit electricity bills via Sahaz Vasudha Centre or via bsebbills.org

e-tendering introduced in NBPDC for tenders above Rs. 10 lacs. For registration log in to www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in and e-Procurement Help Desk Toll Free Number: 1800 572 6571 Email Id: eproc2support@bihar.gov.in
Working Hours: 8AM to 7PM (All days in week except few selected state holidays)

"बिवादो के निष्पादन के लिए लोक अदालत का काम उठाये।" "परस्पर सहमति से न्यायिक निर्णय प्राप्त करें।"
"समय एवं खर्च की बचत करें।"

For further details please visit : www.state.bihar.gov.in/prdbihar **Chief Engineer (Civil) NBPDC**
PR. No. 007662 (B&C) 2024-25 नरो की मार, बर्बाद करे सुखी परिवार।

Govt. of Bihar
North Bihar Power Distribution Company Limited, Patna
(Regd. Office: Vidhyut Bhawan, Bailey Road, Patna)
TIN VAT No.10011248088 TIN CST No. 10011132165 CIN-U40109BR2012SGC018920
Contact No: 7763818751, 9264438936 Email-cecivil.nbpdc@gmail.com
(DEPARTMENT OF CIVIL)
SHORT TENDER NOTICE
NIT No. **77/PR/NBPDC/2024**
(Through e - procurement mode only- www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in)

Online e-Tenders are invited by Chief Engineer (Civil), from eligible and experienced Agency/Firm/Company/State or Central Govt. Undertaking, for the work noted below:

S. No.	Name of Work	Estimated Cost	Earnest Money Deposit (EMD)	Tender Fee	Tender Processing Fees	Completion time
1.	Construction of guard room, Platform (40'x20') with s hed, h eating chamber room (3.05m x 3.05m), G antry work, E lectrical wiring work, Raising of boundary wall, Provision of boring with 1.0 HP Submersible motor, Construction of Approach road and repair & maintenance work at TRW Siwan under Civil Division, Siwan.	₹ 60,26,400/-	₹ 1,20,600/-	₹ 11,800/-	₹ 590/-	5 (Five) Months
2.	Construction of 02 nos. TRW Shed (50'x30'), Boundary wall, Area development, Approach road, Guard room, Gantry work at TRW Khagaria under Civil Division Khagaria.	₹ 1,08,44,500/-	₹ 2,16,900/-	₹ 11,800/-	₹ 3450/-	7 (Seven) Months

Bid submission Start Date and Time: From **10:00 AM** of **13.09.2024**
Bid submission End Date and Time: To **01:00 PM** of **20.09.2024**
Date of opening of Technical & Commercial Part: After **3:30 PM** of **20.09.2024**
Date of opening of price part: To be notified after Technical Bid Evaluation (www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in)
Pre-Bid meeting: From **2:00 PM** To **4:00 PM** on **17.09.2024**

For complains regarding corruption Vigilance Help Line No.- 9431821485, 0612-2504969 Consumer can deposit electricity bills via Sahaz Vasudha Centre or via bsebbills.org

e-tendering introduced in NBPDC for tenders above Rs. 10 lacs. For registration log in to www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in and e-Procurement Help Desk Toll Free Number: 1800 572 6571 Email Id: eproc2support@bihar.gov.in
Working Hours: 8AM to 7PM (All days in week except few selected state holidays)

"बिवादो के निष्पादन के लिए लोक अदालत का काम उठाये।" "परस्पर सहमति से न्यायिक निर्णय प्राप्त करें।"
"समय एवं खर्च की बचत करें।"

For further details please visit : www.state.bihar.gov.in/prdbihar **Chief Engineer (Civil) NBPDC**
PR. No. 007659 (B&C) 2024-25 नरो की मार, बर्बाद करे सुखी परिवार।

GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA
(INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT, PORTS & IWT DEPARTMENT)
KARNATAKA MARITIME BOARD
Office Of The Port Officer, Port Office Old Mangalore Port, Dakshina Kannada District, Old Port, Bunder, Mangaluru 575001.
Phone No: 0824-2420374, E-mail: mangaloreport@gmail.com
Website: www.karnatakamaritime.in

No:MMD/CR-48/2020-21 Date: 05.09.2024

PUBLIC NOTICE
Notice of wreck removal under section 14 of Indian Ports Act-1908 to registered owner of the M.V. ASIAN FOREST

It is informed that, M.V. Asian Forest sailed from New Mangalore Port on 17.07.2009 with cargo of iron ore fines. Vessel developed list and on 18.07.2009 sank 6 nautical miles south of New Mangalore Port. Now, as per Govt. notification No: PWD 142 PSP 2011, Dated: 13.08.2013 wreck of the vessel is in Old Mangalore Port limit.

I, Port Officer, Old Mangalore Port, do hereby issue public notice under Section 397 of Merchant Shipping Act to the bona fide owner of M.V.Asian Forest (Flag: Hong Kong, IMO No: 9369112, Callsign: VRCM9) for removal of the wreck of M.V. Asian Forest which sank on 18.07.2009, 6 nautical miles south off New Mangalore Port. The wreck of the sunken vessel is lying within the port limit of Old Mangalore Port and is posing a hindrance to the safe navigation of the maritime traffic passing along the coast of India and also abstracting fishing activities, thereby causing threat to the marine environment and safety of vessels.

The Director General of Shipping issued notice to the registered owners of the sunken vessel directing them to remove the wreck at the earliest. However, even after lapse of 14 years, no action is being taken to remove the wreck.

I, Port Officer, Old Mangalore Port, Competent Authority to receive the wreck within the jurisdiction of Old Mangalore Port direct the Owner of sunken vessel M.V. Asian Forest to immediately take action to remove the wreck within 30 days from the publication of this notice. Failure to comply with this notice within the stipulated period action will be taken under section 14 of Indian Port Act-1908 for removal of wreck and dispose off the same through public auction.

Sd/-
Port Officer, Mangalore & Competent Authority
DIPR / MNG / 579 / MPL / 24-25

M.P. STATE ELECTRONICS DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION LTD.
State IT Centre, 47-A, Arera Hills, Bhopal-462011 (M.P.)

NOTICE INVITING TENDERS (NIT)

MPSEDC invites online proposals from suitable agencies for following RFP/Tenders :

S.No.	Tender No.	NIT
1.	MPSEDC/ MKT/2024/ 576	Request for Proposal (RFP) for AMC & FMS Services for Computer Hardware Equipment and Peripherals for General Administration Department (GAD) at Mantralaya, Bhopal (M.P.) T.No. MPSEDC/MKT/2024/576, Dated : 07.09.2024

For detail scope of work and terms and conditions, please refer to the respective RFP document available at <https://mptenders.gov.in>. An interested agency who qualifies as per the criteria mentioned in the RFPs may submit their proposals through <https://mptenders.gov.in>.

M.P. Madhyam/116309/2024 **CHIEF GENERAL MANAGER**

कार्यालय अधिष्ठाता
पं.ज.ने. स्मृति चिकित्सा महाविद्यालय, रायपुर (छ.ग.)
Phone No. 0771-2890001, 2525602 2523919

क्रमांक. चिकि/क्रम/2024/9881 रायपुर दिनांक 3/9/24

// दावा-आपत्ति सूचना//

पं.ज.ने. स्मृति चिकित्सा महाविद्यालय रायपुर की ओर निम्नलिखित चिकित्सकीय उपकरण सांपत्तिक प्रकृति होने के कारण रिजेन्ट्स / कन्स्यूमेबल/किट्स/कैटोडोर क्रय करने हेतु दावा आपत्ति सूचना आमंत्रित की जा रही है। प्रपत्र एवं अन्य जानकारी महाविद्यालय के वेबसाइट www.pjnmcraipur.in में अवलोकन कर प्राप्त किये जा सकते हैं।

S.No.	Name of Equipment	Make/Model	Department
1.	Activated Clotting Time (ACT Tube)	ACT Machine, PB Life Sciences Pvt. Ltd.	CTVS
2.	ECMO Circuit for ECMO	ECMO Kit Adult/Pediatric	CTVS
3.	Cauty Machine	Medtronic Vally Labe- Cautyry, Covidien	CTVS
4.	Blood Gas Analyzer	Radiometer, ABL-500 FLEX	CTVS
5.	Phaco & vitrectomy System	I/A Tubbing Set,	Ophthalmology
6.	Ambu Ascope 4 Flexible Bronchoscope	Ambu, Model-Ambu Ascopes	Anaesthsiology

दावा-आपत्ति जमा करने की अंतिम तिथि 04.10.2024 समय सायं 5.00 बजे तक
स्थान- पं.ज.ने. स्मृति चिकित्सा महाविद्यालय रायपुर (छ.ग.)

हस्ता/-
अधिष्ठाता
पं.ज.ने. स्मृति चिकित्सा महाविद्यालय
रायपुर (छ.ग.)
RO NO 242502252-01

OFFICE OF THE ENGINEER-IN-CHIEF, RURAL WATER SUPPLY & SANITATION, JAL "O" PARIMAL BHAWAN, UNIT-V, BHUBANESWAR-751001, ODISHA
Tel: 0674-2395734, Fax: 0674-2394946,
E-mail: cerwssodisha@gmail.com

No. 9650 Date: 05.09.2024

Request for Proposal (RFP)
Bid Identification No. EIC/RWS&S/05/2024-25

Request for Proposal (RFP) for Hiring of Agency to provide Manpower support to Rural Water Supply & Sanitation (RWSS) Divisions for Block Resource Centres (BRCs), Panchayati Raj & Drinking Water Department, Government of Odisha

The Engineer-in-Chief, RWS&S, Odisha, Bhubaneswar, on behalf of Panchayati Raj & Drinking Water Department, Government of Odisha invites Request for Proposal (RFP) for Hiring of Agency to provide Manpower support to Rural Water Supply & Sanitation (RWSS) Divisions for Block Resource Centres (BRCs), Panchayati Raj & Drinking Water Department, Government of Odisha.

The eligibility criteria for selection of Agencies/Firms are provided below:

- (a) The bidder should be registered for minimum period of 3 years under the Indian Companies Act 1956/ Societies Registration Act/ Trust Act/ Any other Relevant Act in India;
- (b) The bidder should have an Average Annual Turnover of atleast 5 (five) crore during the last three Financial Years i.e. FY 2021-22, FY 2022-23 and FY 2023-24 (Supported by duly audited balance sheet and statutory auditor certificate);
- (c) The bidder should have successfully undertaken at least either of the following Similar Assignment/Project of value specified herein during the last five financial years as on the last date of submission for International/ National/ State level Govt./ Corporate Sector Program:
 - One project of similar nature not less than the amount of Rs. 2 crores or
 - Two projects of similar nature not less than the amount of Rs. 1.25 crores each
- (d) The bidder/ firm/ any partners of the firm should not be blacklisted by any Government or any other organization in respect of any assignment or behaviour.
- (e) The bidder should have never been indicted by any court of law or any regulatory body or any State/ Central Government agencies. Interested Agency/ Firms may download the RFP document from Government of Odisha Website i.e. <https://odisha.gov.in/> <https://panchayat.odisha.gov.in> on 12.09.2024 to 02.10.2024 up to 5:00 PM. A pre-bid meeting shall be conducted on 11:30 hours dated 16.09.2024 at Office of the Engineer-in-Chief, Rural Water Supply & Sanitation, Jal o Parimal Bhawan, Unit-V, Bhubaneswar-751001, Odisha. Interested bidders may send their queries to cerwssodisha@gmail.com and attend the said pre-bid meeting. The Authority reserves the right to accept or reject any/all RFP without assigning any reason thereof. Further details can be seen from the e-procurement portal <https://odisha.gov.in/> <https://panchayat.orisha.gov.in>

Sd/-
Engineer in Chief, RWSS
OIPR 25003/11/0006/2425

WEST CENTRAL RAILWAY

E-Open Tender Notice No. 20-2024
For and on behalf of President of India, Sr. DIVISIONAL MECHANICAL ENGINEER (Frt), West Central Railway, Bhopal invites E-Open Tenders from reputed contractors for the under mentioned work:

(1) **Name of work:** Retrofitment of Twin Pipe Air Brake System on (250 Nos. BCNA + 78 Nos. BCN) Wagons at ROH Depot Itarsi of BPL Division, (2) **Approximate Value of work:** ₹ 75,25,947.50 (Including GST) (3) **Contract Period:** 06 Month (4) **Earnest Money:** Rs. 1,50,600.00 (5) **Cost of Tender Documents:** Nil (6) **Date and time of Closing of Tender:** 27.09.2024 at 17:00 hrs. (7) **Date and timing of Tender Opening:** 27.09.2024, After 17:30 hrs. (8) Tender notice can be seen on notice board of Sr. DME office WCR/BPL and all information regarding tender terms & conditions and eligibility criterion is available on the website <http://www.ireps.gov.in> (9) No manual offer will be acceptable. Sr. DME(Frt), WCR, Bhopal

S. E. RAILWAY - TENDER
e-Tender Notice No. EL-CON-KGP-SRC- YD-24-04, dated 05.09.2024. e-Tender is invited by Dy. Chief Electrical Engineer (Con), S.E.Railway, Kharagpur for and on behalf of the President of India for the following work. Following tender has been uploaded on website www.ireps.gov.in The e-tender will be closed at 12.00 hrs. on due date. **Brief Description of Works:** Supply, erection, testing & commissioning for the balance work of 25KV OHE, PSI and Electrical General services work for yard remodeling of Santragachi Yard in connection with the work of Santracil-Santragachi Link line in Kharagpur Division. **Cost:** ₹ 6,61,59,676/- **EMD:** ₹ 4,80,800/- **Completion period:** 06 (Six) months. **Due Date:** 30.09.2024. Interested tenderers may visit website www.ireps.gov.in for full details/description/specification of the tenders and submit their bids online. In no case manual tenders for these items will be accepted. NB : Prospective Bidders may regularly visit www.ireps.gov.in to participate in all other tenders. (PR-568)

EAST CENTRAL RAILWAY
TENDER NOTICE
No. GS-DNR-SnT-2024-05 Danapur, dtd. 05.09.2024

Sr. Divnl. Signal & Telecommunication Engineer, Gati Shakti, East Central Railway, Danapur Division, for and on behalf of President of India invites tenders on web portal www.ireps.gov.in for the following work:-

1. Name of work with its location: Signaling work in connection with Provision of 05 Nos. terminal Platform in Harding Park area at Patna Jn. in Danapur Division of East Central Railway. 2. Approximate cost of work : Rs. 77120310.24. 3. Earnest Money: Rs. 535600.00. 4. Last Date & Time of Submission: Up to 15:00 hrs. on 30.09.2024. 5. Opening of tender: 15.30 hrs. on 30.09.2024. 6. Website Particulars where detail of the work and criteria can be seen: www.ireps.gov.in. 7. Address of the office from where detail information can be obtained: Sr. Divnl. Signal & Telecommunication Engineer, Gati Shakti, East Central Railway, Danapur

Note: Any Corrigendum if required will be uploaded on above website before 14 days from the date of opening of tender.
Sr. Div. Sig. & Telecom Engineer(GS) East Central Railway, Danapur
PR/01074/DNRGS/S&T/24-25/36

"IMPORTANT"

Whilst care is taken prior to acceptance of advertising copy, it is not possible to verify its contents. The Indian Express (P) Limited cannot be held responsible for such contents, nor for any loss or damage incurred as a result of transactions with companies, associations or individuals advertising in its newspapers or

UJVN Ltd. (An Uttarakhand Govt. Enterprises) H.Q.: "UJJWAL", Maharani Bagh, G.M.S. ROAD, Dehradun-248006. Phone : 0135-2763508, 2763808 & Fax : 0135-2763507. CIN No. - U40101UR2001SGC025866 Website: www.ujvnl.com

नगर परिषद परळी वैजनाथ ई-निविदा क्र. (04), (05) / बोधकाम विभाग / 2024-25. ज.क्र. 2892/2024-25 नगर परिषद परळी वैजनाथ नि.बोर्ड दि. 06.09.2024 मुळाधिकारी नगर परिषद परळी वैजनाथ यांनी ई-निविदा प्रणालीवरून निविदा सूचना दिनांक 05.09.2024 रोजी खालीलप्रमाणे www.mahatenders.gov.in या संकेतिक स्थळावर प्रसिध्द केली आहे.

