



A protest against the Parbhani police custody death near the Collector's office in Thane on December 16. Deepak Joshi

'He aspired to be just 1% of Babasaheb, but police killed him': A family seeks justice

In Parbhani's Dalit areas, allegations of police brutality do the rounds

SIDDHANT KONDUSKAR
PARBHANI, DECEMBER 20

SEATED ON a cot in the courtyard of a relative's house in Annabhau Sathe Nagar area of Parbhani district, Vijayabai Suryawanshi remembers her son as "an avid book lover". "His only assets were his books, running into hundreds. He aspired to be even 1% of what Babasaheb (B R Ambedkar) was," Vijayabai says. On December 15, Somnath Suryawanshi, who was studying to become a lawyer like Ambedkar, died in custody, two days before his law exam. The interim postmortem report attributed the immediate cause of death as "shock following multiple injuries".

Somnath's death triggered protests in Parbhani town as it followed allegations of widespread police brutality in rounding up people from its Dalit ar-

reas over a violent agitation on December 10. The agitation had been sparked off by the "desecration" of a copy of the Constitution kept next to an Ambedkar statue in the area.

The Opposition has sought to corner the newly elected Mahayuti government over the issue, particularly as it coincides with the war of words between the two sides in Parliament and outside over the Constitution and Ambedkar. On Friday, replying to a discussion on the Parbhani incident in the Maharashtra Assembly, Chief Minister Devendra Fadnis said Somnath was suffering from breathlessness and other diseases, and had not complained of any police torture when produced before a magistrate.

At the same time, the government has set up an SIT to probe the incident, suspended a police sub-inspector and sent on leave

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

ONLY BUSINESS ON LAST DAY: 39-MEMBER PANEL FOR BILLS ON JOINT POLLS

The cold, bitter end



The winter session of Lok Sabha was adjourned sine die amid pandemonium in the House Friday. PTI

Amid protests, Speaker issues warning, Dhankhar flags 'severe criticism'

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 20

THE WINTER session of Parliament came to an acrimonious end Friday when the two Houses were adjourned sine die after a few minutes of business amid the faceoff between the ruling NDA and the Opposition. The divide appeared to have deepened a day after they clashed on the premises of Parliament, accusing each other

of insulting Dr B R Ambedkar.

Two minutes after proceedings began in the morning, Lok Sabha was adjourned sine die as Opposition members stormed the Well of the House, raising slogans of 'Jai Bhim' and protesting a remark by Union Home Minister Amit Shah which they called an insult of Ambedkar.

Amid the din, Speaker Om Birla allowed Law Minister Arjun Ram Meghwal to move the proposal that the Bills related to

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Crime Branch to investigate BJP's FIR against Rahul, Cong complaint

Make scuffle footage public, says Cong; BJP gives notice against Rahul, Kharge

PRAGYNESH, ASAD REHMAN & LALMANI VERMA
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 20

A DAY after it registered an FIR against Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi on a BJP complaint following a scuffle on Parliament premises in which two BJP MPs were injured, Delhi Police transferred the case to its Crime

Branch.

The Interstate Cell (ISC) of the Crime Branch will investigate the FIR against Gandhi which was registered under sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita that included those on voluntarily causing grievous hurt, use of criminal force and criminal intimidation.

DCP (Crime) Sanjay Kumar Sain said, "A team led by ACP

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

EXPLAINED
Stormy days ahead

THE END of the winter session on an acrimonious note has deepened the divide, and hardened positions on either side. It is likely that this faceoff will play out across the country in the days leading to the Budget session of Parliament.

BUSINESS AS USUAL

By UNNY



Bhagwat: Ram temple matter of faith, raking up new issues unacceptable



RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
PUNE, NEW DELHI, DEC 20

UNDERLINING THAT Ram temple in Ayodhya was a "matter of faith" for Hindus, RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat has said that it is "unacceptable" to rake up "such new issues on a daily basis" simply because of "extreme hatred, malice, enmity and suspicion".

His remarks come amid the debate over the Places of Worship Act, the challenge to the validity of which is before the Supreme Court, and a clamour for surveys of mosques and dargahs in different parts of the country.

In his address on "Vishwaguru Bharat" at a lecture series in Pune on Thursday, Bhagwat said, "Ram temple is a matter of faith for Hindus. The Hindus believed Ram temple should be constructed. But by doing that one does not become a Hindu leader..."

"Under the burden of the extreme past, it is not acceptable to resort to extreme hatred, malice, enmity, suspicion and rake up such new issues on a daily basis," Bhagwat said.

He said that while the world believes that all have to be

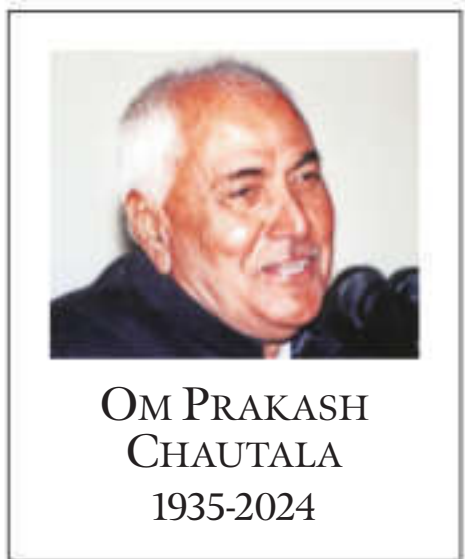
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Five-time Haryana CM and INLD patriarch O P Chautala dies at 89

VARINDER BHATIA
CHANDIGARH, DECEMBER 20

INDIAN NATIONAL Lok Dal (INLD) supremo and five-time Haryana Chief Minister Om Prakash Chautala, patriarch of one of the most influential political families of the state, died at his Gurugram residence Friday. He was 89.

A dominant figure of Haryana politics for over five decades, Chautala was born to former Deputy Prime Minister Devi Lal and Harki Devi. He grew up observing his father, a two-time CM and one of the tallest Jat and



OM PRAKASH CHAUTALA
1935-2024

farmer leaders of Haryana.

It was in 1968 that Chautala fought his first political battle from Ellenabad, which was con-

sidered his father's bastion, on a Janata Party ticket. He, however, lost to Lalchand Khor of Vishal Haryana Party, formed by former CM Rao Birender Singh. Chautala challenged the election in High Court and after about one year, Khor's election was set aside. A bypoll was conducted and Chautala won the seat, marking his Assembly debut.

Since then, the journey of Chautala — the man with 90% physical disability who couldn't even "change his clothes on his own", a plea his lawyers took while seeking leniency after he was convicted of corruption

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

12 killed in explosion on Jaipur highway after LPG tanker-truck crash

PARUL KULSHRESTHA
JAIPUR, DECEMBER 20

AT 5:45 AM — 15 minutes after he dropped his nephew Harlal and another relative, Raju, at the Jaipur-Ajmer highway to board a truck to take them back home — Mohanlal (47) got a distressing call: there had been an explosion and that Harlal was nowhere to be found.

The explosion occurred after the truck they were travelling in collided with an LPG tanker while it was taking a U-turn on the



At the site of the accident in Jaipur on Friday. Rohit Jain Parass

highway. According to officials, 12 people died and 40 vehicles were burnt in the accident.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

THE WORLD



TOP US OFFICIALS IN SYRIA TO DISCUSS TRANSITION

TRUDEAU LOOKS SET TO LOSE POWER AS KEY ALLY VOWS TO TOPPLE HIM PAGE 18

New game in town: Opinion trading sees surge in users, funding — under the radar

SOUMYARENDRA BARIK
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 20

WILL INDIA take three wickets against Australia at the end of six overs? Will Bitcoin breach the \$110,000 mark today? Will the Congress contest 30 or more seats in the Delhi Assembly elections in 2025?

You can bet real money on the outcome of these and many

more questions.

Welcome to the world of opinion trading: platforms which allow users to wager on the outcome of future events. The sector is growing exponentially, raking in funding and an estimated 5 crore users, but it seems to have largely gone under the radar in India, unscrutinised.

Parochially, opinion trading platforms appear to be betting platforms — and some in govern-

ment also have this view. But, investors and founders argue that there is a big element of skill that goes into making money on such platforms. Whether it's a game of skill or of chance, stakeholders in the larger online gaming sector in India are privately calling for a clear Central law to deal with opinion trading platforms, *The Indian Express* has learnt.

The sector in India has companies like Gurugram-based

Probo and MPL Opinio. While the former offers questions on a varied set of sectors like sports, elections and cryptocurrency, the latter only deals with questions related to cricket matches. These platforms have received more than Rs 4,200 crore in funding so far from over 35 investors which include Sequoia Capital (PeakXV), Elevation Capital, Accel Partners,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Near the slopes of the Caucasus, a hotel tragedy at a ski resort reveals India-Georgia connection

PAGE 1
ANCHOR

ANJU AGNIHOTRI CHABA
JALANDHAR, DECEMBER 20

A DECADE ago, having hot idlis near the snow-clad Caucasus mountains in Gudauri was perhaps a pipe dream for most Indian tourists and medical students in Georgia.

With Gudauri becoming a "must-visit" destination for Indian tourists and medical stu-

dents — thanks to its breathtaking views, snow and hotels — restaurants serving Indian food are thriving in this scenic Europe-based ski resort.

Gudauri was thrust into the spotlight on December 14, when a gas leak at an Indian restaurant, Haveli, claimed 12 lives, including 11 Indians, due to suspected carbon monoxide poisoning during a severe snowstorm. On the day the bodies were discovered, temperatures had plunged to minus 18 degrees. According to the local media, the deaths allegedly happened after fumes



An Indian restaurant in Gudauri, Georgia. Special arrangement

from a generator placed in a closed room filled the premises.

The incident, however, shed light on the growing Indian presence in Gudauri, which started developing as a tourist resort after the first hotel was established there in the late 1980s. Located near the Russian border, Gudauri is now home to nearly 36 Indian and Indian-Arabic restaurants, catering to the increasing number of Indian tourists and students who are primarily pursuing medical education in Georgia.

One such restaurant is owned

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

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● Parbhani: A family seeks justice

another.

However, for Somnath's family, this is hardly justice for his "murder at the hands of police".

It was a big deal for his nomadic Wadar family, listed as a Scheduled Caste, that Somnath, 35, was so invested in education. Their lifestyle, involving constantly moving to find work, means very few of them pursue higher studies. The death of Somnath's father in 2018 further strained the family's resources.

"But Somnath believed in learning as a way to improve his life and help others," says his brother Premnath. "He would say, 'jithe sthan, tithe kaam, ani tithe shikshan' (Wherever you go, find work and education)."

Somnath himself lived by this dictum, enrolling for different courses even as he earned a living and moved from city to city, such as Aurangabad, Latur, Parbhani, and Pune. Once he became a lawyer, Premnath says, Somnath hoped to offer free legal help to the needy.

According to the family, Somnath was doing the same, offering "legal advice", following the protest in Parbhani town over the "desecration" of the Constitution. The protests in the area, roughly 500 km from Mumbai, were peaceful to begin with, but had descended into violence.

What fuelled tempers was police identifying a resident of Mirzapur village, about 20 km from Parbhani city, as the man behind the "desecration", saying he was "mentally unstable and suicidal", and did not act out of any ill intentions. The Dalit protesters took this as an attempt to cover up a caste incident, with several claiming the Mirzapur man had been seen at a rally held earlier that day in the area by the right-wing Sakal Hindu Samaj over "atrocities" against Hindus in Bangladesh.

After the Dalit protests on December 10 turned violent, between December 11 and 12, around 50 people were rounded up in police action, including Somnath. Locals claim police came at night to Dalit neighbourhoods, and that even women "were not spared". Somnath was picked up from Shankar Nagar, a largely Dalit settlement, and remanded in police custody for two days. On December 15, the family was told he had died of a "heart attack". The last they had talked to Somnath was on December 9, after which the family could not get through to him. Unaware of the unrest in Parbhani, they didn't think much of it.

The Suryawanshis were enroute to Parbhani town, after hearing of Somnath's death, when they were told the body had been

sent to Aurangabad for post-mortem. It was when they reached Aurangabad and saw a crowd of protesters gathered for the autopsy that the first doubts rose in their mind.

Fearing that the anger over Somnath's death may trigger more violence, police told the family they could not take the body back to Parbhani. "Police asked me if I would take the responsibility if the situation worsened. I asked them whether they took responsibility for my son's death," Vijayabai says. Finally, after intervention by Dalit activists, police gave in. Premnath says his brother deserves justice. "He was totally innocent and was murdered by police."

In the Assembly Friday, CM Fadnis said the man behind the "desecration" of the Constitution had been under treatment for his mental condition since 2012, and had expressed regret for his actions. "A committee of four doctors gave a report that he was suffering from a mental and psychotic disorder and needs to take regular treatment," he said.

Suggesting a conspiracy to make "communities fight against each other", the CM said: "The insult of the Constitution had nothing to do with castes and communities. We politicians should work to ease the tension." Announcing Rs 5 lakh for the family of a Dalit activist who died of a heart attack while protesting over Somnath's death, he said that the December 10 protest was largely peaceful.

About allegations of police excesses, Fadnis said: "No combining operation was held... I talked to the local police." The sub-inspector who faced suspension had faced action for "using extra force", he said.

Calls and messages to IG (Nanded) Shahaji Umap and Additional SP Yashwant Kale went unanswered. Local police officers denied allegations of atrocities.

Countering the same, Jyoti Kankute says her minor daughters, 14 and 16, "who had nothing to do with the violence", were taken from their tin-canopy home. "When I went to the police station, I was beaten and abused," Jyoti alleges.

The in-laws of Pooja Jadhav, who was visiting from Pune, say she too was detained, and they were beaten up when they tried to intervene. "Police beat me with bamboo sticks," alleges Vimal Jadhav.

From Priyadarshini Nagar, Vatsalabai Manwate, 50, a nurse who was trying to record police action, says she was led away by the authorities. Nikita Wature claims police kept beating her "until I told them I had just delivered a baby".

● 12 killed in explosion after truck-LPG tanker crash

Within seconds, Mohanlal turned around his bike and shot straight to the spot. "It took me a good 15 minutes to find Haralal," he told *The Indian Express* at Sawai Man Singh Hospital in Jaipur, where both his nephew and Raju are currently being treated.

According to officials, 30 people were wounded in the incident, six of whom are on ventilator support. It took the fire department over seven hours to get the fire completely under control.

Among the wounded are 20 passengers of a sleeper bus that was caught in the explosion.

"It was dark when it hap-

pened and it was difficult to see what was happening. But later we came to know an LPG tanker had collided with a truck," said Manish Gupta, the Station House Officer of Bhankrota Police Station. "There were so many vehicles that by the time we brought one under control, the others had already caught on fire. All damaged vehicles have been cleared from the road but it hasn't been opened to traffic. The route will be opened late night."

Eyewitnesses told *The Indian Express* that the explosion could be heard for miles.

"Around 42 people were admitted to the hospital in the

FROM PAGE ONE

FULL REPORTSON
WWW.INDIANEXPRESS.COM

The cold, bitter end to session

'One Nation, One Election' be sent to a joint committee of Parliament set up for the purpose.

Once Meghwal moved the proposal, Birla warned members that protests in Parliament would be met with "appropriate action". He asked members to take their seats, saying 'Vande Mataram' would be played. He later adjourned the House indefinitely.

He said "maintenance of the dignity and decorum of this House is a collective responsibility of all of us. It is not good to stage a protest at any gate of Parliament. You will have to ensure that rules are followed in these matters. I request again that take it seriously and under no circumstance hold a protest at the gates or on the premises. Otherwise, Parliament will have to take appropriate action".

In Rajya Sabha, when the House met at 11 am, Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar noted that he had received notices under Rule 267, a rule of the House to suspend scheduled business and take up issues mentioned in the notices.

"This House is unique. The world watches our democracy. Yet we fail our citizens through conduct. These parliamentary disruptions mock public trust and expectations. Where seasoned dialogue should prevail, we witness only chaos... We squander precious opportunities that could serve the greater good of our people. These hallowed chambers deserve conduct that honours our oath and not theatrics that betray

it," he said.

Dhankhar asked the Leader of the House and the Leader of the Opposition to meet him in his chambers, adjourning proceedings until noon. Within a few minutes of resumption, the House was again adjourned, this time indefinitely, following Dhankhar's valedictory address.

He said persistent disruptions are steadily eroding public trust in democratic institutions and as parliamentarians "we are drawing severe criticism from the people of India, and rightfully so".

"As we conclude this session, coinciding with the 75th anniversary of our Constitution, we face a moment of serious reflection. While our celebration of Samvidhan Divas in the historic Samvidhan Sadan was made to reaffirm democratic values, our actions in this House tell a different story," Dhankhar said.

Amid the law, Law Minister Meghwal moved the motion in Parliament announcing names of 12 members of Rajya Sabha who would be part of the joint committee to scrutinise the 'One Nation, One Election' Bills even as the list of members from Lok Sabha in the committee was expanded to 27 — names of 21 members were announced Wednesday. The strength of the committee rose from 31 to 39.

Addressing a press conference later, Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju suggested that the strength of the committee had been increased to make it

more representative and that there have been precedents earlier of committees with more than 50 members.

"So, looking at the importance of the JPC to look after the issues of 'One Nation One Election', the Speaker got representation from all parties and the matter also came to me for consultation. The government agreed that the matter is very important and it relates to the reformation of the election process in our country. So we agreed to include most of the prominent political parties. So, eight more members were included," he said.

Of the 12 Rajya Sabha members in the committee, four are from the BJP, two from the Congress, and one each from the JD (U), TMC, DMK, AAP, BJD and YSRCP.

The BJP representatives from Rajya Sabha are K Laxman, former Telangana BJP chief and current national president of the party's OBC morcha; Ghanshyam Tiwari (Rajasthan); Bhuvaneshwar Kalita (Assam); and Kavita Patidar (MP).

From the Congress, AICC general secretaries Randeep Singh Surjewala and Mukul Wasnik have been made part of the committee.

The JD(U) is represented by its national working president Sanjay Kumar Jha. YSRCP by its national general secretary V Vijayasai Reddy, TMC by Saket Gokhale, DMK by P Wilson, AAP by Sanjay Singh, and BJD by Manas Ranjan Mangaraj.

On Tuesday, the government had introduced two Bills in the Lok Sabha as part of its plans for simultaneous elections across the country, countering the Opposition's charge of the move being "anti-constitutional" and "undermining the federal structure".

Outside Parliament, Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, Congress MP from Wayanad, alleged that the House had been adjourned quickly because the government was "scared" of debating the Adani issue.

"This government is scared to have a discussion on the Adani matter. They know that their true sentiments for Ambedkarji have come out. So, they are now scared of the Opposition because we are raising this issue. National interest is related to this matter. Our Constitution has been given by Ambedkarji, people of this country and our freedom struggle. Such an insult to him will not be tolerated by India," she said.

On the FIR registered against Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi by Delhi Police over injuries to two BJP MPs Thursday, Vadra said, "This is the government's desperation. They are so desperate that they are lodging false FIRs. Rahulji can never push anyone. I am his sister, I know him. He can never do such a thing. Frankly, the country knows this too. The country is watching how desperate they are that they are lodging baseless FIRs... These are all distractions."

● Bhagwat: Ram temple matter of faith, raking up new issues unacceptable

similar to stay united, we believe that "diversity is an ornament of unity, and we should respect and accept it".

Bhagwat said that despite having advanced facilities and wealth, the world lacks peace. "And that is the reason why the world needs a guru... India can fulfil that need... Vishwaguru is the one who forgets caste and religious differences and walks the path of equality shown by the sants," he said.

Bhagwat said India is progressing geographically but the country needs to make strides on the moral path. "If that happens, we can achieve the status of a Vishwasguru in the next 20 years," he said.

Reacting to the remarks on Friday, Opposition parties asked whether what Bhagwat said would be implemented.

While the Samajwadi Party raised the Sambhal violence issue

and sought action, the Trinamool Congress called Bhagwat's remarks "double speak" and Congress said "there should be no difference in what is said and what is done".

Asked about the remarks, Congress MP Manish Tewari said there should be no difference between "words and deeds". "The suggestion given by him is a creative one. This advice should be given to those people who believe in the same ideology as him. That they should be patient. They should save and protect the Constitutional framework, the legal system and laws passed by Parliament," he said.

The Samajwadi Party "welcomed" Bhagwat's remarks, with party president Akhilesh Yadav saying that the RSS should take "disciplinary action" against his "disciples" who are not following his guidance.

He said Bhagwat should also ensure that "false cases" filed against people in connection with last month's Sambhal violence are withdrawn and compensation is given to the families of those killed.

"After five people were killed (in the Sambhal violence), false cases were filed against people... He (Bhagwat) is now saying that not every temple should be dug out," Yadav said.

"So when such an important person has given this statement, it becomes his responsibility and his party leaders' responsibility to ensure that all those people in Sambhal against whom false cases have been filed are withdrawn," Yadav said in Parliament complex.

"No one can bring back anyone's life. But they can at least provide government help to their family members," he said.

Samajwadi Party national general secretary Ram Gopal Yadav said Bhagwat has done the correct thing by giving such a statement but his "disciples" are not accepting it. "He should take disciplinary action against his disciples," Yadav, a Rajya Sabha MP, told PTI.

TMC Rajya Sabha MP Sagarkha Ghose said, "Every few months Mohan Bhagwat delivers homilies about religious harmony. But on the ground, the Hindutva groups and cadres keep pushing ahead with their violent exclusivist Hindutva agenda. The double speak doesn't cut ice."

Asked about Bhagwat's remarks, former Bihar Deputy Chief Minister and RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav said: "The only work they have is to talk about all this. They should talk about the country's progress, brotherhood, Constitution, democracy. Talk to the farmers sometimes."

● INLD patriarch O P Chautala dies

years later — not only changed the political dynamics of Haryana but also played a key role in transforming Gurgaon into the Millennium City. It was during the tenures of Congress's Bhajan Lal and Chautala that Gurgaon underwent a major transformation.

However, Chautala's political career was punctuated with controversies. On October 22, 1978, a decade after his debut in electoral politics, he was flying back from a convention in Southeast Asia when he was detained at Delhi airport for allegedly carrying a bag containing 48 wrist watches, a charge that hounded him for the rest of his career. Following this, Devi Lal told the media that he was publicly "disowning him". Both, however, patched up later.

Chautala holds the distinction of being Haryana's CM for the maximum times but his overall tenure was around six-and-a-half years. The only full term he could complete was from 2000 to 2005.

The roller-coaster journey for Chautala and the INLD, formed by Devi Lal, began from there, eventually landing Chautala and his

son Ajay Chautala in Tihar jail on corruption charges in the Junior-Basic-Training teachers recruitment. Both served a 10-year sentence, and were released last year.

Chautala's ascendancy was tied to his father's rise in national politics. On December 2, 1989, he became the CM for the first time after Devi Lal vacated the chair and went to Parliament. As he was not an MLA, Chautala contested the bypoll from Meham. Voting was held on February 27, 1990, but after allegations of booth capturing, the Election Commission ordered repolling in eight booths.

A few days before repolling, Amir Singh, an Independent candidate, was killed. Subsequent clashes between police and protesters left 10 dead. The issue snowballed, and was even raised in Parliament, necessitating the resignation of Chautala as CM. He was succeeded by Banarsi Das Gupta. Amidst all this, Chautala contested another bypoll from Darba Kalan and won. Gupta was promptly removed as CM, barely 51 days after he took charge, and Chautala took over the post again.

With the heat over the Meham episode rising, the then PM V P Singh of the Janata Dal was said to have conveyed that it would be best for Chautala to step down. Chautala had to quit again with five days of assuming office. He was replaced with Master Hukam Singh.

When V P Singh's government fell in November 1990, and Chandra Shekhar took charge as PM, Devi Lal was again appointed Deputy PM. Four months later, Hukam Singh quit and Chautala was back as CM. But this prompted a defection in his party and the Chautala government fell within a fortnight. President's Rule was imposed between April and June 1991. In the polls that followed, the Congress won.

In 1996, Haryana Vikas Party leader Bansilal formed the government with BJP support. But three years later, the BJP withdrew support and the government fell. By then, Devi Lal had left the Janata Dal and formed the INLD. Chautala inducted a few HVP MLAs into the INLD fold, and took over as the CM for the fourth time in July 1999. In 2000, the INLD won and Chautala became CM — the only time he got a full term.

● Hotel tragedy at a ski resort in Georgia reveals an India connection

by Elizabeth Johny, who belongs to Ernakulam in Kerala. A partner at Lunch Bokx, an Indian restaurant that opened six months ago in Gudauri, she says her first restaurant has been running successfully in Tbilisi, Georgia's capital, for over a decade now.

"Gudauri is one of the most popular tourist destinations in Georgia. In winter, people come here to ski. In summer, they visit the resort to enjoy the cool weather," says Elizabeth, adding that her new restaurant gets a couple of hundred visitors daily in Gudauri.

Talking about the presence of Indians in Gudauri's hospitality industry, she says, "Of the over 100 restaurants, hotels and motels here, around 36 are owned by Punjabis, Gujaratis, South Indians and Pakistanis. All these restaurants serve Indian food. My restaurant serves South Indian

food. The presence of locals in Gudauri is nominal. The ski resort is usually filled with tourists and people in the hospitality and skiing business."

On Gudauri's growing appeal among Indians, Darpan Parashar, the president of the Business Chamber in Georgia since 2021, says, "Ever since direct flights from New Delhi to Georgia started a few years ago, so did the influx of Indian tourists and students. This in turn led to the opening of new Indian restaurants here."

Before Gudauri became popular among Indian visitors, it was a preferred skiing destination among Europeans due to its scenic beauty and ski slopes. "The town's proximity to the Russian border — it is the only open crossing between Georgia and Russia — also adds to its appeal," says Parashar.

According to a report in

Georgia Today, a local English newspaper, the first ski lift opened in Gudauri in 1988, while Georgia was still a part of the erstwhile Soviet Union. As Gudauri cemented its reputation as the leading winter resort in eastern Europe, several ski lifts were constructed here, the newspaper reports.

As per Georgia's National Statistics Office, Gudauri was the top mountain resort destination for international visitors to the country in 2023. Of the nearly 4.50 lakh international visitors who went to mountain resorts in Georgia in 2023, 71% visited Gudauri.

Today, Georgia has become a hub for Indian students, especially those hoping to pursue medicine. Parashar says over 20,000 Indian students study in Georgia at present, primarily in its 21 medical universities.

He says, "Since Gudauri is just a two-hour drive from Tbilisi, it is rare to find an Indian student in Georgia who hasn't visited this stunning destination."

Gudauri indeed seems to be a popular destination among Indian students based in Tbilisi.

Harsh Vardhan, a fourth-year MBBS student at Georgian American University in Tbilisi, says, "I visited Gudauri recently with friends. We have been going there regularly since then due to its proximity to Tbilisi. At times, we just go there to eat at an Indian restaurant," he says.

Garima, a fifth-year MBBS student from Alte Medical University Tbilisi, says she visited Gudauri for the first time last year and was planning to go there for Christmas this year with friends. "Visiting Gudauri is easy and convenient. Most students love to go there for a day-long trip and Indian food."

● Crime Branch to investigate

Ramesh Lamba will lead the investigation in the case."

The Congress complaint against BJP MPs following the scuffle has also been entrusted to the Crime Branch — in its complaint, the party said BJP MPs had pushed Congress president and Leader of Opposition in Rajya Sabha Mallikarjun Kharge to the ground and caused injuries to him.

DCP Sain said, "We will also look into the investigation of the complaint filed by the Congress."

The BJP and Congress had filed separate complaints Thursday at the Parliament Street police station, accusing each other of assault.

On Friday, as the winter session of Parliament ended, the Congress stepped up its attack on the BJP. It demanded that CCTV footage of the scuffle Thursday be made public. Congress members of Lok Sabha also skipped the customary tea meeting with Speaker Om Birla after the conclusion of the session, while Upper House members from both Opposition and ruling side attended the tea with Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar.

At a press conference by deputy leaders of the Congress

in both the Houses — Gaurav Gogoi (Lok Sabha) and Pramod Tiwari (Rajya Sabha) — after the Houses were adjourned sine die, Tiwari said: "In the history of democracy, this has happened for the first time. Generally, the Opposition disturbs the Parliament... This is the first time that in the first week, the ruling party did not allow the House to be run."

The BJP, on the other hand, accused Rahul Gandhi of showing an "edited" speech of Shah and "creating tension in masses". It moved notice of breach of privilege against Gandhi and Mallikarjun Kharge. BJP MP Nishikant Dubey submitted the privilege notice in Lok Sabha to Speaker Om Birla. In his communication to the Speaker, Dubey said Gandhi shared on social media, especially X, an "edited" version of Shah's speech in Rajya Sabha with the sole intent of stoking public sentiments and lowering the dignity of Parliament and the country.

Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju said privilege has been moved against Kharge because he shared a clip of speech of Shah on X to "mislead" and "misinform" people.

● Opinion trading sees a surge

Soma Capital and Y Combinator.

India currently does not have a law which can directly deal with opinion trading platforms like Probo and MPL. Opinion — though in foreign markets like United States and Australia, where this industry is more mature, governments have decided to treat the wagers as securities, thereby putting the responsibility of regulation on the stock market regulator.

To give a sense of the pace of growth in India, as per industry estimates, these platforms have registered transaction volumes of over Rs 50,000 crore a year with a user base of more than 5 crore people. Collective revenues for firms in the sector are projected to be over Rs 1,000 crore for the financial year 2024-25.

OPINION TRADING
HEATS UP

■ Rs 4,200 crore in funding so far from over 35 investors.

■ Registered transaction volumes of over Rs 50,000 crore a year.

■ User base of more than 5 crore people.

■ Collective revenues projected over Rs 1,000 crore for the financial year 2024-25.

condition of anonymity.

Another lawyer said that while at first glance opinion trading platforms can seem like betting platforms, as it allows wagering on events, there are some fundamental differences. "For instance, there is no house on such platforms, and they do not have any control over the events they are asking questions about. When there is a house, there is of course a perverse incentive to rig the system," the lawyer said.

Google has allowed some opinion trading apps such as MPL. Opinion on its Play Store, but has prohibited apps like Probo. These games are, however, available on Apple's App Store. Incidentally, Google had allowed some fantasy sports and rummy apps on its Play Store as part of a pilot project in 2022. This pilot is currently the subject of a Competition Commission of India investigation for alleged market distortion.

Generally, these apps, including opinion trading apps, acquire users through digital ads on platforms like Google and Meta's Facebook and Instagram.

Global experience

The opinion trading sector is regulated across countries like the US, UK and Australia. In the US, Kalshi, the company that started the opinions trading segment — and from which Probo gets a lot of its inspiration from — is regulated by the Commodity Futures Trading Commission, one of the country's two main stock market regulators. Although, it is worth noting that a similar prediction app called Polymarket has come under the scrutiny of the US Department of Justice allegedly accepting trades from US-based users. The company is not registered with the CFTC and as a result, can not legally allow US-based users to wager on the platform.

In India, however, there is currently no direct regulator for the sector and it is yet to pique the interest of regulators like SEBI. So effectively, at the central level, there is no dedicated law that sets the guardrails for such platforms, and there is very little in terms of regulatory protection that is available to their users.

The IT Ministry had come up with amendments to Information Technology Rules to regulate online gaming platforms, which could have had a bearing on firms like Probo. However, there is a question mark on the status of these rules. For now, these laws have no regulatory teeth, which further the problem of the legal lacunae that exists around online gaming in general, and opinion trading platforms in particular.

"We would like to get regulated. The IT Ministry has shown and continues to show interest in regulating the sector, which is a great starting point. A platform with a similar business model to ours has been regulated in the US," Probo's Gupta said.



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Air quality ‘severe’, rain likely after Christmas



On Thursday, Delhi recorded AQI in the ‘severe plus’ category. File

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 20

DELHI REMAINED the most polluted city in the country for the fifth day in a row on Friday, recording an air quality index (AQI) of 429, in the ‘severe’ category. Owing to improved wind speed, this was slightly better than the ‘severe plus’ AQI of 451 that the city had recorded on Thursday.

According to the India Meteorological Department (IMD), the wind speed on Friday was recorded between 8 and 12 kmph. It had remained below 8 kmph on Thursday.

Meteorological conditions such as low wind speed and high humidity cause pollutants to linger in the atmosphere.

The city recorded a minimum temperature of 7.5 degrees Celsius, 2.5 notches above the season’s average, the IMD said. The maximum temperature was a notch above normal at 23.3 degrees Celsius.

The IMD forecast rain on December 26 and partly cloudy sky on December 23 and 24. Till Sunday, it forecast dense fog conditions, following which the same is likely to reduce. The minimum temperature is set to hover around 7 to 9 degrees Celsius and the maximum at 22 to 23 degrees Celsius for the next six days.

The Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology in Pune forecast the AQI to be in the ‘very poor’ category on Saturday, which is likely to worsen to ‘severe’ on Sunday. In its long-term forecast, it said the AQI is likely to fluctuate between ‘very poor’ and ‘poor’ after Sunday.

‘Hurting sentiments’: HC refuses to quash FIR lodged against DU professor over social media post

SOHINIGHOSH
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 30

THE DELHI High Court has refused to quash an FIR against a Hindu College faculty member booked for allegedly hurting religious sentiments. The court noted that offences that penalise deliberate and malicious attempts to outrage religious feelings “balances the right to free speech with the need to maintain social harmony”.

The court of Justice Chandra Dhari Singh was hearing a petition by Ratan Lal, an assistant professor of history, who was booked after he had allegedly made claims on social media on May 14, 2022 of a Shilving being discovered inside the Gyanvapi mosque. An FIR was filed on May 18 under IPC sections 153A (promoting enmity among various groups) and 295A (deliberate and malicious

acts intended to outrage religious feelings) and subsequently, arrested on May 20 before being released on bail the next day.

“...prima facie, the petitioner has created disturbance of the harmony of the society and this court has also found that the said tweet/post were made with the intention to hurt the sentiments of a large number of the society and no person being a professor, teacher, or an intellectual has the right to make such type of comments, tweets or posts as the freedom of speech and expression or any type of freedom is not absolute,” Justice Singh stated in the order dated December 17.

Seeking the quashing of the FIR, Lal had argued before the court that “neither any unrest nor disturbance happened in the society due to his social media posts. He also pointed out that “being a historian and an intellectual person, (he) had expressed

his thoughts without any intent”.

The prosecution, on the other hand, opposed his plea saying “there is a clear intent to hurt sentiments of the believers of Lord Shiva and the society at large”.

The court, in its order, highlighted the petitioner’s responsibility as “a historian and an educator”. “An intellectual person is instrumental in guiding others and the society at large and thus, he should be more conscious while giving such type of statements in a public domain as the same carries weight and power to influence other people which, if made in a negative manner, such as in the instant case, might create unrest and disturb the peace of the society... Sections 153A and 295A of the IPC balances the right to free speech with the need to maintain social harmony as the freedom of speech and expression is not absolute,” the order read.

Parent alleges son was injured and mentally harassed at school, child rights panel issues notice

SOPHIYA MATHEW
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 20

THE NATIONAL Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) has issued a notice to a government school in East Delhi after a parent filed a complaint alleging that her 15-year-old son has faced injury and mental harassment at the hands of the school’s physical education teacher. The mother also accused the school principal of misbehaviour.

The NCPCR, in a notice issued on December 6, said the alleged behaviour violates Section 175 of the Juvenile Justice Act, 2015. The Deputy Director (Education), East Delhi, has been asked to investigate and file an action taken report within 10 days from the date of issue of the notice.

The parent alleged in the complaint, “On December 2, my son left the school in a healthy condition at 7.45 am but came

home early at 10.15 am... he was crying badly from pain. He told me... that a physical education teacher took his class to the ground but despite informing the teacher that he couldn’t play as he suffers from a cardiovascular disease, he was forced to race hand walking, along with five other students... the floor was made of bricks and my son lost his balance.”

The injury caused wrist dislocation in both hands, the parent alleged, adding that the school did not inform her about the incident immediately. She also alleged that while anti-pollution curbs were in place, the school was carrying out outdoor activities.

The mother further accused the school teachers, including the principal, of mentally harassing her when she approached the school.

“I do not know when he will be able to use his hands again...,” she wrote in the complaint.”

TARKUNDE MEMORIAL LECTURE

‘Are we truly prepared for ONOE’

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 20

A DAY after a scuffle broke out in Parliament involving BJP and Congress MPs, Neeraj Chowdhury, contributing editor, *The Indian Express*, on Friday wondered if the country was ready for the proposed ‘One Nation, One Election’ (ONOE) policy.

Chowdhury, who has covered Indian politics for over five decades, was delivering the Tarkunde Memorial Lecture on ‘The Electoral Process and the Idea of One Nation One Election’.

Vithal Mahadeo Tarkunde, hailed as the ‘Father of the Civil Liberties Movement’ in India, dedicated his life to defending democratic ideals and individual freedoms. Chowdhury’s association with Tarkunde, the founder president of PUCL, began in the 70s when she worked with the civil rights organisation.

“The Constitution 129th Amendment Bill and the Union Territories Laws Amendment Bill, 2024, if passed, will synchronise Lok Sabha and state Assembly elections,” Chowdhury said, adding that while the government insists on the administrative efficiency and cost-cutting potential of such reforms, logistical challenges are abound.

“The Election Commission says it is ready... but let us not forget the scale: polls for 543 Lok Sabha constituencies, 28 state assemblies, and 8 Union territories, many requiring multi-phase polls. Are we truly prepared for this?” she asked.

The BJP’s push for ONOE has sparked sharp resistance from the Opposition.

The policy, Chowdhury noted, risks favoring popular national leaders, such as Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in both state and central elections. Moreover, she said, “If the national government

loses its majority mid-term, calling for fresh elections, this could curtail the mandates of all state governments.”

Senior advocate Raju Ramachandran, speaking on the occasion, gave a brief overview of the life of Tarkunde.

After completing his BSc in agriculture, Tarkunde had moved to London. He returned to India in 1933 and started his legal practice. He then joined the Congress Socialist Party and the Indian National Congress but left both to become a member of the Radical Democratic Party founded by M N Roy. The party was dissolved in 1948 and Tarkunde returned to legal practice. In 1957, he was appointed a judge of the Bombay HC.

However, he stepped down at 60 and started practice in the Supreme Court. Tarkunde played a major role in probing the 1984 anti-Sikh riots and cases of human rights violations and was awarded the Padma Bhushan in 1998.

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UP CM to review DMRC’s 5-km Metro corridor proposal to connect Noida, Delhi airports

NEETIKA JHA
NOIDA, DECEMBER 20

THE DELHI Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) proposal to construct a 5-km elevated Metro corridor to improve connectivity between Noida International Airport Limited (NIAL) in Jewar, which is slated to open early next year, and Delhi’s Indira Gandhi International Airport will be submitted before Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath for approval, Yamuna Expressway Industrial Development Authority (YEIDA) CEO Arun Vir Singh said on Friday.

“The CM will review the proposal. The project’s future depends on how we achieve the funding,” he added.

DMRC will construct a small corridor between Tughlakabad and Kalindi Kunj as part of the

larger plan to connect Aerocity to Tughlakabad under a project worth Rs 950 crore within three years. “It is also updated that Aerocity to Tughlakabad Metro corridor... work is in advance stage of construction and its further extension up to Kalindi Kunj will provide Metro interchange facilities with Magenta Line, Blue Line, Aqua Line as well as with proposed new line between Botanical Garden and Noida’s Sector 142,” read a letter dated December 13 from Singh to DMRC’s chief project manager, Shiv Om Dwivedi.

“Initially, DMRC had prepared a detailed project report to link NIAL with IGI via the expressway. However, this proposal was shelved after the UP government decided to look at the rapid rail option — a 72-km corridor connecting Ghaziabad, Greater Noida and Noida airport,” Singh added.

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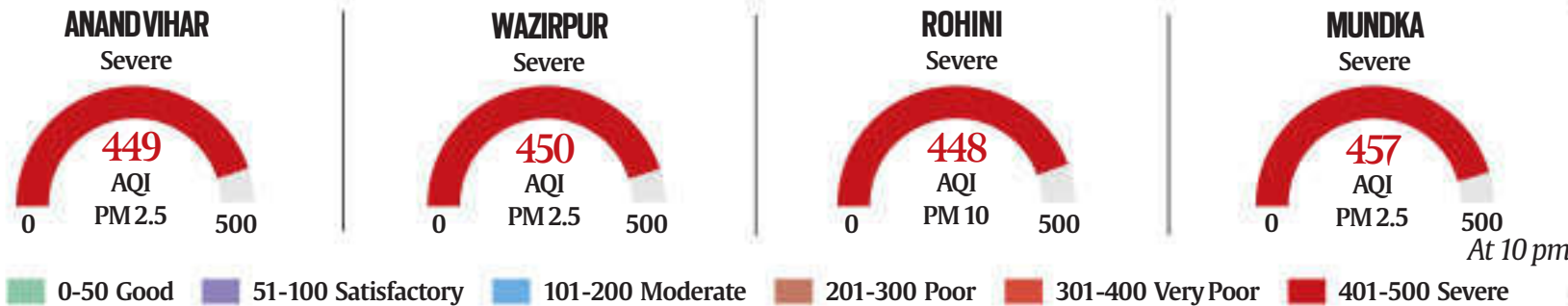


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December 21: Smog/moderate to dense fog likely in the morning. Mainly clear sky

MAX: 23
0.8°C above normal

MIN: 8
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2-3 names shortlisted for each seat, BJP first list likely to be out soon



Candidates being shortlisted during a consultation exercise, based on suggestions given by party workers .X/BJP4Delhi

JATIN ANAND
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 20

THE BJP has shortlisted two to three names as potential picks to be fielded on each of Delhi's 70 Assembly constituencies, party sources said Friday. According to party insiders, the first list of BJP's candidates for the 2025 Delhi Assembly elections is likely to be announced this weekend or early next week with Prime Minister Narendra Modi likely to chair the Central Election Committee meeting "Sunday or Monday".

The candidates have been shortlisted following a discussion around suggestions made by the party's cadre during a raishumaari, or consultation exercise, presided over by BJP leaders appointed by its national leadership as well as multiple ongoing surveys at a meeting of the party's State Election Committee (SEC) on Thursday evening, sources said.

"Many leaders who have joined the BJP recently from other parties are being considered for tickets. These include Neeraj Basoya from Kasturba Nagar and Arvinder Singh Lovely from a seat in the trans-Yamuna area," a source said.

"Former West Delhi MP Parvesh Verma is likely to be fielded from New Delhi, while Rajya Sabha MP Dushyant Gautam is being considered a front-runner for the Karol Bagh seat. Harish Khurana from Moti Nagar, former South Delhi MP Ramesh Bidhuri from Kalkaji, and Satish Upadhyay from

Malviya Nagar are among others," the source added.

Delhi BJP chief Virendra Sachdeva's candidature has been proposed from Vishwas Nagar and Patparganj seats.

"The SEC had its first meeting yesterday where it discussed potential picks (for each of Delhi's 70 Assembly constituencies). The Core Committee, led by BJP national president JP Nadda, is likely to meet on Friday or Saturday," a source said.

"Here, the list of candidates, especially those leaders who have joined the BJP from other parties in the run-up to the upcoming Delhi Assembly polls, will be narrowed down before finally seeking the nod of the Central Elections Committee that is chaired by the Prime Minister over the weekend," the source added.

Sources said the BJP's state unit was also "expecting clarity" from its national leadership on its suggestion of countering the AAP's Mukhyamantri Mahila Samman Yojana in Delhi through a scheme "similar to" Maharashtra's Ladki Bahin and Madhya Pradesh's Ladli Behna schemes as part of its manifesto for the Delhi polls "around the time" of the announcement of its first list of candidates.

Chaired by Sachdeva, the BJP announced a 21-member State Election Committee mandated with screening potential candidates on Wednesday.

While the AAP has announced picks for each of the 70 Assembly constituencies in Delhi, the Congress has named candidates for 21 seats with more expected.

Delhi BJP gets over 1 lakh suggestions for poll manifesto

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 20

THE DELHI BJP has received more than one lakh suggestions for its manifesto for the upcoming Assembly elections.

South Delhi MP and convener of the BJP's manifesto committee for the polls, Ramvir Singh Bidhuri, said the manifesto would be a "symbol of public aspirations" even as efforts are underway to seek more suggestions over the weekend.

"More than one lakh suggestions have been received so far. Now, on December 21-22, more suggestions will be collected from the public by sending a large number of vans to all city markets," he added.

"Facilities of free water, electricity and bus travel will continue (after the elections) and these will be implemented in a better way so that the public can get real benefit," he said.

Bidhuri said that while the party had received more than 3,200 suggestions via email, more than 36,000 had come its way on WhatsApp till Thursday. Besides, mobile 'Sankalp Patra' vans sent to all 70 Assembly constituencies had generated almost 67,000 suggestions and while over 3,500 have been received through direct meetings held with members of various communities.

"A total of 1,04,322 suggestions have been received so far, which is proof of huge public participation... We have gone among the public and understood their issues after a detailed three-week-long public discussion," said Bidhuri.

Among the suggestions received so far, the former Leader of Opposition in the Delhi Assembly said, most are regarding problems of sewer water, electricity bills, pollution, education and health. "The election manifesto committee will now prepare the manifesto on the basis of the suggestions and submit the same to the party leadership," said Bidhuri.

SC upholds the Allahabad HC order ending toll collection on DND flyway

ANANTHAKRISHNAN G.
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 20

THE SUPREME Court on Friday upheld the Allahabad High Court order ending toll collection by Noida Toll Bridge Company Limited (NTBCL) on the DND (Delhi-Noida Direct) flyway connecting Delhi to Noida.

Dismissing the appeal filed by NTBCL against the HC's October 26, 2016 order, a bench of Justices Surya Kant and Ujjal Bhuyan said, "NTBCL has recovered the project costs and substantial profits, eliminating any justification for the continued imposition or collection of user fees or tolls." It added there is no infirmity in the HC judgment and that it found no reason to interfere with it.

The SC further said that the contract awarded to NTBCL through the concession agreement by state authorities and New Okhla Industrial Development Authority (NOIDA) was "unfair, unjust and inconsistent with Constitutional norms". It added that NOIDA "exceeded its authority by delegating the power to levy fees or impose tolls to NTBCL, rendering such delegation invalid".

The origin of the flyway dates back to April 1992, when NOIDA and the Delhi administration entered into a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with IL&FS, intending to construct the bridge. The concession agreement was executed on November 12, 1997, designating NOIDA and IL&FS -- which constructed the flyway --

as the "sponsors" and NTBCL as the "concessionaire".

The HC ruling came on a plea filed by the Federation of Noida Resident Welfare Association, which claims to espouse the cause of NOIDA residents, particularly civic issues. The association had moved the HC nearly 15 years after the execution of the concession agreement. It sought a direction to discontinue toll charges from those who used the DND flyway, saying NTBCL had already recovered the project costs.

Agreeing with the HC's findings, the SC said that "no person or entity can be allowed to make an undue and unjust profit from public property, at the cost of the public at large."

It referred to the findings of the Comptroller and Auditor

General (CAG) audit report, which said: "...the annual toll income of NTBCL during 2001-2016 was Rs 892.51 crore. NTBCL has been making profits for the last 11 years... has no accumulated losses as of 31.03.2016; has paid dividends of Rs 243.07 crore till 31.03.2016 to its shareholders and repaid all its debt with interest. NTBCL had thus, by 31.03.2016, recovered the project costs, the maintenance costs, and a significant profit on its initial investment."

The order said that "an exhaustive reading of the CAG report highlights the extent to which the public has been defrauded..." This, it added, "could not have been done but for the collusion of then officers of the two state governments and of NOIDA..."



