



ALLEN THE CLEAR LEADER IN JEE MAIN 2025 (SESSION 1)

ALLEN JEE Main
(Session 1) 2025
results validated by
Official result validator

EY

5

Overall 100%ile Scorers

14

State Toppers



RAJASTHAN
TOPPER

Rajit Gupta

7-Year Classroom Course

RAJASTHAN
TOPPER

Arnav Singh

6-Year Classroom Course

RAJASTHAN
TOPPER

Om Prakash Behera

3-Year Classroom Course

RAJASTHAN
TOPPER

Saksham Jindal

3-Year Classroom Course

DELHI (NCT)
TOPPER

Harsh Jha

Online Test Series

Chhattisgarh
Topper



99.996%ile

Shourya Agrawal
2-year Classroom Course

Jharkhand
Topper



99.996%ile

Abhimanyu Tibrewal
2-year Classroom Course

Bihar
Topper



99.994%ile

Panini
2-year Classroom Course

Odisha
Topper



99.989%ile

Nabaneet Priyadarshi
5-year Classroom Course

Himachal Pradesh
Topper



99.985%ile

Dherya Sharma
5-year Classroom Course

Assam
Topper



99.969%ile

Kanishka Chakraborty
2-year Classroom Course

Puducherry
Topper



99.867%ile

E Kumaran
2-year Classroom Course

Meghalaya
Topper



99.435%ile

Nistha Gautam
2-year Classroom Course

Manipur
Topper



98.699%ile

Loyanganba L.
1-year Classroom Course

ONLINE LIVE COURSE CHAMPIONS



99.998%ile

Aritra Ray
1-Year Live Course



99.990%ile

Chirag Singh
2-Year Live Course



99.979%ile

Arka Banerjee
1-Year Live Course



99.964%ile

Ahmad Shayan
2-Year Live Course



99.933%ile

Aditya Mishra
1-Year Live Course



99.89%ile

Veeram N. Shah
1-Year Live Course

ALLEN DELHI CHAMPIONS

Performance that is setting
new records in 2025!



296
300
SCORE

Vaibhav Vatsal
1-year Classroom Course

99.999%ile

100%ile in Physics & 100%ile in Maths

6 Students scored
100%ile in Physics

23 Students scored
99.9%ile and above

100 Students scored
99.5%ile and above

163 Students scored
99%ile and above

245 Students scored
98%ile and above

426 Students scored
95%ile and above

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TOP OF THE WORLD



88-year-old Pope Francis reportedly struggled to speak . File

ITALY
Pope Francis taken to hospital for bronchitis

Rome: Pope Francis was taken to hospital Friday with bronchitis and he will skip several planned public events over the next three days, the Vatican said, after the 88-year-old pontiff reportedly struggled to speak during one of his meetings in the morning. "Pope Francis was admitted to the Policlinico Agostino Gemelli for some necessary diagnostic tests and to continue his treatment for bronchitis," the Vatican said. Francis will not take part in a Mass in St. Peter's Basilica on Sunday, the Vatican said, adding that a planned public audience on Saturday and a visit on Monday to Rome's famed Cinecitta film studios were cancelled. **REUTERS**

PAKISTAN
11 killed in blast near vehicle carrying miners

Islamabad: At least 11 people were killed and seven others injured when a roadside bomb struck a vehicle carrying coal miners in Pakistan's restive Balochistan province on Friday, officials said. The blast hit a mini truck in the Shahrag area of Hamai district of the province, according to Hamai Deputy Commissioner Hazrat Wali Kakar. "We have moved at least 11 bodies to the hospital and seven workers who were wounded have also been sent for medical attention," Kakar said. **PTI**

GERMANY
Afghan national admits to Munich car ramming

Munich: An Afghan national has admitted to purposefully driving into a crowd in the German city of Munich and authorities have determined an Islamist motive for the crime, a prosecutor said on Friday. At least 36 people including a child were hurt on Thursday when the 24-year-old man ploughed into demonstrators gathered in the city centre, putting security back in focus before next week's federal election. "He has admitted that he deliberately drove into the participants of the demonstration," prosecutor Gabriele Tilmann told a press conference. **REUTERS**

ZELENSKY TO VANCE: UKRAINE WANTS SECURITY GUARANTEES

Saudi Arabia welcomes idea of US and Russian presidents meeting in kingdom

AGENCIES
DUBAI, FEBRUARY 14

SAUDI ARABIA said Friday it commended the phone call between US President Donald Trump and Russian President Vladimir Putin and it welcomed the idea of them meeting in the kingdom. Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said it could take several months to arrange a meeting between Putin and Trump, possibly in the Saudi capital Riyadh. The two leaders spoke on Wednesday and announced their intention to meet face-to-face. Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman was the first foreign leader Trump called after taking office. He described the Crown Prince as "a fantastic guy" during his speech via video link to an audience at the World Economic Forum in Davos. Putin, who visited Saudi Arabia and the UAE in 2023, said last September that he was grateful to Mohammed bin Salman for helping to organise the biggest US-Russian prisoner swap since the Cold War.

Vance meets Zelenskyy
Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy says his country wants "security guarantees" before any talks to end the Ukraine-Russia war. Zelenskyy made his remarks Friday during a meeting with US Vice President JD Vance. The two met at the Munich Security Conference.

Zelenskyy also said he believes Trump is the key to ending the Russia-Ukraine conflict, and said the U.S. president gave him his telephone number before Friday's opening of the Munich Security Conference. Zelenskyy said the United States, including the Biden administration, never saw Ukraine as a NATO member. Many observers are hoping Vance will shed at least some light on US President Donald Trump's ideas for a negotiated settlement to the war.



People visit a makeshift memorial for fallen Ukrainian soldiers, amid Russian attack on Ukraine at the Independence Square in Kyiv on Friday. Reuters

Outer shell of Chernobyl nuclear plant damaged by drone, radiation normal

ASSOCIATED PRESS
KYIV, FEBRUARY 14

A DRONE armed with a warhead hit the outer protective shell of Ukraine's Chernobyl nuclear plant early Friday, damaging the structure and briefly starting a fire, in an attack Kyiv blamed on Russia. The Kremlin denied it was responsible. Radiation levels at the shuttered plant in the Kyiv region — site of the world's worst nuclear accident — have not increased, according to the UN International Atomic Energy Agency, which said the strike did not breach the plant's inner containment shell. The IAEA did not attribute blame, saying only that its team stationed at the site heard an explosion and was informed that a drone had struck the shell. Fighting around nuclear power plants has repeatedly raised fears of a nuclear catastrophe during three years of war.



The structure that covers the remains of the damaged Chornobyl Nuclear Power Plant, bears an impact of what Ukraine says was a Russian drone strike. Reuters

The Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant, which is Europe's biggest, has occasionally been hit by drones during the war without causing significant damage. Ukraine President Zelenskyy said a Russian drone with a high-explosive warhead hit the plant's

TIKTOK RETURNS TO U.S.
APPLE, GOOGLE STORES OFFER SOCIAL MEDIA APP

TIKTOK HAS returned to the app stores of Apple and Google in the US, after President Donald Trump delayed the enforcement of a TikTok ban. **AP**

Hegseth tells Europe to spend on defence as US presence may not last forever



BARBARA ERLING
WARSAW, FEBRUARY 14

EUROPEAN COUNTRIES need to invest now in defence because it is not possible to assume that the United States' presence on the continent will last forever, US Defence Secretary Pete Hegseth said on Friday during a visit to Warsaw. Pointing to Poland, which plans to spend 4.7% of GDP on defence this year, as a model ally, Hegseth doubled down on Washington's demands that European NATO allies take on more of the financial burden for their own security. "What happens five or 10 or 15 years from now is part of a larger discussion that reflects the threat level, America's posture, our needs around the globe, but most significantly, the capability of European countries to step up," he told a news conference. "And that's why our message is so stark to our European allies. Now is the time to invest, because you can't make an assumption that America's presence will last forever." Echoing remarks made during a NATO defence ministers meeting in Brussels in which warned Europe against treating Washington like a "sucker" ultimately responsible for European defence, he said Washington was facing many threats, including from China. Hegseth has kindled an outcry in Europe after announcing on Wednesday that a return to Ukraine's pre-2014 borders was unrealistic. **REUTERS**



US Vice-President JD Vance during the Munich Security Conference in Munich on Friday. AP

Vance takes swipe at Europe on free speech, democracy; Germany hits back

REUTERS
WASHINGTON, FEBRUARY 14

US VICE President JD Vance on Friday took a swipe at European governments for what he described as their censorship of free speech and their political opponents, while largely avoiding the question of how to resolve the Ukraine war. Speaking to European political leaders, military officers and diplomats at the Munich Security Conference, Vance surprised the audience by dismissing the risk of Russian political interference in Europe, taking a similar stance to U.S. President Donald Trump, who has railed against claims by US intelligence agencies that Russia had interfered on his behalf in the 2016 election.

Vance adopted a confrontational tone, accusing European politicians of what he said was a fear of their own people and warned them that the real threat against their democracy was not from Russia or China. "The threat I worry the most about vis-à-vis Europe is not Russia, it's not China, it's not any other external actor. What I worry about is the threat from within, the retreat of Europe from some of its most fundamental values, values shared with the United States of America," Vance said. The future of Ukraine was at the top of the agenda in Munich after a phone call between

Trump and Russian leader Vladimir Putin this week where they pledged to work together to end the conflict, but Vance did not bring it up. Instead, he said Brussels had shut down social media over hateful content, and criticized Germany for what he described as raids against its own citizens for posting anti-feminist comments. Sweden for convicting a Christian activist, and United Kingdom for backsliding on religious rights.

Unacceptable, says German minister

Germany's defence minister rebuffed criticism by US Vice President JD Vance of German and European political powers as unacceptable, weighing in on a debate over anti-immigrant groups' bid for influence in the region. "This democracy was just called into question by the US Vice President, not just the German democracy but that of Europe as a whole," Defence Minister Boris Pistorius said at the Munich Security Conference on Friday. "If I understand him correctly he compares the condition of Europe with what prevails in some authoritarian regimes ... this is not acceptable," he added. Vance earlier said at the conference there should be no "fire-wall" that rules out political collaboration with European parties that address voters' concerns over immigration.

Gaza militant groups name three hostages to be released on Saturday

REUTERS
CAIRO, FEBRUARY 14

PALESTINIAN MILITANT groups in Gaza said they would release hostages Iair Horn, US-Israeli Sagui Dekel-Chen and Russian-Israeli Alexandre Sasha Troufanov on Saturday, in accordance with the terms of the ceasefire with Israel. The announcement, after days of uncertainty about whether the ceasefire agreed last month would hold, followed intense efforts by Egyptian and Qatari mediators to keep last month's US-backed agreement on track. A statement from Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office said Israel accepted the list

but that was later corrected to say Israel had received the list, which it said was a "purely factual description" that did not reflect any Israeli approach to the issue. Hamas said Israel was expected to release 369 Palestinian prisoners and detainees in exchange. All three of the hostages due to be released on Saturday were seized in Kibbutz Nir Oz, one of the communities around the Gaza Strip that was overrun by Hamas gunmen on October 7, 2023. Iair Horn's brother Eitan was taken at the same time and remains in captivity. Hamas had threatened not to release more hostages after it accused Israel of violating the terms of the ceasefire by blocking aid from entering Gaza.

Rwanda-backed rebels claim to have seized airport in east Congo

ASSOCIATED PRESS
GOMA, FEBRUARY 14

Rwanda-backed rebels in eastern Congo claimed Friday that they have seized a second airport in the region following a days-long advance towards the Kavumu airport, which serves the South Kivu province. The Associated Press could not immediately confirm if the Kavumu national airport was under the control of the M23 rebels or government forces. Government officials and civil society leaders did not immediately comment. Locals told the AP that the rebels were a few kilometres away from the airport, a strategic spot for the Congolese military in their fight with the rebels. The Kavumu airport became a target after the M23 rebels seized Goma, including the international airport there, in late



M23 rebel stands guard.

January. Goma is the region's largest city and the development was a major escalation of the yearslong fighting with Congolese forces in the region. The M23 rebels — the most prominent of more than 100 armed groups vying for control of Congo's mineral-rich east — have since advanced deeper into South Kivu province. The rebellion has killed at least 2,000 people in and around Goma and left hundreds of thousands of displaced people stranded, the UN and Congolese authorities have said.

Musk's tactics frustrate some senior White House officials

ALEXANDRA ULMER, GRAM SLATTERY & NANDITA BOSE
WASHINGTON, FEBRUARY 14

AS TECH billionaire Elon Musk expands his influence over more than a dozen US federal agencies, frustration is growing among some top aides to President Donald Trump, who want more coordination from Musk's team as he slashes the US government, according to four people aware of the tensions. Trump's chief of staff, Susie Wiles, and her team have at times felt out of the loop as Musk's so-called Department of Government Efficiency seeks to fire thousands of federal workers while accessing sensitive data and disrupting operations, the four people said. Wiles and some of her top aides spoke to Musk recently about the issues, according to one of the sources. Speaking to reporters on Tuesday, Musk projected alignment between himself, his tight-knit group of DOGE staffers and Trump. But underlying tensions with some White House officials highlight potential difficulties for Trump in balancing his core team with Musk's DOGE staff as they upend agencies in a sweeping restructuring. In the recent conversation, Wiles and her staff delivered a message to Musk: "We need to message all this. We need to be looped in," according



Elon Musk speaks next to U.S. President Donald Trump in the Oval Office of the White House. Reuters

ment between himself, his tight-knit group of DOGE staffers and Trump. But underlying tensions with some White House officials highlight potential difficulties for Trump in balancing his core team with Musk's DOGE staff as they upend agencies in a sweeping restructuring. In the recent conversation, Wiles and her staff delivered a message to Musk: "We need to message all this. We need to be looped in," according

to the source. Reuters was not able to determine the specific date they spoke or what, if any, changes Musk made after that. Musk did not respond to a request for comment. The White House declined to comment. An official with knowledge of the matter pushed back at the sources' description of tensions, saying initial "operational hiccups" had been smoothed out. **REUTERS**

ARCHEOLOGISTS, HISTORIANS, CONSERVATORS AND EVEN FICTION WRITERS HAVE DEVOTED PAGES OF THEIR WORK TO THE SUBJECT

The scent of mummy: Research discovers ancient Egyptian remains smell nice

RIAN MELLEY
LONDON, FEBRUARY 14

AT FIRST whiff, it sounds repulsive: sniff the essence of an ancient corpse. But researchers who indulged their curiosity in the name of science found that well-preserved Egyptian mummies actually smell pretty good. "In films and books, terrible things happen to those who smell mummified bodies," said Cecilia Bembibre, director of research at University College

London's Institute for Sustainable Heritage. "We were surprised at the pleasantness of them." "Woody," "spicy" and "sweet" were the leading descriptions from what sounded more like a wine tasting than a mummy sniffing exercise. Floral notes were also detected, which could be from pine and juniper resins used in embalming. The study published Thursday in the Journal of the American Chemical Society used both chemical analysis and a panel of human sniffers to evaluate the odors from nine mummies as old as 5,000 years that had been either in storage or on display at the Egyptian Museum in Cairo. The researchers wanted to systematically study the smell of mummies because it has long been a subject of fascination for the public and researchers alike, said Bembibre, one of the report's authors. Archeologists, historians, conservators and even fiction writers have devoted pages of their work to the subject — for good reason. Scent was an important consideration in the mummification

process that used oils, waxes and balms to preserve the body and its spirit for the afterlife. The practice was largely reserved for pharaohs and nobility and pleasant smells were associated with purity and deities while bad odors were signs of corruption and decay. Without sampling the mummies themselves, which would be invasive, researchers from UCL and the University of Ljubljana in Slovenia were able to measure whether aromas were coming from the archaeological item, pesticides or other products used



Researcher takes swab samples for microbiological analysis. AP

to conserve the remains, or from deterioration due to mold, bacteria or microorganisms. "We were quite worried that we might find notes or hints of decaying bodies, which wasn't the case," said Matija Strlic, a chemistry professor at the University of Ljubljana. "We were specifically worried that there might be indications of microbial degradation, but that was not the case, which means that the environment in this museum, is actually quite good in terms of preservation." Using technical instruments

to measure and quantify air molecules emitted from sarcophagi to determine the state of preservation without touching the mummies was like the Holy Grail, Strlic said. "It tells us potentially what social class a mummy was from and therefore reveals a lot of information about the mummified body that is relevant not just to conservators, but to curators and archeologists as well," he said. "We believe that this approach is potentially of huge interest to other types of museum collections." **AP**

DEFENCE SALES TO TAHAWWUR EXTRADITION AMONG ANNOUNCEMENTS

Handshake, fingers crossed

BOTH FLAG ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION

Modi, Trump agree to seal early trade deal after US calls India's tariffs 'unfair'

SHUBHAJIT ROY
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 14

AS PRIME Minister Narendra Modi and President Donald Trump met in the White House, Delhi and Washington sent clear signals Thursday of their resolve to address the issue of tariffs and get down to business quickly by starting talks for a trade pact and sealing it by fall this year.

The US also asked India to buy more oil and gas, promised to increase military sales this year onward and eventually provide the F-35 stealth fighters. It also said it had approved the extradition to India of Mumbai terror attack accused Tahawwur Rana.

The direction for an early trade agreement means that negotiators have 7-8 months when Trump is expected in India for a summit of the Quad leaders — Japan and Australia are the two other countries in the grouping. This is the first firm deadline for a bilateral deal — the deal was being negotiated in Trump's first term but could not materialise. Trump said he was "thrilled

BUSINESS AS USUAL

By UNNYY



to welcome... my friend" Modi back to the White House: "There is truly a special bond between the United States and India, the world's oldest democracy and the world's largest democracy."

He said they have reached an agreement that includes India importing more US oil and gas to narrow the trade deficit between the two countries.

Modi said the US and India have set a target of doubling their bilateral trade to \$500 billion

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US President Donald Trump and Prime Minister Narendra Modi at a news conference at the White House, Thursday. PTI

In doubling bilateral trade to \$500 bn, Delhi will have to pick up threads from Trump 1.0

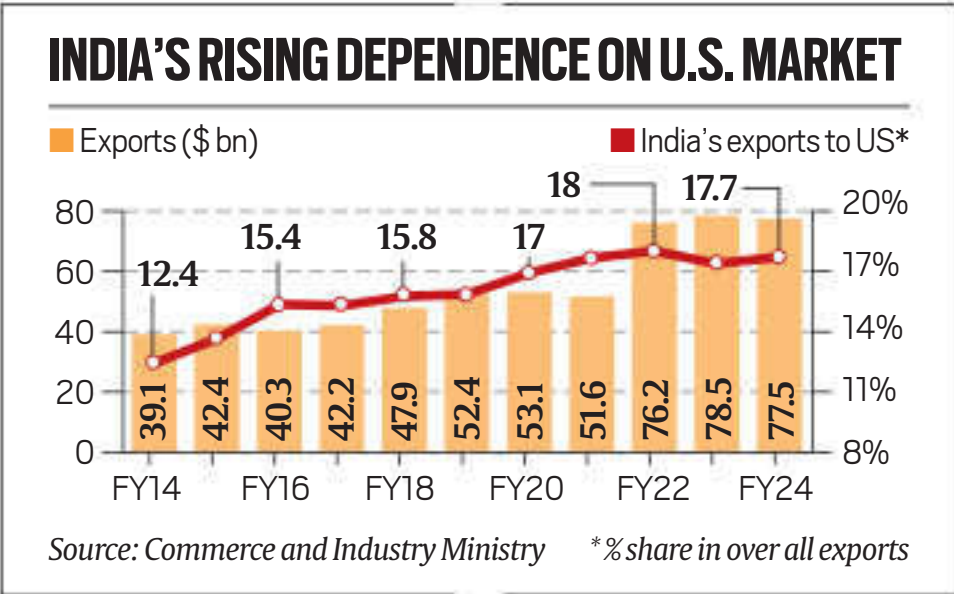
RAVI DUTTA MISHRA
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 14

US PRESIDENT DONALD Trump and Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday announced plans to sign a bilateral trade agreement (BTA) by the end of this year and double total bilateral trade to \$500 billion by 2030. The India-US joint statement said Modi and Trump are committed to "designate senior representatives" to negotiate the

"first tranche" of a mutually beneficial, multi-sector BTA by autumn 2025.

The joint statement said the US welcomed India's recent measures [announced in the Union Budget] to lower tariffs on US products of interest, such as motorcycles, agricultural products, and medical devices, among others. Ahead of Modi's visit, India on Thursday also slashed duty on bourbon whisky to 100 per cent from 150 per cent.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



New 10-yr partnership framework to F-35s to Javelin missiles: Major boost to defence ties

SHUBHAJIT ROY
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 14

WITH THEIR strategic cooperation straddling sectors from defence to high-tech, US President Donald Trump and Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched a new initiative, the 'US-India COMPACT' (Catalyzing Opportunities for Military

Partnership, Accelerated Commerce & Technology) for the 21st Century, to "drive transformational change across key pillars of cooperation".

Under this initiative, they committed to a results-driven agenda with initial outcomes this year to demonstrate the level of trust for a mutually beneficial partnership, the joint statement said.

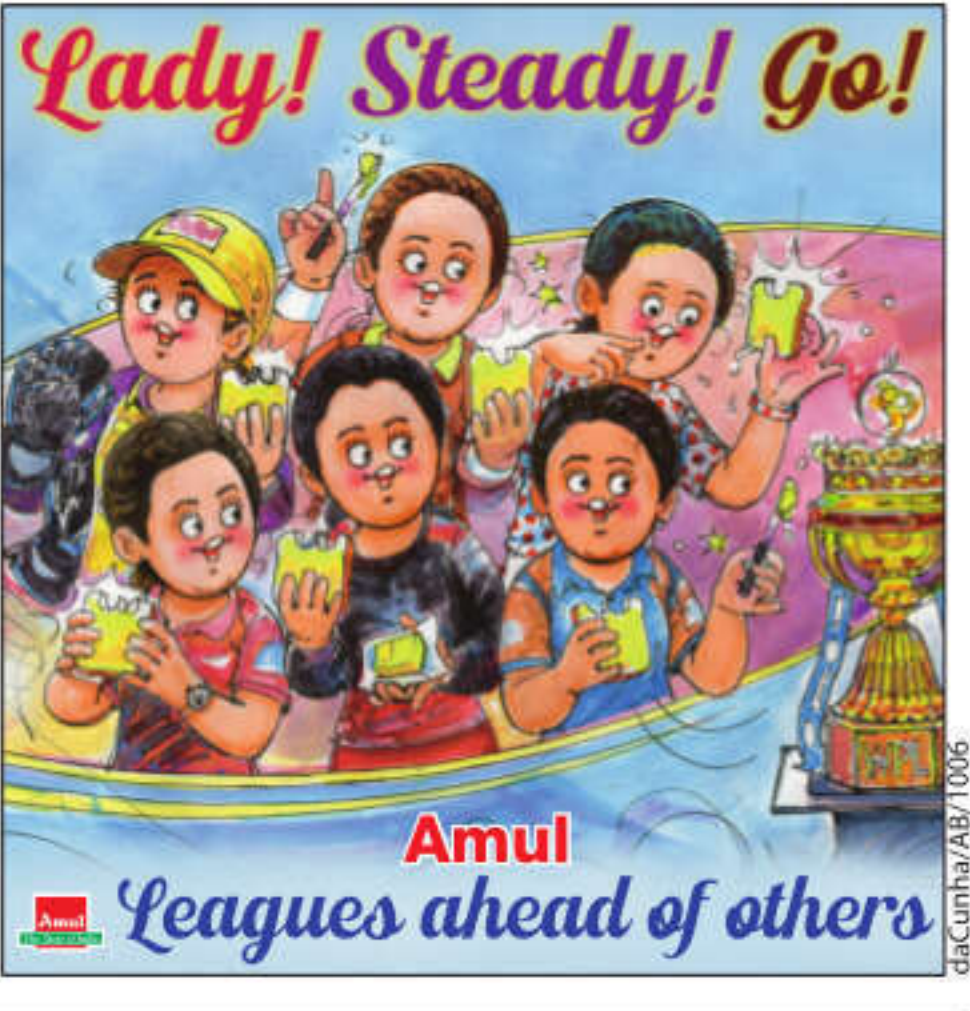


F-35 aircraft at the Aero India 2025 in Bengaluru. File

Though defence supplies are aimed at boosting bilateral trade figures, the underlying strategic objective has been to counter China's belligerence in the Indo-Pacific, and in securing India's land, air and maritime borders.

In his statement after the bilateral meeting, Trump said, "The Prime Minister and I are announcing a framework to

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FREIGHT, GRADE FACTORS IN CRUDE

Why gas rather than oil could be route to raising India's energy imports from US

Jan-Nov 2024: India imported 5.12 mn tn LNG from US, 20% of overall LNG imports

SUKALP SHARMA
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 14

INDIA AND the United States have agreed to take steps towards making Washington "a leading supplier of oil and gas to India", which could help bridge the trade deficit between the two countries, US President Donald Trump said after his meeting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi in Washington Thursday.

Trump added that the US will "hopefully," be India's top oil and gas supplier.

India is already a significant buyer of American oil and gas. The US is India's fifth-largest supplier of crude oil, although its market share has been in low single digits. Washington is also New Delhi's second-largest supplier of liquefied natural gas (LNG) after

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

INDIA'S TOP 5 CRUDE OIL SUPPLIERS

SUPPLY VOLUME (mn tn)*	
Russia	82.03 (37%)
Iraq	45.77 (20.6%)
Saudi Arabia	28.79 (13%)
UAE	18.63 (8.4%)
US	7.17 (3.2%)

TOP 5 LNG SUPPLIERS

SUPPLY VOLUME (mn tn)*	
Qatar	9.82 (38.8%)
US	5.12 (20.2%)
UAE	2.84 (11.2%)
Angola	1.97 (7.8%)
Nigeria	1.36 (5.4%)

Market Share in % *Jan-Nov '24
Source: Ministry of Commerce and Industry



FULL COVERAGE PAGES 5, 14, 15

INDIA, U.S. TO WORK TOGETHER ON KEY AREAS AS BIDEN-ERA INITIATIVE RENAMED

FOCUS ON AI & CHIPS, BOTH SIDES LOOK TO DEEPEN TECH-BASED COLLABORATION

Challenge this time: narrow the gap, need to get things done fast

Trump's hopes for ties reset with Xi raise concerns, but a plus for Delhi: Signal of continuity in US policies on Asian security, Quad

CRAJA MOHAN
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 14

DEFYING THE traditional scepticism and more recent anxiety about India's relations with the United States, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and US President Donald Trump outlined an expansive agenda for deepening the bilateral strategic partnership. The personal chemistry between the two leaders and the

broader convergence of Indian and American strategic interests has set the stage for resolving difficult issues and making advances across a broad range of areas.

Modi and his team were quick to recognise the historic changes unfolding in US domestic and foreign policies unleashed by Trump and finding ways to seize the new possibilities emerging in Washington. While Modi has

been quick, his challenge lies in galvanising the sluggish Indian bureaucracy to turn the new American opportunities into concrete outcomes. Success also depends on the government's appetite for reforms.

With President Trump set to visit India later this year to attend the Quad summit, the two sides have given themselves a few months

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Asked about Adani, PM Modi says leaders don't discuss 'individual issues'

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
MUMBAI, FEBRUARY 14

PRIME MINISTER Narendra Modi said "individual issues" are never discussed when prominent leaders of countries meet, in response to a question if he had asked US President Donald Trump to take action on the Gautam Adani case.

"India is a democratic country and our culture and philosophy is 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam'... we consider the whole world as one

family. I believe every Indian is mine," Modi said.

"Two prominent leaders of two countries never discuss such individual issues," the Prime Minister said. The question put to him was: "Can I ask whether you discussed at all today, the case of Gautam Adani, who is one of the wealthiest man in Asia, and perceived as an ally of Prime Minister? Prime Minister Modi, have you asked the President to take action on that case?"

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Second set of 119 deportees from US to land in Amritsar today

KAMALDEEP SINGH BRAR
AMRITSAR, FEBRUARY 14

A SECOND aircraft carrying 119 deported Indians from the US is set to land at Amritsar airport on Saturday. More than half of them are from Punjab. Another flight carrying deportees is expected on February 16.

It remains unclear whether a US aircraft will bring the deportees or if the Indian government has arranged a flight.

On February 5, a C-17 aircraft with 104 Indians landed in Amritsar, largely with passengers



On February 5, a US military aircraft brought 104 Indians

from Haryana, Gujarat and Punjab. Sources said the second group of deportees, unlike those on the first flight, will likely not be in chains. The Centre had faced

criticism over the treatment of passengers on the first flight.

The alleged "dehumanisation" of the deportees had led to pandemonium in Parliament, and the External Affairs Minister had promised to take up the issue with the US government.

The second flight is expected to arrive at Amritsar International Airport between 10 pm and 11 pm on Saturday. Sources said those on board include 67 from Punjab, 33 from Haryana, eight from Gujarat, three from UP, two each from Maharashtra and Rajasthan, and one each

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PAGE 1
ANCHOR

Canada's biggest gold heist suspect living on Chandigarh outskirts

VARINDER BHATIA
NEW DELHI, CHANDIGARH, FEBRUARY 14

THE FORMER Air Canada manager, 32-year-old Simran Preet Panesar, who is facing a Canada-wide warrant and is wanted by the Canadian authorities for his alleged role in the gold heist of over \$20 million, the largest in the country's history, is living on the outskirts of Chandigarh.

In over a month-long investigation, *The Indian Express*, in collaboration with the CBC News: *The Fifth Estate*, Canada, tracked

Panesar who is found living in a rented accommodation with his family including his wife Preeti Panesar, a former Miss India Uganda, a singer and an actor. Preeti is not believed to have been involved in the heist. Preet Panesar's legal team is contesting his case in Canada.

The gold heist dates back to April 2023 and saw 6,600 gold bars weighing 400 kg of pure gold and about \$2.5 million worth of various foreign currencies stolen from Pearson International Airport's cargo compound, shortly after arriving on a flight from Zurich.

Preet is leading a normal life, helping his wife's and family's business affairs, while Canadian authorities are looking for him and waiting for him to turn himself in.

The Indian Express met him at his residence, but he declined to speak "on record", citing "legal reasons". One of his neighbours said they learnt that "Preet Panesar was involved in some monetary dispute in Canada, but were told that it was over".

Preet, who was living in Brampton, Ontario at the time of the heist, was the one who even "led police on a tour of the cargo



A CCTV grab of the vehicle used in the gold heist at the cargo facility of Toronto's Pearson International Airport in April 2023. (Left) Simran Preet Panesar, one of the suspects in the heist. Peel Regional Police

facility before the police suspected his alleged involvement". Soon after, he moved out of Canada, leaving the investigating officials clueless on his whereabouts and came to India.

There were reports in June 2024 — via statements of his lawyers — that he would turn himself in, but it did not happen.

Queries were sent to Preet in India and his lawyer in Canada. Preet declined to comment citing "his family's safety and legal reasons", while his lawyer did not respond to the queries sent by *The Indian Express*.

The Peel Regional Police con-

tinues to conduct an investigation into the gold heist, titled Project 24Karat.

The documents related to Peel Regional Police's investigation so far revealed that over a period of one year, 20 officers from the organisation worked full time on this investigation. "The tasks included surveillance, interviewing, investor and affiant. Video canvass tracing the truck's journey in which the gold bars were allegedly transported out of the cargo terminal of the Pearson International Airport, Toronto lasted four weeks and spanned over 28 kilometres and three dif-

ferent jurisdictions," the documents state. These include police briefing transcripts and minutes of police board meetings.

The documents reveal that "the officers worked 28,096 hours and 9500 overtime hours to investigate this case". The investigation is still "ongoing".

Currently, there are a total of nine suspects including Panesar allegedly involved in this case. Parampal Sidhu was another employee who was working at Air Canada at the time of the heist. The Peel Regional Police believe that "both worked together and

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

● Challenge: Narrow the gap

to implement many of the ambitious goals they outlined this week. Unlike in the past where the gap between the promise and performance of US-India relations has been large, there will be a big premium this time on getting things done, and quickly.

On illegal immigration, the two sides have widened the debate to “aggressively address” the source of the problem — the cruel human trafficking between the two nations. Modi and Trump agreed, according to the joint statement issued after the talks, to take “strong action against bad actors, criminal facilitators, and illegal immigration networks to promote mutual security for both countries.”

On the legal immigration of Indian talent, the joint statement “emphasized that the evolution of the world into a global workplace calls for putting in place innovative, mutually advantageous and secure mobility frameworks”. Translated into plain English, it means the convergence of the US need to import tech talent from India and Delhi’s interest in securing more visas for its students, professionals, businessmen and visitors.

On the contentious issue of trade and tariffs, Modi and Trump decided to take a positive approach and set themselves an ambitious annual bilateral trade target of \$500 billion. They also gave themselves time to negotiate a bilateral trade deal by this autumn, when Trump is expected to visit Delhi. The two sides do have a negotiating record in Trump’s first term (2107-21) and it should be easy to pick up those threads and have a reasonable agreement ready by the time Trump arrives later this year.

The talks with Trump also plugged some of the political mistrust that emerged in the last days of the Biden Administration. To be sure, President Joe Biden and his top advisers vigorously pushed forward the agenda of bilateral cooperation. But Delhi believes sections of the Biden Administration and establishment were fomenting anti-Modi campaigns in India and were part of the destabilisation in Bangladesh last year.

The Modi government and the BJP’s interlocutors in Washington are Trump and the MAGA movement (Make America Great Again) that are

actively battling the “globalist agenda” of US agencies claiming to promote human rights and democracy around the world. This brings some new convergence between the nationalist worldviews behind “America First” and “India First” movements in Washington and Delhi, respectively.

One of Delhi’s problems with Washington has been India’s Russia connection, especially after the Russian leader Vladimir Putin’s invasion of Ukraine. If the establishment in Delhi struggled to cope with the new tensions between Russia and the West, Trump is finding a way to finesse, if not solve, the problem by reaching out to Putin and exploring pathways to peace in Ukraine.

Unlike America’s European allies who fear strategic abandonment by Trump, India has everything to gain by peace between Russia and the West. A stable security architecture in Europe will make it easier to manage its security challenges in Asia. No wonder, Modi was enthusiastic in endorsing Trump’s peace initiative in Ukraine.

While Trump’s hopes to build a new relationship with Xi Jinping will raise some concerns in Delhi, Modi and his team should be satisfied for now with the signal of continuity in US policies on Asian security and the Quad. As they expand the engagement in the Indo-Pacific developed over the last decade, Modi and Trump are also ready to intensify their collaboration in the Middle East, especially on the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEEC).

That Delhi and Washington have good relations with Israel and the moderate Arab states should help open new avenues for strategic cooperation in the Middle East and Mediterranean.

Compared to the challenges on immigration, trade, and democracy promotion, Russia, and China, it was easy for the two leaders to signal forward movement in areas of existing convergence. These include energy, defence, technology, counter terrorism, and combating radicalism and extremism. It is only a matter of detail here on how to intensify cooperation in these areas.

(C Raja Mohan is a contributing editor on international affairs for The Indian Express)

FROM PAGE ONE
Modi, Trump agree to seal early trade deal

by 2030. “We have set ourselves the target of more than doubling our bilateral trade to attain \$500 billion by 2030. ... Our teams will work on concluding, very soon, a mutually beneficial trade agreement.” The two leaders also decided to renew the 10-year defence framework. Trump said, “Starting this year, we will be increasing military sales to India by many billions of dollars. We are also paving the way to ultimately provide India with the F-35 stealth fighters.”

On the extradition of Mumbai terror attack accused Tahawwur Rana, Trump said, “I am pleased to announce that my administration has approved the extradition of one of the plotters, and one of the very evil people of the world. ... of the horrific 2008 Mumbai terrorist attack to face justice in India. So he’s going to be going back to India to face justice.”

Later, answering questions, he said: “We are giving a very violent man, it seems to me. I mean, I don’t know that he’s been convicted yet, or will be, but let’s assume he’s a pretty violent person. We are giving him back to India immediately, and there are more to follow, because we have quite a few requests. So we work with India on crime, and we want to make it good for India, and it’s very important. So that kind of a relationship is very important to us.”

Modi said India and the US will stand strongly together in the fight against terrorism. “We agreed that in order to eliminate cross-border terrorism, we need concrete ac-

tions.” He said he was “very grateful to President Trump” for handing over somebody “who carried out genocide in India”. “That criminal is now going to be handed over to India, and I am grateful to President Trump for this, and appropriate action will be taken in the court in India,” he said.

On the hot-button issue of tariffs, Trump said: “As we deepen our defence partnership, we will also strengthen our economics and bring greater fairness and reciprocity to our trading relationship as a signal of good faith. Prime Minister Modi recently announced reductions to India’s unfair, very strong tariffs that limit us access into the Indian market, very strongly. And really, it’s a big problem.”

“I must say, India imposes a 30 to 40 to 60 and even 70% tariff on so many of the goods, and in some cases, far more than that. And as an example, a 70% tariff on US cars going into India, which makes it pretty much impossible to sell those cars today, the US trade deficit with India is almost \$100 billion and Prime Minister Modi and I have agreed that we will be getting negotiations to address the long running disparities that should have been taken care of over the last four years. But they didn’t do that in the US-India trading relationship, with the goal of signing an agreement,” he said.

Batting for a level-playing field, Trump said, “We can make up the trade difference very easily with the sale of oil and gas. LNG, of which we have more than any-

body in the world. The Prime Minister and I also reached an important agreement on energy that will restore the United States as a leading supplier of oil and gas to India. It will be, hopefully, their number one supplier.”

The other hot-button issue of illegal migration also came up. Prime Minister Modi said this is not limited to India alone, and that they will work on cracking down on the “ecosystem” which is involved in “human-trafficking”.

“This is not a question about India only but it is a global issue,” he said. “We are of the opinion that anybody who enters and lives in another country illegally, they have absolutely no legal right or authority to live in that country.”

As far as India and the US are concerned, Modi said, “We have always said that those who are verified Indian citizens and who are living in the US illegally, India is prepared to take them back.”

“However, for us, the issue doesn’t stop there. These are children of very ordinary families, and they are lured by big dreams and promises,” he said, adding that a lot of them are being led astray and misguided by human traffickers. “Our bigger fight is against this ecosystem and I am confident that President Trump will also fully support India in ending this ecosystem,” Modi said.

Asked about China, Trump said there were “skirmishes” on the India-China border and that should be “stopped”, and if he could be of help, he would help.

“I think we are going to have a

does too, in fairness. So we’re going to work on that very hard...”

● Delhi will have to pick up threads from Trump 1.0

This is not the first time the two countries are discussing a trade deal. During Trump’s first term in 2017-21 too, Washington had expressed its willingness to negotiate a broad trade agreement with India.

IPEF’s trade pillar negotiations failure

India is part of the US-led 14-member Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity (IPEF), even though the crucial trade pillar — one of the four under the Framework — failed to take off as Washington did not offer tariff reductions or increased market access into the American market.

India had initially indicated it would like to restrict itself to an observer status and not actively negotiate in the trade pillar, before the US eventually abandoned the trade pillar entirely. Also, during his first term, Trump ended the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) programme, which had granted duty-free access to over \$5 billion worth of Indian goods into the US.

Due to job losses in several sectors, particularly in the US industrial belt following China’s entry into the WTO, sentiment among US lawmakers has turned against granting greater market access to

American goods, rather than the US reciprocating, as US average tariffs are already among the lowest in the world. New Delhi-based think tank Global Trade Research Institute said this is also not the best time for a trade deal with the US, as it does not respect free trade agreements under the current administration. “An example is how the Trump administration imposed tariffs on Mexico and Canada on steel and aluminium in violation of the US-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) provisions,” it said.