कार्यालय संचालक राज्य वन अनुसंधान संस्थान, पोलीपथर, जबलपुर (म.प्र.) Phone-0761-2666529, E-mail: mpsfr@mp.gov.in, mpsfr@mp.gov.in ई-निविदा सूचना (e-Tender Notice) No/NIT/SFR/Store/Pro/ 2270 Date 04/09/2024

UJVN LIMITED H.O.: "UJJWAL", Maharani Bagh, GMS Road, Dehradun-248006, Telephones: 0135-2763808, Fax- 0135- 2763508, CIN No. U40101UR2001SGC025866 Website: www.ujvnl.com

NORTHERN RAILWAY TENDER NOTICE (Through e-tendering) Tender No. 558-Sig-16-Tele-OT-1006 Dated: 06.09.2024 Name of work with its location: Telecom work in connection with construction of ROB in Lieu of LC No. 127 at Km 131.163 B/W Rampur Maniharan - Manani on DSA - SRE section.

कार्यालय कार्यपालन अभियंता जल संसाधन सभाग-कोणडागांव, छत्तीसगढ़ कोड क्रमांक-041 Email :- ceurkon@egwr.in निविदा निरस्तीकरण आदेश क्रमांक 1950/व.ले.लि./2024-25 कोणडागांव, दिनांक : 04/09/2024

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON See Section 82 Cr.P.C. Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused Ashok Kumar, S/o Late Sh. Om Prakash, R/o H.No. 67, Main Chowk, Village - Chandpur, Near Hanuman Mandir, Delhi - 83, has committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence in case FIR No. 506/2013 U/s 287/304A, P.S. Bawana, Delhi and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said Ashok Kumar cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said Ashok Kumar has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant).

PRAYAGRAJ MUNICIPAL CORPORATION Civil Lines, Prayagraj, U.P.- 211001 NOTICE INVITING TENDER (NIT) NIT No.- 3186/PRO/2024, Date: 06 September, 2024 The Chief Engineer (E/M), Prayagraj Municipal Corporation invites online tender for various works as per the details given below:

केनरा बँक Canara Bank (भारत सरकार का उपक्रम) सिंडिकेट Syndicate E-AUCTION SALE NOTICE

E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of movable/Immovable Properties under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 6(2), 8(6) & 9 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002

Table with 6 columns: SL NO., Branch Name/Name & Address of the Borrower(s)/ Guarantor(s), Brief Description of Property/ies, Total Liabilities as on specified Date, Reserve Price (in Rs.), Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) (in Rs.), Details of A/c No. (IFSC CODE, Possession notice)

Table with 6 columns: SL NO., Branch Name/Name & Address of the Borrower(s)/ Guarantor(s), Brief Description of Property/ies, Total Liabilities as on specified Date, Reserve Price (in Rs.), Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) (in Rs.), Details of A/c No. (IFSC CODE, Possession notice)

OTHER TERMS AND CONDITIONS: A) Auction/bidding shall be only through "Online Electronic Bidding" through the website https://ebkray.in. Bidders are advised to go through the website for detailed terms before taking part in the e-auction sale proceedings. B) The property can be inspected, with Prior Appointment with Authorised Officer, on (10.09.2024).

STATUTORY 15 DAYS SALE NOTICE UNDER THE SARFAESI ACT, 2002 Date :- 06.09.2024 Place :- Karnal Authorised Officer, Canara Bank

कार्यपालक अभियंता का कार्यालय ग्रामीण विकास विशेष प्रमंडल, गुमला

कार्यपालक अभियंता का कार्यालय ग्रामीण विकास विशेष प्रमंडल, लोहरदगा।

NORTHERN RAILWAY OPEN-E-TENDER NOTICE

ARMY PUBLIC SCHOOL DHAULA KUAN TENDER NOTICE - CORRIGENDUM

OFFICE OF THE MEDININAGAR MUNICIPAL CORPORATION

Rural Works Department Bihar Rural Roads Development Agency Invitation of Expression of Interest cum Request for Quote

WESTERN RAILWAY - AHMEDABAD DIVISION SIGNALLING WORKS INVITING TENDER No. EPC ADI WR SNT 06R

NORTHERN RAILWAY PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARING OF ACCUSED PERSON

कार्यालय महानिदेशक, चिकित्सा शिक्षा एवं प्रशिक्षण, उत्तर प्रदेश, लखनऊ

बिहार सरकार प्राचार्य का कार्यालय राजकीय पॉलिटेक्निक, अखिल

कार्यपालक अभियंता का कार्यालय भवन निर्माण विभाग, भवन प्रमंडल, लातेहार।

बिहार सरकार गया नगर निगम ई-निविदा/पुनर्निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना सं- 09/2024-25

बिहार सरकार बिहार राज्य पुल निर्माण निगम लिमिटेड

OFFICE OF THE GUWAHATI MUNICIPAL CORPORATION :: Ganeshguri :: Guwahati- 06

झारखण्ड सरकार कार्यपालक अभियंता का कार्यालय, ग्रामीण कार्य विभाग, कार्य प्रमंडल, सरायकेला-खरसावाँ।

17 ECONOMY

SENSEX: 81,183.93 ▼ 1017.23 (1.24%) NIFTY: 24,852.15 ▼ 292.95 (1.17%) NIKKEI: 36,391.47 ▼ 265.62 HANG SENG: 17,444.30 ▼ 13.04 FTSE: 8,218.16 ▼ 23.55 DAX: 18,495.74 ▼ 80.76

GOLD	USD RATE	OIL	SILVER
₹85,800	₹83.95	\$73.75	₹84,600

Note: Gold, silver rates at Delhi spot market, gold per 10g, silver per 1 kg; Crude oil (Indian basket) per barrel as of September 5

International market data till 1900 IST

WILL ENTAIL TOTAL INVESTMENTS OF AROUND ₹85,000 CR IN TWO PHASES

As Maharashtra clears Adani-Tower chip plant, Centre's approval awaited

SOUMYARENDRA BARIK
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 6

THE MAHARASHTRA government's announcement late Thursday that it had approved a \$10 billion chip plant to be jointly set up by Israel's Tower Semiconductor and the Adani Group, caught many in the industry and some in Delhi's policy circles by surprise. The key question was whether the state government had jumped the gun, with concerns around what would happen to central subsidies if the proposal does not get clearance from the Centre's technical committee.

MeiTY approval pending

Senior central government officials said that the Ministry of Electronics and IT (MeiTY) has not yet approved Tower and Adani's semiconductor unit, but the two have applied for subsidy under the Centre's Rs 76,000 crore India Semiconductor Mission, with the government's technical committee yet to complete its evaluation. This means that at this stage, the plant has not been approved by the technical committee of the Central government for subsidies under the Centre's scheme — with work on the plant unlikely to start without the Centre's ap-



AIM TO BECOME A SEMICONDUCTOR HUB

INDIA HAS ambitions to become a major chip hub on the lines of the United States, Taiwan and South Korea, and has been courting foreign companies to set up operations in the country. THE SEMICONDUCTOR plant is expected to create 15,000 jobs

proval, and subsidy commitment. "So, when the Maharashtra announcement happened, that was a bit surprising for us since we were still looking at their proposal. But the announcement does not change anything. If our committee does not like their proposal, it will not be cleared for central subsidy," one of the officials said on condition of anonymity. In fact, neither Adani Enterprises nor Tower Semiconductor had made any public announcement regarding their plant, at the time of publication. The Centre, too, had not issued a statement. On Thursday, Gautam Adani also delivered a lecture at a college in Mumbai, but made no mentions about the chip plant. The Adani Group did

not respond to a request for comment. For many, the uncharacteristic lack of acknowledgement, especially at the Centre, about India managing to secure a second foundry in the same year after approving a fab by the Tatas and Taiwan's Powerchip, raised more questions than answers about the announcement by the state government. Centre's chip incentive plan

As per the Centre's chip incentive scheme, entities approved for setting up semiconductor units in the country can secure as much as half of the total capex subsidies needed for it. It is widely understood that without this fiscal support, companies may not be willing to set

up shop in India given its nascent, and almost non-existent chip ecosystem. It is unclear whether state governments could have similar financial bandwidth. For some officials in Delhi, the surprise announcement seemed reminiscent of the Vedanta-Foxconn chip plant, which was to first come up in Maharashtra, but then moved to Gujarat, before the partnership between the two ended in 2023, ending any hopes for that plant. At the time, the proposed plant's shifting base from Maharashtra to Gujarat had also ignited a political storm. However, a senior government official said that the one key difference between the Vedanta-Foxconn and Tower-Adani plans is that the former did not have any experience or technology for making chips. Tower is an established, albeit small, name in the chip business and has the technology to make some legacy nodes.

Eye on elections

Many are also seeing the announcement as an election-linked move by the state government. A senior industry executive who is aware of the details of Adani and Tower's plan said that the two are not expecting the Centre's clearance to come up any time soon, primarily because the government has

exhausted its entire subsidy amount on various projects. "The reason it was announced by the Maharashtra government is certainly keeping an eye on the upcoming Assembly elections. The plant, in any case, will take at least seven years to function, and work will only happen when the central subsidy is approved," the executive said. Adani and Tower's chip plant has been approved by the Maharashtra government to be set up in Panvel of Raigad district. It will entail a total investment of Rs 84,947 crore (\$10 billion) in two phases and is expected to create 15,000 jobs.

"Tower Semiconductor company and Adani Group would jointly launch a mega-project of semiconductor manufacturing at Panvel (District Raigad). There would be investment of Rs 58,763 crore in first phase and Rs 25,184 crore in second phase, thereby a total of Rs 83,947 crore generating employment to 15,000 persons," a press release issued by the government stated. As per a post on X by Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnis, the plant will manufacture analog, mixed signals semiconductors. It will have a capacity of 40,000 wafers per month in the first phase and 80,000 wafers per month in the second phase.

US hiring rebounds in Aug, unemployment rate dips

ASSOCIATED PRESS
WASHINGTON, SEPTEMBER 6

HIRING BY America's employers picked up a bit in August from July's sluggish pace, and the unemployment rate dipped for the first time since March in a sign that the job market may be cooling but remains sturdy. Employers added 142,000 jobs last month, up from a scant 89,000 in July, the Labor Department said Friday.

The unemployment rate ticked down to 4.2 per cent from 4.3 per cent in July, which had been the highest level in nearly three years. Collectively, Friday's figures depict a job market slowing under the pressure of high interest rates but still growing. Many employers are responding to the resilience of consumers, who stepped up their spending in July, even after adjusting for inflation. With inflation falling steadily back to the Federal Reserve's 2 per cent target, the Fed is preparing to cut its key interest rate from a 23-year high. Friday's mixed report on the job market raises the question of how large a cut the Fed will announce after it meets September 17-18. The central bank could reduce its benchmark

Fed policymakers say they are ready to cut interest rates

Washington: Federal Reserve policymakers on Friday said they are ready to lower interest rates at the US central bank's meeting in two weeks, with one of them saying he could support back-to-back reductions, or a bigger cut in borrowing costs, should the cooling labour market need support.

"It is now appropriate to dial down the degree of restrictiveness in the stance of policy by reducing the target range for the federal funds rate," New York Fed President John Williams said at a Council on Foreign Relations event, though by how much and at what pace, he added, is still up in the air. **REUTERS**

rate by a typical quarter-point or by a larger-than-usual half-point. Wall Street traders now foresee a roughly 50-50 likelihood of either scenario, according to futures prices. America's labor market is now in an unusual place: Jobholders are mostly secure, with layoffs low, historically speaking. Yet with the pace of hiring having weakened, landing a job has become harder. In its report on August hiring, the government also sharply revised down its estimate of job growth for the previous two months. July's gain was revised down from an initial estimate of 114,000 to 89,000, June's from 179,000 to 118,000. In the past three months, hir-

ing has averaged only 116,000 a month, down sharply from an average of 211,000 a year ago. In a major speech last month, Chair Jerome Powell suggested that the Fed's policymakers have all but tamed inflation through high interest rates and don't want to see the job market weaken further. The central bank is trying to achieve a "soft landing," in which it succeeds in driving inflation down from a 9.1 per cent peak in 2022 to its target level without causing a recession. A lower Fed benchmark rate will lead eventually to lower borrowing costs for a range of consumer and business loans, including mortgages, auto loans and credit cards.

Sensex, Nifty tank 1.2%: What led to the fall in markets?

HITESH VYAS
MUMBAI, SEPTEMBER 6

DOMESTIC BENCHMARK equity indices witnessed heavy selling pressure on Friday, with the Sensex and Nifty falling 1.2 per cent each. The fall in stock market barometers was mainly due to profit booking and caution ahead of the release of US jobs data for August. The market capitalisation, or the total value of all listed shares, of the BSE-listed firms fell by Rs 5.49 lakh crore to Rs 460.18 lakh crore, or \$5.48 trillion.

How much have Sensex and Nifty fallen?

The BSE's 30-share Sensex tanked 1,017.23 points, or 1.24 per cent, to close at 81,183.93. The broader Nifty 50 slipped 292.95 points, or 1.17 per cent, to end at 24,852.15.

"Markets witnessed intense profit-booking after the recent upsurge and key benchmark indices crumbled on fears a subdued US economic data could push Fed chairman to postpone rate cut decision," said Prashanth Tapse, Senior VP (Research), Mehta Equities Ltd.

What triggered the fall in markets?

Investors trimmed their bullish bets ahead of the US jobs report, as any uptick in the numbers could prompt the Fed to maintain the status quo on interest rates. "Indian markets witnessed a



FILE

ment edged up by 114,000, stoking fear of a deteriorating labor market and a slowdown in the economy.

What other factors led to heavy selling?

"The domestic market was in panic today (on Friday) due to the SEBI's deadline over FII's disclosure norm. However, this is not expected to impact India's lucrativeness to FIIs in the long-term," said Vinod Nair Head of Research Geojit Financial Services.

In August last year, the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) had asked FPIs, holding more than 50 per cent of their equity AUM in a single corporate group or with an overall holding in Indian equity markets of over Rs 25,000 crore, to disclose granular details of all entities holding any ownership, economic interest, or exercising control in the FPI by end of January 2024.

However, Sebi, in January, this year gave FPIs additional seven months to provide additional disclosures.

Which stocks fell the most?

All sectors ended in red with PSU bank and oil and gas declining the most. The Nifty Bank fell 1.74 per cent to close at 50,576.85. Among the NSE companies, the stocks that declined the most included State Bank of India (4.26 per cent), BPCL (2.34 per cent), ICICI Bank (2.14 per cent), NTPC (2.05) and HCL Tech (2.04 per cent).

BRIEFLY

Vaishnav meets Japan minister to boost digital ties

New Delhi: Union minister Ashwini Vaishnav discussed further enhancing cooperation with Japan in the field of railways, innovation in the digital landscape and focusing on futuristic technological advancements during his visit to Tokyo. Vaishnav, who holds the portfolios of railways, information and broadcasting, and information technology and electronics, held productive discussions with Tetsuo Saito, Japan's minister of land, infrastructure, transport and tourism on enhancing India-Japan cooperation. Vaishnav said he discussed enhancing railway cooperation, promoting economic growth and deepening cultural ties with Saito. The meeting with Saito took place on Thursday. **PTI**

Hyundai adds two variants under EXTER portfolio

New Delhi: Hyundai Motor India has rolled out two new variants on its popular entry level sports utility vehicle EXTER, the company said on Friday. The S(O)+ variant, equipped with manual transmission is priced at Rs 7,86,300 while S+ variant is an automated manual transmission offered at Rs 8,43,900. Some of the key features of the newly added variants include smart electric sunroof, digital cluster with Colour TFT multi-information display, an 8" touchscreen infotainment system with Android Auto and Apple CarPlay, rear air-conditioner vents among others. **PTI**

Forex reserves jump \$2.3 bn to fresh record

New Delhi: India's forex reserves jumped by \$2.29 billion to a new high of \$683.9 billion for the week ended on August 30, according to the RBI data release on Friday. In the previous reporting week, the forex reserves had jumped by \$7.02 billion to a high of \$681.6 billion. For the week ended August 30, foreign currency assets, a major component of the reserves, increased by \$1.48 billion to \$599.03 billion, the data showed. **PTI**

Tata Sons' profit jumps 74% in FY24

SWARAJ BAGGONKAR
MUMBAI, SEPTEMBER 6

TATA SONS, the principal investment holding company of the Tata group, saw a 74 per cent jump in the consolidated net profit to Rs 49,000 crore for FY24, helped by improvements in sectors like information technology, financial lending and airlines.

The Mumbai-headquartered company saw its FY24 consolidated revenue rise to Rs 4.77 lakh crore, an increase of 15 per cent compared to FY23, data from Tata Sons 106th annual report stated. Profit for FY24 attributable to the shareholders of the company has more than doubled to Rs 34,625 crore compared to FY23.

Based on the company's performance, the directors have recommended a dividend of Rs 35,000, which is double the Rs

RISE IN FY24 REVENUE

■ The company saw its FY24 consolidated revenue rise to Rs 4.77 lakh crore, an increase of 15 per cent compared to FY23

17,500 paid in FY23. If approved by the shareholders, it would involve a cash outflow of Rs 1,415 crore (from Rs 707 crore in FY23).