AAP leaders Sanjay Singh, Arvind Kejriwal and Avadh Ojha in New Delhi on Friday. Express

Kejriwal and Sachdeva lock horns over Nadda remarks on Purvanchali community

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 20

ACCUSING THE saffron party of conspiring to "strip Delhi's Purvanchali community of their dignity and voting rights", AAP national convener Arvind Kejriwal Friday attacked BJP national president JP Nadda for allegedly making "offensive" remarks against the community in Parliament.

Countering the attack, Delhi BJP president Virendra Sachdeva said people from Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, and Haryana had not forgotten that Kejriwal had repeatedly stated that Delhi's border hospitals and schools were "under heavy pressure from outsiders".

"Just two days ago, BJP

President JP Nadda made deeply offensive remarks against the 'Purvanchali' community during a session in Parliament. He compared the Purvanchalis living in Delhi to 'Rohingya' infiltrators and 'Bangladeshis', and further stated that BJP workers were filling out forms to have their names removed from voter lists," Kejriwal alleged.

After playing a purported video in which Nadda could be seen speaking, Kejriwal added, "We strongly condemn this act and regard it as a well-planned conspiracy against an entire community. On one hand, BJP leaders brand Purvanchalis as 'Rohingyas' and Bangladeshis; on the other, they attempt to strip them of their citizenship."

The AAP went on to allege that the BJP was "implementing its sinister plan to uproot the Purvanchali community" from the Capital, while it was working "tirelessly to give this community dignity and respect".

"We urge every member of the Purvanchali community not to trust BJP workers. Do not show your voter card or share any details with them... In the coming days, AAP will take this issue to every household in Delhi. We will show Nadda's video to expose BJP's deliberate conspiracy against the Purvanchali community," he added.

In response, Sachdeva raked up a video from June 6, 2020, saying Kejriwal had "made an issue" out of the "pressure from Bihar

residents on Delhi's healthcare services" and imposed a ban on treatment for outsiders in Delhi's hospitals which was revoked after "strong opposition from the BJP". "Whether it is the Purvanchali community or any other, everyone knows that the corruption in Kejriwal's Yamuna cleaning project is the reason why people from Purvanchal can't perform their traditional Chhath Puja by the riverside in Delhi," he alleged.

"Today Arvind Kejriwal is trying to show himself as a supporter of Purvanchalis... but they have not forgotten his statement of September 30, 2019, when he said, 'Biharis come to Delhi with a 500-rupee ticket, get 5 lakh worth of free treatment, and leave'" he alleged.

Health dept sacks supervisor, 'carelessness' led to TB patient not getting essential drugs

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 20

THE DELHI Health department has terminated the services of a DOTS Plus Supervisor on the ground that his alleged "carelessness" led to a Tuberculosis (TB) patient being deprived of essential medicines, an official said on Friday. This comes after *The Indian Express* on December 17 reported on the non-availability of TB medicine to Harshita Singh Chandel, a 16-year-old girl from the city.

After Chandel filed a writ petition in the Delhi High Court on the erratic supply of TB drugs, the court had directed the state government to provide her with medication.

According to sources in the Union Health Ministry, drug-resistant TB (DRTB) regimen drugs are adequately available in all states and Union territories, including at the state drug store in Delhi. They added that adequate supplies of longer DRTB regimen drugs like Cap Cycloserine and Tab Linezolid are available for all patients currently on longer DRTB oral regimens in Delhi. Further, the ministry is in touch with states and UTs to ensure last mile delivery of the medicines, the sources said.

This comes amid the Health department terminating the services of a senior DOTS Plus Supervisor posted at Babu Jagjivan Ram Memorial Hospital Chest Clinic under National Tuberculosis Elimination Program, National

Health Mission. Harshita is undergoing treatment at the hospital.

According to an official from the health department, it came to the department's notice that "Harshita, a school-going girl in North District was deprived of essential TB medicines due to the carelessness of a DOTS Plus Supervisor".

"Responding firmly, the department terminated the services of the supervisor within 24 hours, sending a strong message that such lapses will not be tolerated. Also, the girl was provided with all the prescribed medicines," the official added.

The Delhi government had on Tuesday formed a committee to look into gaps in the supply of TB medicines in the city.

From tomorrow, AAP to go door to door to register beneficiaries for 2 key schemes

SAMAN HUSAIN
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 20

COME SUNDAY, the AAP will begin its door-to-door campaign to distribute forms and pamphlets to register beneficiaries under its two key welfare schemes -- the Mukhyamantri Mahila Samman Yojana and the Sanjeevani Yojana, *The Indian Express* has learnt.

The Mukhyamantri Mahila Samman Yojana offers a monthly direct benefit transfer of Rs 1,000 to Aadhaar-linked bank accounts of eligible women residents of Delhi, provided the applicants fulfil certain criteria. On December 13, AAP convener Arvind Kejriwal also promised to increase the ex-

isting monthly dole of Rs 2,100 if the party is re-elected.

Meanwhile, the recently announced Sanjeevani Yojana provides healthcare coverage for Delhi residents over 60 years at all government and private hospitals.

On December 13, Chief Minister Atishi had also stated that work on the Mahila Samman Yojana is underway with registrations set to start within 7-10 days.

"For the online process, a Project Management Unit has been set up to oversee the registration process. For the offline setup, our door-to-door campaign will start Sunday. Before that, we had a meeting scheduled on how to train workers on distributing these pamphlets. Separate meet-

ings are now going to take place in each assembly constituency on Saturday," an AAP leader said.

Party sources also disclosed plans to establish booths in every constituency to distribute these forms. "We have identified key areas for setting up these booths. Most constituencies will have a booth at a landmark location, such as near the police station, (where) posters will also be put up, guiding people towards the booth... Multiple booths are being planned in constituencies with a strong BJP presence," sources said.

Cash transfer schemes for women have played a significant role in helping incumbent governments retain power, as seen in the recent Maharashtra and

Jharkhand elections.

Earlier, the AAP had launched the 'Revdi Pe Charcha' campaign to directly engage with Delhi residents warning that the welfare schemes would be discontinued if the BJP comes to power. With over 27,500 such meetings conducted across the Capital, the campaign is now at its tag end.

"This campaign has been successful. We targeted small groups of 20-25 people, sent out invitations, arranged tea and snacks, and had hour-long interactive conversations. Later, we collected feedback. By now, we have covered almost every part of the city. Our booth-level workers will now take charge of handing out these forms," an AAP leader said.

How squads respond to bomb threats before declaring them hoax

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 20

ANOTHER DAY and at least four schools in Delhi woke up to bomb threats, which later turned out to be hoaxes, the sixth such incident in 11 days. Barring an incident where a minor boy was apprehended for sending a bomb threat because he did not want to appear for an exam, none of the other hoax cases have been cracked so far.

The police have found it difficult to track down the culprits due to their usage of VPNs to keep their location and IP addresses hidden. Coupled with ProtonMail, an email service that provides end-to-end encryption, it becomes virtually impossible for the police authorities to track

down the perpetrators.

What's left for the Delhi Police to do is manually check each bomb threat and declare them as hoaxes. Naturally, the Bomb Disposal Squad (BDS) and BDT of the Delhi Police have been on their toes with a slew of hoax bomb threats being reported from schools across Delhi NCR. The movement from control rooms to district BDT units has been fast and frequent.

For the Bomb Squad personnel, it all starts with the first call to the police control room on the dial of 112. "As soon as the control room gets information about a bomb threat... BDT inspectors in the concerned district are alerted within 60 seconds through wireless communication. Within five to 10 minutes of the call, a seven-member BDT reaches the spot in

an ROV (Remote Operation Vehicle)," a BDS officer said.

The team, the officer said, consists of an inspector-level officer, two sub-inspectors, three head constables, a dog handler, and a dog to sniff out the explosive.

The team then starts the process to verify whether the call is a hoax or not. "Multiple devices are deployed to detect the presence of explosives. Non Linear Junction Detector (NLJD) and M-ION (Explosive Weapon Detector) are first used to see if any visible explosive is present. DSMD (Deep Search Metal Detectors) are used to search metal items. RTVS, a portable X-ray machine, is used to check for wires and switches inside closed items. Since bomb suits don't guarantee 100 per cent protection, robotic hands called Telescopic Manipulators are used

to pick up suspicious items. These hands are 10-foot-long and are controlled by remotes," the BDS officer said.

If no bombs are found, which has been the case with all bomb hoax calls in Delhi schools this year, the BDT declares the same.

If any suspicious or probable explosive is found, BDT calls the BDS team of the concerned range to swing into action. "As the BDS team arrives, BDT covers the explosive with a 'bomb blanket' to turn down the effect of a probable blast. These blankets are made of a special material that controls the spread of splinters," the officer explained.

The officer added that BDS (Crime), the nodal agency, is in constant touch with the National Security Guard (NSG) and Defence Research and

Development Organisation (DRDO) to work on the latest technology and state-of-the-art bomb defusal machinery. "From suits to safety equipment, guidelines are constantly revised by MHA (Ministry of Home Affairs) when it comes to machinery involved. We visit NSG labs to collaborate with them on more elaborate and efficient bomb disposal techniques," the officer said.

However, in all cases so far this year, there has been no requirement to call the BDS on-site. Nonetheless, the fire brigades remain on standby nearby to ensure no fire hazards take place. According to police officers, the teams take around 30-45 minutes to check a building thoroughly. It may take more time if the building is larger or more complex in design.

4 schools receive hoax bomb threat

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 20

IN THE sixth incident in 11 days, four schools in Delhi received a bomb threat via email in the early hours of Friday. According to Delhi Fire Services, DPS Dwarka sounded the alarm around 5 am, followed by three other schools alerting the authorities at 8 am, 8:39 am and 9:48 am.

"In the few hours of December 20, PCR calls and information regarding bomb threats in schools were received at Dwarka North and Jaffarpur Kalan police stations. In response, local police, PCRs, and fire-brigade reached the schools. The school staff apprised



Security checks outside a school earlier in Delhi this week following a bomb threat. Tashi Tobgyal

that they had received emails each from unknown sources regarding the bomb threat. School premises were checked by local police and

MAHAPANCHAYAT TOMORROW

Demands not met, 360 villages of Delhi to decide whether to boycott polls

DEVANSH MITTAL
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 20

DEMANDS REGARDING land reforms and compensation, among others, not resolved, voters in all the 360 villages of Delhi are set to participate at a mahapanchayat to be held in Northwest Delhi Sunday to decide whether to boycott the upcoming Assembly polls or vote for only a particular party.

Under 'Gaon Dehat Bachao Yatra' campaign, village panchayats are looking to get civic issues they face resolved. "Many issues are pending, including land reforms, house tax and compensation against land acquired by the government," said Chaudhury Surrender Solanki, head of Palam 360 Khap. "Whatever strategy we decide upon, we will take a call collectively and act as one unit in the elections," he added.

Solanki said they have met AAP national convener and former Delhi chief minister Arvind Kejriwal, but did not get any relief. He added that after they met L-G V K Saxena, "three or four issues were resolved".

"Issues related to mutation of land, release of money in connection to Dilli Gramodaya Abhiyan, abolition of the requirement to get NOC (no objection certificate) from Delhi Development Authority to get an electric meter installed and Gram Sabha land being handed over to private institutions, have been resolved," said Solanki. He maintained that the government is yet to allot alternative plots in lieu of the land it had acquired from villagers since the early 2000s.

AAP replaces Naresh Yadav from Mehrauli

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 20

THE AAP Friday dropped its Mehrauli candidate Naresh Yadav, convicted last month in the 2016 Quran desecration case, and fielded Mahender Chaudhary in his place for the upcoming Delhi Assembly polls. Chaudhary's wife Rekha Chaudhary is a councillor from Mehrauli.

Yadav, the sitting MLA from Mehrauli, was convicted by a Punjab court with two-year sentence in the 2016 Quran desecration case.

Earlier in the day, Yadav said in a post on X that he met AAP convener Arvind Kejriwal to inform him about his decision not to contest the polls till he is acquitted by the court.

In 2012, Chaudhary had contested the municipal corporation polls but lost. In 2020, he had contested the Assembly polls on a Congress ticket from Mehrauli and bagged the third spot with 6.04% vote share.

Taking on Kejriwal, Delhi BJP chief Virender Sachdeva said, "Kejriwal did not change his party's candidate from Mehrauli due to the sacrilege case, but because... of the new candidate's financial power. Naresh Yadav was sentenced on November 30, 2024... Despite this, Arvind Kejriwal had given him a ticket to contest elections from Mehrauli for the third time last week"

5 IN PARLIAMENT WINTER SESSION



Congress's Priyanka Gandhi Vadra and other INDIA bloc MPs protest against Amit Shah; (right) BJP MP Anurag Thakur and party members protest against Rahul Gandhi at Parliament. PTI



BJP MP gives Priyanka a reminder on 1984 riots, in her own style



BJP's Aparajita Sarangi with the bag at Parliament, Friday. PTI

IN LS, QUESTION HOUR DIDN'T LAST MORE THAN 10 MINUTES ON 12 OF 20 DAYS

Chaos costs Winter Session half of its time

Lok Sabha functioned for 52 per cent of its scheduled time, Rajya Sabha for 39 per cent, says PRS Legislative Research

VIKAS PATHAK
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 20

PARLIAMENT WAS adjourned sine die Friday, marking the end of a winter session that witnessed recurrent disruptions on a range of issues and an acrimonious debate on the Constitution, which culminated in a scuffle that left two MPs injured and led to an FIR against Leader of the Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi.

Amid the chaos, according to a report by non-profit PRS Legislative Research on the session, Parliament functioned for about half of its scheduled time: Lok Sabha for 52% of its scheduled time and Rajya Sabha for 39%.

The functioning of Question Hour, too, was significantly affected. According to PRS, Question Hour did not function in Rajya Sabha for 15 of 19 days, and

in the Lok Sabha for more than 10 minutes on 12 out of 20 days.

Only one Bill has so far been passed by the 18th Lok Sabha since it was elected in June, the PRS report said, "the lowest in the last six Lok Sabha terms". The Bill — Bharatiya Vayuyan Vidheyak, 2024 — was passed by the Lok Sabha in August and by the Rajya Sabha in the winter session.

Two Bills introduced by the government for the implementation of 'one nation, one election' were referred to a 39-member parliamentary panel for further scrutiny.

Here's a recap: For four days — during the "Discussion on the Glorious Journey of 75 Years of the Constitution of India" in Lok Sabha on December 13-14 and in Rajya Sabha on December 16-17 — Parliament went into deliberative mode without disruptions. But, while there was

largely consensus on the views of the Constitution, the tone and tenor were of intense acrimony as the Treasury and the Opposition accused each other of having damaged the Constitution and insulted B R Ambedkar.

Replying to the two-day debate in Lok Sabha, Prime Minister Narendra Modi accused the Congress of inflicting repeated blows on the Constitution and said the Nehru-Gandhi family had committed the "sin" of denigrating, damaging and subverting it. He also targeted the Congress saying it had always opposed reservation and was now playing "a game" to bring in quota based on religion.

Targeting the BJP, Rahul Gandhi said V D Savarkar had rejected the Constitution and that the Hindutva ideologue wanted that "the book India is run by (the Constitution) should be superseded by this book

(Manusmriti)". "And this is what the fight between the BJP and the Opposition) is about," Gandhi said.

Rahul's Rajya Sabha counterpart, Mallikarjun Kharge, also took on the BJP and the RSS, saying "RSS leaders opposed the Constitution in 1949 because it was not based on the Manusmriti..."

Union Home Minister Amit Shah and Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman kept up the Government's attack on the Congress.

Replying to the debate in Rajya Sabha on December 17, Shah said: "There is a fashion these days — Ambedkar, Ambedkar, Ambedkar, Ambedkar... Had you chanted the name of God these many times, you would have been blessed with heaven in seven births."

This triggered an uproar: the next few days saw the Congress protest to demand Shah's resig-

nation and a scuffle Thursday between the Opposition and ruling MPs at the Makar Dwar, the main entrance to the parliament building.

While the BJP alleged that MPs Pratap Chandra Sarangi and Mukesh Rajput fell and sustained injuries after Gandhi pushed them, the Congress wrote to Speaker Om Birla claiming that Gandhi was "physically manhandled" by three ruling party MPs. Kharge also wrote to the Speaker saying he was "physically pushed by BJP MPs" and demanded an inquiry.

After the faceoff, both BJP and Congress lodged complaints with Delhi Police; and an FIR was registered against Gandhi.

Before the debate, the session was largely about disruptions — by the Opposition as it demanded a discussion on Adani's indictment in the US on bribery charges; and by the Treasury as it attacked Congress over its al-

leged links with George Soros.

While the first week of the session, which began November 25, was washed out in the wake of the Congress's insistence on a discussion on Adani and the government's reluctance to accept it, the standoff came to an end as both reached an agreement, which was reflected by the announcement of a special discussion on the Constitution.

However, days later, the chaos was back, this time due to the BJP targeting Gandhi and the Congress, alleging that a "dangerous triangle", comprising Soros, global investigative news network OCCRP, and the Congress plus Gandhi were trying "to derail India's success story" under Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

The session also saw the Opposition move to impeach Vice President and Rajya Sabha Chair Jagdeep Dhankhar, accusing him of bias. It was, however, rejected.



Union Minister of Parliamentary Affairs Kiren Rijiju, along with Ministers of State Arjun Ram Meghwal and I. Murugan, addresses reporters on the Winter Session of Parliament in New Delhi on Friday. PTI

Disruptions damaged House dignity: Rijiju

LALMANI VERMA
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 20

AFTER BOTH the Houses of Parliament were adjourned sine die Friday as a faceoff between the Centre and Opposition MPs continued, Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju held the Opposition responsible for the decline in productivity of the Houses during the Winter Session.

Rijiju said that a total of 20 sittings of Lok Sabha and 19 sittings of Rajya Sabha were held during the Winter Session in which five Bills were introduced and four were passed by the lower House, three Bills were passed by the

Rajya Sabha, and Bhartiya Vayuyan Vidheyak, 2024 was passed by both the Houses.

The minister said that Constitution Day was celebrated on November 26 in the Central Hall to mark 75 years of the Constitution and a detailed discussion was held on December 13

and 14 in LS and on December 16 and 17 in RS. In LS, discussions spanning 15 hours and 43 minutes were held in which 62 members participated. Discussions in RS were held for 17 hours and 41 minutes, in which 80 participated.

Rijiju said that the productivity of the lower House was 54.5% and the upper House was 40%. "We are not satisfied with

this...We should not have left any chance of serving the nation...But such activities...in Parliament caused a loss to the business and also damaged its dignity," he said.

Rajya Sabha Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar too highlighted low productivity in his valedictory remarks and said, "The stark reality is troubling, this session's productivity stands at a mere 40.03%, with just 43 hours and 27 minutes of effective functioning." He also said it is time to choose between meaningful debate and destructive disruption.

Responding to a question related to low attendance of BJP MPs and absence of the Prime Minister during the voting on in-

troduction of a Bill related to One Nation One Election in Lok Sabha, Rijiju said, "Introduction is a formality. The actual consideration and passing will be at the later stage after the receiving of the report from the JPC. Modi ji himself had said that the Bill should be referred to the JPC."

Rijiju said that following the uproar during four days, leaders of all the parties had met in the Speaker's chamber where they agreed to let the Houses run smoothly. "But suddenly... Congress spoiled the atmosphere by sloganeering, wearing jackets, black cloths. I will meet Congress leaders and appeal to them to not repeat that in future," he added.

DELHI CONFIDENTIAL



Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav, party MP Dimple Yadav during the INDIA bloc protest. PTI

HERE & THERE

SAMAJWADI PARTY president Akhilesh Yadav is juggling hard with responsibilities as an MP and as the head of the party. On Thursday when other MPs of his party staged a protest in the Parliament complex over Home Minister Amit Shah's remarks against Dr B R Ambedkar, Yadav was in Lucknow to chair a meeting of his party's state legislature group. Yadav was back in Parliament on Friday where he joined MPs of his party in a protest against Shah's remarks.

CHASING POST

INDEPENDENT MP from Bihar's Purnea, Rajesh Ranjan alias Pappu Yadav, who had merged his 'Jan Adhikar Party' into the Congress in March this year, has been vying for the post of Bihar Congress president, it is learnt. The six-time MP — who could not bag a Congress ticket in the Lok Sabha elections — on Friday met AICC general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra and is learnt to have conveyed his aspirations to head the party in Bihar where elections are due in 2025.

HARYANA DECLARES 3-DAY STATE MOURNING

‘Visionary leader’: President, PM lead tributes to Chautala

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
CHANDIGARH, DECEMBER 20

THE HARYANA government declared a three-day state mourning from Friday as a mark of respect to former chief minister Om Prakash Chautala, who passed away in Gurugram.

"During this period, the national flag will fly at half-mast. All state government functions shall stand cancelled and there will be no official entertainment during this period," an order issued by Haryana chief secretary's office said.

The Haryana government also declared Saturday as a public holiday in all state government offices and all schools.

His younger son and INLD leader Abhay Singh Chautala said, "He saw many ups and downs — both on the political and the family front — but never lost courage. As chief minister, he took several decisions that are examples even today".

Abhay said he had a big hand in Gurugram's development. "Not only have I lost my father but the farming community has lost a voice," he added.

Leaders cutting across party lines, President Droupadi Murmu and Prime Minister Narendra Modi expressed anguish at Chautala's demise. "In his



O P Chautala died in Gurugram on Friday. File

decades-long public life, he played an important role in Haryana politics. I offer my condolences to his family and supporters," the official X handle of the President's Office quoted President Droupadi Murmu as saying.

Vice-President Jagdeep Dhankhar will attend Chautala's last rites Saturday. Dhankhar said he had had cordial relations with the Chautala family for decades. "As a visionary politician, he always gave top priority to rural development and agricultural prosperity. His unforgettable contribution to overall development of Haryana and strengthening Indian democracy will always remain a source of inspiration," an X post from the Vice-President's Office quoted him as saying.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi said Chautala strove con-

stantly to advance the work of Devi Lal. In his condolence message, Haryana Governor Bandaru Dattatreya described Chautala as a seasoned politician and a visionary leader. "His contributions to the development of Haryana and his commitment to the welfare of its people, particularly the 'kisan (farmers)', will always be remembered," he said.

Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini said Chautala's contribution to the state's political landscape would always be remembered. "With his passing, a significant chapter in Haryana's political history has come to an end, and it is hard to fill the void left by his departure. His personality was a reflection of simplicity and resilience. He was a visionary leader who initiated numerous schemes for rural development, education, and infrastructure improvement," Saini added.

Former Haryana CM and Congress leader Bhupinder Singh Hooda said Chautala was "like an elder brother" to him. "I had strong relations both in the family and political sphere with him," Hooda said.

SAD leader Sukhbir Singh Badal said Chautala's passing at a time when farmers were engaged in a fight for justice and survival was a huge loss to society in general and the farmers and the downtrodden in particular.

Myanmar's neighbours call for peace as Foreign Secy attends Thailand meet

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 20

AS MYANMAR is witnessing clashes between its security forces and the armed resistance groups, Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri visited Bangkok for informal consultations with Myanmar's neighbours on the situation there.

Two days of meetings on Myanmar's violent political crisis took place this Thursday and Friday in the Thai capital Bangkok, the latest in a long series of regional talks that have made no

2,200 cases of violence against minorities in Bangladesh: Govt

New Delhi: A total of 2,200 cases of violence against Hindus and other minorities have been reported in Bangladesh this year till December 8, and India's expectation is Dhaka will take necessary measures to ensure their safety, MoS for External Affairs Kirti Vardhan Singh said in a written response to a query in Lok Sabha.

The High Commission of India in Dhaka "continues to monitor the situation" related to the minorities in Bangladesh "closely," the Minister of State for External Affairs said. PTI

headway in restoring peace to the war-torn Southeast Asian nation. Thursday's discussions were attended by foreign ministers and high-level representatives from Myanmar and its neighbours, Laos, China, India, Bangladesh and host Thailand.

The Ministry of External Affairs' official spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said on Friday, "Our position on Myanmar has been consistent. We call for cessation of violence and a peaceful resolution of the ethnic issue through the establishment of a genuine federal democracy. This

process should be Myanmar-led and Myanmar-owned."

The six nations attending Thursday's meeting "agreed that direct engagement with Myanmar is critical and necessary," said Thailand's Foreign minister Maris Sangiampongsa.

Thai officials said talks "were held in a friendly and cordial atmosphere". China's vice foreign minister Sun Weidong said during the meeting that all parties should support Myanmar in advancing its peace and reconciliation process, the Chinese foreign ministry said.

COEP TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY
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(A Unitary Technological University of Govt. of Maharashtra)
Ph - 020-25507000 / 09 Website- www.coeptech.ac.in

COEPTech/Registrar Office/Walk-in-Adjunct Faculty Recruitment/2024/904

Walk-in Interview for Adjunct Faculty Recruitment

Walk in interviews will be conducted for the appointments of Adjunct Faculty for temporary basis at COEP Technological University Pune for the following Departments as per the following schedule.

Sr. No.	Department Name	Date of Interview
1	Civil Engineering and Planning	02/01/2025
2	Computer Science and Engineering	02/01/2025
3	Mechanical Engineering	30/12/2024
4	Metallurgy and Material Engineering	03/01/2025
5	Management	07/01/2025

The candidate shall report at 10.00 am to the respective Department as per the date mentioned above. The candidate is requested to bring the necessary documents and the print copy of the duly filled application form available on the website under the recruitment tab. After scrutiny of the application, the Interviews will be conducted on the same day.

Please visit University website (www.coeptech.ac.in/recruitment) for application form, qualifications, experience, salary and other details under "Recruitment" tab. The reservation policy will be followed in the recruitment process as per the norms.

Registrar

Date : 20th December 2024 COEP Technological University Pune

6 GOVT & POLITICS

Bail to BJP’s C T Ravi in sexual harassment case filed by Cong minister Hebbalkar

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
BENGALURU, DECEMBER 20

A SINGLE-JUDGE bench of the Karnataka High Court Friday granted interim bail to BJP Member of Legislative Council (MLC) C T Ravi, 58, in a case of sexual harassment filed in Belagavi on Thursday by the sole state woman Congress minister Laxmi Hebbalkar.

The Karnataka High Court granted bail even as Ravi was brought to Bengaluru from Belagavi for an appearance in a court for elected representatives in connection with the FIR filed under BNS Sections 75 (sexual harassment) and 79 (outraging modesty of woman through word, gesture or act).

“The interim relief as sought for by the petitioner is granted. The petitioner is ordered to be released from the custody, forthwith, subject to condition that he shall make himself available for investigation before the Investigating Officer as and when required at all reasonable times,” Justice M G Uma of the high court ruled Friday evening.

The BJP leader was accused by the Congress minister of using a derogatory word against her during a verbal spat in the Legislative Council between BJP and Congress leaders over the alleged insult to Dr B R Ambedkar in parliament by the Union Home Minister Amit Shah.

The Belagavi police arrested Ravi outside the legislature building Thursday evening and kept him in detention at night before transporting him to Bengaluru on Friday.

Even as Ravi was being brought to a special court for elected representatives in Bengaluru, the BJP leader moved



BJP leader C T Ravi

bail pleas in the high court and the special court.

In the HC plea, Ravi argued that he was arrested in violation of Supreme Court directives outlined in the ‘Armesh Kumar vs State of Bihar’ case. The BJP leader argued that he was arbitrarily deprived of his personal liberty.

In the special court, the hearing on Ravi’s plea was adjourned to Monday. “The learned senior counsel Ashok Annahalli has vehemently argued that the impugned act of arresting the petitioner is per se illegal and he has relied upon several authorities of the Hon’ble Apex Court,” the special court noted.

“By considering the rival contentions urged at Bar it would be appropriate to request the learned PP to appear on behalf of the prosecution and in the meantime the complainant/victim is also permitted to file necessary objections if necessary. For objections by prosecution, call on 21.12.2024,” the special court ruled.

CT Ravi also filed a complaint with the Legislative Council chairman saying that a few people claiming to be followers of Hebbalkar tried to attack him in the legislature building.

PM Modi’s Kuwait trip to begin today with labour camp visit; to meet Emir

DIVYAA
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 20

PRIME MINISTER Narendra Modi will kick off his two-day Kuwait visit on Saturday with a visit to an Indian labour camp, with an aim to show solidarity with the Indian labour force employed in the country. The PM, who was invited by the Emir of Kuwait, Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, will also hold bilateral talks with the Emir, and Crown Prince Sabah Al-Khalid Al-Sabah, besides an interaction with the Indian diaspora.

Addressing reporters ahead of the PM’s visit, Ministry of External Affairs Secretary (CPV & OIA), Arun Kumar Chatterjee highlighted “excellent political relations between the two countries”, adding: “This marks the first visit by an Indian Prime Minister to Kuwait in 43 years

and therefore assumes considerable significance.” The last Indian PM to visit Kuwait was Indira Gandhi in 1981.

PM Modi will be accorded a ceremonial guard of honour at the Bayan Palace (Emir’s palace), following which he will hold separate meetings with the Emir and the Crown Prince. The visit will witness delegation-level talks with the Prime Minister of Kuwait as well.

PM Modi will review with the leadership of Kuwait, the entire spectrum of our bilateral relations — trade, investment, energy, culture, and people-to-people ties — and the steps that both sides need to take to further enhance them, the MEA said.

On Modi’s visit to the labour camp, Chatterjee stated, “...We have a community of around one million in Kuwait...The idea of the visit to the labour camp is

to express the amount of importance the government of India attaches to our workers who are working in a foreign country...”

In June this year, around 40 Indian workers were killed after a fire broke out at an apartment in Mangaf, south of Kuwait City, which is heavily populated with migrant workers. With a million-strong diaspora and the largest expatriate community in Kuwait, Indians constitute 21 per cent of Kuwait’s population and 30 per cent of its workforce. Be it carpenters, masons, domestic workers, fabricators, drivers or even food delivery riders and courier delivery boys — Kuwait’s dependency on the Indian workforce is huge.

Kuwait is among the top trading partners of India, with bilateral trade valued at \$10.47 billion in 2023-24.

It is also India’s sixth largest crude supplier, meeting three

per cent of the country’s energy needs. Indian exports to Kuwait reached \$2 billion for the first time, while investments by the Kuwait Investment Authority in India exceed \$10 billion.

India and Kuwait have enjoyed friendly relations, with links dating back to pre-oil Kuwait when maritime trade with India was the backbone of its economy. In fact, the Indian rupee remained legal tender in Kuwait until 1961.

Recent high-level meetings the one between Prime Minister Modi and Kuwait’s Crown Prince on the sidelines of UNGA in September.

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar visited Kuwait on August 18, while his counterpart Abdullah Ali Al-Yahya visited India on December 3-4, during which he also called on PM Modi and extended an invitation from the Kuwaiti leadership.

Sanatan Dharma national religion of India: CM Yogi

Lucknow: Sanatan Dharma is the “national religion” of India, and it is the “collective responsibility of every citizen to protect it,” CM Yogi Adityanath said in Ayodhya Friday.

Reflecting on attacks on temples in the past, Adityanath said that the clans of those who desecrated these holy sites have met their downfall.

He said, “Today, the descendants of Aurangzeb are pulling rickshaws. Their plight is the result of their destructive actions. Had they upheld righteousness and refrained from demolishing temples, would they be in such a situation?”

He reiterated that Sanatan Dharma is “eternal” and has existed since the beginning of creation, holding the key to establishing global peace.

‘Encroachment’: Part of Sambhal MP’s residence demolished

AMIT SHARMA
MEERUT, DECEMBER 20

AN ALLEGED encroachment outside Samajwadi Party MP Ziaur Rahman Barq’s house in Uttar Pradesh’s Sambhal was razed with a bulldozer on Friday afternoon, with authorities saying that the construction was illegal.

A team of officials from the Sambhal Municipal Board and local administration razed the stairs over a drain outside Barq’s residence in Deepa Sarai. “The stairs were illegally constructed and the blueprint of the house in the municipal board records does not mention the same,” Vandana Mishra, Sambhal SDM, said.

“We are working within the framework of law as a campaign is going on in Sambhal against encroachment and power theft and illegal electricity connections,” Mishra added.

This is the fifth major action taken against Barq in 24 hours.

The UP Power Corporation Limited (UPPCL) imposed a fine of ₹1.91 crore after booking him for alleged electricity theft, cut the power supply to his residence and lodged a case against his father for allegedly threatening the corporation employees during the raid on Thursday.

This came after it was detected that more than 16 KW units were being used at his residence against the sanctioned strength of 4 KW-capacity meters. “We have put up a smart meter in place of the existing ones which detected the power theft. The existing meters had shown a zero unit reading for the last six months,” said Vinod Kumar Gupta, assistant engineer, UPPCL.



SP MP Ziaur Rahman Barq

ASI CONDUCTS SURVEY OF TEMPLE

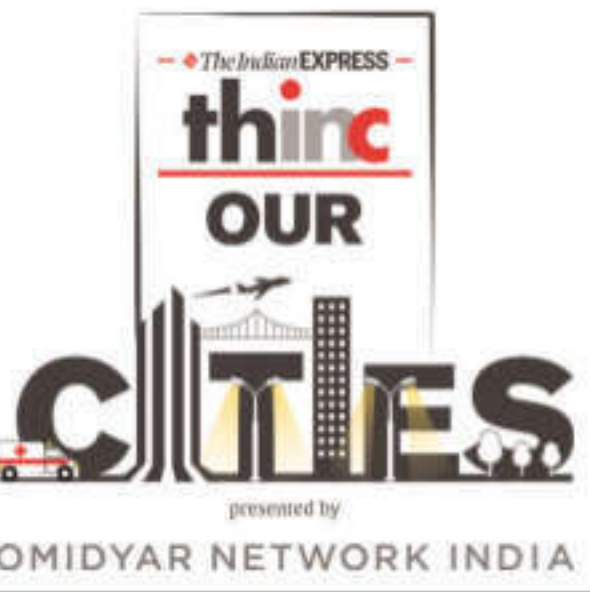
Sambhal: A four-member team of the ASI Friday conducted a survey of the recently-discovered Shri Kartik Mahadev temple, five ‘teerths’ (pilgrimage sites) and 19 ‘koops’ (wells), a senior official said. Sambhal DM Rajender Pensiya said, “A four-member team of the ASI started the survey this morning. This survey continued till 3.30 pm. In this, the ASI team surveyed five pilgrimage sites and 19 wells of Sambhal and also surveyed the new temple (Shri Kartik Mahadev temple) that was found.” The DM said, “Along with this, the new temple (Kartik Mahadev) has also been surveyed by ASI. We had got all these places measured earlier but ASI did the survey today.” **ENS & PTI**

Barq has already been booked for allegedly instigating a crowd through his speech ahead of the violence near Shahi Jama Masjid on November 24.

IE THINC: OUR CITIES

‘Tech must become accessible & affordable’

Panellists discussed how technology can be leveraged to help in urban planning and expansion at the fifth edition of the IE Thinc: CITIES series, presented by The Indian Express with Omidyar Network India. The session was moderated by Udit Misra, Associate Editor



On potential of tech in urban planning

KESHAV VERMA: India has immense potential by fully leveraging urbanisation, which remains untapped. The challenges from the 1990s have intensified. To achieve a \$10 trillion economy, we must transform urban youth profiles and create employment. Urbanisation in India is nearly 50 per cent, much lower than developed nations where rates exceed 75 per cent. Delhi-NCR’s 30 million people face toxic air, reflecting governance failures. Vehicular pollution, especially two-wheelers, thermal plants, dust, factories and degradation of the Aravalis contribute significantly. Municipal commissioners must spend 70 per cent of their time on roads. Professionalising municipal systems is crucial, requiring MBAs, chartered accountants, environmental and civil engineers. Municipal corporations are often insulated and disconnected from the public. In Ahmedabad, we professionalised property tax systems, increasing revenue to 67 per cent. Municipal budgets are less than one per cent of a city’s GDP, leaving no room for generating significant income.

Traffic remains a major issue. AI could revolutionise parking systems and traffic management. For example, New York earns \$546 million from traffic, whereas India earns nothing. Technology enables transparency and better governance, turning administration toward public needs. Lidar technology aids in understanding water systems and brownfield development potential, while social infrastructure impacts

area marketing.

Key recommendations include filling 27 per cent of sanctioned positions, creating an all-India urban planning service, and updating outdated urban planning acts to address environmental sustainability, climate change and water sensitivity. Transformative change requires world-class planners, a national authority, and nurturing city-specific skills. Enhancing economic geographies and coastal city potential is vital. We must also reform governance by integrating businesses, industries, professionals and associations into local government.

On the role of tech in India’s urbanisation

JAGAN SHAH: One thing we must recognise about technology, especially digital technology, is that it forms the backbone of many transformations in Indian cities. Much of this technology is dematerialised, almost invisible due to its digital nature. Currently, we are using various technologies, including data sciences for ICT applications, material sciences for waste recovery and advanced methods for water recycling.

Technologies such as remote sensing and GIS-based planning are integral to urban development. Cities, particularly under the Smart Cities Mission, are leveraging these technologies for data collection, efficient transportation and citizen engagement. A successful example is Srinagar, a smart city utilising these innovations.

However, challenges remain. First, cities must efficiently measure their “metabolism,” monitoring operations like air quality and traffic flow through sensing technologies and data analysis. Second, platforms like Gatishakti, effective at national logistics management, should be adapted for a macro view of urban systems. With over 8,000 cities, understanding their economic interactions is crucial for growth.

Third, scaling these technologies requires market forces and private sector involvement. Currently, projects like Srinagar act as lighthouses but widespread implementation is necessary. The government must enable cities to partner with the private sector, fostering competition and innovation.

While progress is promising, much remains siloed. A tipping point is approach-

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

KESHAV VERMA, CHAIRMAN, HLC, URBAN PLANNING, MOHUA

Professionalising municipal systems is crucial. There is enthusiasm with regard to the potential of using technologies. But that enthusiasm is diluted

because of lack of professionals in city governance structures. Transformative change requires world-class planners, a national authority, and nurturing city-specific skills

PANELLISTS

SHALINI AGARWAL
COMMISSIONER, SURAT MUNICIPAL CORPORATION

Urban planning will be one of the most important aspects. Technology and urban governance will have to run in tandem with each other

JAGAN SHAH
CEO, THE INFRAVISION FOUNDATION, ARCHITECT AND URBANIST

Cities, particularly under the Smart Cities Mission, are leveraging technologies such as remote sensing and GIS-based planning for data collection, transportation and citizen engagement

ANUPAM KUMAR SINGH,
PROFESSOR & DEAN, ACADEMICS, ADANI UNIVERSITY, AHMEDABAD

There is a lot of air pollution and dust generated through construction. We are still relying on traditional practices

—on sand and cement aggregate mix. The challenge lies in bringing sustainable building practices into the urbanisation pattern

ing where the impact of technology will significantly improve urban life. Continued efforts are needed to make these advancements more visible and scalable across the urban landscape.

On key concerns in the path to urbanisation

ANUPAM KUMAR SINGH: When we look at the challenges in the urban context, it’s not only the challenges which are related to urban planning or urban governance alone. There are challenges even in construction management and construction technology. When we see the overall urbanisation perspective, construction

technology plays a significant role. Therefore, the challenges in this particular sphere of construction technology relate to a large number of construction projects that are happening at the city level.

Technologies are available to arrest this particular challenge. There are challenges related to sustainable building practices. We have more than a few lakhs square metre of space, which has been identified as site for green buildings. But when we look into the overall scenario of buildings, not just green field but brownfield projects as well, we find a less than optimal use of technology. This could align with sustainable building practices. There is air pollution and dust

generated through construction. We are still relying on traditional practices — on sand and cement aggregate mix. The challenge lies in how to bring sustainable building practices into the urbanisation pattern.

On reasons why we get sub-optimal results

SHALINI AGARWAL : India has set an ambitious target to become a \$30 trillion economy in the world by 2047. Cities will play the biggest role to fulfill this target. Today, 65 per cent of India’s GDP comes from the cities and you will be surprised that they occupy 3 per cent of our total land area. So, 65 per cent of GDP is coming from 3 per cent area of the country, which is expected to grow to 85 per cent by 2047.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has mentioned in one of his speeches that urban planning will decide the fate of cities in India and the fate of cities will in turn decide the fate of India. So, urban planning will be one of the most important pivots of urbanisation.

Now, when we are talking about urban governance, technology will play role in three ways. One, planning, implementation and monitoring. Second, we have to think about people. So, technology must be put it in such a way that it is accessible to people and works for their convenience. The third aspect is the way the urban local bodies work. Is their staff equipped with technology? Without technology, you can’t pace your development the way the cities are growing. So, technology and urban governance will have to be in tandem with each other.

On the reluctance to use technology

KESHAV VERMA: There is enthusiasm with regard to the potential of using technologies. But that enthusiasm is diluted because of lack of professionals in city governance. We don’t have professionals and we hire them on contract. There is this whole sprinkling of contracted professionals who come from one city and go to another. Therefore, there is a lack of intent to create in-house capacities, which is extremely important. For technology to become real, you

need a professional platform which is in-house, to make it relevant to people.

If the PM says urban planning is going to catalyse economic development, then where are the urban planners? We’ve got to have them in place.

On tech-related solutions

JAGAN SHAH: A plethora of solutions is being applied to urban challenges. Waste water reuse is a national priority, with Surat leading in supplying recycled wastewater to industries in Hazira and Panipat following suit. Towns along the Ganga are scaling up these efforts, combining biotechnology and water transport technologies. Remote sensing supports transportation systems, while renewable energy, like solar and compressed biogas, is gaining traction. The Building Information Modelling code is being embedded in public contracts, paving

the way for digital twins — data-rich simulations used for complex systems, initially developed by National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA). Cities are beginning to adopt digital twins for urban management.

Command and control centres in smart cities became vital during COVID-19, acting as war rooms where data, AI and machine learning were used to understand the viral spread. Municipal portals now deliver services, address grievances and collect taxes, all driven by this technology. Miniaturisation is increasing reliance on handheld devices, from point-of-sale machines on buses to mobile navigation and payments.

Technology is no longer optional; it is essential for urbanisation and improving quality of life. However, its inefficient use remains a challenge. Cities must converge and integrate technologies, developing decision-support systems to analyse data and prioritise actions. Surveillance cameras enhance safety and traffic management, while early warning systems aid in flood control.

Technology must become ubiquitous, accessible and affordable, as there is no alternative path to progress. Integrating and scaling these solutions is critical to ensuring sustainable urban development and prosperity for all.



Scan the QR code to watch video

BRIEFLY

ASSAM

Congress state chief detained during protest

Guwahati: Several Congress leaders, including Assam Congress president Bhupen Borah, were detained by police during protests against the death of Congress worker Mridul Islam in Guwahati Friday. Islam, a 45-year-old advocate and a district level office bearer of the party's legal cell, had died Wednesday following a confrontation between Congress workers and leaders during a protest march towards Raj Bhavan. This came hours after Indian Youth Congress national president Uday Bhanu Chib was detained in the city ahead of the protests. They were released in the evening.

MAHARASHTRA

Five of a family killed, 27 injured as bus overturns

Pune: Five members of a family, including three women, died and 27 others were injured after the private bus they were in veered out of control and overturned in Maharashtra's Raigad Friday. Occupants of the bus were headed from Pune to Birwadi in Mahad to attend a wedding. Raigad SP Somnath Gharge said around 9.30 am, the driver of the bus lost control of the vehicle in Tamhini Ghat area and fell into a gorge.

CHHATTISGARH

Two DRG jawans injured in 'IED blast'

Raipur: Two jawans from the District Reserve Guard (DRG) suffered injuries in an alleged Improvised Explosive Device (IED) blast in Chhattisgarh's Abujhmad during an anti-Naxal operation Friday, police said. The jawans, Janak Patel and Ghasiram Manjhi, were shifted to Narayanpur district hospital, an official said.

UTTAR PRADESH

Tehsildar's car hits biker, drags body for 30 km

Bahraich: A government vehicle belonging to the tehsildar of Nanpara hit a biker and allegedly dragged his body for 30 kilometers. The victim, identified as Narendra Kumar Halder (35), a resident of Payagpur, was returning home when the accident occurred on Thursday evening. Naib Tehsildar Shailesh Kumar Awasthi, who is believed to be present in the vehicle, has been recommended for suspension by the District Magistrate. The driver, Meraj Ahmed, has been arrested.

MAJOR RELIEF TO ADANI GROUP

Bombay HC dismisses Dubai firm plea challenging Dharavi project award

OMKAR GOKHALE
MUMBAI, DECEMBER 20

IN A major relief to the Adani group, the Bombay High Court on Friday dismissed a plea by Dubai-based Seclink Technology Corporation (STC) challenging the formal award and work order for the Dharavi slum redevelopment project in favour of Adani Properties Pvt Ltd. It rejected allegations that the tender conditions were "tailor-made" to suit the Adani group and oust other bidders, and found the claim to be "misconceived". As per STC's lawyer, the firm will appeal the HC order in the Supreme Court in due course. A bench of Chief Justice Devendra Kumar Upadhyaya and Justice Amit Borkar concluded that the grounds urged in the petition lacked force, and therefore

the challenge raised to the government's action of cancelling the previous tender and issuing a fresh tender failed. As a result, the writ petition was dismissed. STC had challenged the July 13, 2023 government resolution of the state housing department to formally award the project to Adani Properties as the lead partner in the project, and the subsequent work order issued on July 17 last year. In November 2022, Adani Properties won the bid to redevelop nearly 259 hectares of slum area in Central Mumbai. Adani Group was declared the highest bidder after it quoted ₹5,069 crore and with the ₹2,800-crore payment to the railways, the bid amount stood at ₹7,869 crore. This exceeded the ₹7,200-crore price bid of Seclink under the old tender, which was cancelled by the Uddhav Thackeray-led MVA government in October 2020. The government had then said that a new tender would be floated soon. The project got an impetus in 2016 when the Detailed Project Report was prepared during the tenure of the BJP-Shiv Sena government led by Devendra Fadnavis. In November 2018, the then Fadnavis government approved a new model for the slum's redevelopment. Through senior advocate Virendra Tulzapurkar, STC claimed it was a successful bidder against the Adani group in January 2019. However, it added that the tender was not awarded following the decision to include railway land in the redevelopment project. It alleged that the government gave away the project to the Adani group "at a loss to the public exchequer".

Senior advocate Milind Sathe, appearing for the Maharashtra government and the Slum Rehabilitation Authority, said that the subsequent government helmed by Eknath Shinde issued a new tender in 2022 as a fresh 45-acre plot was found in place of the railway land, and Adani qualified for the bid. However, petitioner STC contested the claim and argued that there had been no material change between the earlier and present tenders as the railway land featured in both. The Maharashtra government, through its housing department, opposed the plea and told the High Court that the new tender issued to the Adani Group was "absolutely transparent" and "no undue favour" was given to the highest bidder. The bench observed that though Seclink was intimated to

be the highest bidder, the Committee of Secretaries (CoS) of the state government never decided to declare the petitioner to be the selected bidder. "Merely because certain expenditure might have been incurred by the petitioner (due to decision of cancelling earlier tender, taken at later stage), in our opinion, will not vitiate the impugned action on the part of the respondents authorities to cancel the earlier tender process," it noted. The HC further noted that the three bidders had participated in response to the fresh tender, of which two bids were found technically qualified. "Since there were more than two bidders in the field who participated out of which two technically qualified, it cannot be said that the tender conditions were tailor-made so as to suit only a particular bidder," it added.

whether Sh. Dallewal can be shifted to the make-shift hospital which is said to have been set up at a distance of 700m from the site, or otherwise," the court said in its order. On Thursday, the bench had pulled up Punjab for not doing enough to provide medical assistance to Dallewal, who began an indefinite fast over three weeks ago, and asked it to produce the farm leader's medical reports Friday. Producing the reports Friday, state Advocate General Gurminder Singh told the bench that most parameters in Dallewal's blood reports were fine, but for high uric acid. Dallewal's ECG was normal, too. Regarding cancer diagnosis, the AG said Dallewal's PSA values were slightly high but not dangerous. The AG also said a makeshift hospital had been set up at the Khanauri border. When the court sought to know if Dallewal could be shifted to this makeshift hospital, he submitted it could be done with the support of the protesting farmers.