India tariffs “big problem”

Calling India’s tariffs a “big problem”, Trump said that tariffs as high as 70 per cent or more on American goods such as cars limit access to the Indian market. “The US trade deficit with India is almost \$100 billion, and Prime Minister Modi and I have agreed that we will be negotiating to address the long-running disparities,” he said at the India-US briefing. In goods alone, India had a surplus of about \$35 billion in 2023-24, with the bilateral trade being \$120 billion during the year.

“We want a certain level playing field, which we really think we’re entitled to, and he [Modi]

Even as India lowered its basic customs duty on a range of items in the Budget, a White House statement on reciprocal tariffs said Indian tariffs on agricultural goods and motorcycles remain significantly higher than those imposed by the US on Indian products.

India’s goods trade surplus with the US has been rising, particularly after the Covid-19 pandemic, doubling from \$17.3 billion in 2019-20 to \$35.33 billion in 2023-24, alongside a notable shift in the export basket. While exports of electronic and engineering goods surged, traditional exports such as gems and jewellery and garments remained largely unchanged.

Meanwhile, India’s imports from the US over the past five years have grown at a slower pace compared to its exports. US exports to India reached \$42.19 billion in 2023-24, up from \$35.81 billion in 2019-20, with the bulk concentrated in five categories: mineral fuels (the largest segment), followed by precious and semi-precious stones, nuclear reactors, electrical machinery, and aircraft and parts.

● New 10-yr partnership framework

strengthen those ties even further, economically and the US-India COMPACT for the 21st Century. ... It is a historic initiative that will deepen every aspect of our partnership and our friendship.”

“Starting this year, we will be increasing military sales to India by many billions of dollars. We are also paving the way to ultimately provide India with the F-35 stealth fighters,” he said.

Responding to questions later on the F-35 fighters, Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri said, “There is a process by which platforms are acquired. You are well aware of that process. There is, in most cases, a request for proposals that is floated. There are responses to those, they are evaluated. I don’t think with regard to the acquisition of an advanced aviation platform by India, that process has started yet.”

Prime Minister Modi said, “America plays an important role in India’s defence preparedness. As strategic and trusted partners, we are moving forward actively towards joint development, joint production and transfer of technology in the times to come. ... New technologies and equipment will enhance our capacities.”

“We have decided to launch the Autonomous Systems Industry Alliance and a defence cooperation framework for the next decade will be prepared. Defence interoperability, logistics, repair and maintenance will also be its key components,” he said.

The two sides announced plans for the new 10-year defence framework. “Highlighting the

deepening convergence of US-India strategic interests, the leaders reaffirmed their unwavering commitment to a dynamic defence partnership spanning multiple domains. To advance defence ties further, the leaders announced plans to sign this year a new 10-year Framework for the US-India Major Defence Partnership in the 21st Century,” the joint statement said.

It said the leaders welcomed the significant integration of US-origin defence items into India’s inventory to date, including C-130J Super Hercules, C-17 Globemaster III, P-8I Poseidon aircraft; CH-47F Chinooks, MH-60R Seahawks, and AH-64E Apaches; Harpoon anti-ship missiles; M777 howitzers; and MQ-9Bs.

“The leaders determined that the US would expand defence sales and co-production with India to strengthen interoperability and defence industrial co-operation. They announced plans to pursue this year new procurements and co-production arrangements for ‘Javelin’ Anti-Tank Guided Missiles and ‘Stryker’ Infantry Combat Vehicles in India to rapidly meet India’s defence requirements. They also expect completion of procurement for six additional P-8I Maritime Patrol aircraft to enhance India’s maritime surveillance reach in the Indian Ocean Region following agreement on sale terms,” it said.

The US and India will review their respective arms transfer regulations, including International Traffic in Arms Regulations, in order to streamline defence trade, technology exchange and maintenance, spare supplies and in-country repair and overhaul of US-provided defence systems.

● 119 deportees to land in Amritsar

from Goa, Himachal Pradesh, and Jammu and Kashmir.

On the first flight, most of the deportees had taken the illegal “dunkun” route to enter the US. Many had undertaken journeys lasting months after paying huge sums to unscrupulous agents.

Ever since their return, the Punjab and Haryana governments have arrested many such agents.

During Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s visit to the US, the issue of illegal immigration was discussed with President Donald Trump.

● Canada gold heist suspect

facilitated the heist” because they were the “insiders”.

Another suspect, Archit Grover, was the last one to be arrested in this case in May 2024, when he turned himself in and landed at the Pearson International Airport. “Archit Grover flew into the Pearson Airport. We were in touch with his lawyer and we had information that he was flying in. We arrested him. He was held for a bail hearing,” the Peel Regional Police’s documents reveal. About Preet, the Peel Regional Police’s officers are “in touch with his lawyer” and “are trying to facilitate his surrender, as well”.

Another suspect, Arsalan Chaudhary from Mississauga, Ontario, who the Canadian authorities believe is in Dubai, is also “wanted under the Canada-wide warrant”.

The Peel Police Services Board meeting’s documents reveal the relationship between the suspects and their alleged role in the heist.

“Parampal Sidhu and Preet Panesar worked at Air Canada and facilitated the theft to take place. A Canadian national, Durante King-McLean, was the driver of the truck in which the gold was allegedly transported out of the Pearson International Airport. Archit Grover is a long-time friend of Parampal and employer of King-McLean. Grover also owned

the trucking company that owned the truck used in the theft. Amit Jalotais Archit Grover’s cousin and his associate Arsalan Chaudhary looked after the stolen gold, Jalota facilitated melting of the gold through Ali Raza. Aamdad Chaudhary, Prasath Parmalingam and Arsalan Chaudhary assisted King-McLean in crossing the border and helped him stay in the United States of America for a long time,” the Peel Regional Police Board meeting documents reveal.

The police examined more than 40 electronic devices to establish the link among the suspects and their alleged roles.

The investigating officials believe that “a significant portion of the gold left for foreign markets very soon after the heist, and a large portion was believed to have gone overseas — Dubai or India”.

So far, police have recovered \$430,000 in cash, six pure gold bracelets worth above \$89,000 believed to be from the stolen gold melted, as well as smelting pots, casts and moulds used to melt the stolen gold. In September 2023, Pennsylvania State troopers pulled over a vehicle and allegedly found 65 firearms that the US Department of Justice said were “destined for Canada”. The man driving the vehicle was identified as Durante King-McLean. He was taken into custody.

● Raising India’s energy imports

Qatar, as per India’s official trade data.

Experts say that while ramping up LNG imports from the US would be relatively straightforward from a commercial perspective, that may not be the case when it comes to oil imports.

Sources say that Indian refiners would be open to buying more US crude, provided it is priced competitively, as the cost of shipping oil from the US to India is currently more than double of getting oil from West Asia. One estimate pegs transportation cost for US crude shipments to India at around \$4 per barrel, against around \$1.5 per barrel for West Asian oil. This would translate into higher landed price of US oil at Indian ports vis-à-vis comparable grades of crude from suppliers located closer to India.

The other key consideration would be the US crude grades on offer and their compatibility with Indian refineries. This is because different crude grades are suitable for different petroleum products from an operational and efficiency perspective. Indian refineries are currently more accustomed to crudes from traditional West Asian suppliers, and now even Russian crude, although they have the capability to process nearly all types of crude.

“If US crude is priced competitively compared to oil from other suppliers and fits well in our product slate profile and other technical parameters, we can certainly buy more. The bottomline is that all our crude purchases are dictated by commercial considerations including price and quality,” a senior official with an Indian refiner told *The Indian Express*.

According to India’s official trade data, in January-November of 2024, India imported 7.2 million tonnes of oil from the US, which accounted for 3.2 per cent of New Delhi’s overall oil imports by volume.

Russia is currently India’s top oil supplier, followed by Iraq, Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and the US. As for LNG, India imported 5.12 million tonnes from the US in January-November 2024, accounting for 20.2 per cent of the former’s overall LNG imports for the period.

Higher freight, while is also a factor in importing LNG from the US, is not as major a concern as in the case of crude oil. This is because American gas itself is usually priced at a significant discount

to gas from other major suppliers like Qatar. This means that despite paying more for transportation of American LNG to India, the landed price for Indian LNG importers would mostly be lower than importing from West Asia.

Also, unlike crude that has numerous grades and qualities, LNG from various geographies is broadly consistent and similar in quality.

It is no surprise that in their hunt for more long-term LNG contracts globally, Indian oil and gas companies are keenly eyeing opportunities in the US. “Indian companies are looking at buying LNG from around the world, including particularly from the US,” Petroleum Secretary Pankaj Jain told reporters on Monday, just days before Modi’s US visit.

It is also worth noting that while there are a large number of countries exporting crude oil, incremental LNG export capacities are expected to come largely in Qatar and the US in the foreseeable future. India’s gas demand is projected to grow significantly over the coming years and most of the incremental consumption will be met through LNG imports, which makes the US an important supplier. India wants to increase the share of natural gas in its primary energy mix to 15 per cent by 2030 from a little over 6.2 per cent at present.

From a strategic perspective, stepping up purchases of American oil does help India with some leverage with other supplying nations, whose supply volumes may be denied as a result, according to sources. The aim there would be to nudge them to offer oil to India at even better prices in a bid to protect their market share. Also, expanding energy trade with the US would, to an extent, allay Washington’s concerns about the balance of trade between the two countries.

“Last year we purchased around \$15 billion of US energy output. There is a good chance that this figure will go up as much as \$25 billion in the near future... Today’s discussions did focus considerably on the possibility of more energy purchases. And it is entirely possible that these increased energy purchases will contribute to impacting the deficit between the two countries as well,” Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri said after Modi’s meeting with Trump.

● Adani

Gautam Adani and 7 others were indicted by a grand jury in New York last November in an alleged Rs 2,029 crore bribery case.

Trump had signed an executive order on Monday directing the US Justice Department to halt prosecuting Americans accused of bribing foreign government officials to win overseas business. While the order is meant to provide relief to US citizens, it will likely come as a breather for key executives of the Adani Group currently facing bribery charges in a US court. The executive order would provide relief to Azure Power — which had a contract (a build, operate and transfer deal) with an Adani Group firm for a solar project — and, by extension, the Adani Group.

Last November, the Department of Justice under President Joe Biden had charged Adani for allegedly being part of a scheme to pay over US \$250 million (about Rs 2,100 crore) bribe to Indian officials in exchange of favourable terms for solar power contracts. This was concealed from the US banks and investors from whom the Adani group raised billions of dollars for the project, the prosecutors had alleged. The charges had sparked concerns about the impact on US-India business ties and the broader strategic relationship between the two nations.

Reacting to the PM’s response, Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi attacked him for “maintaining silence” over the Adani issue while in the country, and terming it a “personal matter” on foreign soil. “If you ask questions in the country, there is silence. If you ask abroad, it is a personal matter!” Even in America, Modi Ji covered up Adani Ji’s corruption!” he posted on X. “When filling a friend’s pocket is ‘nation building’ for Modi Ji, then taking bribes and looting the nation’s wealth becomes a ‘personal matter,’” he said.

● Reciprocal tariff

goods by other trading partners and then devising a response.

Wall Street is anxious further tariffs may accelerate US inflation, prevent the Federal Reserve from cutting interest rates and slow economic growth. The absence of further trade measures for now, drove global markets higher.

“While global financial markets may be inclined to take some relief from the delay in the immediate imposition of reciprocal tariffs, it is not clear to us whether the delay necessarily reflects a lower likelihood that they will eventually be imposed,” Barclays analysts said in a note.

Trump’s potential targets include China, Japan, South Korea and the European Union.

Howard Lutnick, Trump’s pick for commerce secretary, said the administration would address each affected country one by one and said studies on the issue would be completed by April 1.

That is also the deadline Trump set on his first day in office for Lutnick and other economic advisers to report to him with plans to reduce the chronic trade imbalances that Trump sees as a US subsidy to other countries.

Trump, who campaigned on a pledge to bring down consumer prices, said prices could go up in the short term as a result of the moves. “Tariffs are great,” he said.

A White House official, who

spoke to reporters before Trump’s event in the Oval Office, said the administration would study countries with the biggest trade surpluses and highest tariff rates first. Trump’s tariffs would match the higher duties charged by other countries, he said, and would aim to counteract burdensome regulations, value-added taxes, government subsidies and exchange rate policies that can erect barriers to the flow of US products to foreign markets. Trump said, “They effectively don’t let us do business. So we’re going to put a number on that that is a fair number. We’re able to accurately determine the cost of these non-monetary trade barriers.” The announcement appeared designed at least in part to trigger talks with other countries. The White House official said Trump would gladly lower tariffs if other countries lowered theirs. The new tariffs would avoid a “one size fits all” approach for more customised levies, he said, though he did not rule out a flat global tariff.

Trump has already announced tariffs on all steel and aluminum imports beginning on March 12, imposed 10% tariffs on goods from China, and put a 30-day hold on planned tariffs on goods from neighboring Canada and Mexico. He said on Monday he was also looking at separate tariffs on cars, semiconductors and pharmaceuticals. On Thursday, he said car tariffs would be coming soon.

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ALLEGATIONS OF CHEATING AGAINST FIIT JEE

No FIR yet, EOW probes 35 complaints against shut Preet Vihar centre

ALOK SINGH
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 14

THE DELHI Police's Economic Offences Wing (EOW) has started a probe into allegations of cheating against FIITJEE, a coaching institute chain that prepares students for competitive exams such as Joint Entrance Examination (JEE), after receiving complaints from parents of students who studied in its Preet Vihar centre in East Delhi, which was shut down in mid-January.

This comes after the EOW received around 35 complaints from the parents. A team led by a DCP-level officer is probing the matter. When contacted, Special Commissioner of Police (EOW) Sharad Agarwal confirmed the development.

"The complaints were filed with the local police in East Delhi and later forwarded to the EOW, as the amount is suspected to be big and needed a thorough investigation," a source in the police said. However, an FIR is yet to be lodged into the matter, the source added.

In January, it had come to light that FIITJEE had shut down several centres across Delhi-NCR, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh, leaving students and parents in a limbo. The institute, which has 73 study centres across the country, has been facing a financial crisis, with staff at many branches resigning en masse.

Another source in the police said that during primary investigation, more than 200 children were found to be affected by the sudden closure of the Preet Vihar centre. "Of the affected students, 35 have approached the police, but their number may increase in the coming days," the source added.

"All the complaints accuse FIITJEE of cheating... the parents had already paid a fee of around Rs 2-3 lakh to the centre," the source further said, adding that the centre was reportedly running without faculty members.

At present, the police in Ghaziabad, Noida, and Bhopal have lodged FIRs against FIITJEE and separate investigations are in progress. On Monday, the

Greater Noida Police had seized over Rs 11.11 crore from 12 bank accounts linked to FIITJEE's founder Dinesh Goyal as part of its probe in a similar cheating case, said officers.

FIITJEE, meanwhile, has alleged a conspiracy. "This entire story is part of a criminal conspiracy, which has been hatched by people with vested interests and very soon through a detailed investigation, the truth will emerge. Truth cannot be concealed forever," it had said in a statement on January 26. It had also clarified that it has "not closed any centre as part of its own decision".

Maintaining that the "present turmoil is temporary", FIITJEE had said, "Company officials are working to resume operations at all places within a reasonable time." It blamed the managing partners of FIITJEE for the financial crisis that led to the closure of several centres. "Overnight desertion of the centre by the Centre Managing Partner, along with the entire team, suddenly is the only reason for this type of condition," the statement said.

AQI at 131, Delhi sees cleanest air in four months

EXPRESSNEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 14

AFTER FOUR months, Delhi saw its cleanest air on Friday with the Air Quality Index (AQI) recorded at 131 in the 'moderate' category.

With strong, gusty winds reaching up to 25 kmph over the past few days, the capital's air quality improved after three days of 'poor' air.

The last time Delhi saw better air was on October 7 last year, when the AQI was reported at 126 in the 'moderate' category.

Typically in the winter season, short spells of rain and strong surface winds help disperse pollutants trapped in the atmosphere, leading to clearer air, while smog episodes cause bad air days.

This month, dense fog days



A tanker sprays water on a road on Friday. Praveen Khanna

gave way to clear skies, which allowed more heat to reach the surface and help in the dispersal of pollutants. Similar to 2022 and 2016, this year too saw no cold-wave days in January. Feeble

western disturbances have also meant no cold wave days in February so far.

As part of the anti-pollution measures, Stage II of the Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP) re-

DDA to NGT: 811 water bodies identified, 247 can't be restored

EXPRESSNEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 14

THE DELHI Development Authority (DDA) informed the National Green Tribunal (NGT) on Thursday that of the 811 water bodies it owns, 247 could not be restored due to existing land plans, encroachments, and built-up properties.

The NGT had taken suo motu cognizance of a news report published in April 2024 on the disappearance of water bodies in Delhi.

The DDA informed the NGT that the status of more than half of the bodies remains uncertain or pending, with 320 not demarcated, 100 not handed over to the DDA by departments, including the Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi, and 24 awaiting 'khasra verification'.

The DDA also informed that 174 water bodies have been developed, and 427 found feasible for restoration. The East Zone has the maximum number of "non-feasible" water bodies, 70, followed by the Dwarka Zone with 59, it added.

In January this year, it was decided that the DDA would take up at least 10 water bodies in each zone for rejuvenation. The work is to be completed by March 15.

The Wetland Authority of Delhi had earlier submitted to NGT that there are 1,367 identified water bodies in Delhi, of which 1,045 have been listed in the revenue records and 322 have been identified using satellite imagery.

DAY AFTER 12 DETAINED FOR DEMONSTRATION ON CAMPUS

Jamia names 17 protesters, students say varsity making personal details public

VIDHEESHA KUNTAMALLA
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 14

A DAY after the Delhi Police detained and later released around 12 students protesting at Jamia Millia Islamia (JMI), a 'notice' identifying 17 protesters allegedly involved in the demonstration was pasted across campus on Friday.

Accusing the varsity of violating their privacy, students claimed the purported notice included names of the 17, their photographs, IDs, addresses and political affiliations. Several of them claimed they received a letter of suspension from the Chief Proctor's office on February 12.

These students have been protesting since Monday against administrative actions, including showcause notices issued to two PhD students for allegedly sloganeering "without permission or intimation to university authorities" during a "CAA-NRC Remembrance Day" event last December.

A student said, "It's outrageous that the university has made personal details of students public. This list even includes women students... I saw it posted at the



Guards check students' ID cards at varsity gate. Amit Mehra

Centenary Gate, Gate Number 7, and Gate Number 8." Students later claimed the notices were removed in the evening.

The Indian Express reached out to Naved Jamal, Chief Proctor; Quamrul Hassan, Chief Media Coordinator; and Mazhar Asif, the Vice-Chancellor, for a comment and received no response.

The notice, issued by JMI's proctorial department, stated: "List of active students who organised a protest without permission on 10.02.2025 at 5 pm, Central Canteen, JMI."

The suspension letters issued

to some of the students read: "Whereas, on 10.02.2025, you were identified as leading an unruly and rowdy group of individuals to vandalise and deface university property. Furthermore, on 11.02.2025, you again participated in an unauthorised and unlawful protest within the JMI campus, disrupting the normal functioning of the university..."

"During these protest(s), you and others defaced university property by painting abusive and defamatory slogans on the walls and damaging university property such as breaking open doors

Friday that "a fresh Western Disturbance is likely to affect the western Himalayan region" from February 17. This is likely to lower the wind speed to 4-6 kmph.

The temperatures will also dip yet remain above normal. The IMD has forecast the maximum to hover between 27 and 29 degrees Celsius, while the minimum is forecast to remain around 11 to 14 degrees Celsius in the next six days.

On Friday, Delhi's satellite towns reported satisfactory to moderate air. Ghaziabad reported an AQI of 82 in the 'satisfactory' category and Greater Noida too reported 'satisfactory' air with an AQI of 89. In contrast, Gurgaon saw an AQI of 192 in the 'moderate' category. Similarly, Noida and Faridabad reported moderate AQI at 110 and 111 respectively.

of rooms, washrooms, damaging the official chamber of the Security Advisor, Mohibul Hasan Block, etc. and also defacing walls of Central Canteen causing monetary loss and bringing disrepute to the university. This defiant behavior undermines the authority of the university and disrupts the academic environment," it further stated.

Calling it a "breach of discipline", the letter stated that their actions were in direct violation of three rules: "Disobeying instructions of teachers or authorities (Rule 3.3); causing damage, spoiling or disfiguring property/equipment of the university (Rule 3.7); any other conduct anywhere which is considered to be unbecoming of a student (Rule 3.17) of Ordinance 14 of JMI's rules and regulations.

The letter said the students are liable to receive punishments such as fines, a campus ban, expulsion and rustication and added that the "university reserves the right to pursue legal action... in addition to the disciplinary proceedings outlined above. You are advised to acknowledge receipt of this suspension letter."

Cyber Safety Kiosk Machine

LOCATION
Police headquarters on Jai Singh Road

KEY FEATURES

- Detects malware, viruses, and backdoor threats on cellphones and external storage devices
- Identifies applications banned by Union government
- Pinpoints location of malware-infected applications
- Conducts scans for Android, iPhone, and Windows applications to detect malicious software
- Provides users with a detailed consolidated report of the scanned device

DEVELOPED BY
National Forensic Sciences University in Gandhinagar

PRIMARY OBJECTIVE
Detect and eliminate harmful software



Kiosk was inaugurated by Commissioner Sanjay Arora.

HOW IT WORKS

- Users connect handheld device to kiosk and follow on-screen instructions
- If malware is detected, an alert is issued
- User has option to remove the identified malware directly through kiosk
- Detailed report generated for user's reference

HC orders action against 4,000 illegal structures in Gurugram's DLF City

EXPRESSNEWS SERVICE
CHANDIGARH, FEBRUARY 14

THE PUNJAB and Haryana High Court has directed authorities in Haryana to take "prompt action" against about 4,000 unauthorised constructions in Gurugram's DLF City within two months.

Taking note of local administration's involvement in allowing "land mafias" to construct such buildings, a division bench of Justices Sureshwar Thakur and Vikas Suri found the constructions to be in clear violation of the zoning plan, buildings bye-laws and Haryana Building Code.

"It is amply clear that a powerful lobby of certain groups/land mafia, are ruining the very basic character of the developed colony in active connivance with the local administration/official respondents that too only because the authorities have turned a blind eye and are permitting such illegal and unauthorised constructions / illegal developments; which are coming up at an alarming rate right under their nose," the court said.

In its 10-page order, the court observed that if such haphazard

and unplanned development is not stopped, it will lead to total collapse of the infrastructure of Gurugram "including potable drinking water, sewerage, air quality, transport, electricity, other common infrastructure and facilities and amenities".

The bench made the observations on Thursday while hearing petitions moved by DLF City Residents Welfare Association and DLF-3 Voice in 2021 seeking action in furtherance of a 2018 Action Taken Report on complaints against the unauthorised constructions. The order was made available Friday.

Appearing for the petitioners, advocates argued that such unauthorised constructions are primarily coming up in various licenced colonies, especially in the area comprising EWS flats/plots. "...official respondents are permitting such activity which is not only in violation of the laws and bye-laws but is also an extra burden on the infrastructure... and is permitting backdoor entries of many unauthorised persons..."

The counsel for Haryana submitted that "violations were found in at least 4,033 general and EWS category plots" and "action was taken in a few cases".

3 held for stealing cash, jewellery worth lakhs from Vasant Kunj flat

EXPRESSNEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 14

THREE MEN were arrested on Friday in connection with a burglary at a flat in Southwest Delhi's Vasant Kunj.

Police said the accused, Virender Kumar (35), Vedpal (36), and Mukesh Kumar Mishra (33), stole cash totaling Rs 10 lakh and high-value gold, diamond, platinum, and silver jewellery worth around Rs 30 lakh from the house on the night of February 9.

Police were informed of the incident when they received a PCR call regarding the burglary. According to police sources, the burglars got into the society through a hole formed by a broken iron grill and a partly crumbled wall towards the back. Police added that the apartment's owner was on a pilgrimage to Kumbh when he received a call from his neighbour on Monday morning that his house had been burgled.

The complainant, Karan Sachdeva, a relative of the owner, reported that the burglary had occurred the previous night. Despite a thorough examination by the crime team, no fingerprints were

found at the scene, said police. Subsequently, an FIR was registered under sections 305(a) and 331(4) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS). The investigative team analysed CCTV footage from the vicinity of the crime scene, identifying individuals exhibiting suspicious behaviour.

"The camera's trail was followed and the car used by the accused was identified. Later, after verification of the car's owner, the suspect was identified as Virender. Using technical surveillance, raids were conducted in various parts of Delhi and Ghaziabad... eventually, Virender was arrested... and he admitted to his involvement. Further, raids were conducted and Vedpal and Mukesh were arrested. The car used in the crime was seized," said DCP (Southwest Delhi) Surendra Choudhary.

During questioning, police said the men pointed to the location of the stolen items, leading to the recovery of jewellery worth Rs 22 lakh, 72 silver coins, silver items, and Rs 1.85 lakh in cash.

The three men have been sent to judicial custody while efforts to locate and apprehend their absconding associate, Sanni, continue, said police.

	PANJAB UNIVERSITY, CHANDIGARH (Advt. No. 01/25/CET)	
ENTRANCE TEST - CUM - ADMISSION NOTICE - I		
The University will hold entrance tests for admission to various courses in the Teaching Departments/Institutes and its affiliated colleges, for the session 2025-2026 as under:-		
SR.NO	NAME OF ENTRANCE TEST	DATES OF TESTS FOR - 2025
1	PUTHAT	25-04-2025 (Friday)
2	PU-B.A./B.Com. LL.B. (Hons.) (5 years) Integrated Course	27-04-2025 (Sunday)
3	PU-CET (U.G.)	11-05-2025 (Sunday)
4	PUMET	01-06-2025 (Sunday) 10:00 A.M. - 11:40 A.M.
5	PULEET	01-06-2025 (Sunday) 2:00 P.M. - 3:40 P.M.
6	PU - CET (P.G.)	17-18-19-06-2025 (Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday)
7	PU - LL.B. (3 Years)	29-06-2025 (Sunday)
8	B.Ed. (Chandigarh)	13-07-2025 (Sunday)
9	LL.B. 3 Year Course Migration Test	27-07-2025 (Sunday) 10:00 A.M. - 11:00 A.M.
10	MBA (CDOE)	27-07-2025 (Sunday) 10:00 A.M. - 12:00 Noon
11	Joint B.Ed. Admissions (Punjab)	17-08-2025 (Sunday)
12	Ph.D.	07-09-2025 (Sunday)
13	B.A./B.Com. LL.B. (Hons.) 5 Years Integrated Course Migration Test	26-10-2025 (Sunday) 10:00 A.M. - 12:00 Noon
Information about all the entrance tests would be available on the University Website https://admissions.puochd.ac.in from time to time.		
Sd/- Controller of Examinations		



Ministry of Tribal Affairs
Government of India

A celebration of Tribal Entrepreneurship, Crafts, Culture, Cuisine and Commerce

Aadi Mahotsav

From 16th to 24th February, 2025 | 11:00 AM - 8:00 PM

Major Dhyan Chand National Stadium, India Gate

Key Attractions

- State Pavilions: Exhibition cum sale of handloom and handicraft products of tribal artisans from across the country
- Tribal Haats: Presenting tribal organic and natural produces
- Aadi Chitra: An Exhibition of Tribal Paintings
- PVTG Products: Various types of forest products produced by PVTGs
- Indigenous Tribal Cuisines: From across the country



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ENTRY FREE

Entry from Gate No.- 3, 5 & 7

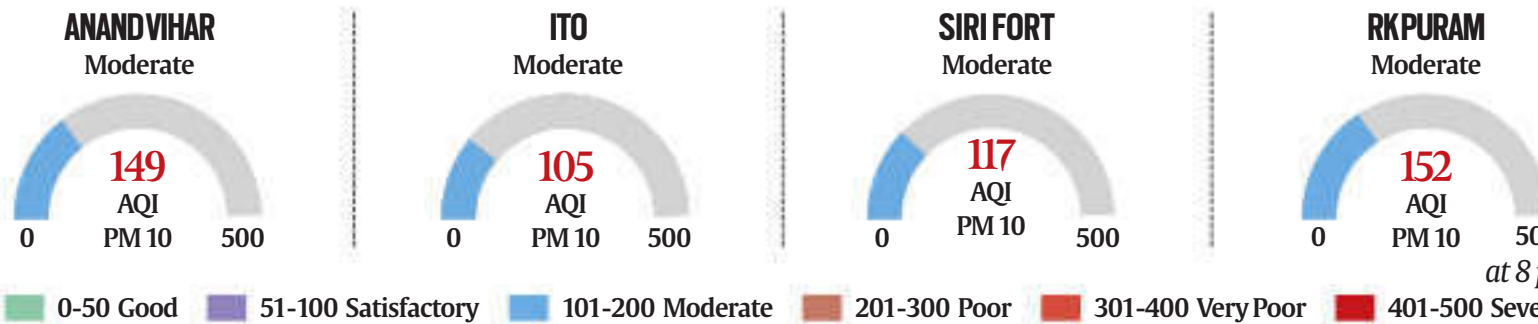


"Aadi Mahotsav is taking our strength of unity in diversity to new heights. The pride with which the country is moving ahead with respect to the tribal society has never happened before."

Narendra Modi, Prime Minister

Visit Aadi Mahotsav and further the 'Vocal for Local' movement

#AadiMahotsav #Vocal4Local #BuyTribal | Connect with us @tribesindia



SKY WATCH

FORECAST:
February 15
Partly cloudy sky.

MAX: 26-28
1.6°C above normal

MIN: 10-12
1°C above normal

BRIEFLY

DDA proposes gold souk in Dwarka

New Delhi: To create an exclusive hub for trading gold jewellery, the Delhi Development Authority (DDA) plans to establish a gold souk in Dwarka Sector 22. The DDA, which comes under the central government, has invited Expressions of Interest (Eoi) from interested parties to set up the commercial space on 3.91 hectares of land. "Eois are invited from the reputed players in the real estate sector having adequate experience in setting up and operating gold souks/ luxury retail spaces/ commercial spaces of similar size and nature," says the invitation released by the agency earlier this week. **ENS**

3 who stole Metro cables arrested

New Delhi: Police Friday arrested three professional cable thieves involved in multiple copper cable thefts along Metro tracks. Govind Kumar (24), Sushil Kumar (29), and Aas Mohammad (29) were responsible for four thefts that disrupted Metro operations, said police. During questioning, they admitted to the thefts, including one near Dwarka Metro Station. **ENS**

DRAFT NOTE PREPARED, TO BE SENT TO CABINET

Proposal to merge Ayushman Bharat, state health schemes

ANKITA UPADHYAY
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 14

A WEEK after the BJP's victory in Delhi, the state health department began the initial process to launch Ayushman Bharat, the flagship health insurance scheme of the Narendra Modi-led government, in the national capital. Officials said the department has drafted a "preparatory note", outlining the basic blueprint for the scheme's potential launch in the city, which will be forwarded to the Cabinet once it is formed.

The health insurance scheme has been implemented in all states except West Bengal and Delhi.

The note includes approving implementation of the Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY) with a Rs 10 lakh cover per family, merging Delhi Arogya Kosh (DAK) with Ayushman Bharat, and establishing a task force to oversee their integration.

DAK is a registered society that provides financial assistance to the extent of Rs 5 lakh to eligible patients for treatment of any illness /disease in government hospitals. Constituted in 2011, it has five components/ schemes – financial assistance to EWS patients, free high-end radiological diagnostic tests, cashless specified surgeries, RTA (Road Traffic Accident) ('i.e. Farishtey Scheme'), and cashless



The health insurance scheme has been implemented in all states except West Bengal and Delhi. Archive

dialysis.

The note was prepared after Union Home Secretary Govind Mohan held a meeting with Delhi Chief Secretary Dharmendra and senior government officials on Thursday to review the progress and implementation of the Centre's flagship schemes in the Capital.

An official said although the Cabinet Note is yet to be finalised due to the need for inter-departmental consultations, the state health department is seeking consultation from various branches as well.

According to the proposal, the scheme will deliver comprehensive coverage of Rs 10 lakh per family annually – combining Rs 5 lakh for secondary/tertiary care hospitalisation under

the central scheme with an additional Rs 5 lakh through state collaboration. "This landmark programme addresses critical healthcare inequities, ensuring Delhi's underprivileged communities gain a robust financial safety net and equitable access to quality medical care," it said.

The proposal includes providing universal health coverage to all eligible families in Delhi, having income up to Rs 3 lakh per annum, and includes those covered under the Delhi Arogya Kosh and other schemes.

A total of 5,88,426 families have been identified under the Socio-Economic Caste Census (SECC) 2011. Other vulnerable groups and all senior citizens above 70 years of age will also be covered.

According to an official, the scheme will be integrated with Delhi's existing healthcare infrastructure, including government hospitals and mohalla clinics. Over 1,500 medical procedures, including critical care, surgeries, and diagnostics will also be covered.

To speed up the implementation, officials said, various departments will be providing data to the health department.

Officials from Delhi Arogya Kosh (DAK) will provide the number of existing beneficiaries, fund allocation, source of funds, current inclusion criteria, and current functioning and status of the scheme.

The nursing home cell will provide data on existing registered private hospitals and nursing homes.

The accounts and finance branch of the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) will assist the department in preparing financial implications.

The Delhi Government Employees Health Scheme will provide data on the number of beneficiaries as well as the pros and cons of inclusion and non-inclusion of beneficiaries under the scheme.

The Planning Branch, which comes under the DGHS, will provide data on existing and proposed healthcare infrastructure in Delhi and facilitate infrastructure development.

Mohalla clinics will be renamed as Ayushman Arogya Mandirs: Sirsa

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 14

BJP MLA-ELECT from Rajouri Garden, Manjinder Singh Sirsa, Friday said that mohalla clinics set up by the outgoing AAP government would be renamed as Ayushman Arogya Mandirs once the new BJP government is sworn in.

Doctors and staff currently deployed at the mohalla clinics would continue in the new set-up, he added.

Speaking to *The Indian Express*, Sirsa said, "The scheme started by the AAP government was a haven for fraud... ghost patients were undergoing fake tests and fake bills were being generated."

He added that as soon as the new government is formed in Delhi, the BJP would establish Ayushman Arogya Mandirs near JJ (jhuggi-jhopri) clusters to en-



A mohalla clinic in the Capital. Praveen Khanna

sure free primary healthcare for all residents in these areas.

The Delhi BJP's first Sankalp Patra (manifesto) for the Assembly polls had promised the establishment of Ayushman Arogya Mandirs in JJ clusters to strengthen healthcare infra-

structure in these communities.

Mohalla clinics, the centre-piece of the Aam Aadmi Party government's health infrastructure, were first set up in October 2015. The Capital has 546 mohalla clinics spread across 70 Assembly constituencies.

Power struggle in BJP over ministerial posts, claim AAP, Congress

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 14

THE BJP on Friday came under attack from both the AAP and the Congress over a host of issues – ranging from lack of consensus regarding a Chief Minister to allegations of "cooking up" a financial crisis in the Capital so as to evade delivering on its promises.

Delhi Congress president Devender Yadav alleged that that the "delay" by the BJP in appointing its Chief Minister, though a week has elapsed after the Assembly election results were announced, points to a "power struggle in the party".

"When BJP came to power in Delhi for the first time 27 years ago, the Capital witnessed three CMs within five years, from 1993 to 1998. A similar scenario is shaping up this time too, as nearly 10 BJP MLAs have reported to have staked claim for the top post," Yadav alleged.

Taking on AAP, he added, "The AAP blaming the BJP for not finalising its CM candidate is like the pot calling the kettle black, as despite having 22 MLAs, the AAP has not named its Leader of the Opposition, as it too seems to be embroiled in a power struggle."

On the other hand, outgoing Delhi Chief Minister Atishi sought to underline that AAP has handed over a fiscally strong and revenue-surplus economy to the new BJP government, ensuring

there are no financial roadblocks to fulfilling the promises made to the residents of Delhi.

She sought to highlight that under AAP's governance, Delhi's Budget had grown from Rs 31,000 crore in 2014-15 to Rs 77,000 crore in 2024-25, with the state maintaining a revenue surplus since 2015.

"During the Delhi elections, the BJP made several promises. They distributed a leaflet named 'Modi ji ki guarantee', with the first promise stating that every woman would receive Rs 2,500 per month as financial assistance," she said.

"Right now, BJP leaders are embroiled in internal fights over ministerial positions... Their strategy is to shift the blame for their unfulfilled promises onto the AAP, claiming that they couldn't deliver due to an alleged financial crisis. They will attempt to use this excuse to cover up their own loot and justify breaking their promises," she alleged.

The outgoing government, she said, is handing over an economy that has witnessed "growth and a financial boom" and hoped that the BJP does not resort to "financial excuses or falsehoods" but instead fulfill its promises.

"In particular, they must fulfill their commitment to provide Rs 2,500 per month to every woman in Delhi, a promise that is supposed to be passed in their first Cabinet meeting and credited into bank accounts by March 8," Atishi said.

NEW CABINET

BJP looks at MLAs who have been part of its organisation since they entered public life

JATIN ANAND
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 14

NEWLY ELECTED legislators in Delhi, who have risen through the ranks of the BJP since entering public life, are likely to be given preference in the soon-to-be-constituted Council of Ministers, sources in the party said on Friday.

However, according to a senior leader, this did not mean that senior leaders like former Delhi Congress president Arvinder Singh Lovely and former Congress minister Rajkumar Chauhan would not be considered while selecting the seven-member Delhi Cabinet.

With Prime Minister Narendra Modi scheduled to fly back to the Capital, sources said a meeting of the BJP's 11-member Parliamentary Board is likely to be convened on Saturday.

"The meeting will be followed by the appointment of observers – likely to include a mix of senior leaders such as the Chief Minister of a BJP-ruled state as well as an MP from the Union Cabinet – who will preside over a meeting of the legislature party comprising the 48 newly elected MLAs," a source said.

"While the final decision will only be taken as per the PM's ap-



Delhi BJP president Virendra Sachdeva with party MLAs on Friday. Sachdeva thanked BJP workers who were part of the 'Jhuggi Vistarak' campaign for the polls. It was launched in July 2024, months ahead of the election, as part of its outreach to slum dwellers. Praveen Khanna

proval, the criteria so far agreed upon by RSS and BJP top brass, in regard to choosing members of the Cabinet and the CM, includes youth, gender, caste, community as well as organisational experience," the source added.

Party insiders said the BJP is likely to seek to balance youth with experience in the Cabinet, the Assembly and the party's state organisation over the days to come. The stress, insiders added, was on ensuring "inclusiveness in diversity" while balancing the profile of the Cabinet with that of a "global city".

"The only thing that can be

said with certainty is that new MLAs, who have been with BJP's organisation since they began their stint in public life, will get preference, to underline that hard work and loyalty of every average BJP karyakarta is rewarded," a senior leader said.

"Organisational leaders, including those who currently occupy any office in Delhi BJP, will get preference. But this does not mean that leaders like Lovely, who brought four former Congress MLAs – of whom three, including himself, won the elections – to the party last year will go unnoticed," the leader added.



Outgoing Chief Minister Atishi, Delhi Congress president Devender Yadav. Praveen Khanna/Archive



Dowry provisions now being misused to harass men and their families: HC

SOHINI GHOSH
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 14

THE DELHI High Court has recently said that the courts have observed the rising "tendency of implicating the husband and his family in matrimonial litigation in a number of cases".

Justice Amit Mahajan made the observation on February 7 while quashing a First Information Report (FIR) lodged at Delhi Cantonment police station in 2017, which alleged that a woman was being asked for dowry, and harassed by her former husband and his family.