The Tata group's combined market capitalisation at the end of FY24 was Rs 30.37 lakh crore, an increase of 47 per cent from Rs 20.71 lakh crore a year ago, the report added.

The company is investing to leverage the India growth opportunity and in industries with a

large potential driven by global energy transition trend across sectors, imperative for global manufacturers to create a more diversified and resilient supply chain and artificial intelligence/data-led transformation of business.

"The company continues to make investments in businesses to enable them to capitalise on above growth opportunities and to support deleveraging of balance sheets," the report further added.

Tata Electronics, Air India, Tata Digital, Tejas Networks and Agratas (battery manufacturing) are the new businesses identified and incubated by Tata Sons.

Drawing a remuneration of Rs 135.32 crore, a rise of 20 per cent during FY24, Tata Sons executive chairman N Chandrabosekar retained the title of one of the country's highest paid CEOs. **FE**

Crisil: Cheaper tomatoes, broiler led to fall in thali cost

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU
MUMBAI, SEPTEMBER 6

THE COST of representative home-cooked vegetarian and non-vegetarian thalis declined by 4.29 per cent and 3.42 per cent, respectively, on a month-on-month basis in August 2024, Crisil MI&A Research said.

The decline was steeper at 8 per cent and 12 per cent for vegetarian and non-vegetarian thalis, respectively, when compared to the same period of last year.

"Prices of tomato, which accounted for 14 per cent of the vegetarian thali cost in August, declined 51 per cent on-year (from Rs 102 per kg in August 2023 to Rs 50 per kg in August 2024) due to fresh arrivals from southern and western states," Crisil said. A 27 per cent drop in fuel cost — to Rs 803 for a 14.2 kg LPG cylinder in Delhi in March 2024 from Rs 1,103 in August 2023 — contributed to the decline, it said. Moreover, prices of vegetable oil, chilli and cumin, which together account for less than 5 per cent of the vegetarian thali cost, eased 6 per cent, 30 per cent and 58 per cent on-year, respectively, Crisil said.

FULL REPORT ON
www.indianexpress.com

SpiceJet plans to raise ₹3,200 cr via debt, equity

Mumbai: Cash-strapped domestic carrier SpiceJet plans to raise Rs 3,200 crore through QIP, warrants and capital infusion by the promoter, the airline said in a presentation on Friday.

The funds will be utilised in taking back the grounded fleet in operations, liability settlement, new fleet induction and other general purposes, SpiceJet in the presentations.

"Spicejet plan to raise Rs 2,500 crore through QIP and Rs 736 crore through Previous Warrants and promoter infusion, the airline said in an investor presentation," it said in a corporate presentation to investors ahead of its proposed capital infusion. The proposed funds raised are subject to shareholders' approval.

Ajay Singh-promoted SpiceJet had earlier in January this year,

could raise only Rs 1,060 crore through preferential issues against its Rs 2,250 crore funding plan announced in December last year. The airline attributed factors like reduction in fleet, and subsequent grounding, higher cost of working capital, escalating fixed costs, fixed rentals at airports, and outstanding statutory dues as the factors for its current problem. **PTI**

MORGAN STANLEY EM IMI India overtakes China in emerging market index

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MUMBAI, SEPTEMBER 6

WITH INDIA overtaking China in terms of weightage in the Morgan Stanley Emerging Markets Index (MSCI EM IMI), Indian equities could see inflows of about \$4.5 billion (Rs 37,000 crore), according to estimates.

This week, Morgan Stanley announced that India has overtaken China in the MSCI Emerging Markets Investable Market Index (MSCI EM IMI). The weight of India in MSCI EM IMI stood at 22.27 per cent compared to 21.58 per cent of China.

While the main MSCI EM index (standard index) covers the large and midcap space, the IMI includes a more comprehensive range, encompassing large, mid, and small cap stocks.

India's heavier weight vis-a-vis China in MSCI IMI stems from the greater small-cap weighting in its basket, official sources said. Post this rejig in MSCI EM IMI, Indian equities could witness in-

flows of about \$4-4.5 billion, according to analysts' estimates. "The rebalancing reflects broader market trends. While Chinese markets have struggled on the back of economic headwinds in China, India's markets have benefitted from favourable macroeconomic conditions," official sources said.

They said that in the recent past, India has posted a much superior equity market performance, driven by strong macroeconomic fundamentals of Indian economy as well as robust performance by Indian corporates.

Further, the gains in Indian equity market have been broad based, reflected across large cap as well as mid-cap and small-cap indices. Key factors contributing to this positive trend include a 47 per cent increase in foreign direct investment (FDI) in the early part of 2024, decreasing Brent crude prices, and substantial foreign portfolio investment (FPI) in Indian debt markets, official sources added.

India must guard itself from becoming an 'EV colony' for China, says GTRI

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 6

AS CHINA seeks other manufacturing locations for its electric vehicles (EVs) which now face high tariff walls and other restrictions in the European Union, US and Canada, India must guard itself from becoming an "EV colony" for its northern neighbour, according to trade policy think tank Global Trade Research Initiative (GTRI).

EU, US and Canada collectively bought 50 per cent of the EVs that the Chinese exported and with the curbs it is now looking at moving its production to Asean countries and is setting its sights on India. While it may seem as an opportunity to get investments on EV manufacturing.

"These units would still depend heavily on imports from China, with 70-80 per cent of parts, including batteries, coming from there. Thailand, the first to allow local production by Chinese firms, is already facing



FILE

challenges with rising imports and complaints of lower sales from established manufacturers," the report prepared by GTRI's Ajay Srivastava said.

India should learn from Thailand's experience, where leading Chinese firms such as BYD, SAIC Motor, and Great Wall Motors have set up assembly plants and production lines, leveraging Thailand's established automotive industry infrastructure.

However, the increasing dominance of Chinese EV firms has raised concerns about the competitiveness and sustainability of local automotive man-

ufacturers and suppliers. Reports indicate a significant drop in orders for locally produced auto parts, with some suppliers experiencing up to a 40 per cent reduction in business. There's also a risk that China might dump excess EVs in India as access to developing markets becomes tougher. There are other challenges that India faces in accelerating EV adoption. These challenges include 80 per cent electricity generated from fossil fuels like coal; frequent power cuts; and dependency on imports for making EVs in the country like batteries and critical minerals. **FE**

Rajasthan State Road Development And Construction Corporation Ltd., JAIPUR
No. MTR/2024/28/1366-73 ई-निविदा सूचना संख्या 195/2024-25 Date: 05.09.2024

गोपालगढ़, जयपुर के निम्न क्षेत्रों में अग्रणी पोर्टलन्ट सीमेंट (PPC) के पर ई-निविदा प्रक्रिया के माध्यम से निविदाएं आमंत्रित की जाती हैं:-

कार्य का विवरण: गोपालगढ़ पोर्टलन्ट सीमेंट कारखाने की अग्रणी पोर्टलन्ट सीमेंट (PPC) के पर ई-निविदा प्रक्रिया के माध्यम से निविदाएं आमंत्रित की जाती हैं:-

अनुबंध का विवरण: गोपालगढ़ पोर्टलन्ट सीमेंट कारखाने की अग्रणी पोर्टलन्ट सीमेंट (PPC) के पर ई-निविदा प्रक्रिया के माध्यम से निविदाएं आमंत्रित की जाती हैं:-

अनुबंध का विवरण: गोपालगढ़ पोर्टलन्ट सीमेंट कारखाने की अग्रणी पोर्टलन्ट सीमेंट (PPC) के पर ई-निविदा प्रक्रिया के माध्यम से निविदाएं आमंत्रित की जाती हैं:-

RAJASTHAN RAJYA VIDYUT PRASARAN NIGAM LIMITED
NOTICE INVITING BID: 1110002408 1110002409 & 1110002410

The BIDs are invited from the interested competent & experience Bidder through sealed Bid (Single Part Bidding) for BN:1110002408 by the SE (T&C), RVPN, Ajmer and E-bid under (Two Part Bidding) for BN:1110002409 & 1110002410 are also invited through E-procurement process. Other particulars of the Bids may be visited on the procurement portal <https://eprocr.rajasthan.gov.in>, <https://sppp.rajasthan.gov.in> & <https://energy.rajasthan.gov.in/rvpl> Departmental website.

1. BN:1110002408 for (UBN: VPN2425WSO801293)
2. BN: 1110002409 for (UBN: VPN2425WSO801296)
3. BN: 1110002410 for (UBN: VPN2425LSO801303)

Superintending Engineer (T & C), Ajmer
Raj.Samwad/C/24/4811 RRVPN/TR-6339/2024

Rajasthan State Mines & Minerals Limited
(A Government of Rajasthan Enterprise), 4, Meera Marg, Udaipur - 313001
Phone : (0294)2428743/2428764-67, Fax : (0294) 2428739, Email: rsmmiphosphate@gmail.com
Date - 06.09.2024

Corrigendum- No. 2

NIT No. & Date	Description of Work
E-Tender no. RSM/CO/MKT/2024-25/97 Dated: 22.07.2024 UBN No. MML2425WLOB00072	Tender For Long term Sale of High-Quality Limestone Fines (5mm - 30 mm) from backfilled dump at Sanu, District- Jaisalmer (Raj.).

In respect of above mentioned e-tender, a corrigendum-2 no. 145 dated 05.09.2024 has been published for which kindly visit on our website www.rsmm.com or www.sppp.rajasthan.gov.in or eprocr.rajasthan.gov.in or Contact Head (Centralized Marketing) on above address.
Raj.Samwad/C/24/4847 Dy. General Manager (P&A)

IN AUGUST

HARRIS RAISES \$361 MN, TRUMP \$130 MN

Kamala Harris's presidential campaign and the Democratic Party raised \$361 million in August. Her campaign said the August haul left Harris with \$404 million in cash on hand at the beginning of September. Trump's campaign raised \$130 million in August, leaving \$295 million cash on hand

TOP OF THE WORLD



Colt Gray, who is charged as an adult

UNITED STATES School shooting: Teen, father appear in court

Atlanta: The Georgia teenager charged as an adult with killing four people at his high school made his first court appearance on Friday, and his father later appeared before the same judge on charges of enabling his son to obtain the rifle used in the shooting. Suspected Georgia high-school shooter Colt Gray, 14, made his first appearance in state court, where he faces murder charges stemming from Wednesday's rampage, which killed four and wounded nine. Gray did not enter a plea in front of Barrow County Superior Court Judge Currie Minglehoff. Gray was told that he was charged with four counts of felony murder and that he could face life in prison. **AP**



TYPHOON YAGI MAKES LANDFALL IN CHINA

A road in Haikou following the landfall of typhoon Yagi, in south China's Hainan Province, Friday. Xinhua via AP

- Asia's strongest storm this year, Super Typhoon Yagi, landed in Hainan on Friday, bringing violent gales and rain
- Hainan saw power outages affecting 830,000 households; In Guangdong, 574,500 people had been evacuated
- Schools shut, flights cancelled in southern China; Hong Kong stock exchange and businesses closed
- The world's second-most powerful tropical cyclone in 2024 so far, Yagi moved west towards Vietnam

Half of Gaza's 6 lakh children get polio shots

REUTERS CAIRO, SEPTEMBER 6

ISRAELI MILITARY strikes killed at least 27 Palestinians across the Gaza Strip on Friday, medics said, as health officials resumed vaccination of tens of thousands more children in the enclave against polio. In Nuseirat, one of the territory's eight historic refugee camps, an Israeli airstrike killed two women and two children,

while eight other people were killed in two other airstrikes in Gaza City, the medics said. Meanwhile, Israeli forces battled Hamas militants across Gaza. The United Nations agency for Palestinian refugees, UNRWA, said at least 160,000 children received polio drops in southern areas of Gaza on Thursday where medical staffers began the second stage of the campaign, benefiting from an Israeli and Hamas agreement on

limited pauses in the fighting. "Since 1 September @UNRWA & partners have vaccinated nearly 355,000 children...." UNRWA said in a post on X. "We'll continue the campaign aiming to reach around 640,000 children," it added. Israeli soldiers killed an American woman participating in an anti-settlement protest in the West Bank on Friday. Two doctors said she was shot in the head.

PROTESTERS DISRUPT TORONTO FESTIVAL

Toronto: Four Pro-Palestinian protesters disrupted an opening night screening at the Toronto International Film Festival, chanting "Stop the genocide!". It happened at the screening for the David Gordon Green comedy "Nutcrackers". **AP**

PAKISTAN Islamabad reports 1st polio case in 16 years

Islamabad: Authorities in Pakistan on Friday reported its first polio case in the capital Islamabad in the last 16 years, a setback to the national efforts aimed at eradicating the crippling virus from the country. According to the Regional Reference Laboratory for Polio at the National Institute of Health, wild poliovirus type 1 (WPV1) was detected in a child at Union Council Rural 4 of Islamabad. "This is the first human case reported from Islamabad in the last 16 years," an official statement said, adding that the newest case marked the 17th polio case this year in Pakistan. **PTI**

Telegram begins action to tackle criticism: Durov

London: Telegram boss Pavel Durov said Friday that the messaging app would tackle criticism of its content moderation and remove some features that had been abused for illegal activity. Durov, who was last week placed under formal investigation in France in connection with the use of Telegram for crimes including fraud, money laundering and sharing images of child sex abuse, announced the move in a message to his 12.2 million subscribers on the platform. "While 99.999% of Telegram users have nothing to do with crime, the 0.001% involved in illicit activities create a bad image for the entire platform, putting the interests of our almost billion users at risk. We are committed to turn moderation on Telegram from an area of criticism into one of praise," he wrote. **REUTERS**

Revival of SAARC spirit can solve many regional problems: Yunus

PRADIPTA TAPADAR DHAKA, SEPTEMBER 6

THERE SHOULD be a revival of the "spirit of SAARC," Muhammad Yunus, the head of Bangladesh's interim government has said, underlining that the eight-member bloc can solve many of the region's problems. In an interview with PTI in Dhaka, Chief Adviser Yunus said that although the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) was formed with a great cause, it now exists only on paper and is not functioning. The regional grouping comprises Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. Yunus mentioned that he



Muhammad Yunus says he will try to meet PM Modi on the sidelines of UNGA meet

would try to meet Prime Minister Narendra Modi on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly session scheduled to be held later this month. He also mentioned that he will try to get the heads of state of SAARC nations together for a photo op. Prime Minister Modi

is likely to address the high-level UN General Assembly session on September 26, according to a provisional list of speakers issued by the UN. The high-level General Debate of the 79th session of the UN General Assembly will take place from September 24-30. "The SAARC summit has not taken place for quite a long time. If we come together, a lot of problems will be resolved," Yunus said. Nepal has been making efforts to activate the regional grouping, which has not been very effective since 2016. The 2016 SAARC Summit was to be held in Islamabad. But after the terrorist attack on an Indian Army camp in Uri in Jammu and Kashmir on September 18 that year, India expressed its inability to participate in the summit due to "pre-

vailing circumstances". The summit was called off after Bangladesh, Bhutan and Afghanistan also declined to participate in the Islamabad meet. The Nobel laureate noted that although the European Union, which was formed along similar lines as SAARC, has achieved a lot through mutual cooperation, SAARC has yet to achieve the same. Speaking on the issue of the Rohingya influx in Bangladesh, Yunus said he would seek help from India to convince Myanmar to take back its population. Yunus has said the interim government would pursue with India ways to resolve the differences over the long-pending Teesta water sharing treaty, as delaying it for years serves no purpose for either nation. **PTI**

China to no longer send kids abroad for adoption

REUTERS HONG KONG, SEPTEMBER 6

CHINA WILL no longer send children overseas for adoption, the government said, overturning a more than three-decade rule that was rooted in its once strict one-child policy. More than 160,000 Chinese children have been adopted by families across the world since 1992, when China first opened its doors to international adoption. Around 82,000 of these children, mostly girls, have been adopted in the US. On Thursday, Foreign Ministry Spokeswoman

Mao Ning said the Chinese government had adjusted its cross-border adoption policy to be "in line" with international trends. The rule change comes as Chinese policymakers struggle to encourage young couples to get married and have children after the population fell for two consecutive years. China has one of the lowest birth rates globally. China's move to halt international adoptions comes after the Netherlands in May banned its citizens from adopting children from foreign countries. In Denmark, people will no longer be able to adopt children from abroad.