Dallewal's health responsibility of Punjab govt: SC

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 20

THE SUPREME Court Friday said that the onus of ensuring stable health of farm leader Jagjit Singh Dallewal, who is on a fast-unto-death at the Khanauri border, is entirely on the authorities in Punjab. A bench of Justices Surya Kant and Ujjal Bhuyan asked Punjab Chief Secretary and the chairperson of the medical board constituted to monitor Dallewal's health to file a fresh medical report. It fixed the next hearing on January 2, but said the parties could approach the court should a necessity arise. The bench also sought an affidavit signed by the state Chief Secretary and the DGP undertaking responsibility of Dallewal's health situation. "It is the entire responsibility of the State of Punjab to ensure the stable health condition of Sh. Dallewal, for which, if he requires hospitalisation, the authorities will take a call as to

MUMBAI FERRY ACCIDENT



Part of the ferry, Neel Kamal, which capsized on Wednesday, is seen in the foreground in the seas off the Mumbai coast on Friday. Ganesh Shirshekar

Navy, Coast Guard ramp up search for missing 7-yr-old boy

NAYONIKA BOSE & VIJAY KUMAR YADAV
MUMBAI, DECEMBER 20

FOR THE past 48 hours, a team of 50 personnel aboard nine Indian Navy and Coast Guard ships has been scouring the waters off the Mumbai coast in search of seven-year-old Zohan Pathan, the last missing passenger from the ill-fated Neel Kamal ferry. The ferry capsized after it was struck by a Navy speedboat during an engine trial on Wednesday, resulting in the deaths of 14 people, including Navy personnel. Zohan is the only passenger who remains unaccounted for.

"Six Navy and three Coast Guard surface craft are engaged in the search and rescue mission, which will continue until the boy is found. The search covers a vast designated area," a defence spokesperson said. The search operation has been challenging, as the incident occurred during a full moon, causing strong sea currents. This led authorities to deploy helicopters initially, but since then, the Navy and Coast Guard have continued their search with nine vessels working non-stop. The rescue efforts are mandated to last 72 hours from the time of the incident, but officials said that they will persist in their

efforts as long as necessary. Besides, three patrol boats have been deployed by Mumbai's port zone police for the search. "Police have also roped in fishermen and taking help from other agencies such as Mumbai port trust to trace the missing boy," a senior police officer said. Zohan's mother Sakina Pathan drowned in the ferry mishap, and Zohan was last seen in her arms. The Pathan family, residents of Mapusa, Goa, had come to Mumbai for work and had planned a brief vacation. Their journey turned tragic just hours after they boarded the ferry from the Gateway of India on Wednesday, heading towards Elephanta Island. The boat was reportedly overloaded, and Ashraf Pathan, Zohan's father, recalled the lack of safety precautions. "...We could see that the boat was overloaded. I was holding our ten-month-old baby and my wife Sakina was holding Zohan. After the accident occurred, my wife, I and other members were unable to find any life jackets," Ashraf told *The Indian Express*.

Even as he survived with his younger son and sister-in-law Sonali Gaunder, Sakina breathed her last on Wednesday. She was taken to INHS Sandhani hospital in Karanje, Navi Mumbai. For the postmortem, the body was then sent to Uran rural hospital. On Thursday, the family collected her remains from the Uran rural hospital and left for their hometown in Goa, where her last rites were performed. With Ashraf away in Goa for his wife's funeral, his friends have stayed back in Mumbai and have been keeping him abreast of any updates on Zohan. However, until Friday afternoon, Ashraf had not received any updates about his son. A kindergarten student, Zohan was slated to join the first grade next year. Sonali had earlier told *The Indian Express* that the family was slated to return to Goa after their sojourn within the next two days. "While we survived, the loss of Sakina has left us devastated. We have been told that a missing persons case has been filed at Colaba police station. Even though it was the Navy's boat, officials have given us no updates," she said. According to the family, they also lost cash worth ₹15,000-20,000, Sakina's purse, other valuables and their bags containing some recent purchases. The ferry capsize near Karanje on Wednesday has claimed 14 lives so far. While 13 deceased victims had been recovered within hours of the crash, the 14th, Hansaaram Bhati, was retrieved from the seas on Thursday evening.

AAP MPs hold protest in Parliament complex, Friday. PTI

RAAKHI JAGGA
LUDHIANA, DECEMBER 20

HOURS BEFORE he was whisked away by the Punjab Police in the dead of the night from Khanauri protest site — ahead of his proposed fast unto death — farmer leader Jagjit Singh Dallewal had reached Faridkot where he transferred his property to his son, daughter-in-law, and grandson. Dallewal, 70, who heads the SKM (non-political), owns 17 acres agricultural land at his village Dallewal. His son Gurbinderpal Dallewal said, "He transferred 4.5 acres to me, two acres in the name of my wife Harpreet Kaur and the remaining 10.5 acres to my son Jigarjot Singh. He told us that his fast unto death was going to be an *aar-paar ki ladai* (decisive battle) for the farmers". Dallewal said that he has transferred some land to his daughter-in-law so that she remains financially secure. "Normally, the daughters-in-law are called '*begani*' throughout their married life. I believe, a woman who comes to your house, takes care of the family, fulfils all responsibilities, deserves to be owned by the family as their own," he said. Even as the veteran of many a hunger strikes was shifted to a hospital in Ludhiana, the social media found in him a new hero. "He is the face of fem-



Jagjit Singh Dallewal

inist farmer leader," said social activist Samita Kaur. An X user said every Indian can learn from Dallewal's gesture. Another praised his progressive thoughts. The farmer leader, however, has had his fair share of controversies especially when a video had surfaced in February, purportedly showing him talking to farmers about how he has the opportunity to bring down the rising popularity of PM Narendra Modi. The video came to fore days after farmers, marching to Delhi under the aegis of his SKM (non-political) and Kisan Majdoor Morcha were stopped at the Punjab-Haryana border. A follower of social activist Anna Hazare, Dallewal had announced his fast unto death to coincide with the fourth anniversary of the November 26, 2020 march to Delhi by farmers to protest against the now repealed farm laws.

Chhattisgarh: Bullet extracted from neck of girl injured in encounter

JAYPRAKASH SNAIDU
RAIPUR, DECEMBER 20

A MINOR girl, who police sources said was among four children injured in an encounter between security forces and Maoists in Chhattisgarh's Abujhmad region on December 12, underwent surgery on Friday to extract the bullet that had been lodged in her neck. The girl was brought to the DKS Super Speciality Hospital in Raipur on Tuesday. On Friday, a team of 12 doctors operated on her. Deputy Medical Superintendent of DKS hospital, Dr Hemant Sharma, told *The Indian Express*, "The bullet was

lodged in a highly critical place. We had to ensure her nerves did not get damaged and there is no infection. The girl has been kept under observation. The next 48 hours are crucial." According to security forces, the encounter in Abujhmad, which broke out around 3 am on December 12, left seven Maoists dead. There was, however, no information provided at the time on any injuries to civilians. On Tuesday, a senior police officer told *The Indian Express*: "Four minors suffered splinter injuries in the encounter. The injuries are from splinters in the Barrel Grenade Launcher (BGL) fired by Maoists." After the surgery on Friday,

IGP, Bastar Range, Sundarraj P, said: "We have sent the piece of metal for forensic testing. A ballistic test will make it clear if it's a bullet or splinter. As per the investigation carried out so far, the circumstantial evidence indicates that Maoists, in a desperate attempt to guard and protect their high-value cadre, used villagers as a human shield, due to which these four got injured." A doctor who was part of the team who operated on the girl said the surgery was a complex one. "The nerves that are connected to the eyes, ears, and head could have been affected, so the utmost care had to be taken." The surgery went on for two and a half hours

ALIND CHAUHAN
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 20

VETERAN ECOLOGIST Madhav Gadgil, who received the UN's highest environmental honour — the 'Champions of the Earth' award — for 2024 last week, emphasised the role of local communities in protecting the environment while speaking to *The Indian Express*. He said that Gram Sabhas and locals should be part of the decision-making process regarding carrying out activities such as rock quarrying in ecologically sensitive areas in Western Ghats. Gadgil was the chairman of the Western Ghats Ecology Expert Panel (WGEEP), which submitted a report in 2011 —

later came to be known as the Gadgil report — and recommended demarcating the Western Ghats into different levels of ecologically sensitive area. He said, "The approach for making decisions has to be bottom-up, and not vice versa. In low-sensitivity areas, rock quarrying can be allowed with suggestions from well-organised community groups such as Kerala's Kudumbashree [a community network and poverty eradication programme that aims to empower women]. These groups should be given the contract for rock quarries and asked to manage them." According to Gadgil, such measures along with limiting activities in high and moderate ecologically sensitive areas in the Western Ghats would help in



Ecologist Madhav Gadgil

avoiding disasters such as the Wayanad landslides which took place in July this year. The disaster killed more than 250 people. The ecologist, however, said implementing these actions would not be easy as the rich and powerful continue to profit from the

rock quarries, which make ecologically sensitive areas more prone to landslides, in the vicinity. "Most of these quarries are illegal and do not have adequate permission from the local district collectors. My friends in Kerala have told me that a large number of the quarries are owned by members of political parties, including the BJP, CPI (M), and Congress, who make a lot of money," he said. Gadgil also accused "tea estate owners and their friends" of building resorts and lakes in the area which are further increasing the pressure on the land and making it more vulnerable to landslides. He highlighted the fact that when disasters like the Wayanad landslides take place it is the

poor and marginalised communities that suffer. The ecologist also pointed out that India needs to revise its outlook on economic growth. He said that the country needs to focus on the development of four main components — natural capital, human capital, social capital, and man-made capital. "We cannot just focus on man-made capital, which includes mining and polluting industries for economic growth. That is because man-made capital, in the long term, adversely impacts natural capital and human capital. It severely affects the environment and creates unemployment by destroying agriculture, etc., if we proceed this way, I am quite sure that we can pursue a path which will lead to overall development," he said.



बिहार सरकार

Bihar Medical Services & Infrastructure Corporation Limited, Patna

(A Govt. of Bihar Undertaking)

2nd & 3rd Floor, Swasthya Bhawan, Behind IGIMS, Sheikhpura, Bihar, Patna

Phone:- +91 612 2283289, Fax:- +91 612 2283289

Mail: md-bmsicl-bih@nic.in, bmsiclinfra@gmail.com

www.bmsicl.gov.in

निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना संख्या-BMSICL/Infra/31/2024 दिनांक- 18/12/2024

बिहार चिकित्सा सेवाएं एवं आवागमन संरचना निगम लिमिटेड, पटना द्वारा निम्न कार्यो हेतु प्रतिस्पर्धी / मद दर निविदा आमंत्रित की जाती है। कोई भी संवेद्यक जो केन्द्रीय / राज्य सरकार / लोक उपक्रम की किसी भी श्रेणी में निविधित हो, निविदा में भाग ले सकते है, परंतु उक्त कार्य का लेटर ऑफ एक्सेप्टेस प्राप्त होने के पश्चात एवं एकांकरनामा के पूर्व BMSICL में निबंधन कराना अनिवार्य होगा-

युग संख्या 1	कार्य का नाम	परिमाण विषय की राशि (लाख में)	अग्रयन की राशि (रु० में)	परिमाण विषय का मूल्य (रु० में)	बिद प्रोसेसिंग शुल्क	कार्य समाप्ति की अवधि
1.	समस्तीपुर जिला के पटौरी प्रखंड अंतर्गत पंचायत-दक्षिणी धर्मौन में अतिरिक्त प्राथमिक स्वास्थ्य केंद्र के पवन का निर्माण कार्य.	123.84	2,47,700/-	11,800/-	As Per e-Proc2	06 माह
2.	अतिरिक्त प्राथमिक स्वास्थ्य केंद्र, ग्राम-करसिया एवं बरहरा लेखनसंत, प्रखंड- डाका, पूर्वी चम्पारण के पवन निर्माण का अंशोश कार्य.	122.42	2,44,900/-	11,800/-	As Per e-Proc2	06 माह
3.	पश्चिम चम्पारण जिला-तर्गत प्रखंड नरकटियागंज के ग्राम- पारसी, पिपरा, पुमनगर, सोखरी, सोनसाली, एवं विनाहाल स्वास्थ्य उपकेंद्र के निर्माण का अंशोश कार्य।	62.56	1,25,200/-	11,800/-	As Per e-Proc2	04 माह

2. निविदा समय-सारणी (Tender Schedule)

SL No.	Activity	Date & Time
1.	Bid Submission Start Date	From 30/12/2024, 11:00 AM on https://eproc2.bihar.gov.in
2.	Bid Submission Last Date	Up to 20/01/ 2025, 05:00 PM on https://eproc2.bihar.gov.in
3.	Pre-Bid Meeting Date & Place	On 03/01/2025, 03:00 PM in 3rd Floor-Conference Hall of BMSICL, Swasthya Bhawan, Behind IGIMS, Sheikhpura, Bihar, Patna
4.	Physical document (Original Affidavit & Payment Receipt) Submission End Date	Up to 21/01/2025, 03:00 PM in the office of BMSICL, Patna (2nd & 3rd Floor, Swasthya Bhawan, Behind IGIMS, Sheikhpura, Bihar, Patna)
5.	Technical Bid Opening Date	21/01/ 2025, 03:30 PM on https://eproc2.bihar.gov.in
6.	Financial Bid Opening Date	To be announced later
7.	Tender Bid Validity	120 Days (As Per SBD Provision)

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विस्तृत जानकारी www.state.bihar.gov.in/prdbihar से प्राप्त की जा सकती है।

गर्मावस्था की पहली तिमाही में माँ की एच.आई.वी. और सिफिलिस की जाँच जरूर करायाँ।

GOVERNMENT OF NCT OF DELHI DEPARTMENT OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT 1ST FLOOR ISBT BUILDING KASHMERE GATE DELHI - 110006 (CHILD PROTECTION AND DEVELOPMENT UNIT)	
I. Applications are invited for the posts of a Chairperson & Six Members (out of which at least two shall be women) of Delhi Commission for Protection of Child Rights (DCPCR) constituted u/s 17 of the Commissions for Protection of Child Rights Act, 2005 for the National Capital territory of Delhi.	
Eligibility & Qualifications of the Chairperson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Should be a person of eminence and has done outstanding work for promoting the welfare of children. b) Shall have at least 5 years' experience in Social Sector like Education, Health, Social Welfare. c) No person having any past record of violation of human rights or child rights shall be eligible for appointment as the Chairperson/Members.
Eligibility & Qualifications of Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Should be persons of eminence ability, integrity, standing and experience in (i) education, (ii) child health care, welfare or child development, (iii) juvenile justice or care of neglected or marginalized children or children with disabilities, (iv) elimination of child labour or dealing with children in distress, (v) child psychology or sociology and, (vi) laws relating to children b) Shall have at least 5 years' experience in Social Sector like Education, Health, Social Welfare. c) No person having any past record of violation of human rights or child rights shall be eligible for appointment as the Chairperson/Members.
II. Terms of reference: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Chairperson or a Member shall hold office as such for a term of three years from the date on which he/she assumes office: Provided that no Chairperson or any other member shall hold office as such after he/she has attained - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) in case of Chairperson, the age of sixty-five years; and (b) in case of Members, the age of sixty years. 2. The Chairperson/Members may by writing under his hand addressed to the Government resign at any time. 3. Salaries & Allowances In case of retired government servants, the pay will be fixed in accordance with the prevailing orders i.e. last pay drawn minus pension. In case of public figures, the amount will be Rs. 2,00,000/- p.m. consolidated without allowances for the Chairperson and Rs. 1,00,000/- p.m. without allowances consolidated for each Member. 	
III. Procedure for applying: Interested persons may submit their application online through website http://cams.wcdel.in Applications shall be accepted w.e.f. 26.12.2024 (from 12:00 AM) to 09.01.2025 (up to 11:59 PM).	
IV. Applicants may note that misrepresentation of facts shall amount to disqualification Note:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) No other mode of application except online shall be entertained by the Department. b) Functions of Chairperson and Members/ Removal from office and other relevant details may kindly be referred from the Commissions for Protection of Child Rights Act 2005 and the Delhi Commission for Protection of Child Rights Rules, 2008, and it's Amendment Rules, 2017 & 2019. 	

FIR for promoting enmity: Zubair gets protection from arrest until January 6

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
PRAYAGRAJ, DECEMBER 20



Alt News co-founder had shared a video in October

THE ALLAHABAD High Court on Friday stayed till January 6 the arrest of Alt News co-founder Mohammed Zubair in relation to an FIR accusing him of promoting enmity among religious groups.

The court also directed him not to travel abroad.

The FIR was lodged last month following a complaint by an associate of controversial priest Yati Narsinghanand.

In her complaint, general secretary of Yati Narsinghanand Saraswati Trust Udit Tyagi claimed Zubair posted a video clip of an old programme of Narsinghanand on October 3 with the intent to provoke violence by Muslims against him.

It was further alleged that Zubair posted edited clips of the priest on X, containing Narsinghanand's alleged incendiary remarks on Prophet Muhammad to incite radical sentiments against the controversial priest. Hearing the matter, a bench of justices Siddhartha Varma and Nalin Kumar Sengupta observed, "We are

Nalin Kumar Shrivastava observed, "We are tentatively of the view that even though from the reading of the FIR one could make out that the offence under section 196 BNS up to a large extent was being made out

“However, from the allegations made in the FIR, any offence under section 152

BNS was being made out wherein the acts of the petitioner would excite people to commit offences of secession, armed rebellion, subversive activities or get encouraged to get feelings of separatist activities is to be seen. Matter thus requires consideration." The bench added: "However, since the affidavits between the parties have yet not been exchanged, and the learned Additional Advocate General has yet to make submissions with regard to what would be 'separatist activity', we consider it appropriate to grant the state three weeks' time to file a detailed counter-affidavit." Zubair had moved the high court, requesting quashing the FIR and protection from coercive action. In his plea, he stated that his post did not call for violence against Narsinghanand.

Rather, he had merely alerted the police authorities about Narsinghanand's actions and sought action according to law, and this could not amount to promoting disharmony or ill-will between two classes of people.



कारा एवं सुधार सेवाएँ निरीक्षणालय

गृह विभाग (कारा)

--: प्रेस विज्ञापित :-:

गृह विभाग (कारा) अंतर्गत सविदा के आधार पर चिकित्सकों (विशेषज्ञ एवं सामान्य) के नियोजन हेतु वॉक-इन-इन्टरव्यू आयोजित करने से संबंधित सूचना

आवेदन की अंतिम तिथि-15.01.2025

राज्य की काराओं में सविदा के आधार पर चिकित्सकों (विशेषज्ञ एवं सामान्य) के नियोजन हेतु दिनांक-28.01.2025 से 30.01.2025 तक पूर्वाह्न 10:00 बजे से वॉक-इन-इन्टरव्यू का आयोजन कारा एवं सुधार सेवाएँ निरीक्षणालय, गृह विभाग (कारा), बिहार, पटना में किया गया है।

- (i) वॉक-इन-इन्टरव्यू में सम्मिलित होने वाले चिकित्सक अभ्यर्थी, Online Application प्राप्त करने हेतु Develop किये गये निम्नांकित URL पर सभी वांछित सूचनाओं की प्रविष्टि (Online आवेदन) उपलब्ध विहित प्रपत्र में दिनांक-01.01.2025 से 15.01.2025 तक कर सकते हैं :-
https://eprisons.bihar.gov.in/mis/RecruitmentDr2024/DrRec_Instruction.aspx
- (ii) चिकित्सक अभ्यर्थियों से ऑफलाइन आवेदन (विहित प्रपत्र को डाउनलोड करें), कारा एवं सुधार सेवाएँ निरीक्षणालय, मुख्य सचिवालय, बिहार, पटना के कार्यालय में दिनांक-15.01.2025 तक स्वीकार किये जाएंगे।
- अभ्यर्थियों के वॉक-इन-इन्टरव्यू की तिथि निम्नवत् निर्धारित की जाती है:-

क्र०	अभ्यर्थियों के नाम के प्रथम अक्षर के अनुसार समूह (Name Start With)	साक्षात्कार हेतु निर्धारित तिथि
1	A से F तक	28.01.2025
2	G से P तक	29.01.2025
3	Q से Z तक	30.01.2025

- वॉक-इन-इन्टरव्यू में अभ्यर्थियों को निम्नांकित प्रमाण पत्रों की मूल प्रति तथा उसकी छायाप्रतियों की एक स्वअभिप्रेमाणित (Self Attested) प्रति साथ लाना अनिवार्य होगा :-
 - सभी शैक्षणिक योग्यता से संबंधित मूल प्रमाण पत्र एवं अंक पत्र।
 - सक्षम पदाधिकारी द्वारा निर्गत जाति प्रमाण पत्र (आरक्षित कोटि के अभ्यर्थियों के लिए)।
 - सक्षम पदाधिकारी द्वारा निर्गत क्रिमिलेयर रहित प्रमाण पत्र (पिछड़ा / अल्पमत पिछड़ा वर्ग हेतु)।
 - सक्षम पदाधिकारी द्वारा निर्गत EWS प्रमाण पत्र (आर्थिक रूप से कमजोर वर्ग के अभ्यर्थियों के लिए)।
 - सक्षम पदाधिकारी द्वारा निर्गत स्थायी आवासीय प्रमाण पत्र।
 - सक्षम पदाधिकारी द्वारा निर्गत निःशक्तता प्रमाण पत्र (दिव्यांग कोटि के अभ्यर्थियों के लिए)।
 - पासपोर्ट आकार का 02 (दो) फोटोग्राफ।
 - एक फोटो युक्त पहचान पत्र (यथा-आधार कार्ड / पीन कार्ड / मतदाता पहचान पत्र इत्यादि)।
 - बिहार राज्य चिकित्सा परिषद् से एग्जाईनिबेशन से संबंधित प्रमाण पत्र की मूल प्रति।
 - सभी अभ्यर्थियों को आवेदन के साथ इस आदेश का 100 रुपये के बैंड-न्यायिक स्टाम्प पेपर पर इंडेमनिटी बॉण्ड (Indemnity Bond) संलग्न करना अनिवार्य होगा जिसके अनुसार वे नियमित नियुक्ति का दावा नहीं करेंगे।
- आवेदक आवेदन पत्र भरते समय प्राथमिकता के क्रम में इच्छा-क्रमानुसार तीन काराओं / जिला (गृह जिला को छोड़कर) का नाम देंगे। इच्छित तीन काराओं / जिलों में रिक्रिट अवशेष नहीं रहने की स्थिति में विभाग अन्य जिला में पदस्थापन हेतु स्वतंत्र होगा।
- इस नियोजन प्रक्रिया में सरकार द्वारा निर्धारित सभी आरक्षण नियमों का पालन किया जायेगा तथा इन्टरव्यू में शामिल होने हेतु अभ्यर्थियों को कोई यात्रा व्यय देय नहीं होगा।
- नियोजन हेतु रिक्रिटियों की विवरणी, अर्हातएँ तथा मानदेय निम्न प्रकार है:-

(i) सविदा आधारित विशेषज्ञ चिकित्सक, कुल रिक्त पद:-17

पदनाम	मानदेय	रिक्त पदों की कॉटेदार विवरणी							स्वतंत्रता सेनानियों के पोता / पोती नाती / नतीनी हेतु	
		गैर आर०	आर्थिक रूप से कमजोर वर्ग	अनु० जाति	अनु० जन जाति	ओपीवओ	पि०वओ	पि० वर्गी की महिलाएँ		कुल
सविदा आधारित विशेषज्ञ चिकित्सक	₹82,000/-	06	01	03	00	04	02	01	17	-
	महिलाओं के लिए 35% क्षीरिज आरक्षण के तहत अनुमान्य पद	02	00	00	00	00	00	-	02	-
	दिव्यांग हेतु	अब और निम्न दृष्टि दिव्यांगता को बहिष्कृत और श्रवण शक्ति में ह्रास दिव्यांगता को -00, चलत दिव्यांगता को -00, बहुदिव्यांगता को -01								
		कुल = 01								

अनिवार्य शैक्षणिक योग्यता :-एमबीबीएसएमडी एवं एमडीएमडी/एमओएमडी तथा बिहार राज्य चिकित्सा परिषद् से स्थायी निबंधन।

(ii) सविदा आधारित सामान्य चिकित्सक, कुल रिक्त पद:-75

पदनाम	मानदेय	रिक्त पदों की कॉटेदार विवरणी							स्वतंत्रता सेनानियों के पोता / पोती नाती / नतीनी हेतु	
		गैर आर०	आर्थिक रूप से कमजोर वर्ग	अनु० जाति	अनु० जन जाति	ओपीवओ	पि०वओ	पि० वर्गी की महिलाएँ		कुल
सविदा आधारित सामान्य चिकित्सक	₹65,000/-	27	07	17	01	15	05	03	75	01
	महिलाओं के लिए 35% क्षीरिज आरक्षण के तहत अनुमान्य पद	09	02	05	00	05	02	-	23	-
	दिव्यांग हेतु	अब और निम्न दृष्टि दिव्यांगता को बहिष्कृत और श्रवण शक्ति में ह्रास दिव्यांगता को -01, चलत दिव्यांगता को -01, बहुदिव्यांगता को -00								
		कुल = 03								

अनिवार्य शैक्षणिक योग्यता :-एमबीबीएसएमडी तथा बिहार राज्य चिकित्सा परिषद् से स्थायी निबंधन।

- CWJC No.-16760/2023 नीरव कुमार एवं अन्य बनाम राज्य सरकार एवं अन्य तथा सम्बद्ध सभी अन्य मामलों में माननीय उच्च न्यायालय, पटना द्वारा दिनांक-20.06.2024 को पारित न्यायादेश के माध्यम से बिहार (बिहार पदों एवं सेवाओं की रिक्रिटों में) आरक्षण अधिनियम-19, 2023 को Setaside कर दिया गया है। इस न्यायादेश के विरुद्ध राज्य सरकार द्वारा माननीय सर्वोच्च न्यायालय, नई दिल्ली में SLP(C) No.-014086/2024, 014425/2024, 014096/2024, 014329/2024, 014079/2024, 014051/2024, 014132/2024, 014094/2024, 014081/2024 एवं 014430/2024 दायर किया गया है। यह नियोजन माननीय सर्वोच्च न्यायालय, नई दिल्ली में दायर उपरोक्त सभी SLP(C) में पारित होने वाले आदेशों के कलाफल से प्रभावित होगी।
- अन्य शर्तें-**
 - नियोजन 11 माह के लिए किया जायेगा एवं सेवा संतोषजनक होने पर नियमानुसार सविदा विस्तार किया जा सकेगा।
 - नियोजन हेतु अधिकतम आयु-सीमा 65 वर्ष होगी।
 - रिक्रिटों की संख्या घट-बढ़ सकती है।
 - इस संबन्ध में विस्तृत जानकारी गृह विभाग(कारा) के वेबसाइट https://eprisons.bihar.gov.in/mis/RecruitmentDr2024/DrRec_Instruction.aspx पर उपलब्ध है।

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

संयुक्त सचिव-सह-निदेशक (प्र०)
 बिहार, पटना

PR. No.15200 (B & C) 2024-25
नशे की मार, बर्बाद करे सुखी परिवार।

GOVERNMENT OF ASSAM
PUBLIC WORKS ROADS DEPARTMENT
O/O THE CHIEF ENGINEER (EAP)
ARR&TI CAMPUS, FATASIL AMBARI, GUWAHATI-25
Email-id: as-ce.asbip@assam.gov.in

RFB No CE/EAP/ARRBP/02/TENDERS/2024/33

REQUEST FOR BIDS (RFB)
E-PROCUREMENT NOTICE - Open Competitive Bidding
(Two-Envelope Bidding Process with e-Procurement)

The Government of Assam through Government of India has applied for financing from the World Bank towards the cost of the Assam Resilient Rural Bridges Program (ARRBP) and intends to apply part of the proceeds to the eligible payment under the contract. Bids are invited online from the eligible bidders from India for the 18 (Eighteen) packages in the district of Bajali, Bongaigaon, Jorhat, Golaghat, Chirang, Goalpara and Kokrajhar for a total amount of Rs. 5447.02 Lakh (approx). Details may be seen at website <http://www.assamtenders.gov.in> and also at the office of the undersigned during office hours.

The bidding documents are available online on <http://www.assamtenders.gov.in> from 25/12/2024 to 24/01/2025. Bidders will be required to register on the website which is free of cost. For submission of the bids, the bidder is required to have Digital Signature Certificate (DSC). Bids must be submitted online on <http://www.assamtenders.gov.in> on or before 14:00 Hours on 24/01/2025. Other details can be seen in the bidding document. The method of paying Bid Security, Tender Processing fees as indicated in the table above of this e- procurement shall be required to be submitted online on <http://www.assamtenders.gov.in> by selecting "Pay Online" option.

Sd/-
Chief Engineer (EAP), PWRD,
Fatasil Ambari, Guwahati-25

JANASANYOG/CF/2894/24/21-DEC-24

HIMACHAL PRADESH STATE ELECTRICITY BOARD LIMITED (A State Govt. Undertaking)	
TENDER CUM AUCTION NOTICE (e-Tendering Mode Only)	
<p>Online tenders (having two part Bids) are invited for the execution of following work, on the prescribed form (Tender Document). The dates of Sale, Receipt and Opening of Tenders are as per details given below. The detailed tender notice can also be downloaded from website https://hptenders.gov.in. Any further Corrigendum/ Addendum to this tender notice shall not be published in Newspapers, but shall only be uploaded at website eProcurement System Government of Himachal Pradesh (hptenders.gov.in). The Bidders are advised to keep visiting the said web-site for any such Corrigendum, if so. The sale of Tenders shall start from 24.12.2024 at 05.30 PM onwards:-</p>	
Sr. No.	Tender No. Description of Work NIT Amount (Crore) Earnest Money Amount (Rs.) Cost of bid Document i/c GST (Non-refundable) Opening of tender (Technical Bid)
1.	HPSEBL/CEOMZ/MM/NIT/10/2024-25 Tender for "24X7 QUALITY AND RELIABLE POWER SUPPLY THROUGH IMPLEMENTATION OF SMART GRID TECHNOLOGIES FOR TWO (2) TOWNS (MANDI AND SUNDERNAGAR) OF HIMACHAL PRADESH (IBRD FUNDED PROJECT)" under Himachal Pradesh Power Sector Development Program (HPPSPDP). Rs. 66.31 Crore. Rs. 66,31,00,000/- Rs. 2950/- 23.12.2025 at 11:00 AM
2.	HPSEBL/CEOMZ/MM/NIT/11/2024-25 Tender for "24X7 QUALITY AND RELIABLE POWER SUPPLY THROUGH IMPLEMENTATION OF SMART GRID TECHNOLOGIES FOR TWO (2) TOWNS (KULLU AND MANALI) OF HIMACHAL PRADESH (IBRD FUNDED PROJECT)" under Himachal Pradesh Power Sector Development Program (HPPSPDP). Rs. 60.50 Crore. Rs. 60,50,00,000/- Rs. 2950/- 23.12.2025 at 02:00 PM
Key Dates:- 1. Initial date & time for sale of tender 24.12.2024 from 05:30 PM 2. Pre-bid Meeting 07.1.2025 up to 12:00 PM 3. Last date for Receipt of tender 21.1.2025 up to 03:00 PM 4. Time period for completion of work 24 months	
Save Energy for Benefit of self and Nation Chief Engineer (Operation), Mandi Zone, HPSEBL, Mandi.	

NORTHERN RAILWAY												
E-AUCTION NOTICE No. March-2025												
E-Auction will be conducted for disposal of Ferrous Scrap, Non Ferrous Scrap, Other Misc Scrap, Condemned Loco, Coaches and Wagons, Scrap Rail and other scrap P.Way material etc. Used Lead Acid Batteries/Used oil/Refused oil etc. will be sold only to recyclers registered with State Pollution Control Board. Auction programme is as under.												
E-AUCTION DATES FOR MARCH-2025												
Sl. No.	Depot/Division Auction Conducting Unit	Auction Starting Time	1st round's date	2nd round's date	3rd round's date	4th round's date	5th round's date	6th round's date	7th round's date	8th round's date	9th round's date	10th round's date
1.	Alambagh/Lucknow 0522-2451257	10:00 AM	3	6	8	12	17	19	22	25	27	29
2.	Shakurbasti 011-27015387	10:00 AM	3	6	8	12	17	19	22	25	27	29
3.	Jagadhari 01732-252388	10:00 AM	3	6	8	12	17	19	22	25	27	29
4.	Sr. DMM/LKO 0522-2234756	10:00 AM	4	7	10	13	18	21	24	26	27	28
5.	Sr. DMM/FZR 01632-244154	10:00 AM	4	7	10	13	18	20	24	26	27	28
6.	Sr. DMM/UMB 0171-2611203	10:00 AM	5	8	11	13	17	19	21	25	27	28
7.	Sr. DMM/MB 0591-2413141	10:00 AM	4	7	10	13	18	21	24	26	27	28
8.	Sr. DMM/DLI 011-23365311	10:00 AM	5	8	11	13	17	19	21	25	27	28

Hashimpura massacre: SC grants bail to 2 more convicts

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 20

THE SUPREME Court on Friday granted bail to two more former members of the Uttar Pradesh Provincial Armed Constabulary, including an 82-year-old, whose acquittals by the trial court in the Hashimpura massacre case were reversed by the Delhi High Court.

A bench of Justices AS Oka and A G Masih noted that they had spent six years in prison after the high court overturned their acquittal in 2018. On December 6, the SC gave bail to eight convicts in the case, all of whom were former members of the PAC.

As per the prosecution's case, communal riots took place in Meerut district in May 1987. As a result, the police, paramilitary and military forces were posted in Hashimpura mohalla for riot control and security. This included the 'C-Company' of the PAC's 41st Battalion. On May 21, 1987, the brother of an Army Major was killed in the mohalla adjacent to Hashimpura and two rifles belonging to PAC personnel were looted by certain anti-social elements. On May 22 evening, the PAC personnel allegedly rounded up around 42-45 Muslim men and took them away in a truck. They were later shot and the bodies dumped in the Gang Nahar and Hindon canal. Some of those who were shot managed to survive. Of the 38 who were killed, the bodies of only 11 were identified by relatives later.

**OFFICE OF THE
EXECUTIVE ENGINEER,
CONSTRUCTION
DIVISION (E/M),
U.P. JAL NIGAM
(URBAN), GHAZIABAD**
Letter No.: 3987/Vividh-7/195
Dated : 17.12.2024
SHORT TERM NOTICE
INVITING TENDER

Tender for "Operation & comprehensive maintenance of SCADA System for 162 Nos. Tubewells of Nagar Nigam, Meerut, Maintenance of Automatic Chlorinating Plant along with Supply and Re-filling of Liquid Chlorine at Tubewells for 02 month under Nauchandi & Town Hall Zones in Nagar Nigam, Meerut, Maintenance of Automatic Chlorinating Plant along with Supply and Re-filling of Liquid Chlorine at Tubewells for 02 month under Circuit House & Prahladnagar Zones in Nagar Nigam, Meerut, Maintenance of Automatic Chlorinating Plant along with Supply and Re-filling of Liquid Chlorine at Tubewells for 02 month under Madhavapuram & Shastrinagar Zones in Nagar Nigam, Meerut and Maintenance of Automatic Chlorinating Plant along with Supply and Re-filling of Liquid Chlorine at Tubewells for 02 month under Sharma Smarak, Vikaspuri & Baccha Park Zones in Nagar Nigam Meerut and Maintenance of 157 Nos. Servo Voltage Stabilizers having 60 KVA capacity at Tubewells for duration 02 months in Nagar Nigam, Meerut" is invited by U.P. Jal Nigam (Urban) that shall be purchased from 23.12.2024 to 30.12.2024. 17:00 Hrs. Last date of receipt of tender is 30.12.2024 up to 15:00 hrs. and tender shall be open on 31.12.2024 at 15:30 hrs. onwards at office of the Superintending Engineer, Construction Circle (E/M) U.P. Jal Nigam (Urban), Ghaziabad. The cost of tender document is 1,000+18% GST. All other conditions shall be as per NIT and tender document.

9 BIG PICTURE

THE SENIOR ADVOCATE

Who sets the Bar?

They are considered the big guns of the Bar, their voices and briefs often deciding the course of the case. APURVA VISHWANATH & SOHINI GHOSH examine the changing world of the ‘Senior Advocate’ — once a rarefied group in courtrooms but which is now a much more democratic space

IMAGINE A crowded courtroom at 10:30 am on a Monday. A litigant is before the Supreme Court, the final court of the country, and for every case at this stage, the stakes are high — there are no appeals or second chances. Whether it is a death penalty, a company’s liquidation, a child custody battle or a bail application, the litigant usually doesn’t have more than a couple of minutes for her lawyer to make the case before a bench of judges.

This is where the Senior Advocate — a rarefied set of some of the most sought after and often highly paid lawyers in town — steps in. From the late Fali Nariman to names such as Mukul Rohatgi, Abhishek Manu Singhvi, Kapil Sibal, Harish Salve, among others, the legal acumen of this bunch is often spoken of in the same breath as the fee they command for each appearance.

Currently, there are 639 practising Senior Advocates in the Supreme Court, with 116 of them designated just this year.

The designation of this unusually large number of Senior Advocates has invited its share of criticism with concerns being expressed over the “quality” of those who end up getting the coveted tag.

Talking of how “too many Senior Advocates” could lead to a dilution of the Bar, a senior lawyer, who has held the designation for over a decade, said on condition of anonymity, “Earlier, when someone said ‘doyen of the Bar’, you could think of a handful of seniors. Now with 200 doyens, what is the value of their word? A weaker Bar is a matter of concern for the independence of the judiciary.”

Yet, there are others who say that this once-exclusive club is now a much more democratic space with more representation for women and first-generation advocates, among others.

Conferred on members of the Bar by the Supreme Court or High Courts, the designation of ‘Senior Advocate’ is a coveted one

Who is a Senior Advocate?

Conferred on members of the Bar by the Supreme Court or High Courts, the designation of ‘Senior Advocate’ is a coveted one. Even retired judges of High Courts are known to apply for the designation in the Supreme Court.

Once a lawyer — who has at least 10 years of experience at the Bar — is designated a Senior Advocate, she is not allowed to take on clients or litigants directly, but is briefed on the case by another lawyer. Essentially, the litigant can’t approach a Senior Advocate directly, but goes to an Advocate-on-Record (AoR), who then ‘briefs’ the Senior. The idea is that a Senior Advocate argues a proposition of law which could be independent of the client or the factual matrix of the case. Armed with these briefs, a senior lawyer could appear in many cases, across courtrooms, in a day. Senior Advocate Sanjay Hegde had once described his tribe as being “a bit like a taxi for hire, for day and date only”.

The enormous influence the tag carries is no small part of the charm of being Senior Advocate.

A 2015 study by the Delhi-based Vidhi Centre for Legal Policy had found that the chances of the Supreme Court agreeing to accept a case for detailed hearing roughly doubles when argued by a Senior Advocate compared with cases without a Senior Advocate — while Senior Advocates had a 59.6% success rate in getting their cases admitted, for other lawyers, it was 33.71% success.

According to the 2023 book *Court on Trial: A Data-Driven Account of the Supreme Court of India* — co-authored by National Law School of India University, Bengaluru, professor Aparna Chandra — while Senior Advocates form just 1% of the Bar, they appear in nearly 40% of the cases at admission stage.

Their role as “gatekeepers” who influence the court on which cases to admit is crucial considering how pressed judges often are for time. The book states that a typical hearing on whether to admit a Special Leave Petition

— under which an aggrieved party is granted special permission to be heard in the Supreme Court — lasts for a mere 1 minute and 33 seconds on average.

Data that Chandra analysed from over 5,000 cases shows that while Senior Advocates have a higher chance of being heard, that pattern does not hold as the case progresses. In the final hearing, a Senior Advocate has a success rate of 57% when compared to 60% for other advocates. Which means, since the fate of the case could very well be sealed in the initial stage, engaging a Senior Advocate at that stage could have maximum impact.

Which explains the sky-high fee some of these big names command — starting from a lakh to anywhere between Rs 17–25

lakh per hearing.

How to be a ‘Senior’

It was on a public interest litigation by Indira Jaising, the first woman to be designated a Senior Advocate of the Bombay High Court, that the Supreme Court in 2017 laid down objective criteria to designate Senior Advocates.

The process now involves the courts inviting applications from lawyers. The selection is based on a set of criteria, which includes reported judgements, experience, publications and a personal “suitability” interview.

Until the 2017 ruling, courts would invite or receive applications and discuss the candidature in full court to confer a designation.

While there are oral histories in the Bar

of promising advocates such as former Supreme Court judge Rohinton Nariman being designated at the age of 37 or former Chief Justice of India D Y Chandrachud getting the designation at 39, critics of the earlier system point out that they all belonged to illustrious legal families.

It was Jaising who started a “gown wapsi movement” and “shed” her senior counsel gown which she termed “a symbol of discrimination”, eventually paving the way for reforms in the process.

However, the criticism of the new process began soon after. Last year, the 2017 rules were challenged in court and the government, too, sought a reconsideration of the existing process.

“(The existing) system has been subject to ridicule, memes and jokes. In Delhi, we recently had 170 designations (of Senior Advocates)... advocates are floating (in the city),” Solicitor General Tushar Mehta told the court during a recent hearing on December 6. While Mehta insisted that the government is not concerned with any one individual, “designation is a responsibility conferred by the court, let it not be a distribution,” he said.

In 2023, the Central government sought to change the 2017 guidelines for the designation of senior lawyers, seeking some tweaks in the criteria.

The 2017 ruling had, on a 100-point scale, allotted 15 points to writing articles in newspapers or journals. This was followed by a

Illustration: Suvajit Dey

rise in lawyers publishing on several media portals. Taking note of this, the SC in 2023 reduced the points allocated to this criterion from 15 to 5.

There are also concerns that designating more advocates is a “populist move.”

“Especially when it comes to women, simply designating them when there are not many who will brief them will only damage their existing practice,” a former judge said.

‘Current system more inclusive’

Many of these concerns are, however, dismissed by the younger members of the Bar as a reaction by the existing group of seniors to greater competition or reluctance to changing the status quo.

“The designation process post the 2017 judgment is definitely more inclusive and is a better system than what we had earlier. It also makes it easier for younger members of the Bar or those practising as first-generation lawyers to aspire for the designation,” said advocate-on-record Anas Tanwir.

Many other first-generation lawyers, especially women, see the existing process as a step in the right direction.

Consider this: in 1977, Leila Seth, then a lawyer practising before the Delhi High Court, became the first woman to be designated a Senior Advocate. A year later, she went on to become the first woman judge of the Delhi High Court. After that, it took 30 years for another woman to be designated a Senior Advocate. In 2007, Indu Malhotra,

The Centre in 2023 sought to change the 2017 guidelines for the designation of senior lawyers, seeking some tweaks in the criteria

who in 2018 became a judge of the Supreme Court, was designated a Senior Advocate.

In what’s been a clear shift, since the new rules came into force in 2017, 40 women have been designated Senior Advocates.

“This process also allows lawyers who may not have high visibility with judges but have contributed significantly in other ways to be considered. For example, the scoring system introduces measurable benchmarks such as academic contributions and pro bono work. It also allows lawyers who may not have high visibility with judges but have contributed significantly in other ways to be considered,” said Tushar Sannu Dahiya, another first-generation lawyer practising in the Delhi High Court.

Senior Advocate Anindita Pujari pointed out that the new process has ensured that it is not only SC lawyers with visibility who can aspire for the designation. “Someone with a specialised technology or regulatory practice before a tribunal and who may not appear before the SC everyday can also get designated. This would have never been possible before,” Pujari said.

For instance, N S Nappinai was designated a Senior Advocate by the Supreme Court in January this year. Nappinai has for over two decades of immersive practice in cyber laws and technology.

“Much of this conversation (about there being too many seniors) is because it is big money. Having more seniors cuts into the pie of existing Senior Advocates,” said another lawyer who did not wish to be identified.

Those who speak in favour of having more designations say it has made legal services more accessible. “If litigants can afford Senior Advocates who are starting out at lower fees, why is that a bad thing? We get visibility too in court. It’s a win-win,” a newly designated Senior Advocate said.

The system has its own way of levelling out, says Vipin Nair, President of the Supreme Court Advocate-on-Record Association. “Once you become a senior, it is the lawyers who were till then your competition, who will have to send you work. They have to brief you. If they don’t think you are good enough, briefs don’t come. The market will ultimately balance it out. It’s a conscious call a lawyer has to take before applying to be Senior Advocate. Let people apply, it’ll test the competition,” he said.

How an Indian-Canadian musician makes brinjals, mushrooms ‘sing’

Tarun Nayar is among a growing tribe of musicians making ‘plant music’ — a series of otherworldly beeps and bops emitted by plants

SOPHIYA MATHEW

NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 20

WHAT CAN a shiitake mushroom or a brinjal sound like? If Indian-Canadian “plant musician” Tarun Nayar, 49, is to be believed, the mushroom can produce a series of high-pitched beeps, while a brinjal can make oddly melodic sounds, like the soothing strains of a santoor.

At least that’s what Nayar, a biologist-turned-musician from Vancouver in Canada, seems to have discovered as converts plant ‘signals’ into music.

Nayar is among the growing tribes of musicians finding success in making “plant music” — a series of otherworldly beeps and bops emitted by plants. From brinjals and mushrooms to marigolds, these musicians’ preferred choice of musical instruments is as wide as nature’s basket.

“It’s important to note that the sound that we are hearing is not from the plants. The sound is data... We are doing (bio) data sonification. We are listening to a representation

of data that we are gleaning from the plant,” Nayar, who goes by the stage name Modern Biology, tells *The Indian Express*.

On December 13, he enthralled a 100-member audience, as they sat cross-legged in the cold Sanskriti Kendra amphitheatre in Delhi’s Aya Nagar, listening to the sometimes rhythmic and the sometimes high-pitched “sounds” emitted by plants. Near him was an altamas (*Cassia fistula*) tree, with 40 feet of electrical cables coiled around it like a creeper and plugged into the modular synthesizer.

Here’s how biodata sonification works. Electrodes are hooked into a plant to detect fluctuations. The signals — whose sounds and intensity depend on factors such as moisture, temperature and the time of day — are then converted into waves and eventually “musical” sounds. The technology makes use of a circuitry that works much like a polygraph (lie detector) machine and on principles similar to those of a psychogalvanometer, developed to measure galvanic skin response (GSR) or the change in the electrical properties of the skin in humans.

But sounds from plants are often



Indian-Canadian musician Tarun Nayar plays ‘plant music’ along with flautist Nathalie Ramirez at Sanskriti Kendra in New Delhi. Farhan Sayeed Masoodi

unpredictable, which means that the music thus produced is inconsistent, even from the same variety of plants — at times providing otherworldly and even structured melodies, and at others, chaotic and short bursts of sounds.

“The timbre of the sound is not determined by the plant. That’s determined by humans. What we are listening to is differences in bio-electric activity over time,” explains Nayar.

For Nayar, whose family traces its roots to Uttar Pradesh’s Shahjahanpur, his foray into music began with the tabla when he was seven years old. Aware that his parents would not approve of a career in music, he secured a PhD in Oceanography from the University of British Columbia. Nayar worked as a biologist for several years, first with the Canadian government and then at the Genome Sciences Centre in Vancouver.