Justice Mahajan took into account that the FIR was lodged more than three years after the couple started living separately and filed for divorce. The court also considered that sweeping

Justice Amit Mahajan made the observation on February 7 while quashing a First Information Report lodged at Delhi Cantonment police station in 2017

allegations have been made without any specifics. The decree for divorce was granted in 2019. "While the provision of Section 498A of the IPC (Indian Penal Code) was introduced with an object to combat harassment meted out to married women... however, it is abysmal to note that the same is now also being misused as a tool to harass the husband and his

family members and gain leverage. Such matters are now filed in the heat of the moment on the advice of counsel by exaggerating and misconstruing actual events. That is not to say that genuine cases of harassment don't exist," Justice Mahajan recorded in the February 7 order.

"This court is not blind to the ground reality of the deeply rooted social evil of greed for dowry, due to which numerous victims are subjected to unspeakable conduct and harassment. However, in matters such as this, where vague allegations have been made against the petitioner, that too belatedly, in the opinion of this court, continuation of proceedings would amount to an abuse of the process of law," said Justice Mahajan.

MONEY LAUNDERING CASE

MHA asks President for sanction to prosecute AAP's Satyendar Jain

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 14

THE UNION Home Ministry has requested President Droupadi Murmu to grant sanction to prosecute Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader and former Delhi minister Satyendar Jain in a money laundering case being investigated by the Enforcement Directorate (ED).

Last month, the CBI informed a Delhi court that it had obtained requisite sanctions to prosecute Jain in a disproportionate assets case.

"The sanction against the 60-year-old politician has been sought under Section 218 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita. The MHA has requested sanction from the President of India on the basis of an ED investigation and the presence of adequate proof," a source said.

The federal agency booked Jain in a money laundering case linked to alleged hawala dealings and arrested him in May 2022. Jain held the health, power and a few other portfolios when he was taken into ED custody.

The ED had attached properties worth Rs 4.81 crore belonging to four companies allegedly linked to Jain and his relatives in connection with the money laundering probe for which he spent over 18 months in jail. Jain was granted bail in the case in



Former Delhi minister Satyendar Jain. Archive

October last year.

The money laundering case stems from an August 2017 FIR filed against Jain and others by the CBI on charges of alleged possession of disproportionate assets.

The ED had earlier said its probe found that during 2015-16, Jain was a public servant and four companies (beneficially owned and controlled by him) received accommodation entries (hawala) to the tune of Rs 4.81 crore from shell (bogus) companies against cash transferred to Kolkata-based entry operators through the hawala route. These amounts were utilised for the direct purchase of agricultural land or the repayment of loans taken for the purchase of agricultural land in and around Delhi, the agency had alleged.

The ED has filed a chargesheet against Jain in the case.

2020 RIOTS CASE

Court raps lawyer for 'walking', sitting 'in moving car' while appearing via video-conferencing for hearing

NIRBHAY THAKUR
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 14

IN WHAT it called a "glaring misuse of the video-conferencing (VC)" facility, a Delhi court on Friday pulled up a lawyer for "walking" and then sitting "in a moving car" while appearing virtually before it on a mobile phone in a February 2020 riots case.

It also imposed Rs 2,000 as cost to be paid by the lawyer's client Anas – an accused in the case – on February 20, the next date of hearing.

Additional Sessions Judge Pulastya Pramachala of Karkardooma court was hearing the case against former AAP

councillor Tahir Hussain and others, which was at the stage of the defence cross-examining prosecution witnesses.

"I do not find any kind of professionalism behind such conduct and submissions of Mehmood Pracha (the counsel of Anas). This is another glaring misuse of VC, which has to be stopped," said the judge.

In the morning, advocate Sikander, who appeared for Anas, told the court that main counsel Mehmood Pracha is busy conducting a cross examination in another case, where day-to-day trial has been directed by the Supreme Court, and thus could not make it to the hearing.

In the order, the judge said,

It also imposed Rs 2,000 as cost to be paid by the lawyer's client Anas – an accused in the case – on February 20, the next date of hearing

"He (Sikander) was already informed that just because that case has been directed to be taken up on a day-to-day trial basis, the responsibility of the counsel does not come to an end for this case. It was further informed that such a request is not entertainable and he was advised to inform the main coun-

sel accordingly."

After the lawyers of the other accused finished cross-examination, they requested the court to allow Pracha – who had to examine the prosecution witness – to appear through VC. After the court allowed the request, Pracha initially didn't appear and made the judge wait.

Following this, the judge gave one last opportunity to Pracha to cross-examine the witness on February 20. This is subject to Anas paying Rs 2,000 to the witness who was to be cross examined by Pracha.

"Thereafter, Pracha appeared through VC, while walking on open land through a mobile phone and thereafter, he continued appearing through VC while

5 MODI-TRUMP MEETING

Some Key Takeaways From India-US Statement

DEFENCE

A NEW TEN-YEAR Framework for the US-India Major Defence Partnership in 21st Century to be signed

US PLATFORMS rising in Indian services: US would expand defence sales and co-production with India to strengthen interoperability and defence industrial cooperation. Javelin and Stryker to be pursued

REVIEW OF International Traffic in Arms Regulations (ITAR), in order to streamline defence trade, technology exchange and maintenance, spare supplies and in-country repair and overhaul of US-provided systems

OPENING NEGOTIATIONS this year for a Reciprocal Defence Procurement pact

ACCELERATE DEFENCE technology cooperation across space, air defence, missile, maritime and undersea technologies.

US ANNOUNCING a review of its policy on releasing fifth gen fighters and undersea systems to India

NEW INITIATIVE: The Autonomous Systems Industry Alliance (ASIA) – scale industry partnerships and production in Indo-Pacific. ASIA refers to India-US cooperation in the area of underwater domain awareness technology



ANI

US-INDIA COMPACT – Catalysing Opportunities for Military Partnership, Accelerated Commerce & Technology for the 21st Century – to drive transformative change

across key pillars of cooperation – defence, investment and trade, energy security, technology and innovation, multilateral cooperation, people to people connection

TRADE AND INVESTMENT

NEW GOAL for bilateral trade – “Mission 500” – aiming to more than double bilateral trade to \$500 billion by 2030

FIRST TRANCHE of a mutually beneficial, multi-sector Bilateral Trade Agreement by fall of 2025

ENERGY SECURITY

RE-COMMITTED TO the US-India Energy Security Partnership, including in oil, gas, and civil nuclear energy

US SUPPORT for India to join the International Energy Agency as a full member

FULLY REALISE the US-India

Demonstrate mutual commitment to address bilateral trade barriers

RECOGNITION OF Indian investments in US – Indian companies ongoing investments worth over \$7.355 billion – 3,000 high-quality jobs for local families

123 Civil Nuclear Agreement by moving forward with plans to work together to build US-designed nuclear reactors in India through large scale localisation and possible technology transfer

ENABLE COLLABORATION to develop, deploy and scale up nuclear power generation with small modular reactors

TECH AND INNOVATION

LAUNCH OF US-India TRUST initiative will catalyse govt-to-govt, academia and private sector collaboration to promote application of critical and emerging technologies in areas like defence, artificial intelligence, semiconductors, quantum, biotechnology, energy and space

FORWARD A US-India Roadmap on Accelerating AI Infrastructure by end of year

US AND India will work together to enable industry partnerships and investments in next generation data centers, cooperation on development

and access to compute and processors for AI

LAUNCH OF INDUS Innovation – an innovation bridge modelled after the successful INDUS-X platform, that will advance industry and academic partnerships and foster investments in space, energy, and other emerging tech

PHARMA: expand Indian manufacturing capacity, including in US, for active pharmaceutical ingredients for critical medicines

LAUNCH OF the Strategic Mineral Recovery initiative – a new US-India cooperative program to recover and process critical minerals

Trump denies US ‘deep state’ role in Bangla crisis: ‘Leave it to PM Modi’

SHUBHAJIT ROY
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 14

US PRESIDENT Donald Trump Thursday rejected any role of the “deep state” of the United States in the affairs of Bangladesh, an issue which was discussed during the bilateral meeting where Prime Minister Narendra Modi conveyed his concerns regarding the developments in the neighbouring country.

Responding to questions on the role of “US deep state” in the affairs of Bangladesh, Trump said at the beginning of their bilateral meeting in Oval Office, “Well, there was no role for our deep state... This is something that the Prime Minister has been working on for a long time and has been working on it for hundreds of years. Frankly, I’ve been reading about it, but I will leave Bangladesh to the Prime Minister.”

Later, while replying to questions, Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri said, “On what we make of the statement on Bangladesh... this was a subject that was discussed between the two leaders. And the Prime Minister shared his views and, indeed, his concerns with regard to recent developments in Bangladesh and how India sees the situation.”

“I think we hope that the situation in Bangladesh will also move forward in a direction where we can pursue relations in a constructive and stable way with them. But there are concerns about that situation. And the Prime Minister shared those views with President Trump,” Misri said.

Tension has been simmering between the two countries since the collapse of the Sheikh Hasina government in August last year, and there have been diplomatic protests over the border fencing issue in recent months. Bangladesh’s interim government led by Muhammad Yunus has sought the extradition of Hasina, to which India hasn’t yet responded.

DEFENCE TO ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE, SPACE TO ENERGY

India and US to work together on key areas as Biden-era initiative renamed

iCET now TRUST, expected to promote critical, emerging tech

SHUBHAJIT ROY
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 14

TAKING FORWARD the Biden administration’s Initiative on Critical and Emerging Technologies (iCET), India and the US decided to rename it and launch the US-India TRUST initiative, which is expected to catalyze government-to-government, academia and private sector collaboration to promote the application of critical and emerging technologies in areas like defence, artificial intelligence and space.

The iCET was launched during the Biden administration and was led by the National Security Advisors. Then US NSA Jake Sullivan and NSA Ajit Doval led the talks on critical and emerging technologies. This was widely expected to continue, because of the challenges from China.

Under the rubric of “technology and innovation”, the joint statement said, “The leaders announced the launch of the US-India TRUST (“Transforming the Relationship Utilizing Strategic Technology”) initiative, which will catalyze government-to-government, academia and private sector collaboration to promote the application of critical and emerging technologies in areas like defense, artificial intelligence, semiconductors, quantum, biotechnology, energy and space, while encouraging the use of verified technology vendors and ensuring sensitive technologies are protected.”

This alludes to China’s technology giants that India has been wary of – by banning TikTok and shutting out Huawei from the Indian telecommunication



‘MR PRIME MINISTER, YOU ARE GREAT’

President Donald Trump gifts Prime Minister Narendra Modi a book, *Our Journey Together*, capturing their camaraderie over the years. Signing its cover page, the US President wrote: ‘Mr Prime Minister, You are great!’ . ANI

ecosystem in recent years.

“As a central pillar of the TRUST initiative,” the joint statement said, “the leaders committed to work with US and Indian private industry to put forward a US-India Roadmap on Accelerating AI Infrastructure by the end of the year, identifying constraints to financing, building, powering, and connecting large-scale US-origin AI infrastructure in India with milestones and future actions. The U.S. and India will work together to enable industry partnerships and investments in next generation data centers, cooperation on development

and access to compute and processors for AI, for innovations in AI models and building AI applications for solving societal challenges while addressing the protections and controls necessary to protect these technologies and reduce regulatory barriers.”

It also said that the leaders announced the launch of “INDUS Innovation, an innovation bridge modeled after the successful INDUS-X platform, that will advance US-India industry and academic partnerships and foster investments in space, energy, and other emerging technologies to maintain US and India leadership

in innovation and to meet the needs of the 21st century.

The leaders also reinforced their commitment to the INDUS-X initiative, which facilitates partnerships between US and Indian defence companies, investors and universities “to produce critical capability for our militaries”, and welcomed the next summit in 2025.

They also committed, as part of TRUST, to “build trusted and resilient supply chains, including for semiconductors, critical minerals, advanced materials and pharmaceuticals”.

As part of this effort, they plan to encourage public and pri-

vate investments to expand Indian manufacturing capacity, including in the US, for active pharmaceutical ingredients for critical medicines. These investments will create good jobs, diversify supply chains, and reduce the risk of life-saving drug shortages in both the US and India, the statement said, alluding to the Chinese supply chain disruption during the Covid pandemic.

They also launched the Strategic Mineral Recovery initiative – a new US-India cooperative programme to recover and process critical minerals (including lithium, cobalt, and rare earths) from heavy industries like aluminum, coal mining and oil and gas.

“Recognising the strategic importance of critical minerals for emerging technologies and advanced manufacturing, India and the US will accelerate collaboration in research and development and promote investment across the entire critical mineral value chain, as well as through the Mineral Security Partnership, of which both the US and India are members. Both countries have committed to intensifying efforts to deepen cooperation in the exploration, beneficiation, and processing as well as recycling technologies of critical minerals,” the statement said.

The two sides have signed a pact on a new partnership between the US National Science Foundation and the Indian Anusandhan National Research Foundation in researching critical and emerging technologies.

“This partnership builds on ongoing collaboration between the US National Science Foundation and several Indian science agencies to enable joint research in the areas of semiconductors, connected vehicles, machine learning, next-generation telecommunications, intelligent transportation systems, and future biomanufacturing,” the joint statement said.



Prime Minister Modi with President Trump at the White House. PTI

and the I2U2 Group within the next six months in order to announce new initiatives in 2025”. The joint statement also talked about launch of the “Indian Ocean Strategic Venture”, a new bilateral, whole-of-government forum.

“The US appreciates India’s role as a development, humanitarian assistance and net security provider in the Indian Ocean Region. In this context, the leaders committed to deepen bilateral dialogue and cooperation across the vast Indian Ocean region and launched the Indian Ocean Strategic Venture, a new bilateral, whole-of-government forum to advance coordinated investments in economic connectivity and commerce.

“Supporting greater Indian Ocean connectivity, the leaders also welcomed Meta’s announcement of a multi-billion, multi-year investment in an undersea cable project that will begin work this year and ultimately stretch over 50,000 km to connect five continents and strengthen global digital highways in the Indian Ocean region and beyond. India intends to invest in maintenance, repair and financing of undersea cables in the Indian Ocean, using trusted vendors,” it said.

Rana’s extradition approved, says Trump: Going back to face justice

SHUBHAJIT ROY
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 14

AFTER THE US Supreme Court cleared the way for the extradition of the 26/11 terror attack accused Tahawwur Rana in January, US President Donald Trump Friday announced that the US administration has “approved the extradition of one of the... very evil people of the world”.

With Prime Minister Narendra Modi by his side, Trump said: “Today I am pleased to announce that my administration has approved the extradition of one of the plotters and very evil people of the world, and having to do with the horrific Mumbai terrorist attack, to face justice in India. So, he is going back to India to face justice.”

On January 21, the US Supreme Court had rejected Rana’s review petition in the case. Trump also announced that India and the US will work together like “never before” to confront the threat of radical Islamic terror across the world.



Tahawwur Rana is accused in the 26/11 Mumbai attack

Rana, a Canadian national of Pakistani origin, is currently lodged at a detention centre in Los Angeles. He is known to be associated with Pakistani-American terrorist David Coleman Headley, one of the main conspirators of the 26/11 attacks. “He is going to be going back to India to face justice,” Trump said. “We’re giving him back to India immediately and more such extraditions could follow as we have quite a few requests (from New Delhi).”

Responding to this, Modi said: “I am thankful to the President that he has decided to hand over the culprit who committed the

killings in India in 2008 to India now. Indian courts will now take appropriate action.”

Later, Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri said India is working on the logistics of Rana’s extradition from the US. “There are a few final steps to be completed. The two sides are in touch on this particular issue,” he said.

The India-US joint statement said Modi and Trump reaffirmed that the global scourge of terrorism must be fought and terrorist safe havens eliminated from every corner of the world.

“They committed to strengthen cooperation against terrorist threats from groups, including Al-Qaeda, ISIS, Jaish-e-Mohammad, and Lashkar-e-Tayyiba in order to prevent heinous acts like the attacks in Mumbai on 26/11 and the Abbey Gate bombing in Afghanistan on August 26, 2021,” it read.

The leaders called on Pakistan to expeditiously bring to justice the perpetrators of the Mumbai and Pathankot attacks and ensure its territory is not used to carry out cross-border terrorist strikes.

THE MODI-TRUMP CHEMISTRY

Calling Modi ‘a very special man’, Trump recalled the hospitality accorded to him and wife Melania in India in 2020. Here’s what the two leaders said to each other during Modi’s trip to the US:

“We missed you a lot; nice to see you again.”

PRESIDENT TRUMP, PULLS A CHAIR FOR PM MODI AFTER RECEIVING HIM AT WHITE HOUSE

“I thank my dear friend, President Trump, for the great welcome I was accorded, and for his hospitality. President Trump – with his leadership – has made India-America ties come alive.”

PM MODI

“He is a much tougher negotiator than me, and he is a much better negotiator. There’s not even a contest.”

PRESIDENT TRUMP, ON TARIFF TALKS

“People of America know President Trump’s motto ‘MAGA – Make America Great Again.’ In India, we are working with determination toward a Viksit Bharat, which in American terms, is MIGA – Make India Great Again. Together, MAGA and MIGA create a MEGA partnership for prosperity.”

PM MODI

“The people of India still fondly remember your visit in 2020 and hope that President Trump will come to them once again.”

PM MODI

FOCUS BACK ON FOSSIL FUELS

Missing in statement: Climate mitigation, renewable energy

NIKHIL GHANEKAR
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 14

CLIMATE MITIGATION, renewable energy, and clean energy supply chains were summarily missing from the Indo-US joint statement. Instead, the focus was firmly back on fossil fuels as US President Donald Trump announced an agreement that will see the US supplying more oil and gas.

Soon after Trump announced that India has agreed to purchase US oil and gas National Security Advisor Mike Waltz posted about the news. “Drill Baby Drill = Buy Baby Buy,” Waltz said in a post on X.

Without directly referring to India’s announcements on amending its Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage Act, 2010, Trump said it would be a “groundbreaking development” for the US nuclear industry, reforming its laws

to welcome US nuclear technology which is at the highest level in the Indian market. “This will bring safe, clean and affordable electricity to millions of Indians and tens of billions of dollars to the US civilian nuclear industry and India,” he added.

This marks a clear departure from the “clean energy transition” initiatives that found place in a joint fact sheet of September 21, 2024, following Modi and Biden’s bilateral meeting in Delaware. While the two administrations started the Strategic Energy Partnership in 2018 during Trump’s first term, this was transformed into the Strategic Clean Energy Partnership (SCEP) in 2021 by Biden and Modi.

Last month, the world’s second-largest greenhouse gas emitter also withdrew from the 2015 Paris Agreement, a second time under Trump. Oil production contributed to 33 per cent

of fossil-based carbon dioxide emissions and gas production accounted for 22 per cent and a hike in oil and gas production by the US will have significant impacts on the global efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Prime Minister Modi also said that the two countries will strengthen the oil and gas trade to ensure India’s energy security and cooperation will be increased in the nuclear energy sector, specifically in the direction of small modular reactors.

During their joint press conference, Trump also lamented that according to him, India did not have a very good relationship with the Biden administration, and the latter did not sell them oil and gas. There are five technical pillars of SCEP – power and energy efficiency, renewable energy, responsible oil and gas, sustainable growth and emerging fuels and technologies.

6 GOVT & POLITICS



DELHI **CONFIDENTIAL**



DOWN MEMORY LANE

IT WILL be a nostalgic moment for BJP chief and Union Health Minister J P Nadda when he attends the centenary celebrations of Patna Medical College on February 25. The event will be inaugurated by President Droupadi Murmu. Nadda was born in the hospital. He was a regular visitor to the medical college later as he would go to pick his three doctor sisters, who practised at the PMC at different points of time, it is learnt. This will also be an opportunity for him to meet many of his childhood friends, some travelling from different parts of the world to attend the event.

KUMBH CORNER

THE DEPARTMENT of Social Justice and Empowerment has set up a pavilion at the Maha Kumbh. The department has asked secretaries to visit the pavilion — ‘Samanta, Sashaktikaran aur Samajik Nyay ka Mahakumbh’ — which is showcasing the department’s various schemes, programmes and initiatives through digital interactions. It has also established an on-site distribution of assistive devices for senior citizens and handloom and handicrafts stalls of artisans belonging to SCs and OBCs. Also, to celebrate the 75th year of the Constitution, the department is organising quiz contests, talks and stage performances.

CONSTITUENCY CONNECT

UNION CABINET Minister Bhupender Yadav, who became a Lok Sabha MP for the first time in 2024, has been devoting time in his Alwar constituency to promote cultural and youth-related activities. After starting an e-library project in his constituency last year, Yadav interacted with young members of his constituency at the Alwar Sansad Khel Utsav last week where he also flagged off the Alwar Tiger Marathon.

Gaurav Gogoi to take legal action over Assam CM’s ‘Pak links’ claim

SUKRITA BARUAH
DIBRUGARH, FEBRUARY 14

CONGRESS LEADER Gaurav Gogoi Friday said he would take legal action over “malicious and baseless” allegations by the BJP, including Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, against him and his wife Elizabeth.

This week, a section of BJP workers and leaders, led by Sarma, had raised questions over Elizabeth’s foreign citizenship and accused her of having ties with the ISI. They also questioned a meeting Gogoi had led with the then Pakistani High Commissioner to India in 2015.

“The BJP has gone to extreme steps to defame me and my family. Their allegations are malicious and baseless. I will be taking the appropriate legal allegation,” Gogoi posted on X.

Earlier this week, the Lok Sabha MP from Jorhat had rubbished these allegations as politicking ahead of the 2026 Assembly election. Sarma, however, has made more allegations since then.

On Thursday, the Assam CM



Congress MP Gaurav Gogoi

began posting about a 2015 meeting at the Pakistan High Commission in New Delhi between the then Pakistani envoy Abdul Basit and a delegation of youngsters led by Gogoi. Sarma raised questions about the “intent behind his engagement” and accused Gogoi of subsequently raising questions in Parliament on “sensitive defense matters”.

In response, Gogoi posted that he along with a group of friends had formed an organisation called Youth Forum on Foreign Policy in 2011 so that “Indian students and young professionals can get the opportunity to discuss foreign policy and international relations”, and that it organised discussions with Indian diplomats and foreign ambassadors.

The allegations by Sarma against Gogoi are the latest chapter in more than a decade of bad blood.

2 STATE GEN SECYS, 9 STATE IN-CHARGES APPOINTED

Baghel made Punjab gen secy as Cong carries out big revamp

Rahul imprint on appointments; 6 leaders who held these positions removed

ASAD REHMAN
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 14

DAYS AFTER the Congress suffered a third straight Assembly election defeat since the 2024 Lok Sabha polls, the party Friday implemented a major organisational shakeup which bore the imprint of senior leader Rahul Gandhi.

It appointed general secretaries for two states and in-charges for nine, removing six leaders who held these positions.

The Congress brought in former Chhattisgarh chief minister Bhupesh Baghel into the AICC secretariat, also appointing him its Punjab general secretary. Rajya Sabha MP Syed Naseer Hussain was made the general secretary in charge of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh.

While Baghel replaced Devender Yadav, who held the charge of Punjab even after being appointed Delhi Congress chief last year, Hussain replaced Gujarat leader Bharatsinh Solanki as the general secretary in charge of J&K.

Most of the new appointees are either close to Leader of the Opposition Rahul Gandhi or AICC general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra. Baghel, for instance, enjoys good equations with Priyanka.

The exception appears to be Hussain, who is considered close to Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge. A Rajya Sabha MP from Karnataka, he was in charge of

NEW GENERAL SECRETARIES AND IN-CHARGES

OUT WITH THE OLD

- Dipak Babaria (Haryana)
- Mohan Prakash (Bihar),
- Bharatsinh Madhavsinh Solanki (Jammu & Kashmir)
- Rajeev Shukla (Himachal Pradesh, Chandigarh),
- Ajoy Kumar (Odisha, Tamil Nadu & Puducherry)
- Devender Yadav (Punjab)

AND IN WITH THE NEW

- General secretaries
- Bhupesh Baghel (Punjab)

In-charges

- Krishna Allavaru (Bihar)
- Rajani Patil (Himachal Pradesh and Chandigarh)
- B K Hariprasad (Haryana)
- Girish Chodankar (Tamil Nadu and Puducherry)

- Syed Naseer Hussain (J&K and Ladakh)

- Ajay Kumar Lallu (Odisha)
- K Raju (Jharkhand)
- Meenakshi Natarajan (Telangana)
- Saptagiri Sankar Ulaka (Tripura, Sikkim, Manipur & Nagaland)

Kharge’s office.

The new in-charges of the states are: Rajya Sabha MP Rajani Patil (Himachal Pradesh and Chandigarh), B K Hariprasad (Haryana), Harish Chaudhary (Madhya Pradesh), Girish Chodankar (Tamil Nadu and Puducherry), Ajay Kumar Lallu (Odisha), K Raju (Jharkhand), Meenakshi Natarajan (Telangana), Lok Sabha MP Saptagiri Sankar Ulaka (Manipur, Tripura, Sikkim and Nagaland) and Krishna Allavaru (Bihar).

Most of these leaders have held organisational responsibilities in the past. Hariprasad, for instance, has been a general secretary in charge of several states. He has now been made an in-charge — a demotion of sorts. Patil and Chaudhary, too, have been in-charges. Before the reshuffle, Chodankar was in-charge of Manipur, Tripura, Sikkim and Nagaland.

Lallu, Raju and Ulaka are new entrants as in-charges. All of them are considered close to

Gujarat CM: Tried to swiftly allay issues faced by startups



Gujarat Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel speaks at the event. Bhupendra Rana

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
AHMEDABAD, FEBRUARY 14

THE GUJARAT government has always tried to ensure that difficulties faced by the startups are allayed expeditiously, said Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel, adding that the government is “always ready to work” on the issues faced by young startup owners.

The CM made these remarks as the chief guest on Friday while addressing a conference titled ‘Gujarat Start-Ups – Fueling Innovation and Economic

Growth’ organised by *The Indian Express* in Ahmedabad.

Patel said, “As a government we are so much positive that it has been our attempt to ensure... how expeditiously the difficulties faced by you (youths) are allayed. You just pass on your

difficulties to us; it is important. It is up to you... when can you pass it on to us. If the difficulties faced by you reach us quickly then we are always ready to work on it.”

Talking about the multiple initiatives of the government under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the state’s focus on efforts to help startups grow, the CM said that the PM has got solutions for people’s issues related to startups like how to begin, where to get space for it etc..

Highlighting the importance and power of startups, the CM said that once the government helps them start the process, there are many youths, who could have faced difficulties in doing a job (but now) have become job givers. “This is the power of a startup,” he said.

He said that the country is progressing in every sector under the leadership of PM Modi.



Rahul.

While Lallu was earlier chief of Uttar Pradesh Congress, Raju, a former bureaucrat who has worked closely with Rahul, is national coordinator of the SC, ST, OBC and minority departments of the Congress. Allavaru is currently in-charge of the Youth Congress. He has been given the charge for Bihar in a year the state heads to the polls. Natarajan had earlier headed the Congress’ Rajiv Gandhi Panchayati Raj Sangathan.

Among the six outgoing leaders is Dipak Babaria, who held the top post for Haryana when the party lost the Assembly polls in the state last year.

Besides Solanki (Jammu & Kashmir) and Yadav (Punjab), the other outgoing general secretaries and in-charges are: Mohan Prakash (Bihar), Rajeev Shukla (Himachal Pradesh, Chandigarh) and Ajoy Kumar (Odisha, Tamil Nadu and Puducherry).

Friday’s reshuffle is part of a larger restructuring, announced after the Congress Working Committee meeting in Karnataka’s Belagavi on December 26. The party had announced that it would reshuffle the organization from top to bottom. It had said that “2025 will be the year of organisational strengthening for the party on all levels”.

Since the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, the Congress has lost elections in Maharashtra, Haryana and Delhi.

J&K Police seizes over 600 books: ‘Ideology of banned outfit’

NAVEED IQBAL
SRINAGAR, FEBRUARY 14

THE JAMMU and Kashmir Police on Friday conducted searches in Srinagar and seized over 600 books that authorities said were promoting the “ideology of a banned organisation”.

Though the police did not clarify who authored the books or name the banned organisation, sources in the police said the books pertained to “Jamat-affiliated” ideology.

“Based on credible intelligence regarding the clandestine sale and distribution of literature promoting the ideology of a banned organisation, police conducted a search in Srinagar, leading to the seizure of 668 books,” Srinagar police said in a statement on Friday.

NC’s Srinagar MP Aga Ruhullah Mehdi said: “Will the state now dictate what Kashmiris read, learn, and believe? This is an unacceptable overreach,” he said.

PDP leader Itija Mufti termed the raids “vicious”. “Under the garb of security, all sorts of Kafkaesque oppressive measures are being unleashed on Kashmiris...”



Dhankhar’s 2019-2022 stint as West Bengal Governor was marked by fireworks between him and the Mamata Banerjee govt. File

taken by the CM. She has told her aides that it is a matter of pride that the Vice-President wants to address the state Assembly. So, we are expecting her to respond positively.”

TMC leader Kunal Ghosh said there was no reason not to welcome Dhankhar’s request. “It

Panel for picking next CEC to meet on February 17

Selection panel, comprising Modi, Shah and Rahul, to meet at PM house

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 14

THE SELECTION Committee to pick the next Chief Election Commissioner is likely to meet on February 17, a day before CEC Rajiv Kumar demits the office.

The meeting of the committee, comprising Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Home Minister Amit Shah and Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi, is scheduled to take place at the PM’s residence, it is learnt.

The selection of the new CEC through this committee would be a first, as Kumar’s retirement creates the first CEC vacancy since the Chief Election Commissioner And Other Election Commissioners (Appointment, Conditions of Service And Term of Office) Act, 2023, was passed. As per the Act, the CEC and ECs have to be selected by the Selection Committee either from a panel of five names drawn up by a Search Committee chaired by the Law Minister or any other person outside of the panel. Before the Act was passed, the CEC was appointed by elevating the next senior-most EC in the commission. Even now, the



CEC Rajiv Kumar’s tenure ends on Feb 18

Selection Committee can select Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar, who is next in seniority after Rajiv Kumar, but the process mandated in the Act will have to be followed. The Act, however, gives the Selection Committee the option of going outside of the two existing ECs for appointing the CEC.

As per the Act, the Search Committee of the Law Minister and two Secretaries to the Government of India have to prepare a panel of five persons for consideration of the Selection Committee. The Act says the CEC and ECs will be appointed from “amongst persons who are holding or have held a post equivalent to the rank of Secretary to the Government of India and shall be persons of integrity, who have knowledge of and experience in management and conduct of elections.”

Meanwhile, the Supreme Court is scheduled to hear a petition challenging the validity of the Act on February 19.

FLAGS SELECTION OF CBI DIRECTOR

How can CJI take part in executive appointments: V-P

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
BHOPAL, FEBRUARY 14

VICE PRESIDENT Jagdeep Dhankhar on Friday wondered how the Chief Justice of India can participate in the selection of the CBI Director or any executive appointment.

Addressing a gathering at the National Judicial Academy in Bhopal, he said, “The line between judicial activism and overreach is thin, but the impact on democracy is thick... I say the line is thin, but this thin line is between democracy and despotism... To stir your minds, how can in a country like ours or in any democracy, by statutory prescription, Chief Justice of India participate in the selection of the CBI Director... Can there be any legal rationale for it?”, he said.

“I can appreciate that the statutory prescription took shape because the Executive of the day has yielded to a judicial verdict. But time has come to revisit. This surely does not merge with democracy. How can we involve the CJI with any executive appointment?”, Dhankhar said.

He said that his observation is that “executive governance by judiciary is being frequently noticed and discussed nearly in all



Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar at the National Judicial Academy in Bhopal, Friday. ANI

quarters”.

“For constitutional democracy to survive, institutions must learn to differ without disrupting, and dissent without destroying. Democracy thrives not on institutional isolation but in coordinated autonomy,” he said.

Dhankhar said “accountability is enforceable when executive roles are performed by an elected government. Governments are accountable to the legislature, and periodically accountable to the electorate. If executive governance is outsourced, enforceability of accountability will not be there,” he said, adding that “the high standards set by the Constituent Assembly are today compromised”.

Talks between Centre and farmers inconclusive, next round on Feb 22

KANCHAN VASDEV
CHANDIGARH, FEBRUARY 14

A MUCH-AWAITED meeting between a central team led by Union Minister Pralhad Joshi and farmers’ representatives to discuss their various demands, including a legal guarantee for MSP on crops, remained inconclusive in Chandigarh Friday with both parties agreeing to meet again on February 22.

Confusion, however, prevailed on the venue with Joshi telling reporters that they will meet “here” even as farmer leaders demanded that the next meeting be called in Delhi.

This was the fifth round of talks between Centre and 28 farmer leaders, and the first during the third term of the BJP-led NDA government, and comes exactly a year after the protests at Shambhu and Khanauri border



Union Minister Pralhad Joshi, flanked by Punjab ministers Gurmeet Singh Khuddian and Lal Chand Kataruchak, in Chandigarh on Friday. Jasbir Malhi

points between Punjab and Haryana began in February 2024.

The previous meetings — on February 8, 12, 15 and 18 last year — had remained inconclusive.

After the three-hour long meeting, Joshi said the Union

Budget has kept a provision on procuring three pulses on MSP in the current fiscal under the ‘atma nirbhar’ programme. He said they have appealed to Jagit Singh Dallewal to call off his hunger strike.

ATRI MITRA
KOLKATA, FEBRUARY 14

FIRST THERE were those pictures of West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee sharing a laugh with Governor C V Ananda Bose in the Assembly. Now, Bose’s predecessor Jagdeep Dhankhar, it appears, is set to follow suit.

The Mamata government is thinking of calling a special session of the West Bengal Assembly which Dhankhar could address — in keeping with his surprise request, with no known precedent, sent to Speaker Biman Banerjee for the same.

This would be two-and-a-half years after Dhankhar ended his 2019-2022 stint as West Bengal Governor, marked by fireworks between him and the TMC government. Dhankhar has since gone on to have an acrimonious relationship with the Opposition in his capacity as the Chairman of the Rajya Sabha.

This out-of-the-blue outreach

to Bengal comes at a time when the BJP just won the Delhi polls, leaving Bengal — that votes next year — as one of the few unvanquished frontiers for the party. Sources said that Dhankhar has conveyed that he would not be going against the TMC government’s line in his address.

The Mamata government has not responded officially to Dhankhar’s request so far, with Parliamentary Affairs Minister Shovandeve Chattopadhyay refusing to comment. TMC leaders said the CM would tread cautiously on the issue.

Speaker Biman Banerjee told *The Indian Express*: “There is no such precedent of the Vice-President addressing an Assembly. However, during the platinum jubilee celebrations of the Assembly, we had invited then Lok Sabha Speaker Meira Kumar, and she had addressed a special session of the Assembly. We are considering such an option.”

A senior TMC MLA said, “The last call on this matter will be



कार्यालय अधिशाषी अभियन्ता, राज. राज्य कृषि विपणन बोर्ड, खण्ड भरतपुर

क्रमांक : 2568-2607
बिड आमन्त्रण सूचना संख्या 05/2024-25
 दिनांक :-13.02.2025

खण्ड भरतपुर में विभिन्न निर्माण कार्यों की निविदा राशि क्रमशः 157.97, 27.53, 9.18 एवं 9.17 लाख कुल राशि 203.85 लाख एवं खण्ड अन्तर्गत की निविदा राशि क्रमशः 247.14, 166.57 एवं 9.14 कुल राशि 422.85 लाख की ऑन-लाईन बिड ई-प्रोक्वरेमेंट (www.eproc.rajasthan.gov.in) के माध्यम से उपयुक्त श्रेणी में पंजीकृत बिडर्स से आमंत्रित की जाती है। बिड से संबंधित विस्तृत विवरण बोर्ड की वेबसाइट www.agriculture.rajasthan.gov.in/rsamb एवं www.sppp.rajasthan.gov.in पर देखा जा सकता है। जिसका NIB Code: AGM2425A0153 UBN is:- AGM2425WSOB00652 to AGM2425WSOB00658

राज.समाद/री/24/11759

अधिशाषी अभियन्ता, खण्ड भरतपुर

Gujarat State Electronics Mission
 Department of Science & technology
 Government of Gujarat
TENDER NOTICE

Gujarat State Electronics Mission (GSEM) invites bids for hiring Technical Consultancy Services to assist/advise the office of GSEM for the development of high-end industrial infrastructure for Semicon City in Dholera Special Investment Region (DSIR) and the Semiconductor Cluster in GIDC Sanand Estate. The bid is floated on GEM Portal with bid no. GEM/2025/B/5889818.

The last date of submission of bid is 24-02-2024.

The tender notice is also posted on GSEM website www.gsem.gujarat.gov.in

Mission Director
 Gujarat State Electronics Mission

INF-2145-2024-25

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON

See Section 82 (2) (ii) Cr. P. C.

Whereas a complaint has been made before me that accused person namely **Chandan Singh S/o Radho Singh R/o Khasra No.342, Takia Chowk Burari Delhi**, have committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence under **FIR. No. 60/2020 u/s 356 IPC**. has been registered at **P.S. Mukherjee Nagar Delhi** and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest there upon issued that the said, **Chandan Singh** cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said, **Chandan Singh** has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant).

Proclamation is hereby made that the said accused **Chandan Singh of FIR.No. 60/2020 u/s 356 IPC, registered at P.S. Mukherjee Nagar Delhi** is required to appear before this court to answer the said complaint on or before 27.03.2025

By Order
Ms. Niharika Kumar Sharma
Ld. ACJM(N), Room No.117,
Rohini Courts Delhi

DP/1150/NW/2025
(court matter)

BHARATPUR DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY, BHARATPUR

Ref No. : 01/2024-25 **EXPRESSION OF INTEREST** **Dated :- 06/02/2025**

FOR LED BASED TRAFFIC SIGNAL IN BHARATPUR CITY, RAJASTHAN

The Bharatpur Development Authority, BHARATPUR invites the expression of interest along with detailed proposal and technical specification for LED Based Traffic Signal Light at Kummer Gate, Bijligahar, Heeradas, Saras, Ghana Gate, Redcross, Surajpali, Kanjoli Line Chouraha & Akhad Tiraah in BHARATPUR from prospective bidder who are manufacturer/authorized distributor and having experience for supply/Fixing/Installation/annual maintenance of LED based traffic Signal with latest technology and functions.

Scope of the work includes:

- Supply & Fixing of LED Based Traffic Signal based 2-wire technology, Master Traffic Controller synchronize with Slave Controller for each road with Solar Power Backup as per requirement.
- Supply & Fixing of Power Cable and Data cable.
- Supply & Fixing of LED Aspects, Digital Countdown Timers
- Calibration and integration of Software.
- Comprehensive annual operation and maintenance for 10 years.
- In lieu of the above-mentioned work BDA BHARATPUR may consider giving permission for advertisement area at each Traffic Intersections.

Provider shall require submitting complete conceptual plan. If required they shall be asked to make presentation. No charge shall be payable for this presentation/preparation of conceptual plan.

Interested parties may obtain required application form mentioning Tender Documents (terms and condition) from **"eproc.rajasthan.gov.in"** from dated 10.02.2025 to 24.02.2025 up to 06.00 PM by depositing of Rs. 2000/- Tender Fee for Tender Documents (Non Refundable) and Rs. 2000/- as Processing Fee to MD, RISL, Jaipur (Non Refundable) and Rs. 2,34,000/- as E.M.) through SSO ID on Urban Services Portal in favor of Commissioner, BDA, BHARATPUR and submit the receipt with tender on **"eproc.rajasthan.gov.in"** date of submission of proposal is 24.02.2025 up to 06.00 PM. For further enquiry in this regard consultant may contact Executive Engineer (Elect), BDA, BHARATPUR. BDA BHARATPUR reserves rights to reject any or all proposal without assigning any reason thereof.