In rare verdict, Lahore HC orders removal of serving Army General

M ZULQERNAIN LAHORE, SEPTEMBER 6

IN A rare verdict, a Pakistani court on Friday ordered the removal of a serving general of the Pakistan Army from heading a key organisation, which regulates government databases and statistically manages the sensitive registration database of all citizens of the country, stating that his appointment to the position was "unauthorised" and in violation of the rules. The Lahore High Court (LHC) annulled the appointment of

EXPLAINED A setback to Pak govt

According to experts, the decision is seen as a setback for the backers of the current regime as the military wants to have its men in important positions in civil organisations.

National Database and Registration Authority (Nadra) Chairman Lieutenant General Munir Afsar on a petition filed by a citizen, Ashba Kamran.

SIGNIFICANT VICTORY FOR FORMER PRESIDENT Trump hush money sentencing delayed until after election



Donald Trump at a press conference in New York, Friday. Reuters

Wants to avoid perception of a political motive: New York judge

REUTERS NEW YORK, SEPTEMBER 6

A NEW York judge on Friday delayed former US President Donald Trump's sentencing in his hush money criminal case until after the November 5 election, writing that he wants to avoid the unwarranted perception of a political motive. Trump, the Republican nominee for president, had previously been scheduled to be sentenced on September 18. His lawyers in August asked Justice Juan Merchan to push back his sentencing date until after the vote, citing "naked election-interference objectives." Manhattan District Attorney Alvin Bragg, who brought the charges against Trump, is a Democrat. Merchan said on Friday he now planned to sentence Trump on Nov. 26, unless the case is dismissed before then. "The imposition of sentence will be adjourned to avoid any appearance - however unwar-

ranted - that the proceeding has been affected by or seeks to affect the approaching Presidential election in which the Defendant is a candidate," the judge wrote. "The Court is a fair, impartial and apolitical institution." Trump campaign spokesperson Steven Cheung said after the ruling that the case should be dismissed altogether. Trump campaign spokesman Steven Cheung said after the ruling that the case should be dismissed altogether. Trump called for the creation of a government efficiency commission in an economic speech in New York on Thursday, adopting a policy idea that was pitched to him by tech billionaire Elon Musk. Trump said that Musk would also lead the commission, which would conduct an audit of the federal government and recommend "drastic reforms" for cutting waste. He said the commission would save "trillions of dollars."

enced. Falsifying business records is punishable by up to four years in prison. If Trump wins the White House, he could potentially order the Department of Justice to drop federal election interference charges against him. **Trump: Musk will lead efficiency commission** Trump called for the creation of a government efficiency commission in an economic speech in New York on Thursday, adopting a policy idea that was pitched to him by tech billionaire Elon Musk. Trump said that Musk would also lead the commission, which would conduct an audit of the federal government and recommend "drastic reforms" for cutting waste. He said the commission would save "trillions of dollars."



US Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin, German Defence Minister Boris Pistorius, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, US Air Force General Charles Q Brown Jr in Germany, Friday. AP

Need arms to strike deeper into Russia, Zelenskyy tells West

Austin: Kremlin on defensive on its own turf

REUTERS RAMSTEIN AIR BASE, GERMANY, SEPTEMBER 6

UKRAINIAN PRESIDENT Volodymyr Zelenskyy urged Western allies Friday to ignore Moscow's "red lines" and allow Kyiv to use long-range weapons for strikes on Russian territory as Washington pledged a further \$250 million in weaponry for Kyiv. Zelenskyy made his first appearance at a regular U.S.-hosted gathering of Ukraine's allies at Ramstein Air Base in Germany and sought to present the long-range strike options as another way to pressure Russia to end the 2-1/2-year-old war. He spoke at a high-risk moment for Ukrainian forces, who have made a surprise offensive into Russia's Kursk region even as Russian forces focus on seizing the city of Pokrovsk in eastern

Ukraine, a logistics hub for Kyiv's war effort. "We need to have this long-range capability not only on the occupied territory of Ukraine, but also on Russian territory, yes, so that Russia is motivated to seek peace," Zelenskyy said, in remarks that drew support from countries including Baltic nations Lithuania and Estonia. The latter shares a border with Russia. US Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin pointed to the Kursk offensive as an example of how Ukraine was working to seize the battlefield initiative. "The Kremlin's army of aggression is now on the defensive on its own turf," Austin said. "Putin's malice runs deep. Moscow is continuing its offensive in the east of Ukraine, especially around Pokrovsk," Austin said. "Putin is repositioning his troops in Kursk. The Kremlin continues to bombard Ukraine's cities and to target Ukraine's civilians."

INDONESIA 7 detained for bid to attack Pope Francis

Singapore: Indonesian police detained seven people in a failed plot to attack Pope Francis, who wrapped up the first leg of his 12-day Asia-Pacific tour from the archipelago on Friday. The seven people were detained in the outlying cities of Bogor and Bekasi near Jakarta, said The Straits Times quoting a media statement by Indonesia's national police anti-terrorism squad. **PTI**

CHILDREN UNDER 2 SHOULD NOT BE EXPOSED TO ANY SCREENS TO LIMIT PHONE USE BY YOUNGSTERS, HEALTH EXPERTS SAY

How much screen time should toddlers have? None at all, says Sweden

MELIA NIERENBERG LONDON, SEPTEMBER 6

SWEDISH PUBLIC health authorities recommended this week that children younger than 2 should not use any digital media, as parents, paediatricians and governments struggle to respond to the challenges of today's tech-soaked world. "We have to take back control," said Jakob Forsmed, the minister of social affairs and public health, and give children

"the ability to have a different kind of childhood." The intention of Sweden's policy - and others like it - is to cut down on distractions, promote healthy development and help preserve the innocence of childhood. But some experts wonder if the guidance may be too unrealistic and too judgmental to stick. There are four main categories to Sweden's new screen-time recommendations: **Duration:** No screens for children younger than 2, an hour maximum for children age 2 to 5,



11-year-old boy plays with his father's phone outside school in Barcelona, Spain. AP file

two hours for children age 6 to 12 and three hours for teens. **Control:** Sweden recommends following the age limits provided by social media and game companies, and that parents keep tabs on what their children use. **Sleep:** No screens before bedtime, or in the bedroom. (That's probably also a good move for adults, sleep scientists say.) **Self-reflection:** Parents should think about their own screen time, which can cut into their interactions with their chil-

dren - and set the tone for a child. Paediatric health experts in the United States and Ireland recommend no screens before 18 months, save for video chats with adults they know. That jumps to 2 years old for experts in Canada and Australia, which, like Sweden, does not make exceptions for chats. France may go further. President Emmanuel Macron commissioned a report, which was published in April, that recommended children younger than 3 have no exposure to screens - including television. **NYT**

19 BIG PICTURE

For 11 years, Harish Rana has been lying still on a bed — the only sign of life an occasional cough. With the Supreme Court turning down the family's plea for passive euthanasia for Harish, VIDHEESHA KUNTAMALLA visits their home to find how the law around death has changed everyone's life

KEEPING THEIR CHILD ALIVE

IT'S A photograph taken in a park, "somewhere in Chandigarh". Harish Rana, wearing a black pullover and white sneakers, a mobile phone in his left hand, strikes a pose in the winter sun.

"Look at him... This was when he was in college. He is posing for the camera," smiles Ashok Rana, 63, gently stroking the photograph, straightening the tiny moisture bubbles trapped in between the plastic sheets of a file where it lay along with other documents. It's a photograph from another time, of his son as a third-year civil engineering student at Chandigarh University.

Now 30, Harish lay in an adjacent room, his left arm strapped to the bed to restrain him and prevent him from falling, his limbs twisted and wasting. It's a state he has been in for the last 11 years — a "100% disability" that has left him in a vegetative state, from which he has almost no chance of recovering, say doctors who have attended to him.

Ashok, weary with age and fatigue, struggles to keep memories of his eldest child alive. The photograph helps. As does a gastrostomy tube — filled with milk at times, beetroot puree at other times — that's attached to Harish's stomach. It is this that has helped keep Harish alive since 2013, when he fell from the fourth floor of his flat in Chandigarh and suffered severe head injuries.

But as the prayers and hopes of the initial years gave way to a gnawing realisation that Harish will never respond or get up again, Ashok and his wife Nirmala, 58, were weighed down by a nagging fear. "We are getting old. What will happen to him after we are gone? There is no one else to care for him. He will be left all alone, trapped in this state," says Ashok.

It's this fear that has prompted the ageing couple to seek what "no parent would wish for their child" — death by euthanasia.

In July, the Delhi High Court turned down the parents' plea for passive euthanasia for their son, saying Harish was not being "kept alive mechanically and he is able to sustain himself without any extra external aid".

Last month, the Supreme Court too declined their plea, with the CJ-led bench ruling that Harish's was not a case of "passive euthanasia" as he was not completely dependent on life-support machines. The court, however, said it was "moved by the plight of the family" and asked the Centre to consider if arrangements could be made for Harish's treatment and lodging. The next hearing in the case is expected to be held on September 10.

Manish Jain, the lawyer representing Harish Rana in the Supreme Court, says, "In our petition, we have asked the court to enlarge its definition of what all comes under the term 'life support'... The petition was originally the mother's painful decision as she was the one who started worrying about the deteriorating health condition of her son." Sitting on a thin mattress on the floor at



Abhinav Saha

his home in Ghaziabad, the documents strewn around him, Ashok rearranges the files one more time — his son's medical reports, hospital receipts, petitions to courts and the countless letters that he has written seeking help and, now, euthanasia for Harish.

"I have lost count of the number of times I have gone through these documents. Still, I discover new things about my son every day. I found this photograph only a few days ago. I also found his mess card from college," says Ashok, who retired in 2022 after 30 years of working in a catering firm, where he supplied food to clients.

A phone call on Rakshabandhan

Recalling the Rakshabandhan day of August 20, 2013, that turned their world upside down, Nirmala says she spoke to her son in the afternoon, after the day's festivities had wrapped up.

"I called him and asked if he had tied the rakhi his younger sister had sent him. He said he was busy, but would do that soon," recalls Nirmala.

That was the first time since he left home that Harish hadn't come home for Rakshabandhan.

"Bhaiya had won several weightlifting competitions in college. That year, he stayed back because he had a crucial bout coming up in two days and wanted to focus on his training. Bhaiya loved three things: video games, football and working out at the gym," says Harish's brother Ashish, younger by three years, who works for an edtech firm.

Around 7:30 pm that day, the phone rang with terrible news. Ashok says the caller told

him that Harish had fallen from the fourth floor of a building while attempting to jump "from one structure to another".

"Why would our son attempt something so reckless?" wonders Ashok. It's a question he has asked himself several times, but never found an answer to.

The family immediately set out for Chandigarh — it was around 1 am by the time they reached the hospital where Harish was admitted.

Nirmala says the sight of her son on the hospital bed, hands and legs restrained, broke her. "His teeth were chattering, and there were tears in his eyes," she says, her voice trembling.

Harish was a teenager when he left his home in Mahavir Enclave to join college in Chandigarh — a polytechnic course, followed by civil engineering at Chandigarh University. Almost overnight, says Nirmala, he grew up.

"Until then, he avoided the smallest of chores at home. He was someone who would call us to his room and ask us to turn off his fan," laughs Ashish, recalling how "bhaiya was a lot of fun... played a lot of pranks... But in Chandigarh, he became more responsible, and when he came home from college during vacations, he would help our mother with work and guide me."

A bedside in Ghaziabad

After he was brought to Delhi from the Chandigarh hospital, Harish was taken straight to the AIIMS Trauma Centre, from where he was sent home four days later.

His medical records from Janakpuri Super Speciality Hospital, one of the 20-odd hospitals Harish was taken to in the initial years, show he has a "head injury with diffuse axonal injury with vegetative stage, quadriplegic. He is physically disabled and has 100% disability in relation to his whole body and is permanent in nature".

Dr Shweta Singla, a neurologist who treated Harish at her private clinic in Delhi's



A photograph of Harish Rana taken in Chandigarh, where he was a student of civil engineering; (left) Harish's father Ashok Rana with his son's documents

Dwarka for the first six years after the accident, told *The Indian Express*, "When I first saw him, he was unable to open his eyes or move his limbs. Since then, the family has approached me several times for medication and in times of emergencies. But in all these years, Harish has shown no improvement in his clinical status."

Meanwhile, the family's world shrank to Harish's bedside, defined by the rhythms of his care.

"Now everybody's a doctor in our house," says Ashok wryly.

From the time Nirmala and her son Ashish wake up at 5 every morning, their day is an unrelenting schedule of medication and care — sponge baths, massages, and physiotherapy sessions for Harish.

Twice a week, they lift Harish and place him on a wheelchair and give him a sponge bath, after which they dress his bed sores, place him back on the bed and carefully refit the gastrostomy tube. They also help him do physiotherapy sessions twice a day and give him a coconut oil massage for "better blood circulation".

Through all this, Harish lies still on the bed, the only sign of life an occasional cough and the silent heave of his chest as he breathes.

In the initial years, the family clutched at every straw they could find. "My mother did all kinds of things to bring him back. For months, she would boil two litres of milk everyday, make khoya out of it and place it on my brother's head, simply because someone suggested that would help. We also tried homoeopathy medicines. Nothing worked," says Ashish.

For a while, the family also took Harish to RML, AIIMS and Apollo hospitals for Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy — a treatment that involves breathing pure oxygen in a pressurised environment — but gave up after he failed to respond.

It's Nirmala who is in constant attendance by Harish's bedside, rushing off to the kitchen to cook and to prepare his pureed food, but heading back every few minutes to attend to him — to feed him four times a day every four hours, rinse and wash the gastrostomy tube after every feed, empty the catheter, or simply to check on him. While she and her younger son Ashish share Harish's room, Ashok sleeps in an adjacent room.

Ashish says that as "glue that has kept us together", his mother took it upon herself and shouldered much of the caregiving responsibility. "Earlier, mummy would lift bhaiya all by herself and place him on the wheelchair. But she can't do that anymore. She has slowed down," he says.

This year, there has been a new worry: the big bed sores that refuse to go away. "I make sure I turn his body to the side every hour," says Nirmala.

The gastrostomy tube, too, has given them several anxious moments — in the early days, every time Harish was turned on his side, the tube would come off and the family had to rush him to hospital.

Pouring some milk from a steel glass into Harish's gastrostomy tube, Nirmala says, "He used to love the *aloo parathas* I made. He would eat at least eight in one sitting. Now my heart breaks when I pour this into the tube," she says. "Harish was so fit he could eat 10 to 12 bananas at a time," adds Ashok.

Ashok says that with Harish bedridden, the family's finances are always stretched thin. "We spent lakhs on our son's medication and the hospital visits. Even now, the catheter, the gastrostomy tube have to be changed every few days. I had to support two other children and my wife with my salary of Rs 30,000. Now I have retired and all of us are dependent on my younger son's income," says Ashok.

To supplement his son's income and his own monthly pension of Rs 3,600, Ashok sells sandwiches and burgers at a local cricket ground on weekends.

In 2021, they sold their home in Mahavir Enclave and relocated to Ghaziabad.

"We wanted Harish's room to have some ventilation and some light. The house in Mahavir enclave had no ventilation and the lights had to be on all the time. Since we keep the air conditioner on in Harish's room almost round the day, we thought we could save some money on electricity if we moved to another house with better ventilation," says Ashok.

Over time, the hospital and doctor visits have gone down. "We have given up on hospitals," Ashok says, recounting their endless wait for basic procedures at various medical facilities, their hopes rising and dipping with each doctor consultation.

All these years, Nirmala says, she had kept hoping for a miracle — that Harish would someday twitch a toe, move his hand a bit, call out to her. But now, she has given up.

"A decade is a long time... Even when doctors gave up hope, I was hopeful that my son would recover some day. But this year, after his bed sores got worse, I decided I cannot see my son suffer any more," she says.

The law and the ground realities of passive euthanasia

AJOY SINHA KARPURAM
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 6

FINDING THAT 30-year-old Harish Rana was not being kept alive 'mechanically', the Delhi High Court and the Supreme Court recently rejected a plea by his parents for constituting a medical board to examine if this is a viable case for passive euthanasia.

The case has reignited the debate around the ethics and law that defines passive euthanasia — withdrawing life-supporting treatment to allow a person to die naturally.

2011: Aruna Shanbaug case in SC

In 2011, the Supreme Court for the first time recognised the legality of passive euthanasia in the case of Aruna Ramchandra Shanbaug v Union of India.

After being sexually assaulted by a ward attendant of Mumbai's KEM Hospital in 1973 and suffering a brain injury in the process, nurse Aruna Shanbaug was left in a 'persistent vegetative state' for decades, with no possibility of recovery. Journalist and author Pinki Virani, who wrote a book on Shanbaug, filed a petition at the Supreme Court in 2009 seeking an end to the life-supporting treatment the hospital was providing to Shanbaug, arguing that she should be allowed to die peacefully.