In 2006, he became part of Delhi 2 Dublin, a six-member Indo-Canadian band that gained popularity for its fusion of genres, including bhangra and dub, among others. While Nayar began with playing tabla in the band, his repertoire eventually extended to synthesizers, production and backing vocals. Though he took up music as a full-time career, it wasn’t until the pandemic that he truly engaged with the synthesizer — even taking courses on how to build them. It was around this time that his tryst with “plant music” began.

“The very first plant that I plugged into was a salmonberry plant...(I) it hooked up to a synthesizer that sort of sounded like a piano...and as soon as we got it plugged in, I just thought it was magic. I felt that was the coolest thing ever. I remember thinking to myself, ‘I’m going to be doing this for the next 10 years’,” he says.

His sound palette — a collection of sounds used for a sound design project — is simple: the plants, a modular synthesizer disconnected from the computer, three oscillators, some sound filters and modulation sources. All this, combined with some special effects, produces the music he seeks to make.

“I really like this limited palette because I find it gives me limited control. So I can’t make the sounds do everything, only a very limited number of things. Like any artiste, I like those constraints. It’s like being a painter, but you

only have like three different colours and then you have to use them in a creative way. As an artistic practice, I enjoy that,” he says.

But what Nayar does control during the performance is the choice of the sensitivity of electrodes. It’s this that decides the timbre of the sound that plants make.

“There’s a lot of creativity to be found in just the way of expressing this natural, generative information...I’m not very good with melodies. So, it’s kind of nice to have the plants and the mushrooms do the work,” he laughs.

Nayar’s music often involves collaborations with other music artistes. For instance, the performance in Delhi — part of his tour to several cities in India, including Bengaluru, Kochi and Mumbai — also involved a collaboration with Nathalie Ramirez, a multi-genre flutist from Mexico. The musician, who released an album titled *Field Notes* in 2023, has also collaborated with Indian artistes, including Diljit Dosanjh.

Nayar has also been a TikTok star and has more than nine lakh followers, thanks to his videos on “plant music” gaining immense popularity during the pandemic. Despite this, the artiste is no fan of social media. “Social media can be used as a bit of a starting point or like an entryway into conversations that happen in real life, but it’s not made for our good. While I think it is a useful tool, it is a double-edged sword...My ultimate goal is to get people to connect with nature for real,” he says.



THE EDITORIAL PAGE

WORDLY WISE

SPORTSMANSHIP IS MAKING SURE YOU
HAVE RESPECT FOR THE GUY YOU'RE PLAYING
ACROSS FROM. — WARREN MOON

The Indian EXPRESS

FOUNDED BY

RAMNATH GOENKA

BECAUSE THE TRUTH INVOLVES US ALL

TOWARDS A THAW

Delhi-Beijing Special Representatives meeting is a beginning. Addressing fundamental issues will require patient diplomacy

THE OUTCOME OF the first formal meeting between the Special Representatives (SRs) of India and China in five years is cause for cautious optimism over a thaw in bilateral ties. Building on the momentum of the talks between Chinese President Xi Jinping and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi on the sidelines of the BRICS summit in Kazan, Russia, in October, the SRs announced confidence-building measures (CBMs) that seek to restore a degree of normalcy in ties after a prolonged military stand-off. While NSA Ajit Doval and Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi have interacted in the last half-decade, these meetings were under the shadow of China's expansionist moves along the Line of Actual Control. The People's Liberation Army's (PLA's) aggression vis-a-vis India was of a piece with its actions in the South China Sea, East Asia and the broader Indo-Pacific, which led to strategic and diplomatic pressure from the US and several middle powers. The restoration of the Kailash-Mansarovar Yatra, trade at Nathula and data sharing on trans-border rivers must be viewed in this context: These CBMs are an incremental step, an attempt to find common ground between the two countries.

The respective statements after the meeting frame the fundamental differences between Delhi and Beijing. For India, a settled border, free of conflict, is the priority while Beijing seems to be looking at fewer restrictions vis-a-vis the large Indian market, and other economic opportunities. While the Indian Foreign Ministry stressed the need for "peace and tranquillity" on the border as fundamental to the deepening of bilateral ties, Beijing sought to view the border as a part of the broader relationship. The fact remains that China's violations in the Ladakh sector beginning in 2020 have eroded trust and undermined earlier pacts and mechanisms, notably the 2005 Agreement, which finds a mention in the Chinese statement. The Indian side's emphasis on the need for a "framework" on the boundary question must be viewed in this context. The CBMs are a beginning, a gesture of goodwill ahead of the more difficult task of de-escalation and de-induction along the LAC. The task will be challenging, given that the People's Liberation Army has reportedly built military infrastructure in border areas.

The complexity of the relationship and the differences between the two countries should not deter future engagement. Neither country can choose its neighbours. China is the world's second-largest economy and military power. India, too, has been rising on the global stage and has become a formidable economic power. Both Delhi and Beijing have much to gain from more stable ties. The hurdles can be overcome if China and India find better ways to relate to each other. The CBMs announced by the SRs do send out the message that the two countries seem willing to make an attempt in that direction. The neighbours now have to lay the foundation to resolve the fundamental issues that have plagued their relationship. That might be a painstaking task. It will require patient diplomacy, but it cannot be delayed.

A PARTIAL RECOVERY

State finances have improved from pandemic times. Concerns in sectors such as power remain

DURING THE PANDEMIC, state governments had witnessed a marked deterioration in their debt-deficit position. In 2020-21, the combined fiscal deficit of all states had edged up to 4.1 per cent of GDP and their debt-to-GDP ratio had risen to 31 per cent. However, as the RBI's latest report on state finances notes, state governments have in the years thereafter stuck firmly to the path of fiscal consolidation, bringing down their debt to 28.5 per cent by March 2024 and their deficit to 2.9 per cent. Alongside, they have also managed to ramp up allocations for capital expenditure. Their total capital outlay has risen from 2.1 per cent of GDP in 2020-21 to 2.6 per cent in 2023-24, and is further budgeted to increase to 2.8 per cent in 2024-25. These are encouraging developments.

However, the report also flags several areas of concern. For one, the power sector: The losses of power distribution companies stood at a staggering Rs 6.5 lakh crore by 2022-23, despite many attempts to improve their financial metrics over the years. To put this loss in perspective — its equivalent is around 2.4 per cent of GDP. In recent years, states have also seen a sharp increase in subsidies, due to "farm loan waivers, free/subsidised services (like electricity to agriculture and households, transport, gas cylinder and cash transfers to farmers, youth and women)". The amounts involved are significant. According to an Axis Bank report, 14 states now have income transfer schemes for women with a spending of Rs 2 lakh crore. This amounts to roughly 0.6 per cent of GDP. Such forms of spending will limit the resources available to governments for expenditure on more productive avenues. Then there are contingent liabilities. As per the RBI report, state guarantees have witnessed a steady increase, rising from 2 per cent of GDP at the end of March 2017 to 3.8 per cent by March 2023.

As state debt remains considerably above the level recommended by the Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management review committee, the RBI report calls for — rightly so — a "credible roadmap for debt consolidation." In particular, it says that states with high levels of debt — these would include states such as Punjab, Bihar, Kerala and West Bengal — "may establish a clear, transparent and time-bound glide path for debt consolidation." The report also calls for "next generation" fiscal rules which, while providing states the flexibility to deal with shocks such as the pandemic, would be guided by the objective of ensuring medium-term fiscal sustainability. These suggestions should generate more debate in the coming weeks and months.

ICC'S COMPROMISE

India will play Pakistan at neutral grounds. Spare a thought for fans in both countries

THAT ALL INDIA-PAKISTAN games in International Cricket Council (ICC) events staged at either of the two countries will now be held on neutral turf is a result of Pakistan putting its foot down and demanding equal treatment as their neighbours refuse to visit for any event. The 2025 Champions Trophy isn't the first time the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) will not send its team across the border, citing government instructions. At last year's Asia Cup too, India's matches were held in Sri Lanka. The Pakistan team, in contrast, came to India for the 50-over World Cup.

The schedule and venues for the tournament can be announced now, and the marketing and promotional campaigns begin in earnest. The announcement will certainly bring a sense of relief to broadcasters. The arrangement also averts the uncertainty that looms over any big event scheduled in either India or Pakistan — at least till 2028. But it is unfair on local fans. India-Pakistan is arguably the biggest fixture in international cricket and the social media chatter it generates is off the charts. But a match in Dubai or Colombo isn't the same as one in Lahore or Kolkata. For one, not all cricket enthusiasts in the two countries can afford to go abroad to cheer for their teams. The match will anyway be big, but without the home-and-away atmosphere, the electricity will not be the same.

This is the first ICC event Pakistan will host since 1996 but the most anticipated matches won't be held on grounds in the country. Not only will they have to play India on a neutral ground — ICC always ensures an India-Pakistan game in the league stages of its competitions for commercial reasons — if India advances to the semifinals or final of the tournament, those games will also be played outside Pakistan. This makes a bit of a mockery of the country's status as tournament host.



PRAVEEN CHAKRAVARTY

PAGE 21 OF the Congress party's 2019 Lok Sabha election manifesto said "To eliminate abject poverty by 2030, Congress will introduce a Nyuntam Aay Yojana (NYAY) to provide Rs 72,000 a year to the poorest one-fifth of all families. The money will be transferred to the bank account of the woman head of the family". The Congress party lost the 2019 election badly. But this idea of an unconditional cash transfer to women in poor families has won huge.

Five years after NYAY was first proposed, 15 states governed by eight different political parties have implemented some version of NYAY, after promising it in their state election manifestoes. Sixty per cent of India's women live in these 15 states. So, a majority of poor women in India now are beneficiaries of an unconditional cash transfer from the government. Going by the trend, it is only a matter of time before other large states follow suit. This is an astonishingly rapid paradigm shift in India's welfare model. From just an academic "universal basic income" idea mooted in the 2017 Economic Survey to a concrete election promise by a major political party in 2019 to nearly 100 million women receiving roughly \$25 billion every year as unconditional cash transfer by 2024, this must rank as one of the largest and fastest "lab to reality" economic policy ideas in recent history anywhere in the world. But such a wide-scale rollout of cash transfers in such quick time is a warning, not a jingle bell.

Feminists and social scientists support unconditional cash transfers for its power to liberate and empower women, especially in underdeveloped countries. Economists believe it can boost consumption demand and help stimulate the larger economy. Efficiency hunters find cash transfers appealing for their simplicity and efficiency of governance. Libertarians like it because of the freedom it provides to the individual family unit in making spending decisions. But we do not yet know how many of these promised benefits of cash transfers to women have been fulfilled in India. While some studies such as the Pratichi Trust's assessment of Bengal's cash transfer scheme report some encouraging findings, they lack rigour and neutral-

Social benefits may be enormous in long run. But in the short run, tangible costs outweigh intangible benefits

Noisy rhetoric aside, cash transfers to women is clearly not the electoral magic bullet that it is made out to be. Yet nearly all political parties in India have pounced on this idea. The Aam Aadmi Party is upping the ante on cash transfers to women for the upcoming Delhi elections and predictably, other parties will follow. NYAY has become the inevitable sapling in India's electoral landscape that may not attract voters, but its absence can be conspicuous.

ity. The truth is that it is still too early to assess the real impact of \$25 billion a year "NYAY" type programmes on social development and women's empowerment.

But it is obvious that the idea has gained enormous political currency, with nearly every political party promising it in their election manifestos. However, there is no empirical or scientific evidence that cash transfers to women, either as a scheme by a ruling party or as a promise by an opposition party, have material impact on influencing voter behaviour. The Congress party promised the largest cash transfer for women in 2019 and even made it its core election plank, but lost. Similarly, in the recent Maharashtra elections where contrary to media punditry, there was no difference in voting behaviour between beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries of the ruling BJP Alliance's cash transfer to women scheme. The Congress alliance's promise to significantly increase the cash transfer amount too didn't strike a chord with women voters in Maharashtra.

Noisy rhetoric aside, cash transfers to women is clearly not the electoral magic bullet that it is made out to be. Yet nearly all political parties in India have pounced on this idea. The Aam Aadmi Party is upping the ante on cash transfers to women for the upcoming Delhi elections and predictably, other parties will follow. NYAY has become the inevitable sapling in India's electoral landscape that may not attract voters, but its absence can be conspicuous.

These schemes come at a substantial cost, politically and financially. Cash transfers subvert the very essence of politics in terms of representing people, understanding their real issues and solving them with specific policies and programmes. If all it takes to govern is to throw money at people and let them address their needs themselves, it hollows out the politics of representative governance, as Ruchi Gupta pointed out ("Too much or too little", *IE*, December 16).

Most importantly, the financial burden of such cash transfer schemes is large, real and current. Nearly \$25 billion is being spent by all state governments combined on cash transfers to women every year, roughly 10

per cent of what each state government earns annually. More worryingly, these schemes have significantly increased the state government's deficits and debt burdens. Ironically, the rising debt of state governments due to NYAY-type programmes comes back to harm the same poor women beneficiaries through increased prices (inflation) and costlier access to money (interest rates). This is why the 2019 Congress manifesto that proposed NYAY also committed that "it will be funded only through new revenues and rationalisation of current expenditure with a commitment to keeping the fiscal deficit to less than 3 per cent of GDP". All political parties seem to have borrowed the NYAY idea unconditionally.

So, after five years, \$25 billion and 100 million women beneficiaries, the social, economic and even electoral gains of NYAY are still unknown and intangible, while the political and financial costs are known, tangible and large. It is likely that the social benefits of NYAY-type programmes in terms of women empowerment are enormous in the long run. But in the short run, the tangible costs far outweigh the intangible benefits. It is thus prudent to calibrate spending on cash transfers slowly every year rather than expand rapidly in one go. To be clear, this is neither a *mea culpa* on the NYAY idea nor is it a call for state governments to abandon the scheme. When costs are immediate, but benefits are spread over a long term, it is important to scale slowly and not too fast, be it in physical infrastructure projects such as metros or in social infrastructure projects such as women empowerment. But with the misplaced excitement and belief about cash transfer schemes leading to electoral victories, all political parties are now engaged in a "my NYAY is larger than yours" slugfest. This is a dangerous race to fiscal ruin that can collectively sink the nation ship, only for the rich to escape with their lifeboats while the poor drown helplessly. NYAY can turn into ANYAY for a poor woman, if it is not slowed down.

The writer is chairman, Professionals' Congress & co-author of the Congress' 2019 NYAY proposal

SHE, THE ANCHOR

Raj Kapoor's women leads were full-bodied in the script, holding the 'hero' together



RINKU GHOSH

WHILE RAJ KAPOOR@100 is trending, do pause at the posters commemorating the actor-filmmaker's genius. They are testimony to the equity given to women characters at a time when mainstream Hindi films had a very gendered view of the word "hero". In fact, the word "heroine" was a dismissive construct, somebody who would embellish the hero, rather than being one herself. But the director himself didn't shy away from giving them pride of place.

While modern cinema has somewhat democratised the term "actor", the gendered view of the hero persists, with films still classified as "women-led" or "women-driven." For Kapoor though, the male and female characters were inseparable, with each feeding off the other, growing and evolving together. In this sense, he was ahead of his time.

Critics have often pointed out the duality of Kapoor's women characters — objectified on one hand, but also deified on the other. Remember the iconic wet-sari image of Mandakini in *Ram Teri Ganga Maili* (1985)? For all his concern for marginalised people and the latent messaging of Nehruvian socialism, why were the women in his films, as the trade talk was those days, "bold", a bait for male fantasy and a commercial trope? But it was precisely this "goddess versus temptress" duality that Kapoor wanted to demolish, conceiving them in the fullness of being, rather than being seen as mere avatars of male emotion and desire.

Kapoor's female leads were always full-

Critics have often pointed out the duality of Kapoor's women characters — objectified on one hand, but also deified on the other. Remember the iconic wet-sari image of Mandakini in 'Ram Teri Ganga Maili' (1985)? For all his concern for marginalised people and the latent messaging of Nehruvian socialism, why were the women in his films, as the trade talk was those days, 'bold', a bait for male fantasy and a commercial trope?

bodied in the script, holding the "hero" together. In fact, the male leads, some of which he played himself, were at times frail, undecided, predictable, cardboard-ish even, needing the support of the leading women. If Rita (Nargis) in *Awara* (1951) appears in a decolletage in the film poster, she is also the feisty defence lawyer, who rescues a tramp from the fringes because of the purity he represents, and fights the injustices he faces. She is the moral voice, questioning social hypocrisy and even her own father's decisions. Similarly, in *Shree 420* (1955), Nargis's character Vidya acts as a moral anchor for Raj Kapoor's character, a boy from Allahabad who is dazzled by the city's temptations. It is her steadfast values that help center him. In *Jagte Raho* (1956, produced by Kapoor), it is Nargis once again, who revitalises a homeless man in the dead of night, reviving the protagonist when no one else would. This gesture goes beyond physical sustenance, symbolising the nurturing role of women in his films.

But perhaps the strongest voice is that of Radha (Vyjayanthimala) in *Sangam* (1964), who chastises both men who love her for treating her as a trophy in a contest of chivalry and never seeking her opinion on who she wants to be with. Without a *sangam* (confluence) of minds, a man-woman relationship can never be completed. And that's evident in the last frame of the film where Radha and her husband Sundar are pensive and fractured, although a couple. *Mera Naam Joker* (1970) is an outright tribute to women. Would the joker

be what he is without the three women? Mary, the teacher who led to his sexual awakening, Marina, his transient but true love and Meena, who prioritises herself over her love. Raju, the joker, and his women never had expectations of each other but were crucial to understanding their respective journeys.

If Roopa, the village belle with a disfigured face, was sexualised in *Satyam Shivam Sundaram* (1978), it was to critique men like her husband, who rejected her for her face scar but accepted her when she masked herself and posited herself as his mistress. Ganga in *Ram Teri Ganga Maili* was a metaphor for the pollution of a river civilisation that once pivoted on women. She denounces patriarchy, demanding paternal rights from the father of her love child rather than seeking validation as his wife.

Perhaps, Kapoor, who was torn between relationships in his personal life with his leading women, embodied his alter ego in films. The leading man relinquished his strengths to the woman, knowing she was always capable of heavy lifting. Acknowledging his flaws and insincerity of wanting both the goddess and seductress equally, he depended on women to give him clarity. Be it guilt or courage, Kapoor was sure of one thing. That women needed an equal voice. Sadly, women in gun-toting commandos in 400-crore hits or in script-backed niche films have rarely built on the ground laid by the showman.

rinku.ghosh@expressindia.com

DECEMBER 21, 1984, FORTY YEARS AGO

INTERPOL: PAK GUILTY

THE PISTOL THAT was given to the hijackers of the Indian Airlines Boeing 737 aircraft at Lahore airport on August 24 had been procured by the chief administrative officer of the Pakistan Defence Ministry from a West German armament firm, as per a telegram New Delhi received from Interpol.

PM TO AKALI DAL

PRIME MINISTER RAJIV Gandhi urged the Akali Dal to publicly state that extremists and terrorists have no place in their party. Addressing public meetings in New Delhi on

his whirlwind election tour, Gandhi said that the Akali Dal must prove that they stand for the unity and integrity of the country and declare that extremists and terrorists are not a part of them, but a separate group altogether.

BUSES FOR VOTERS

SIKH VOTERS IN 12 relief camps in New Delhi will be provided government transport for going to their residential areas to cast their votes on polling day. This will be part of the special arrangements being made by the Election Commission to ensure that minority communities and weaker sections can vote without fear. Both the People's Union for Civil Liberties

and the Nagrik Ekta Manch asked the Election Commission to give security to eligible voters belonging to minority groups.

ZIA-UL-HAQ WINS

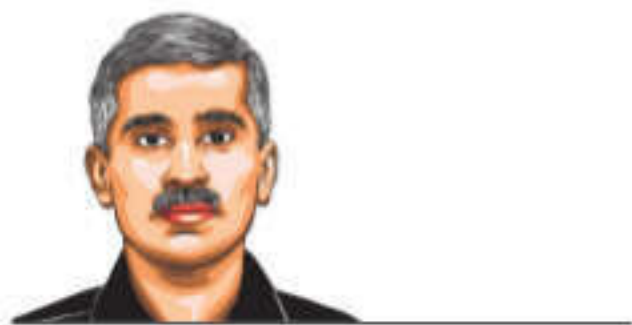
GENERAL ZIA-UL-HAQ WAS given a fresh mandate of five years as President of Pakistan. The Pakistan chief election commissioner Justice SA Nusrat, announced that out of about 35 million registered votes, 21 million cast their franchise in the referendum held on December 19. The affirmative vote was 97.71 per cent of the total votes cast. By and large the turn-out in all the provinces was exceptionally good.



THE IDEAS PAGE

Two steps forward, one step back

Bilateral exchanges between India and China have regularised. However, Chinese actions appear to have driven Indian expectations of a peaceful boundary resolution to an all-time low



JABIN T JACOB

WHILE INDIAN STATEMENTS on the bilateral relationship with China are exercises in brevity, Chinese statements are more expansive by comparison. Taken together, however, they provide a picture of how the relationship is evaluated by each side. With the 23rd meeting of the Special Representatives (SRs) on the India-China boundary question concluding in Beijing earlier this week, bilateral exchanges at the highest levels might have gotten closer to regular service but the meeting also highlights continuing differences.

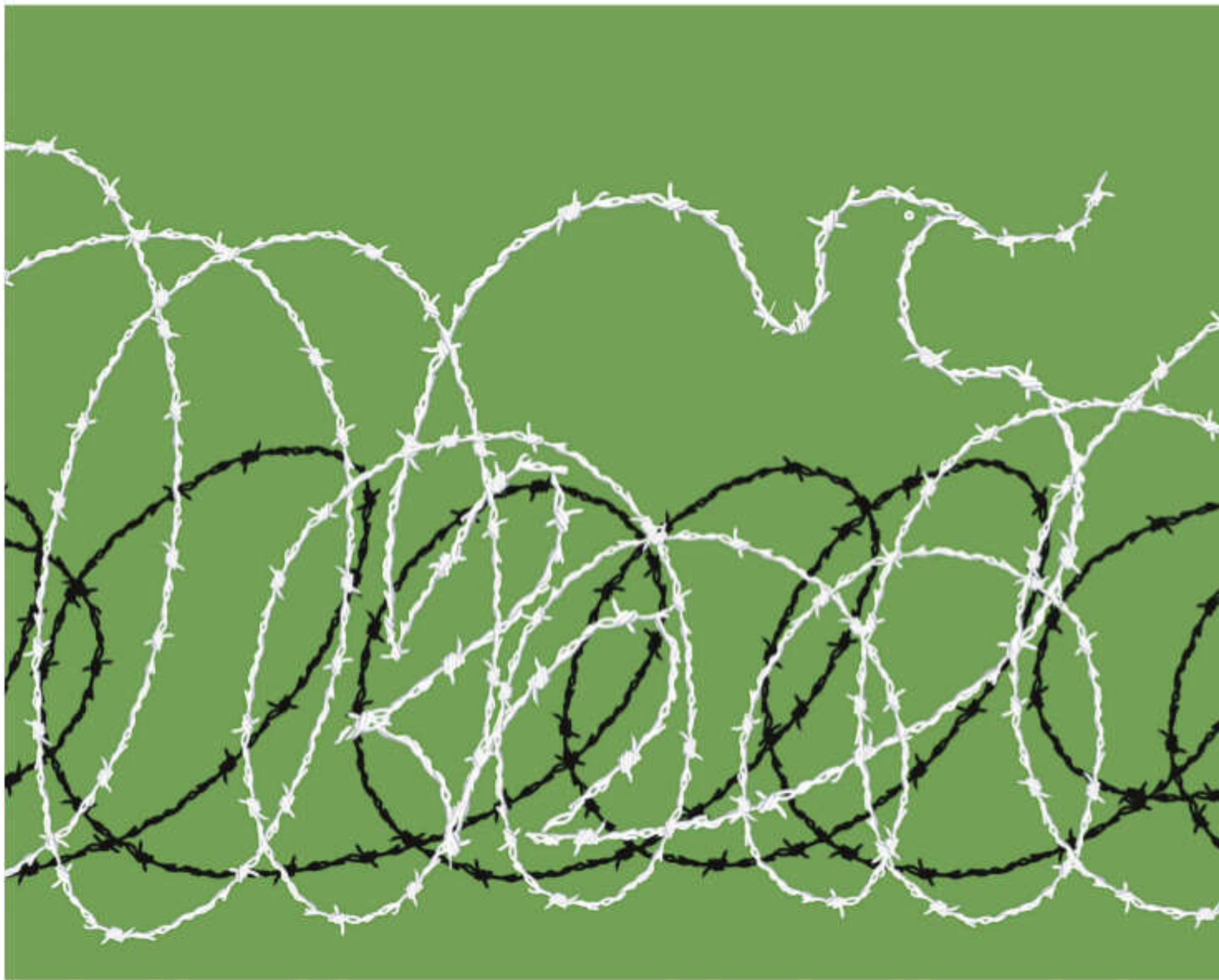
Comparing the six statements on SR meetings that have come out (three from each country) since the first “informal summit” between Indian Prime Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping in Wuhan in 2018 — the 21st (in Chengdu, November 2018), the 22nd (in New Delhi, December 2019) and the latest one — it is evident that the Indian side has increasingly weak expectations of the relationship.

In its statement on the latest meeting, the Indian side specifically referenced the “frictions (that) had emerged... in 2020” and appeared keen to underline the decisions of the new patrolling arrangement and conclusion of the disengagement process as well as separate developments such as the “resumption of the Kailash Mansarovar Yatra, data sharing on trans-border rivers and border trade”. The Chinese too, noted the latter point but otherwise merely “positively evaluated the solutions reached by the two countries on border-related issues”.

While the latest Indian statement stressed the need “to use, coordinate and guide the relevant diplomatic and military mechanisms” to “maintain peace and tranquillity on the border and advance effective border management”, there was no talk any longer about specifically “promot(ing) exchanges and communication between the border personnel”, reflecting perhaps, the desire to reduce direct contacts between the actual troops on the ground as well as the reality of no-patrolling buffer zones in some areas along the LAC.

As in 2021, so also in their latest statement, the Chinese described a six-point consensus that the Indians did not acknowledge as such. While past Indian statements have described talks as “constructive and forward-looking” the latest talked instead about “resolv(ing) to inject more vitality into this process”.

Oddly, however, the Indian SR statement talks about “seeking a fair, reasonable and mutually acceptable framework for the settlement of the boundary question” even though such a framework already exists in the form of bilateral treaties, particularly, the 2005 Agreement on Political Parameters and Guiding Principles for the Settlement of the India-China Boundary Question. The Chinese references to the 2005 Agreement in its latest statement as well as in the last one obviously do not hold much weight given how they have repeatedly violated it. India, by contrast, has displayed a reluctance to refer directly to extant legal agreements and has — like the



C R Sasikumar

Chinese — preferred to reference instead the “guidance”, “directions” or “decision” of meetings between Modi and Xi.

The danger now exists — as was the case post-Doklam in 2017 — that the Indian government could once again take its foot off the gas pedal of sustained political, diplomatic, military and economic pressure on China in order to achieve short-term interests. While another round of “informal summits” is hopefully out of the question, formal exchanges also need to be carefully calibrated in terms of their frequency, scope and deliverables.

Consider “the imperative of a diplomatic effort to defuse these heightened tensions and restore peace and tranquillity” that External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar in his statement to Parliament earlier this month said was his government’s effort following the 2020 transgressions. Why defusing tensions and the need to restore peace is always an Indian “imperative” but not a Chinese one is a question the Indian government has yet to answer. Instead, Indian diplomacy on China has for some time swung between extremes — either pomp and ceremony signifying little or a rather masochistic thrill in simply undergoing the ragda (Hindi slang for pointless grind, often as punishment) of endless talks as a way of proving one’s diplomatic chops rather than actually focusing on the actual outcome and its longer-term implications.

And the outcome — even as many on the Indian side crow about strategic patience and resolve having paid dividends in the form of the disengagement process underway in eastern Ladakh — is simply that the Chinese

The danger now exists — as was the case post-Doklam in 2017 — that the Indian government could once again take its foot off the gas pedal of sustained political, diplomatic, military and economic pressure on China in order to achieve short-term interests. While another round of ‘informal summits’ is hopefully out of the question, formal exchanges also need to be carefully calibrated in terms of their frequency, scope and deliverables.

have driven down Indian expectations of a peaceful boundary resolution to an all-time low given that the problem of de-escalation has to be dealt with first. In essence, then, it is the Chinese that have shown strategic patience and resolve having forced the Indians to back down from strong positions, even if these were morally and politically justifiable ones. It is quite likely that de-escalation will now proceed even more slowly than disengagement did, if it proceeds at all.

Given that India’s lack of proactive, like-for-like responses to China’s 2020 violations of bilateral agreements on the LAC is now clear, Beijing can perhaps breathe a little easier that the front with India is not likely to pose a major threat if China were to concentrate on its other fronts with active territorial disputes. For China then, its 2020 action and the current disengagement process is effectively a case of two steps forward, one step back, and one step gained.

This reality might draw even more pressure from the Americans under Donald Trump — now stronger and more determined to follow through with his threats to adversaries and friends alike — for New Delhi to get with the larger American approach to China instead. It also risks confirming for India’s other partners similarly involved in long-standing tensions with China that New Delhi cannot be expected to intervene usefully in order to reduce Chinese pressure on them.

The writer is associate professor, Department of International Relations and Governance Studies, and director, Centre of Excellence for Himalayan Studies, Shiv Nadar University, Delhi NCR

WHAT THE OTHERS SAY

“The politicians who have applauded Gisèle Pelicot must now make good on her demands for change by ensuring justice for other women and addressing the culture that enables such crimes.” — THE GUARDIAN

Debate, without demonising

Opposition ruckus in Parliament over Ambedkar is uncalled for. Political class must treat national heroes with respect even while disagreeing



RAM RAJYA RAM MADHAV

THE POLITICALLY-MOTIVATED protests of the Congress Party over Home Minister Amit Shah’s statement in Rajya Sabha, that led to a scuffle and hospitalisation of a couple of MPs, are most unfortunate. While addressing the Congress Party members in the House, Shah said: “Nowadays it is fashionable (for the Opposition) to chant Ambedkar, Ambedkar, Ambedkar... Had god’s name been invoked so many times you would have attained heaven for seven lives. We are happy that you invoke Ambedkar’s name. Invoke it hundred times more but let me reveal what your true opinion about Ambedkar was. Why was Ambedkar forced to resign from the first cabinet of the country? Ambedkar had said that he was unhappy about the treatment meted out to SCs and STs, he was in disagreement with the government’s foreign policy, with Article 370. Hence, he wanted to leave. B C Roy wrote a letter expressing concern over Ambedkar and Rajaji leaving the cabinet. Jawaharlal Nehru replied that Rajaji’s departure could cause some damage, but the cabinet won’t be weakened by the exit of Ambedkar. That is your thinking (about Ambedkar). How fair is it to invoke the name of someone just for votes whom you oppose?”

He reminded the Congress leadership about its refusal to build a memorial for B R Ambedkar at his birthplace in Mhow in Madhya Pradesh on the specious argument that personal memorials should be built using private resources. “Were not so many memorials (of Congress leaders) built all over?” he questioned. He told the House that the BJP government had built memorials for Ambedkar at Mhow, London, Delhi, Nagpur, and Mumbai, which Prime Minister Narendra Modi described as “*panch teerth*” — five sacred places associated with Ambedkar.

Where is any insult to Ambedkar in this? Shah’s intention was to expose the duplicity of the Congress party. His comment about heaven was not for the admirers of Ambedkar, but for parties like the Congress that view Ambedkar just as an instrument for garnering votes. The reality is that there were no protests from the Congress Party during the 90-minute speech of Shah. Only after several hours, as though at the instigation of someone, the Congress and its allies started protesting. Clearly, it was not any real sentiment of hurt, but a political afterthought.

Leaders like Mahatma Gandhi, Ambedkar and Savarkar shouldn’t be treated as the property of any one group or party. They are our national heroes. They did not always agree with each other. Gandhi wrote in one of his last statements that the Congress should not be allowed to become an instrument for power and it should be disbanded. Ambedkar was a life-long critic of Congress and said at one point

that he would prefer suicide to joining that party. Savarkar too had his disagreements with Gandhi’s politics. Yet, they always demonstrated utmost maturity. It was Gandhi who told Nehru to include Opposition leaders like Ambedkar, Rajagopalachari and Shyama Prasad Mookerjee in the interim government of 1946. Savarkar invited Gandhi to Ratnagiri in 1934 and both held day-long discussions. Beyond their political differences lay their great contributions to the nation, its freedom and reconstruction.

The Opposition also demonstrated its immaturity through a futile attempt of cornering the ruling party on what scholar Shashi Shekhar Sharma called the “imagined *manuvaad*”. None of those waving copies of *Manusmriti* would have read it. But they sure did not read Ambedkar fully either. It is nobody’s case to insist that a code written several centuries ago should be considered appropriate in this age. But to identify one party or a group as *Manuvaadis* betrays intellectual bankruptcy.

Several codes, including *Manusmriti*, existed in ancient India. But none of them were made mandatory by any ruler. They were largely moral codes. There were some elements in those that outlived their purpose. Ambedkar fought against those regressive elements by symbolically burning down *Manusmriti* at a public event in 1927. But he was not blind to certain valuable elements in those *smritis*. Speaking in the Constituent Assembly on the Hindu Code Bill on February 24, 1949, Ambedkar said that Manu and Yagnavalkya “rank the highest among 137 who had tried their hands in framing *smritis*”, reminding the House that those *smritikars* had made daughters entitled to one-fourth share of the family inheritance. However, the British government had ruled that customs overruled texts. Ambedkar bemoaned that it “has destroyed the efficacy of the texts”. Complaining that the decision made it impossible for the judiciary to examine what laws were laid out by “our rishis and our *smritikars*”, Ambedkar rued that “if the privy council had not given that decision”, “some lawyer or a judge would have unearthed this text of Yagnavalkya and *Manusmriti*, and women today would have been enjoying, if not more, at least one-fourth of the share of their property”. On a couple of later occasions too, Ambedkar stated that he had used *Manusmriti* for issues like caste determination and inheritance rights.

It is not unusual that great leaders are subjected to scrutiny and criticism. Bismarck was hailed as the greatest unifier in German history, the “Iron Chancellor”. Today, his legacy is both respected and critically examined. Abraham Lincoln is considered the greatest American president in history. Yet, he also endures criticism for using racist language and supporting Black voting rights very late in life. In the UK, Winston Churchill is regarded as the national saviour. But his complex history is a subject of great debate and criticism.

Can our political class imbibe that maturity about treating national heroes with respect while agreeing to have constructive differences of opinion, without deification or demonisation?

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



JEFFREY DROPE AND MUKESH KEJRIWAL

A smoker check

Higher GST on tobacco can improve societal health, revenues

IMAGINE A BIG, vibrant joint family filled with young, ambitious members, who dream of education, better opportunities, and a healthy life. The family head prioritises essential needs like food, clothing, education, health and life insurance to safeguard their future. To afford these, he would naturally cut back on non-essential or harmful expenses.

Interestingly, this common-sense approach is exactly what the Group of Ministers (GoM), set up by the GST Council, has proposed for the country’s tax structure. It has recommended a major revision of taxes, aligning them more closely with the critical and essential priorities of the common person. Essential items like bottled water, bicycles, and exercise books will see reduced levies. Simultaneously, there is momentum to reduce the GST on health and life insurance premiums, making these essential services more affordable. High-value luxury goods, including tobacco products, will face higher GST rates.

Just as a family prioritises investments for the well-being of its members, this proposal reflects a national vision for a healthier, more equitable India.

Using tobacco products like cigarettes, *bidis* and *gutka* kills about half of the people who use them and takes 11 years off a life on average. In India, tobacco kills nearly 1.3 million people each year and makes millions more sick. These numbers are not just statistics; they represent families torn apart and enormous societal costs in terms of lost pro-

ductivity and healthcare burdens.

However, there is a proven way to reduce this needless death and disease — taxation. Raising taxes on tobacco products to increase their prices is the single most effective policy to reduce consumption. Higher prices discourage people from starting, encourage current users to quit, and prevent relapse among former users. This is particularly true for young people, who are highly price-sensitive. Many smokers would quit, many young people would never start, and hundreds of thousands of lives could be saved even in the short term.

To add another big win, because consumption declines disproportionately less compared to the tax increase, these tax increases will lead to substantially higher tax revenues, which can be used to support health, education, and other policies that promote societal well-being. And because lower-income people are more responsive to price, they are more likely to quit or consume less, and the benefits will go more to them. In other words, taxing tobacco products is a highly progressive policy.

In this context, the proposal to place tobacco products in a higher slab of the GST at 35 per cent is an excellent policy for both public and fiscal health. It will also help to correct a somewhat rocky recent path for tobacco tax policies in India that began well when the GST was introduced.

The Economics for Health programme at Johns Hopkins University Bloomberg School of Public Health evaluates countries’ tobacco

tax policies biennially on a scale of 0 to 5, with 5 being the top score. It evaluates the overall price, the tax share of price, the change in affordability, and the tax structure. India’s overall score in the latest edition was 1.5 out of 5, which was below the global average of 1.99. India’s tax share of prices of all the major tobacco products falls significantly short of the WHO’s recommended minimum of 75 per cent.

India continues to struggle on both tax structure and change in affordability. Like many of its South Asian neighbours, India maintains a tiered structure wherein excise taxes are lower on some brands. This means that when taxes and prices increase, there remain cheaper, similar products to which users can switch. Furthermore, *bidis* have much lower or even no tax and are therefore very inexpensive. Because of both the problematic tax structure and the lack of regular, significant tax increases, from 2016 to 2022, tobacco products like cigarettes, *bidis* and chewing tobacco products have become more affordable on average.

For India to maximise the health and fiscal potential of tobacco taxes, it is necessary to improve on several things. In brief, India needs a unified tax structure — the same rate applied per cigarette no matter the brand, price, or other characteristic — that relies more on specific excise taxes and is adjusted upward annually more than the combination of inflation and income growth. The government must

also consider how to regulate and tax *bidis*, the other major smoked tobacco product, more effectively, and eventually smokeless products, too.

Just as every family must balance its books wisely, so too must a nation. India is on the right track with the proposed increase in the GST for tobacco products. The GST Council’s deliberations on restructuring the tax system come as a timely opportunity to address these gaps.

While these proposals are commendable, they require strong political will to overcome opposition from the powerful tobacco industry. This industry, with its vast resources, will undoubtedly resist any move that threatens its profits. However, the stakes are too high for hesitation. The GST Council has an opportunity to demonstrate courage and foresight by adopting these reforms.

A higher GST slab for tobacco products will not only save lives but also align with India’s broader goals of creating a healthier, more productive population. The revenue generated can be reinvested in public goods, reinforcing the nation’s commitment to universal health and social equity.

Jeffrey Drope is Director of Economics for Health (formerly Tobacco Economics), as well as a Research Professor at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. Mukesh Kejriwal is a Delhi-based journalist works on health and tobacco control issues

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

EXTENDING A HAND

THIS REFERS TO the article, ‘The bridge to Moscow’ (IE, December 20). The article highlights the importance of India-Russia relations in the current geopolitically complex world. A diplomatic relationship between them two is pivotal in mitigating global disorder. India serves as a crucial bridge, connecting Russia to the West and preventing its complete isolation from global conversations. This strategic partnership offers mutual benefits, including energy security, economic cooperation, and shared interests in Arctic governance. While geopolitical complexities and ethical concerns persist, the enduring significance of this alliance cannot be underestimated. India’s ability to navigate this relationship will be instrumental in shaping the future growth of these two countries.

Sharadiya Mitra, Kolkata

AMBEDKAR’S LEGACY

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, ‘Over Babasaheb’ (IE, December 20). Union Home Minister Amit Shah’s comment on B R Ambedkar has ignited a political firestorm, with the Opposition uniting across party lines to demand his resignation and an apology. Shah’s remarks, made during a debate in Parliament

while discussing the Constitution, were perceived as disrespectful to Ambedkar, the chief architect of India’s core document. It goes without saying that for millions, Ambedkar represents the foundation, empowerment, and equality of India’s democracy. As protests continue, the debate over Shah’s remarks reveals deeper divisions in India’s political discourse — divisions over who truly respects Ambedkar’s ideals and who uses his name as a tool for political expediency.

Khokan Das, Kolkata

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, ‘Over Babasaheb’ (IE, December 20). Babasaheb’s legacy isn’t limited to Dalits; it has a profound influence on everyone, and his determination to create a casteless society is well-known. However, what is happening today can only be described as disappointing. No one can claim to be a true devotee of Ambedkar unless they genuinely adhere to his ideology, which is tough yet worthwhile. He stood for universal civil liberties and rights and was a saviour for those who lacked these fundamental freedoms. The political carnival taking place in his name today tarnishes his dream for India. To truly uphold his words and aspirations, political parties need to address equality and justice for all.

Vishwas Singh, Lucknow



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If there are questions of current or contemporary relevance that you would like explained, please write to explained@indianexpress.com

EXPLAINED FOREIGN POLICY & STRATEGY

As Dissanayake visits, takeaways from the India-SL engagement

SHUBHAJIT ROY
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 20

THE VISIT of Sri Lanka’s President Anura Kumara Disanayake to India this week — his first trip overseas since becoming leader of his country — saw some classic diplomatic deal-making, with give and take on both sides.

Win some, lose some

AKD, as he is popularly known, committed to not allowing the use of Sri Lankan territory for any anti-Indian activities.

“I have given an assurance to the Prime Minister...that we will not have our land...used in...a manner that is detrimental to the interest of India,” Dissanayake said after bilateral talks with Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday.

The joint statement said “President Disanayake reiterated Sri Lanka’s stated position of not permitting its territory to be used in any manner inimical to the security of India as well as towards regional stability.”

This was a signal to China — whose “research vessels” frequently visit Sri Lanka, and are seen with suspicion in New Delhi. The fact that the President, who is seen as being pro-China, has clearly articulated this position is a relief to India.

On the issue of Tamil minorities, however, AKD did not yield to the formulation preferred by New Delhi. There was no explicit mention of the implementation of the 13th amendment in the Sri Lankan Constitution, which gives powers to the Tamil minority — a long-standing demand of the Indian government. AKD does not support the implementation of the amendment, and has opposed any investigation into alleged war crimes during the last phase of the civil war between the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) and the Sri Lankan military.

Modi said the two leaders had discussed “reconciliation and reconstruction” in Sri Lanka, and hoped that the Sri Lankan government would “fully implement the Constitution and fulfil its commitment to hold provincial council elections”.

AKD, on his part, mentioned unity, social protection, and sustainable development. “Diversity”, he said, is the “cornerstone of democracy”.

Confident President

The joint statement suggested that the new establishment in Sri Lanka had got its way in its framing.

About two months ago, after External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar met AKD in Colombo, the Indian statement had said that Jaishankar reiterated India’s support for the aspirations of all communities, including Tamils, for equality, justice, dignity, and peace, while maintaining the unity, territorial integrity, and sovereignty of Sri Lanka.

“The full and effective implementation of the 13th Amendment...and the early holding of Provincial Council elections would facilitate these objectives,” it had said.

Two and a half months later, AKD — emboldened by the historic parliamentary majority in the November election — is much more confident in his dealings with big powers such as India and China.

ers such as India and China.

This confidence has been visible in the President’s actions at home as well, where he has appeared determined to abide by the anti-corruption principles of the “Clean Sri Lanka” campaign that propelled him to power.

A case in point was the controversy, days before the President travelled to India, about the academic qualifications of his close political ally, Speaker Asoka Ranwala. The senior member of AKD’s Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP) was forced to step down after AKD made a thinly-veiled reference to the party’s intolerance for even the appearance of impropriety.

Focus on mutual benefits

The message from the Ranwala incident was that the President wanted no distractions as he went about his difficult and ambitious agenda to rebuild Sri Lanka after the social and economic crises of recent years. That focus was visible in the India-Sri Lanka joint statement, “Fostering Partnerships for a Shared Future”.

On bilateral development cooperation, the joint statement said the two leaders ac-

knowledgeed the “positive and impactful role of India’s development assistance to Sri Lanka that has significantly contributed to its socioeconomic growth”.

The countries agreed to work together for the timely completion of ongoing projects such as Phase III & IV of Indian Housing Project, the three islands’ Hybrid Renewable Energy Project, and High Impact Community Development Projects across Sri Lanka.

The elements of cooperation range from digital connectivity — the Aadhaar project and UPI — to energy cooperation. The countries are discussing the supply of LNG to Sri Lanka, the development of Trincomalee as a regional energy and industrial hub, high-capacity power grid interconnection, and the development of offshore wind power in the Palk Strait.

On physical connectivity, apart from the resumption of the passenger ferry service between Nagapattinam and Kankesanthurai, the two leaders agreed that officials should work towards the early recommencement of the passenger ferry service between Rameswaram and Talaimannar. They will also

explore the possibility of working on the rehabilitation of Sri Lanka’s Kankesanthurai port.

It was also agreed to “explore the possibility of concluding a framework Agreement on Defence Cooperation”, provision of “defence platforms and assets to augment Sri Lanka’s defence capabilities”, and intensify collaboration through joint exercises, maritime surveillance, and defence dialogue and exchanges, according to the joint statement.

PM Modi flagged the importance of maritime security, cyber security and counter-terrorism among the issues to be discussed through the Colombo Security Conclave mechanism.

All of this suggests that even though India is now no longer dealing with the traditional set of interlocutors who have dominated Sri Lankan governments, priorities and interests have not fundamentally changed for either New Delhi or Colombo.

AKD is looking at a consequential five years in power, while India, which has deep strategic stakes in Sri Lanka’s success and stability, is keen on a “mutually beneficial” partnership.

EXPLAINED GLOBAL

WHY AND HOW DID THE UNITED STATES ERADICATE ‘MURDER HORNETS’?

ALIND CHAUHAN
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 20

THE NORTHERN giant hornet, nicknamed the “murder hornet”, has been eradicated in the United States, the Department of Agriculture said on Wednesday. The insect was first spotted in Washington state near the Canadian border in 2019. Efforts quickly began to track down and get rid of the invasive species which poses a threat to bees and agriculture. Washington was the only state in the US that has had confirmed sightings of the northern giant hornets.

What made ‘murder hornets’ a threat?

The hornets, which can be 2 inches long and are an invasive species from Asia, first came under the spotlight in 2013 when they killed at least 42 people in China, and seriously injured 1,675, according to a report by the *Associated Press*.

The species poses a significant threat to insects and native pollinators. “Murder hornets” can kill an entire beehive of honeybees in just 90 minutes. “The hornets can enter a ‘slaughter phase’ where they kill entire hives by decapitating the bees. The hornets then defend the hive as their own, taking the brood to feed their own young,” according to the Washington State Department of Agriculture. “They also attack other insects but are not known to destroy entire colonies of those insects.”

Northern giant hornets can sting

through most beekeeper suits, delivering almost seven times the amount of venom as a honey bee. Moreover, they have the ability to sting multiple times.

How did the US eradicate ‘murder hornets’?

State, federal, and international government agencies joined forces to eradicate northern giant hornets in the US.

The first task was to find the nests of hornets. This was a challenge as hornets usually build their nests in forested areas, often in an underground cavity, according to the US Department of Agriculture. “In some cases, entomologists captured a live hornet, attached a radio tag to it, released it, and tracked the hornet back to its nest,” a report by *CBS News* said.

After locating a nest in a tree, entomologists “plugged the nest with foam, wrapped the tree in plastic and vacuumed out the hornets” the report said. They also used carbon dioxide to kill any of the remaining hornets.

The public participated in the process by helping entomologists track down hornet nests, and agreeing to place traps at their residences.

Dr Mark Davidson, deputy administrator at USDA’s Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, said in a statement, “By tackling this threat head-on, we protected not only pollinators and crops, but also the industries, communities, and ecosystems that depend on them.”

The eradication, however, does not mean that the hornet cannot return to the United States.