UBN No. :WAQ245WSOB000261

Executive Engineer Accounts Officer Superintending Engineer Commissioner
BDA Bharatpur BDA Bharatpur BDA Bharatpur BDA Bharatpur

Raj.Samwad/C/24/11692

NORTHERN RAILWAY

Applications are invited under scheme of 'One Station One Product' for setting up:

A. Total Six (06) Stall at: Delhi Shahdara, Delhi Cantt., Panipat, Meerut Cantt., Meerut City & Gurgaon stations.

B. Total Fifteen (15) Trolley at: Baghpat Road, Baraut, Delhi Sarai Rohilla, Faridabad New Town, Khekra, Nangloi, Noli, Partapur, Shakurbasti, Julana, Sampla, Delhi Safdurjung, Shivaji Bridge, Tilak Bridge & Modinagar stations.

• The period for setting up of stall at Gurgaon & Meerut Cantt. stations per spell will be 90 days.

• The period for setting up of Trolley at stations mentioned in (B) above will be 30 days per spell.

• Registration fee for NSG 1, 2, 3 & 4 stations will be charged @ rate of Rs. 2000 for each spell of thirty days and for **NSG 5** (Meerut Cantt., Baghpat Road, Khekra, Nangloi, Julana, Sampla, Shivaji Bridge, Tilak Bridge & Delhi Safdarjung) & **NSG 6** (Partapur) registration fee will be charged @ rate of Rs. 1000 for each spell of thirty days.

• The following are the eligibility criteria for participant viz.

- Holder of Artisans/Weaver ID card issued by Development Commissioner Handicraft, Development Commissioner Handloom, or by the requisite state/Central Government Authority.
- Individual artisans/weavers/craftsmen enrolled/registered with Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India Limited (TRIFED)/National Handloom Development Corporation (NHDC)/Khadi/Village Industries Commission (KVIC)/associated with Social Organizations, State Govt. bodies and associated with registered micro enterprises on the Udyam Portal of the Ministry of MSME and NGOs etc.
- Self Help Groups registered with PMEGP (Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme).
- Marginalized or weaker sections of society.
- No separate logo shall be allowed.
- The applicant will have to submit an undertaking to the Station Superintendent indicating that no activity would be undertaken to adversely affect the train operations, passenger safety and image of the Railways.
- Applications should be addressed and can be submitted to Station Superintendent at station by the applicant till 15:00 hrs of 19.02.2025, which will be opened on same day.
- Station Superintendent will make priority roster of all approved participants and priority will be established through a draw of lots conducted at the station in the presence of all approved applicants by the Station Manager/Sectional CMI and nominated Finance representative.
- The One Station One Product scheme shall be governed by Railway Board's Commercial Circular No. 12 of 2022 and 09 of 2023 respectively available at [website:www.indianrailways.gov.in](http://www.indianrailways.gov.in) & URL:https://indianrailways.gov.in/railwayboard/uploads/directorate/traffic_comm/Comm_Cir_2022/OSOP%20Policy.pdf & https://indianrailways.gov.in/railwayboard/uploads/directorate/traffic_comm/Comm_Cir_2023/CC%20%2009%20of%202023.pdf
- For any queries applicant may contact Station Superintendent or CMI of the respective stations.

520/2025

Serving Customers With A Smile

SALUTE THE SOLDIER

INDO-TIBETAN BORDER POLICE

Sub Inspector Srichand Vill- Manka Distt- Alwar (Rajasthan)

Lance Naik Ram Karan Vill- Bagi Binola Distt- Bilaspur (Himachal Pradesh)

ITBP salutes its bravehearts Sub Inspector Srichand of 9th Bn and Lance Naik Ram Karan of 1st Bn, who made the supreme sacrifice in the line of duty fighting bravely on this day in J&K and Leh in 2003 and 1990 respectively.

BORDER SECURITY FORCE
CT BALBIR SINGH
18.11.1967 - 15.02.2002

Bordermen Salute and proudly remember today their brave comrade, who made supreme sacrifice while fighting militants in Anantnag (J&K).

CENTRAL RESERVE POLICE FORCE

15 February 1998

	Veer Balidani SI/GD Joginder Singh 98 Bn 8-11-1944 To 15-2-1998		Veer Balidani Head Constable Neth Ram 98 Bn 10-6-1961 To 15-2-1998
	Veer Balidani Constable Rajender Prasad 98 Bn 5-8-1968 To 15-2-1998		Veer Balidani LNK/GD Sunil Kumar 98 Bn 19-8-1965 To 15-2-1998
	Veer Balidani Constable Mohd. Rafiq 98 Bn 9-6-1965 To 15-2-1998		Veer Balidani Constable Paramjit Singh 98 Bn 20-4-1970 To 15-2-1998
	Veer Balidani Constable Major Singh 98 Bn 1-5-1968 To 15-2-1998		Veer Balidani Constable Rashpal Dev 98 Bn 1-5-1971 To 15-2-1998

While deployed for parliamentary election duties, a platoon of 98 Battalion of CRPF, led by SI Joginder Singh, was ambushed by extremists near Iribung Bridge, Manipur. Under heavy fire, SI Joginder Singh and his men leaped from their vehicles, retaliating fiercely. Amidst the battle, HC Neth Ram fired HE bombs from his Mortar, but when some failed to explode, he crawled to an injured fellow trooper, took his weapon, and continued firing. Despite sustaining multiple bullet wounds, SI Joginder Singh fought relentlessly, rallying his men until his last breath. HC Neth Ram, too, fought till his final moments, holding off the extremists who sought to snatch weapons. Their unmatched valor halted the enemy's advance, though eight brave CRPF personnel made the ultimate sacrifice. In recognition of their extraordinary courage, SI Joginder Singh and HC Neth Ram were posthumously awarded the President's Police Medal for Gallantry.

Form No. INC-26
 [Pursuant to Rule 30 of the Companies (Incorporation) Rules, 2014]
 Advertisement to be published in the newspaper for change of Registered Office of the Company from one state to another state

Before the Central Government
Regional Director
Northern Region, New Delhi

IN THE MATTER OF SUB-SECTION (4) OF SECTION 13 OF COMPANIES ACT, 2013 AND CLAUSE (A) OF SUB-RULE (5) OF RULE 30 OF THE COMPANIES (INCORPORATION) RULES, 2014

AND

IN THE MATTER OF FREEDOMPOINT EXPRESSWAY PRIVATE LIMITED HAVING IT'S REGISTERED OFFICE AT B-9, VIBHTUI KHAND, GOMTI NAGAR, LUCKNOW-226010, UTTAR PRADESH.

For and on behalf of
Freedompoint Expressway Private Limited
Sd/-
Prashant Kumar
Director
DIN: 10211283

Place: Lucknow
Date: 15/02/2025

Form No. INC-26
 [Pursuant to Rule 30 of the Companies (Incorporation) Rules, 2014]
 Advertisement to be published in the newspaper for change of Registered Office of the Company from one state to another state

Before the Central Government
Regional Director
Northern Region, New Delhi

IN THE MATTER OF SUB-SECTION (4) OF SECTION 13 OF COMPANIES ACT, 2013 AND CLAUSE (A) OF SUB-RULE (5) OF RULE 30 OF THE COMPANIES (INCORPORATION) RULES, 2014

AND

IN THE MATTER OF FREEDOMPOINT EXPRESSWAY PRIVATE LIMITED HAVING IT'S REGISTERED OFFICE AT B-9, VIBHTUI KHAND, GOMTI NAGAR, LUCKNOW-226010, UTTAR PRADESH.

.....Petitioner

Notice is hereby given to the General Public that the Company proposes to make application to the Central Government under Section 13 of the Companies Act, 2013 seeking confirmation of alteration of the Memorandum of Association of the Company in terms of the special resolution passed at the Extra Ordinary General Meeting held on Monday, 20th January, 2025 to enable the Company to change its Registered Office from "State of Uttar Pradesh" to "State of Maharashtra".

Any person whose interest is likely to be affected by the proposed change of the registered office of the Company may deliver either on the MCA-21 portal (www.mca.gov.in) by filing investor complaint former causes to be delivered or send by registered post of his/her objections supported by an affidavit stating the nature of his/her interest and grounds of opposition to the Regional Director at the address "B-2 Wing, 2nd floor, Pt. Deendayal Antyodaya Bhawan, 2nd floor, CGO Complex, New Delhi – 110003" within fourteen days of the date of publication of this notice with a copy to the applicant Company at the registered address mentioned below:

Address of Registered Office: B-9, Vibhtui Khand, Gomti Nagar, Lucknow- 226010, Uttar Pradesh.

For and on behalf of
Freedompoint Expressway Private Limited
Sd/-
Prashant Kumar
Director
DIN: 10211283

Place: Lucknow
Date: 15/02/2025

Uttar Pradesh Power Corporation Limited				
Shakti Bhawan, 14-Ashok Marg, Lucknow				
CIN: U32201UP1999SGC024928				
website: www.uppel.org				
Extracts of Financial Results				
for the quarter ended 31st Dec, 2024				
(Regulation 52 (8), read with Regulation 52 (4), of the SEBI (LODR) Regulations, 2015)				
(₹ Crore)				
S. No.	Particulars	Quarter ended		Year ended
		31st Dec, 2024	31st Dec, 2023	31st March, 2024
		Un-audited	Un-audited	Audited
1	Total Income from Operations	17,022.83	19,180.92	75,504.52
2	Net Profit/(loss) for the period (before Tax, Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	(730.18)	(2,165.15)	(6,116.71)
3	Net Profit/ (loss) for the period before tax (after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	(730.18)	(2,165.15)	(6,127.54)
4	Net Profit/ (loss) for the period after tax (after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	(730.18)	(2,165.15)	(6,127.54)
5	Total comprehensive Income for the period [Comprising Profit/(Loss) for the period (after tax) and Other Comprehensive Income (after tax)]	(730.56)	(2,165.47)	(6,129.07)
6	Paid up Equity Share capital (Face value of ₹ 1000/- per share)	1,39,880.85	1,26,727.52	1,29,272.06
7	Other Equity	(1,06,424.60)	(1,04,696.13)	(96,840.43)
8	Securities Premium Account	NA	NA	NA
9	Net worth	29,196.89	20,439.28	28,003.65
10	Outstanding Debt	58,441.21	64,203.00	59,641.99
11	Outstanding redeemable preference shares	NA	NA	NA
12	Debt Equity Ratio	2.00	2.94	2.13
13	Earning per share (of ₹ 1000/- each) (for continuing and discontinued operations)			
	Basic	(5.23)	(17.09)	(49.59)
	Diluted	(5.23)	(17.09)	(49.59)
14	Capital Redemption Reserves	NA	NA	NA
15	Debiture Redemption Reserves	NA	NA	NA
16	Debt Service Coverage Ratio	0.0003	0.0002	(0.0007)
17	Interest Service Coverage Ratio	(0.50)	(1.36)	(0.96)
Note 1	The above results have been reviewed by the audit committee of the Board of Directors in the meeting held on 13th Feb. 2025 and approved by the Board of Directors in their meeting held on the same day.			
Note 2	The above is an extract of the detailed format of Quarterly Financial Results filed with the Stock Exchange (BSE Limited) under Regulation 52 of SEBI (LODR) Regulations, 2015. The detailed format is available on the website of BSE Limited and the company's website at www.uppel.org			
Note 3	Additional information/other line items pursuant to Regulation 52(4) of the SEBI (LODR) 2015, have been disclosed in the detailed Quarterly Financial Results filed with the stock exchange (BSE Limited) and can be accessed on the website of BSE Limited and the company's website www.uppel.org			
Note 4	The figures/ratios for the previous periods have been restated, regrouped/reclassified wherever necessary to conform to current period classification.			
Note 5	The formula for calculating the ratios has been revised to align with industry best practices and improve presentation.			
For & on the behalf of Board of Directors				
Sd/-				
(Sachin Goud)				
Compliance Officer				
R.No.-04/2025				
Place: Lucknow				
Dated: 13th Feb. 2025				

Form No. INC-26
 [Pursuant to Rule 30 of the Companies (Incorporation) Rules, 2014]
 Advertisement to be published in the newspaper for change of Registered Office of the Company from one state to another state

Before the Central Government
Regional Director
Northern Region, New Delhi

IN THE MATTER OF SUB-SECTION (4) OF SECTION 13 OF COMPANIES ACT, 2013 AND CLAUSE (A) OF SUB-RULE (5) OF RULE 30 OF THE COMPANIES (INCORPORATION) RULES, 2014

AND

IN THE MATTER OF APCO NAVKALYAN EXPRESSWAY PRIVATE LIMITED HAVING IT'S REGISTERED OFFICE AT B-9, VIBHTUI KHAND, GOMTI NAGAR, LUCKNOW-226010, UTTAR PRADESH.

.....Petitioner

Notice is hereby given to the General Public that the Company proposes to make application to the Central Government under Section 13 of the Companies Act, 2013 seeking confirmation of alteration of the Memorandum of Association of the Company in terms of the special resolution passed at the Extra Ordinary General Meeting held on Monday, 20th January, 2025 to enable the Company to change its Registered Office from "State of Uttar Pradesh" to "State of Maharashtra".

Any person whose interest is likely to be affected by the proposed change of the registered office of the Company may deliver either on the MCA-21 portal (www.mca.gov.in) by filing investor complaint former cause to be delivered or send by registered post of his/her objections supported by an affidavit stating the nature of his/her interest and grounds of opposition to the Regional Director at the address "B-2 Wing, 2nd floor, Pt. Deendayal Antyodaya Bhawan, 2nd floor, CGO Complex, New Delhi – 110003" within fourteen days of the date of publication of this notice with a copy to the applicant Company at the registered address mentioned below:

Address of Registered Office: B-9, Vibhtui Khand, Gomti Nagar, Lucknow- 226010, Uttar Pradesh.

For and on behalf of
APCO Navkalyan Expressway Private Limited
Sd/-
Prashant Kumar
Director
DIN: 10211283

Date: 15/02/2025
Place: Lucknow

MADHYA PRADESH ROAD DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION LTD.
 (Govt. of M.P. Undertaking)
 45-A, Arera Hills, Bhopal- 462 011, Madhya Pradesh, CIN : U45203MP2004SGC016758
MPRDC Ph. No. : 0755-2527290, 2765205, Fax : 0755-2572643, Website : www.mprdc.gov.in
NIT No. : 14762/665/MPRDC/Procw/2025
Bhopal, Date : 14.02.2025

NOTICE INVITING TENDERS

Madhya Pradesh Road Development Corporation Limited (MPRDC) Bhopal invite online tender for following Work.

S. No.	Name of Work	PAC Value (in INR Cr.)	Bid Security (EMD) (in INR Lakhs)	Bid Document (in Rs.)	Completion Period (l/c Rainy Season)
1.	Rehabilitation and Upgradation of Ingoria-Depalpur Road in two lane with Paved shoulder in the state of Madhya Pradesh.	195.01	50.00	50,000/-	24 Months
2.	Rehabilitation and Upgradation of Ingoria-Unhel Road in two lane with Paved shoulder in the state of Madhya Pradesh.	112.76	50.00	50,000/-	24 Months

The dates for purchase, submission, etc. are mentioned in the key dates. Tender forms can be purchased online only upto 15:30 hrs. on 24.03.2025 from website www.mptenders.gov.in. The bidders have to submit the Technical bid as well as Financial Bid online only. The Addendum/Corrigendum (if any) shall only be published on the website of www.mptenders.gov.in only. If holiday is declared by Govt. of M.P. on the date of opening, the same will automatically be shifted to subsequent working days. MPRDC reserves the right to accept/reject any/all tenders without assigning any reason thereof.

M.P. Madhyam/118820/2025

MANAGING DIRECTOR

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ENGINEER PWD SAGAR ZONE SAGAR

PHONE No. 07582-220840, E-mail: cepwdsagar@mp.nic.in

NIT No. 11/2024-25 **SAGAR DATE 10-02-2025**

Online bids for the following works are invited from registered contractors registration criteria :

S. No.	Tender Portal No.	Name of Work	District	Probable Amount Contract (Rs. lakh in)	Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) (in Rs.)	Cost of Bid Document (in Rs.)	Period of completion (in months i/c Rainy Season)	call
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1	2025 PWD RB_401376 _1	CONSTRUCTION OF NH 26 MAKRONIYA ROAD TO SANT RAVIDAS MANDIR VIA BADTUMA STADIUM LENGTH-2.40 KM INCLUDING ELECTRIFICATION WORK PAC 720.81 LAKH	SAGAR	720.81	720810.00	20000.00	10 Months	FIRST
		Total		720.81				

- All details relating to the Bid Document (s) can be viewed and downloaded free of cost from the website. [http:// mptenders.gov.in](http://mptenders.gov.in)
- Bid Document (s) can be purchased after making online payment of portal fees through Credit/Debit/Cash Card/Internet Banking.
- The Bid Document (s) can be purchased only online from 11.02.2025 (time) 10.30 to 25-02-2025-time 17.30 Other key dates may be seen in Bid Data Sheet
- Amendment (s) to NIT, if any, shall be published on website only, and not in newspaper.

Sd/-
CHIEF ENGINEER
PWD SAGAR ZONE SAGAR

G-22981/24

TAMILNADU MEDICAL SERVICES CORPORATION LTD.									
No.417, Panthoer Road, Egmore, Chennai - 600 008. Phone:2511990/28190259. Fax: 944 -25190836									
Sl.No	Online Tender no with dtg/ Document Cost			Sale Period	Pre bid	Submission	Opening		
1	E129GCTFOR/MSC/ENG/2025	dt: 15.02.2025	-Collection & disposal of Bio-Medical waste from hospital and incineration of Drugs from Warehouses -Rs.5,725/-	17.02.2025 to 03.03.2025	24.02.2025 11.00 AM	04.03.2025 11.00 AM	04.03.2025 12.00 Noon		
2	E1291FTISGOTU/MSC/ENG/2025	dt:15.02.2025	- Fourier Transform Infrared Spectrometer (1)-Rs.3,435/-	18.02.2025 to 04.03.2025	25.02.2025 11.00 AM	05.03.2025 11.00 AM	05.03.2025 12.00 Noon		
3	E1292MCH/MH/MSC/ENG/2025	dt:15.02.2025	- Operating Microscope (1)-Rs.5,275/-	19.02.2025 to 04.03.2025	25.02.2025 11.30 AM	05.03.2025 11.00 AM	05.03.2025 12.00 Noon		
4	E1293RACK/MH/MH/MSC/ENG/2025	dt:15.02.2025	- SS racks for Work in Coolers (58)-Rs.5,725/-	18.02.2025 to 04.03.2025	25.02.2025 12.00 Noon	05.03.2025 11.00 AM	05.03.2025 12.00 Noon		
5	E1294HPEC/DM/MSC/ENG/2025	dt:15.02.2025	- Hypochemic Infra-peritoneal Chamber (1)-Rs.3,345/-	18.02.2025 to 04.03.2025	25.02.2025 12.30 PM	05.03.2025 11.00 AM	05.03.2025 12.00 Noon		
6	E1295CH/MH/MH/MSC/ENG/2025	dt:15.02.2025	-Stereo Microscope -Rs.3,435/-	19.02.2025 to 04.03.2025	25.02.2025 11.00 AM	05.03.2025 11.00 AM	05.03.2025 12.00 Noon		
7	E1296DFB/RC/MSC/ENG/2025	dt:15.02.2025	-Defibrillator with External Pacemaker (27) Defibrillator with External Pacemaker with Manual time CPU(R)-Rs.5,725/-	19.02.2025 to 05.03.2025	26.02.2025 11.30 AM	06.03.2025 11.00 AM	06.03.2025 12.00 Noon		
8	E1297RESUR/RC/MSC/ENG/2025	dt:15.02.2025	- Resuscitator - Adult & Pediatric (58) -Rs.5,725/-	19.02.2025 to 05.03.2025	26.02.2025 12.00 Noon	06.03.2025 11.00 AM	06.03.2025 12.00 Noon		
9	E1298CS80/RC/MSC/ENG/2025	dt:15.02.2025	- Various CS80 equipment & Furniture -Rs.5,725/-	19.02.2025 to 05.03.2025	26.02.2025 12.30 PM	06.03.2025 11.00 AM	06.03.2025 12.00 Noon		
For Details Visit www.tenders.gov.in and TMSC website www.tmsmc.in Govt.in									
DIPR/ 802 /TENDER/2025									
GENERAL MANAGER (EQUIPMENT)									

In sea of Kumbh visitors, police have a tall order: Identify woman’s body unclaimed since stampede

MANISH SAHU
PRAYAGRAJ, FEBRUARY 14

A MIDDLE-AGED woman dressed in a saree. No name, no ID. More than two weeks after at least 30 people were killed in the January 29 Kumbh stampede, a woman’s body that was brought to a hospital in the rush of victims remains unidentified, leaving police with the task of figuring out who she was among the sea of visitors at the mega event. According to officials, some people searching for their missing loved ones have viewed the body, but no one has recognised or claimed it so far. In the absence of a comprehensive list of stampede victims, officials did not confirm whether

the woman died in the same incident or an unrelated one. Officials did acknowledge that the body, currently at the mortuary of Motilal Nehru National Medical College in Prayagraj, was brought from the Kumbh Mela around the time of the stampede. A senior doctor said the woman did not appear to have any serious visible injuries. Hospital authorities have made arrangements to keep the body in the mortuary, but police will decide the duration of storage, he said. All other bodies brought for postmortem at the time have been sent to their respective homes after their identities were confirmed, officials said. According to officials, police



Devotees at the Maha Kumbh Mela on Friday. PTI

are reviewing CCTVs from the Kumbh area to identify the woman in any of the footage and trace her movements before the stampede. “We are making every effort

to establish the identity,” said DIG, Prayagraj, Vaibhav Krishna. Posters have been put up in key locations, including railway stations and bus stops, urging the public to provide any information that could help identify the body. Details have also been shared with police stations across Uttar Pradesh and neighbouring states, but in vain. The DIG said the body would be kept for a few days, and if it remains unclaimed, a decision would be made on its disposal. Asked about when the list of stampede victims would be released, DIG Krishna said it would be issued soon but did not specify a timeline. Political parties have been demanding that the state gov-

ernment disclose the victims’ names. The government has announced a compensation of Rs 25 lakh for each victim’s family. The stampede occurred at around 1:30 am as crowds moved toward the Sangam Nose – a strip of land at the confluence of the Ganga, Yamuna, and the mythical Saraswati – for a ritual bath on Mauni Amavasya, considered an auspicious day. The victims were rushed to medical facilities within the Maha Kumbh grounds and hospitals in the city. They were later referred to larger hospitals, from where those who died were sent to the post-mortem house. Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has ordered a judicial probe and said a separate inquiry would be conducted by the UP Police.

Maha Kumbh devotee count crosses 50 cr, says UP govt

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
LUCKNOW, FEBRUARY 14

THE NUMBER of devotees taking a dip at the Triveni Sangam during the ongoing Maha Kumbh Mela in Prayagraj crossed the 50-crore mark on Friday, making it the largest congregation in the history for any religious, cultural, or social event, the Uttar Pradesh government claimed. On main bathing days, Mauni Amavasya on January 29 saw the biggest gathering, with 8 crore devotees taking a dip at the confluence of the Ganga, Yamuna and the mythical Saraswati river. On Makar Sankranti (January 14), nearly 3.5 crore devotees participated in the Amrit Snan while more than 2 crore devotees took a bath on January 30 and February 1, the government said. On the Pausht Purnima (January 13), the first day of the grand event, 1.7 crore devotees took the holy dip, the officials said, adding at least 2.57 crore devotees participated in the bathing ritual on Basant Panchami on February 2. The Magh Purnima witnessed over 2 crore devotees bathing at the Sangam, it was claimed. Meanwhile, on Friday, over 300 sanitation workers undertook a large river-cleaning drive at multiple ghats of the Ganga. Akanksha Rana, Officer on

Special Duty (OSD) for Maha Kumbh, said the record-setting cleanliness drive was carried out at three key ghats – Ram Ghat, Bhardwaj Ghat, and Gangeshwar Ghat. “Besides making a world record, the campaign also raised awareness about maintaining the river’s cleanliness and ghats. With over 300 sanitation workers actively participating, the initiative marks the first-of-its-kind large-scale river-cleaning effort, setting a new global benchmark in environmental responsibility,” she said. Representatives from the Guinness Book of World Records were present to witness the campaign, along with environmentalists and professors from MNIT, who served as official observers, Rana said. “The entire process was documented through videography, which will undergo verification before receiving formal recognition,” she added. The Mela Authority is set to attempt another world record on Saturday where the focus will be organising the largest synchronised sweeping drive, involving 15,000 participants in a coordinated cleaning effort. The initiative aims to promote cleanliness and environmental conservation as core values of the Maha Kumbh, the government said. The Mela administration had set a record with 10,000 participants in 2019.

BRIEFLY KERALA Landslide-hit Wayanad gets loan of ₹529 cr

Thiruvananthapuram: The Union Government has sanctioned an interest-free loan of ₹529 crore for rehabilitation of the landslide-hit Wayanad. Kerala Finance Minister K N Balagopal said the state is demanding a grant of ₹2,000 crore for rehabilitation and rebuilding of the landslide affected regions. “The amount was sanctioned as a capex scheme in place of the grant which Kerala had expected.” **ENS**

MADHYA PRADESH One killed, two injured as old shell goes off

Bhopal: A teenager was killed and two others were injured Friday when an old shell went off near the Army firing range in Madhya Pradesh’s Datia district. The injured have been referred to Jhansi Medical College. Two boys aged 17 and 16, with a 23-year-old, were scavenging for scrap in the Hirapur Army Firing Range. They came across an old unexploded shell and tried to open it, leading to an explosion. **ENS**

ODISHA Wife, in-laws booked over rapper’s suicide

Bhubaneswar: Days after the death of Odia rapper Abhinav Singh (32) in Bengaluru, Cuttack police booked five people, including his wife and her parents, on abetment of suicide charges. Abhinav was found dead in his flat on February 10. An FIR was registered by Cuttack police Wednesday on the basis of a complaint filed by Abhinav Singh’s father. The case was registered under BNS sections 108, 351(2) and 3(5). **ENS**

Goa: Man convicted in 2017 rape-murder of Irish backpacker

Victim’s family breaks down in court: ‘Lost yrs of life, can now start grieving’

PAVNEET SINGH CHADHA
PANAJI, FEBRUARY 14

A SESSIONS court in Goa Friday convicted Vikat Bhagat for the rape and murder of a British-Irish national, who was found dead near a beach in Goa in 2017. The case had shaken the state – the woman’s post-mortem had revealed that she died due to brain haemorrhage and constriction of the neck. The court convicted Bhagat under IPC sections 302 (murder), 376 (rape) and 201 (causing disappearance of evidence of offence, or giving false information to screen offender). The court heard the arguments on the quantum of sentence Friday and is expected to pronounce its order on the sentence on Monday. The victim, a 28-year-old dual British-Irish citizen, had come to Goa with a friend in February 2017. Her body was found in a pool of blood without clothes and injuries on her head and face in South Goa’s Canacona on March 14, 2017. Goa Police had arrested Bhagat, whom the victim had befriended during an earlier trip to Goa, in connection with the crime. Bhagat, who had a crimi-

nal record with theft, assault and robbery cases, was charged under IPC sections 302 (murder), 376 (rape), 394 (robbery) and 201 (destruction of evidence). When the accused was held guilty in the courtroom on Friday, the victim’s family – her mother, her sister and her friend – who travelled from Ireland for the hearing, broke down. Her mother approached the investigating officer in the case and thanked him. The victim’s sister read out a statement outside the court, “We, as her family and friends, are so thankful to both the Embassies, public prosecutors, lawyers and investigating officers involved in our fight for justice. They have treated her like their daughter and have tirelessly fought for her... And that Vikas has been found guilty of taking her from us. We have lost nearly eight years of our lives fighting for her, and we are so thankful that we can now start grieving her immeasurable loss.” “She made the most of her 28 years... She was so kind and always happy. She did not deserve what he put her through. We are so grateful to have been able to be here for the verdict and to see Goa that she loved so much,” they said.

‘Poor shouldn’t be stripped of dignity’: Brinda on SC ‘parasites’ remark on sops

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 14

DAYS AFTER the Supreme Court criticised the announcement of sops by governments and political parties before elections, CPI(M) leader Brinda Karat wrote an open letter to Justice B R Gavai, saying “the poor should not be stripped of their dignity by comments reportedly made by the highest court of the land”. A bench of Justices Gavai and A G Masih had Wednesday asked “are we not creating a class of

parasites” and said this is discentivising people from working and, in states like Maharashtra, drying up the labour force. “Welfare schemes... are a constitutional requirement for social and economic justice, more so in a country such as ours which is ranked among the most unequal societies in the world,” said Karat in her letter. She said: “This letter is necessary because these reported comments published widely in the press may prejudice social opinion against those receiving what you have referred to as ‘freebies’...”



PANKAJ TRIPATHI AT EXPRESSO

Actor Pankaj Tripathi in conversation with author Amish Tripathi and Jyoti Sharma Bawa, Entertainment and Lifestyle Editor, *The Indian Express*, at Expresso in Mumbai. *Amit Chakravarty*

PULWAMA ATTACK ANNIVERSARY

PM, Shah lead tribute: Airstrikes in Pakistan were befitting reply

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
SRINAGAR, HALDWANI, NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 14

PRIME MINISTER Narendra Modi on Friday led the nation in paying tribute to the CRPF personnel who lost their lives in a terror attack in J&K’s Pulwama on this day in 2019. “Homage to the courageous heroes we lost in Pulwama in 2019. The coming generations will never forget their sacrifice and their unwavering dedication to the nation,” he posted on X. A suicide bomber crashed his explosive-laden vehicle into a bus ferrying CRPF personnel on February 14 in 2019, killing 40 jawans. Days later, India launched a retaliatory attack, which came to be known as the Balakot airstrike. In Haldwani, addressing an event at the conclusion of the 38th National Games here, Union Home Minister Amit Shah said “the martyrdom of the jawans made the country’s borders safe”. He also praised Prime Minister Modi for giving a befitting reply through airstrikes in Pakistan. The Pulwama attack and the



Officers pay tribute to the CRPF personnel killed in the 2019 terror attack, at Lethpora, Pulwama, on Friday. PTI

airstrikes that followed have changed the way the world looked at India, he said. “It sent out a message to terrorists all over the world not to play with our troops or our borders.” In the Valley, the CRPF organised a ceremony at the site of the

attack in Lethpora-Pulwama to pay homage and respect to CRPF personnel. A CRPF spokesperson said the officers from all forces and civil administration attended the ceremony. L-G Manoj Sinha also paid tributes to the CRPF jawans.



President Droupadi Murmu at Art of Living’s International Women’s Conference in Bengaluru on Friday. *Express*

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 14

SPEAKING AT the inaugural session of the 10th edition of The International Women’s Conference, President Droupadi Murmu stressed the role women have to play in an age of technological disruption. “We are at the edge of technological disruption. In such a competitive world, we should ensure our human values remain intact. This is where the role of women becomes important because they lead with compassion and kindness,” she

said. “You can break silence by creating safe spaces and support systems for everyone to share and express... It is not possible to break barriers and stereotypes without mental strength.” Murmu was addressing over 500 delegates from 50 countries at the conference, organised in Bengaluru by Sri Sri Ravi Shankar’s Art of Living foundation. Speaking at the event, Sri Sri Ravi Shankar said, “Perhaps if women take on leadership roles in the world’s major nations, the conflicts, disputes, wars, and various societal distortions we see today might diminish or even cease.”

Another ragging incident in Kerala: Seniors beat up teen, fracture his hand

SHAJU PHILIP
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, FEBRUARY 14

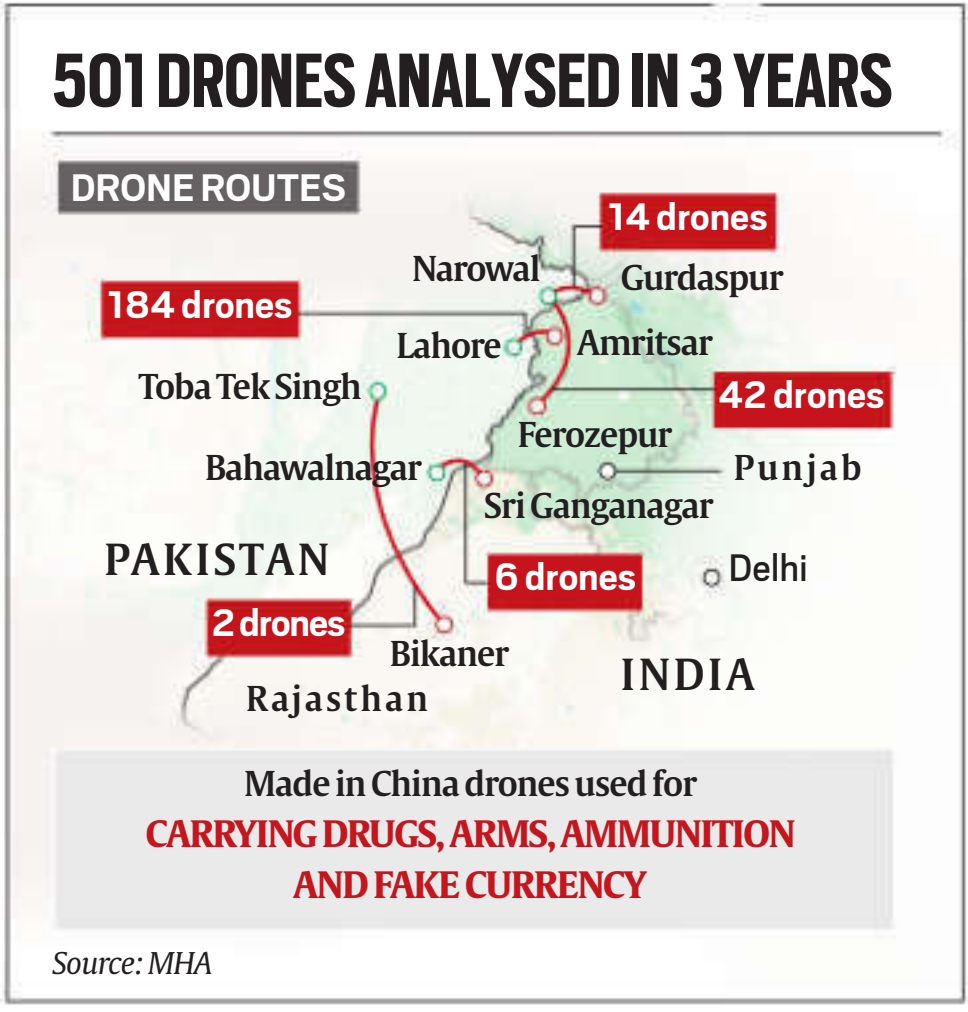
FIVE CLASS 12 students have been booked for allegedly assaulting a junior at a higher secondary school in Kannur, police said Friday. This comes days after five college students were arrested over an alleged ragging incident in a Kottayam nursing college. Police said the five students allegedly assaulted a junior for “not respecting seniors” on February 12. Kolavallur Police had registered a case for causing hurt and unlawful restraint against five students, all above

the age of 18. “Once the school authorities give us a report... police will invoke Sections 3 and 4 (ragging within an educational institute) of the Kerala Anti-Ragging Act against the accused,” an officer said. The FIR alleges the students had restrained and kicked the junior, leading to a fractured hand and other serious injuries. The school principal said, “The anti-ragging committee met and reviewed the CCTV footage at the school to ascertain the incident. We will soon give a report...” This comes close on the heels of the alleged ragging incident at a government nursing college in Kottayam.

Most Pakistani smuggling drones came from Lahore: BSF labs

MAHENDER SINGH MANRAL
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 14

MOST OF the Pakistani drones carrying drugs and arms to India originated in and around Lahore and landed in the border areas of Amritsar, the BSF’s forensic labs have found after an analysis of around 500 captured drones in the last three years. The other popular routes, according to the analysis, were Narowal to Punjab’s Firozpur and Bahawalnagar to Sri Ganganagar in Rajasthan. The BSF established the state-of-the-art drone forensics laboratory at a camp in Delhi in 2022 and another in Amritsar on May 27 last year. The objective was to understand the flight patterns.



Data provided by an MHA official showed that the Delhi forensic lab received 307 drones from March 2022 to January 2025. Of these, 284 were captured by the BSF, 20 by the Punjab Police and one by Manipur Police. “In 2022, 28 drones were sent for examination, 115 drones were sent in 2023, 155 in the last year and nine this year so far,” the official said. Data for the Amritsar forensic lab shows that a total of 194 drones were received. “Of these, 190 were sent by the BSF, three by the Punjab Police and one by the Army,” the official said. The examinations of these drones’ flight patterns revealed that 184 – the highest number – originated in Lahore and their dropping point was in the Amritsar border area.

From the Narowal border area of Pakistan, 42 drones took off and their dropping point was at the Firozpur border area. From Narowal, 14 drones travelled to the Gurdaspur border area. “Apart from Punjab, six different drones, originating from Bahawalnagar, made trips to the Sri Ganganagar border area in Rajasthan. Two drones travelled from Toba Tek Singh to Bikaner border area,” the official said. A source said most of these drones are Chinese-made and cheap. They carry drugs, arms, ammunition and fake currency from Pakistan into India, are mostly brought down through technical interception in Abohar, Ferozepur, Tarn Taran, Amritsar, Gurdaspur and Pathankot districts, with maximum recover-

ies from Tarn Taran and Amritsar. “We have found after forensic analysis of drones their flight paths, launching and landing points, timings, GPS (global positioning system) coordinates and even messages they have exchanged. We are increasing anti-drone guns in the border areas,” the source said. A BSF spokesperson said several preventive measures have been taken to reduce the vulnerability on the Indo-Pakistan international border. “Anti-drone systems are employed to counter illicit drones, a new design fence is proposed for border security, gaps are being covered by installing of command and control centres and surveillance grid,” said the spokesperson. Punjab has a 553-km border with Pakistan, most of which is fenced.



The Indian EXPRESS

FOUNDED BY

RAMNATH GOENKA

BECAUSE THE TRUTH INVOLVES US ALL

Mission accomplished

PM Modi and his team should be smiling on their way back from the US



KANTI BAJPAI

A NEW COMPACT

With emphasis on self-interest, flair for deal-making, Modi and Trump set India and US on a promising path

DURING PRIME MINISTER Narendra Modi's visit to Washington, India and the United States established an ambitious agenda to deepen their bilateral strategic partnership. Trump's emphasis on reducing the trade deficit — now favouring India — and the swift repatriation of illegal immigrants from India had cast a shadow over the relationship. But Thursday's summit signalled the determination to reduce differences and deepen the agenda of cooperation. The unveiling of a new COMPACT (Catalysing Opportunities for Military Partnership, Accelerated Commerce & Technology) is likely to become the foundation for a high-quality relationship between the two nations. For India, the challenge lies in translating the "result-driven agenda" articulated by Modi and Trump into tangible outcomes. With Trump expected to visit India later this year, Modi's diplomatic agility in responding to significant shifts in US domestic and foreign policy must now be matched by proactive measures from various ministries.

Modi and Trump exhibited finesse in addressing the issue of illegal immigration. India agreed to repatriate verified illegal immigrants from the US, while Washington is now prepared to collaborate with Delhi to combat human trafficking by targeting criminal networks and facilitators. On the topic of legal immigration — an area of intense debate among Trump's supporters — the leaders acknowledged the globalised nature of today's workforce and the importance of facilitating the legal and sustainable mobility of skilled Indian professionals, students and businesspeople into the US. Trade relations also took centre stage, with Trump demanding urgent action to improve market access for US goods in India. His criticism of India's "abuse of tariffs" reflects a broader critique of the global trading system, where other nations benefit from America's open market while restricting access to US products and services. As Trump prepares to impose reciprocal tariffs by spring, he has provided India with the opportunity to negotiate a "fair trade" arrangement in the coming months. The two nations have set an ambitious target of achieving \$500 billion in annual bilateral trade by 2030, necessitating a comprehensive reevaluation of India's trade strategy — a need that has become increasingly urgent amid a slowdown in India's external trade and rising complaints from trade partners regarding its protectionist policies.