The court, while ruling out passive euthanasia in this case, held that Shanbaug was still alive as she did not require life support. However, the court recognised the legality of passive euthanasia, though it clarified that this could only be done with the approval of a High Court.

A roadmap

In 2018, the Supreme Court recognised the legality of 'passive euthanasia' for terminally-ill patients, holding that the 'right to die with dignity' forms a part of the right to life under Article 21 of the Constitution of India. The court also laid down detailed guidelines for passive euthanasia, both in cases where the patient left an 'advance directive' or a 'living will' stating that life support should be withdrawn if they fall terminally ill, and in cases where no such directive was left behind.

Among the guidelines was the condition that the living will must be signed in the presence of two witnesses and signed by a Judicial Magistrate. The guidelines also called for multiple approvals before the terminally ill patient's case is cleared — from the treating physician, a suitably qualified medical board, and another external medical board, with representation from the local administration.

In the case of patients without a living will, the family has to give their consent for withdrawal of life support.

In 2019, the Indian Society of Critical Care Medicine filed an application for modifying these guidelines, stating that they were cumbersome and unworkable.

In 2023, another five-judge bench allowed the guidelines to be modified in a number of ways. This included introducing timelines for each board to make a decision, and

limiting the involvement of the Judicial Magistrate.

The tough decisions

Though the Supreme Court dismissed the plea for passive euthanasia in Harish Rana's case on August 20, the bench was sympathetic to the plight of Rana's parents who had spent a significant portion of their own lives and savings caring for their son who will likely never recover.

Since his fall from the fourth floor of a building in 2013, Rana has been in a 'permanent vegetative state', suffering from quadriplegia with "100% disability in relation to his whole body", according to his hospital records.

According to medical experts, the financial implications are often drastic for patients in a vegetative state.

Speaking of the tough decisions families are forced to make while caring for a terminally ill patient, Dr Bhavani Prasad Gudavalli, Head of the Critical Care Department at CARE Hospitals, Banjara Hills, Hyderabad, said, "It's not as if they (the families) don't have compassion, but when the finances come into play and you tell them that the financial implications are very high and the chance of recovery is very low, then the family will often want to withdraw treatment."



How agriculture in Haryana differs from Punjab

Haryana has a more diversified cropping profile than the environmentally and fiscally unsustainable rice-wheat monoculture of Punjab



HARISH DAMODARAN

BOTH HARYANA and Punjab are seen to embody the best and the worst of the Green Revolution — they helped India turn self-sufficient, if not surplus, in rice and wheat, but also imposed steep environmental costs through the monocropping of rice-wheat. But like the grains of wheat and rice are apart, field realities in Punjab are very different from those in Haryana.

The Punjab story

Rice-wheat monoculture — farmers growing just the two crops during the *kharif* (monsoon) and *rabi* (winter-spring) seasons respectively year after year — aptly describes Punjab's agriculture. The state ranks third in the country in both wheat and rice output. Table 1 shows the average share of rice in Punjab's total crop area sown during the *kharif* season from 2019-20 to 2024-25 at

86.8%. The average share of wheat during *rabi* is even higher at 97.9%.

In absolute terms, the state's area under rice has risen from 20.2 lakh hectares (lh) in 1990-91 and 26.1 lh in 2000-01 to 31.9 lh in 2023-24. Area under wheat cultivation has not gone up as much — from 32.7 lh in 1990-91 and 34.1 lh in 2000-01 to 35.1 lh in 2023-24.

Rice is a water-intensive crop, requiring about 25 irrigations compared to just 4-5 for wheat. The problem of "too much production" — reflected in Punjab's depleting groundwater tables and the fiscal cost it bears to procure and stock surplus grain — stems more from rice than from wheat.

EXPLAINED ECONOMICS

Picture in Haryana

Haryana's cropping pattern is far less of a monoculture. Table 2 shows that rice accounts for less than half the state's *kharif* crop area, while wheat has just over three-fourths share of the overall *rabi* acreage. Farmers in the state cultivate a varied crop mix that includes cotton, *bajra* (pearl millet) and *guar* (cluster bean) in *kharif*, and rapeseed-mustard, *chana* (chickpea) and sunflower in *rabi*. Within rice, between 2019-20 and 2023-24, 56.2% of the area was given to *basmati* varieties, compared to only 16.5% for the

same in Punjab. There is no "surplus" problem in *basmati* — unlike other varieties, it is not procured at a fixed minimum support price by government agencies, and is largely exported or sold at a premium in the domestic market. *Basmati* paddy also consumes less water.

Haryana's more diversified cropping profile, extending to the rice varieties being cultivated, has a lot to do with agro-ecological factors. The state's extensive canal network irrigates its northeastern (Ambala, Yamuna Nagar, Kurukshetra, Kaithal, Karnal, Panipat and Sonapat), central (Jind, Hisar, Rohtak and Bhiwani) and northwestern (Fatehabad and Sirsa) districts. Haryana's two main canal systems — Western Yamuna and Bhakra — do not cover the southern districts, from Charkhi Dabri and Jhajjar to Mahendragarh, Rewari, Gurugram, Faridabad, Nuh and Palwal.

The limited access to irrigation for Mahendragarh, Charkhi Dabri, Nuh and Palwal (63.7%, 78.9%, 79.4% and 80.5% of the gross cropped area respectively) compared to the state average of 93.7% (for 2021-22) means that southern Haryana farmers usually sow *bajra*, *guar* and *jowar* during *kharif*, and wheat, mustard, *chana* and barley in *rabi*. The cotton belt extends from Sirsa, Fatehabad and Jind down to Hisar, Bhiwani and Charkhi Dabri.

The challenges

Haryana has of late sought to promote crop diversification through MSP procurement and price deficiency payments under a Bhavantar Bhanjani Yojana. This is being implemented mainly in *bajra*, mustard, and sunflower seed, even though it also covers groundnut, *chana*, *moong*, and 16 vegetable and three fruit crops.

The state government procured 776,909 tonnes of *bajra*, 747,633 tonnes of mustard, and 16,489 tonnes of sunflower seed during the 2020-21 marketing season. In subsequent seasons, it opted for a mix of physical procurement and BBI payments to cover the difference between MSP and market prices.

The current *kharif* season, however, has seen the area planted under rice increase to record levels in both Punjab (32.4 lh) and Haryana (16.4 lh). This has been primarily at the expense of cotton, whose acreage has fallen to 4.8 lh in Haryana and 1 lh in Punjab from the corresponding 2023 levels of 6.7 lh and 2.1 lh. Farmers have diverted area from cotton due to not-so-remunerative prices and the risk of pink bollworm insect pest attacks.

Lowering price and yield risks in other crops vis-à-vis rice and wheat should be a focus area for Haryana's next government as well.

LONGER VERSION ON indianexpress.com/explained

TABLE 1
PUNJAB CROPPING PROFILE

KHARIF		
Kharif	Area*	% share
Rice	30.20	86.78
Cotton	2.43	6.98
Maize	1.03	2.97
Sugarcane	0.89	2.57
Guarseed	0.10	0.29
Total***	34.81	100.00
RABI		
Rabi	Area*	% share
Wheat	35.24	97.86
Mustard	0.43	1.19
Moong**	0.22	0.62
Barley	0.05	0.15
Total***	36.01	100.00

*Five-year average from 2019-20 to 2023-24; **Includes summer moong; ***Includes other crops. Source: Department of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare.

TABLE 2
HARYANA CROPPING PROFILE

KHARIF		
Kharif	Area*	% share
Rice	14.28	49.39
Cotton	6.50	22.50
Bajra	5.20	17.98
Guarseed	1.08	3.74
Sugarcane	1.00	3.45
Moong	0.40	1.40
Jowar	0.26	0.90
Groundnut	0.07	0.26
Maize	0.06	0.19
Total***	28.9	100.00
RABI		
Rabi	Area*	% share
Wheat	24.25	75.78
Mustard	7.04	22.01
Chana	0.35	1.09
Sunflower	0.13	0.39
Moong**	0.10	0.32
Barley	0.10	0.30
Total***	32.00	100.00

NIGHT-TIME LIGHT POLLUTION LINKED TO HIGHER ALZHEIMER'S RISK: STUDY

RESEARCHERS IN the US have found a correlation between light pollution at night and the incidence of Alzheimer's disease. "Exposure to artificial light at night is one environmental factor that may influence Alzheimer's," researchers Robin Voigt, Bichun Ouyang, and Ali Keshavarzian of Chicago's Rush University Medical Center wrote in the study published in *Frontiers in Neuroscience* on Friday.

The disease

Alzheimer's is the most common type of dementia, an umbrella term for a range of conditions that involve the loss of cognitive functioning. It involves the formation of plaques and tangles in the brain, and the accelerated aging of certain neurons concerned with storage and processing of memory. Early symptoms include forgetfulness — and as the illness progresses, patients become more confused, lose their way around familiar places, and have difficulties with planning and completing simple tasks.

According to WHO estimates from 2023, more than 55 million people suffer from dementia worldwide, with Alzheimer's contributing to around 75% of these cases. Anywhere between 3 and 9 million Indians are believed to suffer from the disease, a number that is set to grow as India's population ages. Latest drugs may slow down cognitive decline, but there is no cure available yet.

The study

Earlier research has suggested that multiple factors may contribute to Alzheimer's, from genetics and medical conditions to environmental stresses. The new study adds to this scholarship by introducing a new environmental factor — light pollution — that hasn't been previ-

ously considered.

The study used satellite-acquired light pollution data from the US, and mapped it along with publicly available Medicare data reports on the prevalence of Alzheimer's. Other medical data on variables known or believed to be risk factors were incorporated into the analysis.

Researchers found that while conditions like diabetes and hypertension were correlated more strongly with the prevalence of Alzheimer's than night-time light intensity, the latter was more strongly associated with the disease than alcohol abuse, chronic kidney disease, depression, heart failure, and obesity — all commonly cited risk factors.

The correlation with light exposure was more stark when it came to early-onset Alzheimer's, i.e., for those under the age of 65.

Robin Voigt, one of the study's authors, told *The Guardian* that exposure to light at night disrupts natural circadian rhythms and hampers sleep, making individuals more susceptible to the disease.

Additionally, "disruption of circadian rhythms is associated with increased risk of diseases that are risk factors for Alzheimer's including obesity, diabetes, and depression," the study says.

Too much light

As much as 80% of the global population experiences light pollution.

Although these artificial night-time lights are most often seen as harmless — and sometimes even beneficial (for safety, etc.) — recent research has shown numerous negative impacts of these lights, both to humans and the environment. The latest study adds to the growing scholarship on the subject, and raises an issue that should (but currently does not) concern policymakers. **ENS**



EXPLAINED CLIMATE SCIENCE

Why La Niña is delayed, and how it could still impact India's weather

ANJALI MARAR
 BENGALURU, SEPTEMBER 6

THE INDIA Meteorological Department (IMD) said last week that neutral Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD) conditions were prevailing over the Indian Ocean, and there was a higher likelihood of La Niña conditions developing "during end of the monsoon season" — that is, towards the end of this month. Major global agencies have been off the mark in their forecast of the onset of La Niña — the climate phenomenon that is associated with enhanced monsoon rainfall over India — this year. What impact could the late onset of La Niña have on India?

ENSO and The Little Girl

La Niña ('The Little Girl' in Spanish) is a phase of the El Niño Southern Oscillation (ENSO), which is a major driver of global natural climate variability. ENSO is characterised by changes in sea surface temperatures in the tropical Pacific Ocean as a result of atmospheric fluctuations overhead. These changes alter and interfere with the global atmospheric circulation, and influence weather worldwide.

ENSO has three phases — warm (El Niño or 'The Little Boy' in Spanish), cool (La Niña), and neutral — which occur in irregular cycles of between two and seven years.

During the neutral phase of ENSO, the eastern Pacific Ocean (off the northwestern coast of South America) is cooler than the western Pacific (around Indonesia and the Philippines). This is because trade winds blowing from east to west between 30 degrees north and 30 degrees south of the equator sweep warmer surface water along with them, and the cooler waters from below rise to the surface to replace the displaced water (known as upwelling).

In the El Niño phase, these wind systems weaken, leading to lesser displacement of warmer waters off the South American coast. Consequently, the eastern Pacific becomes warmer than usual.

The opposite happens in the La Niña phase — the trade winds become stronger than usual, and push larger quantities of water to the western Pacific.

In India, El Niño is associated with suppressed rainfall during the monsoon season, while La Niña is known to help monsoon ac-

THE THREE PHASES OF EL NIÑO SOUTHERN OSCILLATION (ENSO)

The illustrations show the Pacific Ocean around the equator and the trade winds above it. The heat map shows water temperature. Thermocline is the layer of water separating the warmer surface water and cooler water below

Neutral phase
 Eastern Pacific is cooler than Western; thermocline indicates upwelling in the east as trade winds carry surface water westward; normal rainfall in Asia

El Niño phase
 Difference in temperature between East and West Pacific decreases; lesser upwelling in east; rain clouds get pulled towards the Americas, Asia gets less rain

La Niña phase
 Eastern Pacific is much cooler than Western; considerable upwelling in the east as more surface water heads westward; heavy rainfall in Asia

tivity. The previous El Niño event occurred between June 2023 and May 2024. One of the longest recorded La Niña episodes lasted from 2020 to 2023.

Anthropogenic climate change has exacerbated the impact of both El Niño and La Niña-related hazards, including high temperatures, heavy precipitation and droughts.

Weather model predictions

One of the strongest El Niño events ever ended this June, following which ENSO entered the neutral phase. Initial projections by several global weather models suggested the onset of La Niña conditions around July. But by mid-July, it was clear that the onset of La Niña would be delayed.

The US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) said ENSO neutral would give way to La Niña between August and October. The Australian Bureau of Meteorology predicted the emergence of cooler-than-usual sea surface conditions in the latter half of the year.

The IMD had maintained since mid-April that La Niña conditions would emerge in the latter half of the June-September monsoon season, and could enhance rainfall in August

and September. The prediction of "above normal" monsoon rainfall this year was based on the likely emergence of La Niña. A major reason cited by weather modellers and meteorologists for the inaccurate prediction is the severity of the emerging La Niña — it is likely to be fairly weak, and weather models are generally more accurate about strong La Niña (or El Niño) phases.

Other factors, including inter-seasonal variability in the atmosphere, wind and pressure, directly linked to the Madden Julian Oscillation — an eastward-moving band of rain-bearing winds and clouds — too impact surface and subsurface conditions in the Pacific. The interplay of different weather systems makes predictions harder.

The impact of La Niña

According to NOAA, ENSO-neutral conditions are currently prevailing in the Pacific Ocean. Latest predictions suggest that the first signs of the onset of La Niña will likely emerge by the end of September or in early October. La Niña would peak in November, and is expected to last through the winter in the northern hemisphere.

La Niña is known to enhance rainfall dur-

ing the southwest monsoon, but it is too late now for it to play any direct role this season. India as a whole recorded almost 16% surplus rainfall in August, and IMD has forecast 109% "above normal" rain over most geographical areas for September.

But La Niña, after its onset by late September-October, could still influence rainfall during the northeast (winter) monsoon (October-December) in Tamil Nadu, coastal Andhra Pradesh, Rayalaseema, south interior Karnataka, and Kerala. La Niña does not usually favour northeast monsoon rainfall, but there have been exceptions in the past.

The north Indian Ocean basin — Bay of Bengal and the Arabian Sea — sees cyclone development during March-May and October-December, with peak activity during May-November. La Niña years have seen high chances of frequent cyclogenesis, and storms with above-average intensity and longer-than-average lives.

Lastly, La Niña years have typically had harsher, colder winters — so the coming winter could be severe.

(Anjali Marar is a science communicator at Raman Research Institute, Bengaluru)

Formalised 'gender apartheid': Taliban's morality law against women

RISHIKA SINGH
 NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 6

TALIBAN SUPREME leader Hibatullah Akhundzada has directed officials to enact Afghanistan's "morality law", formalising and codifying the restrictions on women and other groups in the country.

The Ministry of Propagation of Virtue, Prevention of Vice and Hearing Complaints published the 114-page code, the first formal enactment of such laws since the Taliban took power in August 2021, late last month.

Not to be seen or heard

The code makes it mandatory for a woman to veil her entire body at all times in public, and deems a face covering as "essential to avoid temptation and tempting others".

The *Associated Press* quoted the document as saying that a woman's voice is deemed "intimate", and should not be heard singing, reciting, or reading aloud in public. A report in *The Guardian* noted a provision that says women should not be heard singing or reading aloud even inside their homes.

According to *The AP* report, the playing of music and mixing of men and women who not related are banned. Women and men are forbidden from even looking at each other if they are not related by blood or marriage.