AMITABH SINHA

SOME OF the biggest challenges facing humankind — like climate change, biodiversity loss, and hunger — are interconnected, meaning that an integrated approach is needed to address these, according to a major new scientific report. Trying to deal with these challenges separately, while ignoring how they interact with and influence each other is not only likely to be ineffective, but also counter-productive, the report concluded.

The first-of-its-kind report was produced by the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES), a global group of scientific experts. The group examined the interlinkages among five major challenges — climate change, biodiversity loss, food insecurity, water scarcity, and health risks.


The report found that the world’s current economic direction was negatively impacting all of these challenges, leading to unaccounted-for costs of at least \$10-25 trillion annually.

Role of IPBES

The IPBES is to biodiversity and natural ecosystems what the more famous Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) is to climate change. It periodically examines all existing scientific knowledge on biodiversity and nature to assess its current state. Like the IPCC, the IPBES does not produce new science — it only evaluates existing knowledge to make consolidated assessments.

The information provided by the IPCC, which came into being in 1988, has formed the scientific basis for climate change negotiations. The IPBES, set up only in 2012, informs several multilateral environmental processes, including the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the Convention on Combating Desertification (CCD), the Ramsar Convention

SOME CRITICAL NUMBERS



2-6% is the decadal decline in biodiversity over the last 30-50 years

MORE THAN 50% of the global population lives in areas worst impacted by biodiversity decline, increased health risks, water and food availability, and climate change

\$58 TRILLION is the value of economic activities dependent on nature (in 2023)

UP TO \$1 TRILLION is the annual financing gap for biodiversity restoration needs

\$100-300 BILLION is the annual value of illegal resource extraction in forests, wildlife and marine trade

Plants are seen in a burned forest in Bolivia in September 2019. *Reuters*

on Wetlands, Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species, and the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety.

In its first ever report in 2019, the IPBES assessed the prevailing threat to global biodiversity and found that of an estimated eight million species of plants and animals in the world, one million faced extinction threats — more than ever before. This was mainly due to anthropogenic changes in natural ecosystems. The report found that nearly 75% of Earth’s land surface and 66% of marine environments had been “significantly altered”, and over 85% of wetlands had been “lost”.

This information became the basis for the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework finalised in 2022. This international agreement set 23 targets to be met by 2030 in order to halt and reverse biodiversity loss, including the so-called ‘30x30 targets’ which aim to protect 30% of land, freshwater, and marine ecosystems, and restore at least 30% of degraded ecosystems by 2030.

Nexus Report findings

The key takeaway of the latest assessment,

which is being called the ‘Nexus Report’, is that responses to the five aforementioned challenges need to be harmonised such that positive actions taken on any one of these does not result in negative impacts on others.

For example, an attempt to scale up food production, a positive action to deal with hunger, could increase the stress on land and water resources, and biodiversity. Exclusive focus on climate change could also go down on the same pathway. Similarly, protecting land and oceans could restrict choices on climate change and food security.

The report, therefore, argued that it is important to adopt synergistic approaches that deliver benefits across the spectrum. It went on to identify 70 such synergistic response options that produced positive outcomes across all five elements. These include restoration of carbon-rich ecosystems like forests, soils and mangroves, effective management of biodiversity to reduce risks of diseases spreading from animals to humans, promotion of sustainable healthy diets, and reliance on nature-based solutions wherever possible.

There were other response options that

deliver benefits on two or three elements but not all. These were important, but needed to be implemented carefully, the report said.

According to the report, the aim must be to find and implement actions that focus on sustainable production and consumption, while also conserving and restoring ecosystems, reducing pollution, and mitigating the impacts of climate change.

Why nature is important

The report emphasised that protecting nature and biodiversity was important for purely economic reasons as well. It said that more than half of the global GDP (about \$58 trillion annually) was moderately to highly dependent on nature. Deterioration of natural ecosystems, therefore, could directly hurt productivity and adversely impact economic output.

As it is, the world has been witnessing biodiversity decline at the rate of about 2-6% on an average, every decade over the last half a century, the report said. It highlighted that existing economic systems still offered trillions of dollars in incentives every year for actions that have direct negative impacts on biodiversity and natural ecosystems.

In another report released simultaneously, IPBES called for fundamental and transformative shifts in the way people view, and interact with the natural world in pursuit of its well-being. The so-called ‘Transformative Change Report’ found that current and previous approaches to deal with ecological decline had failed, and a new and different approach was needed to halt the slide further.

This new and transformative approach, the report said, must be based on four fundamental principles — equity and justice, pluralism and inclusion, respectful and reciprocal human-nature relationships, and adaptive learning and action.

It said the world needed to act immediately on such new approaches because the cost of delaying action would significantly increase the costs of action, which would double in a decade. There were also economic benefits of acting immediately. The report said that \$10 trillion in business opportunities, and about 400 million jobs, could be generated by 2030 through sustainable economic approaches that rely on nature-positive economic models.

In Pushpa 2’s recipe for success, the role and ingredients of masala films

ARUSHI BHASKAR
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 20

WITH THE success of Allu Arjun’s film *Pushpa 2: The Rule*, released on December 5, the focus is once more on *masala* films. Cinephiles have pointed out that it took a Telugu hero to bring back *masala* into the Hindi audiences’ film diet, with Bollywood, once the consummate master of the genre, of late churning out only lacklustre fare that has disappointed critics and the box office alike.

But what is a *masala* film? And why does the genre matter?

What are masala films?

Simply put, a *masala* film has wildly different elements thrown together (similar to how spices are combined in Indian cooking) to form a coherent narrative, with music and choreographed dance sequences comprising a major part of the runtime. Picture this: an emotional scene between a widowed mother and her young children is followed by a raunchy “item number” fea-

turing the film’s villain, which is then followed by a romance sub-plot, and then an action sequence. By the film’s end, these elements have come together to form a harmonious medley of flavours.

Indian Popular Cinema: A Narrative of Cultural Change, written by K Gokulsing and Wimal Dissanayake, postulates that the conventions of a *masala* film have been shaped by historical art forms. First are the Hindu epics *Mahabharata* and *Ramayana*, which have multiple side characters, flashbacks, and subplots. Second

are ancient Sanskrit dramas or *natyas* (including Kalidas’s *Abhijnanashakuntalam* and Sudraka’s *Mruchhakatika*). They utilised song and dance to create stylised spectacles, seemingly to maximise entertainment as well as the emotional responses of the audience.

Third come indigenous folk theatre forms, ranging from the *Harikatha* traditions of the Telugu states to Uttar Pradesh’s *Ramlilas*. The fourth influence comes from Parsi theatre. “The Parsi plays contained crude humour, melodious songs and music, sensationalism and dazzling stagecraft,” they write.



How did Bollywood get masala-fied?

The consensus is that *Yaadon Ki Baaraat* (1973) was the first *masala* movie from Bollywood. Director Nasir Hussain, and the writers Salim Khan and Javed Akhtar are now considered pioneers in popularising the format — full of plot twists, heavy emotions, action sequences, comedic sub-plots, and of course, dance numbers.

Salim-Javed wrote some of the most seminal *masala* movies in Bollywood: a few examples are *Sholay* (1975), directed by



Pushpa 2 (2024) contains many of the elements commonly seen in *masala* films, like the seminal 1973 Bollywood film *Yaadon ki Baarat*.

Ramesh Sippy that routinely features in ‘best of Bollywood’ lists; *Deewaar* (1975), directed by Yash Chopra and among the most iconic ‘Angry Young Man’ movies of the 1970s; *Don* (1978), directed by Chandra Barot and the inspiration for remakes across languages.

Why does masala matter?

The simplest answer: *masala* movies are made to cater to a large section of people. Since they contain so many different elements, something is bound to appeal to

everyone, from family audiences to ‘angry young men’. This could translate to big profits for producers and fame for the artists.

Further, if *masala* movies choose to deliver a social ‘message’, they are potentially delivering that message to a wider audience than any ‘arthouse’ film could.

Masala films have also influenced how Indian film industries, specifically Hindi, Tamil and Telugu, have been popularised globally. The Mithun Chakraborty-starrer *Disco Dancer* (1982) still enjoys a fan base in China and Russia, Rajinikanth’s *Muthu* (1995) started off a fandom wave for the superstar in Japan, and the S S Rajamouli directorial *RRR* (2022) won the Best Original Song award at the Oscars.

What about the masala films of today?

Post the economic liberalisation of 1991, the themes of Hindi films started changing. With globalisation, they also started dealing with the Indian diaspora. Several movies from this period had NRIs as the leads (most famously, 1995’s *Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge*).

With increasing exposure to Western media, there was a gradual shift in aesthetic sensibilities too — the 2000s saw the rise of

the term ‘multiplex film’, for movies made with a niche, urban audience in mind.

This did not mean that *masala* films completely faded away. The South Indian industries made *masala* films with superstar actors like Chiranjeevi and Rajinikanth. Bollywood had a few stars who delivered on this front (the likes of Salman Khan, Akshay Kumar and Ajay Devgn). But the Kannada, Tamil and Telugu industries soon took over Bollywood as the biggest supplier of *masala*. Their Hindi dubbed versions on YouTube also became popular with north Indian audiences.

Which brings us back to Allu Arjun. His fandom in the Hindi heartland is now huge, with the film making around Rs 620 cr of its total Rs 900 cr-plus haul domestically through the Hindi version. Another recent ‘pan-Indian’ success, *KGF* starring Kannada star Yash, also centred on an ‘angry young man’.

Both film franchises contributed to the discourse on whether Bollywood has lost its *masala*. A complaint against many recent Hindi *masala* films is that they take the audience for granted and lack emotional or intellectual sincerity. Examples include *Singham Again* (2024) directed by Rohit Shetty; and Salman Khan’s *Kisi Ka Bhai Kisi Ki Jaan* (2023).

Classifieds

PERSONAL

I Anuj Kumar S/o Yogendra Sharma R/o Kalanour, Post-Kalanour, P.S.-Makhdumpur, Jehanabad, Bihar- 804427, have changed my name to Anup Kumar 0070941191-1

It is for general information that I, Lakhmender, S/o Raj Kumar, R/o B-123, Laxmi Park, Nangloi, West Delhi, Delhi-110041, declare that name of mine and my minor daughter has been wrongly written as Lakhvinder Singh and Palak Yadav in my minor daughter Palak aged 14 years in her School Records. The actual name of mine and my minor daughter are Lakhmender and Palak. 0040764854-9

I, HARSHEET KAUR W/o HARPREET SINGH R/O PLOT.NO-36 F/F SHIVAJI ENCLAVE TAGOREGARDEN, DELHI-110027, have changed my name to HARSHEET KAUR SAHNI. 0040764854-7

SIRAJUDDIN S/O MOHD KALWA SALMANI R/O 17, GALI NO-43, H BLOCK, MADINA MASJID, ZAKIR NAGAR OKHLA, DELHI-25, HAVE CHANGE MY NAME SIRAJUDDIN SALMANI 0130047522-1

I Ahmad Moghese R/O of F88 Abul Fazal Enclave Jamia Nagar Delhi-25 have changed my daughter's name from Moiza Ahmad to Ayanaza Ahmad vd affidavit dated 30.7.24 0050256895-1

It is for general information that I, Sandeep Singh, S/o -Kanwaljit Singh, R/o -Flat No.487, Gali No.74, Swatantra Nagar, Delhi-110040, declare that name of my father has been wrongly written as Kamaljit Singh in my 10th and 12th-class educational documents. The actual name of my father is Kanwaljit Singh, respectively which may be amended accordingly. 0040764874-9

I, Karan, S/O-Satish dang, R/O,House.no.333,Shakti Khand-3,Indirapuram Ghaziabad,Uttar Pradesh - 201014, have changed my name to Karan Dang, for all, future purposes. 0040764883-3

I, hitherto known as KALAWATI, D/O-GOVIND VALLABH OJHA, W/O-MOHAN CHANDRA UPRETI, R/O-C-18/2, THIRD FLOOR, SEWAK PARK, UTTAM NAGAR, WEST-DELHI, DELHI-110059, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as KALAWATI UPRETI. 0040764878-3

I, VINOD KUMAR, S/O Panna Lal Saxena, R/O, A-199 2nd Floor Sector-14, Budh-Vihar, Kaushambi, Ghaziabad U.P.201010, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO VINOD KUMAR SAXENA, FOR ALL FUTURE PURPOSES. 0040764891-4

I, VIJAY KUMAR, S/O-ISHWAR LAL DHAKA, residing at-1307, SECTOR-55 FARUDABAD HARYANA-121004, Have changed my name to VIJAY KUMAR DHAKA for all future purpose. 0040764878-9

I, VANSHIKA, D/O MAHESH CHAND, R/O-138-A GYAN KHAND-4 INDIRAPURAM SHIPRA SUN CITY, Ghaziabad-201014, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO VANSHIKA PAL, FOR ALL FUTURE PURPOSES. 0040764854-8

I, Shelly W/o-Deepak Shawel Address-FLAT no-C-6 VISHWAS APARTMENT, PLOT NO-G-21-22, GALI-1A, VISHWAS PARK UTTAM -NAGAR DWARKA Delhi-110059, changed my name to Shelly Shawel. 0040764854-1

I, SAMEENA, W/O MOHAMMAD JAVED, R/O-B-565, FRIST FLOOR, BUNKAR COLONY , PHASE-4, ASHOK-VIHAR, Delhi-110052, have changed my name to SAMINA BANO permanently. 0040764854-5

I Aditya Rana S/O Pardeep Rana R/O Flat.No-405 Tower-3 Silver Estate F-29, Sector 50, Noida Up, Have Changed My, Name To Aditya Rana. 0040764891-1

I, S B Anupama, spouse of Pradeep Kumar R, resident of at Village & PO-Parasuvaikkal, PS-Parasalla, District- Thiruvananthapuram, State-Kerala, Pin-695508, have changed my name from S B Anupama to Anupama B S, vide Affidavit dated 14/12/2024 before Notary Public, District Court Srinagar, Govt of Jammu and Kashmir. 0020486097-1

I, Reena Mittal W/O Nitin Mittal, R/O-304 Yucca Paramount Symphony Crossing Republic Ghaziabad Up, Have Changed My, Name To Reena Rastogi Mittal. 0040764891-2

I, Rashmi Kumari Jha, w/o Ravindra Nath Jha R/o B3B/34B, Janak Puri B1, New Delhi-110058 have changed my name to Rashmi Jha Permanently. 0040764874-2

I, Raman S/o Naresh Kaushik, R/O H-90/1B, New Palam Vihar Phase 1 Gurgaon (Haryana)-122017, have changed my name to Raman Kaushik. 0040764883-2

I, Dharmendra Singh S/o Mahendara Singh, R/O B-924, Gautam Puri, Ph-2, Badarpur, South Delhi, Delhi-110044, have changed my name and shall hereafter be Known as Jitendra. 0070941179-1

I, Tabssum D/o. Mohd Deen R/o 3168, Phatak Telyan, Turkman Gate, Delhi-110006 have changed my name to TABASSUM permanently. 0040764854-2

I, RIPU DAMAN S/O SURESH KUMAR, R/O 326/9, WARD NO.9, NEAR SABZI-MANDI OLD HOUSING BOARD COLONY, SONIPAT, HARYANA-131001, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO RIPU DAMAN NASSA. 0040764883-4

I, RAJKUMAR S/O RAM JI DASS R/O HNO.11004/14, KRISHNA COLONY, GOHANA-ROAD, ROHTAK, HARYANA-124001, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO RAJ KUMAR BABBAR FOR ALL PURPOSES. 0040764883-5

I, Pushpendra Singh, S/o Gopal Singh, R/O-T-572/E1, Gali.No-2, Vijay-Marg, Baljeet Nagar, Patel Nagar, Central Delhi, Delhi-110008, have changed my name to Pushpendra Singh Rawat, for all, future purposes. 0040764264-11

I, Prashant Sadh S/O Naresh Kumar Sadh, R/O E-42 Lajpat Nagar-3, Delhi-110024 Have Changed my Name to Prashant Kumar Sadh. 0040764874-3

I, PUSHPA W/O Arvind Thakur R/O H.No-172-A, 4th floor Hari Nagar, Ashram, Jungpura Delhi-110014, have changed my name to PUSHPA KUMARI permanently. 0040764854-4

I, Nusrat Parween, spouse of MD Asif Equbal, resident of at Village -Bakerpur, PO-Dariyapur, PS-Mufasssil, District-Munger, State-Bihar, Pin-811201, have changed my name from Nusrat Parween to Nusrat Perween, vide Affidavit dated 14/12/2024 before Notary Public, District Court Srinagar, Govt of Jammu and Kashmir. 0020486096-1

I, Nisha Prakash, W/O-Satya Prakash Garg, R/O Flat.No-109,1st floor, Block S-3, Saraswati Apartment, D-6, Vasant Kunj South West-Delhi-110070, have changed my name is Nisha Prakash Garg. 0040764878-2

I, Naresh Kumar S/o Puran Chand R/O-H.No.196, 1st and 1IInd Floor, Sandesh Vihar, Pitampura Delhi-110034, changed my name to Naresh Kumar Goyal. 0040764874-7

I, NO-15425879X, RANK-HAV/BTA NAME-NAGESH KUMAR, S/O-SEVAN LAL GANGBER, R/O VPO-LOHARSIT, TEHSIL & DIST-DHAMTARI, CHATTISGARH-493773, inform that in my, service records my, father's name SEVAN KUMAR and mother's, name SAGUNA BAI, wrongly-written. Kindly amendment in my, service records my, father's name from SEVAN KUMAR to SEVAN LAL GANGBER and my, mother's name from SAGUNA BAI to SAGUNA BAI GANGBER, for all, future purposes. 0040764883-9

I, Aanchal Dhawan, W/o Rajat Wadhwa, R/O 3E/59 NIT Faridabad (Haryana)-121001, have changed my name to Aanchal Wadhwa. 0040764883-1

I, Manu Kumar, S/o Shiv Kumar Sahani, R/O, H.No.726, 1st Floor, Tarla Mohalla, Ghitorni, South West-Delhi, Delhi-110030, have changed my name to Manu Kumar Sahani, for all, future purposes. 0040764874-8

I, MOHD JAFAR S/o Mohd. Sami, R/O-136, 4th Floor, Gali No.-7, Chand Bagh, Karawal Nagar, Delhi-110090, have changed my name to MOHD. ZAFAR for all future purposes. 0040764874-1

I, MAHAVIR GARG S/O MATTA CHAND, R/O, H.No.35-36, SECOND-FLOOR, POCKET-4, SECTOR-22, ROHINI, DELHI-110086, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO MAHAVIR PRASAD FOR ALL PURPOSES. 0040764878-6

I, Kumari Madhu Sharma, W/o Sh. Sanju Sharma, R/O, House, No.A-262, Gali.No.11, Swaroop-Vihar, Burari, North Delhi-110084, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as Madhu Sharma. 0040764878-7

I, Kumar Gaurav, S/o Satish Kumar R/O A-101, manisha towers, plot number. 7B, Dwarka sector-23 Pin 110077, have changed my name to Gaurav Kumar, for future use. 0040764891-3

I, Kawal Ratra, S/o Dayal Das R/o-207, Bhoor Bharat Nagar, Near-Railway Station, Ghaziabad U.P-201001, have changed my name to Kawal Kumar Ratra. 0040764878-1

I, Jasbir Singh, S/O Joginder Singh R/O J-19, Third floor, Gangra-Ram Vatika, Near Ganga Ram Vatika-Park, Tilak Nagar, New Delhi-110018, have changed my name to Jasbir Singh Grover for All Purposes. 0040764878-4

I, Jasmohan Nakra, S/o Ravi Kumar, R/O WZ-38A, Meenakshi Garden, New Delhi-110018, have changed the name my minor daughter Ashika Nakra to Yashika Nakra born on-06/10/2016. 0040764874-4

I, HARPREET S/O SIMRAN SINGH, R/O PLOT.NO.36/F SHIVAJI ENCLAVE TAGOREGARDEN DELHI-110027, have changed my name to HARPREET SINGH. 0040764854-6

I, Jayanti D/o Sh. Dinesh kumar house-28 sawanpark extn. Ashok Vihar north west Delhi-52 My Father name Dinesh kumar is mention wrong in my all Education certificate and Aadhar, PAN card etc. But the correct name is Dinesh kumar verma. This is my true statement. 0040764778-1

I, HARBIR SINGH SHOKEEN, S/O JAI PAL SINGH, R/o, House.No-116A, SULTANPUR MAJRA, DELHI-110086, declared that in my passport name has been written as HARBIR SINGH my passport.no M4015106, whereas my correct-name is HARBIR SINGH SHOKEEN. 0040764854-10

I, Bajrang Lal Gupta R/o-L-1049, Mangolpuri Delhi-110083, have charged my Minor Daughter's Name From LAXMI to DIVYA GUPTA. (DOB:16.11.2010). 0040764878-8

I, Asit Kumar, S/O-Govind Prasad Ray, Address-Flat.no-1806 Ko.2 classic height Jaypee wish town sector-134, noida GautamBuddha-nagar, Uttar Pradesh-201304, changed my name to Asit Kumar Rai. 0040764878-5

I, Ankit S/O Arvind Thakur, R/O H.No-172-A, 4th floor Hari Nagar, Ashram, Jungpura, Delhi-110014, have changed my name to ANKIT THAKUR permanently. 0040764854-3

I, VIDYANAND DAHIYA S/O SH.BHAGMAL DAHIYA R/O 3729, GALI NO-9, NARANG COLONY TRI NAGAR, DELHI-110035, do herby solemnly affirm and declare that PRIYA DAHIYA and PRIYA GULATI is one and the same person and finally consider her name as PRIYA DAHIYA for all future Purposes. 0040764775-1

I, VIDYANAND DAHIYA S/O SH.BHAGMAL DAHIYA R/O 3729, GALI NO-9, NARANG COLONY TRI NAGAR, DELHI-110035, do herby solemnly affirm and declare that GUNIKA DAHIYA and GUNIKA GULATI is one and the same person and finally consider her name as GUNIKA DAHIYA for all future Purposes. 0040764776-1

I, Sikander Ial S/o Late Shri Deep Chand R/O A-194, Prashant vihar Delhi-110085, have changed my Son Name From Vaibhav to Aarav Kansal for all purposes. 0040764835-1

I, Rohit S/O Ishwar Singh R/O 25-B, Zamrudpur, Greater Kailash-1, Delhi-48 have changed my name to Rohit Kohli 0070941169-1

I, Rashi Shailesh Gupta, W/o Sanchit Jindal, R/o-C-11, Friends colony east Delhi-110065, have changed my name to Rashi Jindal 0040764874-5

I, R.S.Negi S/O K.S.Negi R/O RZ-D220, Flaj Nagar-2, Palam, Delhi have changed my name to Rabinder Singh Negi for all purposes. 0070941146-1

I, Priyanka W/o Anuj Bhartiya R/O T-3/803, Parsvnagri Platinum, Swarn Nagari, Greater Noida, Distt. G.B. Nagar, U.P., have changed my name to Priyanka Bhartiya for all future purposes. 0070941238-1

I, Pawan Kumar S/o Mam Chand R/O A-57, Anarkali Garden, Gali No-4, Krishna Nagar, Delhi-51 have changed my name to Pawan Kumar Varma 0070941172-1

I, P Nandini alias Nandini P and Padmanabhan Nandini D/O Padmanabhan Mani, W/O Balasubramanian R/O House Number.6, F-169, Katwarlia Sarai, Hauz Khas, South Delhi, Delhi-110016, have changed my name and shall hereafter be Known as Nandini Padmanabhan 0070941186-1

I, Mora Vishwanath S/o M Kishan Ganesh R/o 1-1-301/12, Bapu Nagar, Chikkadpally, Musheerabad, Hyderabad, Telangana-500020, have changed my minor son's name from Mora Devansh Aged 07 Years to Mora Trinav forever 0070941251-1

I, Mohammed Haider Pasha S/o Mohammad Kareem R/o H-No-1-122/A, 1st Ward, Prashanth Nagar, Siddipet, Medak, Telangana-502103, have changed my minor daughter's name from Esa Mariya aged 09 years to Samreen forever 0070941247-1

I, Mohammad Hamza Athar S/o Muhammed Mumtaz Ahmad Residence C-154T/F, Abul Fazal Enclave-I, Shahnai Bagh, Okhla, Naina Nagar, Delhi-110025 have changed my name Muhammad Hamza Athar to Mohammad Hamza Athar for all future purposes. Mohammad Hamza Athar and Muhammad Hamza Athar both are same person. 0070941192-1

I, Manisha Gupta R/o 67, 3rd-Floor, Pocket-D, Sarita Vihar, Delhi-76 have changed my name to Manisha Batham 0070941163-1

I, MD Hamza Rashid, S/o- Mohammad Rashid, R/o-591, Gali Jutey wali, churi wala, Jama Masjid Delhi-110006, have changed my name to Mohammad Hamza 0040764874-6

I, Laxmi Kant Gautam S/O Mohan Lal Gautam, R/o A-18, First Floor, Mansa Ram Park, Uttam Nagar, D.K Mohan Garden, West Delhi, Delhi-110059, I have changed the name of my minor Son Naksh Gautam aged about 10 Years and He shall hereafter be known as Nakshatra Gautam 0070941188-1

I, Harjas Sodhi Alias Harjas Singh S/o Rajinder Singh R/o H.No. 25/3, Patel Nagar, Delhi-110008 have changed my name to Harjas Singh for all purposes. 0070941174-1

IDAULAT RAM S/O SITAL DASS R/O-E-142 ASHOK VIHAR PHASE-1, DELHI-110052 HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO DAULAT RAM KESWANI. 0040764878-10

I, Happy Kumar S/o Sh, Kirpal Singh Chauhan R/o Chhalera, Sector-44, Noida Sector-37, G.B.Nagar U.P.-201303do hereby solemnly inform that Happy Kumar & Happy Chauhan both are one and the same person. 0040764850-1

I, Badal Sethi S/o Harish Kumar Sethi R/o BW-95C, Shalimar Bagh, Delhi-08 declare that my Passport shows my father's name as Harish Sethi. It should be read as Harish Kumar Sethi and both belong to one and same person. 0040764777-1

I, Ahmit Lal S/O Chabi Lal Chhettri, R/o Vasant Kunj, South West Delhi-110070, have changed my name and shall hereafter be Known as Ahnit Lal Chhettri. 0070941181-1

I Sheikh Zuhaib S/O, Fehmima Siddique R/o 404, Gh-13, Paschim Vihar, West Delhi, New Delhi, 110087 have changed my name to Zuhaib Batra. 0040764805-1

I Neeraj Tanwar S/o Mr.Satpal Tanwar R/o WZ-396B/1, Naraina Village, New Delhi-110028 have changed my name to Neeraj Kumar Tanwar for all purposes. 0040764764-1

I Mohammad Nasbulain S/O, Kaiful Wara Ansari R/o H No. 69 Chur Ashola Church Wali Gali Fatehpurberi Distt South Delhi 110074. have changed my name to Nasbulain K Wara. 0040764803-1

I Chinamalakonda Pedamalakonda Vhennapusa S/O Pada Malakondaiah R/o 3-35-1, Neredu Palai, Prakasam, Andhra Pradesh-523111, have changed my name to China Malakondaiah Vennapusa 0070941241-1

I Archana Yadav D/O, Amarjit Yadav R/o Village- Bhudpur, Rewari, Haryana- 123401 have changed my name to Archana Yadav. 0040764780-1

LOST & FOUND

Original Sale Deed Serial No. 5205 Dated 21/03/2016 of House No. 11-A/216 Rachna Sector-3 Vaishali Ghaziabad has been lost somewhere, if anybody found contact to Dr. Surinder Kumar Mobile No. 9971977736 0040764765-1

Lost my original Allotment Letter and other related documents of my Plot No.S-28, Sector-C-4, Tronica City, Loni, Ghaziabad, U.P. Finder may Contact-Dhir Singh at Village Pavisadak Pur, Loni. 0040764801-1

Lost my original Allotment Letter and other related documents of my Plot No.S-27, Sector-C-4, Tronica City, Loni, Ghaziabad, U.P. Finder may Contact-Deepak Chaudhary at Village Pavisadak Pur, Loni. 0040764798-1

I Vijay Kumar Chugh S/o Late Sh.Laxman Dass R/O C-4/191, Sector-36, Noida, U.P. have lost my Original Papers General Power of Attorney registered as document No.1140 dated 09.06.1995 and Original Agreement to Sell registered as document No.1204 dated 09.06.1995 of above said property. Finders may contact at above address. 0040764764-2

Lost all original documents against my Land Covered under Kh.No.54/12 & 55/19 in Village Bakhtawarpur Delhi, owned by Sh. Amit Jain S/o-Late Sh.M.M. Jain. Finder may Contact-Amit Jain at 208, Starlite Apartment, Sec-14 Extn., Rohini, Delhi-110085 0040764795-1

Lost all original documents against my Land Covered under Kh. No.35//23/2/4 & 42//3/4 in Village Jakhoda, Delhi Rohtak Road, Jhajjar, Haryana, owned by Smt. Bela Jain. Finder may Contact-Bela Jain at 208, Starlite Apartment, Sec-14 Extn., Rohini, Delhi-110085 0040764797-1

I, Vimal Wadhwa W/o Late Jayant Wadhwa have Lost my Property Original, Documents Possession Letter, DDA NOC for, Electricity and Water, Bank Chalan, and Site Possession Slip in respect of Flat No.69-B, Block-CD Pitampura Delhi-110034, have Lodged AN FIR/NCRV IDE LR. No.2408067/2024. DATED 17/12//2024, if any, found plz, Contact-9999490386 0040764883-11

Lost all original documents against my Land Covered under Kh. No.55/19 in Village Bakhtawarpur Delhi, owned by Smt. Bhavna Jain. Finder may Contact-Bhavna Jain at 208, Starlite Apartment, Sec-14 Extn., Rohini, Delhi-110085 0040764793-1

PUBLIC NOTICE

TO be known to all that I Vinay Prakash Roy S/o Sh. Maya Prakash Roy R/o Flat No. above GF, Pk-2, CACT SFS 2, Sec-9, Dwarka, New Delhi. The original Property documents i.e. Allocation Letter, 5th and Final Demand Letter, DDA Possession Letter and Water and Electricity NOC in respect of Flat No. 44A, GF, Pk-2, CACT SFS 2, Sec-9, Dwarka, New Delhi, have been lost. An FIR to this effect has been lodged in Police Station Vide NCR/ LR No. 2410372/2024 dated: 18/12/2024. Any person (s) claiming any right, interest, having any objection or found in possession of original documents, may write/contact with above named person at above address within 15 days from the date of publication of this notice. The person claiming any right, interest, objections with respect to this property can personally inform or write to Dr. Dir. of Ctr. SFS D-Block, 3rd Floor, Vikas Sadan, INA, New Delhi.

PUBLIC NOTICE
IT IS HEREBY INFORMED THAT SHRI AKHRESH YADAV & SMT. NILAM YADAV, WHO HAD APPLIED FOR LOAN FROM UCOB AND THERE IS A DEATH OF LATE SHRI YASHI PAL GERA DIED ON 16/04/2024 AND HIS SON SHRI GUNESH KUMAR SO LATE K SHRI YASHI PAL GERA ALSO DIED IN 16/04/2024 OF THE FREEDHOLD RULES IF PROPERTY BEARING MUNICIPAL NO. 25-B, AREA MEASURING 115 SQ. YDS. SIRAJ NAGAR, GAZIABAD, UTTAR PRADESH, AND IN THIS PROPERTY AND SELLER NAME IS SHRI GURAV CHAUHAN. SH. SHRI DEEPAK CHAUHAN & O SHRI ANJY CHAUHAN DOES NOT POSSESS THE DEATH CERTIFICATE AND SURVIVING MEMBER CERTIFICATE. IF ANY OTHER CLAIMANT HAS ANY RIGHT IN THE ABOVE SAID PROPERTY, HE/SHE SHOULD INFORM A GIVE INTIMATION TO THE UNDERSIGNED WITHIN 07 DAYS FROM THE DATE OF ISSUE OF THIS NOTICE.
Sd/-
SUBHASH GUPTA
ADVOCATE
Enrt. No. D-446/2002

PUBLIC NOTICE
Notice is hereby given to public at large that I, Vivek Dutta, son of Mr. Bal Kishan Dutta, resident of House No.781-P Sector-21A, Faridabad-121001 (Haryana) have severed all my relations with my son Mr. Varun Dutta, who is a Canadian citizen and I have no dealings and/or connections of any kind whatsoever with him. Mr. Varun Dutta has no right or title or interest or share or claim in any of the properties, movable and immovable, belonging to/owned by me. Anybody including any legal entity either dealing with Mr. Varun Dutta or may deal with him in future, may do so entirely at his/her/their own risk, responsibilities and consequences and I am not and I will not be responsible and/or liable in any manner whatsoever for his acts, actions, deeds, dealings, liabilities, debts etc. Be informed accordingly.
Advdt. Sudhir Chahal
Enroll No. D-3155/2019
On Behalf of Vivek Dutta
Dated: 21.12.2024.
Place: Faridabad

PUBLIC NOTICE
It is to inform the public at large that my clients Sh. Madan Mohan Srivastava, S/o Late Sh. D.S. Srivastava and Smt. Bharti Srivastava, w/o Sh. Madan Mohan Srivastava, R/o A-42A, Kiran Garden, Gali No. 9, Nawada, Uttam Nagar, Delhi-110059, have disowned their son Akash Srivastava from all their movable and immovable properties as their son is beyond their control and family norms. My clients shall not be responsible for any acts or deed done by him in future.
Sd/-
(Ms. DEEPIKA)
Advocate
Ch No. 653, Western Wing, Tis Hazari Courts, Delhi-110054

PUBLIC NOTICE
It is for the general information that my clients Sh. Madan Mohan Srivastava, S/o Late Sh. D.S. Srivastava and Smt. Bharti Srivastava, w/o Sh. Madan Mohan Srivastava, R/o A-42A, Kiran Garden, Gali No. 9, Nawada, Uttam Nagar, Delhi-110059, have disowned their son Akash Srivastava from all their movable and immovable properties as their son is beyond their control and family norms. My clients shall not be responsible for any acts or deed done by him in future.
Sd/-
(Ms. DEEPIKA)
Advocate
Ch No. 653, Western Wing, Tis Hazari Courts, Delhi-110054

PUBLIC NOTICE
It is for the general information that I AJAY GERALD EKKA S/O AUGUSTINE EKKA R/O H.No-360, Flat NO-10, FF CHIRAG DELHI, NEW DELHI -110017, declare that name of mine has been wrongly written as AJAY GEKKA in my driving License No. DL03 1999930488. The actual name of mine is AJAY GERALD EKKA which may be amended accordingly.

PUBLIC NOTICE
IT IS HEREBY INFORMED THAT SHRI RAJAN BIKHRAIA, WHO HAD APPLIED FOR LOAN FROM BANK OF BARODA AND THERE IS A DEATH OF LATE SHRI SHUKHRY RAJ DIED ON 20/01/2020 IN RESPECT OF THE ENTIRE FIRST FLOOR WITHOUT ROOF RIGHTS, OFF OF BUILD-UP PROPERTY BEARING NO.170/1A, BUILT ON FREEDHOLD PLOT NO.80-K IN BLOCK-3, SITUATED IN THE COLONY OF VILLAGE GARDHIA, DISTT. DELHI, AREA OF VILLAGE YATAPUR, DELHI, STATE DELHI, ALONG WITH FREEDHOLD RIGHTS OF THE LAND UNDER THE SAID PROPERTY AND IN THIS PROPERTY AND BORROWER SHRI RAJAN BIKHRAIA DOES NOT POSSESS THE SURVIVING MEMBER CERTIFICATE OF LATE SHRI SHUKHRY RAJ. IF ANY OTHER CLAIMANT HAS ANY RIGHT IN THE ABOVE SAID PROPERTY, HE/SHE SHOULD INFORM A GIVE INTIMATION TO THE UNDERSIGNED WITHIN 07 DAYS FROM THE DATE OF ISSUE OF THIS NOTICE.
Sd/-
SUBHASH GUPTA
ADVOCATE
Enrt. No. D-446/2002

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON
(SEE SECTION 82 Cr.P.C.)
Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused person(s) (1) Gulnaz D/W/O Lt. Mehmuddin (2) Aarif S/o Lt. Mehmuddin (3) Sahana S/o Lt. Mehmuddin (4) Faraz D/W/O Lt. Mehmuddin (5) Shakna D/o Lt. Mehmuddin (6) Aas Mohammdad S/o Lt. Mehmuddin (7) Nisha D/o Lt. Mehmuddin (8) Shahnaz D/W/O Lt. Mehmuddin (9) Kherun D/o Lt. Mehmuddin all above R/o Vill. Sara, Thana Nivadi, Near Choti Masjid, Modnagar, Ghaziabad, U.P. has committed (or are suspected to have committed) the offence in case FIR No. 146/2017 U/s 498-A/406/34 IPC, PS Jafraabad, Delhi and it has been returned to a Warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said accused person(s) (1) Gulnaz (2) Aarif (3) Sahana (4) Faraz (5) Shakna (6) Aas Mohammdad (7) Nisha (8) Shahnaz (9) Kherun can not be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said accused person(s) (1) Gulnaz (2) Aarif (3) Sahana (4) Faraz (5) Shakna (6) Aas Mohammdad (7) Nisha (8) Shahnaz (9) Kherun of case FIR No. 146/2017 U/s 498-A/406/34 IPC, PS Jafraabad, Delhi are required to appear before this court to answer the said complaint on or before dated 22.01.2025
By Order
Nidhi Bala
LD, JMFC, Mahila Court-03
Room No. 08, Shahdara Distt. Karkardooma Courts, Delhi

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF A PERSON ACCUSED
(See Section 82 Cr. PC)
Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused person namely Joginder Singh S/o Rajveer Singh R/o H.No. 162, Vishnu Colony Ballabhgarh Faridabad Haryana-121004 Mob.: 08506971003 has committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence in case CC No. 542767/16 U/s 138 NI Act at PS: Rajender Nagar, Delhi and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said accused Joginder Singh can not be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said accused Joginder Singh has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant). Proclamation is hereby made that the said accused Joginder Singh of CC No. 542767/16 U/s 138 NI Act of PS: Rajender Nagar, Delhi is required to appear before this court to answer the said complaint on or before 28.02.2025.
By order
Aradhana
Judicial Magistrate First Class NI Act-01
Room No. 201, CBA-II, Tis Hazari Court, Delhi

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF A PERSON ACCUSED
(See Section U/S 82 Cr. P.C.)
Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused Dhanesh Kumar Soni @ Ganesh S/o Kadori Lal Soni @ Latoori Soni R/o Jhuggi near C-1/53, Bapa Nagar Flats, New Delhi, Permanent Add.: Village Ward No. 5, Soni Mohalla, Bada Malhera, P.S. Bada Malhera, District Chhatterpur, Madhya Pradesh has Committed (or is susp ected to have committed) the offence in case FIR No. 22/2022 U/s 323/341/34 IPC, P.S. Tuglhak Road, New Delhi and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said Dhanesh Kumar Soni @ Ganesh cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said Dhanesh Kumar Soni @ Ganesh has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant). Proclamation is hereby made that the said accused Dhanesh Kumar Soni @ Ganesh of case FIR No. 22/2022 U/s 323/341/34 IPC, P.S. Tuglhak Road, New Delhi is required to appear before this Court to answer the said complaint on or before 30.01.2025.
By Order
Ms. Isha Singh
Judicial Magistrate First Class-03
Room No. 18, First Floor, Main Building Patiala House Court, Delhi

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON
(See Section 82 Cr.P.C.)
Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused person Mehfooj @ Junaid S/o Zahir R/o P-59, Gali No. 17, Kh. No. 109, Holli Chowk, Bhrampuri, Seelampur, Delhi has committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence case e-FIR No. 20122/2022 u/s 379/411 IPC at P.S. Bhajanpura, Delhi and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said Mehfooj @ Junaid cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said Mehfooj @ Junaid has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant). Proceeding u/s 82 Cr.P.C. has been initiated in the case. Proclamation is hereby made that the said Mehfooj @ Junaid accused of e-FIR No. 20122/2022 u/s

NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY
Second Corrigendum
Second corrigendum to Tender Notice no.- SNT-PROJ-JU-07-2024-25. In the above cited tender notice following corrigendum is issued: (i) Correction in tender document to suit the requirement of S&T project unit Jodhpur-(ii) Correction in NIT. The others terms and conditions in the original tender will remain unchanged.
1469-DK/24
Follow us at NWRailways NWRailways.

KERALA WATER AUTHORITY e-Tender Notice
Tender No : T No.161/2024-25/SE/Q
JJM- CWSS to Kunthathoor-Clear Water Transmission Main,Clear water Pumping main from Sump at Edackadu Market to Devagiri OHSR, Supply erection and Commissioning CF Pump set in Poruvazhy-Revised EMD : Rs. 500000 Tender fee: Rs. 16540+2978 Last Date for submitting Tender : 13-01-2025 02:00:pm Phone: 0474 2745293 Website : www.kwa.kerala.gov.in, www.etenders.kerala.gov.in
Superintending Engineer
PH Circle Kollam
KWA-JB-GL-6-941-2024-25

Government of Jharkhand
Department of School Education and Literacy
(Jharkhand Education Project Council, Ranchi)
JSCA Stadium Road, Sector- III, Dhurwa, Ranchi-834004
Phone: 0651-2444501, E-Mail: jepcranchi1@gmail.com

e-Procurement Notice – 3rd Call
JEPC invites Separate Technical & Financial Bids through e-procurement method from eligible and interested contractors registered in appropriate class for Strengthening and Infrastructure Development of Existing Adarsh Vidyalaya located in different 03 Districts of Jharkhand. Interested and eligible bidders are requested to submit their proposal latest by 2:00 PM on 04.01.2025.
The details of tender documents can be seen and applied through website <https://jharkhandtenders.gov.in> only. Tender notification & Tender document can also be seen (read only purpose) from departmental website <https://jepc.jharkhand.gov.in>. **Sd/-**
Ref. No.: JEPC/CIV/03/721/2022/4729 (Shashi Ranjan) State Project Director
Ranchi, Date : 19.12.2024 Jharkhand Education Project Council
PR 342442 (Jharkhand Education Project Council) 24-25'D

Office of Executive Engineer, Provincial Division, P.W.D. Sambhal E-Procurement Notice Inviting Tenders

No. 3500 /E-Tender/24-25

On behalf of the Governor of UP, tenders for following work are invited by the Executive Engineer, Provincial Division, PWD, Sambhal online on website <http://etender.up.nic.in> from registered contractors from 24-12-2024 at 10.00 am to 09-01-2025 at 12.00 pm. Technical bid /Prequalification of tenders shall be opened on 09-01-2025 at 12:30 pm in office of undersigned by tender committee in presence of authorised representatives/bidders who wish to be present. Financial bid of the tenders' who qualify in technical bid shall be opened on date and time as specified by a notice in the office of undersigned. In case of Government holiday the required process shall be carried out on next working day.
2.