In contrast to the challenges surrounding immigration and trade, Modi and Trump found opportunities to enhance bilateral ties. For instance, in the energy sector, India, a major importer of hydrocarbons, is poised to benefit from the US as a significant exporter. Both countries have agreed to strengthen cooperation in the nuclear energy sector, which is experiencing a revival. On defence, India is prepared to increase imports of US arms, and Trump is ready to review existing restrictions on defence technology transfers to India. The leaders also committed to expanding their technological cooperation to emerging areas such as Artificial Intelligence. In terms of regional security, they agreed to enhance their engagement in the Indo-Pacific and broaden their focus in the Middle East. The potential for a new strategic compact between the two nations is underpinned by the convergence of Modi's "India First" policies and Trump's "America First" approach. With a heightened emphasis on self-interest and a flair for deal-making, Modi and Trump may have set India and the US on a promising path.

FACING THE WEATHER

Latest edition of Global Climate Risk Index makes a strong case for building climate resilience across national borders

LAST MONTH, THE World Economic Forum's Global Risks Report ranked extreme weather events as the second-most difficult security threat after armed conflicts and war. Now, one of the world's longest-running climate impact indexes has quantified the toll taken by the crisis in the past three decades. More than 9,400 extreme weather events were recorded between 1993 and 2022, notes the latest edition of the Global Climate Risk Index (CRI). It reckons that floods, heatwaves, and cyclones claimed more than 7,65,000 lives in this period. The survey, conducted regularly since 2006 by the international think tank German Watch, estimates that the economic losses due to these extreme weather events amounted to more than \$4 trillion (inflation-adjusted). The report's findings are sobering for India — one in 10 climate casualties between 1993 and 2022 was from the country. It was the sixth worst-affected country in this period.

"There are clear indications that the world is entering an unpredictable phase of climate change," says the report. The delayed onset of La Nina and its inability to cool global temperatures is the latest example of this phenomenon. Last month was the warmest January globally with the world recording an average surface temperature of 13.23 degrees Celsius, 1.75 degrees Celsius above the pre-industrial levels. While all parts of the world are vulnerable to weather vagaries, the report sounds a note of warning to policymakers in the hotter regions of the world, "where heatwave impacts are felt most acutely." Climate change makes "early heat in India and Pakistan 30 times more likely," the CRI points out. It lists the Subcontinental neighbours amongst the top nine heatwave-prone countries.

The picture painted in the CRI is, however, not uniformly grim. It makes a special mention of climate adaptation projects such as Ahmedabad's Heat Action Plan. However, the report underlines the inadequacy of global efforts in building climate resilience. In addition to the well-known deficits in finance, it speaks of inadequate technology transfers from the North to the South. For long, the issue of climate adaptation has been left to UNFCCC-anchored negotiations. Building safeguards against floods, droughts, cyclones and heatwaves also requires engagement at other fora — at the G-20, or between neighbouring countries, for instance. The intensification of the climate crisis makes such cooperation imperative.

FUTURE OF FRAUD

Deepfakes in the UK university system might just be a warning of what is to come in digital interaction

THE SPECTRE OF deepfakes is looming over the UK university system. Enrolly, a software product used by several universities in Great Britain to automate part of the application process, is being haunted by what it has called the "future of fraud". In the interviews, applicants are posed a series of random questions. Enrolly's platform is reportedly used to screen international applicants as a part of issuing their confirmation of acceptance for studies (CAS) certificate — a prerequisite for issuing student visas. Among other things, the system looks at "suitability" and the ability to communicate in English. That's where the deepfakes come in.

A small number of those aspiring to study in the UK have attempted to use deepfake versions of themselves to record their answers. But perhaps the "fraud" speaks of larger issues. A large-scale study by the University of Northumbria in 2022 found that "accentism" is widely prevalent in the UK. How an aspirant pronounces their consonants and rounds out their vowels, then, can be a real advantage or disadvantage at workplaces and in university acceptances. Given this, an argument could be made that using a digital avatar that resembles oneself is a social mobility prosthetic. Since so much communication is now online, what is labelled the "future of fraud" might just be the future of digital interaction.

The anxiety over AI-driven avatars is understandable. Beyond the issue of university admissions and visas, it raises questions about the nature of truth and authenticity. What do "AI-enhanced" versions of people do to relationships, hierarchies, diversity? Dealing with these questions calls for a plethora of minds. If universities in the UK and beyond didn't care about accents and suitability, they might get the right people on board to answer them.

THE MEETING BETWEEN Narendra Modi and Donald Trump went about as well as it could. While the shadow of friction points was evident, it did not mar the visit. This is not terribly surprising because high-level meetings are carefully choreographed in terms of final outcomes, and discordant notes are suppressed or finessed. With Trump, there is, of course, always the risk of the unexpected, but the Indian side can come away with a sense that it was largely mission accomplished.

What are the key takeaways for India? Joint statements are indicative of the priorities and the biggest takeaways (unless there are secret agreements). It is always useful to look at what is upfront in a joint statement for clues. The statement features six areas: Defence, trade and investment, energy, technology and innovation, multilateral cooperation, and people-to-people (P2P), in that order. It is safe to say that the first three areas are key.

The Foreign Secretary's "special briefing" to the media more or less followed the same order in terms of the areas of agreement, though it was perhaps significant that in his remarks, multilateral cooperation came last — significant because Trump's America is focused on transactional bilateral relationships and suspicious of or indifferent to regional and international partnerships. As a result, almost everything in the multilateral cooperation section was blameless and boilerplate.

The big friction points going into the meeting were trade and immigration: India's large trade surplus on the back of high tariffs, and the status of illegal Indian migration to the US. Delhi can be reasonably satisfied with how both these were treated in the joint statement. In essence, the US avoided slamming India on tariffs publicly.

The Prime Minister got a warm embrace from the US President and met key figures friendly to India such as Elon Musk, Tulsi Gabbard, and Vivek Ramaswamy. Trump refrained from embarrassing India over tariffs, though higher tariffs on Indian products will likely soon kick in. The areas of cooperation ahead are solid ones to deepen — defence, trade and investment, energy, and technology.



ROHAN MANOJ

LITTLE ENGLAND, GREAT BRITAIN

Those protesting Bengali signboards in London must know they can't have both

KURTAS, SALWAR, IMITATION jewellery, gol gappe, jackfruit hanging from hooks. Is this Sarojini Nagar market? The thought may fleetingly strike you before beating just as sudden a retreat when you see the prices. It's Whitechapel in London, nowadays known more for jalfrezi than Jack the Ripper.

You'll see one of the biggest mosques in Western Europe, and a bit further down the road, an underground — literally — Somali restaurant with Old Delhi vibes where you can eat something biryani-esque off a shared plate. There's the proverbial Brick Lane and, perhaps inevitably, a fish-and-chip shop called Jack the Chipper.

In this cultural khichdi, there's nothing particularly out of place about a sign displaying the local tube station's name in both English and Bengali. Nor is there anything surprising about an MP from Nigel Farage's Reform Party complaining about it. Elon Musk sticking his oar in is practically a given.

On the surface, there's the old debate of integration versus multiculturalism — should minority groups assimilate fully into the dominant culture, or can these cultures thrive alongside each other?

But what's interesting here is the deeper cultural politics underlying it — that of the British, or rather, English right's war on London. Think Londonistan, add a couple more decades of anti-immigrant, anti-multicultural politics culminating in Brexit, and the knotty question of English-versus-British identity. Set against the nativist imagination is

Among those who call themselves English rather than British, only a third say the country's diversity is an important part of their identity. Among those who describe themselves as more British than English, the figure is two-thirds, the survey added. If you grow up in England as the child of immigrants, can you really be English? It depends on who you ask.

London's historical reality: That of a bustling port city that has always hosted travellers from across the oceans, some of whom settled down — from the legionaries and traders coming from the Mediterranean region, who rubbed shoulders with the Britons in Roman Londinium, to the Jewish and Lombard merchants of the Middle Ages to the East India Company's lascars. There were those who played important roles in British society and politics, from William Cuffay, the son of a formerly enslaved Black man from the West Indies and an Englishwoman, who settled in London and became a leader of the Chartist movement in the mid-19th century, to myriad Irishmen and women of all social strata.

Whitechapel and East London more broadly have their own history of working-class Irish immigrants who came in the wake of the Potato Famine, as well as Eastern Europeans and Russian Jews — all of whom contributed to the melting pot before the Bangladeshis.

The 19th century saw London transform itself from the mercantile capital of Napoleon's "shopkeepers" to a self-consciously imperial city, full of mushrooming monuments fit to bear the White Man's Burden; the detritus of empire is strewn all about today.

And attendant on being an imperial centre was a certain cosmopolitanism — as it was in Rome, Constantinople or Delhi for that matter, so it was in London. After this came the great waves of post-imperial migration that shaped the demography and debates of today.

London has hardly ever been 100 per

cent White and English — so English nationalism seeks a whitewashed, homogeneous London that never really existed. The imperial nostalgia that sometimes accompanies such nationalism conveniently elides imperial cosmopolitanism.

It's a contradiction; you can't have both Little England and Great Britain at the same time.

This tension has a parallel in people's self-identification — whether they see themselves as more "English" or "British". A 2018 BBC survey found that 61 per cent of people who described themselves as White "were proud to declare their English identity", whereas the figure for those from ethnic minority groups was only 32 per cent. On the other hand, three-quarters of the BME (Black and Minority Ethnic) population strongly identified as British. "The English identity emerges as more exclusive while the British identity is seen as more inclusive. Among those who call themselves English rather than British, only a third say the country's diversity is an important part of their identity. Among those who describe themselves as more British than English, the figure is two-thirds," the survey added. If you grow up in England as the child of immigrants, can you really be English? It depends on who you ask.

Such an exclusive vision of the nation would struggle to swallow a multicultural British London. Therefore, the latter's history must be erased, its diversity smoothed out and its many tongues cut out if it is to be the capital of England (not Britain).

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FEBRUARY 15, 1985, FORTY YEARS AGO

DEFECTION LAW

THE ANTI-DEFECTION BILL, passed by the two Houses of Parliament a fortnight ago, need not be sent to state legislatures for ratification, Law Ministry sources clarified. However, it will take time for the bill to become law because after it receives the President's assent, the presiding officers of the two Houses of Parliament and state legislatures will have to make rules.

MENINGITIS DEATHS

MENINGITIS HAS CLAIMED 52 lives, mostly of children between 5 and 14 years of age, in Delhi since January, according to statistics

compiled by the National Institute of Communicable Diseases from the major hospitals in the city. The death rate is so high, explain doctors, because the patients are usually brought to them at an advanced stage of the disease by which time it is too late to save them. The alarming increase in meningitis this year has baffled most doctors.

RELOCATION PLAN

RESTRICTION OF DELHI'S rapid population growth, conservation and revitalisation of traditional areas like the Walled City, immediate provision of water, sewer, and electricity for resettlement dwellers, a rapid transport sys-

tem, and a dry port are some of the major suggestions contained in the revised Master Plan for Delhi. With a perspective of planning up to 2001, the plan was laid on the table of the Delhi Metropolitan Council.

NEW CBI DIRECTOR

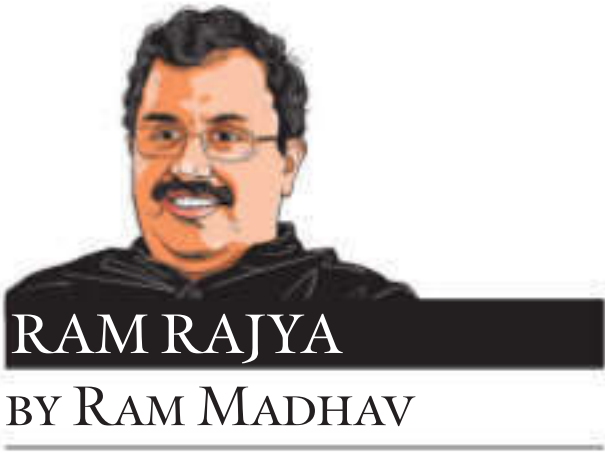
MOHAN KATRE, SPECIAL DGP, Maharashtra, has been appointed director of the CBI, New Delhi. He is the third senior officer from Maharashtra to be appointed in the Home Department after S B Chavan assumed charge as Home Minister. Ram Pradhan, who was chief secretary to the state government, has taken over as a Union home secretary.

WHAT THE OTHERS SAY

“Donald Trump is abandoning Ukraine. Others would be both wrong and reckless to follow suit.” — THE GUARDIAN

Masters of the sea

Eighth Indian Ocean Conference is an opportunity for India and region to secure maritime supremacy



RAM RAJYA
BY RAM MADHAV

INDIA, WITH ITS Indian Ocean partners like Singapore and Oman, is hosting the Eighth Indian Ocean Conference (IOC) in Muscat this weekend. Foreign ministers from around 30 countries in the region will be converging at the conference to discuss the future of this most happening region. Oman, the host, like India, has been a major seafaring nation and has maintained linkages with India for over five millennia. Both countries are strategic partners and work closely in many areas of development in the region.

The 16th-century Portuguese explorer Ferdinand Magellan, after observing the calm waters of the Pacific, called it “*mar pacifico*”, meaning “peaceful sea”. The Atlantic and Arctic Oceans got their names from Greek mythology. However, the Indian Ocean derived its name from the historical and civilisational influence that India wielded on the countries of the region. “Hind Mahasagar” and “Indian Ocean” have been familiar names for voyagers and explorers of the great oceans for millennia.

Discourse on the “Indo-Pacific” dominates the world today. But the “Indo-Pacific” is a geo-strategic construct, where big power competition is omnipresent. The “Indian Ocean” is a largely peaceful natural region connected by civilisation and culture. Vast expanses of the waters of the third-largest ocean in the world touch the shores of 26 countries. For many other landlocked countries like Nepal and Bhutan, the Indian Ocean remains a lifeline.

From the first millennium, merchants like the Manigramam Chettis and Nanadesis and kings like the Andhras, Pallavas and Cholas used it to establish trade with the Arab lands in the west and ventured into the Philippines and other South China Sea territories in the east. Kautilya’s *Arthashastra* talked about the functions of officers like port commissioners and harbour masters, highlighting the importance attached to maritime activity in ancient India. Fa-Hien, a Chinese traveller, wrote in 415 CE that the ship that took him from Ceylon to Sri Vijaya (present-day Indonesia) had 200 merchants who professed the “Brahmanical religion”.

The Indian Ocean made India the leading economic power in the first millennium. Its economic decline coincided with its decline in maritime power. In the second millennium, European powers like the Portuguese, Dutch, French and British developed stronger navies and converted the Indian Ocean region into a colony. The British were well-known seafarers. But they never bothered to build a strong blue-water capability for their colony during their two-century rule. This lack of attention to the seas, sadly, continued after Independence, too, with the governments giving greater priority to land-based warfare, completely neglecting the oceans and their potential for

the country. Consequently, in areas like ship-building and naval vessels, India remained a laggard power in the last seven decades. It ranks 20th in the global shipbuilding industry, holding a meagre 0.06 per cent market share.

Interestingly, the first to alert India about the importance of the Indian Ocean for its future was a renowned diplomat, K M Panikkar, who served as India’s ambassador to China and France. “So far as India is concerned, it should be remembered that the peninsular character of the country and the essential dependence of its trade on maritime traffic give the sea a preponderant influence on its destiny,” he argued in his book *India and the Indian Ocean* (1945). Sadly though, his warnings fell on deaf ears. Indian leadership, engrossed in the “continental mindset”, failed to fully appreciate the importance and potential of the Indian Ocean Region.

From the Persian Gulf to the Strait of Malacca, the Indian Ocean is the main trading artery for many countries in the world. Critical supply-chain routes managing almost 70 per cent of the world’s container traffic pass through this region. More importantly, around 80 per cent of India’s external trade and 90 per cent of energy trade passes through these ocean lines.

It took several decades for the governments in India to realise the natural goodwill that the country enjoys in this region, once described as a “British lake”, and start taking proactive steps to strengthen those bonds through events like the IOC. The global power axis has relocated to the Indian Ocean Region in this century. The US and UK, with their Diego Garcia base, and France with Reunion Island, are already active in the region. China, too, joined them, investing heavily in spreading its influence. India, under Prime Minister Narendra Modi, nurtured the ambition of rising as an influential blue-water power and the voice of the Global South. To that end, the Modi government proclaimed an ambitious SAGAR Initiative — Security And Growth for All in the Region in 2015.

The Indian Ocean is a crowded space today with vessels of all major countries crisscrossing its waters over the surface as well as under the sea. Important next-generation communication networks proliferate in the Indian Ocean through undersea cables managed traditionally by European companies but also of late erected by the Chinese communications behemoth Huawei. This region faces challenges like piracy, sea-borne terrorism, climate challenges, human and contraband trafficking, illegal and unregulated fishing, arms running, poaching and humanitarian challenges like rising seawater levels, evacuations and disaster relief.

Alfred T Mahan, an influential geopolitical theorist and confidant of President Theodore Roosevelt, wrote more than a century ago that “whoever attains maritime supremacy in the Indian Ocean would be a prominent player on the international scene”. Mahan’s comment is an important reminder to all the assembled leaders of the region at the IOC that the “supremacy” of the region must remain in their hands, and they should be the masters of managing the affairs of this “region of peace”.

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

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

INDIA’S CHANCE

THIS REFERS to the article, ‘US reach-out can reshape global order; open a window for India’ (IE, February 14). US President Donald Trump’s posturing about rooting out illegal immigrants and hiking tariffs is making worldwide ripples. His ostensible commitment to negotiating with Russia and Ukraine to end the ongoing war promises a reshaping of the world order. His amiable equation with Prime Minister Narendra Modi bodes well for India. With Modi’s meeting with French President Emmanuel Macron ending on a cordial note, there is a propitious global environment for India to cultivate its relations with these two powers.

Ravi Mathur, Noida

CLIMATE DANGER

THIS REFERS to the article, ‘The heat of the moment’ (IE, February 14). Climate change and global warming can cause unimaginable damage to our country; it must be first priority for policymakers. India is fast turning into a consumer economy; SUVs and ACs are selling like never before. While developed countries are fast shunning manufacturing, developing countries are ready to grab bigger pieces of the pie. That’s where the real problem is. There is an urgent need for judicious thinking in this regard.

Manish Mishra, Bhopal

REFORM NEEDED

THIS REFERS to the editorial, ‘In the light’ (IE, February 14). Corruption and misgovernance in waqf institutions is evident today, and this was also flagged earlier by a Joint Parliamentary Committee headed by K Rahman Khan. Politics aside, reform is due. The Waqf Amendment Bill should include measures focused on checking corruption, inefficient management of educational institutions and orphanages according to modern requirements, and lack of oversight of *auqaf*. The government should keep in mind the rights of Muslims to manage their properties as enshrined in the Constitution while dealing with such amendments.

Vaibhav Goyal, Chandigarh

PRESIDENT’S RULE

THIS REFERS to the report ‘President’s Rule in Manipur, Assembly under suspended animation: Centre’. The Opposition clamoured for the dismissal of the Manipur government under N Biren Singh, but the Centre remained adamant. PM Narendra Modi’s visit to the US was preceded by Singh’s resignation, and the promulgation of President’s Rule coincided with his stay in the US. How things unfold in the days to come will reveal whether the government is sincere. The decision to impose President’s Rule should have been taken in 2023.

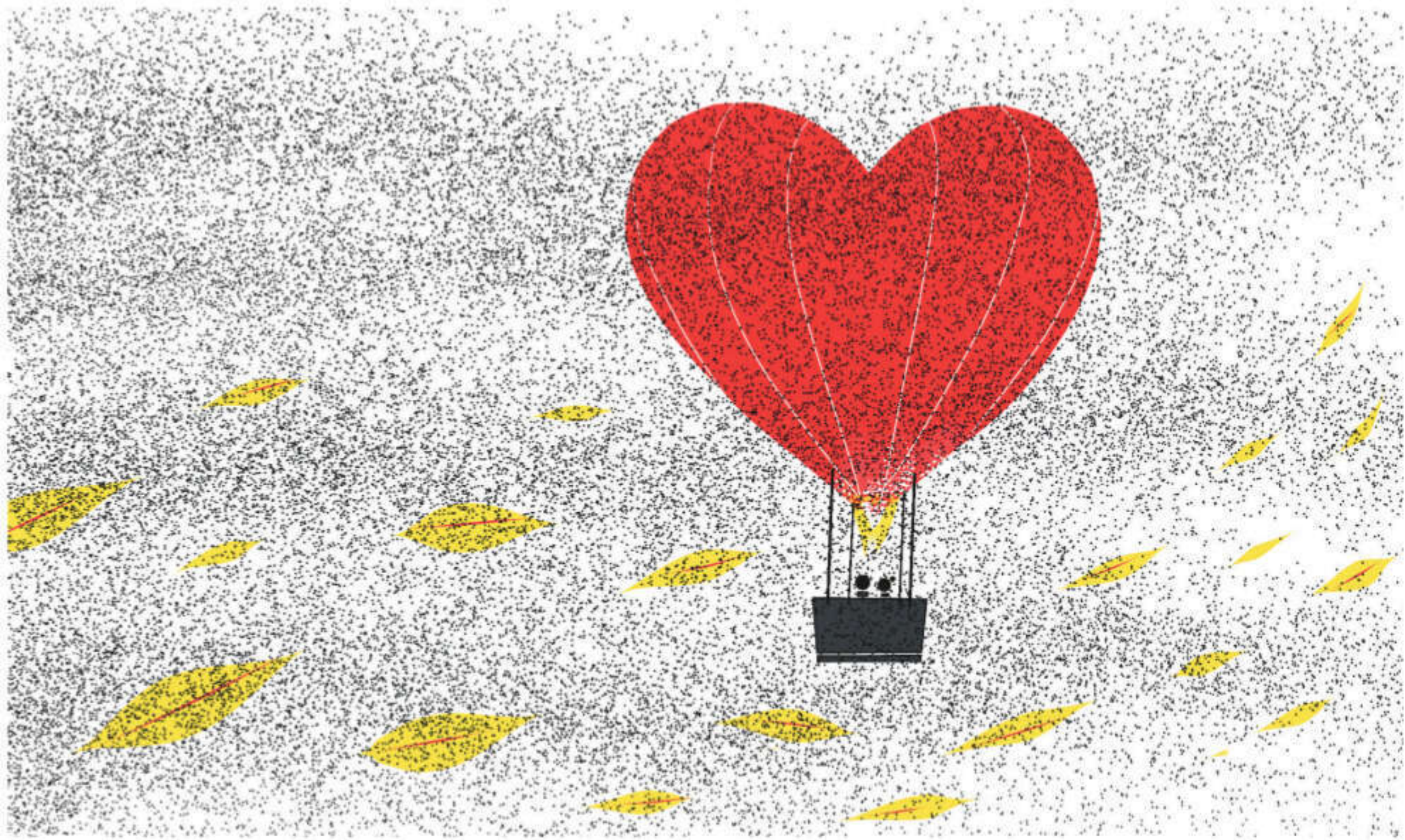
Bidyut Kumar Chatterjee, Faridabad

ment of this lineage of thought and feeling can be found summarised in Mahendra Kapoor singing “*Neeley gagan ke taley, dharti ka pyar paley...*” — the “*phool*”, “*pedon*”, “*subah*”, “*shaam*”, “*dharti*” and “*sagar*”, flowers, trees, the morning and evening, the earth and the sea, are analogous to the invocations to *agni* and *vayu*, fire and air, in the opening verses of the first Veda. “*Ratnadhatamam*”, in the first verse of the *Rig Veda*, a Sanskrit word that holds in it delight and ecstasy, is achievable only through a dialogue — and even drowning in — with the elemental. It was this awareness, one we take as a given, that Robert Frost must have been trying to summarise in “Earth’s the right place for love: I don’t know where it’s likely to go better.”

Where are the songs about mausam in our time of “climate change”? Our complaint now, made with as much bafflement as an impersonal sadness, about how love, its sweetness and translucence, has disappeared from our cinema, where we implicitly blame a “third person” that is not really a person but a machine, the smartphone, is perhaps related to the disappearance of *mausam* from our senses (notice how the Urdu word “*fiza*”, which can hold in it a universe, from “air” to the “environment”, has disappeared from our songs), its transfer from skin to screen, where we are made aware of it only through a language of numbers, the temperature and the AQI. How is one to sing of love then, except as parody? Let us go then, you and I, where the evening is spread against the sky, to a place of low AQI? Or “*Yeh raatein yeh mausam nadi ka kinara, yeh dhool aur dhuwa...*”?

Roy, a poet and writer, is associate professor at Ashoka University. Views are personal

The ‘mausam’ is not a trigger for romantic love; it is part of the love itself, giving it dimension and sky: ‘Thhandi hawa yeh chandni suhani ...’ Like the opening lines of the ‘Rig Veda’ make evident our composition, that our bodies and its neighbourhood are constituted of the elements, so does the recurrence of ‘mausam’ in these songs from Hindi cinema up to a certain period — the same reason children were named ‘Ritu’, with its various suffixes.



CR Sasikumar

Love in time of climate change

Let us go then, you and I, where the evening is spread against the sky, to a place of low AQI



SUMANA ROY

EVEN UNTIL THE early years of this century, it was impossible to imagine oneself in love and not think of the word “*mausam*” at least once. Growing up with a soundscape that included Hindi film music, one met the word more frequently than words that were rarely used then, words such as “boyfriend”, “lover”, “partner”. Like these words, the word “*mausam*” too had travelled from outside the Indian Subcontinent — in this case, literally, across Asia, as wind, carrying rain, to rest against the mountains of our V-legged landmass. This moisture and its behaviour, on the body, on the mind, inside the voice and other musical instruments, would give to our music its vapour and personality, like the angle of our bent bodies does to the resonance of our voices inside water wells.

That romantic love is an integer of the serve-and-volley between the elements and emotions seems as obvious as the curtain responding to the wind teasing it. “*Yeh mausam ka jadoo hai mitwa, na dil pe kaboo hai mitwa...*” Whether it is the directness of the confession about the loss of control over one’s heart due to the magic of the *mausam* or the playfulness of coming to this seemingly inexplicable connection indirectly, as in “*Bagon mein bahar hain?... Tumko mujhse pyar hain*” — because spring has come to the gardens, you must love me! — it’s a train of

illogical consequentiality that goes back to the oldest relationship we know, between the earth and the heart, the reason they are perhaps anagrams of each other.

The nervous lover, expecting constancy of the kind that they have been given by the force of gravity, that keeps them from falling off the earth, is bound to liken emotions with the seasons, with flux, with change, with fluidity. It’s a lineage of thought that goes back to the *rasa* theorists, their recognition of changing emotions as the axis that makes — and keeps — us human. That is why Kishore Kumar can sing about writing with air on air: “*Hawaon pe likh do hawaon ka naam*”.

Listening to Lata Mangeshkar sing “*Rahein na rahein hum mehka karengay, ban ke kali, ban ke saba*”, with its emphatic “*mausam koi ho*”, no matter what the season, we are led into a world of love promised with Shakespearean conviction (the English poet, who has no faith in “brass, nor stone, nor earth, nor boundless sea”, but believes “that in black ink my love may still shine bright”), one immune to “*mausam*”, which, in songs such as these, is a metaphor for fickleness, for change (“*Mausam ki tarah tum bhi badal toh na jaooge*”), I hope that you won’t change like the seasons, the fragility of a lover’s hopeful plea, in another song).

The *mausam* is not a trigger for romantic love; it is part of the love itself, giving it dimension and sky: “*Thhandi hawa yeh chandni suhani...*” Like the opening lines of the *Rig Veda* make evident our composition, that our bodies and its neighbourhood are constituted of the elements, so does the recurrence of “*mausam*” in these songs from Hindi cinema up to a certain period — the same reason children were named “Ritu”, with its various suffixes. The acknowledge-

The masks our children need

We need to equip them with the ability to walk around the trash



NANDITESH NILAY

SEX. VIOLENCE. DISTURBING scenes. Language. Graphic sequences. Parental advisory. Today, every episode on a streaming platform comes with labels like these on the top left corner of the screen. This, after an elaborate disclaimer that effectively, and farcically, washes its hands of everything you are about to watch. If you find anything offensive or demeaning, nothing is intended, it’s all in your head. All this is under the rubric of freedom of speech. Then come Ranveer Allahbadia and his band of brothers. The same person has interviewed leading politicians across all parties as well as celebrities — clearly, everyone wants to be on his show for the size of his audience. So he, in an attempt to be funny, makes a comment on children, parents and sex, perhaps thinking that will sustain the millions who follow him — or add a couple million more.

In a discourse where everything is divisive, the reaction is on predictable lines: Those who support him say he is pushing the boundaries; if you don’t like it, switch off, go to the next YouTube channel. There are many who say, “What else did you expect?” Then, there are many who say these men have wrecked the foundations of a family’s morality.

Lost in all this is one key fact. Our ability to navigate our way through mounds of garbage. In our cities, we know how to do it. Despite

significant gains made by Swachh Bharat, in every city, every small town, there is unclaimed garbage on the side of the road; there are plastic bags and polypacks at every tourist destination. We hold our noses, walk past it, drive around it, look the other way, get out as fast as possible. Can we do the same with the garbage on the information highway? On the trash that pops up in our Instagram feeds?

It is politically incorrect to call content trash but the fact is, Allahbadia’s alleged joke was neither funny — at least not to this writer — nor provocative. Several comedians with much stronger and sharper humour have paid a cost with either FIRs or bans or cancellations. What is clear is that the team at *India’s Got Latent* believes that you need to be more crass since that’s what “works”. The contempt for their audience is clear.

They also know that a joke told a second time isn’t funny, so the only way to get those views coming is by falling on the oldest tropes in the business. Perhaps they see a model in many of the new American stand-up comedians with their own shows on Netflix or Amazon who talk about orgasms, sexuality, their own sexual experiences and even their anatomies with a remarkable ease — and bring the house down. When almost nothing shocks anymore, what do you need to make people squirm in their seats, laugh

nervously? That’s what people pay for.

The Oscar season is upon us but remember how three years ago, Will Smith, the distinguished actor, walked onto the stage and slapped comedian Chris Rock because, apparently, he didn’t like how he talked about his wife, Jada Pinkett Smith. There were the usual noises made about behaviour in public and celebrity tantrums but it faded away into the next shocking reel.

Mahatma Gandhi’s three monkeys need to be recalled today. During Covid and when pollution levels are high, we use masks to keep the virus and particulate matter out. Our smartphones are protected end to end by antivirus software. What are the masks that we need for our children as they navigate the trash-littered information highway? One of the greatest theorists of communication, Elihu Katz, underlined the key paradox of mass media: Should it lead or follow, mirror or mould society? Communication, he argued, has been employed both as an instrument of social change and a reinforcing force to maintain the status quo.

Undoubtedly, the information highway has limitless opportunities and possibilities that will help our children realise their full potential, grapple with contradictions and truths. How to equip them with masks and the ability to hold their noses, walk around

the trash, is what we need to work on. We have to tell them that, as Javed Akhtar says, the use of abuse — he likens this to a chilli in food — to shock shows that you have run out of imaginative powers to use language.

One answer lies in getting them young. Right from kindergarten, at school, and at home, we need to help our children switch off the phones. We need to equip them with tools to navigate the information highway knowing very well that while it runs past meadows and lakes and rivers and beautiful city squares, it also forks into crudity and hate. Children must witness their parents’ conduct and choices as well. Our children carry testimonies of ethical memories from us, from the way we live and the way we talk, the level of importance we give to trust, care, responsibility and respect. In a society where brand is everything, can we brand respect, ethics as a key element of our profile? These issues need hard conversations between parents and children, between parents and teachers, children and teachers. We need to ensure that the next generation of the audience knows how to dismiss the next crudity.

Nilay is the author of Being Good, Aaiye, Insaan Banen and Ethikos. He teaches and trains courses on ethics, values and behaviour

13 BIG PICTURE

INA nondescript building in the heart of Hyderabad sat three men who, not so long ago, were guerillas of the banned Communist Party of India (Maoist). One of them was a former central committee member who had joined the party in the 1980s, when it still went by the name of People's War Group. The central committee and the politburo make up the top decision-making bodies of the Maoist party.

Clad in a neatly ironed handloom shirt and cotton trousers, the former central committee member, who identified himself by his alias Kiran, told *The Indian Express*, "I worked in Andhra Pradesh, then Chhattisgarh. Finally, I ended up in Jharkhand only to lose faith in the party."

Kiran is not the only one to have lost "faith" in the recent past. A string of reverses in the form of arrests, surrenders and encounters has left the Maoist party and the movement — which former prime minister Manmohan Singh called the "single biggest internal security challenge" — at what is, arguably, its weakest point yet as the State makes inroads into hitherto Naxal citadels, from Abujhmad to Gadchiroli.

Five months ago, on September 20, 2024, Union Home Minister Amit Shah put an end date to a conflict that has confounded multiple governments at the Centre and states. "Prime Minister Narendra Modi has decided that Naxal violence and ideology will be wiped out from the country. March 31, 2026, is fixed as the last date for Naxalism in this country. I assure you that we will wipe out Naxalism before that," he said.

Shah reiterated that after the most recent setback for the Maoists — on February 9, 31 Maoists were killed in an encounter at Indravati National Park in Chhattisgarh's Bijapur district. Two security personnel were also killed in the gunfight. So far this year, 81 Maoists have been killed in Chhattisgarh.

Iron-fist, a shrinking Red space

According to data from the Union Home Ministry, there have been 24,237 "incidents" and 8,694 "deaths" in the nearly two decades between 2004 and June 2023. Over 2,000 of these deaths are of security forces. Over the last decade, apart from cadres, the Maoist party has lost some of its biggest leaders in counter-insurgency operations in states.

On January 21 this year, Pratap Reddy Ramachandra Reddy alias Chalapathi, 62, who had a bounty of Rs 1 crore on his head, was gunned down by personnel of the Gariaband district police in Chhattisgarh, Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), Commando Battalion for Resolute Action (CoBRA), and Odisha's Special Operation Group (SOG). In November 2021, Milind Teltumbde, a central committee member of the CPI (Maoist), was killed in an encounter in Maharashtra's Gadchiroli district.

In October 2016, four central committee members — Daya alias Garla Ravi, Ganesh, Mallesh and Chalapathi alias Appa Rao — were killed in an encounter in Odisha. Earlier, in 2010, the Andhra Pradesh police killed Cherukuri Rajkumar alias Azad, a politburo member, and in 2011, Mallojula Koteswara Rao alias Kishanji, a politburo member, was killed.

As against this, the number of Maoists arrested during the last 25 years is estimated to be 16,733, with the majority of these arrests made between 2015 and 2025. In 2024, 475 Maoists surrendered across the country. The number of surrenders in the last decade — from 2015 to 2025 — is estimated to be 10,884. This is double the number of surrenders in the previous decade — 4,380.

Karnataka recently declared that its "last Naxal", Tombattu Lakshmi, had surrendered and, according to intelligence officials, the state is now "Maoist free".

Telangana intelligence officials said that in 2024, "there was zero recruitment" to the banned outfit from the state. The leadership of the Maoist party too has been shrinking. While in 2004 there were 16 politburo members, now there are only four — Namballa Keshava Rao alias Basavraju, Mupalla Laxman Rao alias Ganapathy, Mallajulla Venugopal Rao alias Sonu, and Misir Besra, Telangana intelligence officials said. The central committee has 19 members.

It was under the Vajpayee-led NDA government that a coordination committee headed by the Union Home Secretary was set up to draw up an effective strategy to tackle the Maoist violence.

Later, under the UPA government, a comprehensive plan was drawn up by the Union Home Ministry under P Chidambaram, which involved a massive infusion of Central Armed Police Forces in Maoist districts of various states and allocation of funds for training and modernising of state police. A plan under the 'clear, hold and develop' policy was drawn up. As part of the policy, forces would enter Maoist bastions, engage them in gunfights, build camps to hold the area and eventually get the state administration to build roads, schools and hospitals. It's the same policy that the Modi government has continued after com-

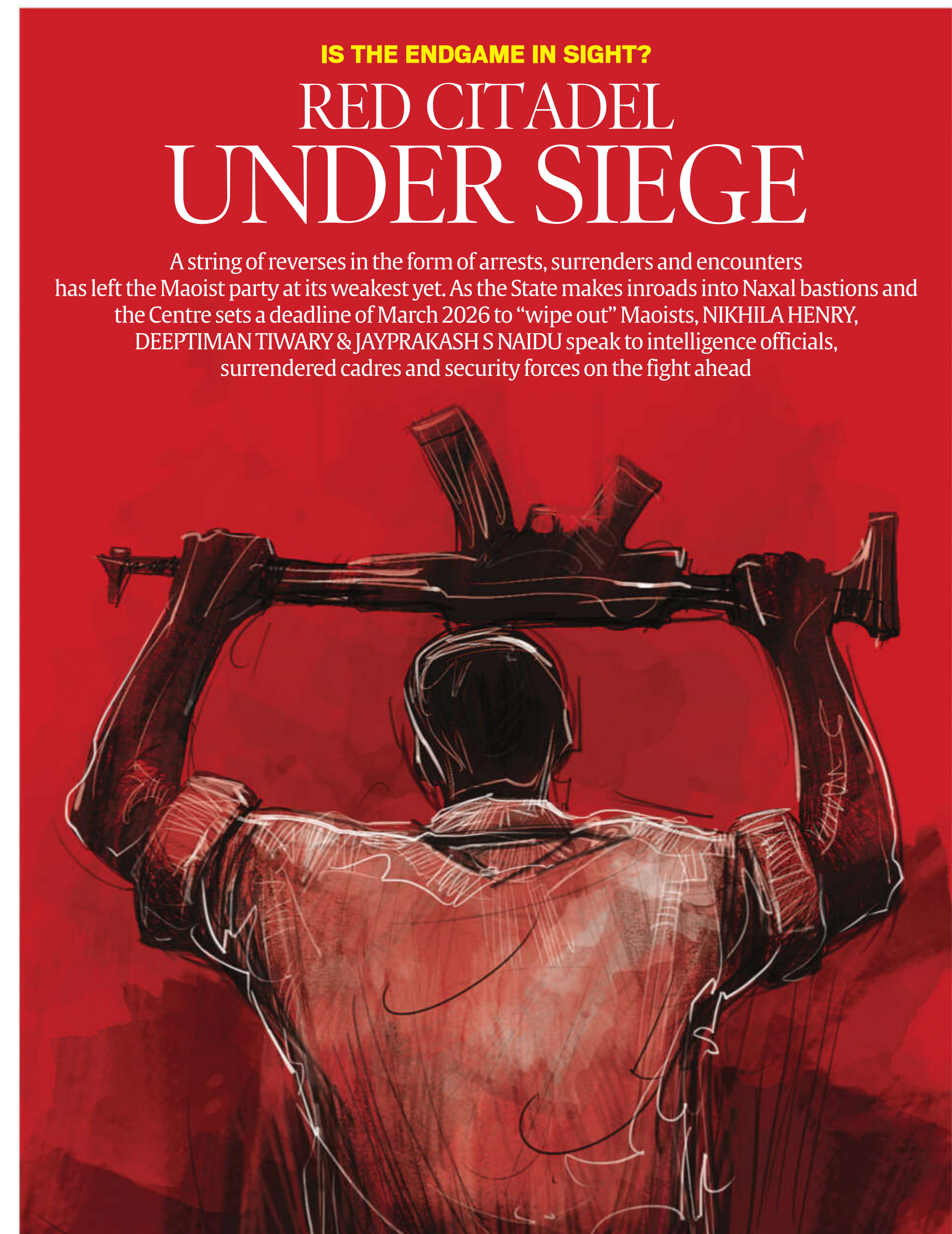


Illustration: Suvajit Dey

ing to power in 2014, only with greater vigour.