Ravina Shamdasani, chief spokesperson of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, said the law effectively renders women "faceless, voiceless shadows".

Other provisions in the code sanction the persecution of LGBTQ people and religious minorities, and lay down rules on the

appearance of men. An *AFP* report said men must not wear clothing that ends above the knee, and are forbidden from closely trimming their beards.

Increasing repression

In the past, the Taliban have enforced such policies using threats, arbitrary arrests and detentions, and excessive force, according to a UN report.

Heather Barr, associate director of the Women's Rights Division of Human Rights Watch, told *Reuters*: "A lot of these rules were in place already, but less formally — and now they are being formalised... This is a sign of what we've been seeing over the last three years... a steady and gradual escalation of the crackdown." The regime completed three years

in power in August.

UN experts said the code introduces "new, even more repressive measures". "Empowered by the new law, the Taliban's morality inspectors have extensive authority to arbitrarily detain and punish individuals... Ordinary citizens [are] encouraged to report transgressions," they said — which would worsen the "already pervasive climate of fear and surveillance across Afghan society".

The same, 25 years later

UN experts described the measures as "gender apartheid", and "disturbingly similar" to what was seen in the previous Taliban regime (1996-2001). "The group has not moderated its approach since its return to power," they said.

The Taliban were driven from power by US-led forces who invaded Afghanistan after the September 11 attacks in 2001; however, the group could never be destroyed.

As the costs of the US presence mounted and the American-backed government struggled to establish control Afghanistan, several rounds of talks were held between the US government and the Taliban in Doha, mediated by Qatar, for a power-sharing agreement.

Many cautioned against engaging with the Taliban, but the US, desperate to get out of Afghanistan, went ahead. In 2020, the Doha Agreement was signed, and the US said it would withdraw its armed forces after talks between the Taliban and Afghan government to decide the future of Afghanistan's democracy.

By mid-2021, as the full US withdrawal neared, Taliban forces gained ground in ma-

major cities in quick succession. The last American forces left amid chaos, with the Taliban in Kabul, and President Ashraf Ghani having fled the country.

In his first press conference, Taliban spokesperson Zabiullah Mujahid said, "Our sisters, our men have the same rights," adding, "They are going to be working with us, shoulder to shoulder with us." However, Mujahid also said that Afghan women must live their lives "within our frameworks of Sharia".

Soon after, the Taliban banned education for girls beyond Class 6. Punishments such as public stoning, flogging, and executions have also been reported since then.

The US has made its support to the Taliban in part contingent on such measures being withdrawn. But several Muslim-majority countries and China have given official or *de facto* recognition to the regime.

21 REVIEWS CINEMA & MUSIC

No Love Lost

STRANGE DARLING

★★★★

Director: JT Mollner
Cast: Willa Fitzgerald, Kyle Gallner, Barbara Hershey, Ed Begley Jr

SHALINI LANGER

WE MEET her as she runs out of the woods, the green behind her, dressed all in red, blonde hair matted, fear written on her face, tears streaking down her cheeks. The image can't be starker, our fears never more sure — about Little Red Riding Hoods and Big Bad Wolves.

Strange Darling is a film about a serial killer that hopes to surprise you at every twist of its turn, starting from that shot of 'The Lady' (Fitzgerald) trying to escape 'The Demon' (Gallner). Those are the only iden-

titles writer-director Mollner gives its two leads, who are thrown together in dangerous foreplay and then a combat that switches — and switches back — moods, tones and power dynamics so subtly and constantly, that the couple are not the only ones unsettled.

After opening the film with a declaration that it's about the final few days of a serial killer's rampage across several American states, between the years 2018 and 2020 — giving it a patina of a true story, when it is not — Mollner goes on to tell the story via "six chapters", which are not in a linear form.

However, as the film unfolds, it is unclear if this non-linear structure is more than a stylistic flourish that can often be irritating. Like that foreplay, it keeps us guessing throughout about the motives and identities of the two leads, and what really brought them together on this risky one-night stand.

The director of photography is well-known character actor Giovanni Ribisi, in his first feature behind the camera. And his



work here is impressive, right from the intimacy of the two leads flirting and feeling their way around each other in a car bathed in the blue of the hotel's neon light, to the danger that hangs in the air as they engage in role play in a room with heavier, denser hues, to when they break free into the almost dazzling light of empty roads or the

woody warmth of quaint cottages.

It's in one such cottage where 'The Lady' lands up seeking help that she meets an old couple (Hershey, Begley Jr) enjoying a leisurely, calorie-loaded Sunday breakfast and solving a jigsaw puzzle, who too may not be all there. Various, they describe themselves as "old hippies", "old bikers" and "doomsdayers".

Mollner wants us to rethink our assumptions about first appearances, gender stereotypes, bodily strength and violence. Before she checks into the hotel with 'The Demon', 'The Lady' tells him: "Do you know the kind of risks women like me run every time we go into a room like this?"

It's an interesting thought. However, while he asks the right questions, Mollner isn't really interested in getting too deep into them. And somewhere in the "epilogue", after the six chapters are over, the film stops being smart about its gender politics and is just lazy. There is one too many killing, needless dialogue, and a mention of the devil that does no one any good.

STREAMING WATCH LIST

BY ALAKA SAHANI



IMMACULATE

BOOKMYSHOW STREAM
This Michael Mohan-directed American horror film revolves around Cecilia (Sydney Sweeney), a woman of devout faith, who is warmly welcomed into the serene Italian countryside by Father Matteo (Álvaro Morte) as she takes on a new role at an illustrious convent. Gradually, Cecilia realises that her new home harbours dark and horrifying secrets.



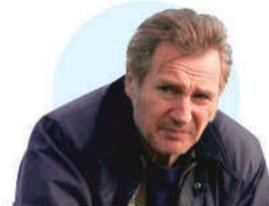
THE PERFECT COUPLE

NETFLIX
Based on the book by Elin Hilderbrand, the series follows Amelia Sacks, who is about to marry into one of the wealthiest families on Nantucket. Her disapproving mother-in-law has spared no expense in planning a lavish wedding — till a body on the beach sets the stage for an investigation. Directed by Susanne Bier, the series marks Ishaan Khatter's Hollywood debut.



MY FIRST FILM

MUBI
Directed by American filmmaker Zia Anger, this semi-autobiographical debut feature is an inspiring meta exploration of her own artistic and personal experiences. She blends documentary and feature film-making into a story about the transformative power of artistic self-reflection. It follows a young filmmaker, Vita, who revisits her first chaotic attempt at filmmaking 15 years prior.



IN THE LAND OF SAINTS AND SINNERS

LIONSGATE PLAY
The film follows Liam Neeson as a former assassin who wishes to live a quiet retired life in a coastal Irish town, away from the political violence that grips the rest of the country, just as he settles in, a ghost from his past resurfaces, threatening to disrupt his peace. It also stars Jack Gleeson and Kerry Condon.

Misplaced Plot

VISFOT ★★

Director: Kookie Gulati
Cast: Fardeen Khan, Riteish Deshmukh, Priya Bapat, Krystle D'Souza, Seema Biswas, Nachiket Purnapatre, Arjun Aneja, Purnendu Bhattacharya, Satyajit Kadam
Streaming on: JioCinema



SHUBHRA GUPTA

TWO SETS of parallel lives — one from the slums, the other which inhabits plush South Mumbai high-rises — collide, and of course, murder and mayhem ensues.

Based on the 2012 Venezuelan thriller *Rock Paper Scissors*, *Visfot* doesn't waste any time in tumbling into trouble. Australia-returned-to-Dongri cab driver Shoeb (Fardeen Khan) has misplaced an article of clothing belonging to his old pal (Nachiket Purnapatre, looking straight out of a RGV gangster flick), in which there nestles a substantial amount of the substance that gets either snorted or injected.

Over on the other side of the tracks, airline pilot Akash (Riteish Deshmukh) also misplaces something. Or rather, someone. His young school-going son disappears from a coffee-shop as a disturbed Akash steps out on his own pursuits, telling the lad to stay where he is. And all hell breaks loose.

Nice premise, but the execution sticks to the over-familiar lane populated by smart-talking goons, mothers doused in misery (Sheeba Chaddha), overwrought wives (Priya Bapat) and girlfriends (Krystle D'Souza), corrupt cops (Purnendu Bhattacharya and Satyajit Kadam), ransom calls and shootouts.

Expectedly the male stars are the space grabbers, with Deshmukh coming off a tad more interesting than Khan, who fares better when he is essaying supporting parts, as in the recent *Khel Khel Mein*. What could have been a weighty strand — a woman who doesn't apologise for having an affair — doesn't get enough attention, as doesn't her lover.

And in that vein, it's another woman who leaves the strongest impact: Seema Biswas as Acid Tai, not hiding her scarred face from the light, comes on for just three or four scenes, vamping away madly, and steals each one.

The rest is been-there, seen-it, so what's new?

Frothy, Frivolous, Fun



SHUBHRA GUPTA

BELLA BAE Chowdhary is rich. Like not your average garden variety wealthy, but the kind that forgot to count their billions a couple of generations back. She calls it a golden spoon, but it could very well be diamond. Why? Because the rocks as big as the ones that drip from her mommy, and assorted friends and relatives, are as big as the Ritz. Why not Taj? Duh. Coz Bae is fully international, having gone the coming-out-ball route, the finishing-school route.

Wait, am I forgetting something? Ah, the looking-for-Prince-Charming route, except the said gent has already been set upon and 'settled' by her fond, beady-eyed mama. Because like all the similar girls before her, that's Bae's destiny — to go from being dutiful *beti* to beautiful *biwi*, to be seen and never heard, and never, ever, be caught doing the wrong thing.

So that's Bella aka Bae, and in the playing of this poor little rich girl, who discovers poverty quite soon after telling us about her swish homes and choppers and designer bags, Ananya Panday has found her metier.

Her meter — and delivery — is just right, as she goes through the paces set for Bella by writers Ishita Moitra, Samina Motlekar, Rohit Nair, who appear completely committed to the cheery, sunny disposition of their leading lady, and by extension, their show. *Call Me Bae*, a Dharmatic Production, is frothy, frivolous and fun, just as it should be for the kind of show it sets out to be, and it's all good till it remains in this zone.

It's self-aware to the right degree by

sending itself up just enough, not letting self-righteousness weigh its exaggerations down. It's only when it starts getting too woke and serious about its chosen hot button topic — misogyny and sexism, and MeToo revelations — that it bites off decidedly more than it can chew.

It is a dark, rainy night when Ms Bella Bae is cast out of her mansion by a frothing, fuming husband surrounded only by her clutch of matching LV bags. Over eight episodes, we follow Bae as she struggles out from under, passing through the following stages — drowned rat, devastated wife, plucky survivor, struggling for selfhood, and finally reaching where she needs to be.

Bae could well be a cliché, because she is an amalgamation of the scores of silly, ditzzy girls — think Alicia Silverstone, Elle Woods, and more — who've paraded across our screens, her brunette beach waves replacing those dumb blonde strands.

But Panday, who fully embraces the shallow crevices of the her character, invests her Bae with a real sweetness which feels genuine, and owns the part: determined not to be beaten by the kind of circumstances which would have others in her position curl up and give in, she squares her slender shoulders, and launches forth, asking us to call her Bae, who will slay.

Panday being in such pole position necessarily means that everyone else revolves

around her. But when it all gets too much for her, and there's only that much she can do to keep it all going, the other characters get a look-in.

Her husband (Vihaan Samat) is one of those uncouth rich South Delhi guys who are always off somewhere, handing their wives platinum cards to shop until they drop. There's her little indiscretion in the shape of the bulked up gym trainer (Varun Sood) who breaks out of being eye candy-cum-chick magnet-cum-on-and-off-dalliance for bored rich housewives cliché by revealing his soft side, as wholesome as a protein shake.

There's the investigative TV journalist (Gurfaah Pirzada) who offers her a job in his channel, though her real journalist in their right mind would offer this clueless creature a real job is a question that goes unanswered. Even Vir Das, who truly slays in his real-life stand-up avatar, is reduced to playing yet another variation of a famous anchor who has a direct line on what the 'Nation Wants To Know', and whose one job is to badger and humiliate his guests, and smirk when things go badly for them, as planned. By now this character is such a trope that it needs either wholesale junking or a refresh.

The women fare better. Muskaan Jaferi, as the working girl who comes to poor Bae's rescue, and speaks virtuously about the importance of being your own woman, has a

CALL ME BAE

★★★

Director: Collin D'Cunha
Cast: Ananya Panday, Vir Das, Gurfaah Pirzada, Varun Sood, Vihaan Samat, Muskaan Jaferi, Niharika Lyra Dutt, Mini Mathur, Lisa Mishra
Written by: Ishita Moitra, Samina Motlekar, Rohit Nair
Streaming on: Prime Video

Back to the Beginning

BEETLEJUICE BEETLEJUICE ★★★

Director: Tim Burton

Cast: Michael Keaton, Winona Ryder, Catherine O'Hara, Jenna Ortega, Justin Theroux, Monica Bellucci, Willem Dafoe, Arthur Conti

SHALINI LANGER

GHOSTS DON'T age, but films certainly do. So the question is, can Tim Burton revive the mix of macabre, maniacal and comical that made his 1988 *Beetlejuice* a cult classic?

It's certainly an achievement that 36 years later, the director who was then onto just his second feature but now has several similarly themed films in his resume, has assembled three from the original cast for a sequel that has long been in the making. But while saying *Beetlejuice* thrice can summon up the name-

sake demon — and much else — in the film, deploying two of them in the title, getting Keaton, Ryder and O'Hara to reprise their roles, and securing many more celebrities to put in thankless appearances doesn't lend the story any extra "juice".

You can't blame Keaton, who thanks to the make-up covering his face, can be revived to look exactly the same. Ryder's Lydia, the goth girl from the original who could see ghosts, is now a single mother to teenager Astrid (Ortega). In fact, Astrid is exactly the age that Lydia was when she discovered her unique talents in the first film. Which here, or



there in the netherworld, is a coincidence that is never coincidental.

The two along with Lydia's stepmother Delia (O'Hara) are back at the house where it all began to mark the recent passing of Lydia's

father. While Delia still remains a self-obsessed, barely talented "artist", who sees an opportunity to "unpack the art of sorrow" in her husband's death, she and Lydia are now settled into a more affable relationship.

As teens are wont to do, Astrid does not believe her mother is all that she claims to be — the TV shows and fame which have come the ghost whisperer Lydia's way in all the intervening 30-plus years notwithstanding. This lasts till, that is, Astrid meets a cute boy (Conti) who is not really all he claims to be. (The two teens spout Dostoevsky, so who is to what's real and fake?)

Theroux plays Lydia's selfish manager-cum-boyfriend who is arm-twisting her into marrying him. Bellucci plays Delores, the ex-wife of Beetlejuice (Keaton), who in a truly delightful scene staples her different body parts together to return to her old "soul-sucking" glory and seek revenge from him. Dafoe is an actor who played small cop roles when alive and now heads 'Afterlife Crime Unit' in death, and is hunting for Delores. Even Danny DeVito shows up for a few brief moments, to drink a morbid liquid and die.

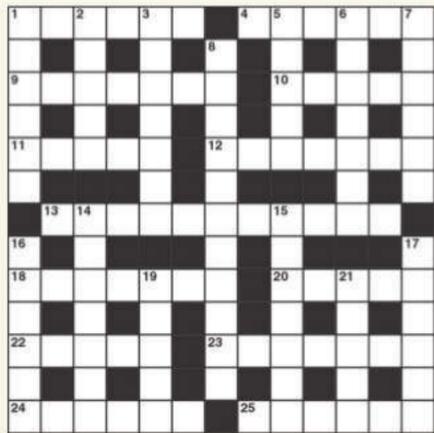
With so many people around, there is not much of *Beetlejuice* around. And that is both

this sequel's loss and a possible advantage it doesn't make any use of. Keaton slithers easily back into the skin of the role he made famous, even if *Beetlejuice* is now more silly than sinister. But while he lives up the screen, having Ryder there and seeing her nice and easy interactions with her daughter, makes one wish that one saw more of her.

Where the film has come a long way from 1988 is taming *Beetlejuice*'s harassing behaviour towards women, which wouldn't do now. Instead, it takes several swipes at the constraints of political correctness — Theroux's Rory is a joke in his resolve at being "a non-feminine muscular archetype", and the film has Astrid call him out for his "new-age, over-emotional... yoga retreat bullshit".

And, as Delia notes rolling her eyes, carrots have replaced candy as Halloween treats! The afterlife, in comparison, is comfortingly familiar — minus a ghost or a limb or two from 1988.