Sl. No	DISTRICT	Name of Work	Estimated cost (Rs.in Lacs)	Bid Security (Rs.in Lacs)	Time of completion of the work (Including rainy season)	Cost of tender documents including GST (RS.)	Category of road Signage contractor eligible
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Financial Year 24-25 Short term improvement works under road safety (In anticipation of sanction)							
1	Sambhal	Year 2024-25 Road Safety Short term improvement work of Kaiserpur Tiraha black spot located at km 61 of Moradabad Gawan Bulandshahr road (including Anupshahr Dibai part) SH-148, a black spot identified in accident prone area in Sambhal district.	7.00	0.70	2 Month	766.00	A Road Signage Work category
2	Sambhal	Year 2024-25 Road Safety Short term Improvement work of the black spot Bichhauri (Bypass Tiraha) identified in the year 2023 at Km 24 of Chandausi Sambhal Road (MDR)	9.00	3.10	2 Month	854.00	A Road Signage Work category
3	Sambhal	Year 2024-25 Road Safety Short term improvement work of Akbarpur Gahara at km 15 of Sambhal Joya road (MDR)	9.00	0.90	2 Month	766.00	A Road Signage Work category
4	Sambhal	Year 2024-25 Road Safety Short term Improvement work of black spot Tajpur identified in the year 2024, 01 T-junction (Ch. 3.950) and sharp turn (Ch. 3.800-3.900) at Km. 4 of Sambhal Joya Marg (MDR)	9.00	0.90	2 Month	766.00	A Road Signage Work category
5	Sambhal	Year 2024-25 Road Safety Short term Improvement work of the culvert of Maulagarh, the black spot identified in the year 2024, from NH-93 Chandausi bypass km 192.30 to 197.45 and Chandausi Sahri road (ODR) km 195.	5.00	0.50	2 Month	677.00	A Road Signage Work category
6	Sambhal	Year 2024-25 Road Safety Short term Improvement work of the black spot Moti Nagar identified in the year 2024 on Moradabad Gawan Bulandhar Road (including Anupshahr Dibai part) SH-148.	6.00	0.60	2 Month	766.00	A Road Signage Work category
7	Sambhal	Year 2024-25 Road Safety Short term Improvement work of hot spot Gawan Petrol Pump, identified in the year 2023, at Km 60 of Moradabad Gawan Bulandshahr Road (State Highway-148).	4.00	0.40	2 Month	677.00	A Road Signage Work category
8	Sambhal	Year 2024-25 Road Safety Short term Improvement work of Sirsi-Bilari Tiraha, a hot spot identified in the year 2023 on Moradabad Gawan Bulandshahr Road (State Highway-148)	4.00	0.40	2 Month	677.00	A Road Signage Work category
9	Sambhal	Year 2024-25 Road Safety Short term Improvement work of Saundhan Chauraha, a hot spot identified in 2023 on Sambhal Adampur Marg (ODR)	4.00	0.40	2 Month	677.00	A Road Signage Work category
10	Sambhal	Year 2024-25 Road Safety Short term improvement work of Khirmi Tiraha hot spot identified in the year 2023 at km 40 of Moradabad Gawan Bulandshahr road (State Highway-148)	8.00	0.80	2 Month	766.00	A Road Signage Work category
11	Sambhal	Year 2024-25 Road Safety Short term improvement work of hot spot Manota Bridge, identified in the year 2023 at km 17 of Sambhal Joya Marg (MDR)	10.00	1.00	2 Month	766.00	A Road Signage Work category
12	Sambhal	Year 2024-25 Road Safety Short term Improvement work of hot spot village Khaspur identified in the year 2024 at km 10 of Lodhipur Madhan Tanda Asmoli Road (ODR).	9.00	0.90	2 Month	766.00	A Road Signage Work category
13	Sambhal	Year 2024-25 Road Safety Short term Improvement work of the hot spot Chitavali turn identified in the year 2024 at Km 5 of Saidangali Manota Chaudharpur Road (ODR).	7.00	0.70	2 Month	766.00	A Road Signage Work category
14	Sambhal	Year 2024-25 Road Safety Short term Improvement work of the hot spot Pathra Mod Mai Bhatte near the identified hot spot in the year 2024 at Km 47 of Moradabad Farrukhabad Road (SH-43).	6.00	0.60	2 Month	766.00	A Road Signage Work category
15	Sambhal	Year 2024-25 Road Safety Short term improvement work of hot spot Tehsil Tiraha, identified in the year 2024 at km 44 of Moradabad Farrukhabad Marg (SH-43)	11.00	1.10	2 Month	766.00	A Road Signage Work category
16	Sambhal	Year 2024-25 Road Safety Short term Improvement work of the hot spot Chandausi Bypass Reliance Petrol Pump, identified in the year 2023 at Km 43 of Moradabad Farrukhabad Road (SH-43).	8.00	0.80	2 Month	766.00	A Road Signage Work category
17	Sambhal	Year 2024-25 Road Safety Short term Improvement work of identified hot spot Sambhal Tiraha in the year 2024 at Km 1 of Chandausi Sambhal Road (MDR) under Road Safety in the year 2024-25.	9.00	0.90	2 Month	766.00	A Road Signage Work category
18	Sambhal	Year 2024-25 Road Safety Short term Improvement work of Jhande Wala Bagh, a hot spot identified in the year 2024 at Km 10 of Chandausi Sambhal Road (MDR).	7.00	0.70	2 Month	766.00	A Road Signage Work category
19	Sambhal	Year 2024-25 Road Safety Short term Improvement work of hot spot village Sarai Sikandar Tiraha, identified in the year 2023 at km 12 of Chandausi Sambhal Road (MDR)	5.00	0.50	2 Month	677.00	A Road Signage Work category
20	Sambhal	Year 2024-25 Road Safety Short term Improvement work of Pathakpur hot spot identified in the year 2023 at km 1 of Pathakpur Naadha Marg (ODR)	4.00	0.40	2 Month	677.00	A Road Signage Work category
21	Sambhal	Year 2024-25 Road Safety Short term Improvement work of Bahta Jaisingh Chauraha hot spot identified in the year 2024 at km 1 of Rajpura Tikta Bahjoi Marg (ODR)	4.00	0.40	2 Month	677.00	A Road Signage Work category
22	Sambhal	Year 2024-25 Road Safety Short term Improvement work of the hot spot Arthal intersection identified in the year 2024 in km 9 of Dhanari Bhiravati Road (ODR).	7.00	0.70	2 Month	766.00	A Road Signage Work category
23	Sambhal	Year 2024-25 Road Safety Short term Improvement work of Mamta Nursing Home Gunnaur, identified hot spot in the year 2024 at Km 144 of Meerut Badayu Marg (SH-18).	30.00	3.00	2 Month	854.00	A Road Signage Work category
24	Sambhal	Year 2024-25 Road Safety Short term Improvement work of the hot spot Jagannathpur Gunnaur identified in the year 2024 at Km 146 of Meerut Badayu Road (SH-18).	24.00	2.40	2 Month	854.00	A Road Signage Work category
25	Sambhal	Year 2024-25 Road Safety Short term Improvement work of the hot spot Rajpura DSM Sugar Mill identified in the year 2024 at km 13 of Babrala Gavan Rahra Road (MDR).	13.00	1.30	2 Month	766.00	A Road Signage Work category
26	Sambhal	Year 2024-25 Road Safety Short term improvement work of hot spot Deeppur Danda, identified in the year 2023 at km 66 of Moradabad Gawan Bulandshahr Marg (State Highway-148)	7.00	0.70	2 Month	766.00	A Road Signage Work category
27	Sambhal	Year 2024-25 Road Safety Short term Improvement work of the hot spot Dhanipur identified in the year 2023 at Km 153 of Meerut Badayu Road (SH-18).	30.00	3.00	2 Month	854.00	A Road Signage Work category
28	Sambhal	Year 2024-25 Road Safety Short term Improvement work of the hot spot village Junavai identified in the year 2023 at Km 151 of Meerut Badayu Road (SH-18).	29.00	2.90	2 Month	854.00	A Road Signage Work category
29	Sambhal	Year 2024-25 Road Safety Short term Improvement work of the hot spot Kadarabad identified in the year 2024 at Km 161 of Meerut Badayu Marg (SH-18).	17.00	1.70	2 Month	854.00	A Road Signage Work category
30	Sambhal	Year 2024-25 Road Safety Short term Improvement work of the hot spot Berani Tiraha identified in the year 2024 in Km 11 of Chandausi Berani Reeth ka bazar Road (ODR).	3.00	0.30	2 Month	677.00	A Road Signage Work category
31	Sambhal	Year 2024-25 Road Safety Short term Improvement work of the hot spot Rajthal intersection identified in the year 2024 in km 9 of Chandausi Berani Reeth Ka Bazaar Road (ODR).	3.00	0.30	2 Month	677.00	A Road Signage Work category
32	Sambhal	Year 2024-25 Road Safety Short term Improvement work of hot spot Garhi Bichola identified in the year 2024 in km 13 of Pathakpur Nadha Marg (ODR).	4.00	0.40	2 Month	677.00	A Road Signage Work category
33	Sambhal	Year 2024-25 Road Safety Short term improvement work at 02 intersections (Ch. 25.050 and Ch. 65.980) and 04 T-junctions (Ch. 58.520, 59.130, 62.350, 62.800) falling on Moradabad-Gawa-Bulandshahr road (including Anupshahr Dibai part) (State Highway-148)	21.00	2.10	2 Month	854.00	A Road Signage Work category
34	Sambhal	Year 2024-25 Road Safety Short term Improvement work will at 02 intersections (Ch. 7.400, 11.900) and 03 T-junctions (Ch. 3.400, 5.800, 12.650) on Sambhal Joya Marg (major district road).	17.00	1.70	2 Month	854.00	A Road Signage Work category
35	Sambhal	Year 2024-25 Road Safety Short term Improvement work will at 01 intersection (Ch. 17.450) and 05 T-junction (Ch. 0.750, 3.150, 5.050, 5.500, 8.500) falling on Pathakpur Faridpur Kailadevi Shakarpur road (other district road).	12.00	1.20	2 Month	766.00	A Road Signage Work category
36	Sambhal	Year 2024-25 Road Safety Short term work at 01 intersection (Ch. 13.780) and 03 T-junctions (Ch. 3.450, 8.860, 12.120) falling on Babrala Anupshahr road (ODR)	16.00	1.60	2 Month	854.00	A Road Signage Work category
37	Sambhal	Year 2024-25 Road Safety Short term Improvement work will at 01 intersection (Ch. 4.575) and 03 T-junction (Ch. 6.980, 7.150, 11.250) falling on village Madhan to Moradabad Sambhal road (other district road).	15.00	1.50	2 Month	766.00	A Road Signage Work category
38	Sambhal	Year 2024-25 Road Safety Short term work at 04 intersections (ch. 0.000, 5.900, 8.500, 12.000) and 03 T-junctions (ch. 3.420, 3.600, 12.800) and widening at 05 sharp turns (ch. 5.100, 5.250, 6.200, 6.350, 11.200) falling on the Sambhal bypass (ODR) for the urban population of Tehsil Sambhal	28.00	2.80	2 Month	854.00	A Road Signage Work category
39	Sambhal	Year 2024-25 Road Safety Short term Improvement work of 02 intersections (Ch. 3.475, 6.500) and 04 T-Junction (Ch. Road safety work at 1.200, 3.675, 5.700, 8.750) on Moradabad-Gawa-Bulandshahr road (including Anupshahr Dibai part) (State Road-148) from Sirsi to village Nabada, Harsingpur road (ODR)	10.00	1.00	2 Month	766.00	A Road Signage Work category
40	Sambhal	Year 2024-25 Road Safety Short term work of Chaudhrisara Chauraha located at km 32 of Moradabad Gawan Bulandshahr road (including Anupshahr Dibai part) State Highway-148	8.00	0.80	2 Month	766.00	A Road Signage Work category
41	Sambhal	Year 2024-25 Road Safety Short term Improvement work of Chandausi Chauraha located on Moradabad Gawan Bulandshahr road (including Anupshahr Dibai part) State Highway-148	3.00	0.30	2 Month	677.00	A Road Signage Work category
42	Sambhal	Year 2024-25 Road Safety Short term Improvement work of hot spot Naharther identified in the year 2024 in km 3 of Sambhal Joya Marg (MDR).	9.00	0.90	2 Month	766.00	A Road Signage Work category
43	Sambhal	Year 2024-25 Road Safety Short term Improvement work of 01 intersection (Ch. 12.950) and 02 T-junctions (Ch. 0.000, 14.600) and (Ch. 15.100, 15.200, 15.400, 15.500, 17.800, 17.900) falling on Lodhipur Madhan Toda Asmoli road (ODR)	36.00	3.60	2 Month	854.00	A Road Signage Work category

3- In PWD technical evaluation of tenders to be done by Phari Software. URL for Phari is <http://wms.uppwd.gov.in/Phari/> On opening of the website Phari login page will open in which user type Contractor is to be selected. User name and password for login on Phari shall be same as used for contractor's registration on Chhakra Portal. Bidders have to upload all the basic information and required document on Phari as given in Phari in detail. If a bidder does not upload information and document on Phari technical evaluation of the tender shall not be done and the bidder will be responsible for that. Rules/conditions & details of the tender are available at website <http://etender.up.nic.in>.

UPID-224390 Dt. 18/12/2024
www.upidadv.gov.in

कार्यपालक अभियंता का कार्यालय, ग्रामीण विकास विशेष प्रमण्डल, जामताड़ा
Email Id: rdsdjmt@gmail.com

अल्पकालीन ई0-निविदा आमंत्रण संख्या-RDD/SD/JAMTARA/RE/12/2024-25

1. कार्य की विस्तृत विवरणी :-

युप नं०	कार्य का नाम	प्राक्कलित राशि	अग्रघन की राशि	परिमाण विपत्र का मूल्य	कार्य समाप्ति की अवधि
1	2	3	4	5	6
2	जामताड़ा जिला के नाला प्रखण्ड अन्तर्गत आखपोखरिया और सिंदुरकुनियों के बीच जोड़िया पर पुलिया निर्माण।	2,96,99,400.00	5,94,000.00	10,000.00	18 माह
3	ई0-निविदा प्रकाशन की तिथि	:- दिनांक-23.12.2024			
3	ई0-निविदा प्राप्ति की तिथि एवं समय	:- दिनांक-23.12.2024 से दिनांक-31.12.2024. (अपरान्ह 5:00 बजे)			
4	निविदा शुल्क एवं अग्रघन की राशि केवल Online Mode द्वारा की स्वीकार्य होगी।				
5	निविदा शुल्क एवं अग्रघन की राशि का ई-मुगतान जिस खाता से किया जायेगा, उसी खाते में अग्रघन की राशि वापस होगी। अगर खाता को बंद कर दिया जाता है तो सारी जबाबदेही संबंधित निविदादाता की होगी।				
6	निविदा खोलने का स्थान	:- e-Procurement Cell, कार्यपालक अभियंता का कार्यालय ग्रामीण विकास विशेष प्रमण्डल, जामताड़ा।			
7	निविदा खोलने की तिथि एवं समय	:- दिनांक-02.01.2025 (अपरान्ह 2:00 बजे)			
8	निविदा आमंत्रित करने वाले पदाधिकारी का नाम एवं पता	:- कार्यपालक अभियंता, ग्रामीण विकास विशेष प्रमण्डल, जामताड़ा।			
9	ई0-निविदा प्रकाश का दृश्य संख्या	:- 9973957543			
10	अधोहस्ताक्षर/सक्षम पदाधिकारी को किसी भी निविदा को बिना कारण बताये रद्द करने का अधिकार सुरक्षित रहेगा तथा निविदादाता को कारण पृच्छा का अधिकार मान्य नहीं होगा।				
11	B.O.Q की राशि घट-बढ़ सकती है, तदनुसार अग्रघन की राशि देय होगी।				

विस्तृत जानकारी के लिए वेबसाइट www.jharkhandtenders.gov.in एवं कार्यालय के सूचना पट्ट पर देखा जा सकता है।

PR 34248 Rural Development(24-25).D

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कार्यपालक अभियंता
ग्रामीण विकास विशेष प्रमण्डल, जामताड़ा

UJVN LIMITED
H.O.: "UJJWAL", Maharani Bagh, GMS Road, Dehradun-248006, Telephone: 0135 - 2763808 Fax: 0135 - 2763508
CIN No. U40101UR2001SGC025866, Website: www.ujvn.com
Ref. No.: 1111 **e-Tender Notice** Dated : 20.12.2024
Office of the Executive Engineer (Civil-II), UJVN Limited, Gupta Kashi, invites online bids from interested parties. Brief summary of tender is given below:-
Tender No: 08/EE/(Civil-II)/Gupta Kashi/2024-25
Name of work: Strengthening of Raised Weir, Under sluice and other miscellaneous works at Madhyamaheshwar SHP (3x5 MW) in Distt-Rudrapur.
Estimated Cost: Rs 438.72 Lakh (Plus GST Extra)
Date of availability of bid document on website : 23.12.2024 from 17:00 Hrs onwards
Last date for submission of bid on website : 20.01.2025 up to 16:00 Hrs
For full & further details, kindly visit e-procurement portal "http://uktenders.gov.in"
Executive Engineer (Civil-II)
"Avoid Wasteful use of Electricity"

"IMPORTANT"
Whilst care is taken prior to acceptance of advertising copy, it is not possible to verify the contents. If 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 Publications. We therefore recommend that readers make necessary inquiries before sending any money or entering into any agreements with advertisers or otherwise acting on an advertisement in any manner whatsoever.

NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY
E-Tender Notice
For and on behalf of President of Republic of India, Dy Chief Electrical Engineer/Construction-1 (North Western Railway, Jaipur invites E-Tender for the following works upto 15.00 hrs. on the mentioned date. Tender No. **ELCJP/AIL-CNA/DLT/18/24-25** 1. **Name of work :** Design, Supply, Erection, Testing and Commissioning of Railway Electrification work of 2x25KV OHE system in Aimer-Chanderiya Section (178.28RKm) of Ajmer Division, NWR in connection with Doubling work. 2. **Approximate cost of the Work :** ₹1506343645.00 3. **Earnest Money to be deposited:** ₹7681700.00 4. **Date of Completion of work:-** 18 Months 5. **Date & Time of closing E-Tender :** 15.01.2025 Upto 15:00 Hrs. **Date & Time of opening E-Tender :** 15.01.2025 at 15:30 Hrs. 6. **The details of above E-Tender are available on Website** www.ireps.gov.in 1467-DK/24
Follow us at NWRailways NWRailways.

INLAND WATERWAYS AUTHORITY OF INDIA
(Ministry of Ports, Shipping & Waterways, Govt. of India)
Head Office: A-13, Sector -1, Noida - 201301 (U.P.)
Tel: 0120-2543931, E-mail: akbansal.iwai@nic.in
Notice Inviting Tender
Bank To Bank Detailed Hydrographic Survey in West Coast Canal alongwith Champakara & Udyogmandal Canal (National Waterway-3).
e-Bids are invited from interested bidders for "Bank To Bank Detailed Hydrographic Survey in West Coast Canal alongwith Champakara & Udyogmandal Canal (National Waterway-3)"
The Tender Documents and other relevant details are available at IWA website www.iwai.nic.in and e-procurement site <https://eprocure.gov.in/eprocure/app>.
Date: 18.12.2024
HYDROGRAPHIC CHIEF
IWA, NOIDA

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY
E-Tendering Notice No. 2024-Dec-03 dated 18.12.24
E-TENDER NOTICE
Divisional Railway Manager (Engineering), N. C. Rly Agra for and on behalf of the President of India invites "Open Tender" through on Line only (E-Tendering) for the following works. The details of the tender are as under:
Tender No : 2024-Dec-03-01 **Approx Cost Rs. : 1725600.00**
Description of work : Miscellaneous work as per PCE Circular No. 122 (Revised) for ART over Agra Division.
Tender No : 2024-Dec-03-02 **Approx Cost Rs. : 921561.12**
Description of work : Operation and maintenance of STP capacity 50 KLD at Agra Fort Station for 24 months.
● For full details and submission of bid please see the Indian Railways website "www.ireps.gov.in" ● Tenders can only be submitted through web portal "www.ireps.gov.in" up to 15:00 hrs on 10.01.25 2155/24 (AS)
North central railways @ www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in @ @CPRONCR

JAPIT
Jharkhand Agency for Promotion of Information Technology
(An Autonomous body under Department of Information Technology & e-Governance, Govt. of Jharkhand)
Ground Floor, Engineer's Hostel - 1, Near Golchakkar, Dhurwa, Ranchi, Jharkhand
Phone: 0651-2401044, 2401047 email: japit_doit@rediffmail.com
CORRIGENDUM - I
Rate Contract for Supply, Installation & Support for Endpoint, IT Equipment's & Services for JAP-IT.
(Tender Ref No.: JAPIT/RC-01/2024)
With reference to the above tender, please be informed that the pre-bid meeting for Tender Reference No. JAPIT/RC-01/2024 has been rescheduled due to some unavoidable circumstances to 24.12.2024 at 03:30 PM.

For further details please visit <https://jharkhandtenders.gov.in>.
PR Ref No. 341310 & 341876. **Sd/-**
(OSD, JAP-IT)
PR 342428 Information Technology(24-25)D

Modern Coach Factory, Raebareli
E-Advertised Tender Notice No. 68/ET/2024-25 **Dated: 18.12.2024**
SN Tender No Short Description Qty Due Date
01 06231140A Supply and Apply of Anti Graffiti Coating on Side Wall of Railway Coaches. 2716 Set 10/01/2025
02 05241300 Supply, Testing and Commissioning (including all connections & dressing without loading) of Switch Board Cabinet for LHB EOG Time Coach. 69 Nos 14/02/2025
03 05241283 LED Type light fitting for Cabin & Corridor Area of Non AC Coaches. 23011 Nos 07/02/2025
04 05241281 Battery Fuse Box +VE. 795 Nos 06/02/2025
05 03242085 Battery Fuse Box-VE. 985 Nos 22/01/2025
06 07241394 Argon Gas Liquid GR-1 (To Be Refilled In Tank of 13T). 412425 cum 13/01/2025
07 12241435 Supply of stainless steel tubes with stainless steel double ferrule fittings for LWS coaches. 405 Set 09/01/2025
08 05241306 Battery Box Mounting for LHB Coach. 610 Nos 16/01/2025
09 12241063B Longitudinal Stop End Plate. 17207Nos 16/01/2025
Website Address: www.ireps.gov.in & www.mcf.indianrailways.gov.in
Dy. Chief Mechanical Engineer/Shell
Open tender based on two packet system Tender Notice No MCF/RB/Tender/ Shell Assembly for 3PH MEMU type trains MC & TC and Vande Bharat Type Train set-18/2024-25 & 2025-26/C

बैंक ऑफ इंडिया

Bank of India

Asset Recovery Department,
Gaya Zone

STAR MEGA E-AUCTION FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES UNDER SARFAESI ACT 2002

E Auction sale notice for sale of Immovable Assets under the securitization and reconstruction of financial assets and enforcement of security interest act 2002 read with provision to Rule 8(2) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002. Notice is hereby given to public in general & in particular to following Borrower(s)/ Guarantor(s) that the below mentioned Immovable properties mortgaged/hypothecated to bank of India (Secured Creditor), the symbolic possession of which has been taken by the Authorized Officer of Bank of India will be sold on "AS IS WHERE IS BASIS", "AS IS WHAT IS BASIS" for recovery of respective dues as detailed hereunder against the secured assets Hypothecated/Mortgaged to Bank of India from the respective borrower(s)/Guarantor(s). The Reserve Price and Earnest Money Deposit is shown there against each secured assets. The sale will be done by the undersigned through e-auction platform provided hereunder.

DATE & TIME of Action: 27.01.2025 between 10.00 AM to 5.00 PM (With auto extensions clause in case of bid in last 10 minutes before closing) (in lakh)

Sr No	Name of the borrower/Guarantor or Owner/Partner/ Mortgagor of the Property	Lot No	Details of Immovable properties to be sold	Details of banks dues	Possession	Minimum Reserve Price in lakhs	EMD in lakhs	Date & Time of E Auction
BANK OF INDIA, BARBIGHA BRANCH, DIST. SHEIKHPURA Phone No. 6204813039, Authorized Officer: Mr. Dilip Kumar Thakur, Gaya ZO, Mobile No. 9430511907								
1	Shri Himanshu Kumar	1	Equitable mortgage of the property in the name of Mrs Manisha Kumari, situated at Mouza Gangachak, Thana No 33, Khata no 17, Khesra no 95 (P), Touzi No 239, Ward No 16, area of land 5.25 Decimal, Deed no 2637 dt 17.05.2017. (Property owned by Co-Borrower- mortgagor Mrs. Manisha Kumari	Contractual Dues Rs. 18.82 lakhs plus uncharged interest and other applicable charges from the date of NPA i.e. 29.07.2023	Symbolic	34.62	3.47	27th Jan 2025 From 10.00 AM to 5.00 PM
BANK OF INDIA, HISUA BRANCH, DIST. NAWADAH Phone: 7903091287, Authorized Officer : Mr. Birendra Kumar, Chief Manager, Zonal Office, Gaya Mobile No. 8237480556								
2	Smt. Renu Devi	1	Equitable mortgage of the property Plot no. 06 (N)07 (O), Khata No. 90 (N) 104 (O), Thana No. 69, Mouza North of Gaya Road, Block Hisua, P.S. Hisua, Dist Nawadah, Bihar- 805122, Area 3.00 Decimal. in the name of Smt. Renu Devi Sale Deed No.: 6022 dt. 12.06.2018 Property owned by Borrower - Mortgagor Smt. Renu Devi	Contractual Dues Rs. 17.47 lakhs plus uncharged interest and other applicable charges from the date of NPA i.e. 28.08.2023	Symbolic	14.74	1.48	27th Jan 2025 From 10.00 AM to 5.00 PM
BANK OF INDIA, JAMUHAR BRANCH, DIST. ROHTAS Phone: 8368678911, Authorized Officer : Mr. Rishiraj Diwakar, Chief Manager, Zonal Office, Gaya Mobile No. 8116828987								
3	Shri Dinesh Kumar Singh	1	Equitable mortgage of the property Situated at Plot No. 455, Khata No. 23, Thana No. 173, Halka No. 07, P.S. Dehri-on-Sone, Dist Rohtas in the name of Mr. Dinesh Kumar Singh admeasuring 4.90 decimal (Property owned by Borrower - Mortgagor Mr. Dinesh Kumar Singh)	Contractual Dues Rs. 17.88 lakhs plus uncharged interest and other applicable charges from the date of NPA i.e. 10.09.2022	Symbolic	14.77	1.48	27th Jan 2025 From 10.00 AM to 5.00 PM

TERMS & CONDITIONS of E Auctions are as under:

1. E-Auction is being held on "AS IS WHERE IS BASIS" and "AS IS WHAT IS BASIS" and will be conducted online.

2. For downloading further details, Process compliance, terms & conditions please visit(a) <https://bankofindia.co.in/b> Website address of E Auction service provider is <https://BAANKNET.com>. Bidder may visit <https://BAANKNET.com> where guidelines for bidders are available with educational videos. Bidders have to complete following formalities well in advance in order to participate in E Auction.

Step-1: Bidder Registration-Bidder to register on E Auction platform (link given above) using his mobile number and Email ID.

Step-2: KYC Verification-Bidder to upload requisite KYC Documents. KYC documents shall be verified by the E Auction service provider.

Step-3: Transfer of EMD amount to bidder Global EMD wallet: On-line/Off-line transfer of fund using NEFT/Transfer using challan generated on E Auction platform.

Step-4: Bidding Process & Auction Results: Interested bidders can bid online on E Auction platform after completing Step 1, 2 & 3. Please note that Step 1 to 3 should be completed by the bidder well in advance, before E Auction date.

3. To the best of knowledge & information of the authorized officer, there is no encumbrance on the properties. However the intending bidders should make their own independent inquiries regarding the encumbrance, title of properties put for E-Auction and claims/rights/dues affecting the property prior to submitting their bid. The E Auction advertisement does not constitute and will not create the certificate with any commitment or any representation of the bank. The property is being sold with all the existing and future encumbrances whether known or unknown to bank. The Authorized Officer/ Secured Creditor shall not be responsible in any way for third party claims/rights/dues. No claim of whatsoever nature will be entertained after submission of On-line bid regarding properties put for sale.

4. It shall be the responsibility of the bidders to inspect and satisfy themselves about the asset and specification before submitting the bid. The bidder inspect the property in consultation with the dealing officer as per the details provide. **Date of Inspection of Immovable Properties: 26.12.2024 to 26.01.2025 from 11.00 AM to 4:00 PM with prior appointment with above mentioned respective branches on the contact numbers given against respective branches.**

5. Bids shall be submitted through online procedure only.

6. Bidders shall be deemed to have read & understood the terms & conditions of sale & be bound by them.

7. The bid price to be submitted shall be above the Reserve Price & bidders shall improve their further offers in multiples of Rs.10,000/- (Rs. Ten Thousand only)

8. The Earnest Monet Deposit (EMD) of the successful bidder shall be retained towards part sale consideration and EMD of the unsuccessful bidders shall be refunded.

9. The Earnest Monet Deposit (EMD) shall not bear any interest. The successful bidder shall have to deposit 25% of the sale price inclusive of EMD already paid, immediately upon same day or next working day as the case may be. The balance of the purchase price shall have to be paid within 15 days of acceptance/confirmation of sale conveyed to them failing which Bank is at liberty to forfeit the amount deposited by the successful bidder.

10. Neither the Authorized Officer/ Bank nor E Auction service provider will be held responsible for any Internet Network Problem/ Power failure any other technical lapses etc. In order to ward off such contingent situation the interested bidders are requested to ensure that they are technically well equipped with adequate power back up etc. for successful participation in E Auction event.

11. Payment of sale consideration by the successful bidder only at the bank will be subject to TDS under Section 194- 1A of Income Tax Act 1961 and TDS is to be made by the successful bidder only at the time of deposit of remaining 75% of the bid amount/full deposit of BID amount. The purchaser shall bear the applicable stamp duties, registration charges and other incidental charges and also the statutory and non-statutory duties, taxes, assessments etc.

12. The Authorized Officer/bank has the absolute right & discretion to accept or reject any or all offers or adjourn/postpone/ cancel the E Auction or withdraw any property thereof from the auction proceedings at any stage without assigning any reason therefor. The particulars of Secured Assets specified in the Schedule hereinabove have been stated to the best of the information of the Authorized Officer, but the Authorized Officer shall not be answerable for any error, misstatement or omission in this proclamation.

13. The sale certificate will be issued in the name of purchaser(s)/applicant(s) only and will not be issued in any other name(s).

14. The sale shall be subject to rules/conditions prescribed under the Securitization & Reconstruction of Financial Assets & Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002. For further details /enquiries, if any, of the terms and conditions of sale, can be obtained from the respective branches on the contact numbers given.

15. While inspecting the properties, preventive measures such as social distancing, compulsory wearing of mask at places of social gatherings and all other rules prescribed by State & Central administration must be followed to contain the spread of COVID19 pandemic.

16. For the properties where symbolic possession is taken and put for E Auction, actual possession of the properties will be handed over to successful bidders strictly after obtaining permission for physical possession from district magistrate.

SALE NOTICE TO BORROWERS/GUARANTORS

This Notice is also to be treated as Statuary sale notice to borrower and Guarantor (L/Rs) Under Rules 8(2) Security Interest (Enforcement), Rule 2002.

Dear Sir/Madam,

The undersigned being the Authorized Officer of Bank of India is having full powers to issue this notice of sale and exercise all powers of sale under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and the Rules framed there under. You have committed default in payment of the outstanding dues and interest with monthly rests, costs and charges etc in respect of the advances granted by the bank mentioned above. Hence the bank has issued a Demand Notice to all of you under section 13(2) to pay the above mentioned amount within 60 days. You have failed to pay the amount even after the expiry of 60 days. Therefore the Authorized Officer, in exercise of the powers conferred under Section 13(4), took symbolic/physical possession of the secured assets, more particularly described in the schedule mentioned above. Notice is hereby given to you to pay the sum as mentioned above before the date fixed for sale, failing which the immovable properties will be sold and balance due, if any, will be recovered with interest and cost from you. Please note that all expenses pertaining to demand notice, taking possession, valuation and sale etc. shall be first deducted from the sale proceeds, which may be realized by the undersigned and the balance of the sale proceeds will be appropriated towards your liability as aforesaid. You are also at liberty to participate in the sale to be held on the terms and conditions thereof including deposit of earnest money or may bring

**DESIGN, SUPPLY,
ERECTION, TESTING AND
COMMISSIONING WORKS**

Tender Notice No. Dy.CEE/CON/RE/MLG/09/2024, Dated: 14-12-2024 E-Tender are invited by the undersigned for the following work: **Tender No. : ELCRE-MLG-09-24-25, Name of Work: Design, Supply, Erection, Testing & Commissioning of 132KV/27KV, 21 & 30/24 MVA Tractor Sub-Station (TSS) at Sairam in Bhairabi-Sairang Section, including Electrical General Work.**
Tender Value : ₹10,72,50,952.31/-
Earnest Money : ₹6,86,300/- Date & time of submission of tender at: **14:00 hrs. on 09-01-2025 and opening at 14:00 hrs. on 16-01-2025** For complete information please visit in website www.irops.gov.in.

Dy. CEE/CON/RE, Maligaon
NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY
Construction Organization
Serving Customers With A Smile

ANDHRA PRADESH CAPITAL REGION DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
Governorpet, Lenin Centre, Vijayawada-520002, Andhra Pradesh.
Phone: 91866-2571272 (O) Fax: 91866-2577357. www.apcrda.aap.gov.in

TO WHOMSOEVER IT MAY CONCERN

APCRDA has several projects lined up for execution over the next few years in its endeavor to build a world-class capital city. We invite reputed contractors from across the country to submit bids with their resumes to the Project Director, Government of Andhra Pradesh, Capital Region Development Authority, Governorpet, Lenin Centre, Vijayawada-520002, Andhra Pradesh. We will provide guidance and support for timely registration. You can contact us for this support by emailing apcrda@apcrda.ap.gov.in or crda@apcrda.ap.gov.in expressing your willingness to register. Please contact us before January 9, 2024, for more details and to register your interest.

Sd/- Commissioner, APCRDA, Vijayawada

EAST CENTRAL RAILWAY

E-TENDER NOTICE

DRM (Electrical)/OP/ECR/Dhanbad for and behalf of the President of India, invites E-Tender for the execution of following work.

E-Tender No. : GEM/2024/B/5718627, dated 18.12.2024.

1. Name of the work, location and Completion period : Supply of RAW materials for subsidized meals and preparation of subsidized meals to willing occupants at BRWD Running Room in Dhanbad division of East Central Railway. 2. Approx. cost of the work : ₹19,07,67,78.72. 3. Earnest money to be deposited : ₹245,600.00. 4. Date & Time for closing and opening of E-Tender : Closing of E-Tender : On 08.01.2025 at 17.00 Hrs. Opening of E-Tender : On 08.01.2025 at 17.30 Hrs. 5. Website particulars: Website : <http://gem.gov.in>. Manual offers are not allowed against this GeM Tender.

Div. Railway Manager (Elect./OP/ECR/Dhanbad)
PR/01736/DHN/EOPN/T/24-25/32

EAST CENTRAL RAILWAY

TENDER NOTICE

E-Open Tender (through IREPS Portal) in Single Packet System are invited for execution of the following work by S. Divisional Mechanical Engineer (C&W), East Central Railway, Dhanbad.

1. Tender Number : 09-MC-WagonRepair-2024-2. **2. Name of work :** Outsourcing of various wagon repair activities during intensive examination in Dhanbad division for a period of 02 years/24 months. 3. **Location of work :** BRWD (C&W) depot and PTRU (C&W) depot. **4. Approx. cost of the work :** ₹.11,14,635.18/- (Rupees One Lakh Fourteen Thousand Six Hundred Thirty-Five and Eighteen Paise Only). **5. Earnest Money to be deposited :** ₹.25,800.00/- (Rupees Two Lakh Five Thousand Six Hundred only). **6. Date & Time for submission of tender :** Till 17:30 Hrs. on 06-01-2025. **7. Date & time of opening of Tender (Technical Bid) :** At 18:00 Hrs. on 06-01-2025. **8. Website particulars :** <http://www.ireps.gov.in>

No manual tender will be accepted against e-tendering.

S. Divisional Mechanical Engineer (C&W)
East Central Railway, Dhanbad

PR/01727/DHNM/MECH/T/24-25/32

E-Auction Notice
On behalf of president of India, DRM (Commercial), E.C Railway, Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya invites e-auction for under mentioned work over different station of division. Details are as under:-
1. A/A1. Name of work with its location and completion period : Commercial Publicity/advertisement right through Board, Sign Board media under RDN Non-Digital inside area at 43 stations over Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya division for a period of 05 years (1826 days). E-Auction Catalogue No.: ADVT-DDU-25-01, E-Auction Lot No.: ADVT-DDU- GAYA-OSN-8-23-3. Date & Time for E-Auction: E-auction will start at 15:00 hrs. and close at 15:30 hrs on 01.01.2025.
2. Website particular where complete details of E-Auction available: : www.irops.gov.in (E-auction Leasing)
Divisional Railway Manager(Comm)/ ECR/Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya
PR/01719/HQ/Comm/IN/24-25/32

OPEN TENDER NOTICE

Open Tender Notice No. SRDEE-TRD-IZN-2024-25-T15 Date - 18.12.2024.

Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer/TRD,
North Eastern Railway, Izzatnagar for and
on behalf of President of India, invites sealed
"OPEN" E-Tender for the following work:
Name of work: Replacement of the 105 sq.
mm Isolator large jumper wire with a 160
sq. mm Copper large Jumper wire and
shifting of some Isolators in various
sections of BRT, KJN, FBD, KSJ and
MEU in the IZN Division. Tender reference
no SRDEE-TRD-IZN-2024-25-T15.
Approx. Cost (in Rs.) -91,05,242.40, Earnest
money/Bid Security (in Rs.) :1,82,10,000.
Cost of tender documents (in Rs.) : 00,
E-Tender closing date and Time: 13.01.2025,
11.00, Completion period: 06 Months.

E-Tender Online will be submitted upto
11:00 Hrs on date : 13.01.2025. For full
details and submission of bid kindly visit
the Official website of Indian railways i.e.
www.treps.gov.in

Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer/TRD/
CPRO/REL - 199 Izzatnagar


"Never travel on roof and foot boards"

कुटेशन नोटिस

हरियाणा राज्य परिवहन रेवाड़ी में वाहनों की मरम्मत के लिए हाईवेयर/पैटी आईटम्स/ मिसलेनियस आईटम की अगले एक वर्ष के लिए खरीद हेतु कुटेशन ली जानी है। ईच्छुक सप्लायर दिनांक 28.12.2024 को साँय 05:00 बजे तक अपनी सील बंद कुटेशन महाप्रबन्धक, हरियाणा राज्य परिवहन रेवाड़ी के नाम भेज सकते हैं। जिसके ऊपर 'स्टोर आईटम कुटेशन लिखा होना अनिवार्य है। स्टोर आईटम की लिस्ट व अन्य शर्तों के लिए महाप्रबन्धक कार्यालय में सम्पर्क कर सकते हैं। कुटेशन से सम्बन्धित सभी दस्तावेज किसी भी कार्य दिवस में आकर 200/- ₹० जमा करवाने उपरान्त महाप्रबन्धक, कार्यालय हरियाणा राज्य परिवहन, रेवाड़ी से प्राप्त कर सकते हैं।

हस्ता/-
महाप्रबन्धक
हरियाणा राज्य परिवहन
रेवाड़ी।

No-31212/HR

**Kolhapur Municipal Corporation**
Workshop Department
Tender Notice No. 94. Sr. No. 1 to 30 For First extension



भारतीय विज्ञान शिक्षा एवं अनुसंधान संस्थान भोपाल
Indian Institute of Science Education and Research Bhopal
भोपाल बायपास, भोपी रोड – 462066 (मध्य-प्रदेश)
Bhopal By-pass Road, Bhauri 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 of Automated Flash Chromatography System with ELSD	IISERB/SP/2024-25/104 dated 18/12/2024	30/12/2024
2	Supply & installation of Nanopatterning field emission filament-based scanning electron microscope with EBL (Second Call)	IISERB/SP/2024-25/106 dated 18/12/2024	31/12/2024
3	Supply of CD spectrometer with nitrogen generator & accessories	IISERB/SP/2024-25/107 dated 20/12/2024	09/01/2025

Stores and Purchase Officer

NORTHERN RAILWAY				
TENDER NOTICE				
Invitation of Tenders through E-Procurement systems				
Principal Chief Materials Manager, Northern Railway, New Delhi - 110001, for and on behalf of the President of India, invites e-tenders through e-procurement system for supply of the following items :-				
S. No.	Tender No.	Brief Description	Qty.	Closing Date
01	09252189	BRAKE WEAR PLATE.	55817 NOS	13-01-25
02	02241951B	SET OF EMERGENCY LIGHTING UNIT	971 SET	13-01-25
03	02245060A	SUPPLY, INSTALLATION AND COMMISSIONING OF ROOF MOUNTED AIR CONDITIONING SYSTEM	55 LSET	13-01-25
04	15245247A	AUTOMATIC COACH WASHING PLANT	1 NOS	15-01-25
05	14240845	SOAP TOILET CAKE	372363 NOS	15-01-25
06	07240448	HOSE CONNECTION 20 X 550 MM	14145 NOS	16-01-25
07	07240464	OVERHAULING KIT FOR MANIFOLD MOUNTING COCK	890 SET	20-01-25
08	03242589	FLEXIBLE PVC FLOORING SHEET,	3984 MTR	20-01-25
09	07243685A	PUSH TYPE FLUSHING VALVE	11185 NOS	23-01-25
10	07240465	CIRCUIT BOARD EB01B	96 NOS	23-01-25

<div style="text-align: center;"> बिहार सरकार कला, संस्कृति एवं युवा विभाग अल्पकालीन निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना </div>		
क्र०	निविदा संबंधित विवरण	विस्तृत जानकारी
1	निविदा प्रकाशित होने की तिथि	दिनांक-20.12.2024
2	निविदा राशि	2,000 /- (दो हजार रुपये) मात्र तकनीकी निविदा के साथ जमा करना होगा।
3	अग्रधन जमा राशि (Earnest Money Deposit)	20,000 /- (बीस हजार रुपये) मात्र का डिमांड ड्राफ्ट जो उप सचिव, कला, संस्कृति एवं युवा विभाग के पक्ष में देय हो तकनीकी निविदा के साथ जमा करना होगा।
4	निविदा जमा करने की अंतिम तिथि एवं समय	दिनांक-30.12.2024 के अपराह्न 3:00 बजे तक
5	निविदा जमा करने हेतु पता	उप सचिव, कला, संस्कृति एवं युवा विभाग, कमरा संख्या-326, विकास भवन, तृतीय तल, बेली रोड, पटना
6	निविदा जमा करने का माध्यम	बैंक द्वारा अथवा हाथों-हाथ उल्लेखित पते पर
7	निविदा खोलने की तिथि समय	निविदा विभागीय निविदा मूल्यांकन समिति के समक्ष दिनांक-30.12.2024 के अपराह्न 4:30 बजे खोली जाएगी।
2. निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना एवं निविदा की शर्तें सूचना एवं जनसंपर्क विभाग एवं कला, संस्कृति एवं युवा विभाग के वेबसाइट क्रमशः state.bihar.gov.in/prdbihar एवं state.bihar.gov.in/yac पर देखी जा सकती है।		
अवर सचिव, कला, संस्कृति एवं युवा विभाग, बिहार, पटना।		

Govt. of Bihar

Office of Executive Engineer, Punpun Flood Protection Division, Anisabad, Patna
(Water Resources Department, Government of Bihar)

Jal Sansadhan Bhawan,
Anisabad, Patna – 800002.
 Website-wrd.bihar.gov.in
 E-mail ID-exenpunpun1@gmail.com

Invitation of Request for Proposal (RFP)
Tender Notice No.- PFPDA/RFP/03

- Request for bids are being invited in two bid system by Executive Engineer, Punpun Flood Protection Division, Anisabad, Patna on behalf of Water Resources Department, Government of Bihar from eligible bidders for hiring of communications management and social media agency for Water Resources Department, Government of Bihar as specified in bid document.
- Prospective bidders may visit offices mentioned in 5(ii) for details of terms and conditions of eligibility of bidder, scope of work, bidding procedure, bidding document etc.
- Bid document fee, earnest money deposit shall be submitted through Physical Mode/Manual/Online Payment System as specified in detailed bid document.
- Details of Work -

SL	Name of work	Bid Security/ Earnest Money	Cost of Bid document (Non- refundable)	Service/ Contract period
1	Hiring of Communications Management System and Social Media agency for WRD, Govt. of Bihar	1,00,000.00	10,000.00	03 (Three) years from date of agreement

NOTE: - * Earnest money will be refunded and successful Bidder has to submit 2% of their Bid as Earnest Money in any form as mentioned in Bihar PWD code before agreement.

5. The Schedule of Bidding

Sl. No.	Particulars	Details
(i)	Date of issue of invitation for Bid	20.12.2024
(ii)	Place of sale of Bid document	Executive Engineer, Punpun Flood Protection Division, Anisabad, Patna
(iii)	Period of sale of Bid document	07.01.2025 to 13.01.2025 on working days only
(iv)	Time, Date and Place of pre-Bid meeting	10.01.2025, 3:00 PM (Office of Chief Engineer, Flood Control and Drainage, Water Resources Department, Patna)
(v)	Last date and time for submission of Bids	15.01.2025, 3:00 PM
(vi)	Time and date of opening Technical Bid	15.01.2025, 3:30 PM
(vii)	Time and date of opening financial Bids	to be decided by competent authority
(viii)	Place of opening technical Bids	in the offices mentioned in 5(ii)
(ix)	Period of Bid validity	120 days
(x)	Officer inviting Bids	Executive Engineer, Punpun Flood Protection Division, Anisabad, Patna

- The Bid documents can be obtained from the offices as mentioned in 5(ii) on payment of Rs. 10,000.00 (Ten Thousand) in shape of Demand Draft of any nationalized or scheduled bank payable to Executive Engineer, Punpun Flood Protection Division, Anisabad, Patna payable at Patna from 07.01.2025, 11.00 hrs to 13.01.2025, 17.00 hrs on working days.
- Any other details or information can be obtained from the Office of the Executive Engineer, Punpun Flood Protection Division, Anisabad, Patna during office hrs.
- All rates should be exclusive of all taxes.
- The Officer inviting the RFP reserves the right to extend / cancel the RFP without assigning any reason thereof.

For further details please visit website state.bihar.gov.in/prdbihar

PR- 15412 (W R D) 2024-25
नशे की मार, बर्बाद करे सुखी परिवार।

Executive Engineer,
Punpun Flood Protection Division,
Anisabad, Patna



POOMPUHAR SHIPPING CORPORATION LIMITED

(A Government of Tamilnadu Enterprise)

692, Anna Salai, IVth Floor, Nandanam, Chennai - 600 035, India

Telephone No. : 044 - 24330505 / 007, Fax : 91-44-24344593 /24335706,

E-mail : pscship@gmail.com CIN : U63090TN1974PLC006596

GLOBAL E-TENDER INVITING NOTICE

NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER FOR LONG TERM TIME CHARTERING OF ONE SELF-TRIMMING PANAMAX / KAMSARMAK GEARLESS (OR WITH GEARS CONSIDERED AS GEARLESS) VESSEL WITH CAPACITY OF ABOUT 68,000 TO 86,000 DWT ON ACCOUNT OF NTECL.

E-tenders are invited from the Ship owners / disponent owners for the following specification

Tender Number	Lay Days	Period	Tender Download start date	Bid Submission end date	Tender opening Date
PSC/CHARTERING/ 001/2024-25, Dt 17.12.2024	29.01.2025 to 08.02.2025	6 Month + 3 Month +/- 10 days choption	20.12.2024 at 1600 hours	21.01.2025 at 1200 hours	21.01.2025 at 1400 hours

Tender document is available in e-tendering web portal <https://tntenders.gov.in/nicgep/app> and www.tamilship.com at free of cost. Prospective bidders are advised to refer for <https://tntenders.gov.in/nicgep/app> specific important details and upload their bid. The conditions / requirement mentioned in the website shall be met out by the bidders. This advertisement is an invitation for bid only. The details given in the website are comprehensive. Tender Opening Venue: Poompuhar Shipping Corporation Limited, Head Office, No. 692, Anna Salai, MHU Complex - 4th Floor, Nandanam, Chennai - 600 035.

Further, all communications / corrigendums will be updated through <https://tntenders.gov.in/nicgep/app> only.

DIPR/5588/TENDER/2024

GENERAL MANAGER (OPS)

WWW.INDIANEXPRESS.COM

THE INDIAN EXPRESS, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 21, 2024

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ENGINEER PWD SAGAR ZONE SAGAR

PHONE No. 07582-220840, E-mail:-cepwdsagar@mp.nic.in

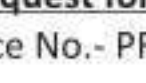
NIT No. 09/TC/2024-25

SAGAR DATE 16/12/2024

Online bids for the following works are invited from registered contractors and firms of repute fulfilling registration criteria :

S. No.	Tender Portal No.	Name of work	District	Probable Amount Contract (Rs. in)	Eraneest Money Deposit (EMD) (in Rs.)	Cost of Bid Document (in Rs.)	Period of completion (in months i/c Rainy Season)	Remark
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1	2024_PWDDB-388739_1	Construction of Different Roads With Electrification Work Under PWD Sub Division Sagar Rs. 933.11 Lacs 1-Bhainsa to Pathariya Tigadua Road [Including Electrification Work (Total Length - 4.60 Km)] PAC Amount: 468.39 Lacs 2-Ghat Semra to Killai Road [Including Electrification Work (Total Length - 3.00 Km)] PAC Amount: 256.92 Lacs 3-Kanchri to Habla Road [Including Electrification Work (Total Length - 3.00 Km)] PAC Amount: 207.79 Lacs	Sagar	933.11	933110.00	20000.00	12 Months i/c Rainy Season	1st Call
2	2024_PWDDB-388740_1	Construction of Different Roads With Electrification Work Under PWD Sub Division Sagar Rs. 873.35 Lacs 1-Gram Tendudabur to Semra Gopalman Road [Including Electrification Work (Total Length - 5.50 Km)] PAC Amount: 452.40 Lacs 2-Bansa to Sarkhadi Road [Including Electrification Work (Total Length - 5.00 Km)] PAC Amount: 420.95 Lacs	Sagar	873.35	873350.00	20000.00	10 Months i/c Rainy Season	1st Call
3	2024_PWDDB-388741_1	Construction of Different Roads With Electrification Work Under PWD Sub Division Sagar Rs. 533.93 Lacs 1-Kevlari to Sehajpuri Bujurg Road [Including Electrification Work (Total Length - 2.50 Km)] PAC Amount: 257.57 Lacs 2- Sehajpuri Bujurg to Sehajpuri Khurd Road [Including Electrification Work (Total Length - 2.40 Km)] PAC Amount: 276.36 Lacs	Sagar	533.93	533930.00	20000.00	8 Months i/c Rainy Season	1st Call

G-20517/24



Govt. of Bihar

Office of Executive Engineer, Punpun Flood Protection Division, Anisabad, Patna
(Water Resources Department, Government of Bihar)

Jal Sansadhan Bhawan,
Anisabad, Patna – 800002.
 Website-wrd.bihar.gov.in
 E-mail ID-exenpunpun1@gmail.com

Invitation of Request for Proposal (RFP)
Tender Notice No.- PFPDA/RFP/02

- Request for proposals are being invited in two Bid (Technical and Financial) system by Executive Engineer, Punpun Flood Protection Division, Anishabad, Patna on behalf of Water Resources Department, Government of Bihar from eligible Bidders (as per eligibility criteria mentioned in Form TECH 2 – Minimum Eligibility Criteria for participating Chartered Accountant firms (CA Firms)) for Chartered Accountant Firm Water Resources Department, Government of Bihar as specified in Bid document.
- Prospective Bidders may visit offices mentioned in 5(ii) for details of terms and conditions of eligibility of Bidder, scope of work, Bidding procedure, Bidding document etc.
- Bid document fee, earnest money deposit shall be made through Physical Mode/Manual Payment System as specified in detailed Bid document and its proof must be submitted in technical Bid.
- Details of Work -

SL	Name of work	Bid Security/ Earnest Money	Cost of Bid document (Non-refundable)	Service/ Contract period
1	Hiring of Chartered Accountant Firm for settlement of GST claims arising from Tendered Work for Water Resources Department.	1,00,000.00	10,000.00	03 (Three) years from date of agreement

NOTE: - * Earnest money will be refunded and successful Bidder has to submit 2% of their Bid as Earnest Money in any form as mentioned in Bihar PWD code before agreement.