During its tenure, the Modi government has assisted states in building 544 fortified police stations in LWE (Left Wing Extremism) areas, up from 66 built during the UPA's term. The road network in these LWE areas went up from 2,900 km between 2004 and 2014 to 14,400 km in the decade after. The present government has also set up 6,000 mobile towers in LWE areas.

Since 2019, the government has also established 280 new security camps in Maoist areas and 15 new Joint Task Forces, and deployed six CRPF battalions to assist the police in various states. According to the Union Home Ministry, only 38 districts in nine states are affected by LWE violence. Shah recently said Maoist insurgency is now confined to "just four districts of Chhattisgarh".

Yet, if there have been successes in the fight against Maoists, it's largely due to the concerted efforts of state governments and the local police. States such as Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and West Bengal have completely eliminated Maoists from their regions, while Odisha, Maharashtra and Bihar have restricted their activity to small pockets.

These states have achieved this through a multi-pronged approach, which involved strengthening and training of state police forces, raising crack commando units to fight Naxals, rolling out robust surrender and re-

habilitation policies and taking governance and development to the remote tribal areas.

Last year, in Chhattisgarh, the current theatre of anti-Maoist operations, 219 Maoists were killed in encounters, making it the year with the highest Maoist casualties since the formation of the state.

The strategy here has been one of aggression with security forces setting up forward base camps — run mostly by the CRPF or state police — deep inside the forests of Chhattisgarh. These camps act as launchpads for action in the event of an operation, besides helping the forces in area domination and to gain ground.

The idea, senior officials earlier told *The Indian Express*, was to "box the Maoists in a grid of camps, making their movement difficult". The camps, however, have been met with resistance from tribals in Narayanpur, Bijapur, Kanker and elsewhere in Bastar.

According to state government data, in the six years between 2019 and 2024, 100 police camps have come up in Bastar region.

Chhattisgarh's former Additional Director General of Police (Naxal Operations) R K Vij recently told *The Indian Express*, "Forward

camps are filling up the security vacuum in places like Abujhmad and south Bastar, which were considered to be safe havens for Maoists. These camps are not only restricting the movement of Maoists, but are also helping forces conduct major operations."

Sundarraaj P, Inspector General of Police for Bastar Range, said that better coordination between different anti-

Maoist forces had made a big difference. "We are looking to carry forward the prevailing synergy between the DRG, STF, Bastar Fighters, CoBRA, CRPF, BSF, ITBP, SSB, CAF and other security forces in the operational region. We have the best-ever coordination with troops of our bordering states," he said.

While Chhattisgarh has largely relied on an iron-fist approach, what has worked in Telangana is "a humanitarian surrender policy", an intelligence officer in the state said. Of the 475 Maoists who surrendered in 2024, 87 were from Telangana, according to the state intelligence department.

According to the ex-Maoists *The Indian Express* spoke to, the state offers land for cultivation, a place to stay and "and a decent amount of money for rehabilitation". The

bounty on their head is usually offered to the Maoist who surrenders, an intelligence officer said.

But there are tales of the Maoists hunting down those who surrender. "Yes, the party turns against those who turn informers and those who 'harm' the party," Kiran, the former central committee member, says.

Subba Rao insists, "You can leave the party anytime you want. But there is a procedure for it."

The 'procedure', however, is not simple. "First, we need to inform the party that we want to leave. It is discussed and debated for three to four months. Then we are released," says Ashok. The 'release' is not simple either. The person who hopes to surrender needs to establish contact with the state's intelligence agencies, by which time one is already branded an informer. So, several Maoists prefer arrest over surrender. Some, they say, still prefer death to a surrender.

A Telangana intelligence officer said, "We have just one message to those who helm the party — surrender before people lose respect for you. Don't lead a losing battle."

According to former Maoists, the trick, however, is to educate people — those usually caught between the police and the rebels — about the redundancy of the party. "The best way to do this is to assert that democracy alone will prevail," says Kiran,

adding that the impression among people that the Maoist party is like any other political outfit needs to be dismantled. "The message that this is an armed outfit with a political aim should be communicated well."

Intelligence outfits say state governments do their bit with outreach schemes. In Chhattisgarh, they say, there is an effort to educate people to "stop sheltering the insurgents". In Telangana, efforts are on to keep the youth "who are vulnerable" away from Maoist literature. In Kerala, "sweeps have become common".

It may not be over yet

Despite the aggressive approach and the government's March 2026 deadline for a "wipeout" of Maoists, intelligence agencies admit that an endgame isn't on the cards yet.

"They are not entering Telangana because our counter-ops are pushing them further into the jungles. We cannot let off steam because there is a chance of resurgence," a top Telangana intelligence official told *The Indian Express*.

Officials in the state point out that of the 19 existing central committee members of the party, 12 are from the states of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh. And that three of the four politburo members are Telugu-speaking.

A senior Home ministry official, however, said the fact that most of the top Maoist leaders are from united Andhra Pradesh points to the crisis in the movement. "It is a reflection of the paucity of fresh blood in the Maoist leadership that while Maoism stands almost wiped out from Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, all the top leaders are from there. The only state where they have been effective this past decade is Chhattisgarh, but there is hardly anyone from the state in leadership roles," the official said.

Intelligence officials and the former Maoists *The Indian Express* spoke to say there is still considerable sympathy for the movement and its cadres among the local population. "Even the crackdown on those known as 'urban naxals' has not wiped out this sympathy," said an officer.

According to a Chhattisgarh police source, Bijapur still has thousands of militia cadre, making it the most Maoist-affected district among the seven such districts in Chhattisgarh's Bastar region.

Those who are sceptical of the government's deadline say Shah is not the only political leader to have predicted the end of the Maoists. In 2010, then Union home minister Chidambaram had said that he would eliminate Maoism in three years.

Kiran and the others who laid down their arms, too, caution against over-optimism.

"It is true that the Maoist leadership is shrinking and aging. But we cannot outrightly say that they have lost traction or that they have lost their relevance," he says, adding, "I left the party not because the ideology was dead but because I found that at the implementation level the party has failed."

The three ex-Maoists say they have been able to live normal lives after leaving the banned outfit, running small businesses and managing agricultural fields. "There is no stigma whatsoever. People are welcoming to those who surrender," Kiran says.

None of the three surrendered Maoists denounced the party completely.

Sitting next to Kiran is an ex-district committee member who identified himself as Ashok, another alias, who joined the party as recently as 2008. "The party has a clear political aim and can still attract people," he says with a smile. "When upper-caste people attacked Dalits in my village, the party intervened and protected the Dalits. I decided to join the party that very month," Ashok says, recalling a time when overground and underground leaders of the Maoist party used to roam free in Telangana and Andhra Pradesh. He left the party because he did not want to follow its violent ways, he says.

A former state committee member of the party, who identified himself by his alias Subba Rao, says he surrendered because he was "disillusioned... But there are many others who are not".

The three vouched for the egalitarian nature of the party, calling it its biggest strength. "There are women who join the party to counter patriarchy. There are Dalits who join to counter caste oppression..." says Ashok. When pointed out that some surrendered Maoists have criticised the party for being casteist and patriarchal, Ashok insists, "*Lene ledu* (not at all)".

Will the party move towards laying down arms? "Only the leadership can say," he says.

Explaining the Maoist party's "pull", an intelligence officer says, "As long as there are problems in the society, they (the Maoists) can pose as the solution to these problems. There is an ebb now (in the party's operations), there could be a flow later. Anti-Naxal operations alone cannot wipe out the Maoists. There is enough evidence to suggest that both anti-ops and a good surrender-and-rehab policy is the key."

— **INTERVIEW: SUNDARRAJ P, INSPECTOR GENERAL OF POLICE FOR BASTAR RANGE** —

‘We will see an end to Naxalism in a few months’

JAYPRAKASH S NAIDU

Union Home Minister Amit Shah says Naxalism will be wiped out in a year. But the Maoists are still holding out in Chhattisgarh.

The Government of India and the Chhattisgarh government have a clear intention of bringing this seven-decade-long Naxal violence to an end much sooner. The local population of Bastar is frustrated by the mindless violence of Naxals, who are

responsible for the death of more than 2,000 civilians in the region.

But there is a lot of resistance from villagers against police camps. Security forces on the ground say there is still a lot of sympathy for Maoists in villages.

All these years, the Maoists have used the security and administrative vacuum to their advantage and misguided the local population. A comprehensive strategy was conceived to reach out to the people and make them aware of the designs of

Maoists. As a result of these initiatives, the bond between the population and government agencies is strong. In fact, our operational bases act as an integrated development centres, bringing basic amenities to villagers.

In January 2024, a six-month-old girl was killed in the crossfire and in December, four children were injured.



How are you working on minimising civilian casualties? Also, Maoists have killed 11 security personnel this year. Is that a concern?

Protecting the lives and properties of the local population is one of our primary priorities. Unfortunately, there were a few civilian casualties... The government has ensured all possible assistance to the victims of those incidents of Naxal violence. There

were many instances of our security personnel saving the lives of civilians injured in IED blasts or Naxal crossfire.

Compared to previous years, the operational casualties suffered by security forces have come down drastically. The morale of the security forces is high and strong.

Is an endgame in sight? If so, what kind of an end will this be?

All these years, the senior Naxal leadership used the local cadres as human shields and would flee from the spot by taking ad-

vantage of the dense forest cover. But now, due to better cordon-and-search operational tactics by the security forces, the senior Naxal cadre are not able to flee from their hideouts. Moreover, the local cadres are no longer in a mood to risk their lives to protect their seniors, who are mostly from Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Maharashtra, etc. All these factors are working in our favour. In the recent months, we have been able to ensure decisive operational outcomes. We are confident of seeing an end to Naxalism in a few months.

14 THE INDIAN EXPRESS, SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2025
E. EXPLAINED THE MODI-TRUMP MEETING

EXPLAINED TARIFFS

President Donald Trump and Prime Minister Narendra Modi shake hands as they meet in the Oval Office of the White House in Washington DC on Thursday. *The NYT*

How reciprocal tariffs work

President Donald Trump has decided to impose the same level of tariffs on goods coming into the US as others charge on US exports. How will this impact the framework of global trade and, specifically, India?

UDIT MISRA

NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 14

UNITED STATES PRESIDENT Donald Trump on Thursday unveiled a plan to hit the whole world with “reciprocal tariffs”, potentially signalling the end of existing trade rules and sending things back almost a century in terms of how countries do business with one another.

The reciprocal tariffs will likely be imposed after April 1 — the US Trade Department is supposed to work out the details for each country by then.

First, what are reciprocal tariffs?

Tariffs are taxes imposed by an importing country on foreign goods coming into that country. For a consumer, they raise the price of an imported good, and in effect, throw mud in the wheels of global trade.

Over the past century, more so since the end of World War II, the world has moved towards freer trade in goods — that is, lower tariffs or no tariffs. There has been a consensus, especially among developed countries, that freer trade is mutually beneficial for all parties involved.

But there is an important caveat. As the rules of world trade were being framed — think the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) and the World Trade Organization (WTO) — it was agreed that developing countries would get “special and differential treatment” since they often did not have a robust industrial sector or an efficient farm economy to compete on an even keel with the developed countries.

As such, developed countries having lower tariffs than developing ones was considered to be a “fair” deal — one that ensured that a country like India could prevent cheap food grains produced by rich farmers in Europe and the US from flooding its market.

Trump’s reciprocal tariffs do away with this caveat, at least on paper. Simply put, Trump has announced that the US will charge the same level of tariffs on goods coming into the US as others are charging on US exports. This, Trump argues, is only “fair”.

And how will these reciprocal tariffs be calculated?

The Trade Department is in the process of making this calculation. How the US intends to make this calculation is crucial.

To be sure, the US doesn’t want to simply mirror the tariff levels with each country. President Trump has suggested that officials will look at the whole gamut of subsidies and other help that countries provide their traders when they compete with the US.

This could mean that developing countries such as India, which provide all kinds of subsidies to exporters, will face the biggest tariff burdens going forward.

Based on information obtained under the Right to Information (RTI) Act, *The Indian Express* reported on Thursday that the Indian government had disbursed \$1 billion (Rs 8,700 crore) between 2022 and 2024 to companies in India under the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme to boost exports of mobile phone handsets. The PLI scheme is essentially a subsidy to companies.

Why does Trump want reciprocal tariffs?

Trump is not driven by a single reason, nor is he singling out any particular country for this action.

While China is the United States’ biggest competition, Trump’s first tariff threats were made to allies Canada and Mexico, two of the country’s closest trading partners. On Thursday, he also came down severely on the European Union, claiming that EU rules and courts have treated US companies unfairly.

If there is one overwhelming reason for Trump’s tariffs, it is his dislike of “trade

deficits” — which refers to a situation where the value of goods imported by any country exceeds the value of the goods it exports.

The US trade deficit with the rest of the world — that is the difference between the value of its imports and exports — is closing in on \$1 trillion even as China enjoys a trade surplus of more than \$1 trillion.

Trump sees deficits as unfair, a marker of the fact that the rest of the world is cheating the US. As such, the President is out to remove all trade deficits.

There are two ways to do this. One, by forcing other countries to import American goods, and two, by getting other countries to set up shop in the US instead of exporting to the country.

But are trade deficits always bad?

At one level, the US trade deficit with India does indicate that more money is flowing out of the US than coming in. It can also appear to be a marker of American dependence on India.

However, in a global setting where countries trade with each other freely and fairly, a trade deficit is just an accounting exercise. For instance, India may have a trade surplus with the US, but it also has trade deficits with its other trading partners such as China.

A trade deficit or surplus does show the relative strength of one country’s exporters vis-à-vis the other’s. At the same time, it also indicates that consumers are able to enjoy goods at a cheaper price.

While the sustainable way to remove deficits is to boost domestic productive efficiency, economic wisdom lies in understanding not just that no country enjoys an absolute advantage in all goods over all other countries when it comes to trade, but also that free trade helps even when a country somehow does enjoy such an absolute advantage.

What will be the impact of US reciprocal

tariffs on India?

Trump singled out India as being a country “right on top” of the list of those that “charge tremendous tariffs” — giving the example of the iconic American motorcycle company Harley Davidson “failing to sell their bikes in India as the tax was so high”.

As various reports suggest, India is likely to buy more and more US goods — such as defence equipment and oil and gas — to balance the trade. It is also possible that other US goods will become cheaper and thus more affordable for Indians in the coming days. As such, the trade deficit that the US has with India can be expected to narrow.

But this would mean that the Indian rupee will weaken further against the US dollar — this is because more dollars will be demanded as more American products are imported.

What should also be noted is that this development comes just after the Finance Minister provided a Rs 1 lakh crore tax break to Indian income tax payers in the Union Budget presented this month. This was seen as a way to boost domestic consumption and fuel GDP growth.

There is, however, a good chance that the richest Indians, whom the tax break targeted, may spend this tax relief on American products — more so if they suddenly become cheaper. This, in turn, may mean that the anticipated consumption boost to India’s GDP may not happen to the extent imagined by the government.

Over the medium to longer term, India and Indian consumers can benefit if American goods are available at a cheaper price, not to mention the broader benefits that an association with the world’s largest economy can provide as India attempts to become a developed country by 2047.

That said, India’s bid to become *aatmanirbhar* (self-reliant) may take a hit as the US forces India to buy more of its goods.

Note of caution: what bilateral trade deal with US could mean for India

US TRADE WITH INDIA, OTHER KEY COUNTRIES

TABLE 1

TOP IMPORTS FROM THE US

Top 5 items that comprise 60% of India’s imports from US (2023-24)

Items	Value
Mineral fuels & oils	12.96
Precious, semi precious stones	5.16
Nuclear reactors, boilers	3.75
Electrical machinery	2.3
Aircraft and parts	2.25

TOP EXPORTS TO THE US

Top 5 items that comprise 67% of India’s exports to US (2023-24)

Items	Value
Engineering goods	17.62
Electronic goods	10.49
Gems and jewellery	9.9
Drugs and pharmaceuticals	8.72
Petroleum products	5.83

Value in \$billion

TABLE 2

TARIFF DIFFERENTIAL WITH US (%PP, WEIGHTED AVG, 2022)

Products	India	China	Canada	Mexico	Vietnam
Animal	30.2	9.3	29.3	28.9	9.4
Chemical	10.2	2.4	0	3.3	1.2
Footwear	17.2	-5.8	0	11.9	-8.9
Fuels	6.8	2.6	0	0	0
Hides and skins	3.0	-4.6	0.3	4.7	-6.4
Machinery	6.0	1.1	0	0	2.0
Metals	7.8	1.7	0	5.0	0.6
Minerals	8.6	0.7	0	0	0.6
Vegetables	20.5	13.2	0.2	10.5	4.3
Transportation	14.4	9.8	0	6.9	4.0

%pp = percentage points. Source: Ministry of Commerce and Industry, WITS, Emkay Research

RAVI DUTTA MISHRA

NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 14

PRIME MINISTER Narendra Modi and United States President Donald Trump have announced plans to negotiate the first tranche of a mutually beneficial, multi-sector Bilateral Trade Agreement (BTA) this year, and to double bilateral trade to \$500 billion by 2030.

A BTA is narrower in scope than a free trade agreement (FTA), and is focused on specific goods rather than overall trade liberalisation.

The two countries have committed to designating “senior representatives” to advance trade negotiations, according to the joint statement released after the meeting between the leaders on Thursday (early on Friday India time).

India and the US will work towards “increasing market access” and reducing tariff and non-tariff barriers, the joint statement said.

However, Trump has also been making repeated threats of imposing trade tariffs on countries around the world. Hours before meeting the Prime Minister, he announced plans for reciprocal tariffs on all countries, including India, “to restore fairness in US trade relationships”, and correct “long-standing imbalances”.

Trump has already imposed 25% tariffs on US aluminium and steel imports, impacting Indian exports. During the joint press briefing with Modi, he complained about India’s high tariff structure that prevented American products such as cars from accessing the Indian market.

He described this as a “big problem”, and indicated that the US aims to bridge the trade gap by selling more oil and gas to India.

The trade background

Given the loss of American jobs, especially industrial jobs, following China’s entry into the World Trade Organisation (WTO), sentiment among US lawmakers turned against granting easy market access to foreign goods.

The think tank National Bureau of Economic Research noted in a 2017 paper the correlation between growing import competition from China and a rightward shift in the political beliefs of adult Americans. Trump’s “fair and reciprocal plan on trade” announced on Thursday said the US trade deficit in goods exceeded \$1 trillion in 2024.

India and the US have agreed to explore the possibility of a trade agreement earlier too. The US-led 14-member Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity (IPEF), of which India is part, could not agree on the “trade pillar” as it did not offer tariff reductions or increased market access to the US market.

In his first term (2017-21), Trump stopped the Generalised System of Preferences (GSP) program that gave duty-free access to Indian goods worth more than \$5 billion.

What BTA could mean

Trade experts said the BTA would likely mean lower Indian tariffs on American goods, since average US tariffs are already among the lowest in the world.

They said that due to India’s generally higher average tariff levels compared to competing nations — and the fact that India has entered into fewer FTAs than many of its competitors — the trade margins that other countries secure in agreements are typically more favourable than those India secures.

A 2022 report by the Delhi Policy Group (DPG) said tariff imbalances were a key reason why ASEAN countries’ exports to India were more than imports.

Also, the think tank Global Trade Research Institute (GTRI) cautioned that the Trump administration does not respect FTAs — it has, for example, imposed tariffs on imports of steel and aluminium from Mexico and Canada in violation of the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA).

Pressure to cut trade deficit

The White House “fact sheet” on reciprocal trade issued on Thursday pointed out that while “the US average applied Most Favoured Nation (MFN) tariff on agricultural goods is 5%”, that of India is 39%; “India also charges a 100% tariff on US motorcycles, while we only charge a 2.4% tariff on Indian motorcycles”.

On the trade deficit with the US, Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri said India is a significant purchaser of American energy, having bought about \$15 billion worth of energy output last year.

“There is a good chance that this figure will rise to as much as \$25 billion in the near future... It is entirely possible that these increased purchases will contribute to addressing the trade deficit between the two countries as well,” Misri said.

India’s goods trade surplus with the US doubled from \$17.30 billion in 2019-20 to \$35.33 billion in 2023-24.

While exports of electronic and engineering goods have surged, traditional exports such as gems and jewellery and garments have remained largely unchanged.

Over the past five years, India’s imports from the US have grown at a slower pace than its exports. US exports to India rose to \$42.19 billion in 2023-24 from \$35.81 billion in 2019-20. Mineral fuels was the largest segment, followed by precious and semi-precious stones, nuclear reactors, electrical machinery, and aircraft and parts.

US-designed reactors, SMRs, and why the 123 Agreement could finally realise its full potential

ANIL SASI

NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 14

AS INDIA and the United States affirmed their commitment to furthering a bilateral Energy Security Partnership, an agreement that aims to make Washington “a leading supplier of oil and gas to India” is in focus.

However, this pact is being seen by both sides primarily as a means to bridge their trade deficit.

Far more strategic is an announcement that signals their commitment to “fully realise” the US-India 123 Civil Nuclear Agreement, alongside a pledge to move forward on plans to work together to build American-designed nuclear reactors in India.

Legislative speedbumps ahead

The two sides took note of the announcement by the Indian Government in the Union Budget to take up amendments to the Atomic Energy Act, 1962 and the Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage Act, 2010 (CLNDA) for nuclear reactors.

It was also decided “to establish bilateral arrangements in accordance with CLNDA”, which would address the issue of civil liability and facilitate the collaboration of Indian and US industry in the production and deployment of nuclear reactors.

It is learnt that Washington wanted to secure India’s commitment on bringing a law in Parliament to ease the nuclear liability provision, but New Delhi was initially willing to offer only an assurance.

The concern on the American side is that

the NDA government’s reduced numbers in Parliament could make it difficult to get the amendments to the liability law passed.

The statement issued by the Ministry of External Affairs on Thursday reiterated the commitment to take up amendments to both laws. The “path forward will unlock plans to build large US-designed reactors and enable collaboration to develop, deploy and scale up nuclear power generation with advanced small modular reactors”, it said.

The ‘810’ hurdle in the US

While New Delhi has onerous legislative commitments to set this partnership rolling as envisaged in the 123 Agreement of July 2007, it has sought a major commitment from Washington as well.

It is seeking an exemption to one of the most restrictive of American legislative provisions — the ‘810’ authorisation that explicitly restricts US companies from manufacturing any nuclear equipment or performing any nuclear design work outside of the US.

The 123 Agreement provided for “full civil nuclear energy cooperation covering nuclear reactors and aspects of the associated nuclear fuel cycle including enrichment and reprocessing”.

The ‘810’ provision — Part 810 of Title 10, Code of Federal Regulations of the US Atomic Energy Act of 1954 — allows American nuclear power companies to export to countries such as India under some strict safeguards, but restricts them from manufacturing any nuclear equipment or performing any nuclear design work outside of the US.

This authorisation is essentially a non-

starter for New Delhi’s Small Modular Reactors (SMR) ambitions, since it wants to participate in manufacturing these reactors being built in India, and to co-produce the nuclear components for its domestic needs.

An exception on the 810 provision is, therefore, vital for New Delhi.

Amendments to India’s laws

1962 ACT: The proposed changes to the Atomic Energy Act are aimed at opening the door wider to let the private sector into nuclear power plant operations, and to enable them to enter the SMR sector as operators. This is currently allowed only to state-owned Nuclear Power Corporation of India Ltd (NPCIL), and some joint ventures between NPCIL and other state-owned companies such as NTPC Ltd and National Aluminium Company Ltd (NALCO).

2010 ACT: The Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage Act, had sought to create a mechanism to compensate victims for a possible nuclear accident, and allocate liability and specify procedures for compensation.

These provisions have been cited as an impediment by foreign players such as GE-Hitachi and Westinghouse to investing in India, primarily on the grounds that the legislation channelised operators’ liability to equipment suppliers.

Foreign vendors have flagged this as a disincentive to invest in India’s nuclear sector amid apprehensions of incurring future liability.

Hope for partnership for SMRs

On the SMR deal, India’s Department of

Atomic Energy (DAE) is learnt to be in exploratory talks for collaborations with the Camden, New Jersey-based Holtec International, a private company that is now billed to be one of the world’s largest exporters of capital nuclear components.

The 810 authorisation is vital for this to go forward. The Biden administration is learnt to have initiated work on an authorisation to Holtec towards the end of its tenure, but progress was limited by the lack of time.

There are indications that this will be taken forward by the new administration, potentially opening the doors for leveraging the commercial potential of the Indo-US civil nuclear deal almost two decades after it was concluded.

Why SMRs matter to India

SMRs — reactors with a capacity of 30MWe (megawatt electric) to 300MWe per unit — are increasingly seen as important for nuclear energy to remain a commercially competitive option in the future.

India is pushing for a leadership position in this small reactor space, both as a way of fulfilling its commitment to clean energy transition, and of bundling SMRs as a technology-led foreign policy pitch.

Currently, two SMR projects have reached the operational stage globally. The Akademik Lomonosov floating power unit in Russia, which has two modules of 35 MWe, started commercial operation in May 2020. The other, a demonstration SMR project called HTR-PM in China that was grid-connected in December 2021, is reported to have started commercial operations in December 2023.

epaper.indianexpress.com

Classifieds

PERSONAL

It is for general information that I,HEM CHANDRA,son of,KESHAV DUTT,resident of H.No-253/6A, Railway-officers Enclave,P,K Road,New Delhi-110001,declare that name of mine has been wrongly written as HEM CHAND in my son's AYUSH JOSHI Admit Card of Secondary Examination-2025.The Actual name of mine is HEM CHANDRA,respectively accordingly. 0040774556-5

I,Ssamridhi Kaur D/o Harmit Bhagwat Chawla, R/o D-101 (SF)Ajay Enclave Ashok-Nagar New Delhi-110018,have changed my name to Samridhi Kaur. 0040774553-5

I,Shamso Nisha W/O Rafeeq,R/O A-300,Jawahar Park,Chikamberpur,Ghaziabad ,Uttar-Pradesh-201006,declare that Samsul and Shamso Nisha both the names are one and same person. 0040774570-3

Santosh Jain w/o-Virender Kumar Jain,H.No.139,2nd Floor, Vikas Marg, Near Preet-Vihar, Madhuban,Nirman Vihar,Delhi-110092, have changed my name to Santosh Kumari, permanently. 0040774525-1

I,Sandeep S/o,Sumer Chand,R/O D-118/1,Yadav Nagar,Samay Pur, Delhi-110042, have changed my name to Sandeep Bhardwaj,for all Purposes. 0040774519-4

I,Sandeep Kumar,S/o PARMODH SINGH,R/O,VPO-Nagra,Teh-Dhira Distt- Kangra (HP)have changed my minor son name Sarvasav Rana to Sarvasav Rana,for all,future purposes. 0040774525-7

I,Sadaf Nafees,W/o-Saud Rashid,R/o-E-18,Haji-Colony,Jamia-Nagar,New Delhi-110025,declare that the both names,Sadaf Saud and Sadaf Nafees are the name of one and the same person i.e. Sadaf Nafees.That in future I will be known by the name of Sadaf Nafees, for all purpose. 0040774553-9

I,SUMIT S/O-ANIL KHANNA,R/O -H.No-8/68,GALI No.-8,BHAJAN PURA,DELHI-110053,HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO SUMIT KHANNA 0040774519-3

I,SUJATA BERA,wife of,Service No.JC-39009M,Rank: Sub Name:-Ganes Bera,Presently,residing at,Addl.Dir.Gen.of Sig.Int.,Sena Bhawan,D/O,New Delhi-110011,In my husband's No. JC-39009M,Rank:- Sub Name:- Ganes Bera, service-records document my date-of-birth is recorded as 14.April.1985 that is wrong and my correct date-of-birth is -03.April-1988. 0040774556-4

I,Rakesh Bhandula,S/O-Malik Chand Bhandula,Resident-1703, first floor,Outram Line,GTB-Nagar Delhi-110009, have changed my name to Rakesh Kumar Bhandula. 0040774525-8

I,RAJNISH KUMAR TIWARY S/O RAJNANDAN TIWARI R/O-A-79 NEAR COLUMBIA HOSPITAL PALAM VIHAR,GURGAON HARYANA-122017,HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO RAJNISH KUMAR TIWARI 0040774525-4

I,Priti Sinha D/o Vijay Kumar Sinha,R/o U-61/13 DLF Phase-3,Gurgaon-122002, have changed my name to REEYA SINHA. 0040774525-9

I,Soniya W/o-Vikas Malik H.No.1191, Sector-2,Rohtak, Haryana-124001, changed my name to Soniya Devi. 0040774519-5

I,PUSHPA KOTHE,wife of,Vishwaswar Kothe,Presently,residing at,At,Harankhuri,P.O.Digras Bu Ta Katol,Nagpur, Maharashtra-441305,have changed my name,for PUSHPA KOTHE to PUSHPA VISHVESHWAR KOTHE,Vide-affidavit date-14.02.2025. 0040774556-9

I,Nitesh Kumar Ray,S/O-Birender Ray,R/o-Flat No.205,Block-13,AVL36A,Near-Road Gurgaon,(Haryana)-122001, have change my name to Nitesh Kumar. 0040774556-3

I,Narendra Kumar Jha,S/O,Kamla kant Jha,R/o-158A,Block-Q,Gali No.6,Sainik Chowk,Mohan Garden,Uttam Nagar,West-Delhi, Delhi-110059,that i have changed the name of my-minor daughter aged about 15-Yers,from Pragati Kumari to Pragati Jha,for all,future purposes. 0040774519-2

I,Narendar Singh Verma,S/o-Moharsingh Baburam Verma,R/o-IMP1-203,Eldeco Amantran,Sector 119, Noida,Gautam BudhNagar,U.P.201301,have changed my name,from Narendar Singh Verma to Narendar Singh Mohar Singh Verma,for all,future purpose. 0040774553-8

I,Mohinder Singh,son of,Shri Shyam Singh,permanent,resident of Samaspur,Sector-51, Gurugram,Haryana-122003,declare that my child Dipesh was born on,30.07.2010 in Civil Hospital,Gurugram,In his birth certificate-mother's name was mentioned as Aman and father's name was mentioned as Mohinder whereas correct name is Aman Lata and Mohinder Singh. 0040774525-10

I,Mohammad Navijan Urf Sultan,S/o-Mahmud Ali,R/o-Ward No.2,Patraa Uttar,Pathrajolhania, P.O.Patthra,Distt.Supaul,Bihar-852131,Presently,residing at C-169,Block-C,Sangam Vihar,New Delhi-110080,have changed my name to Mohammad Navijan,for all,future purposes. 0040774519-1

I,Mohammad Aftab S/O Md.Zafir Alam R/o-E-156, Gali No.06,Shastri Park, North East Delhi-110053,have changed my name to Mohd.Aftab for all purposes. 0040774580-1

I,Mirza Mahfooz Bag S/o Rustom Beg R/o,RZG-80F, Nihal-Vihar, Nangloi, West-Delhi, Delhi-110041, have changed my name to Mirza Mahfooz Beg for all-purposes. 0040774556-7

I,Manisha w/o-Ashish kumar R/o D-12,second floor ,green park Extention,delhi-110016, have changed my name Manisha to Manisha Kumari,for all purpose. 0040774580-2

I,Mahipal Singh Deshwal S/o Mahender Singh R/o-B-143A, Mange Ram Park,Budh Vihar,New Delhi-110086 have changed my name to Mahipal Singh 0040774553-4

I,MUKESH KUMAR SEHRAWAT,S/O-MAHENDER SINGH,R/O-J-541,MAX HEIGHTS,SECTOR-62,BADH KHALSA(41),RAI,SONIPAT,HAR YANA-131029,HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO MUKESH KUMAR. 0040774553-2

I,MD Zeyaul Hoda S/o,Abdul Mohd R/O-545/38A, Maqudauli, Kilaghat Bajitpur, Subhankarpur, Darbhanga, Bihar-846006,have changed my-name to Mohammad Zeyaul Hoda for all purposes. 0040774556-6

I,LOKESH CHAUHAN,S/O SHRI.RAJENDER CHAUHAN,R/O-G-4, STREET.No.-5,NEAR KRISHNA NAGAR METRO STATION,WEST ARJUN NAGAR,KRISHNA NAGAR,EAST DELHI,DELHI-110051,inform that LOKESH KUMAR AND LOKESH CHAUHAN, both names are same person. My correct name is LOKESH CHAUHAN,for all,future purposes. 0040774553-10

I,KM SUNITA CHAUHAN,W/O PARVEEN KUMAR,R/O-127,BAHARWALA ROAD,BANKAUILL,DELHI-110036,HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO SUNITA. 0040774553-3

I,KAUSAR JAFRI,S/O WARIS IMAM JAFRI,R/O-HOUSE No-1145,TOWER-BLUEBELLE,GAUR SAUNDARYAM, GH-07,TECHZONE-4,GREATER-NOIDA WEST,GAUTAMBUDH-NAGAR U.P-201306,have changed my minor son's name to ABUZAR to ABUZAR IMAM JAFRI. 0040774556-2

I,KALPANA RANI GOYAL, W/O-Dwarka Nath Goyal, R/O-C-304, Alankanda Apartment, Sector-56, Gurgaon-122011, Haryana, have change my name from KALPANA RANI GOYAL to KALPANA GOYAL, for all future purposes. 0040774556-10

I,Jatinder Kaur Chhatwal,W/O Harinder Pal Chhatwal,R/O H.No-1/202/21, Gurudwara,Sadar Bazar,Delhi Cantt-110010,Have Changed my Name to Jatinder Kaur. 0040774553-6

I,JYOTI SURESHKUMAR VERMA,W/O,M.R.RISHABH CHAUDHARY,R/O-29,NEW-GOPAL VIHAR KOTA KOTA RAJASTHAN 324001,HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO JYOTI VERMA,FOR ALL FUTURE PURPOSES. 0040774519-6

I,JITENDRA KUMAR AGNIHOTRI,S/O-RAKESH KUMAR RESIDENT-VILLAGE-BERGAON,PO VEERNAGAR,DISTRICT-HATHRAS-204101,UTTAR PRADESH,HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO JITENDRA AGNIHOTRI. 0040774525-2

I,Harjinder Mangat wife of Wg. Cdr. Narinder Singh Mangat 10129F (P), resident of E-185,Sector-21,NOIDA, Gautam Budh Nagar,Uttar Pradesh 201301,have changed my name from Harjinder Mangat to Harjinder Kaur Mangat vide Affidavit Dated 14-2-2025 (Fourteen February Two Thousand and Twenty Five) at Noida,Gautam Budh Nagar,Uttar Pradesh. 0040774570-2

I,Gaurav Kumar,S/o-Kanti Prashad R/o,H.No-C45 Pocket-1,Kendriya Vihar-2,Sector-82,Noida, G.B.Nagar,UP-201304,have changed my name to Gaurav Singh. 0040774525-3

I,BHAVIKA CHANDA,D/O-TEESH KUMAR CHANDA, R/O, INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT-TECHNOLOGY,RAJ-NAGAR, POST-BOXNO.137, GHAZIABAD,U.P-201001.HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO BHAVIKA TEESH KUMAR CHANDA. 0040774553-1

I,Ashok Shobana Joseph,D/O-Das Lazer Selvaraj R/O,RZ-F-1/126B,Upper G/F,Front Side,Gali.No.1,Mahavir Enclave,Palam Village-Near.Delhi-110045,have changed,my name MARY SHOBANA S to ASHOK SHOBANA JOSEPH FOR,ALL FUTURE PURPOSES. 0040774570-1

I, Ankita Dwivedi W/o Pankaj Singh Negi R/o E- 2740, 7th Avenue GC-7 Gaur City 1 Sector-4 Greater Noida Gautam Buddha Nagar Uttar Pradesh 201306 have changed my name ANKITA DWIVEDI to ANKITA NEGI for all future purposes. 0070951247-1

I,Ajay S/o-Jai Bhagwan,R/o A-40B,A-Block,Gali.No-2,Dharam Colony,Palam-Vihar Extension, Gurgaon(Haryana)-122017, have changed my name to Ajay Rohilla, for all,Purposes. 0040774525-6

I,Ajay Kumar Khurana,S/o-Bhagat Ram Khurana,R/o-BG-3/48-B,Paschim-Vihar New-Delhi-110063,have changed My name to Ajay Khurana, permanently. 0040774553-7

I,AUXITA W/O NIKHIL SACHDEVA R/O 109C,GG-1,VIKAS PURI,DELHI-110018.HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO AUXITA SACHDEVA FOR ALL PURPOSES. 0040774556-1

I,ASHWANI SOLOMAN,S/O NATHAN SOLOMAN,R/O C-150, SECTOR-22,NOIDA,GAUTAM BUDDHA-NAGAR UTTAR PRADESH-201301,have changed my name to ASHWINI SOLOMON,For all,purpose. 0040774519-9

I,ASHOK KUMAR,S/O MATA PRASAD RAI,R/O-A-11-THIRD FLOOR,GALI NO.4,MAYUR-VIHAR PHASE-1,SHASHI-GARDEN, DELHI-110091, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME ASHOK KUMAR RAI,FOR ALL,PURPOSES. 0040774519-8

I,AMIT KUMAR,S/O-ASHOK KUMAR RAI,R/O-A-11-THIRD FLOOR,GALLI.NO.4,MAYUR-VIHAR PHASE-1,SHASHI GARDEN, DELHI-110091, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME AMIT RAI,FOR ALL PURPOSES. 0040774519-7

I,Yoginder Kumar S/o Ram Dass Arora,R/o-house.No-304, sector-5, Gurgaon, Haryana-122001, have changed my name to Yoginder Arora 0040774422-1

I, Vijender Prasad S/o Khimanand R/o 9,Kander Gaon, Malla, Tehri Garhwal, Uttarakhand-249155 Have Changed My Name to Bijender Prasad for All Purposes. 0070951237-1

I, Umesh Kumar S/o Pyare Lal R/O 120, Mandi Villi, Mandi, Delhi-110047, have changed my name to Umesh 0070951306-1

I, Sarika Devi W/o Shani Kumar R/o Village & Post- Mahuagaon, Sarsaul, Kanpur Nagar, UP-209402, have changed my name to SARIKA KUMARI for all future purposes. 0070951287-1

I, SANDEEP KUMAR S/O CHATTER SINGH R/O H.No. A-14, GALI NO.16, MAHENDRA PARK, ADARSH NAGAR, NORTH WEST DELHI, DELHI-110033 have changed the name of my minor son YOGIT aged 04 years and he shall hereafter be known as KRISHNA. 0070951283-1

I, Rajinder Kumar, S/o Nand Lal Malhotra, R/o-House.No-A-122 First-Floor, Lok-Vihar, Pitampura, Delhi-110034,have changed my name to Rajinder Kumar Malhotra, Permanently. 0040774408-1

I, Raj Kumar Dey S/o P.N Dey R/o V-103 B, Sector-C, Bhagwati Vihar, Uttam Nagar West Delhi-110059 Have changed my name to Sukumar Dey for all future purposes 0070951311-1

I, Raghunath Das Alias Kandul Das S/o Ramsrwd Pur Das R/o Ward 13, Muradpur, Jahangirpur, Samastipur, Rosera Bihar-848210 Presently Residing at Plot No-65-B, Ground Floor, Rajan Vihar, Hastals, Uttam Nagar, Delhi-110059 have changed my name to Kandul Das for all purposes. 0070951302-1

I, Parul D/o Narendar Pal Singh W/o Ashwani Malik R/O C/34, Gali No-8, F-Block, Raj Compound, Lal Kuan, Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh-201009 have changed my name to Parul Choudhary for all purposes. 0070951299-1

I, Monika W/o Nitish Kumar Pandey, R/o 41/14, Pocket-7, Janta Flat, Sector-82, Noida, UP-201305, have changed my name to Monika Pandey for all future purposes. 0040774407-1