CROSSWORD 5463



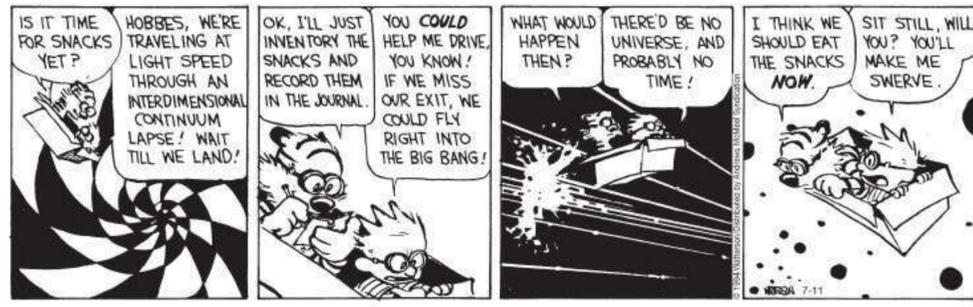
- ACROSS
1 Corrects the final part in a script (6)
2 Young swimmer in wild revel (5)
4 Not sound advice if this tap gets stuck (6)
9 Associate to make things more difficult (7)
10 Former holy man (5)
11 Hear mother repaired to the women's quarters (5)
12 Case Len resolved to clear up (7)
13 By no means the whole of the matter (3,1,3,2,2)
18 Not ripe perhaps but necessary for one's diets (7)
20 What could be finer to conclude? (5)
22 Plasters for eyesores? (5)
23 Growing grain is tricky (7)
24 Question a learned cleric put in to annoy (6)
25 Give a touching display of regal appreciation (6)
DOWN
1 Settle on a clue (6)
2 Young swimmer in wild revel (5)
3 Mid-meal disturbance poses quandary (7)
5 Fruit drink very quietly swallowed (5)
6 Coming from China it is bottled in Italy (7)
7 A show that will flop in the country (6)
8 He wants to go back in politics (11)
14 Utterly pompous (7)
15 What one thinks of love taking wing? (7)
16 Composer of fine lines in order to eat (6)
17 Shock for king in battle (6)
19 Stand in the drawing room (5)
21 Shy, I left office job (5)

Solutions Crossword 5462 Across: 1 Express, 5 Rodeo, 8 Turn to account, 9 Liana, 10 Fiddler, 11 Cheryl, 12 Studio, 15 Let me go, 17 Knave, 19 Sharpshooting, 20 Needy, 21 Refugee Down: 1 Extol, 2 Permanent wave, 3 Estuary, 4 Staffs, 5 Raced, 6 Double-dealing, 7 Ontario, 11 Calls on, 13 Take off, 14 Kosher, 16 Empty, 18 Eagle

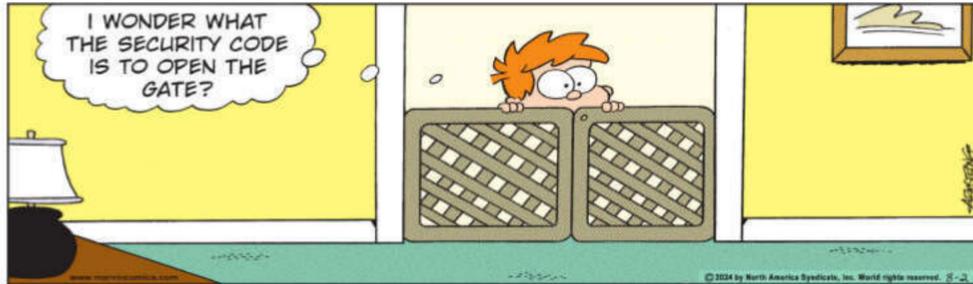
OVER THE HEDGE by Michael Fry & T Lewis



CALVIN & HOBBS by Bill Watterson



MARVIN by Tom Armstrong



JUMBLED WORDS

Given below are four jumbled words. Solve the jumbles to make proper words and move them to the respective squares below. Select the letters in the shaded squares and jumble them to get the answer for the given quip.

CCVII, ALTCUM, DUSTY, ADENTV. Includes a grid for jumbled letters and a solution key.

SUDOKU 5706

Difficulty Level 5s
Instructions
To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from 1 to 9 must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.



SOLUTION SUDOKU 5705



DAY TODAY

BY PETER VIDAL

Horoscope section for Aries, Libra, Taurus, Scorpio, Gemini, Sagittarius, Cancer, Capricorn, Leo, Aquarius, Virgo, and Pisces.

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY E-Procurement Tender Notice No- JHS/DYCM/2024-25/20. Details of tender for inverters and maintenance contracts.

UPSIDA कार्यालय प्रधान महाप्रबन्धक (अभि). इ-निविदा सूचना. Construction and widening of roads in Ghaziabad.

Dudhsagar Dairy India's Largest Co-operative Dairy. E-Tender Notice for milk powder blending unit and other dairy equipment.

SALUTE THE SOLDIER CENTRAL RESERVE POLICE FORCE Punjab. 7 September 1990 and 7 September 1994.

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY EXPRESSION OF INTEREST For Engagement of Consultancy Agency to analyze GST data and identify loading potential over North Central Railway.

UPSIDA कार्यालय प्रधान महाप्रबन्धक (अभि). इ-निविदा सूचना. Upgradation of roads and footpaths in Ghaziabad.

NORTHERN RAILWAY 'One Station One Product' Applications are invited under scheme of 'One Station One Product' for setting up.

CONCOR भारतीय कंटेनर निगम लिमिटेड. NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER. Tender for renovation of turn-outs and approach track at ICD-WFD 2024.

SIMRAN THROUGH TO 200M T12 FINAL

After her agonising miss in the 100m final, Simran has another shot at a medal as she reached Women's 200m T12 final. She won Semifinal 3 with a timing of 25.03sec, that gave her automatic qualification. **ENS**

RECORD-BREAKING GOLD MEDAL HAUL FOR INDIA

TOKYO: 5 GOLDS

In the 19-medal haul at Tokyo Paralympics, India had five champions. Avani Lekhara started things off in shooting sport, and Manish Narwal followed in shooting. Sumit Antil won his javelin throw title with a series of World Record throws. In the end, shuttlers Pramod Bhagat (SL3) and Krishna Nagar (SH6) made it a para badminton debut to remember.

PARIS: 6 GOLDS

Avani and Sumit defended their titles. In badminton the SL3 title was retained by Nitesh Kumar, who was to be the only gold medalist. Shooting too saw one gold fewer. While there was never a doubt about going past the haul from Tokyo, India needed something special to break the gold medal record. It was delivered in style by Harvinder Singh (archery individual), Dharambir (Club Throw) and Praveen Kumar (High Jump). Arguably, even more impressive than going past 19 medals would be India's new record for gold medals.

MEDAL TALLY

Pos.	Country	G	S	B	Total
1.	China	79	59	40	178
2.	Britain	39	31	21	91
3.	USA	28	35	18	81
4.	Holland	23	13	8	44
5.	Italy	18	13	29	60
6.	France	17	24	24	65
14.	India	6	9	11	26

STORY OF MEDALS

Storey wins 19th Cycling gold

Sarah Storey says every race is different. Yet, the outcome – gold medal – always seems the same. The British cycling star won the women's C4-5 road race for the fourth time straight for her 19th gold medal at a Paralympic Games. But the 46-year-old Storey was pushed harder than ever on Friday as French teenager Heidi Gaugain almost snatched the victory in a dramatic finish in front of the flag-waving cheering home fans lining the streets in the Paris suburb of Clichy-sous-Bois. Gaugain, 19, made her break on the final climb of the 71-kilometer course and opened a promising lead. **AP**

ATHLETICS

Paris to name sports venue after Cheptegei

The city of Paris wants to honor the late Ugandan Olympic runner Rebecca Cheptegei by naming a sports venue after her. The proposal was announced by city mayor Anne Hidalgo on Friday and will be discussed by city officials in October. Cheptegei died on Thursday at a Kenyan hospital where she was being treated after 80% of her body was burned in an attack by her partner. **AP**

Scaling dizzying heights

In the prelude to the high jump event, Praveen's only aim was to secure his personal best; in the process he seized a gold too

VINAYAKK MOHANARANGAN
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 6

COMING INTO the men's high jump T64 final at the Paris Paralympics on Friday, Praveen Kumar had only one thing in mind: go past his personal best. That was it. Medal or not, he wasn't fussed. His coach had told him that the primary focus must be to jump higher than he ever had in an event.

As it turned out, that was more than enough for him to win India's record-breaking sixth gold medal in Paris. While the Tokyo tally of 19 was comfortably overcome, getting past the five gold medals won three years back represents an even bigger feat.

It was made possible by a near flawless display by the 21-year-old from Noida. "My coach told me to go for my personal best irrespective of whether I get a medal or not. I improved my personal best by one centimetre and I was really aiming for a 2.10m jump, but that I couldn't manage. But I am happy now with the gold," Praveen said after clinching India's 26th medal in Paris.

Praveen, on paper, perhaps came with an outside shot at a medal. Of course, he was the silver medallist in Tokyo as well, and had a personal best of 2.07m, so that was going to keep him in the mix. But at the Kobe 2024 Para Athletics World Championships in May, he had finished fourth, managing just a clearance of 1.94m. He had three missed clearances at 2.01m. He revealed later that he had suffered an injury about three months ago, which prevented him from going full tilt.

The six-man final in Paris also had the three men who had finished on the podium at the Worlds. Jonathan Broom-Edwards of Great Britain, the defending Paralympic and World Champion, had won gold in Kobe with 2.04. Derek Loccident had also cleared that height and was the silver medallist, while bronze medal winner Maciej Epiato, a decorated Paralympian from Poland, was also a serious contender.

Dialled in

But Praveen looked dialled in from the moment he began his event. He was the last one to start jumping, starting with a first-time clearance of 1.89m. It was at that height where Broom-Edwards' title defence would come to an end, as he struggled to clear anything after that. Suddenly, one of the title contenders was out of the picture. While Loccident, Epiato and Temurbek Giyazov all had at least one failed attempt by the time the bar was raised to 2.03m, Praveen kept clearing the heights in the first go. He did so with clinical precision, and barely displayed any emotion. Run, jump, bounce back off the bed, walk away to the bench... rinse and repeat.

The first real display of emotion came when he cleared 2.06m – once more in the first try – as he stood up and pumped his fists, taking a solitary lead. He was just one centimetre away from his previous personal best and he had gotten here with ridiculous ease, while the rest of the field started to fall behind. Then came the big one at 2.08. For a new PB and Asian record. "I just closed my eyes and the images of my parents came in front of me. My coach's too," he'd say later.

With yet another perfectly timed take off, Praveen cleared 2.08m with his first attempt and let out the biggest roar. Even before this jump, he was assured of a place in the top two, but once he set a new area record, he was favourite for the gold.



Praveen Kumar jumped to a new Asian record of 2.08m in the T64 high jump category to win Paralympics gold.

Reuters

The first real display of emotion came when he cleared 2.06m – once more in the first try – as he stood up and pumped his fists, taking a solitary lead

Loccident would skip 2.08 after one miss, and then miss twice at 2.10. And India had a new champion.

"At the World Championships, where I finished fourth, I had an injury on my take off leg so I couldn't get the desired results. I told my coach and we got an MRI done. We found out there was a 1mm gap in the ankle," Praveen said. "We immediately addressed the injury and got it sorted in 15 days. After that we focussed on my take off and consistency. We wanted all the jumps till 2.00-2.05m to be perfect, *ek bhi miss nahi karna chahiye*. Before the Paralympics I pulled off 2.08 and 2.10m jumps at practice sessions too. And today I could manage a 2.08m. I had told my coach that I would get 2.10 at any cost but I just nudged the bar," he added.

Praveen's three attempts at 2.10m were all close calls. He knew by then that he was the gold medallist, but he wanted that extra centimetres. As he missed it one final time, he spent a few minutes on his back on the bed, disappointed with the outcome. But as he stood up, the celebrations began. It started to sink in. He jumped higher than ever before in his life... and had just become India's latest Paralympic champion.

How Praveen overcame hurdles

NITIN SHARMA
CHANDIGARH, SEPTEMBER 6

HIS LEFT leg being shorter and weaker than his right because of a congenital impairment didn't deter a young Praveen Kumar from doing what he loved the most as a child, cycling with his friends. He would cycle 14 kilometres daily to reach school – from his village Gobindgarh to Jewar.

"Never did he complain about any physical discomfort because of cycling," Praveen's father Amarpal, a tube well operator, told *The Indian Express*. And he hardly complained otherwise too.

On the day Praveen won gold in the men's high jump T64, an upgrade of the silver he won in Tokyo three years ago, Amarpal was overjoyed. His best jump of 2.08 metres was an Asia record and his personal best too.

"To see him winning the gold after the silver medal in Tokyo Paralympics is special for Praveen as well all of us, including his brother Sachin and sister Priya, who have always supported his dream of winning medals for India," Amarpal added.

"When he was born with the leg impairment, we raised him like any other child. That helped him have a positive attitude all his life," Amarpal added.

Praveen started off with volleyball at the Praygn Public School, Jewar, before a chance meeting with Dronacharya awardee coach Dr Satya Pal Singh during a district-level competition got him interested in high jump.



Praveen Kumar (c) with his family.

"The thing which impressed me in Praveen was the strength in his right leg. He used to cycle a lot in his childhood and it helped him develop the muscles in his right leg. He started with the straddle technique in high jump before slowly developing the Fosbury Flop technique," coach Satya Pal said. Despite being just five foot and five inches tall, Praveen soared over 1.70 metres just a couple of years after getting formal coaching.

"The key in Fosbury Flop is to have strength in the back as one falls after clearing the bar. So we had to work on strengthening his back. From gym work to sprints, we did specific training for developing his back to master the technique. The strength in his right leg helped to give the explosive push," Satya Pal said. In 2019 Praveen travelled to Switzerland

for International Paralympic Committee (IPC) classification. The IPC officials classified him in the T64 category. "When we went to classification, Praveen was classified in T64, where athletes having much less impairment than him competed. He was depressed for days. But then I made him understand that whatever the category be, we will prepare hard and give our best," Satya Pal added.

In 2019, Praveen won the silver medal in the World Junior Para Championships in Nottwil, Switzerland apart from a gold medal in Para World Grand Prix. At the Tokyo Paralympics, Praveen made a best jump of 2.07m to finish behind Great Britain's Jonathan Broom-Edwards. Last year, Praveen won the bronze medal in the World Para Championships and also emerged champion at the Para Asian Games.

Earlier this year, Praveen suffered a setback when a shotput landed on his foot during training. He was sidelined for more than a month.

Praveen would also spend time talking with fellow UP athletes like sprinter Preeti Pal and shuttler Suhas Yathiraj to keep himself motivated. "All the seven other para athletes from Uttar Pradesh who were set to compete in the Paris Paralympics kept in touch with Praveen and it helped him focus on recovery," Kavinder Chaudhary, president of the UP Para Sports Association, said.

As for his parents, they know how Praveen will celebrate the medal when he gets back. "He will cycle with his friends. That's one thing which he has always loved," Amritpal said.

US OPEN

Heiress Pegula looking to earn a throne in final against Sabalenka

NAMIT KUMAR
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 6

DURING THE decade or so that Jessica Pegula, the World No. 6 from the United States, spent grinding her way through the lower-rung ITF challenger tennis circuits, her experience had been markedly different from that of her competitors.

As the daughter of a billionaire tycoon, access to unlimited resources in an expensive and exclusionary sport, made life easier. Yet it remained a mystery why a player coming from such unquestionable privilege has resigned herself to compete on the brutal stages of tennis, where the only thing lower than the prize money is the prestige, ranked outside the top 100 and playing at unknown tournaments around the world.

Only an unintelligible craze for tennis could propel Pegula to do so, and the result was the development of an almost deceptive level of resilience and mental composure. Throughout the 30-year-old's late rise to the top 10 and elite level of tennis, she has been able to fall back on that resilience in the absence of flashy tennis or big power.

She did so again early on Friday, completing an astonishing comeback to defeat Czech Republic's Karolina Muchova 1-6, 6-4, 6-2 to reach her maiden Grand Slam final at the US Open. The remarkable victory came only 24 hours after the biggest result of Pegula's career, when she defeated World

No. 1 and 2022 champion Iga Swiatek to win her first Major quarterfinal on her seventh attempt.

The euphoria from the triumph against Swiatek came to a crashing halt in the opening exchanges in Saturday's semifinal. Muchova opened proceedings by showing off her variety of tools in her all-court game; slicing low, volleying deftly, stretching Pegula to all corners of the court. The American slumped in the first set, and as she was being thoroughly outplayed, a few key points under pressure would prove to be the catalyst for the turnaround.