5. The Schedule of Bidding

Sl. No.	Particulars	Details
(i)	Date of issue of invitation for Bid	20.12.2024
(ii)	Place of sale of Bid document	Executive Engineer, Punpun Flood Protection Division, Anishabad, Patna
(iii)	Period of sale of Bid document	07.01.2025 to 13.01.2025 on working days only
(iv)	Time, Date and Place of pre -Bid meeting	10.01.2025, 3:00 PM (Office of Chief Engineer, Flood Control and Drainage, Water Resources Department, Patna
(v)	Last date and time for submission of Bids	15.01.2025, 3:00 PM
(vi)	Time and date of opening Technical Bid	15.01.2025, 3:30 PM
(vii)	Time and date of opening financial Bids	to be decided by competent authority
(viii)	Place of opening technical Bids	in the offices mentioned in 5(ii)
(ix)	Period of Bid validity	120 days
(x)	Officer inviting Bids	Executive Engineer, Punpun Flood Protection Division, Anishabad, Patna

- The Bid documents can be obtained from the offices as mentioned in 5(ii) on payment of Rs. 10,000.00 (Ten Thousand) in shape of Demand Draft of any nationalized or scheduled bank payable to Executive Engineer, Punpun Flood Protection Division, Anishabad, Patna payable at Patna from 07.01.2025, 11.00 hrs to 13.01.2025, 17.00 hrs on working days.
- Any other details or information can be obtained from the Office of the Executive Engineer, Punpun Flood Protection Division, Anishabad, Patna during office hrs.
- All rates should be exclusive of all taxes.
- The Officer inviting the RFP reserves the right to extend / cancel the RFP without assigning any reason thereof.

For further details please visit website state.bihar.gov.in/prdbihar

PR- 15405 (W R D) 2024-25

नशे की मार, बर्बाद करे सुखी परिवार।

Executive Engineer,
Punpun Flood Protection Division,
Anishabad, Patna

Office of the Superintending Engineer,

Chhattisgarh Rural Road Development Agency

Project Circle No. 01 Bastar

E-Procurement Tender Notice

NIT No. 162/TS 1685/CGRDA/2024

Superintending Engineer, Project Circle No. 01 Bastar on behalf of Governor of Chhattisgarh invites percentage rate bids in electronic tendering system for Patch Repair of Constructed Rural Road under Mukhya Mantri Gram Sadak Avam Vikas Yojana in below mentioned district of the state, from the eligible contractors / Firms registered with unified registration system (e-registration) for the works mentioned below :-

Bastar, Date 19/12/2024

S. No	Work Name	Amount (Rs. in Lakhs)	Districts	Rate invited
01	Patch Repair of Constructed Rural Road under Mukhya Mantri Gram Sadak Avam Vikas Yojana	15.10	Brijarpur	Percentage Rate on SOR 22.02.2018 issued by CE, CGRDA Raipur

Detailed N.I.T. and other Details can be viewed on our website <https://eproc.cgstate.gov.in> on or after 24/12/2024, 05:30 PM. In future any related corrigendum would be seen in the notice section of the website.

Sd/-

Superintending Engineer

Chhattisgarh Rural Road Development Agency,

Project Circle No. 01 Bastar

Dist. Bastar (C.G.)

E-mail : circle1jdp@gmail.com

NO 42506-4

AGENDA FOR 55TH GST COUNCIL MEETING

GST relief on cards for food delivery, insurance premiums

Council may consider hiking rates for high-end items like costly watches, shoes

AANCHAL MAGAZINE
JAISALMER, DECEMBER 20

AS THE state finance ministers and Centre converge in Jaisalmer for the 55th Goods and Services Tax (GST) Council on Saturday, there is likely to be a renewed focus on lowering the tax burden for people by reducing rates on mass-consumption items such as food delivery services, insurance premiums, bicycles and packaged drinking water. The Council, however, will also consider hiking rates for higher-end items such as wrist watches, shoes, expensive readymade garments as a move in the direction of pricing-based tax differential rates under the indirect tax regime that was introduced over seven years ago.

The Council is also expected to take up another key item for discussion that has remained outside the ambit of GST — aviation turbine fuel (ATF). Petroleum products including ATF are outside the GST regime and airlines are not able to utilise credit on taxes paid on ATF — a key input which comprises over 40 per cent of airlines' operating expenses. Currently, the Centre and states levy taxes on ATF including excise duty and value added tax. Additionally, the Council will discuss the future of compensation cess rates and the carving out of special rate of 35 per cent for some of the sin goods such as tobacco and aerated drinks.

Insurance premiums, food delivery

The Group of Ministers (GoM) on rate rationalisation, which was tasked with deciding on the reg of rates on items and tweaks in tax slabs, has finalised its report. The recommendations covering rate change suggestions for nearly 150 items will be taken up in the Council's meeting in Jaisalmer on Saturday.

The premiums paid by senior citizens for health insurance and premiums paid by all for term life insurance are expected to be exempted by the GST Council. GST on term life insurance premiums are likely to be exempted for all persons, includ-



Union Minister for Finance and Corporate Affairs Nirmala Sitharaman chairs the meeting on pre-Budget consultation with States and Union Territories (with Legislature) for the forthcoming Union Budget 2025-26, in Jaisalmer, on Friday. X/@FinMinIndia

ing plans that consist of family members. Health insurance premium paid by senior citizens irrespective of coverage would also be exempted. For other citizens, health insurance cover till ₹5 lakh is likely to be exempted and the existing rate of 18 per cent will be charged for health insurance cover over ₹5 lakh. The revenue implication of the exemption proposal for senior citizens for health insurance is expected to be around ₹2,200 crore and ₹200 crore for exemption to term cover premiums. The revenue loss is going to be more than offset by gains of around ₹22,000 crore from the proposed hike in rates on several high-end items.

A rate cut is also being proposed for food delivery aggregators such as Swiggy and Zomato to 5 per cent (without input tax credit) from the existing rate of 18 per cent. Additionally, a rate hike has been proposed for sale of used electric vehicles (EVs) and small petrol and diesel vehicles to 18 per cent from the current 12 per cent to bring them at par with the tax treatment for used and old small cars and large vehicles.

Apart from these, other items which are expected to see a GST rate cut include packaged water above 20 litres (5 per cent from 18 per cent), bicycles priced less than ₹10,000 (5 per cent from 12 per cent) and exercise notebooks (5 per cent from 12 per cent.

High-end items: wrist

watches, shoes

The GoM has proposed hiking rates on high-end items such as cosmetics, watches and shoes. Shoes above ₹15,000 and wrist watches above ₹25,000 are likely to be shifted to the top-most slab of 28 per cent GST from 18 per cent now. This could mark the first major restructuring based on pricing of goods and services.

The GoM on rate rationalisation has also suggested levying 5 per cent GST on readymade garments priced up to ₹1,500; 18 per cent for those priced at ₹1,500-10,000; and 28 per cent for garments costing above ₹10,000. Currently, garments with cost up to ₹1,000 attract 5 per cent GST, while those above that face 12 per cent levy.

The proposals are going to be discussed threadbare in the Council meeting as concerns have been raised by many trade associations operating in textile, readymade garments sectors that the changes in tax rates might raise compliance cost and hurt industry.

Compensation cess, 35 per cent rate proposal

The GST rates for some sin or demerit goods such as tobacco and aerated drinks are also going to be discussed in the Council as some items may face a special rate of 35 per cent in the future.

The GoM on compensation cess has sought an extension of its deadline to submit a report by December 31 this year to

June 2025, which it will take up formally at the Council meeting. The panel will decide the fate of cess rates and the change in GST rates required to meet the revenue gap once compensation cess gets removed after meeting the loan repayment requirements. One such suggestion has been to carve out a special rate of 35 per cent for some of the items belonging to the topmost 28 per cent slab.

At present, the sin or demerit goods such as cars, tobacco face cess rates ranging from 1 per cent to 200 per cent over and above the existing highest rate of 28 per cent. Officials said there is time till March 2026 to take a decision regarding the levy of the cess, a more detailed discussion is required on this issue.

The current major four-slab GST structure — of 5 per cent, 12 per cent, 18 per cent and 28 per cent — is expected to continue as it is for the medium term.

The compensation cess was proposed to be levied for five years after the rollout of GST, till June 2022, to compensate states for revenue loss. In 2022, the Council decided to extend the levy till March 2026 to repay the interest and principal amount of the ₹2.69 lakh crore of loans taken in 2021-2022 to pay off states' revenue loss during Covid years. At its meeting on September 9, the Council decided to set up a GoM to decide the future course of the cess.

UltraTech gets CCI's nod to acquire majority stake in India Cements

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 20

THE COMPETITION Commission of India (CCI) on Friday cleared billionaire Kumar Mangalam Birla-promoted UltraTech Cement's proposal to acquire a majority stake in India Cements.

"The proposed combination envisages UltraTech Cement Ltd's (UltraTech/acquirer) acquisition of 32.72 per cent of the paid-up equity share capital of India Cements Ltd (India Cements/target) from the promoters and members of the promoter group of India Cements and Sri Saradha Logistics Pvt Ltd," CCI said in a release. The fair trade

regulator also granted its clearance to UltraTech Cement to acquire up to 26 per cent of the paid-up equity share capital of India Cements by way of an open offer, it added.

UltraTech is engaged in the business of manufacturing and sales of grey cement, white cement, ready-mix concrete, clinker, and building products in India.

It is a subsidiary of Grasim Industries Ltd, while India Cements operates core and non-core businesses. The core business of India Cements is the manufacturing and sales of grey cement and ready-mix concrete. "CCI approves UltraTech Cement Ltd's acquisition of The India Cements Ltd," the competition watchdog said.

FINANCE MINISTER'S PRE-BUDGET CONSULTATION

States' wishlist: Higher capex spends, hike in interest-free loans and more exigency funds

AANCHAL MAGAZINE
JAISALMER, DECEMBER 20

HIGHER SPEND for capital expenditure, increase in allocation under the 50-year interest-free loans and more funds for disaster management was the common theme in demands made by states in their pre-Budget consultations with Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Friday. States also asked for a higher borrowing limit, with fiscally-strained states such as Punjab, Kerala seeking special financial packages.

Some states including Karnataka and West Bengal also sought enhanced payments for Anganwadi and Asha (accredited social health activist) workers, sources said. Many states also asked for additional funds for road development and railways projects along with additional funds for Jal Jeevan Mission to arrange for tanks and storage to enhance water supplies.

States that suffered a natural disaster of severe nature in fi-

nancial year 2024-25 may be eligible for up to 50 per cent of their allocation under Part-1 (Untied) of the SASCI (Special Assistance to States for Capital Investment) scheme, Sitharaman told the states.

"This amount will be in addition to the funds provided under the National Disaster Response and Mitigation Fund (NDRMF)," an official statement quoted her as saying.

In the meeting, Maharashtra is also learnt to have asked for funds for Mukhyamantri Mahi Ladki Bahin Yojana along with a demand for tweaks in the sharing pattern of Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSS), with states and Centre's contribution at 50 per cent each.

Many states asked for an increase in allocations for the 50 years interest-free loan scheme, especially to focus on capital expenditure. Kerala Finance Minister K N Balagopal in his speech said the Centre has to recognise that fiscal consolidation achieved through restrictions in government expenditure may not necessarily be a

desirable outcome. "We reiterate that fiscal consolidation targets should not compromise sustainable growth. Instead, state governments should be empowered to fulfil their expenditure commitments and implement macroeconomic policies that drive faster national economic growth," Balagopal said. Himachal Pradesh is learnt to have asked for more funds to mitigate disasters and funds for better road connectivity along with funds for expansion of rail lines.

Andhra Pradesh asked for more funds for interlinking of rivers and an enhancement of funds for capital expenditure, with special focus on centrally sponsored schemes for the backward regions. West Bengal's Finance Minister Chandrima Bhattacharya said she sought the release of pending dues. "Whatever is pending, those amounts have to be released. We are a state which is flood prone, so many floods we have faced many people have suffered. Centre has to come forward and

give us assistance," she said.

She demanded that 50 per cent of the 50-year interest free loans be tied to disaster management in order to mitigate the state that face natural disasters frequently, adding that the Union Finance Minister has said that funds would be allotted to all states towards disaster mitigation. West Bengal also demanded a special package and a debt package to help it get over the financial stress.

Telangana Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka said Centre should give flexibility to states to use CSS funds and not insist on branding. He also demanded that the Andhra Pradesh bifurcation act be implemented fully so that Telangana gets all its rights under the act.

Punjab's Finance Minister Harpal Singh Cheema said that he demanded an incentive package given to states which share borders with neighbouring countries. "We are a border state, so we asked for incentives and an industrial package like it exists in other regions such as J&K, Himachal Pradesh," he said.

RBI policy panel divided on inflation-growth dynamics

Fundamental requirement now is to bring down inflation and align it with the target, says Shaktikanta Das

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU
MUMBAI, DECEMBER 20

THE MONETARY policy review of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) held on December 6 has brought out the differences of opinion in the six-member Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) about the growth-inflation dynamics and cutting interest rates. While two external members of the MPC argued for a revival in growth by cutting interest rates, three members from the RBI and one external member opted for status quo on the interest rate front.

According to the minutes of the MPC meeting released on Friday, Reserve Bank Governor Shaktikanta Das, who heads the MPC, has said the fundamental requirement now is to bring down inflation and align it with the target, according to minutes of the MPC meeting. "In my overall assessment, the gains achieved so far in the broad direction of disinflation need to be preserved, while closely monitoring the evolving outlook of both inflation and growth," Das said.

India's GDP growth rate fell unexpectedly to 5.4 per cent in the July-September quarter, its slowest pace in seven quarters, while inflation surged to a 14-month high of 6.21 per cent in October 2024.

The policy panel kept the Repo rate unchanged at 6.50 per cent in a majority 4:2 decision. MPC members Nagesh Kumar and Ram Singh proposed a cut in Repo rates by 25 bps to boost growth.

"The policy priority at this critical juncture has to be on restoring the inflation-growth balance. Lower inflation will enhance disposable income with households and increase their purchasing power. Such an ap-



Shaktikanta Das, former Reserve Bank governor. File

proach would support consumption and investment demand. Without addressing this core issue, it would not be possible to foster sustainable growth," Das said.

Nagesh Kumar, Member of MPC, said most of the central banks around the world, barring a few, have embarked on an easing cycle in recent months, with some, like the US Fed, adopting a rather aggressive posture towards cutting the policy rates. "India risks currency appreciation if we do not follow the process of normalisation when most others have moved forward. The rupee has already been appreciating in real terms, and a further appreciation would hurt the competitiveness of Indian products," Kumar said.

"Therefore, I believe that a rate cut would help in reviving economic growth without worsening the inflationary situation, which may soften with seasonal correction in prices," Kumar said.

According to MPC Member Ram Singh, who voted for a 25 bps rate cut, there will always be uncertainty about the path of inflation and the appropriate policy rates. Due to increases in the capital intensity of production processes due to advances in ICT and AI, the employment elasticity of output is likely to fall in the future. "As such, we have a limited window of 10-15 years to capitalise on the demographic dividend. So, the imperative is high

growth rate while minimising the likelihood of extreme scenarios on the inflation front," he said.

"The monetary policy stance is open to support growth, but it must await the ebbing of inflation on a durable basis or else the uneven progress made so far in disinflation will get dissipated," RBI Deputy Governor Michael Patra said, while voting for status quo on Repo rate.

"It is a durable reduction in inflationary pressures that can rekindle the impulses of growth in a sustained manner. The expected winter easing of food prices may provide the turning point," Patra said.

"As I have pointed out on several occasions, the biggest support for higher growth would come from price stability. Prudence and practicality demand that we now continue with the neutral stance of monetary policy and keep the repo rate unchanged at 6.50 per cent," Das said. "Accordingly, I vote for the same. Any other approach would be counterproductive and a case of inappropriate timing," Das said.

"Based on my assessment of the appropriate response to the increasing complexity of the economic environment, I vote to keep the repo rate unchanged at 6.5 per cent, while continuing with the neutral monetary policy stance," MPC Member Saugata Bhattacharya said, while opting for status quo on interest rates. "Amidst difficult policy trade-offs, our cautious and calibrated approach has kept us in good stead. Related literature shows that during periods of heightened uncertainty with mixed data signals, conservatism and cautious approach can be useful. The need of the hour is to be watchful of the forthcoming data to ascertain the projected improvement in the balance between inflation and growth outlook," RBI ED Rajiv Ranjan said.

US Attorney, whose office brought fraud charges against Adani, to resign



Breon Peace said he plans to resign on January 10

REUTERS
NEW YORK, DECEMBER 20

BREON PEACE, who has served as the top federal prosecutor in Brooklyn since 2021, announced on Wednesday that he plans to resign on January 10, before Republican President-elect Donald Trump's inauguration. Peace, a former longtime partner at law firm Cleary Gottlieb, was nominated as the U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of New York by Democratic President Joe Biden. His deputy Carolyn Pokorny will serve as acting US attorney.

Last month, Peace's office brought fraud charges against Gautam Adani over an alleged bribery scheme. The office has also charged Linda Sun, a former aide to New York state governor Kathy Hochul, with secretly acting as an agent of the Chinese government — part of a broader effort to crack down on Beijing's influence in the US. Adani has denied the charges and is not in custody. Sun has pleaded not guilty.

"I look forward to the Office's continued courageous commitment to pursuing justice, fairly and ethically, without bias, without fear or favor, and with compassion," Peace said. During his tenure, the Eastern District secured the guilty plea of former Republican US Representative George Santos for fraud, won the conviction at trial of a former Goldman Sachs, opens new tab banker related to the looting of a Malaysian development fund, and got French cement maker Lafarge to cough up \$778 mn for making payments to groups designated as terrorists.

SC sets aside NCDRC order barring over 30% charges on credit card dues

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 20

THE SUPREME Court Friday set aside an order of the National Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission (NCDRC) which barred banks from charging more than 30 per cent interest on credit card dues.

A bench of Justices Bela M Trivedi and Satish Chandra Sharma reversed a 2008 decision of NCDRC that held that it was an unfair trade practice from the part of banks to charge credit card users more than 30 per cent interest rate during delayed payments.

The court was hearing a petition challenging NCDRC deci-

sion in Awaz and Others vs RBI case in which the questions before the NCDRC were whether banks can charge credit card users interest at rates ranging from 36 per cent to 49 per cent per annum in case of default in payment within the time specified; whether such interest rates would amount to charging usurious rates of interest and whether the RBI is required to issue any circular or guidelines prohibiting the Banks/Non-Banking Financial Institutions/money lenders from charging interest above a specific rate. NCDRC had held that charging an interest rate beyond 30 per cent shall be considered a usurious rate of interest.

In the Awaz matter, the RBI

toll the stand that it has directed banks not to charge excessive rates of interest, but the policy is not to directly regulate the rates and, therefore, it has left the matter to the Boards of Directors of the banks. Hence, the RBI cannot be directed to issue any further instruction as it is a discretionary power conferred under the Banking Regulation Act, 1949.

The NCDRC, however, had said, "If the RBI is considered to be one of the watchdogs of finance and economy... then, there is no justifiable ground for not controlling the banks which exploit the borrowers by charging exorbitant rates per annum, in case of default by the credit card holders to pay amount before the due date."

India raises trade barriers issue with EU

New Delhi: India has flagged barriers being faced by domestic industry in the European Union (EU) markets and urged to address the issue, an official statement said on Friday.

The issue besides the progress of proposed free trade agreement was discussed by Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal and European Commissioner for Trade and Economic Security Maros Sefcovic. "Goyal underlined that non-tariff barriers were impeding trade and emphasised the need to address pending issues as a confidence building measure," the commerce ministry said. Both sides agreed to explore a balanced, equitable, and mutually beneficial FTA, it added. PTI

DGTR NOTIFIES ANTI-DUMPING INVESTIGATION

Duty hike likely amid surge in steel imports

RAVI DUTTA MISHRA
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 20

AMID A surge in steel imports from several countries, including China, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry is likely to recommend an increase in duty on steel products, according to a source aware of the development.

This comes as the Directorate General of Trade Remedies (DGTR) initiated an anti-dumping investigation into the imports of certain steel products into India as per notification released on Friday.

"There are concerns about the impact of a steel duty hike on the downstream industry, but at

the same time, there is massive overcapacity in China. A recommendation for a duty is likely, as several Western countries are imposing duties on Chinese steel products, and that steel could be rerouted to India," the person said.

The Ministry of Steel has asked the Ministry of Commerce to impose a 25 per cent duty on steel products, citing that steel imports from China surged by 80 per cent to 1.61 million tonnes between January and July this year, compared to 0.9 million tonnes during the same period last year. However, Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) have warned that a safeguard duty on steel products would negatively impact 8 lakh

MSMEs.

According to the DGTR notification, the Indian Steel Association (ISA), comprising ArcelorMittal Nippon Steel India Limited, AMNS Khopoli Limited, JSW Steel Limited, JSW Steel Coated Products Limited, Bhushan Power & Steel Limited, Jindal Steel and Power Limited, and the Steel Authority of India Limited, is seeking the imposition of a safeguard duty on imports of "Non-Alloy and Alloy Steel Flat Products" into India.

"The applicant alleges that there has been a recent, sudden, sharp, and significant increase in the volume of imports, which has caused significant injury to the domestic industry in India. The applicant further alleges that


imports have occurred in such increased quantities and under such circumstances as to cause or threaten to cause serious injury to the domestic industry," DGTR said in a notification.

ISA argued that beginning with the imposition of a 25 per cent duty under Section 232 by the United States of America under its Trade Expansion Act, 1962, several countries have introduced multiple trade remedy measures against steel product imports.

The evidence indicates that 129 trade remedy measures were imposed by various countries against steel products between 2019 and 2023.

FULL REPORT ON
www.indianexpress.com

TOP OF THE WORLD



Luigi Mangione in New York, Thursday

UNITED STATES

Man accused of killing CEO faces death penalty

New York: The man accused of killing UnitedHealthcare's CEO was whisked back to New York by plane and helicopter Thursday to face new federal charges of stalking and murder, which could bring the death penalty if he's convicted. Luigi Mangione was held without bail following a Manhattan federal court appearance, capping a whirlwind day that began in Pennsylvania, where he was arrested last week in the Dec. 4 attack on Brian Thompson. The 26-year-old had been expected to be arraigned Thursday on a state murder indictment in a killing that at once rattled the business community and galvanized some health insurance critics, but the federal charges preempted that appearance. AP

SRI LANKA

Policy on visits by foreign vessels soon

Colombo: Sri Lanka will soon formulate a national policy on allowing visits by foreign research vessels, Foreign Minister Vijitha Herath said Friday, amidst frequent docking requests from Chinese surveillance ships which raised concerns in India. Herath's comments came days after Sri Lankan President Anura Kumara Dissanayake's visit to India. In January, Lanka enforced a year-long moratorium on foreign marine research survey vessels operating in its waters and the Exclusive Economic Zone after security concerns by India. PTI

GREECE

8 dead, 18 saved as migrants' boat capsizes

Athens: A speedboat carrying migrants capsized Friday morning off the eastern Greek island of Rhodes, leaving eight dead, authorities said. The coast guard said the incident occurred while the speedboat was carrying out "dangerous maneuvers" to try and evade a patrol vessel, causing migrants to fall into the sea. Eighteen of the migrants were rescued. Rescue workers on three coast guard vessels and a helicopter were working near the resort area of Afantou Beach in the northeast of the island. It was unclear whether other passengers were missing. AP

FIRST SUCH VISIT SINCE ASSAD'S FALL

Top US officials in Syria to discuss 'transition principles' with new rulers

REUTERS

WASHINGTON/DAMASCUS, DECEMBER 20

US DIPLOMATS visiting Damascus were expected on Friday to hold Washington's first in-person official meetings with Syria's new de facto rulers led by Hayat Tahrir al-Sham, hoping to gauge what plans the former al Qaeda affiliate has for the country. The US, other Western powers and many Syrians were glad to see militias led by HTS topple President Bashar al-Assad, but it is not clear whether the group will impose strict Islamic rule or show flexibility and move towards democracy. Officials from the Biden administration will discuss with HTS representatives a set of principles such as inclusivity and respect for the rights of minorities that Washington wants included in Syria's political transition, a State Department spokesperson said. The State Department's top Middle East diplomat Barbara Leaf, Presidential Envoy for



People attend Friday prayers inside the Umayyad Mosque in Damascus. Reuters

Hostage Affairs Roger Carstens and Senior Advisor Daniel Rubinstein, who is tasked with leading the Department's Syria engagement, are the first US diplomats to travel to Damascus since Assad's rule collapsed. A press conference had been scheduled with the US officials but a statement issued on behalf of

Leaf said it was cancelled for security concerns. Western governments are gradually opening channels to HTS and its leader Ahmed al-Sharaa, a former commander of an al Qaeda franchise in Syria, and starting to debate whether to remove the group's terrorist designation. The US delegation's trip

follows contacts with France and Britain in recent days. Several hundred Syrians gathered in Damascus' central Ummayad Square on Thursday to call for a democratic, secular state that ensures equal rights for women. It was the first such demonstration since Assad's ouster. The UN human rights of-

EXPLAINED

Apprehensions remain

THERE IS apprehension among Syrians that the new administration will gravitate towards headline religious rule, marginalising minority communities and excluding women from public life. Obaida Arnout, a spokesperson for the Syrian transitional government, said this week that women's "biological and physiological nature" rendered them unfit for certain governmental jobs.

D-8 SUMMIT IN CAIRO

Yunus, Sharif discuss settling of 1971 war issues 'once & for all'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

DHAKA, DECEMBER 20

BANGLADESH HAS asked Pakistan to settle the issues of 1971 to help Dhaka move forward with its relationship with Islamabad "once and for all for the future generations," state-run news agency has said. Bangladesh Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus and Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif also discussed the revival of the SAARC and called for a strategic relationship between Dhaka and Islamabad. Yunus and Sharif met on the margins of the D-8 Summit at Cairo on Friday when the two leaders agreed to strengthen relations through increased trade, commerce, and exchange of sports and cultural delegations,

state-run news agency BSS said. Sharif said the 1974 tripartite agreement involving Bangladesh, Pakistan, and India settled things, "but if there are other outstanding issues," he would be happy to look at them, according to the BSS. India, Bangladesh and Pakistan on April 9, 1974, signed the tripartite agreement in New Delhi after the 1971 Liberation War. It dealt with the repatriation of prisoners of war in Indian camps since December 1971 and the resettlement of stranded populations in the two countries. Yunus and Sharif also discussed the revival of the SAARC. Sharif, who invited Yunus to Pakistan, thanked him for ease of air travel for Pakistani passengers to Bangladesh, Pakistan's state-run Associated Press of Pakistan said.



TAIWAN LAWMAKERS CLASH

Lawmakers from DPP use chairs to block the entrance as members of KMT try to break into the Legislature in Taipei on Friday. DPP lawmakers got into the building Thursday night in an attempt to block any votes on three Bills pushed by the NP including one that critics say would paralyse the Constitutional Court. Lai Ching-te, from DPP, is the President. Reuters

'TIME'S UP': NEW DEMOCRATIC PARTY TO BRING NO-TRUST MOTION

Trudeau looks set to lose power after key ally vows to topple him

If all Opp parties back motion, he will be out of office

REUTERS

OTTAWA, DECEMBER 20

CANADIAN PRIME Minister Justin Trudeau on Friday looked set to lose power early next year after a key ally said he would move to bring down the minority Liberal government and trigger an election. New Democratic Party leader Jagmeet Singh, who has been helping keep Trudeau in office, said he would present a formal motion of no-confidence after the House of Commons elected chamber returns from a winter break on January 27. If all the opposition parties back the motion, Trudeau will be out of office after



PM Justin Trudeau in Ottawa, Friday. AP

more than nine years as PM and an election will take place. A string of polls over the last 18 months show the Liberals, suffering from voter fatigue and anger over high prices and a housing crisis, would be badly defeated by the official opposition Conservatives. "No matter who is leading the Liberal Party, this government's time is up. We will put forward a

clear motion of non-confidence in the next sitting of the House of Commons," said Singh. The leader of the Bloc Quebecois, a larger opposition party, promised to back the motion and said there was no scenario where Trudeau survived. The Conservatives have been calling for an election for months. A few minutes after Singh issued his letter a smiling Trudeau, under growing pressure to quit after the shock resignation of his finance minister this week, presided over a cabinet shuffle. Before Singh made his announcement, a source close to Trudeau said the PM would take the Christmas break to ponder his future and was unlikely to make any announcement before January. Trudeau's office was not immediately available for comment.



Speaker of the House Mike Johnson speaks to reporters at the Capitol in Washington on Thursday. AP

Trump-backed spending Bill fails in House, US govt shutdown looms

REUTERS

WASHINGTON, DECEMBER 20

REPUBLICANS IN the US Congress mounted a third attempt to avert a government shutdown on Friday with only hours to spare, after two previous plans were scuttled by President-elect Donald Trump and members of his own party. Republican Representative Ralph Norman said that party leaders planned to hold a vote on a third spending Bill. "We have a plan," House Speaker Mike Johnson told reporters. "We're expecting votes this morning." House Democratic Leader Hakeem Jeffries said he has been in touch with Johnson, but has not seen the latest Republican plan. It would be the third attempt for Johnson, who saw his first package — a bipartisan deal negotiated with Democrats who control the Senate and the White House — collapse on Wednesday after an online fusillade of criticism by Trump and Elon Musk. A second package, which paired government funding and disaster aid with Trump's demand to lift the national debt limit, failed to pass the House on Thursday as Democrats and 38

Republicans voted against it. Democrats accused Johnson of caving to pressure from an unelected billionaire, while Republican opponents said they would not vote for a package that increased government spending and cleared the way for trillions of dollars in increased debt. Trump, who takes office in one month, overnight ratcheted up his rhetoric, calling for a five-year suspension of the US debt ceiling even after the House rejected a two-year extension. "Congress must get rid of, or extend out to, perhaps, 2029, the ridiculous Debt Ceiling. Without this, we should never make a deal," Trump wrote in a post. If Congress does not act, funding for everything from law enforcement to national parks will be disrupted and millions of federal workers will go unpaid. The Transportation Security Administration has warned that travelers during the busy Christmas season could face long lines at airports. The federal government last shut down for 35 days during Trump's first White House term over a dispute about border security. Previous fights over the debt ceiling have spooked financial markets, as a US government default would send credit shocks around the world.

Musk says 'only AfD can save Germany', Scholz dismisses it

ASSOCIATED PRESS

BERLIN, DECEMBER 20

CHANCELLOR OLAF Scholz Friday dismissed an assertion by Elon Musk that only a far-right party can "save Germany," but said that freedom of opinion "also goes for multi-billionaires." Germany is expected to vote on February 23 after Scholz's three-party governing coalition collapsed last month. Scholz is hoping to win a second term, but polls have shown the main opposition centre-right Union bloc in the lead and the chancellor's centre-left Social Democrats trailing well behind. The far-right Alternative for Germany, or AfD, is polling strongly, but its candidate for the top job, Alice Weidel, has no realistic chance of becoming chancellor, because other parties refuse to work with it. In a post on his social network X, Musk wrote: "Only the AfD can save Germany." Weidel posted a video on X thanking Musk — an ally of US President-elect Donald Trump — and declaring that her party "is



indeed the one and only alternative for our country; our last option, if you ask me." Asked about Musk's comment, Scholz replied: "We have freedom of opinion — it also goes for multi-billionaires, but freedom of opinion also means that you can say things that aren't right and don't contain good political advice." "I say emphatically that the democratic parties in Germany all see it differently," he added. Spokesperson noted that the German government has expressed concern about how X developed since Musk took over the platform, but has concluded time and again that it will stay "because it is an important medium to reach and inform people and it brings significant disadvantages if the government, or the chancellor, is not represented on relevant social media."

THE IMAGE, FROM NORTHERN SPAIN, SHOWED A MAN LOADING A BAG INTO THE TRUNK OF CAR

Google Street View image helps Spain police solve man missing mystery

ANNIE CORREAL

MADRID, DECEMBER 20

IT WAS a routine image picked up by Google Street View: a man loading a white bag into the trunk of a car. But that unexceptional picture, authorities in Spain said Wednesday, was among the clues that helped lead them to two people whom they recently arrested in the case of a man who disappeared last year. In a news release, National Police said officers had detained a woman described as the part-

ner of the man who disappeared in the province of Soria, in the country's north, along with a man they said was also the woman's partner. The two were detained last month at two locations in Soria, which is about 100 miles north of Madrid, police said. Investigators later found human remains that they said they believe could belong to the missing man. The police did not identify the people who had been detained or the victim. Police described the pair as "alleged perpetrators of a crime

of aggravated illegal detention" and said they would face charges in the victim's disappearance and in his death. "Among the clues that the investigators had to solve the crime, though they were not necessarily the decisive ones, were some images that they detected during the investigations" on Google Maps, police said in their release. The man had been reported missing in November 2023 by a relative who told police that they had been in regular contact by phone, authorities said. After a period of silence, the



The man had been reported missing in Nov 2023. Google Maps

relative began receiving suspicious messages from the man's phone number, the police said. The messages claimed that he had met a woman and moved away from Soria, they added. "All of this made the person who reported the crime become suspicious that the messages had not been sent by the missing man, and as a result, they decided to make it known to the National Police," authorities said. The missing man was originally from Cuba and had gone to the small town of Tajueco, in the province of Soria, to visit a ro-

mantic partner, according to the newspaper El Pais, which described the relative who went to the police as the victim's cousin. El Pais said the victim was a 33-year-old man whom it identified only by his initials, JLPO. Investigators zeroed in on the two people who were ultimately arrested. The image shows a man in jeans standing behind a red car, with his hands on a bulky white package that looks roughly the size of a human body. On Wednesday, a spokesperson for the National Police limited her comments to

confirming the source of the image. "It's true," she said, adding, "The image was not the key to solving the case." Google did not immediately respond. After the two had been detained, investigators focused on finding the missing man, the police said, which resulted in the discovery of a human torso that had been buried at a cemetery in Soria. Police said the remains, which were recovered December 11, had been turned over to a forensic team. NYT

Reaches For The Heart, Falls Short

OUTHOUSE

★★★

Director: Sunil Sukthankar
Cast: Sharmila Tagore, Mohan Agashe, Sonali Kulkarni, Neeraj Kabi, Jihan Hodar



ALAKA SAHANI

SET IN Pune, Sunil Sukthankar's *Outhouse* positions itself as a small film with a big heart. It has a '90s tele-comedy feel when the narrative used to be uncomplicated yet heartwarming and the premises were simple. That works in its favour since it does make you chuckle, albeit occasionally. However, as *Outhouse* does not manage to shrug off the dated tone and treatment, the movie falls short of being a warm hug on a wintry day that it aspires to be.

Sukthankar, who is a long-time collaborator of Sumitra Bhave (who passed away in 2021), has chosen one of her stories as his latest directorial outing. The director duo of Sukthankar-Bhave are known for exploring several sensitive subjects through their movies such as *Astu* (2013) and *Kasav* (2017). Through *Outhouse*, they wish to talk about the loneliness of senior citizens as well as their wishing to live their life on their own terms. Bhave has written the story, screenplay and dialogues of *Outhouse*.

Adima (Sharmila Tagore) is a talented illustrator, who is taking care of her grandson Neel (Jihan Hodar) as her daughter and son-in-law are away on their respective professional assignments. Things go awry when Neel's pet dog Pablo goes missing. Pablo follows Nana (Mohan Agashe) to his home and eventually makes himself comfortable there. Meanwhile, Adima and Neel decide to play detectives and go looking for Pablo. Nana, a crabby detective story-loving man, takes a liking to the dog and doesn't want to part with him.

While the basic premise of *Outhouse* is cute, it is too stogy to be entertaining. As Adima, Tagore is convincing when she is dealing with her publishers or sorting out issues with her daughter. But playing detective with her grandson and sneaking into other's flats does not seem like her cup of tea. Agashe, who has also produced the film, lends some drama to the proceedings as an ill-tempered man with a beating heart.

The comedy, however, never fully explores the issues of the senior citizens or the family dynamics they have to navigate. Or, that of a young boy, who teams up with his grandmother for a fun mission and ends up growing up a bit in the end.



A Dull But Familiar Roar

SHALINI LANGER

THIRTY YEARS after the Disney animation blazed onto the screen, and five years after it got a photorealistic remake — plus other minor and major takes of *The Lion King* — the 'Circle of Life' gets another spin.

A whirlwind, more like it. For, this film directed by Jenkins of *Moonlight* fame has a lot going on, from giving us at least three back stories (of Mufasa, Scar and Rafiki), to lessons on what real courage and real royalty means, to a blossoming romance that comes accompanied with a song.

If the melange of landscapes and the different prides of lions, mostly in conflict with others, confuses things a bit, the songs are a letdown too — nowhere close to the magic of those 1994 film's evergreen numbers.

That said, *Mufasa: The Lion King* is a fitting tribute to the big cat who gave us Simba. The lion born "without a drop of nobility in his blood" must earn his mane and name, and this film gives Mufasa a story and arc that allows him just that.

Mufasa (Pierre) is separated by the great flood from his parents as a cub, and is saved from the water and crocodiles by another, Taka (Harrison Jr). Taka is the son of a lion king, Obasi, who would much rather eat a stray like Mufasa than include him into his pride. But Obasi's wife Eshe (Newton) takes Mufasa under her wings and Taka takes to him like a brother.

It's here that the film welcomingly hews closer to the animal kingdom than Disney kingdom, apart from its very realistic and grim look. Like every "self-respecting" lion, Obasi spends his days taking long naps, while it is Eshe who must do the hunting and the rearing. Banished to Eshe's side, Mufasa learns the tricks that Taka never gets to.

The script by Jeff Nathanson, Linda Woolverton and Irene Mecchi (who also collaborated on the 2019 remake) engages

with questions of courage, loyalty and earning one's place in the world in this part of the story, as well as failure and rising from it.

Chased by the "Outsiders", a ferocious pride of what seem like albino lions (a suggestion has been made that they represent the marauding White colonisers of Africa), Mufasa must rescue Taka and head out. The Outsiders are led by a snarling Kiros (Mikkelsen), who is very clear about his all-conquering goal but fuzzy on the rest.

Mufasa and Taka make for a region called Milele (translated as Forever), a promised land "just beyond the horizon" where the grass is always green and enough to go around for everyone.

Along the way, Mufasa and Taka meet Sarabi (Boone), Rafiki (Kani) and Zuzu the hornbill (Nyman). Once love enters the picture in the form of Sarabi, and jealousy consumes Taka, *Mufasa: The Lion King* enters

MUFASA: THE LION KING

★★★★

Director: Barry Jenkins
Voices: Aaron Pierre, Kelvin Harrison Jr, Tiffany Boone, John Kani, Preston Nyman, Blue Ivy Carter, Mads Mikkelsen, Seth Rogen, Billy Eichner, Thandie Newton

Sharp As A Tack

GIRLS WILL BE GIRLS

★★★★

Director: Shuchi Talati **Cast:** Preeti Panigrahi, Kani Kusruti, Kesav Binoy Kiron, Devika Shahani, Kajol Chugh, Jitin Gulati **Streaming on:** Prime Video

SHUBHRA GUPTA

IN AN unspecified north Indian hill town boarding school, a girl comes of age. That overused phrase 'coming-of-age' is a misnomer when it comes to mainstream Hindi cinema: the years between 13 and 18 are those where contradictory impulses leap between synapses, with mind and body taking off in opposite directions, and explorations of both taking you into spaces where you've never been before.

These are elements Bollywood has never been comfortable with. Even if films do get made around this subject, their teenagers are either carefully sanitised or overtly fetishised. The result: infantilised characters and viewers, who've never been given a chance to grow up. Eighteen-year-old Mira (Preeti Panigrahi) spends a lot of time resenting her mother Anila (Kani Kusruti) with both women feeling the absence of a mostly-travelling father/husband in their own ways. Mira tells new boy Sri (Kesav Binoy Kiron) that she 'can't stand' her mom, and the vehemence in her

voice is the first hint of the turmoil behind her calm features. Mother bears are protective, restraining creatures, and when you are at Mira's stage, that's the last thing you want.

What debut director Shuchi Talati does has to be a first for Hindi cinema: she triangulates these three characters, the brutally-honest-at-all-times Mira who is madly attracted to Sri, the still-youthful, lonely Anila whose mommy duties are at variance with the neediness that she can't keep a lid on, especially when it comes to the handsome, older-than-his-age Sri, whose challenge is to find a sweet spot between the two.

The simmering conflict between mother and daughter is stitched through the film, which takes us deep inside boarding schools with their rules and traditions, the profusion of teachers' pets and hormonal hoops, boys' proposing, girls disposing. Clearly Talati, who has also written the film, has done it from an insider's knowledge, and everything feels sharp and real: a Mrs Bansal (Devika Shahani) is a model teacher until you see how much she likes to control her charges, especially when it comes to short skirts, and 'too friendly boys'.



The bit featuring the absentee dad (Jitin Gulati) is a little fuzzy. You never really get a sense of where he is off in the long periods he's not around. There's a perfunctoriness to his scenes that is at odds with the lived-in intimacy that the director manages to invoke in the rest of the film, which is all of a piece.

The parts in which Mira experiences the joy of touch, leavened with sharp stabs of desire, are terrific: I haven't seen such truth in sensuous self-discovery in a long time, and Panigrahi executes these with sure delicacy. The three lead players carry the film.

predictable territory.

The stretch from here to Milele (which we know will be reached, despite the hurdles), all the while chased by the Outsiders, seems long and forced.

Meanwhile, humour is provided largely by what's happening in the present, which is Rafiki telling Simba and Nala's daughter Kiara (Carter) the story of Mufasa, as Pumbaa (Rogen) and Timon (Eichner) continue their jousting in the background. The disappointment of the meerkat and warthog in not figuring more prominently in this story, despite being so central to the other Lion Kings, is however appealing.

As this particular circle completes its life, what you are left yearning for is that knot that it promised to unravel — the story of Scar — but finally shies away from doing.

A cold, cold Kiros croons: "*Circle of Life is a lie, a pretty way of saying there are predators and prey.*"

Mufasa: The Lion King, where nary a drop of blood is spilled, ultimately chooses that too — the pretty way.

STREAMING WATCH LIST

BY ALAKA SAHANI



LOVE IN 39 DEGREES

PRIME VIDEO

This Turkish rom-com follows Fatih, a calm man from Izmir, and Kumru, an ambitious lawyer from Istanbul. Their worlds collide when Kumru arrives in Izmir to handle a high-profile divorce case. With just eight hours to gather evidence against a cheating spouse, the duo races through the streets of Izmir, facing challenges that lead to surprising turns and the possibility of love.



YO YO HONEY SINGH: FAMOUS

NETFLIX

Directed by Moez Singh and produced by Sikhya Entertainment, this docu-film offers an exclusive look into the life of hip-hop artist and rapper Honey Singh. *Yo Yo Honey Singh: Famous* aims to unpack the real Honey, aka Hirdesh Singh — the man behind the headlines. It chronicles his rapid rise to fame, from the challenges he faced to his comeback.



BOY KILLS WORLD

LIONSGATE PLAY

The dystopian action comedy, directed by Moritz Mohr, is a revenge drama set in a hyper-stylised, post-apocalyptic world. Bill Skarsgård stars as Boy, a deaf-mute survivor who retreats into a vivid fantasy to escape his violent reality—until tragedy strikes. Trained by a mysterious shaman, he transforms into a deadly assassin, driven by vengeance for his family's murder.



BARBIE

NETFLIX

ONE of the most-talked about movies of last year, Greta Gerwig-directed *Barbie* is inspired by the popular dolls by Mattel. This live-action film follows Barbie and Ken, who are having the time of their lives in the seemingly perfect world of Barbie Land. However, when they get a chance to go to the real world, they soon discover the joys and perils of living among humans.



WHAT IF...?

DISNEY+HOTSTAR

This is the third and final season of the animated anthology series based on the Marvel Comics series by the same name. *What If...?* explores alternate timelines in the multiverse that show what would happen if major moments from Marvel Cinematic Universe films occurred differently. Matthew Chauncey serves as head writer with Bryan Andrews and Stephan Franck directing different episodes.



A Tedious Road to Nowhere

VANVAAS ★★

Director: Anil Sharma **Starring:** Nana Patekar, Utkarsh Sharma, Rajpal Yadav, Ashwini Kalsekar, Simratt Kaur, Khushbu Sundar

SHALINI LANGER

LIKE RAMAYANA'S story of good sons and bad stepmothers and *vanvaas*, this tale is a Bollywood evergreen: of parents abandoned and left desolate by their children in old age.

But it's not as simple as that. Writer-director Anil Sharma, flush from the success of *Gadar 2* (2023), with a third in the making, leads this supposed family drama down a long detour — which starts in Varanasi, ends in Palampur in Himachal Pradesh and feels every metre of that 1,391-km distance.

The abandoned parent in this case is Deepak Tyagi (Patekar), who is losing his

memory but for his late wife (Sundar). He keeps remembering the time they were young (digitally, so to speak), and were remarkably left undisturbed by their three children as they spouted poetry and cuddled up.

The lapses of memory mean Tyagi, a.k.a Babuji, intermittently keeps lashing out at his sons, and particularly, daughters-in-law, over slights (imagined or otherwise). One day, his three sons and their wives plan a family trip to Varanasi, organised for the precise purpose of abandoning him there, as we soon realise.

In this city steeped in religion and remarkably many, many vices, Babuji runs into Veeru (Utkarsh Sharma), a petty thief with

a golden heart, and his two hangers-on (including Yadav). Veeru does a few bad things but turns out to be good after all, like in all films of this kind — though most films get there much faster.

Veeru has a Meena (Kaur), who has a

Mausi (Kalsekar). And of course, there is a scene of Veeru asking for Meena's hand from the reluctant Mausi. But lest that bring down some copyright *Sholay*, this is abandoned midway. Not Meena or Mausi though, who hang around for some reason, and to no pur-

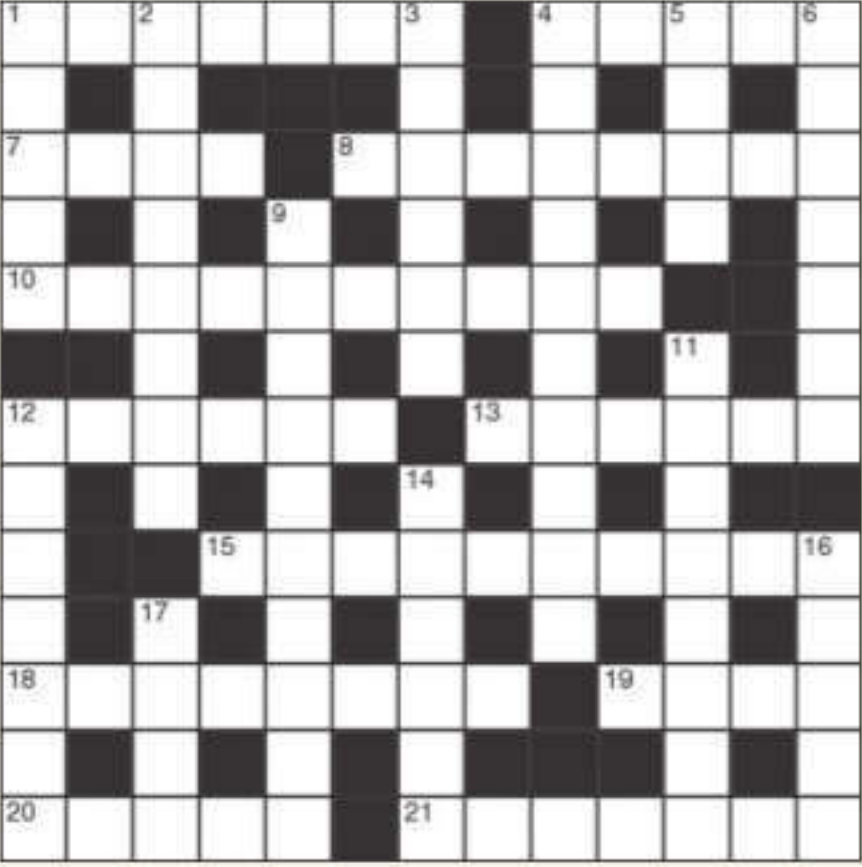
pose, in this plodding plot.