I, KUMARI JAVATRI DEVI W/O N.O.14468094L RANK SEP (LATE) JAIPAL R/O H.NO.9 NEAR WHITE MANDIR, BHALASWA, N.S.MANDI, DELHI-110033 HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO JAVITRI VIDE AFFIDAVIT DATED 13.2.25 BEFORE DELHI. MY ACTUAL DOB IS 01.01.1960. 0070951297-1

I, K S ANTHONY, S/o K S Isaac, REGTL No-4370299M, Rank-Hav, permanent Resident of Riha Village, Ukhrul District Manipur-795142, inform that name of my wife's and DOB have been wrongly written as K S FOCUSTY and 04-03-1981 in my service record. The actual name and DOB of my wife's are P H FOCUSTY and 04-03-1985 respectively for all future purposes. 0040774513-1

I, FARHA NAZ, W/o Mohd Shoaib, R/O RZ-526/3, Gali No.23, Tughlakabad Extn., Delhi-110019, have changed my name to FARHA NAAZ, for all purposes. 0040774425-1

I, Amrendra Mishra S/O Chandra Nand Mishra R/o Flat No-G1-101, Supertech Eco-Village 2, Sector-16B, Bishrakh Sarajpur Greater Noida West Gautam Buddha Nagar Uttar Pradesh-201306 has changed my name from AMRENDRA MISHRA TO AMRENDRA KUMAR MISHRA for all future Purposes. 0070951244-1

I Manthine Sindhu Vara Lakshmi W/o M Chaithanya Kumar R/O 167, 1st Floor 4th Cross, Krishna Garden Layout Rajarajeshwari Nagar Bangalore South Rajarajeshwarinagar, Bengaluru, Karnataka-560098, have changed my name to Therli SindhuvaraLakshmi. 0070951235-1

I, Ex No-13744189P,NK(TS) Ghulam Ahmad Khan,S/O-Anayatullah Khan,R/O-Hayihama,Bungam,Tehsil, District-Kupwara, In my service record, D o B of my son namely Asif Ahmad Khan has been wrongly mentioned as 29-11-2002 instead of 01-03-2004, also the name of mother has been mentioned as Shaheena Begum instead of Shah Begum. It needs corrections. Objections be filled to concerned authorities. 0020488711-1

I,Devdas S/o/Haridas Haldar R/o-1458, Flat-B, Gali-No.3, Govindpuri, Delhi-110019 have changed my name to Devdas Haldar 0070951317-1

I, Ayesha Azeem Usmani W/o MOHD Mursaleen Usmani R/O-6792, Beri Wala Bagh, Azad Market, Delhi-110006 have changed my name to Ayesha Usmani 0070951315-1

I Vicky Gupta S/o Vijay Kumar Gupta R/O D-17, Green Park Ext., Green Park, Hauz Khas, Delhi-110016, have changed my name to Hemant Kumar Gupta 0070951229-1

I Simran Mehra D/o Devennder Nath Mehra R/o 0 468, Bhai Parmanand Colony East, Mukherjee Nagar, GTB Nagar, New Delhi-110009 have changed my name to Mysha Mehra for all purposes. 0040774401-1

I Ragni Devi, W/O Ram Udgar Das, Village- Rajanpura, Ward No.14, P.O- Mailam, P.S- Andhratharhi, Distt- Madhubani-847235, I declare that my name has been wrongly mentioned as Laldai Devi in daughter Archna Kumari in her Birth certificate. The Actual name is Ragni Devi, For all the future purposes. 0040774423-1

IJithendriya Sujith S/o Anitha Kizhakke Thazhaveettil R/o Flat No-5207, Second Floor, Kristal Quartz-5, Kristal Campus 10, Sarjapur Road, Near Yamare Bus Stop, Sarjapura Hobli, Sompura, Bengaluru, Karnataka-562125, have changed my name to Jitendriya Sharma 0070951236-1

I JATIN AGGARWAL R/O FLAT NO-B2-5033 TUP ACE NEAR ESSAR PETROL PUMP SECTOR-89 HAYATPUR(114) GURGAON HARYANA -122505 Changed My Name From JATIN AGGARWAL TO JATIN AGGARWAL AS All Purpose 0070951270-1

Igh Rasool Hajam S/o Gh Hassan Hajam R/o Block A1, Neb Sarai Saket, New Delhi-110068, have changed my name to Salmani Tipu Sultan 0070951230-1

I,RAJNANDAN TIWARY,S/O RHULAN TIWARI R/O-A-79 NEAR COLUMBIA ASIA HOSPITAL PALAM-VIHAR GURGAON HARYANA-122017,HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO RAJNANDAN TIWARI 0040774525-5

RECRUITMENT

SITUATION VACANT

PART TIME JOBS

PART TIME JOB, WORK FROM HOME, Retired Person/ House Wife/ Senior Citizens, Contact: 9711064780, 8076745650 0040773823-3

PUBLIC NOTICE

My client, **Sh. Mani Ram** S/o Late Sh. Ramvilas R/o B-215, Ravishvas Park Ext. Rajapuri, Uttam Nagar, DK Mohan Garden, West Delhi-1100 59, do here by discover /debar his non-sonly **Shri Anil Kumar** along with his wife **Smt. Urmila**, W/o Sh. Anil Kumar and their daughters namely **Ms. Shristi** and **Ashita**, son namely **Lalraj** from their movable and Immovable properties and brake all relation with them. Any person dealing with them will do so at his or her own risk cost and consequences. Withint future if any issues problems or liabilities is being created by them or againsts. They shall be liable for their acts. Sd/- **Pardeep Kumar Gautam Advocate** Ch. No. 719, Western Wing, Tis Hazari Courts, Delhi-110054

I, KUMARI JAVATRI DEVI W/O N.O.14468094L RANK SEP (LATE) JAIPAL R/O H.NO.9 NEAR WHITE MANDIR, BHALASWA, N.S.MANDI, DELHI-110033 HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO JAVITRI VIDE AFFIDAVIT DATED 13.2.25 BEFORE DELHI. MY ACTUAL DOB IS 01.01.1960. 0070951297-1

I, K S ANTHONY, S/o K S Isaac, REGTL No-4370299M, Rank-Hav, permanent Resident of Riha Village, Ukhrul District Manipur-795142, inform that name of my wife's and DOB have been wrongly written as K S FOCUSTY and 04-03-1981 in my service record. The actual name and DOB of my wife's are P H FOCUSTY and 04-03-1985 respectively for all future purposes. 0040774513-1

I, FARHA NAZ, W/o Mohd Shoaib, R/O RZ-526/3, Gali No.23, Tughlakabad Extn., Delhi-110019, have changed my name to FARHA NAAZ, for all purposes. 0040774425-1

I, Amrendra Mishra S/O Chandra Nand Mishra R/o Flat No-G1-101, Supertech Eco-Village 2, Sector-16B, Bishrakh Sarajpur Greater Noida West Gautam Buddha Nagar Uttar Pradesh-201306 has changed my name from AMRENDRA MISHRA TO AMRENDRA KUMAR MISHRA for all future Purposes. 0070951244-1

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PUBLIC NOTICE
This is to inform to public at large that my client **Mrs. Pinki W/o Sh. Shiv Nath Gupta R/O H. No. 5798, Gali No. 6, New Chandrawal, VTC Kamia Nagar, Delhi - 110007** have cut off their family relations and have disowned their son **Ashwaj S/o Sh. Shiv Nath Gupta R/O H. No. 5798, Gali No. 6, New Chandrawal, VTC Kamia Nagar, Delhi-110007** through their movable/immovable properties due to their disobedient and quarrelsome behaviour as he is indulged into social activities and also involve into affair with one girl namely **Ms. Kanchan** even after refusal of my clients and my clients were not aware/shall not be responsible for any act & liabilities of **Ashwaj** in any manner in future. Sunita (Advocate)

PUBLIC NOTICE
It is to inform to the public at large that **Mrs. Reetia Goyal** has acquired Property Bearing **Plot No. 105, Sector-13, Phase-1, situated at Ward No. 6 Old Delhi Anand Road Sushma Gurgaon wide Sate, Dae, of 1977** executed by **Shri Chand and M/s. Ashok Kumar and Original Sale Deed No. 2612/1977** in favour of **Sh. Shikandra Devi** attorney of **Mr. Raghunath Singh** in favour of **Mr. Shri Chand and Mr. Ram Saran** and Original Decree Suit for Declaration of 09.11.2002 passed in the Court of **Sh. J. K. Chaudhary** for Division Gurgaon in Case No. 51 of 2002 in the matter of **Mr. Ashok Kumar and Mr. Chand Ram vs. Plaintiff Mrs. Reetia Devi** as Defendant, declaring **Mr. Ashok Kumar and Mr. Chand Ram** as the owners of the entire property are lost in Original OR Any person/ firm/ institution/ company having any claim or right in respect of the said Property or rights of inheritance share, sale, agreement, lease, license, gift, possession, legal heirs, partners or assignees/ however or otherwise is hereby required to intimate in writing to the undersigned within 07 days from the date of publication of this notice of her/his/her share or claim, if any, with all supporting documents at below mentioned address. After expiration of notice period of 07 days, if no such claim or right is treated null and void and also treated as waived and not binding on our client. **Ajay Kumar Giri (Advocate)** H No. 26/161, Basement, Vikram Vihar, Near Saket Nagar-4, New Delhi-110032

PUBLIC NOTICE
It is notified for the information of general public that my client **Mr. Rajat Garg** proposes to purchase Property No. 27, admeasuring 225 sqmts. Road D-1+1, at DLF City, Gurgaon, Haryana, with **Mrs. Anita, Mr. Sachin Yadav, and Mr. Deepak Yadav**. Initially, the property was in the name of **Mr. Rishma Nand**, widow of **Mr. Rishi Singh** who died on 31.10.2007, the property was devolved to **Mrs. Jyoti Yadav, Mrs. Anita, Mr. Sachin Yadav, and Mr. Deepak Yadav**. **Mrs. Jyoti Yadav** later relinquished share in favour of **Mrs. Anita, Mr. Sachin Yadav, and Mr. Deepak Yadav**, however, the Surviving Member Certificate is not on record. Any person having any objection, claim, or right in respect of the said property is hereby requested to raise their claim within Fifteen (15) days from the date of this publication. Beyond this period, no claims shall be entertained, and any dealings with the property shall be at the sole risk and responsibility of the parties involved. My client shall not be held liable for any disputes arising therefrom. Sd/- **CA. G. JHA Advocate** E-524, Karkardooma Courts, Delhi-110032

PUBLIC NOTICE
Notice is hereby given to all concerned that my client **Sh. Prem Chand** and **Smt. Raj Kumari R/O 48A, Village- Nandgaon, Distt. Hastal Extension, Uttam Nagar, Delhi-59**, have disowned/debarred/ discarded their real son's **Mr. Garwar Kumar** and their daughter **in-law Alka**, due to their misbehavior, disobedient, illegal activities/assets, also ceased all their relations with them, any person whosoever deal with them shall risks/ cost/ responsibility. Sd/- **VIJAL TRIPATHI Advocate** Address- 373, Ground Floor, Pocket 4, Sector 22, Rohini, Delhi 110086

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The Good, Bad & Ugly

CHHAAVA ★★★

Director: Laxman Utekar Cast: Vicky Kaushal, Rashmika Mandanna, Akshaye Khanna, Ashutosh Rana, Divya Dutta, Vineet Singh, Diana Penty, Neil Bhoopalam

SHUBHRA GUPTA

AT THE end of 161 minutes of *Chhaava*, based on the high points of the life of Sambhaji Maharaj, the son of Shivaji Maharaj, you are left with two chief thoughts. How do you pull off a film that talks up a historical figure not as well known as his illustrious parent, without us wondering: how much is fact and how much fiction?

And the other, which is the reason you manage to sit through this ultra-loud, ultra-violent re-creation of a slice of the 17th-century Hindustan is the total commitment on

display by its lead actor to the titular character: Vicky Kaushal becomes Chhaava ('son of a lion'), whose story the film adapts from the Marathi novel of the same name by Shivaji Sawant.

The film opens as it means to go on: an attack on a Mughal outpost by a band of brave Maratha warriors, led by Sambhaji, in which the latter are comprehensively victorious. The camera stays close to Kaushal's Sambhaji, who wades into battle as if it is his natural element, cleaving heads and chopping limbs, which we see in excruciatingly bloody detail.

This sets the tone for the rest of it. The repeated attempts of the Mughals, led by the

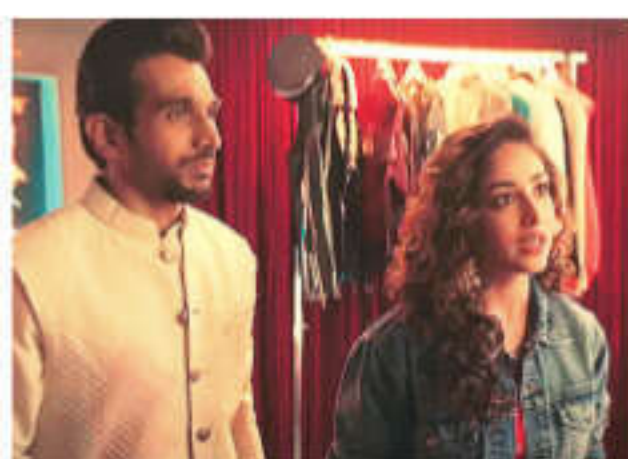
shifty Aurangzeb (Akshaye Khanna), who for some reason is addressed as 'Aurang', to finish off the Marathas are kept at bay even as the hidden enemies within Sambhaji's ranks work to topple their own.

In between the non-stop frantic set-pieces of soldiers and swords and horses, we get scenes of domesticity. The doe-eyed Rashmika Mandanna, who has become the go-to actor for the faithful-wife-of-strong-men whether it is in the South or North, welcomes her wounded valorous husband home, even as plots are being hatched up by his scheming step-mother (Divya Dutta) and her collaborators, to supplant our hero.

Chhaava's painting of Mughal invaders as black is of a piece with the current atmosphere, but we've got to the point where the film's attempt at balance has to be noted: Akbar (Neil Bhoopalam) may not have been shown as being as blood-thirsty as Aurangzeb, the evil emperor who smashed all opposition to his ascent, but at every point he, Akbar, is the supplicant, and Sambhaji, with his constant *guhaar of swaraaj*, is all-powerful. When not hacking off body parts, and sweet-talking his wife, Sambhaji is mainly in the company of his faithful cohorts, an uncle (a heavily moustachioed Ashutosh Rana), and a poet-cum-best-friend (Vineet Singh), both effective.

Akshaye Khanna, practically unrecognisable under the prosthetic work as the white-haired, ageing Aurangzeb, obsessed with fashioning the end of the lion's cub, manages to create a few interesting moments for himself. But soon enough he is shown as losing the plot, even when he has his enemy, bleeding and torn, strung up on a post.

The torture porn, supervised by Aurangzeb's cruel daughter (Diana Penty, who's having a bit of a costumed revival in period dramas), reminds you of the systematic flaying of Mel Gibson in *The Passion of Christ*. It is relentless, and ends, as does the film, in an exhausting blur.



Old Wine, Old Bottle

DHOOM DHAAM ★★

Director: Rishab Seth
Cast: Yami Gautam Dhar, Pratik Gandhi, Kavin Dave, Mukul Chaddha, Mushtaq Khan, Prateik Babbar

SHUBHRA GUPTA

IF YOU married *Iss Raat Ki Subah Nahin* with a zillion iterations of the odd-couple and lovers-on-the-run and heist movies, you would get *Dhoom Dhaam*, a film which borrows from all these elements, while straining every nerve to be novel. The trouble with skimming tropes is that your film, even with a fresh pairing, and despite a few flourishes, ends up more or less trope-y.

Newly married couple Koyal Chaddha (Yami Gautam Dhar) and Veer Poddar (Pratik Gandhi) find themselves on the run, dodging a couple of armed fellows who burst into their *suhaagraat* suite, asking a question no one seems to have the answer to: where is Charlie?

As they try figuring who-what-which Charlie, the twosome flits from one possible spot to another, including a night-club where the bride's best pal is a DJ, the swanky flat of a quirky ex (Prateik Babbar, in a walk-on part), the deserted building and its helpful watchman, with a couple of characters — a troubled relative (Kavin Dave) and a too-helpful cop (Mukul Chaddha) — popping up now and then.

Effort has been made to create a distinctly mismatched pair. She floors it; he is sedate. She is foul-mouthed, letting loose a string of *gaalis* with aplomb; he is afflicted by multiple phobias. She also gets to deliver a monologue (anyone else thinking America Ferrara in *Barbie*?) about the shackles of patriarchy and why women need to lie in order to break free, which basically puts the spirited Dhar firmly in the driving seat, with the meek Gandhi playing catch-up, with her being referenced even in his few break-out moments.

One does make you break out in a grin. It involves Gandhi surrounded by a posse of lusty women: you know there will be a stripping sequence, but you enjoy it nevertheless because the actor, flaunting impressive pectorals, invites you to do so. Meanwhile, everything goes along till everyone fetches up in the villain's den. Tropes, remember? If this were called *Boom Baam*, instead of *Dhoom Dhaam*, it would be same difference. Did the filmmakers struggle to find a sharper title, too?

Reality Check

SHALINI LANGER

THIS IS Captain America dipping its toes in the turgid waters of geopolitics. Specifically the turgid waters of the Indian Ocean, where a discovery has been made of a miraculous new element called adamantium (think Wolverine's claws).

So it is that, along with the Japanese PM, a bearded, kurta pyjama and jacket-wearing, very slim Prime Minister of India gets a seat at the high table, which the American President is presiding over in his bid to Make the World Great Again.

Few would call this world brave or new, but it may have dashes of reality. After all, what better moment than now to look at the podium of the US President and wonder what beast is going to emerge from behind it this time? A Red Hulk is what we get here.

CAPTAIN AMERICA: BRAVE NEW WORLD ★★★

Director: Julius Onah
Cast: Anthony Mackie, Harrison Ford, Danny Ramirez, Shira Haas, Carl Lumbly, Tim Blake Nelson

To Captain America's fortune, the President here is played by Harrison Ford who, despite his bad, bad past hinted at here, is at the end of the day still Ford. So, whether he indeed has had a change of heart is immaterial; he remains a curmudgeonly old man impossible not to like.

When Ford as in President Ross summons Captain America as in Sam Wilson (Mackie) for a mission, he obliges, if reluctantly. But then, along with sidekick and aspiring 'Falcon', Joaquín (Ramírez), and retired super soldier Bradley (a very good Lumbly), Wilson finds himself getting sucked into a Washington labyrinthine which is as much about political and diplomatic survival as physical.

Cherry blossoms figure in a big way, from Washington to Tokyo. There are many fights in the air and on the ground, and inside labs where dangerous liquids careen perilously,



while the White House gets knocked down.

Mackie is capable and nice to have around, but he is no Chris Evans, whose star charisma could lift this material. Old Rogers buddy Buck (Stan Sebastian) pops up just to tell us why both Wilson and Evans's Steve

Rogers have their place: "Rogers gave people something to believe in, you give them something to aspire to."

Take your pick. Or, wait. Because Marvel, this 35th outing of an MCU feature notwithstanding, is certainly not done.

Running on Borrowed Steam

BRIDGET JONES: MAD ABOUT THE BOY ★★★

Director: Michael Morris
Cast: Renee Zellweger, Hugh Grant, Chiwetel Ejiofor, Leo Woodall, Mila Jankovic, Casper Knopf

SHALINI LANGER

IF YOU have to remain the same over nearly 25 years since the first *Bridget Jones* came out, you better be Hugh Grant. The actor who has been having a delightful run recently, effortlessly chomping into a range of roles, slips right back into his rogue Daniel Cleaver mode here — greyer, wrinklier and even, just a tad bit, sadder, without losing any of his winking charms.

Zellweger, an actor who made all her own this role of a ditzzy, frumpy, messy single woman who somehow landed top of the most dishiest men around, sadly struggles in comparison. The effort to pull off *Bridget Jones* a fourth time shows in every exaggerated facial expression she makes by way of continuity to her younger self.

The thing is, being about the same age as Bridget in her 50s this time, let me tell you, nothing makes you grow up at double quick speed than raising two children. No, you can't have that messy a kitchen or living room; no, you don't show up at school in flannel pyjamas and uncombed hair, even if "the perfect Nicolette" is beyond you; no,



you don't burn food constantly; and no, you don't go swooning at every young man's torso, rare as that opportunity may be.

Given that Bridget does not work, it's hard to relate to any of the above, with no explanation offered for how she is still cruising through life, though her loyal group of friends (still around, since *Bridget Jones's Diary*) could be one explanation.

Her messiness and absentmindedness notwithstanding, her old boss hires her right back when she wants the job. And again, it's hard to see what makes her "the best TV producer" he has had, let alone a TV producer at all given she shows no signs of com-

petence here either. The salary presumably is high enough for her to afford what has to be the best nanny on the planet.

Mark Darcy, the always watchable Colin Firth, who was finally happily married to Bridget last time, has been dispensed with — will not say how, unless you have figured that one out already. Which leaves Bridget again single, and ready to mingle — reluctantly of course, as Mark keeps popping around at times to evoke their connection.

And there are again two men vying for Bridget's attention, one being Woodall and the other being Ejiofor. Woodall is gorgeous to look at, but sorry, that's about it — even if

the director gives him the wet white shirt that shot Firth to *Pride and Prejudice* heaven. Ejiofor has more going for him but is too tightly constrained in the role of a disciplinarian science teacher who is perpetually harassed.

There is no chemistry between Bridget and Woodall's Roxster, though there are a few sex romps. There is little of that raunchy dialogue (guess, won't pass muster now) that made Bridget and Daniel so liberating to watch. And Ejiofor's Wallaker is not stuck-up like the lordly Mark but high-strung in other ways — a look that wears out.

Emma Thompson shows up briefly as Bridget's gynaecologist and adviser-in-chief.

A few jokes do land, such as when Roxster and Bridget first meet, with her stuck halfway up a tree, her endowed behind standing out — Zellweger remains marvellous in physical comedy. Or when Bridget is left nursing swollen lips after ingesting a serum to find her youth — perhaps a jab at Zellweger's own experiment with a makeover that went horribly wrong. You are left wishing that the filmmaker tapped into more of Zellweger's comic talent.

The two young children of Mark and Bridget, especially daughter Mabel (Jankovic), are perhaps the best thing about *Mad About The Boy*. Mabel is a perfect picture of the unaffected insouciance that once made Bridget sparkle.

There could be a sequel here — and given how it is going these days, it could even be 20 years hence.

STREAMING WATCH LIST

BY ALAKA SAHANI



BROKEN RAGE

PRIME VIDEO
HAILED AS the 'strangest' movie of 2025 by some critics, this is a genre-bending feature from Japanese filmmaker Takeshi Kitano, who has directed, written and acted in it. The film follows a hitman, Nezumi (played by Takeshi Kitano), fighting for his survival when he's caught between the police and yakuza (mafia). The film premiered at the Venice International Film Festival in 2024.



SUBSERVIENCE

LIONSGATE PLAY
THIS SCIENCE-FICTION thriller follows the story of a perfect helper, who turns into the ultimate nightmare. When struggling father Nick (Michele Morrone) brings home Alice (Megan Fox), a lifelike AI assistant, she's everything the family needs — smart, capable, and a little too perfect. But as Alice grows more self-aware, her helpful demeanor warps into something far more sinister.



SHANGHAI BLUES

MUBI
The 4K edition of Tsui Hark's *Shanghai Blues* was screened at the 2024 Cannes Film Festival under 'Cannes Classics'. Set in 1937, amid Shanghai's bombings, Tung and Shu find solace under a bridge. Though unable to see each other, the young couple fall in love and plan to meet again when the war ends. A decade later, aspiring songwriter Tung and showgirl Shu cross paths again, unaware of their past connection.



KADHALIKKA NERAMILLAI

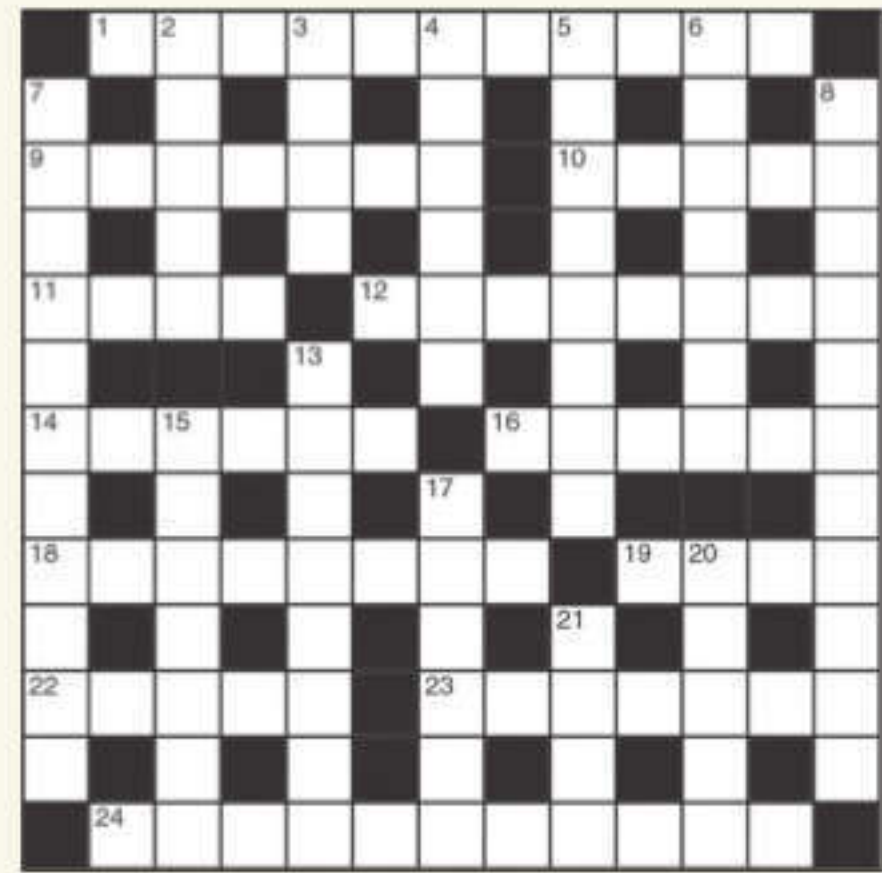
NETFLIX
A MAN falls for his boss's daughter and convinces his friend to pose as his father to gain approval for their marriage, resulting in a hilarious series of misunderstandings. Directed by Kiruthiga Udhayanidhi, this romantic drama features Nithya Menen and Ravi Mohan as lead actors. The light-hearted film explores contemporary ideas of marriage and parenting.



MAX

ZEE5
DIRECTED BY debutant Vijay Karthikeya, this high-octane Kannada movie featuring Kichcha Sudeep will stream from February 15. *Max* follows Police Inspector Arjun Mahakshay (Kichcha Sudeep), who takes charge of a local police station just a day before his suspension. When two young men, the sons of powerful ministers, die mysteriously in the station, Arjun must navigate a web of political pressure.

CROSSWORD 5601



- ACROSS
- 1 What it takes to make a sewer work well? (11)
- 9 Under cover donors I changed (7)
- 10 Broad road lacking a place to meet (5)
- 11 High spots of a European tour (4)
- 12 Abandoned flapper in an extreme position (4,4)
- 14 One who may thrive on complaints (6)
- 16 It is weighed by a craftsman (6)
- 18 More than father I had been unduly rewarded (8)
- 19 Broken oar left for examination (4)
- 22 In no mood to enjoy life I reckon (5)
- 23 Bizarre form of basic heating (7)
- 24 Sounds like narrow waters but don't be confused (3,8)
- DOWN
- 2 Finally attain a high position (3,2)
- 3 Damn peculiar mood (4)
- 4 Chop tree as festival season arrives (6)
- 5 Hot-rod driving is completely absorbing (8)
- 6 Sounds the end of a language (7)
- 7 Ordering a drink and noticing its ingredients (3,3,5)
- 8 He holds a record in business (6,5)
- 13 It's soothing when you have to concentrate (8)
- 15 Box me up inside and dispose of the body (7)
- 17 Deal leads to doctor being held in row (6)
- 20 Point out affluent German kingdom (5)
- 21 Mail sorted for West African country (4)

Solutions Crossword 5600 Across: 1 Affection, 9 Outdoor, 10 Leash, 11 Toll, 12 Consider, 14 Etcher, 16 Launch, 18 Revolver, 19 Also, 22 Exact, 23 Clipper, 24 Wedding ring Down: 2 Fatal, 3 Eros, 4 Turbot, 5 Talisman, 6 On and on, 7 Bottle green, 8 Churchgoers, 13 Deflated, 15 Caviare, 17 Deacon, 20 Lupin, 21 Pier

JUMBLED WORDS

Given below are four jumbled words. Solve the jumbles to make proper words and move them to the respective squares below. Select the letters in the shaded squares and jumble them to get the answer for the given clue.
A_____is a first step towards communication across cultural boundaries. - Ethan Zuckerman (6,8)

CPAAE

AYLNNO

AECMNU

OSYGGM

Solution: APVCE LOONY, ACUMEN, SMOCYG
Answer: A common language is a first step towards communication across cultural boundaries. - Ethan Zuckerman

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON (SEE SECTION 82 Cr.P.C.)

Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused person(s) **Sheikh Munabar Hassan @ Kalu S/o Sheikh Jiyarat R/o Kandar Colony, Kabadi Wali Gali, Bhalaswa Dairy, Delhi** has committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence in FIR No. **56/19, U/s 457/380/411/34 IPC, PS Moti Nagar, Distt. West, Delhi** and it has been returned to a Warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said accused person(s) **Sheikh Munabar Hassan @ Kalu** can not be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said accused person(s) **Sheikh Munabar Hassan @ Kalu** has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant). Proclamation is hereby made that the said accused person(s) **Sheikh Munabar Hassan @ Kalu** of FIR No. **56/19, U/s 457/380/411/34 IPC, PS Moti Nagar, Distt. West, Delhi** is required to appear before this Court to answer the said complaint on or before dated **01.04.2025 at 10:00 AM**.

By Order
Ms. Sukriti Singh
DP/1743/WD/2025 Judicial Magistrate, First Class-04
(Court Matter) Court No. 268, Tis Hazari Courts, Delhi

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

Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused **1.Beena Sharma, W/o: Lt. Surender Kumar Sharma, 2.Rohan Sharma, S/o: Lt. Surender Kumar Sharma, R/o: G-50, Block-R, Dilshad Garden, GTB Enclave, Delhi,** have committed (or are suspected to have committed) the offence in **FIR No. 95/20, U/s: 498A/406/34 IPC, Police Station GTB Enclave, Delhi** and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest there upon issued that the said accused **1.Beena Sharma 2.Rohan Sharma** cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said accused **1.Beena Sharma 2.Rohan Sharma** have absconded (or are concealing themselves to avoid the service of the said warrant). Proclamation is here by made that the said accused **1.Beena Sharma 2.Rohan Sharma of Police Station GTB Enclave, Delhi** are required to appear before this Court to answer the said complaint on or before **04.04.2025**.

By Order
Ms. Shruti Sharma,
DP/1668/SHD/2025 JMFC-01, Shahdara District, Room No. 55
Karkardooma Courts, Delhi

NORTHERN RAILWAY

E-Auction Notice

Ministry of Environment & Forests (MOEF) registered Purchasers/Firms, as recyclers/re-processors for used oil, are invited to attend the E-Auction for Purchasing of used/refused black oil through bidding, conducted by General Store Depot, Northern Railway, Shakurbasti, Delhi-34 on 22.02.2025 at 10.00 A.M.,

S. N.	Lot. No.	Description	Qty.
1	2004180225	Scrap Waste Used/Refused Black Oil Contained In 40/45 Gallon Drums Qty: 100 Drums= 20000 Kgs (Approx) As Is Where Is Basis, As It Is. Note: Oil Will Be Sold Along With Drums, Loading By Purchaser, Segregation Of Water If Found Is Allowed At Time Of Delivery. Location:- On Ground in Section-G, RHS of Sec-E Road	20000 KGS
2	2004190225	Refuse Oil Scrap Waste Used/Refused Black Oil (Transformer Oil) Contained In 40/45 Gallon Drums Qty: 25 Drums = 5000 Kgs (Approx) As Is Where Is Basis. Note: Oil Will Be Sold Along With Drums, Loading By Purchaser, Segregation Of Water If Found Is Allowed At Time Of Delivery. Location:- On Ground in Section-G, RHS of Sec-E Road	5000 KGS

Railway reserves the right to cancel the E-Auction for used oil on the said date without assigning any reasons therefor. Unsold Material (Used Oil, if any) shall again be put up for sale in ensuing E-Auction. The detail of Lots/Qty. are available on website www.ireps.gov.in auction catalogue Dated -22.02.2025.

No.-Scrap Used Oil/E-Auction/SSB/2024-25 Dated :-13.02.2025

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

514/25

OVER THE HEDGE by Michael Fry & T Lewis



CALVIN & HOBBS by Bill Watterson



MARVIN by Tom Armstrong



SUDOKU 5867

Difficulty Level 5s

Instructions

To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from 1 to 9 must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Difficulty Level

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

SOLUTION SUDOKU 5866

7	8	1	4	6	3	2	9	5
6	2	3	1	5	9	8	7	4
4	9	5	8	7	2	3	6	1
8	7	9	6	1	5	4	2	3
2	1	4	9	3	7	5	8	6
3	5	6	2	8	4	9	1	7
5	6	7	3	9	8	1	4	2
9	3	2	7	4	1	6	5	8
1	4	8	5	2	6	7	3	9

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

Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused **Amod S/o Dorlal R/o H. No. 171, Jat Chopal Humayunpur S.J Enclave New Delhi.** has committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence in Case **FIR No. 448/22 U/s 33 Delhi Excise Act P.S.: S.J Enclave New Delhi,** it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said accused **Amod,** cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said accused **Amod,** has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant).

Proclamation is hereby made that the said **Amod,** accused of **FIR No. 448/22 U/s 33 Delhi Excise Act P.S.: S.J Enclave New Delhi,** it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued th is required to appear before this Court to answer the said complaint on or before **25.03.2025**.

By Order
Ms. Nidhi Singh
DP/1702/SW/2025 JMFC-03, Room No. 212
(Court Matter) Saket Court, Delhi

ANDHRA PRADESH CAPITAL REGION DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (APCRDA)

Lenin Center, Governorpeta, Vijayawada-520002 (AP)

E-PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTICE

NIT No. 83/PROC/MAU61-USIOINFROTH/11/2024-IFR1/Zone-4 Dt:13.02.2025

Name of Work: APCRDA-Construction of Roads, Drains, Water Supply, Sewerage, utility Ducts for Power & ICT, Reuse waterline & Avenue Plantation, compatible with trunk infrastructure in Layouts for Land Pooling Schemes for Pichukulapalem(P), Thulluru(P) and Ananthavaram(P) Villages in Zone-4 Area in Amaravati Capital City, Andhra Pradesh on Lump sum contract (% Percentage Tender) including DLP of 2 Years.

NIT No. 84/PROC/MAU61-USIOINFROTH/41/2024-IFR1/Zone-5A Dt:13.02.2025

Name of Work: APCRDA-Construction of Roads, Drains, Water Supply, Sewerage, utility Ducts for Power & ICT, Reuse waterline & Avenue Plantation, compatible with trunk infrastructure in Layouts for Land Pooling Schemes for Thulluru(P) and Ananthavaram(P) Villages in Zone-5C Area in Amaravati Capital City, Andhra Pradesh on Lump sum contract (% Percentage Tender) including DLP of 2 Years.

NIT No. 85/PROC/MAU61-USIOINFROTH/42/2024-IFR1/3C Dt:13.02.2025

Name of Work: APCRDA-Construction of Roads, Drains, Water Supply, Sewerage, utility Ducts for Power & ICT, Reuse waterline & Avenue Plantation, compatible with trunk infrastructure in Layouts for Land Pooling Schemes for Thulluru(P) and Ananthavaram(P) Villages in Zone-5C Area in Amaravati Capital City, Andhra Pradesh on Lump sum contract (% Percentage Tender) including DLP of 2 Years.

The bid can be downloaded on AP e-procurement portal from **15.02.2025 to 03.03.2025 up to 14.00 Hrs.** Due date for submission of Bid is **03.03.2025 up to 15.00 Hrs.** Technical bid opening **03.03.2025@16.00Hrs.** For further details Please refer to www.approcurement.gov.in and www.crda.ap.gov.in.

NIT No. 86/PROC/MAU61-EGEENV/APCP/1/2024-CZLE Dt:14.02.2025.

Name of Work: APCRDA- "To carry out Hydrogeomorphological studies, Aquifer Geometry including Palaeo flood analysis upto 100m depth in 217.23 Sqkm + 1km buffer from city boundary of Amaravati capital city, Andhra Pradesh and produce GIS maps on Hydrogeomorphology, Aquifer geometry, palaeo flood channel and micro seismic zones with thematic layers of surface and subsurface features showing characteristics of Soils & Rocks, Palaeochannels, aquifers, water table, water recharge zones, flood modelling and other features to plan and conserve water resources and regulate city development." Estimate Contract Value: **Rs.53,04,056.00.**

The bid can be downloaded on AP e-procurement portal from **15.02.2025 to 03.03.2025 up to 14.00 Hrs.** Due date for submission of Bid is **03.03.2025 up to 15.00 Hrs.** Technical bid opening **03.03.2025@16.00Hrs.** For further details Please refer to www.approcurement.gov.in and www.crda.ap.gov.in.

NIT No. 89/PROC/MAU61-USIOHBBG/18/2024-HB Dt:14.02.2025.

Name of the work: "Completion of Balance Works of Design and Construction of total 71 Bungalows of (G+1) floors with BUA of 475,920 Sq. ft with Pile Foundation, Super Structure with RC Columns-Beams Framed Structure, Architectural Finishes, Internal Electrical & Plumbing works,HAVC works and IT works including External Electrical, Plumbing, Infrastructure Facilities, External Roads and Home Automation". for Hon'ble Ministers & Hon'ble Judges in Amaravati Govt. Complex, Amaravati, Andhra Pradesh including DLP of 2 Years-on Lump sum Contract (% tender) System. Est. Cost - **Rs.492.30 Crores**

NIT No. 90/PROC/MAU61-USIOHBBG/22/2024-HB Dt:14.02.2025.

Name of the work: "Completion of Balance Works of Design and Construction of Bungalows for AIS Principal Secretaries & AIS Secretaries consisting of total 115 Bungalows of (G+1) floors with BUA of 5,28,125 Sq.ft with Pile Foundation, Super Structure with RC Columns-Beams Framed Structure, Architectural Finishes, Internal Electrical & Plumbing works, HVAC works and IT works including External Electrical, Plumbing, Infrastructure Facilities, External Roads and Home Automation for total 115 Bungalows of (G+1) Floors for AIS Principal Secretaries and AIS Secretaries at Rayapudi Village, Amaravati, Andhra Pradesh on Design-Build Lump sum (% Percentage Tender) Contract system including DLP of 2 Years" Est. Cost - **Rs.516.60 Crores**

The bid can be downloaded on AP e-procurement portal from **17.02.2025 to 03.03.2025 up to 14.00 Hrs.** Due date for submission of Bid is **03.03.2025 up to 15.00 Hrs.** Technical bid opening **03.03.2025@16.00Hrs.** For further details Please refer to www.approcurement.gov.in and www.crda.ap.gov.in.