Down breakpoint at 0-2, Pegula produced a defensive passing shot on the run – more of a squash-style flick as opposed to a full-blooded groundstroke – that caught Muchova off guard, and Pegula escaped to stay in the contest.

Later, under pressure down 1-2, she came up with the defensive goods to win four points in a row and level scores, and saved break point again to go ahead 3-2.

From there, as the crowd cheered the home favourite, Pegula stuck to her strengths – total solidity from the baseline – to ride the momentum, win five games in a row, and cruise to the comeback victory.

"It comes down to really small moments that flip momentum," Pegula said, per Reuters, after the match. "She made me look like a beginner... I was about to burst into tears because it was embarrassing. I started



Jessica Pegula completed a remarkable comeback against Karolina Muchova to win their semifinal 1-6, 6-4, 6-2 and reach a maiden Major final. *Reuters/Robert Deutsch*

to play like how I wanted to play... It took a while but I don't know how I turned that around, honestly."

"If you would have told me at the beginning of the year I'd be in the finals of the US

Open, I would have laughed so hard," she added. "To be able to overcome all those challenges and say that I get a chance at the title Saturday is what we play for as players, let alone being able to do that in my

As the daughter of a billionaire tycoon, privileged in an expensive sport, life was easier for Pegula, but the American 30-year-old has had to grind her way rising to Top 10 without flashy strokes or hitting power.

home country here, in my home slam. It's perfect, really."

Pegula takes on second seed Aryna Sabalenka in the final late on Saturday. Sabalenka defeated another home favourite – and coincidentally, another billionaire American heiress – in the plucky Emma Navarro in two clinical sets earlier on Friday.

Consistent from the baseline

Pegula's tennis is in stark contrast to her country club upbringing. Perhaps part of the reason is that while tennis has long faced allegations of elitism – with layers of truth to it too – on the lower-rung tours, it is excruciating for all.

The desperation to improve rankings and play the Slams, at small tournaments with little rewards, is a feeling all the players share collectively.

With the American, there is no easy talent or quiet brilliance; instead a reliance on doing what it takes to win.

A partnership to remember

Musheer's explosiveness & Navdeep's defiance prop up India B as they pile misery on India A

LALITH KALIDAS
SEPTEMBER 6

A THUNDEROUS din on the mid-wicket tin roof of the M Chinnaswamy Stadium set a cast of hawks scrambling across the ground on Friday afternoon.

Their siesta was disturbed by a monstrous slog-sweep from Musheer Khan, who could not put a foot wrong after occupying the crease for nearly eight hours across two days. He had stupefied Kuldeep Yadav, India's premier wrist-spinner, all morning and controlled the overall proceedings—even the fields of India A captain Shubman Gill. Batting on 175, Musheer enhanced his statement with the six and wanted more. Treading well over the fine margins of his uncharacteristic defence and shotmaking, Musheer looked assured to double up his overnight century.

But when he attempted to subdue Kuldeep with another slog, the right-hander failed to read the shorter delivery. The ball landed in the hands of the deep square-leg fielder, but the damage was done.

The 19-year-old Mumbai'kar had cemented India B's resurgence, manned a second consecutive wicketless session with No. 9 Navdeep Saini, and delivered a smooth exhibition of temperament and situational nous.

Drooping shoulders

By the end of the opening day's play, Musheer and Navdeep had already become an unlikely hit for their side with their 108-run association. The pair remained resolute and doused the early plans from the India A seamers in the first session on day 2.

Navdeep was strikingly effective in guarding his off-stump, offering Musheer ample cushion to explore the expanding vacant zones. Gill's unimaginative field placements with seven men on the fence barely ruffled Musheer as he hugged along with singles and adequate boundaries.

Musheer's immeasurable capacity to make the most of his funky methods stood out. He can duck a bumper and convert it to a flashy ramp over the slip cordon for a four. He can also whisk past Akash Deep's potent out-swing with a momentary jerk of his arms to save the outside edge.

The extra second, the calculated reaction to every proposed question, was the hallmark of Musheer's classic. "I was trying to play the ball as close to my body as possible and was looking to avoid those risky shots. I knew runs would eventually come," he had said on day 1.



India B's Musheer Khan (left) and Navdeep Saini put on record stand of 205 runs. PTI

Bowlers failing to turn up to their best also helped. The energy of India A fielders took a collective plunge when Musheer hooked a struggling Avesh Khan over backward square and square-leg for a six and four off consecutive deliveries. Avesh, who regularly hit 140kph speeds on red-soil strips back home in Indore, failed to touch the 130 mark throughout an insipid spell.

Captain Gill was also restricted in deploying alternatives like part-timer Riyan Parag for an extended period as Musheer biffed Kuldeep with elan, totalling 59 runs. Appearing short on confidence, Kuldeep often slipped into his older avatar, where full and slower deliveries marred his bowling map.

While Parag later came close to prising out Musheer, the teenager only holed out on 181 (373b, 16x4, 5x6) after the longest innings of his fledgling but firm First-Class career. Consequently, Musheer and Navdeep's 205-run stand set a record for the highest 8th wicket-or-lower partnership in the tournament.

Navdeep's day out

Having spent years on the fringes of the Test side with injury concerns, Navdeep had

nearly walked into oblivion before receiving a Duleep Trophy lifeline. The 31-year-old had only played a handful of First-Class games over the last four seasons and only has one five-wicket haul to his credit since 2020.

The Haryana pacer relished his time out with the bat, pushing and poking with the occasional stroke of adventure. Navdeep's marathon also marked his highest score and longest stay at the crease in all professional cricket with a 144-ball 56, limbering up well for his bowling stint.

While Gill and Mayank Agarwal sped India A off the blocks in reply to B's 321, pacers Mukesh Kumar, Yash Dayal and Navdeep were culpable in offering the early freebies on length. Gill feasted on over-pitched balls through the off-side before Navdeep conjured up a moment of magic.

Going wide at the bowling crease, Navdeep hurled the ball with a downward angle. Gill gently planted his front foot forward before stopping in his stride, deciding to leave the delivery on its line, well outside the off-stump. The deceptive corker from Navdeep acted late from a fuller length and zoomed in sharply to rattle the off-stump, evoking memories of Gill's bizarre leave

against Scott Boland in the World Test Championship final at the Oval last year.

Running high on fortune during a six-over spell (6-1-32-2), Navdeep capped his day by strangling Mayank down the leg with a stray delivery that pitched past the leg-stump line.

Wobbly KL stays afloat

No. 4 KL Rahul and Riyan Parag were entrusted to avoid further casualties. Rahul cooed himself into a chunk of dots, restraining himself from forceful drives against a string of inside edges. Adding only three off 30 deliveries, Rahul's reckless flail at a bumper from Mukesh Kumar was also put down at third slip.

Though the pacers' failing lines slowly began to reflect on the scoreboard, B skipper Abhimanyu Easwaran only used a solitary over of spin in the evening. As the hawks returned for a leisurely flight, Rahul and Parag grew sharper in the middle, leading India A to a safe checkpoint with an unbroken 68-run stand before close.

BRIEF SCORES: India B 321 all out (Musheer Khan 181, Navdeep Saini 56, Akash Deep 4/60) vs India A 134 for 2 (Riyan Parag batting 27, KL Rahul batting 23, Saini 2/36)

Manav has virtues to be India's new-age spinner

VENKATA KRISHNAB
CHENNAI, SEPTEMBER 6

WHEN JAGDISH Suthar enrolled son Manav at a coaching programme in Sriganaganagar district that sits next to the LoC in Rajasthan, his message to the coach Dheeraj Sharma was loud and clear: "Make him a batsman the world fears." But 48 hours later, Jagdish's dream ended even before it took flight. "My coach told him, 'Sir, this fellow is made to be a spinner. Don't stop him. He is my responsibility now.' That was that," Manav recalls the start of his cricketing career.

At a time when India are scouting the next rung of spinners in the Tests, the 22-year-old Suthar is high on the pecking order. On Friday, playing for India C in the Duleep Trophy, he became only the second spinner to pick up a five-wicket haul at Anantapur, a venue that has historically aided the seamers. It is the sort of performance that would take him closer to a national call-up, with the selectors keenly following his upward trajectory. Like Dheeraj a decade ago, those in decision-making corridors are gushing over Suthar's traits.

A silky action, drift, guile, turn, variations—Suthar has all the tricks that can make him successful at the top. After being hit all over the ground by Axar Patel on Day 1, on the second day Suthar bounced back just as India D were appearing to seize the fixture. At 121/3, Devdutt Padikkal was in counterattack mode. But Suthar came in and put the speed breakers. "To get wickets, I'd have to contain them first. That's what I did," Suthar told The Indian Express. "After the first innings, I figured that I'd have to slow down a bit to get some turn, which would be handy with the bounce on offer. Each pitch is different, so how you use your skillset is what matters," he said.

In the 15 overs Suthar sent down, his five wickets captured his strengths. Padikkal was undone by the bounce, KS Bharat was beaten in the flight, Ricky Bhui was trapped in front with an arm-ball. Tail-enders Saransh Jain and Arshdeep Singh offered no resistance. For Suthar, everything went according to the plot. "In the time I've spent watching Ashwin and Jaddu bhai, I've noticed how they vary their seam position, trajectory and speed to adjust to different pitches. Just because seamers were getting wickets, I can't say there isn't much help for spinners. So I was backing my skillset, and believed I could do it here," Suthar says.

Suthar had no reason to not believe in his skillset. During a camp in Alur last year, he troubled Rohit Sharma, Virat Kohli, Suryakumar

Yadav and KL Rahul. It was the first he was bowling to quality batsmen at nets, and more than those deliveries that troubled some of the best in the world, Suthar took home the feedback. "After the session, everyone kept telling me, 'keep doing what you are doing, you will be here and you will be troubling a lot of batsmen'. It was a huge confidence booster for me because I'd seldom bowled to any of them before that camp," Suthar recalls.

Not exposed to T20s

During the Alur camp, as Suthar went about troubling the star batsmen, the drift he produced with the white ball stood out. "If he could do this with white ball, then god help the batsmen with the red ball," is how one of them in the team management reacted.

"He is a gifted spinner," his coach Dheeraj says. "The first aspect that struck me was how he gripped the ball. At 12, not many boys have that sort of grip. But he had to get a few other aspects right. He was getting good turn, but to make it effective, we worked on his body alignment a lot. It used to be a bit across earlier, but if you have to be successful at the highest level, you can't have a faulty technique. So we started off by working on his alignment that allowed him to develop a repeatable action without any trouble," Dheeraj says.

Once Suthar found a repeatable action, wickets arrived in a heap across all age-group levels. Dheeraj, wary of what playing white-ball could do to his focus, allowed him to bowl only with the red cherry. It was only after he was picked for the Under-19 side that Dheeraj finally let him bowl with a white ball. Even now, unless the domestic white-ball tournaments are around the corner, Suthar seldom bowls with the white-ball.

"I definitely feel he would make it big in red-ball because he is a natural fit. His temperament is made for the red ball. He is used to bowling long spells because in these parts you won't get turning pitches. So if you have to be good, then you need to have all sorts of tricks up your sleeves. He is now getting the right exposure as well," Dheeraj adds.

Having already made India Emerging team and the India A set-up, Dheeraj sent Suthar to Chennai to play the First Division cricket. "I wanted him to understand how he can bowl on spinning pitches as well. That is the most challenging one, to get it right on a pitch that takes a lot of turn. In Chennai, you will find all sorts of pitches. When he climbs to the top level, he has to be prepared," he says. In the second innings in Anantapur, he showed he is indeed prepared.



Ronaldo scores 900 goals: The numbers behind the versatility and greatness

SANDIP G
SEPTEMBER 6

COMPRESSED IN 900 goals spread across 21 years, 1236 games and numerous triumphs of Cristiano Ronaldo is a captivating tale of sustained evolution, unflinching devotion to his craft, a relentless quest for perfection, an unstoppable pursuit of greatness and astonishing longevity at the highest level.

The journey to the 900 has been as magnificent as the milestone itself—its dissection and details further capture the consummate and unreproducible goal-scoring greatness of Ronaldo. The only more jaw-shuddering aspect of Ronaldo is that he has not yet finished, his hunger for goals and glory still burning bright.

151 headers, 173 with left-foot

Ronaldo's right foot is a tree trunk in flesh and bones. Naturally, the favoured foot has wreaked the maximum damage. As many as 574—the from the first goal against Moreirense to the 900th against Croatia—were executed with the right-foot. But unlike several others, he was proficient with the left-foot, which he had lashed for 173 goals. To put the number in perspective, his legendary rival Lionel Messi has netted only 104 goals with his weaker leg (right foot). His aerial prowess was equally exemplary (151, Messi's is merely 26). He is such a behemoth that even if you discount the goals he had scored with his right foot, he still has scored more career goals (326, which includes one off the thigh and another from the elbow) than several wondrous forwards. For instance, the French legend Thierry Henry had scored only 15 more goals (with both feet, head, and other body parts) than Ronaldo without his strongest foot.

131 strikes from outside the box

He has scored goals of all sorts. From volleys and back-heels to tap-ins and slide-ons, daisy-cutters to pile-drivers, of furious power and dexterous finesse, from under the nose of the goalkeeper to 42 yards. Expectedly, and in lieu with his transformation from a nippy winger to a callous poacher, 605 of his goals were wrought from inside the box. But when the opportunity beckoned he whiplashed from a distance. As many as 131 strikes—of which 63 were free-kicks—came from outside the box. Here, though, Messi steals a yard over him (152 goals from outside the box), but still that's an astounding number. He possessed a variety of dead-ball



Cristiano Ronaldo's goal tally as a centre forward is 348. Reuters

drills—the knuckleball, outside of the foot, from the instep—all delivered from the inevitable Ronaldo pose, arms to the hips, legs apart, the sleeves of the shorts pulled upwards, the brain tracing the path the ball would take, the eyes scanning the goalwards obstacles. He struck the ball on a certain spot so the shot dips and swerves and is almost impossible for a goalkeeper to judge. He often combined those with perfection, power, swerve and audacity all at once. A Ronaldo free-kick is one of football's original spectacles. An event in itself.

164 penalties

The most mind-twisting reality is not that he scored 164 goals (18 percent of his goals) from the spot, but that he has missed only 30, converting 84.5 percent. Messi's corresponding number is 77 percent (109 off 139). It's often held against him that he is greedy about taking penalties and reluctant to split among his teammates (read 'Penaldo'). But given his clinicalness with penalties, he perhaps has every reason to feel that he has earned his right to take them.

272 after 33

Most careers wind down in their 30s. When Ronaldo left Real Madrid when he was 33—belting 450 goals for the Spanish giants—it was misconstrued as his self-realisation of diminishing skills. He has lost some of the explosive pace that had marked his twenties, but his goal-scoring knack re-



mained as lethal as ever. Wherever he travelled, he scored truckloads of goals. So much so that he has nearly scored as many goals in his 30s (437, with five months to turn 40) as in his 20s (440).

50-plus goals in 8 season

The spring years of Ronaldo were from 2010-11 to 2017-18, from his second season to his final one in Madrid, a fruitful period where he won four Champions Leagues and as many as four Ballon d'Ors. Thrice he piled more than 60 goals a season, peaking at 69 in the 2011-12 instalment. It was also time he began to function as a centre forward, inhabiting the central areas of the box rather than wider regions as he once used.

Most of the goals, though, have come when he started as a left-sided forward (410); as a centre forward, his tally as centre forward is 348, and the rest accrued from the right wing or as a second striker. Interestingly, 48 percent of his goals for Portugal came as a centre forward (63 off 131), whereas he netted 45 starting on the left wing. The classification is just to show his adeptness in manning various roles across the front-line, as well as his adaptability to the game-plans of different managers. Real Madrid coaxed his best years (450 goals in 438 games).

Mission 1000

Ronaldo avers that the landmark 1000th goal is within his grasp. There is no mitigating reason that he couldn't. His fitness could shame younger peers, he rarely picks injuries (missed only 82 games in his whole career), and is seldom short of motivation. Few could match his longevity—he is the sole surviving member of Euro 2004; his latest assistant provider Nuno Mendes was just four months old when Ronaldo scored his first competitive goal. The mean rate of his scoring means he could scale the 1k peak in two years. But Pele's FIFA-approved figure of 1281—still subject to debates—is beyond him.

Presents

The Indian EXPRESS AQDA

Co-presented by

WHERE NEWSMAKERS DROP IN FOR A CANDID CHAT.

Lovlina Borgohain

in conversation with

Mihir Vasavda
Deputy Associate Editor
The Indian Express

Manu Bhaker

Associate Partners

Hydration Partner

Wellness Partner

Hospitality Partner