In parts, Anil Sharma suggests he is capable of a more thoughtful film and imagining a world with greys, and not just blacks and whites. Tyagi's offspring, for example, are allowed at least some moments of genuine grievances. In Varanasi, the orphan Veeru and the orphaned Babuji share snatches of camaraderie that feel real. Tyagi's propensity to veer off into complicated Hindi or Sanskrit *shlokas*, interspersed with flawless English, to explain things is pretty funny a few times.

When he is allowed to, Patekar still shows the good actor he is. However, Utkarsh Sharma (a pleasant enough actor) finds a way into every frame and gets to land some flying-in-the-air kicks and make some flying-in-the-air rescues — even when both are ridiculously superfluous to the story.

And who can blame Anil Sharma? He will make a star out of his son Utkarsh (who has featured in most of Anil Sharma's films) yet. What better way than in this film about truant children?

CROSSWORD 5553



ACROSS

- 1 Supervise for a small charge (4-3)
4 Make slow progress on land; fast in water (5)
7 They can't fly me back to the land of the free (4)
8 European set to bail Anna out (8)
10 Overbearing attitude of one surrendering? (4-6)
12 Digs out exclusive news items (6)
13 Everyone with cries of pain at last confesses (6)
15 Accommodation one would normally want at a hotel (6,4)
18 Shortened game in these days (8)
19 A way one takes wine (4)
20 Father goes on foot to get fruit (5)
21 Sudden blows and screams (7)

DOWN

- 1 Tree for the seashore we hear (5)
2 Doctor bound leg, heavy stick required (8)
3 They grip and hold on in the last resort (6)
4 A bird goes by air; so do these (5,5)
5 Opposed to a drink (4)
6 Transport taken from Queensland, Australia (7)
9 It just shows what you can get with money (4,6)
11 Enormous leakage in fuel (8)
12 Two sources of light for Browning's admirers? (3,4)
14 Consents but is a long time coming round again (6)
16 Posts a slim package (5)
17 Desert? Not a lot of water (4)

Solutions Crossword 5552 Across: 1 Denominator, 9 Eyelids, 10 Trump, 11 Tide, 12 Waterloo, 14 Rowing, 16 Parson, 18 Gilt edge, 19 Form, 22 Tarot, 23 Opinion, 24 Emergencies Down: 2 Emend, 3 Omic, 4 Instal, 5 At the bar, 6 Oracles, 7 Set to rights, 8 Appointment, 13 Ancestor, 15 Wolfram, 17 Ignore, 20 Olive, 21 Zinc

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. It is not how much we __, but how much we __, that makes happiness. -Charles Spurgeon (4,,5)

EASEL IMSTHY
DSYNO AILQJV

SUDOKU 5811 SOLUTION SUDOKU 5810

राजस्थान-सरकार
कार्यालय प्रधानाचार्य राजकीय आर्युविज्ञान महाविद्यालय एवं नियंत्रक सलन चिकित्सालय समूह कोटा
web: https://medicaleducation.rajjasthan.gov.in/mckota
e-mail: principalmck@gmail.com Tel: 0744-2470674
क्रमांक: पं()/कय-2/2024-25/136 दिनांक: 12.12.2024
ऑन लाइन बोली सूचना संख्या 07/2024-25 (E-Tender)
चिकित्सा महाविद्यालय, एवं इससे सम्बद्ध चिकित्सालयों के लिए उपकरण आदि क्रय हेतु निम्नकी अनुमानित लागत लगभग \$49,000 लाख रुपय (अक्षरों योनि रुपय लगभग आठ सौ उनचास लाख रुपय), है। मूल विनिर्माताओं / अधिकृत विक्रेताओं / निरतकों / सप्लायर व्यवहारियों से ई-उपपान प्रक्रिया के माध्यम से दिनांक 14/12/24 प्रातः 10.00 बजे से दिनांक 03/01/25. रात 05.00 बजे तक ऑनलाइन बोली आमंत्रित की जाती है। बोली से सम्बन्धित समस्त विवरण वेबसाइट www.eproc.rajjasthan.gov.in एवं www.sppp.rajjasthan.gov.in परेंल पर देखा जा सकता है।
UBN No.- 1. CMK2425GSOB00124-158 हस्ता./-
DIPR/C/13076/2024 प्रधानाचार्य एवं नियंत्रक

GVK Power (Goindwal Sahib) Limited
Regd. Office: Plot No. 10, Paigah Colony, Sander Patel Road, Secunderabad-500003, Telangana, India CIN:1401091G71997PLC028483
(A wholly owned subsidiary of Gurga Amar Das Thermal Power Limited, GATPL)
(A step down wholly owned subsidiary of Punjab State Power Corporation Limited, PSPLCL)
Dept.-HOD, Operations GATP, Goindwal Sahib, invites E-Tender for the work of:
1 Tender Enquiry No. 009/GATP/OPR/20016930 dated 20/12/2024
"TENDER FOR SUPPLY AGRO RESIDUE BASED BIO-MASS PALETS."
at 2X270 MW Guru Amardas Thermal Plant (GATP), Goindwal Sahib; Distt.: Tarn Taran, Punjab as per details given in the tender specifications."
For detailed NIT & tender specifications, please refer to https://eproc.punjab.gov.in from 20/12/2024 from 17:00 Hrs onwards.
Notes: Corrigendum and addendum, if any, will be published online at https://eproc.punjab.gov.in
No. 40094/PB GATP-07/24

Superintending Engineer PHED Circle Kotputli- Behror
CORRIGENDUM (E-NIB 21-36/2024-25)
Bids for Work of construction of Sources, rising main pipelines, internal village distribution pipeline and FHTC, CWR/GLR/OHSR, pump house including one year Defect Liability period of 16 Schemes under JIM in the jurisdiction of PHED Division Behror are invited from interested bidders from 17.12.2024 to dated 08.01.2025 upto 06:00 PM. Other particulars of the bid may be visited on the procurement portal http://sppp.rajjasthan.gov.in and eproc.rajjasthan.gov.in of the state. The approximate value of the procurement in Total Rs. 3153.28 Lacs.
NIB Code - PHIE2425A3215
UBN -
1 PHE2425WSOB06839 2 PHE2425WSOB06840 3 PHE2425WSOB06841
4 PHE2425WSOB06842 5 PHE2425WSOB06843 6 PHE2425WSOB06844
7 PHE2425WSOB06845 8 PHE2425WSOB06846 9 PHE2425WSOB06847
10 PHE2425WSOB06848 11 PHE2425WSOB06849 12 PHE2425WSOB06850
13 PHE2425WSOB06851 14 PHE2425WSOB06852 15 PHE2425WSOB06853
16 PHE2425WSOB06854
(Ramkaran Meena)
SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER
PHED Circle Kotputli- Behror
DIPR/C/13061/2024

MARWARI COLLEGE, DARBHANGA
GANGASAGAR, WEST, DARBHANGA- 846004
(A Constituent Unit of L.N.M.U., Darbhanga)
TENDER INVITATION NOTICE
Marwari College, Darbhanga intends to procure the below mentioned items for the College as per requirement. In this regard, Sealed tenders are invited from Registered Contractors/Service Providers to supply the items, as per the detailed specification which can be ascertained from the College Office during working hours.
(1) CO2 Fire Extinguisher
(2) Dry Powder Fire Extinguisher
(3) Solar Plant setup with installation
(4) Smart Lightning Arrester and Protection System
(5) Refurbishing of IQAC Room with furniture fixture and equipment
(6) Video Conference Room Setup with furniture fixture and equipment
(7) Computer Lab Setup with furniture fixture and equipment
(8) MOOC Studio Setup with furniture fixture and equipment
(9) Laboratory Equipment
Interested and eligible firms are requested to submit their quotation to the undersigned within 10 days from the date of Notice, with supporting documents/Certificates viz. GST, PAN, MSME, 03 years IT Return and Aadhar Card of Proprietor/Director. The specifications and other details can also be ascertained from the College Website https://marwaricollege.ac.in/
The undersigned reserves the right to reject any or all the tenders without assigning any reason thereof.
Prof.-in-Charge
Marwari College, Darbhanga

SALUTE THE SOLDIER
A tribute to Brave Heart
21st December
CISF proudly remembers the supreme sacrifice of this brave-heart. On this day, he laid down his life at the altar of duty while fighting with miscreants at PTPS Patratu. His courage and bravery would remain an abiding source of inspiration for the force. The force will remain eternally indebted to him for his noblest deeds.
HC/GD
B. B. MANJHI
PTPS PATRATU
21-12-1996
INDO-TIBETAN BORDER POLICE (ITBP)
21 December, 2024
ITBP salutes its braveheart Constable Jai Ram of 13th Battalion, who made the supreme sacrifice in the line of duty on this day in Jammu & Kashmir in 2002.
Resident of : Vill.- Bayal, Distt.- Mahendragarh (Haryana)
Constable
Jai Ram

JAIPUR DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
Indira Circle, Jawahar Lal Nehru Marg, Jaipur-302004
No : JDA/EE&TA to Dir.Engg.-I/2024-25/D-91 Dated : 20.12.2024
NOTICE INVITING BID
NIB No. : EE & TA to Dir.Engg.-I/29/2024-25
Bids are invited from interested bidders for following works :-
S. UBN No. Cost of Work (Lacs) Nature of Work Last Date
1 JDA2425WLOB00424 1170.93 Road 11.01.2025
2 JDA2425WLOB00423 1482.56 Development Works 30.12.2024
3 JDA2425WSOB00427 298.05 Various development work 09.01.2025
Other particulars of the respective bid may be visited on Procurement Portal website www.sppp.rajjasthan.gov.in, www.eproc.rajjasthan.gov.in and www.jda.rajjasthan.gov.in.
Executive Engineer & TA to Dir.Engg.-I
Raj.Samwad/C/24/9396

GUJARAT MEDICAL SERVICES CORPORATION LIMITED
(A Government of Gujarat Undertaking)
Regd. Office: Block No. 14/1, Dr. Jivraj Mehta Bhavan, Sector-10, Gandhinagar
079-23250767, 23250766, 23257698
TENDER NOTICE NO:GMSCL/ D-14/2024-25
Tenders are invited online from reputed Manufacturers/formulators/ Direct Importers for Intra Ocular Lens Items on Rate contract basis and details of specification, quantity is available on, https://gmscl.gujarat.gov.in All tender documents can be downloaded free on the website: https://tender.aprocure.com Interested bidders are requested to submit the tender through e-tender process.
Duration of downloading of tender document (online):- 19/12/2024 to 09/01/2025 up to 18:00 Hrs
Last date for Submission (online): 09/01/2025 up to 18-00 HRS
Last date for submission of EMD/Tender Fee (Physical) : 10/01/2025 upto 18:00 HRS
Last date for submission of Sample (Physical) : 10/01/2025 upto 18:00 HRS
Opening of Technical Bid Date (online): 16/01/2025 At 15-00 HRS.
Pre-Consultation meeting (Pre-Bid)
Interested Manufacturers/formulators/Direct Importers are requested to remain present for pre-consultation meeting to be held on 27-12-2024 at 11.30 am at Committee room at above mentioned address. Only one representative from each Manufacturer carrying authority letter would be allowed to participate in the pre-bid.
INF-1804-2024-25 MANAGING DIRECTOR

ARMY PUBLIC SCHOOL DHAULA KUAN
RIDGE ROAD DHAULA KUAN-110010 | www.apsdk.com
TENDER NOTICE
Sealed tenders are invited from leading firms with professional expertise for providing Housekeeping and other administrative services to Army Public School, Dhaula Kuan. Firms with past experience in providing required services in public schools and having Registration No. EPF Code, ESI Code, GST Code etc may contact school office between 11:00 a.m to 2:00 p.m. on any working day for collection of tender forms costing Rs 500/- between 21 Dec 2024 to 08 Jan 2025. Last date for submission of tender form is 08 Jan 2025 by 1130 hrs. For any queries contact Adm Officer on 01125693131, 9592398107.
Principal, APS, Dhaula Kuan

क्लब-21, राज आंगन योजना सोसायटी, जयपुर
क्लब-21, राज आंगन योजना सोसायटी जयपुर के बार संचालन एवं प्रबंधन हेतु आशय/रुचि की अभिव्यक्ति आमंत्रण (Expression of Interest)
क्लब-21, राज आंगन योजना सोसायटी, हल्दीघाटी मार्ग, एनआरआई कॉलोनी, सेक्टर-24 प्रताप नगर, सांगानेर, जयपुर के क्लब-21 में बार संचालन एवं प्रबंधन हेतु इस क्षेत्र में पात्रता व्यक्ति/यों/ फर्म से आशय /रुचि की अभिव्यक्ति दिनांक 23.12.2024 से 01.01.2025 तक सायं 6.00 बजे तक आमंत्रित की जाती है।
क्लब-21, राज आंगन योजना सोसायटी, जयपुर में आवेदनकर्ता हेतु योग्यताएं/ मापदण्ड/ ध्यान प्रक्रिया EOI हेतु सामान्य नियम, शर्तें, अनुबन्ध एवं अन्य जानकारी के संबंध में वेबसाइट www.sppp.rajjasthan.gov.in, www.eproc.rajjasthan.gov.in व www.nrclub21.com साथ ही www.rhb.rajjasthan.gov.in पर एवं गुणवत्ता नियन्त्रण प्रयोगशाला भवन के प्रथम तल पर स्थित आवासीय अनियता, राजस्थान आवासन मण्डल, खण्ड-रुर्तीय, हल्दीघाटी मार्ग, प्रताप नगर, सांगानेर जयपुर से कार्यालय समय में श्री सुभाष चन्द्र यादव (मों नं 9982221822) से सम्पर्क कर प्राप्त की जा सकती है।
UBN No.-: RHB2425SLOB00316 सचिव क्लब-21 परेन आवासीय अनियता खण्ड-रुर्तीय, जयपुर
राज.संका/र/24/9394

NORTHERN RAILWAY
Rail Coach Naveenikaran Karkhana, Sonipat
Tender Notice
Invitation of tender through E-tendering (e-Procurement Systems)
NIT No. 6-SEFile-240002RTTender
Name of Work and its location Tender for "Provision for Integrated Annual Maintenance contract and operation & maintenance services for IT infrastructure at Rail Coach Naveenikaran Karkhana Sonipat for 01 year as per scope of work"
Approx Cost of work Tender Cost: Rs. 2876840/- including GST (Rs. Twenty Eight Lakh Seventy Six Thousand Eight Hundred Forty only)
Earnest Money Rs. 57500/-
Completion period of work 12 months of date of execution of work
Cost of Tender document on cash/b/ post NIL
Date and Time for submission of tender and opening of tender Upto 13.00 hrs. on 13/01/2025 Opening of Tender at 13.00 hrs.
Website particulars notice board location complete details of tender can be seen Above tender available on IREPS site i.e. www.ireps.gov.in
No. 6-SEFile-240002RTTender Dated 20/12/2024 3901/2024
SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

GOVERNMENT OF HARYANA TENDER NOTICE
SR. No. NAME OF BOARD/ CORP./ AUTH NAME OF WORK NOTICE TENDER OPENING DATE CLOSING DATE (TIME) AMOUNT / EMD (APPROX.) IN RUPEES WEBSITE OF THE BOARD CORP./ AUTH NODAL OFFICER/CONTACT DETAILS/EMAIL
1 UHBVN CONSTRUCTION OF BOUNDARY WALL WITH PRECAST PILLARS AND PRECAST PLATES AT CITY SUB-DIVISION OFFICE UHBVN GANNARU. CLOSING DATE 30.12.2024 6.86 LACS https://etenders.hry.nic.in TENDER NO -50/CCR/2024-25 xencivilubhvnrohtak@gmail.com 9991480086
2 UHBVN PROVIDING AND LAYING CEMENT CONCRETE PAVEMENT AT DIVISIONAL STORE BHADJAR. CLOSING DATE 30.12.2024 21.27 LACS https://etenders.hry.nic.in TENDER NO -49/CCR/2024-25 xencivilubhvnrohtak@gmail.com 9991480086
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DAY TODAY BY PETER VIDAL

ARIES (Mar 21 - Apr 20) You may have grown tired of the limelight, and the thought of spending a little time by yourself may now be more appealing. If so, you've picked a good moment to hibernate. Adventures in the big, wide world will be tinged by idealism or romantic fancies.
LIBRA (Sep 24 - Oct 23) There's pressure at home today with a high chance of unexpected developments early on and the occasional personal muddle by midday. This doesn't mean that you'll have a bad time. Far from it. Life could be enjoyable if you look on the bright side.
TAURUS (Apr 21 - May 21) It may be difficult to come to terms with changes which affect your long-term security, but that is precisely what you must do. On a lighter note, morning and early afternoon offer ideal opportunities for trips which are eccentric, unusual or unexpected.
GEMINI (May 22 - June 21) This really is a special time. Only one planet directly influences your sign, but that one, Venus, is both poetic and a bringer of beauty. Your major asset right now is therefore your smile. It's amazing how far a little goodwill will ease your path.
CANCER (June 22 - July 23) There seems little doubt that renewed determination should see you through. Although there is great scope for confusion and misunderstanding today, if your goals are imaginative and far-seeing you will get your way at home, with good consequences for everyone.
LEO (July 24 - Aug 23) Events that transpired recently may have made you a little doubtful about your, or a partner's, professional actions, but today you may forget such concerns and get on with your own very private activities. Put your dreams into practice: you may not have a second chance.
VIRGO (Aug 24 - Sep 23) Your day-dreams tend to take place on a vast and grandiose scale at the moment. Today, however, you may wish to take the plunge and see how your imaginings work out in the real world. You may need expert help, but somehow I feel that for once you are on top.
SCORPIO (Oct 24 - Nov 23) Romantic relationships look distinctly expensive at the moment. However, you may now indulge an adventurous urge, no matter what the cost. You can look overseas for inspiration or, at the very least, introduce a touch of the exotic into your everyday life.
SAGITTARIUS (Nov 24 - Dec 22) If you leave too many decisions to other people you may abdicate responsibility, but this may be no bad thing. There is often something to be said for allowing chance to take a hand and waiting to see what fate turns up. You never know. You might be pleasantly surprised.
CAPRICORN (Dec 23 - Jan 20) It must be comforting to know that other people love you, but the air-waves may be thick with confusing and contradictory messages today. Watch out for someone who seems to be growing increasingly touchy. Maybe you can help.
AQUARIUS (Jan 21 - Feb 19) This should be a busy day, perhaps with an erratic beginning and a confusing middle. As far as your health is concerned, today is a fine moment to get into a new fitness regime. This doesn't mean cutting out your favourite little indulgences, by the way.
PISCES (Feb 20 - Mar 20) Truly splendid romantic and social stars await if you are prepared to be slightly irresponsible. If you insist on punctuality and sobriety, you are likely to cut out the chance of amusing, and possibly inspiring, chaos. Leave yourself open to whatever happens.

Lowest average for Aus top 3 since 1888 in current series

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
DECEMBER 20

NATHAN MCSWEENEY, who was replaced in the Australian squad for the Melbourne Test, had scored 72 runs from his 6 innings at an average of 14.40 in the first three Tests of the Border-Gavaskar Trophy.

Usman Khawaja, who turned 38 this mid-week, has gone 11 Test innings without scoring a half-century. His series average of 12.6, as per *Fox Cricket*, was the lowest of any Australia opener in a home Test series of at least three matches, since Matthew Elliott's against South Africa in 1997.

But what Ben Jones of *CricViz* quoted as a low from a century and more left the Australian cricket circles shaken. "Australia's top three are averaging 14.40, the lowest they've averaged in a Test series since 1888," Jones tweeted recently.

It might have prompted a drastic decision to drop McSweeney and bring in Sam Konstas.

The whole capsizes has been triggered in no small measure by the rampant Jasprit Bumrah, who could have been said to have stubbed McSweeney's nascent career. Bailey had to make a mid-series switch for Boxing Day at Melbourne.

"We remain confident Nathan has the ability and temperament to succeed at Test level in the future. It was a difficult decision to leave him out," Bailey said, about the 25-year-old who took the opener's job, batting out of position, for the first time with Australia A earlier.

But the Aussies needed a shuffle up. "It has clearly been a challenge at the top of the order for batters throughout the series and we want to provide the option of a different lineup for the next two matches," Bailey added.

Konstas averaged 55.83 over the summer and was immediately into contention in October after becoming the youngest player since Ricky Ponting to hit twin tons in a Sheffield Shield game.

While both Indian openers, KL Rahul (235 runs), and Yashasvi Jaiswal (193) stand in the top 7 run scorers from either team this series, neither McSweeney nor Khawaja made the cut. What's worse Pat Cummins has been the top scorer in the last of these innings of the three Tests.

Aggregating 19 runs or less

Statsman Ric Finlay quoted this series as only the 10th time in Tests that Australia's Number 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 have aggregated 19 runs or fewer in an innings.

What's been more concerning according to *CricViz*'s Ben Jones is that according to their metric, the xAverage of the balls McSweeney has faced in his Test career so far is 18.6. "That's the lowest figure for any batter (min 200 balls) in the @CricViz database, back to 2006," Jones tweeted, adding, "Essentially, the sustained quality of bowling he's faced is the toughest of anyone in the data era." In other words, that's another Bumrah scalp.

Khawaja also has a marginally better, but still poor xAverage of 21.1, which means both openers haven't lasted enough deliveries to even take the shine off the ball for the middle order to then dig deep, and exposing Marnus Labuschagne and Steve Smith to the barrage.

McSweeney is thus likely to get out of-tenner for lower scores. Konstas being selected was inevitable.

NUMBER PLATE

14.40

Australia's top three are averaging 14.40 in this series, the lowest they've averaged in a Test series since 1888, according to *CricViz*.

SRIRAM VEERA
MELBOURNE, DECEMBER 20

A DAY after former Test cricketers Ian Healy and Darren Lehmann slammed him for being too close to the players and not making brave selectorial calls, the chief selector George Bailey has made his move, dropping Nathan McSweeney and bringing in the teen sensation Sam Konstas, who has already hit three first-class hundreds this season and starred with an aggressive century in the pink-ball tour game against the Indians in Canberra.

He has been dubbed the 'Greek Freak' by former Australian player and commentator Kerry O'Keefe. In New South Wales, where he plays his cricket, his nickname is 'Pinter', pint-sized Punter, which is of course Ricky Ponting's nickname. Perhaps only the former Australian captain Michael Clarke, who had been dubbed 'Little Pup', had been this hyped as a young cricketer.

Nineteen-year-old Konstas comes from a Greek family in New South Wales and was a 'water boy' for a Test in Sydney against

India-Pakistan in neutral venue is like an *El Clasico* in USA

SANDEEP DWIVEDI
DECEMBER 20

AFTER MANY rounds of high-level bilateral discussions, India and Pakistan have finally given up on the highly popular and immensely profitable idea of 'home' and 'away' cricket. Starting with the ICC Champions Trophy early next year, till 2028 at least, the mother of all sporting rivalries will now be played out at neutral venues.

At least for now, the door has been shut for good. The two bickering neighbours wouldn't invite each other to their homes but in a mutual decision, that gives a strong whiff of hypocrisy, would readily play ball on foreign soil.

So the expats can watch this storied rivalry unfold from the stands, the well-heeled fans from the two nations can take flights to these foreign destinations but the masses, the most interested stakeholders, can say goodbye to their dream of watching India-Pakistan live.

With UAE expected to be the destination for future India-Pakistan games, cricket in the region has rewinded to the 1980s and the Sharjah days. It is back to the days of migrant workers in the stands, Bollywood in boxes and, maybe, desert storms on the field. Mouth-watering yes,

but a sumptuous meal minus the salt.

Though this is an ICC decision, it has been dictated by the stand taken by the top political offices in India and Pakistan. Cricket officials have repeatedly insisted that they are merely following instructions of their governments.

For years now, the travel plans of Indian and Pakistani cricketers have depended on the geopolitics of the region and governments of the day. These decisions were being taken on a tournament-by-tournament basis. So last year, India refused to cross the border for the Asia Cup though Pakistan did for the subsequent World Cup.

The ICC, kicking the can down the road for years, has finally taken a long-term stand. This is the end of ambiguity, speculation and a lot more.

This also means that for the next few years, cricket's status as a diplomatic tool has been taken away. The game would no longer be the thermometer to check the thaw between the two nations with a history of wars and violent attacks. Unlike in 2004, when Atal Bihari Vajpayee was the Prime Minister, cricket teams wouldn't have to play the role of the messengers of peace who had to win games as well as hearts.

Once that tour party of 2004, led by



India and Pakistan will play each other at neutral venues in ICC events. *File*

Sourav Ganguly, would cross the border, there would be reciprocity. Even Pervez Musharraf was cracking jokes.

BCCI old hand Ratnakar Shetty, the manager on that historic tour, gives great details of evenings in Pakistan when Musharraf hosted the teams for tea. "He was in a jovial mood as he interacted with the players of both sides and cracked jokes, some at the expense of the Pakistani team. He described the lavish spread of food, which was rich in

IAN HEALY INTERVIEW

Keeper of cricketing memories

Legendary gloveman recalls what it was like keeping for Warne, playing against Lara & laments the shrinking number of specialists



EXPRESS IN AUSTRALIA

SRIRAM VEERA
MELBOURNE, DECEMBER 20

IAN HEALY had seen everything. Inzamam-ul-Haq's dancing feet, the release from Shane Warne's hand and the awareness that it was going to dip sharply and slide outside leg stump, and the intended shot through a deliberately untenanted midwicket. "Sometimes seeing too much can be a problem," Healy smiles as rain buckets down at the Gabba.

And the pressure. "Oh yes, the pressure. I definitely felt it that day."

Pakistan had needed 56 runs when the last man Mushtaq Ahmed joined Inzamam in that famous Karachi Test of 1994, but the equation now read just three runs to win. "Mushy scored 20! Don't think he ever did it again! That kind of a day." Warne, the captain Mark Taylor, and Healy had consulted and decided to leave the midwicket open. Inzamam would once tell this correspondent why he took the risk to aim for that gap. "*Ho sakta hai ki main vahan pey panic ho gaya hoon* [Perhaps I panicked then]. I could have done it in singles also. But that is the whole charm of the battle. I just backed myself to play that shot."

Healy was also panicking a bit. "It's crazy what goes through the head in one short window of time. I knew what Warne was doing, had read the ball, knew it would dip rapidly, and there was the chance that Inzy was not going to get there in time. Too much stuff going on, and I missed it." And Pakistan won. Sleepless nights awaited for a man who deeply cares about his job.

There was one more sleepless night that involved Brian Lara in another famous chase but that can wait for now. Wicketkeeping, they say, is a thankless job but Healy made it look a joyous activity, especially with his quips, chirps, multiple chats with Warne, occasionally done just to wind up the batsmen, and above all his celebrations: He would jump up like a kid, legs bent back, clap before gravity sucked him back.

Like that famous dismissal of Basit Ali being bowled between his legs, that had Greg Chappell on air say, "he is going to hear that sound (of ball hitting the stumps) all night". There was a chat between Healy and Warne,



Ian Healy made it look a joyous activity, especially with his quips and chirps. (R) The wicket-keeper's fingers, an occupational hazard. *Express*

and the accepted wisdom was that they were talking about where and what to drink and eat, and in the end they decided to have a Pakistani in Ali. Healy laughs at that memory. "Not even a food talk, actually. Basit was annoying Warne at that phase by wasting time as stumps were near. Warne was a bit pissed and he was doing the same thing over and over. He would keep telling me to come over, and I would keep ignoring him, but for some reason, before that last ball of the day, I buckled and ran over. We were just fooling around, and as I turned and walked, I said, 'rip him a leggie, and am not even sure if he heard it'. And my celebration was because of that Warne magic - only he could have done it.

An absolutely incredible bowler, of course. But one that's easily read. He himself would

announce to every local broadcaster where we would visit all his grips and what he would bowl. He would even tell the batsmen, shout out like he would do with Daryll Cullinan or a Robin Smith - two leggies, then a toppie would come. And they would be going, surely he is not going to do that. He would of course do it!"

It's to the basics of wicketkeeping that one returns. Healy had a method. "Arse out, very important as it gives balance. And allows you to stay low and spring up when needed. And also, gloves in front - even as you are looking at the bowler's hand, you should be able to see the gloves in your peripheral vision."

To the pacers, Healy, like most other Australian glovemen, would shuffle to his right and gather the ball to his left. Brisk, snappy, and safe as one could trust the bounce on Australian

ghee, as 'weapons of mass destruction'," wrote Shetty.

Now cricket has been liberated, India and Pakistan wouldn't be using it as a political ice-breaker.

That comes with collateral damage too. By doing away with 'home and away', India and Pakistan are diluting their cricket. The 2022 T20 World Cup's India-Pakistan game at the MCG, the world's biggest cricket stadium then, was a sea of blue. The atmosphere was riveting but it still can't match the intensity of the game between the two countries at the Narendra Modi stadium, the new biggest stadium. Had India allowed Pakistan fans to travel, like Pakistan did for Indians on the 2004 tour, it could well have set a record for the most electric cricket game ever.

Games at neutral grounds don't have the feel of a derby. Manchester United and Manchester City set pulses racing if they play at Old Trafford or Etihad, not in China or Hong Kong. India vs Pakistan in Dubai is as unimpressive as El Clasico played in the US.

The decision also puts an asterisk on the careers of every present-day India cricketer. Virat Kohli hasn't played a Test against Pakistan and has never travelled there as a senior cricketer. If there's any country in the

world that gives Kohli the same love as India, it is Pakistan.

Before the ICC decision on the Champions Trophy was made public, former Pakistan captain Azhar Ali had imagined the scene at a stadium in his country for an India-Pakistan game.

"The stands would be green but there would be enough support for Kohli as I would be for Pakistan players," he told his paper. Another past player Rashid Latif compares Kohli to Dilip Kumar, Amitabh Bachchan and Shah Rukh Khan, superstars popular on both sides of the border.

India not going to Pakistan also would give Indian cricket fans of a certain vintage a sense of despondence. Those who were stunned into silence in the stands when Shoaib Akhtar bowled Rahul Dravid and Sachin Tendulkar off successive deliveries at Kolkata in 1999 would have wanted to watch Jasprit Bumrah running in at Lahore in the Champions Trophy match against Pakistan.

Oh, they would have given anything to see Bumrah send Babar Azam's stumps flying at the Gaddafi Stadium. That would be a story, that would have set things up for several sequels, that would be proper revenge for Eden Gardens, 25 years later.

wickets. "The English liked to keep the body behind the ball, not move out to the right completely as the ball would wobble there very late just as it's about to reach you. I had modelled my keeping on Rod Marsh - the Australian method. I did struggle on my first tour of England and had to adapt, not move too far right, and just enough with my body behind to handle that wobbler."

Healy is a tad disappointed that glovemen of current-day cricket aren't proper specialists. "That's the trend for a while now, isn't it. Batsmen who can keep. England have even gone with Ollie Pope for the Tests against New Zealand. Ben Foakes was good, but didn't last too long. Alex Carey is good, solid. Rishabh Pant is a work in progress, but I saw him in the mornings and like the drills he is doing; he is bound to improve more."

Did he pick anything about Pant's mistakes? "At times, as he did when he dropped a catch in this series earlier, he can make an initial wrong movement. Some keepers like to move a touch to their left first and then press from there. It's better to be still and if you can't, then you start that trigger movement a touch early so that by the time the ball is out there, you can still press to the right side. One of those two decisions have to be made."

Healy himself took a lot of catches off under-edges and as such demanded he stayed low to the spinners. "That's the key. Even though I could read Warne, knew what the ball was going to do for most part, even the degrees of spin depending on at what angle he would release the ball, I had to resist the urge to get there quickly. I have to wait. Wait for the batsmen to make his move, wait for the ball to do its thing, and only then move. Else, you drop or clang."

The way Healy worked with Warne was also team-work that involved Warne's mentor Terry Jenner. Those two would work together and then Jenner would call to tell me what to watch out for. Say, he has to spin up - that was the cue that I had to tell Warne if he was releasing the ball flatter. They had worked on how the ball had to be tossed up out of the hand. So different cues for different deliveries,

and in case Warne wasn't getting it right, only then I would remind him, 'spin up' and such."

Healy rates his two stampings to dismiss Graeme Thorpe as his best. One in England at Edgbaston, and one in Australia. On both occasions Warne had slid the ball past the advancing Thorpe. "But both times, it bounced very high. Near my face. I had to first ensure that I cushioned the ball into my gloves, secure it, before I swooped down. Those urges have to be resisted. Else, I would have been grabbing at the ball." Healy has

also taken diving catches, famously once of Sanath Jayasuriya as he flung himself high to the left to pluck it.

"I am usually not known for diving stuff as my thing was sharp fast leg movement; get close to the ball so that you don't have to dive too much. Bit like Mark Waugh, you won't see him often flying in the slips because he didn't have to; he had such good technique with his legs first. There was a diving catch, though, I rate, as I had to dive really low to my left to take that one from Ravi Ratnayake off Greg Campbell in Hobart in 1989. That was a really satisfying catch."

To move from satisfying stuff to things that keep him awake at nights - the dropped catch of Lara in the famous chase in Barbados in 1999. Five runs after that Indy chase. With just seven runs needed, Lara tried to glide a length and

ball past Warne at first slip but nicked it. Perhaps for one of those rare instances, when Healy's left leg didn't quite make a positive step. "And I lunged with my left hand but it didn't stick." He would get up from the ground, clean his sun-glasses with his inner glove, have a look at Warne and continue. "There wasn't much to be said in that moment, eh?" Healy grimaces as he recalls a moment from 25 years ago. "Thank you very much for reminding me about it!" an avuncular smile returns. Five Tests and seven months later, Healy played his last game for Australia. These days he is a genial presence in the commentary booths, chatting away with his former team-mates in breaks. "Good to see AB (Allan Border) getting better and doing well, eh?"



Arse out, very important as it gives balaOnce. And allows you to stay low and spring up when needed. And also, gloves in front even as you are looking at the bowler's hand, you should be able to see the gloves in your peripheral vision.
ON KEEPING TECHNIQUE

Konstas, the 'Pinter' & 'Greek Freak', set to play Boxing Day Test



Sam Konstas made 107 for the PM XI against the Indians in a tour game. *Express*

Indian pacers, and kept pulling Rana, who bowled short and on the middle and leg line at him. They were crisp pulls, swivelling from that open-stance to thump it up and over in style.

There was even a shot of impunity when he went down on his knee to smear Prasidh Krishna over midwicket with some panache.

There were also a few lap scoops attempted and one came off spectacularly against Akash Deep. Not that the shot is a rarity these days but the fluidity in his shot was quite something as if he were swatting a fly.

At one point, Sarfaraz Khan stood near him, waited for him to turn and lifted his right leg in the air, contorting his body in different angles and twirled his arms wildly. It was a possible reference to some of the shots Konstas played - slashing, backing-away to carve, lap-shots, and down-on-knee pulls. Behind the stumps Rohit Sharma and Rishabh Pant laughed at Sarfaraz's antics and pretty soon on boxing day, they will get another ringside view of the very confident Greek Freak.

He has been mentored by former Australian batsman Shane Watson, who was impressed with how well the teenager has been coping. In the recent past, there were murmurs that Konstas had some issues with the balls that cut back into him, and Scott Boland would trouble him in a game. In the second innings, however, Konstas handled that particular delivery pretty well.

Watson was quoted by The Age as saying,

"He's a very quick learner, and facing Scott Boland in that four-day game, he's so good, so accurate, asking questions every single ball," Watson said. "All batters have a little weakness here and there, and the biggest challenge is clearing your mind and reacting to the ball coming down. So for Sam to learn and make that adjustment from innings to innings shows he is working through 'why and how did I get out and what can I do to give myself the best chance'."

Konstas had run into Watson by accident, when he saw the former opener bat at the Woollahra Oval nets a few years back. A chat ensued, and Watson took him under his wings. "He's been my idol all my years watching him play. It's just pretty crazy. Even talking to him gives me goosebumps just thinking about it," he had told Fox Cricket, then. "He gives me so much advice. I'm like a sponge, trying to soak up as much information as I can."

Konstas also has talked about his method at the crease. "Before the game I'll meditate and visualise how I want to play," Konstas had once told the reporters. "Then during the game, I'd do breathing techniques and have

internal dialogue when I bat. I'll say, 'Where's the ball, where's the ball,' and just control my breathing. I try to do that as long as I can."

There is a photograph of Konstas from when he was just nine in the newspaper *St George & Sutherland Shire Leader* from 2015. His flowing hair is almost the same as it is now, peaking out from his cap, and so is the smile. He stands, holding his bat to his right, and beaming a lovely big smile. The same smile that he would flash after getting to his hundred against the Indians. The nine-year old's ambition wasn't that big that day: "I want to play at Hurstville Oval one day and for St George".

A decade later, he is now about to walk in as an Australian opener on a Boxing Day Test against Jasprit Bumrah. The Pinter aka Greek Freak vs Indians - it promises to be a nice little battle.

AUSTRALIA SQUAD FOR FOURTH AND FIFTH TESTS: Pat Cummins (c), Sean Abbott, Scott Boland, Alex Carey, Travis Head (vc), Josh Inglis, Usman Khawaja, Sam Konstas, Marnus Labuschagne, Nathan Lyon, Mitchell Marsh, Jhye Richardson, Steve Smith (vc), Mitchell Starc, Beau Webster

GM Erigaisi issues plea to US Embassy for visa

AMIT KAMATH
MUMBAI, DECEMBER 20

WITH THE World Rapid and Blitz Championship coming up in New York in six days, Arjun Erigaisi has issued a desperate plea on social media to the US Embassy requesting that they fast-track his US visa. Arjun Erigaisi is in a two-way race with USA's Fabiano Caruana to secure a spot at the next edition of the Candidates, which is an eight-player event to figure out a challenger to Gukesh at the next World Chess Championship. The World Rapid and Blitz Championship will be held from December 26 to 31.

"Last week I submitted my passport to you for visa stamping and it still has not been returned. I request you to please expedite the process and return my passport as soon as possible as I need it for my travel to New York for World Rapid & Blitz Championship. If anyone can help me with this please DM," Arjun Erigaisi posted on X while tagging the US Embassy besides the Ministry of External Affairs India, Minister of External Affairs Dr S Jaishankar, Sports Ministry and sports minister Mansukh Mandviya.

Speaking to *The Indian Express*, Arjun said that he submitted his passport for visa stamping on December 13. "My appointment was initially scheduled for December 3. I was not planning to play in Qatar because of this. Then we got to know that it's possible to pre-pone the appointment. Biometrics was done on November 26 and the visa interview a few days after that. After it was done, I left for Qatar. And when I returned from there, I submitted my passport to the US Embassy," Arjun told *The Indian Express*. He pointed out that he needed his passport to play at a tournament in Qatar at the start of December.

"It's the World Rapid and Blitz Championship. It's still a World Championship. Very prestigious. If I do well there I will have the chance to qualify for the Candidates tournament," Arjun added. Arjun also explained why he had chosen to play in Qatar. If I had submitted my passport to the US Embassy earlier there would have been two weeks. But now we don't have that. But I had to play in Qatar. If I did not play there, regardless of how I played in New York, I would not have been close to qualifying for the Candidates via the FIDE Circuit. So playing there was very important. Otherwise I would have skipped Qatar," he said.

Strike rates in domestic cricket have gone through the roof as seen during recent SMAT

LALITH KALIDAS
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 20

HOW WILL 2024 be remembered in the Indian cricketscape?

Transition seems inevitable in the longer formats. Falling Test standards, home and away; defeat in the only ODI series in Sri Lanka, a first in 27 years. While the ICC Champions Trophy is round the corner, several stalwarts are in the autumn of their careers in the 50-over format.

Amidst this uncertainty, 2024 was also the year when India embraced T20 batting to its fullest.

While the senior team was wrapping up a series win in South Africa after the World Cup triumph, India's T20 season had already started with the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy (SMAT). The major takeaway from the 133-match tournament was most batsmen discovering new methods and ability to hit big shots.

DNA dynamics

The seeds of the tectonic shift were sown with the introduction of the Impact Sub Rule in SMAT in 2022. Since then, scoring rates have swelled by an astonishing stretch with the entire system buying into the philosophy. Muscle memory has begun to dictate instincts, so much so that the scrapping of the Impact Sub rule for the 2024 SMAT didn't slow-down the six-hitting surge.

A cursory progression is telling (see Table).

"The impact player rule has completely changed the mindset. Even though we don't have that rule in SMAT(now), the inclination of all the players is to go and excel from ball one. When you have that kind of belief, it gives you that boost that you can take on every delivery," Mumbai's title-winning skipper Shreyas Iyer said in an Idea Exchange interaction.

Genesis

Having witnessed the rapid spurt in big hitting in the IPL, Jaydev Unadkat took a few insights home, from Sunrisers Hyderabad

Faster, higher, sixer



India captain Suryakumar Yadav (R) acknowledges the big hitting of rookie Mumbai teammate Suryansh Shedge.

PTI

to Rajkot, to prepare for the metamorphosis that has blanketed the domestic structure.

Though Punjab set the template last season, smashing a record 114 sixes in 10 games to win their first SMAT title, they were outpaced in their own game this year. As many as 21 of the competing 38 teams ranked over Punjab, who only hit 47 sixes in seven matches this time.

A Ranji Trophy force over the last five years, Saurashtra have reinvented their T20 game significantly to emerge as one of the top five batting sides over the last few editions.

Unadkat underlines a significant cultural shift in coaching, leadership, and the new-age batter. "First-class cricket used to be the primary goal for a domestic start but that is changing. Almost every team has two or three batters and probably one or two bowlers as well who are T20 specialists. And they practise power-hitting throughout the year.

"Even if they aren't selected for the Ranji Trophy, they might be good enough to get picked in the IPL. Someone playing a blinder, scoring 50 off 18 balls, gets selected by an IPL team. That's why people now believe that they can make a career by only pursu-

STEADY INCREASE OVER THE YEARS

SMAT Strike Rates

Year	Matches	Strike Rate
2022	131	116.87
2023	131	127.82
2024	133	135.54*

IPL Strike Rates

Year	Matches	Strike Rate
2022	74	133.94
2023	74	141.71
2024	72	150.58*

*Highest-ever

ing white-ball cricket. Those who do that work on power-hitting throughout the year," Unadkat explains.

Domestic captains and coaches are also doubling up as scouting arms for new 'white-ballers'. Unadkat unearthed 24-year-old Ruchit Ahir from the Saurashtra Premier League in 2023.

Having spent nearly a year working in the shadows, Ahir was among the 157 SMAT debutants this season. As Ahir churned out rapid fifties in his second and third appearances against Baroda and Tamil Nadu respectively, Saurashtra amassed two of their highest T20 totals, 266 and 233.

Record blitz

Thirty-seven 200-plus totals were made in the tournament. Baroda shattered the world record scoring 349/5 against Sikkim with 37 sixes in their final group game to boost their net run rate and qualify for the knockouts. Mumbai razed down a 230-run target in the highest successful SMAT chase, pipping Andhra and Kerala to finish atop their group.

With a power-packed batting line-up and a middling bowling attack, chasing would form the core of Mumbai's knockout plans. Iyer's men gunned down another 220-plus total in the quarters before trumping Baroda and Madhya Pradesh in chases to win their second title in three editions.

Mumbai almost took bowling out of the strategy. Among the eight quarterfinalists, they held the worst bowling economy, leaking 9 runs per over. However, The bats of Ajinkya Rahane, Suryakumar Yadav, Iyer, Shivam Dube and rookie Suryansh Shedge ensured that they had enough firepower, averaging 10.42 runs per over, the best among the last eight.

"You have got great depth in the batting line-up. Players can come in and go bonkers right from ball one. That has boosted a lot of

batsmen's confidence. And the change is inevitable. You can't control the emotions of batsmen. If you feel that you can take on any bowler, you just go for it," Iyer said.

The bug even caught veteran Rahane. He was the unlikely topper of the SMAT batting charts, finishing with 469 runs, a strike rate of 164.56 and 19 sixes. As he himself would put it, this avatar was a product of "extension of my defence", a broadening of senses.

Unadkat agrees. "There was a fear of getting out in the previous generation. 'What if we try to hit two sixes in a row and get out and get scolded by the coach?' That has vanished in the younger lot now. I saw that being a part of SRH last season. If the wicket is good, if the ball is coming nicely onto the bat, you can hit two or three sixes in a row. That's what I told my side and our coach was on the same page.

"We noticed Ruchit and several other players in the regional league. He played a blinder of a knock in SPL last year and that's when I noticed him for the first time. He didn't play any red-ball cricket. He has only been playing white-ball for the U23 team and came straight into the T20 side, based on that one knock," says the left-arm bowler. Ahir finished with 14 sixes in five innings, the highest for Saurashtra in this SMAT edition.

Slippery slope

Similar selections have been noticed across many sides, says Unadkat, who also cautions against a slightly precarious pathway up ahead. The Cheteshwar Pujaras aren't flooding the circuit as quickly as the Ruchit Ahirs.

"A lot of those players don't even try to change their game according to the red-ball cricket demands. That's a big shift in domestic cricket in general. Whether it's going to harm red-ball cricket or not, I think we are going to wait and watch over the years," Unadkat observes.



Are you prepared for the Cold Wave?

Following precautions are strongly advised to be taken

- Regularly update yourself on the weather conditions and advisories issued through radio, television and newspapers
- Stay indoor as much as possible, minimize travel to prevent exposure to cold wind
- Wear multiple layers of loose fitting, lightweight, windproof warm woolen clothing rather than one layer of heavy clothing. Tight clothing reduces blood circulation.
- Eat healthy food, fruits and vegetables rich in Vitamin C to maintain the equilibrium of body temperature and adequate immunity.
- Drink hot fluids regularly to maintain body heat.
- Keep yourself dry. If wet, change clothes quickly to prevent loss of body heat.
- Take care of elderly people and children and do not allow them to go outside unnecessarily.

- Avoid drinking alcohol. It reduces your body temperature.
- Do not ignore shivering. It is an important first sign that the body is losing heat and is signal to quickly return indoors.
- Prolonged exposure to cold can turn skin to pale, hard and numb, and black blisters on exposed body parts such as fingers, toes, nose and/ or earlobes. Immediately consult the Doctor.
- Take care of your pets and keep them indoors when the temperature drops. If any health issues occur, consult your veterinarian.
- The State Government arranges shelters for the homeless in urban areas during the cold season, where blankets/beds, etc., are provided. These facilities can be used in times of need to protect from the cold.

In case of Hypothermia, take the following steps immediately:

- Get the person into a warm place and change clothes.
- Warm the person's body with skin-to-skin contact, dry layers of blankets, clothes, towels or sheets.
- Give warm drinks to help increase body temperature. Do not give alcohol.
- Seek medical attention if the condition worsens.

Dial 112 in case of any emergency

Revenue and Disaster Management Department, Haryana

Information, Public Relations & Languages Department, Haryana



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along with

PREETI PANIGRAHI & KESAV BINOY KIRON

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