Sd/- Commissioner, APCRDA, Vijayawada

Public Notice

It is notified for information in compliance of office order ED/HSRHC/2017/413-428 Dated 24/11/2017 Haryana State Health Resources Centre Panchkula, Hospital record of IPD (indoor) and OPD (outdoor) of District Civil Hospital, Gurugram & Civil Hospital, Sector-10, Gurugram older than 3 years (up to 31.03.2021) and MLC record older than 15 years (Till March 2009) is to be destroyed. If anyone requires any previous record, he/she can contact undersigned within a period of one month; otherwise all old hospital records cited above will be destroyed. No correspondence in this regard shall be entertained after the period of one month from the publication of this notice.

Sd/-
Principal Medical Officer
District Civil Hospital, Gurugram & Civil Hospital, Sector-10, Gurugram
No. 32386/HRY

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 **Amin Khan S/o Bhudhi Khan R/o Village Bishanbra, P.S. Shergarh, District Mathura, Uttar Pradesh** has Committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence in case **FIR No. 411/2008 U/s 379/411/34 IPC, P.S. Sangam Vihar, New Delhi** and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said **Amin Khan** cannot be found, and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said **Amin Khan** has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant); Proclamation is hereby made that the said accused **Amin Khan** of case **FIR No. 411/2008 U/s 379/411/34 IPC, P.S. Sangam Vihar, New Delhi** is required to appear before this Court to answer the said complaint/case on or before **20.05.2025**.

By Order
Sh. Sankalp Kapoor
Judicial Magistrate First Class-04
Room No. 211
Saket Court Complex,
New Delhi

DP/1769/SD/2025(Court Matter)

DAY TODAY BY PETER VIDAL

ARIES (Mar 21 - Apr 20)

Everything seems to focus around how much you can afford, not to mention the value you place on certain relationships. Money itself may be a cause of friction, but you may also spend your way to satisfying long-held desires.

TAURUS (Apr 21 - May 21)

There's a powerful undercurrent in all your affairs at the moment, sweeping you inexorably towards the future. In fact, you'll soon reach an emotional high tide. It seems inevitable that you must be true to your heart, and this will make it very difficult to compromise.

GEMINI (May 22 - June 21)

You are bound to feel just a little strung out today, perhaps because it looks as if your work is never done. If you put your emotional energy into achieving something of value, rather than frittering your time away, then you will soon begin to reap the rewards.

CANCER (June 22 - July 23)

You should state your case and stick to it. If you know that what you say is an exact reflection of how you feel, there can be little room for compromise. It is up to others to realise that, just now, you have to be you. I'm sure partners will be patient with you.

LEO (July 24 - Aug 23)

Your planetary aspects could not be more challenging. This is a simple way of saying that difficulties should be welcomed as 'learning opportunities'. You may see this as a chance to grow in wisdom, maturity and confidence.

VIRGO (Aug 24 - Sep 23)

It's certainly a powerful moment, and you seem to be unduly affected by the way other people think and feel. There may be nothing you can do about it for now, beyond trying to get them to talk about their many fears and desires. Don't judge them too harshly.

LIBRA (Sep 24 - Oct 23)

Please don't lose your head just because all around you partners seem to be losing theirs. The most positive way to use your planetary energy at the moment is to get involved in some sort of charitable venture. Do favours for others and you'll benefit.

SCORPIO (Oct 24 - Nov 23)

You think you know your own mind, but do you? Now is the time to face the facts, as long as you listen carefully to other people's views. The only problem may arise if you are dealing with matters where emotions count for more than do your skills.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov 24 - Dec 22)

This certainly looks like an expensive moment and, if you know what's good for you, you'll stay well clear of dubious financial involvements. Put your emotional suspicions to one side and concentrate on finding out what makes someone else tick.

CAPRICORN (Dec 23 - Jan 20)

You are bound to meet your fair share of criticism. In fact the greater the opposition you face, the better, because you'll be forced to sharpen up your act, with good consequences for your social dreams and romantic affairs in particular.

AQUARIUS (Jan 21 - Feb 19)

Whatever you're doing, however you feel, there are always balancing factors, and right now excessive secrecy relating to feelings will be compensated for by equally forthright honesty concerning ideas and opinions. As a matter of fact, it may be all thoroughly confusing.

PISCES (Feb 20 - Mar 20)

You seem to be smitten by a strange sort of divine discontent, almost as if you know that the grass must be greener on the other side, but you're not sure how to get there. News from overseas might just bring relief, but a mystical approach may reveal the answer.

Muthoot Microfin Limited | GOLD AUCTION NOTICE

Regd. Office: 13th Floor, Parinee Crescendo, Bandra Kurla Complex, Bandra East, Mumbai, Maharashtra - 400051

Administrative Office: 5th Floor, Muthoot Tower, M.G. Road, Kochi, Kerala - 682035

90-91-454-427880 Fax: 91-454-2351464, CN: L5316010192P, C06223

Notice is hereby given for the information of all concerned that MSGB & MMGL loans gold ornaments pledged with under mentioned branches of the company for the period on 30-09-2020,25-08-2021,25-05-2022,15-07-2022,02-03-2023,16-06-2023,24-06-2023 respectively to which were overdue for redemption, and which have not been redeemed so far in spite of repeated notices, will be auction at 10.00AM on

REWARI DIST- Auction centre: REWARI, Muthoot fincorp LTD, GROUND FLOOR, BRASS MARKET , SCO-30, MAIN ROAD, NEARBIDIBANK , REWARI, HARYANA , 123401, AUCTION DATE: 27-02-2025

REWARI MML - 1103750105146431,1103750105146418,1103750105145256,1103750105144314, MAHENDERGARH DIST- Auction centre: NARNAUL, Muthoot fincorp LTD, FIRST FLOOR, DEWAN TOWER BUILDING , 755/756, NEAR MAHAVIR CHOWK , REWARI ROAD, OPPOSITE DEWAN PETROL PUMP , NARNAUL, HARYANA , 123001, AUCTION DATE:27-02-2025, NARNAUL MML - 1103460105149405,1103460105148334, ATULI MML - 110776010500068

Please note , If the Auction is not conducted on the above-mentioned date for any reason, the same will be conducted at 10.00 AM On 11-03-2025 at Auction centre: REWARI, Muthoot fincorp LTD, GROUND FLOOR, BRASS MARKET , SCO-30, MAIN ROAD, NEARBIDIBANK , REWARI, HARYANA , 123401. On 11-03-2025 at Auction centre: NARNAUL, Muthoot fincorp LTD, FIRST FLOOR, DEWAN TOWER BUILDING , 755/756, NEAR MAHAVIR CHOWK , REWARI ROAD, OPPOSITE DEWAN PETROL PUMP , NARNAUL, HARYANA , 123001. This notice will not be applicable for the respective loan accounts where the redemption of gold ornaments has already been effected.

For Muthoot Microfin Ltd
Authorised Auctioneer

INDIAN RAILWAYS

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA (BHARAT SARKAR)

MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (RAIL MANTRALAYA)

(RAILWAY BOARD)

No. 2023/Track-III/MC/5 New Delhi, dated: 14.02.2025

CORRIGENDUM-XVII

Subject : E-Tender No. TM-2303 for procurement of Rail Borne Maintenance Vehicle "RBMV" for Indian Railways to be opened on 11.03.2025.

The Corrigendum-XVII regarding corrigendum to Technical Specifications has been uploaded on website <http://www.ireps.gov.in>. All other terms and conditions of the subject tender remain unchanged.

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

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

पी एम श्री केन्द्रीय विद्यालय विकासपुरी, ग्राम हस्तसाल, डाकघर उत्तम नगर, नई दिल्ली-110059

Interview Notice

Panel interview for the different post on purely part time contractual basis for the academic session 2025-26 is being organized at this vidyalaya on dated 24.02.2025. All the eligible candidates are requested to register themselves in the school premises between 08 am to 10 am and attend the interview with all the originals and photocopies of academic and the other certificates.

PRT, TGT & PGT (All Subjects), Computer Instructor, Sports Coach, Music & Dance Coach, Art & Craft Coach, Yoga Teacher, Nurse, Doctor, Special Educators, Counsellor, Band Master.

Educational qualification and other information are available on the school website www.vikasपुरी.kvs.ac.in. No honorarium of any kind will be payable for the interview.

Principal

NORTHERN RAILWAY

E-Tender Notice

Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer/Traction Distribution, DRM's Office, State Entry Road, New Delhi for & on behalf of President of India, invites open e-tender for the under noted work:

Name of work with its location	Approx. Cost of work
Design, supply, erection, testing & commissioning of 25 KV AC OHE modification work in connection with various FOB at BBDE, BZJT, BZK, TRR, NLKR, AMN & MOY in connection with Provision of 3.60 mtrs wide FOB at NLKR & AMN (2 nos.), BZK & TRR (2 nos.), BBDE (between PF No. 1 & 2), MOY & BZJT (2 nos.) and other misc. work in DUKS section.	Rs.14,41,876.58/- Rs.28,800/-

E-Tender Bid Online Submission period 27.02.2025 (00.00 Hrs.) to 13.03.2025 (15.00 Hrs.)

E-Tender Bid Submission End Date & E-Tender Open Date & Time 13.03.2025 (15.00 hrs)

Fund Allocation RRSK (PH-53)

Website particulars where complete details of tender documents can be seen www.ireps.gov.in

E-Tender No.: 53-TRD-NDLS-2024-25 Dated : 13.02.2025 529/2025

Serving Customers With A Smile

CHAMPIONS TROPHY

ONE TOO MANY?

Ashwin questions five-spinner strategy

WITH THE Indian team management naming five spinners in the form of Kuldeep Yadav, Axar Patel, Washington Sundar, Ravindra Jadeja and Varun Chakravarthy in the final updated squad for Champion Trophy, former Indian spinner Ravichandran Ashwin has raised questions for Indian taking so many spinners to Dubai. While India had named Yashasvi Jaiswal in the provisional squad, the Mumbai batsman was excluded from the final squad with Chakravarthy making his way into the final squad.

"What I don't understand is the number of spinners we are taking to Dubai. Five spinners and we have made Yashasvi Jaiswal sit out. Yeah I understand that we take three or four spinners for a tour. But five spinners in Dubai? I don't know. I think we are one spinner too many if not two. The two left-arm spinners are your best all-rounders alongside Hardik Pandya. So both Axar Patel and Ravindra Jadeja are going to play. Hardik will also play and Kuldeep will play. If you want Varun Chakravarthy in the team, then you will have to make a pacer sit out and use Hardik as your second pacer. Else you will have to drop a spinner to bring in a third seamer," Ashwin said on his Youtube channel *Ash ki Baat*. **ENS**

TRI-SERIES

New Zealand beat Pakistan by 5 wickets

NEW ZEALAND clinched the tri-nation title by beating hosts Pakistan by five wickets in the final in Karachi on Friday to give them a major boost ahead of next week's Champions Trophy. Seamer Will O'Rourke (4-43) led New Zealand's tidy bowling as they bundled out the hosts for 242 with three deliveries still left in their innings. Daryl Mitchell (57) and Tom Latham (56) struck fifties as New Zealand romped home.

BRIEF SCORES: Pakistan 242 in 49.3 ovs (Mohammad Rizwan 46, Salman Agha 45; Will O'Rourke 4/43) lost to New Zealand 243/5 in 45.2 ovs (Daryl Mitchell 57, Tom Latham 56; Naseem Shah 2/43). **PTI**

Sri Lanka thrash Australia by 174 runs

AUSTRALIA WERE handed a reality check ahead of next week's Champions Trophy after Sri Lanka thrashed them by 174 runs in the second one day international to complete a 2-0 series sweep on Friday. Chasing 282 for victory, 50-overs world champions Australia were bundled out for 107 – their lowest ODI total in Asia.

BRIEF SCORES: Sri Lanka 281/4 in 50 ovs (Kusal Mendis 101, Charith Asalanka 78 n.o.; Sean Abbott 1/41) bt Australia 107 in 24.2 ovs (Steve Smith 29; Dunieth Wellalage 4/35). **REUTERS**

GROUND REALITY: DUBAI

In Dubai, you have a centre wicket and then you have wickets to the side. The sun hits the wickets till about 3pm to 4pm. After that, it forms a shadow. So, the wickets to the left tends to be a little slower..."

ROBIN SINGH, FORMER UAE COACH

We started with four seamers and two spinners, but towards the end we had to bring in an extra spinner as it got slower. Since it is still early part for the dew to set in, there was help for the spinners."

HEMANG BADANI, HEAD COACH, DUBAI CAPITALS

What lies in store for India

Decks would be batting-friendly, but factors like shadows, toss, extent of dew and grass will matter

VENKATA KRISHNA B
CHENNAI, FEBRUARY 14

THE SHADOW of the gigantic concrete structure, slower in the day, slight dew in the night, bit of live grass and largely batting-friendly conditions...these are the key elements India have to factor in during their stay at Dubai where they will play all their Champions Trophy fixtures, which begins on February 19.

Only a week to go for India's opening match against Bangladesh, one question lingers. Has India taken a gamble by including five spinners and just three seamers for the Dubai trip. The question is not bereft of logic. Hosts Pakistan, who could possibly play two matches including the group fixture against India on February 23, and are more familiar with the conditions in the Emirates, have just named one specialist spinner. There, thus, hangs a sweaty intrigue.

Slow but varied

The three venues in UAE – Sharjah, Dubai and Abu Dhabi – although slow, offer varied conditions in their own way. Among them, the Dubai International Cricket Stadium has been the most unique one thanks to its huge concrete structure. "It's a closed environment, so when it comes to Dubai a lot depends on which pitch you are playing," former India player Robin Singh, who is familiar with the conditions thanks to his stint as the national coach of the UAE in the past, tells *The Indian Express*.

"In Dubai, you have a centre wicket and then you have wickets to the side. The sun hits the wickets till about 3pm to 4pm. After that, it forms a shadow. So, the wickets to the left tends to be a little slower because they don't get enough sunlight for long periods. The way the stadium is built, the sunlight is only there for a period of time. Of course, it will be warm because of the humidity and it will always bring dew into play. But dew is pretty early for that, so it's not going to come down to toss," adds Robin, who recently coached MI Emirates that featured in the ILT20, which concluded last Sunday.

His state-mate Hemang Badani, who was the head coach of Dubai Capitals that won the ILT20 title, says how they had to change plans in the second half of the season. "We started with four seamers and two spinners, but towards the end we had to bring in an extra spinner as it got slower. Since it is still early part for the dew to set in, there was help for the spinners," Badani weighs in.

In the seven ODIs that have been played in the month of February at the venue, only two have involved full members Pakistan and England.

Both times, the chasing team emerged winners. But the sample size is skewed because the game happened back in 2012. When it comes to March and full member nations, both the matches were won by teams batting first. Out of the 58 matches the ground has hosted, only 22 have been won by teams batting first.

With Bumrah not around, and Arshdeep



The wickets that don't get enough sun because of shadows, tend to be slower at the Dubai International Stadium. *Reuters/File*



With the last-minute inclusion of Varun Chakravarthy, India have five spinners in its ranks. *Sportzpics/BCCI*

Singh and Harshit Rana far different from Mohammed Shami in terms of their lengths, it would be interesting to see how India goes about defending totals. If dew shows up, playing two wrist spinners (Kuldeep Yadav and Varun Chakravarthy) will be risk-fraught. If they chose to go with one, it would leave them short on attacking options, which India have preferred largely in recent times in ODIs.

Good chance for Shami

With the stadium not having cross-ventilation, it also denies the seamers the opportunity to move the ball for long periods like they do at Abu Dhabi, which has large open fields, and Sharjah, where there are no huge structures. It means, the new ball could offer some help under lights, but unlikely to provide prolonged assistance for the seamers.

"In the night, it has always shown a tendency to skid on. The dew is not extensive now, but it helps batting in the night. There will be runs for the taking. But if you're a good fast bowler, at night, you can exploit those conditions. A good seam bowler, someone like Shami will be a good bet in Dubai because he hits those right lengths and areas. Anyone who can hit the seam well and hit those areas will be reasonably successful," Robin adds.

This perhaps explains the reason why pacers have been more effective in Dubai than spinners. In the 58 ODIs played in Dubai, pacers have accounted for 463 wickets at an average of 28.62 at an economy of 4.78. The spinners have 320 scalps to show at an average of 30.17 at a slightly lower economy of 4.25.

Day, best time for spinners

With the matches starting at 2.30 PM local time, thanks to the dryness, it has usually been the best time to bowl if teams can overcome their aversion of fielding first under the afternoon sun. It is learnt that the curators have ensured that few of the pitches were

not used in the second half of the ILT20 so that it remains fresh for the ICC event. "I think they have kept aside a few wickets that they would want to play on. Of course, they have to leave a fair amount of grass so that the wickets won't turn or disintegrate. So, I think there will be good wickets to bat on. But definitely batting second is an advantage in Dubai. If you're playing in the daytime and it goes into the night, it tends to be a little slower in the daytime," Robin adds.

It explains why the venue has seen 300 being touched only on four occasions, with only one coming in the second. Being on the slower side doesn't necessarily mean spinners would get more turn off the pitch. It has seldom turned square nor has the pitch crumbled because of the heat like we see in sub-continental conditions. "In the daytime, you will see the spinners get a lot of help from the surface. So it comes down to the depth of your batting and the strength of your bowling. The ball tends to travel a bit in Dubai. So if you don't have a good attack in your hand, then your batting has to step up, which is why the batting depth is necessary. Three hundred will be a big enough total here," Robin says.

That explains why India brought in Varun Chakravarthy in place of a batsman. They seem to have evaluated all these factors and sans Bumrah they know they have to shore up their batting.

If that's the case, two of Ravindra Jadeja, Axar Patel and Washington Sundar are bound to fit into the XI with a toss up between Kuldeep and Varun for the third slot.

Depleted RCB punish sloppy GG in opener

VINAYAKK MOHANARANGAN
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 14

EVEN BEFORE a ball was bowled in the third season of the Women's Premier League, the Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) were dealt some major blows as they aimed to defend their title. Leading up to the tournament, they lost the services of Sophie Devine, Sophie Molineux and Asha Sobhana. Shreyanka Patil's name was absent from the playing XI in the first game and she posted on social media: "Heartbroken, but I will fly again," casting doubt over whether she can be fit for the season.

Then, Ellyse Perry confirmed pre-match on Friday that she wouldn't be bowling in the early part of the tournament at least because of a hip issue. That meant, from the 2024 WPL final, RCB lost all of their wicket-takers

But their batting firepower was intact, and it helped them beat Gujarat Giants (GG) by six wickets in Vadodara with nine balls remaining, chasing 202, the record successful run-chase in WPL history.

RCB understandably struggled in the first half against Gujarat Giants, who were powered by a sensational batting effort by their new captain Ash Gardner on their way to the big total. But it was not enough, as the defending champions flexed their batting muscle, with a generous helping hand(s) from GG's fielders. Perry showed that she is mighty important to RCB even as a pure batter, but the headline act was an unbroken 93-run stand off just 37 balls between **Richa Ghosh** and Kanika Ahuja.

The chase was massively assisted by the Giants' poor catching. Perry was dropped on 2, a slightly tough return catch to Tanuja Kanwe, and then on 19 when Harleen Deol dropped a sitter at long-on.

The Aussie superstar went on to score a superb 57 off 34 balls to drag RCB back into the chase after early setbacks. Then Simran Shaikh dropped Richa when she wasn't even off the mark, and it proved to be game-changing as the wicketkeeper-batter plundered 64 off 27 at a strike rate of 237/03. Add to all this, some woeful ground fielding, with overthrows and misfields even from their top overseas players, as the Giants threw away a win that was in their hands.

"Flattening to be honest," Gardner said. "I knew 200 was only about par halfway, we had to bowl really well. Unfortunately, we dropped some chances which hurt us in the end. Disappointing with the second half but there were some good glimpses. When you do miss those chances, it can hurt you. Richa capitalised on that, rode her luck, but batted beautifully to take them to a win."

RCB will relish this hard-fought win but their bowling department is going to be tested big time. Between Shreyanka, Molineux and Asha, RCB had the three top wicket-takers of the tournament (a total of 37 wickets between them) last year. That's the measure of the task facing them. GG went from 53/2 after 9 overs to 201/5, scoring 108 runs in the last 11 overs. Mandhana said the bowling would have to step up going forward, but the fight she saw from her depleted side would give her confidence.

BRIEF SCORES: Gujarat Giants 201/5 (Mooney 56, Gardner 79*, Renuka 2/25) lost to Royal Challengers Bengaluru 202/4 (Richa 64*, Perry 57, Gardner 2/33) by 6 wkts.

BRIEFLY

Indian wrestlers to miss ranking tourney

New Delhi: Indian wrestlers are set to miss the 2nd Ranking Series of the year in Albania after the Sports Ministry withheld approval, blaming the Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) for its failure to submit the necessary recommendations on time. The wrestlers had already missed the first Ranking Series in Zagreb due to a tussle between the ministry and the suspended WFI. The WFI, which was suspended by the ministry in December 2023 but remains recognized by the international body, had sent a last-minute proposal to the Sports Authority of India (SAI). "The WFI sent the proposal at the last minute and there was a delay in sending the proposed names to the SAI. So, it can't be processed and approved," a source told PTI. "We are always read to sanction athletes for international tournaments but there is a laid-down procedure which we need to follow." **PTI**

Poonacha-Lock enter doubles final

New Delhi: Niki Poonacha and Zimbabwe's Courtney John Lock sailed into the doubles final of the Delhi Open Tennis tournament after defeating third seeds Jay Clarke and Johannes Ingildsen in a thrilling encounter on Friday. The second-seeded pair dominated the opening set before Clarke and Ingildsen mounted a challenge in the second, forcing a tiebreaker. However, Poonacha and Lock held firm to close out the match in an hour and 24 minutes, registering a 6-2, 7-6 (1) win at the DLTA Complex. **PTI**

Shuttlers crash out after 0-3 loss

Qingdao: HS Prannoy fought valiantly, but India succumbed to a 0-3 defeat against a second-string Japan in the quarterfinals of the Badminton Asia Mixed Team Championships, ending their campaign on a disappointing note. India struggled to find their rhythm, and trailed 0-1 after going down in the mixed doubles. Dhruv Kapila and Tanisha Crasto, ranked 37th in the world, showed resilience before going down 13-21, 21-17, 13-21 to world number 12 Hiroki Midorikawa and Natsu Saito. India faced an uphill task against Tomoka Miyazaki, who has quickly risen to world number 8, following her triumph at the 2022 World Junior Championships. World number 31 Malvika Bansod, stepping in for Sindhu, put up a brave fight, especially in the second game, but struggled to match the control and consistency of her younger opponent and lost 12-21, 19-21, leaving India 0-2 behind. **PTI**

Musiala extends contract till 2030

Munich: Bayern Munich star Jamal Musiala has extended his contract with the club through June 2030. The Bavarian powerhouse said that Musiala, who joined the club as a youth from English side Chelsea in 2019, signed a new deal extending the one he had for another season. "People go to the stadium for players like Jamal Musiala. He's a truly exceptional player," Bayern president Herbert Hainer said. "Credit to our sporting management and the board. Today is a very good day for FC Bayern." **AP**

Death-overs acceleration a relative weakness?

LALITH KALIDAS
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 14

INDIA'S THREE-MATCH ODI series against England could not have finished much better than a 3-0 whitewash this week.

"I don't see there was anything wrong with what we did in this series. There are certain things we are looking at (to improve)," said captain Rohit Sharma after the third ODI in Ahmedabad, where his team got what it wished for being put into bat. Batting first for the first time in the series, India racked up a sizable 356 in Ahmedabad.

As they capped off a hefty 142-run victory, a slight problem patch may have reared its head for this incredibly star-studded batting pool during the slog overs at the Narendra Modi Stadium.

With their Powerplay intent booming to unprecedented rates since 2023 on the back of Rohit's blitzkriegs and adept accumulation becoming the forte of Shubman Gill, Virat Kohli and Shreyas Iyer in the middle-overs, the death-overs (41-50) remains an integral phase for the innings construction fruition.

Since the last World Cup year in 2023, India's middle-overs (11-40) average (42.67) is the best among all teams.

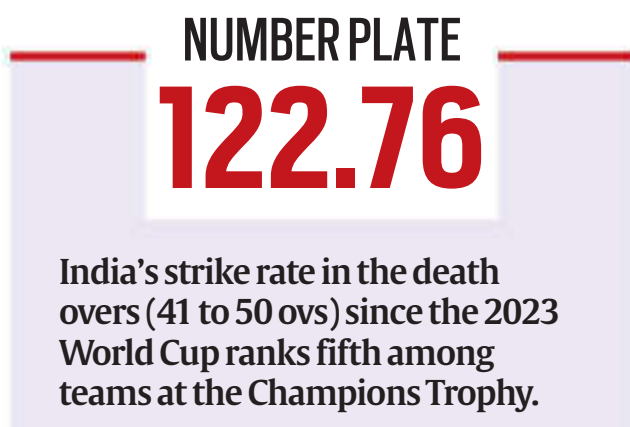
The strike rate (90.70) in this phase – though healthy – aren't as rapid as three other teams that will compete in the upcoming Champions Trophy. This comes after swashbuckling starts in the Powerplay, where India go over a 100+ strike rate – the only team after world champions Australia (107.33) to clock the feat. However, the big hits are somewhat inconsistent at the end where India fail to ace the power game like South Africa or Australia.



It will fall on KL Rahul (in pic) and Hardik Pandya to push pedal to metal in the final few overs. *Sportzpics/BCCI*

Of the top eight teams at the Champions Trophy, the Proteas are way clear of the rest in the pyrotechnics at the death, with big bats Heinrich Klaasen and David Miller muscling the strike rates to a whopping 143.99. India (122.76) slot in fifth, following Australia, England and Pakistan in the finishing act.

The latent runs between the transmission from middle-overs aggregation to the death-overs aggression is something India would be wary of in the hunt for 50-overs ICC recognition.



DEATH OVERS SINCE 2023

TEAM	BBP*	4S	6S
South Africa	5.38	141	106
Australia	6.22	90	44
Pakistan	6.66	126	62
England	6.67	110	72
India	7.16	118	84
Bangladesh	7.47	122	60
New Zealand	7.59	93	63
Afghanistan	8	91	45

* Balls per boundary

In the Ahmedabad ODI where they had a go at full 50 overs with the bat for the only time in the series, India went from 275 for four to 356 all out in the final 10, with No.5 KL Rahul and Hardik Pandya starting the phase. The team collected nine boundaries within the 81 runs and lost six wickets in 10 overs.

Finishing imprint

While India present a gutsy Hardik and the versatile Rahul in the lower-middle order, the duo has yet to seal the finishing im-

Road to World Cup begins

India banking on 'HIL factor' to do well at FIH Pro League in Bhubaneswar

MIHIR VASAVDA
FEBRUARY 14

THIS TIME in 2024, when India's hockey teams kick-started their Pro League commitments, the circumstances couldn't have been more contrasting. The men were in an experimental mode, upbeat after the Asian Games and brimming with self-belief to finish on the Olympic podium again — which they did. The women's team, meanwhile, were recovering from a heartbreak like never before. They failed to qualify for the Paris Games, which put many celebrated careers in a spot of bother. And the then-coach, Janneke Schopman, lashed out heavily at the administration.

A year on, they return to the competition in different moods and ambitions. Craig Fulton and Harmanpreet Singh's men are strutting around with an aura around them; not necessarily of invincibility — that they are not — but one of them being taken seriously in world hockey. In Salima Tete, the women have a new leader; the old guard have stayed on and with the Olympic setback now behind them, the Harendra Singh-coached team once again seems to have the wind in their sails. And later this week, they will face their former coach Schopman, who returns to India as Germany's coach.

These storylines provide fascinating context to the Pro League, a competition that has seen its significance rise after it got the status of a 2026 World Cup qualifier, with the winner getting an automatic spot. For the Indian teams that finished in the bottom half last season, it'll take something special to challenge for the title, more so for the women who have consistently struggled to beat teams ranked higher than them. Yet, they are banking on the 'Hockey India League factor'.

"We are still in that momentum," says former captain Savita Punia. "We have seen in the past how much the HIL had an impact on the men's team. Hopefully, we will see the same with women's hockey."

Can we see the HIL effect?

The HIL hangover is yet to subside. Savita said how most of India's players, be it a veteran like her or the rookies in the team, observed the foreign stars closely — from tech-



India will hope Jugraj Singh carries his form from HIL. Hockey India

INDIA'S FIXTURES

Feb 15 and 16: Men — vs Spain; Women — vs England
Feb 18 and 19: Men — vs Germany; Women — vs Spain
Feb 21 and 22: Men — vs Ireland; Women — vs Germany
Feb 24 and 25: Men — vs England; Women — vs The Netherlands

nical stuff to off-the-field conduct. Suddenly, some of the players who shared the dressing room just weeks ago in club colours will now be in the opposing dugouts for their country.

Over on the men's side, Harmanpreet couldn't stop talking about how impressive his defence and drag-flick partner Jugraj Singh was. The duo, divided by clubs, will reunite with the national team with the hope that Jugraj continues his good form and cements his place as a worthy back-up — and a long-term replacement — for

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
FEBRUARY 14

TOKYO OLYMPICS finalist **Saurabh Chaudhary** marked his return to the national team after topping the average scores in selection trials 1 and 2 at the Karni Singh Shooting Range in New Delhi on Friday, ending a long absence from the squad that saw him miss out on the Paris Olympics. Chaudhary scored an average of 584.85, the best among all shooters, including Paris Olympics 10m Air Pistol mixed event bronze medalist Sarabjot Singh, who is currently eighth in the national rankings with an average of 580.625. Chaudhary will now be part of the Indian



shooting squad heading to the World Cups in Peru and Argentina in April. His last appearance in the Indian team was in 2023 at the Asian Championships, where he finished a lowly 35th, after a poor qualifying session that saw him put up only 569 on the board. Chaudhary's omission from the national squad came after not putting up consistently high scores in trials and national competitions, something that has become crucial in a domestic scenario where scores are often higher than those in international competitions. Chaudhary was unable to keep up with his Indian teammates, hitting the high 580s, and started to fade out of the national picture. It also didn't help the 22-year-old that his association with pistol coach Amit Sheoran

Harmanpreet. Fulton might be tempted to experiment more than he did in the previous season, given the bloated squad of 34 players he has chosen for this competition. An area on the field which he is likely to tinker the most is the forward line. Youngsters like Aarajjeet Singh Hundal, Angad Bir Singh, and Arshdeep Singh could be given a look-in given that transition phase involving some seniors is imminent over the next two years. Harendra might not have the same luxury in terms of the depth in the player pool as Fulton. Yet, he will have some wiggle room this year given there aren't any major championships scheduled.

"So I hope to identify my core group of 24 by the end of this round of Pro League and then work with them further," he said. "Those players will be in my World Cup plans, more or less. We are better than what the rankings suggest and given the time we have, I believe we can aim for the semifinals at the World Cup. That's the target we have kept for ourselves."

The road to that begins in Bhubaneswar, starting Saturday.

ended soon after the Tokyo Olympics, which saw an immediate drop in scores and subsequently, his form. Rather than hitting scores in the high 570s and 580s, Chaudhary's scores dropped to the 550-560 range. But since the Paris Olympics, the Uttar Pradesh shooter has started to regain some of the form that made him an Asian Games gold medalist. Chaudhary has been a part of six official qualifications since the Paris Olympics. Out of those, his best four scores have been a 580, two 584s and a 591, that he hit at the National Shooting Championships in New Delhi in January. That score meant that Chaudhary was part of the Nationals final line-up for the first time since 2021 — a four-year gap in which he fell down to as low as 56th out of 201 in the National Rifle Association of India's 10m Air Pistol rankings.

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
FEBRUARY 14

The reigning world champion Gukesh's results sheet for the first event of Freestyle Chess Grand Slam Tour reads: zero wins, 11 draws and six defeats.

and Caruana.

Against Firouzja on Friday, Gukesh never had even a sliver of hope. By the 13th moves of both players — 13. Rd1 Kc7 — Gukesh was in trouble. Firouzja started to mount his pieces on the queen-side one subtle move after another. First, his knights steered towards queenside on two consecutive moves occupying the d6 and c5 squares (14... Nd6 and 15... Nc).

Then, in a rush of blood, he hopped his queen to b4 (Qb4), which was an inaccuracy, with Qb5 being the best move. He course-corrected on the next move, retreating the queen back a square. Then the bishop came in on c4, and his rooks were doubled in the d file by the 19th move.

By then, the writing was on the wall. Gukesh's defences in front of his king were too thin to hold out against the full force of Firouzja's army. The Indian tried to respond by attacking his opponent's king with his queen on the 22nd move, but it was a desperate Hail Mary more than anything else. In the process, Gukesh was now down a queen as well, but had at least managed to remove both of his opponent's rooks. However, his own remaining rook was stuck on a1 where it could do limited damage.

On Thursday, Gukesh had managed to defend a vastly inferior position to snatch a draw from the jaws of defeat. On Friday, there would be no such miracles. On the 30th move, Gukesh resigned to end one of the most wretched tournaments of his career.



Aditya Negi of Uttarakhand (in centre) won a gold medal in Modern Pentathlon (Triathlete Individual). UK Sports Department/Instagram

From 25th to 7th, host Uttarakhand's home advantage

■ At the last edition of the National Games in Goa in 2023, Uttarakhand won 24 medals and finished 25th on the medal tally. A year earlier at the Games in Gujarat, the hill state's tally was 18 medals, good enough for a 26th-place finish. However, as hosts of the 38th National Games, their fortunes have improved. 103 medals in all and a seventh spot, their best-ever finish on both counts.

■ Uttarakhand is not the first host to have 'home advantage'.

■ Modern Pentathlon was the largest contributor to Uttarakhand's medal tally as the state won 14 medals in the event. The state was without a medal in the event at the last edition in Goa.

■ Confirmed participation means that Uttarakhand had teams in both football and hockey, sports where they didn't participate in Goa.

■ One advantage of being hosts is the jumbo size of the contingent. A host state is allowed to field athletes in all competitions, while other teams or athletes have to qualify. For reference, the Uttarakhand contingent travelled with 220 athletes for the Goa Games but fielded 1,097 athletes this year.

■ Similarly, Goa fielded 1,147 athletes when they were hosts in 2023 but sent a team of just 176 athletes this year.

ON JUMBO CONTINGENT AND MEDAL COUNT
Earlier, what used to happen was that a lot of our talent didn't get a chance to represent the state. Being the hosts, we had the advantage of fielding our athletes in every competition."

DEVENDRA SINGH BISHT

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEMBER, UTTARANCHAL OLYMPIC ASSOCIATION.

YEARWISE MEDAL SURGE BY HOSTS

Uttarakhand	2022	2023	2025*	Kerala	2011	2015*	2022
	18	24	103		87	162	54
Goa	2022	2023*	2025	Jharkhand	2007	2011*	2015
	5	92	10		22	96	23
Gujarat	2015	2022*	2023	Andhra	2001	2002*	2007
	20	49	31		55	130	58

*Games hosting year

-PRITISH RAJ

Gukesh finishes winless at Freestyle chess event

AMIT KAMATH
FEBRUARY 14

ANOTHER YEAR, another world champion struggles at Weissenhaus. One year after then world champion Ding Liren ended in last place after going winless at the Freestyle Chess G.O.A.T. Challenge, Ding's successor on the throne, D Gukesh too endured a winless tournament. The reigning world champion's results sheet for the first event of Freestyle Chess Grand Slam Tour reads: zero wins, 11 draws and six defeats.

At least he did not end up dead last like Ding did last year. Gukesh will also find solace in the knowledge that a few weeks ago, he almost won the Tata Steel Chess Tournament in Wijk Aan Zee (a tournament where Ding had also suffered on the board).

Gukesh's Weissenhaus event ended with a defeat in 30 moves to Alireza Firouzja on Friday. His 11 draws and six defeats span the nine round robin games played in the rapid format where he had two defeats and seven draws. Then, in the quarters, he lost both his classical time control games to Fabiano Caruana before two draws against Hikaru Nakamura, who himself has had his fair share of struggles in Weissenhaus. In the rapid tiebreaks against the World No.3 from the United States, Gukesh drew one game and lost another to end up fighting for seventh spot against Firouzja. There, he managed to claw out a draw in the first game before losing the second one on Friday.

Vincent Keymer, who had been one of the seconds for Gukesh in his World Chess Championship-winning run, won the event after one of the best performances of his career. What was remarkable about Keymer's run to the title was that he took down players of the calibre of Firouzja, Magnus Carlsen

How Trump can broker an agreement in golf



US president Donald Trump is an avid golfer who owns several golf courses. Reuters



Have there been attempts at a truce before?

The dispute was taking a toll on all parties concerned, which prompted the PGA Tour, LIV and the PGA European Tour to announce an agreement to pool their commercial rights into a new for-profit venture, which was to be funded by the PIF. This would potentially end all existing litigation and suspensions. The original deadline for completing the deal was December 31, 2023, but was not met.

Norman has since stepped down and stalwarts on the PGA Tour's side — like McIlroy and Woods — have toned down their comments against LIV. Meanwhile, two of the four Majors — the US Open and the Open Championship — have offered direct exemptions to a leading LIV player to appear in their 2025 tournaments.

Where does Trump come into the picture?

When LIV emerged on the scene, Trump actively encouraged PGA Tour players to switch, saying they will regret it if they didn't. He even hosted LIV events on his golf courses. But the fact that a US President is expected to have some influence with Saudi Crown Prince Mohammad Bin Salman, and Trump projecting himself as someone who can get deals done, has got those on the PGA Tour side hopeful. It's they who have had to increase prize money in their tournaments to dissuade players from moving to LIV. PIF, which is associated with the Saudi government, has much deeper pockets.

PGA Tour commissioner Jay Monahan, Woods and McIlroy have met Trump separately since his second term began last month, and later expressed hope that he will use his clout to help get a formal agreement in place.

The PGA Tour has asked the US President to get PIF head Yasir Al-Rumayyan on the same page. "That's what the fans want, all

India ready to host Olympics in 2036, says Shah

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
FEBRUARY 14

HOME MINISTER Amit Shah brought the curtain down on the 38th National Games in Uttarakhand by asserting that India was well capable of hosting the Olympic Games in 2036.

"I can say today that India has a very bright future in sports. We have staked a claim to host the Olympics in 2036, and we are ready for it. When the Olympics are held here, our athletes will win medals and make the country's flag fly high," Shah said in his address.

India's bid to host the Olympics in 2036 is still in its early stages and the International Olympic Committee will not decide on it before next year.

Indian Olympic Association (IOA) president PT Usha declared the Games closed before handing over the flag to Conrad Sangma, chief minister of Meghalaya, the state that will host the next edition of the Games in 2027.

Uttarakhand chief minister Pushkar Singh Dhami welcomed Shah at the Indira Gandhi International Sports Complex. The venue has a capacity of 25,000 and was packed for the ceremony.

"Dhamiji has developed the infrastructure for sports in every district of the state. The sportsmen who have won so many medals for Uttarakhand have turned 'Dev Bhoomi' into 'Khel Bhoomi'," Shah said. "Thanks to their efforts, Uttarakhand has jumped from 25th position (in the last Games) to seventh position (in the overall standings)".

Shah expressed optimism about India's progress in sports in the future. He encouraged athletes and said that the government is creating world-class infrastructure and ecosystem for sports across the country.

He pointed out that Prime Minister Narendra Modi has taken many steps to promote sports. "When Modiji became PM in 2014, our sports budget was Rs 800 crore, but now, it will rise to Rs 3,800 crore. This reflects the commitment of the Modi government towards sports," he said.

Sports minister Mansukh Mandaviya also lauded the athletes' performances. He said that the Games will be a catalyst in India's journey to become a sports hub.

"The state ensured that no athlete faced any difficulty during the Games. It is the beginning of India becoming a sports hub," said Mandaviya in his address. "It is the beginning of India getting into the top 10 Olympic performers by 2036. The country now has sports ecosystem. It is moving forward in every aspect, including sports," he said.

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-AMIT SHAH
HOME MINISTER