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04 March 2025, New Delhi



# THE WORLD

## TOPOF THE WORLD



Khaleda Zia. Reuters file

### BANGLADESH SC upholds acquittal of Khaleda Zia in corruption case

**Dhaka:** Bangladesh's Supreme Court on Monday upheld a High Court ruling that acquitted former premier and BNP chairperson Khaleda Zia in a corruption case in which she was sentenced to seven years in jail by a lower court. A three-member Appellate Division bench headed by Justice Md Ashfaque Islam passed the order, dismissing the plea filed by the state and the Anti-Corruption Commission challenging the High Court verdict that acquitted Zia and others, the state-run BSS news agency reported. **PTI**

### CANADA

#### PM: Protecting freedom key in talks with King

**London:** Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said his priority in talks with King Charles on Monday will be protecting his country's sovereignty after U.S. President Donald Trump recently suggested making Canada the 51st U.S. state. Trudeau said nothing is more important to his citizens than "standing up for our sovereignty and our independence", ahead of the meeting with Charles, who is Canada's head of state. Last week, Charles invited Trump to what would be a historic second state visit to Britain. **REUTERS**

### AUSTRIA

#### New govt takes office after 5-month wait

**Vienna:** Austria's first three-party coalition since the aftermath of World War Two took office on Monday, ending the country's longest-ever wait for a new government and keeping the Russia-friendly, far-right Freedom Party (FPÖ) out of power. Although the FPÖ won September's parliamentary election with about 29% of the vote, the eurosceptic party failed to form a workable coalition, opening the door to a centrist alternative. When the FPÖ bid crumbled, the conservative People's Party, Social Democrats and liberal Neos struck an alliance, overcoming their own earlier failure to do a deal. **REUTERS**

### JAPAN

#### Japan's prince Hisahito holds 1st press meet

**Tokyo:** Japan's Prince Hisahito, the second in line to the throne, held a debut news conference on Monday, telling reporters he would try to balance official duties and his university studies and research about the drag-only. The prince said he would follow the good examples of his uncle, Emperor Naruhito, and other elder members of the Imperial family, while pursuing his university studies, beginning next month. **AP**

## FRANCE SUGGESTS PAUSE ON AIR, SEA, ENERGY INFRA ATTACKS

# Europe draws up Ukraine ceasefire plans, Trump says Zelenskyy doesn't want peace

UK says many proposals on table; Europe agrees to send troops but calls for US support in some form

ELIZABETH PIPER  
& JOHN IRISH  
LONDON, PARIS, MARCH 3

BRITAIN SAID on Monday there were several possible proposals on the table for a possible Ukraine ceasefire, after France floated a proposal for a month-long initial truce that could pave the way for peace talks.

European countries, led by Britain and France, are looking at options for a peace proposal including Ukraine after last week's Oval Office rupture between U.S. President Donald Trump and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy. "There are clearly a number of options on the table," Prime Minister Keir Starmer's spokesman said. "I'm just not getting into a running commentary on the options."

White House national security adviser Mike Waltz told reporters: "So, we welcome Europe stepping up for Europe, but they have to also invest in the capabilities to do so."

France, Britain and potentially other European countries have offered to send troops to Ukraine in the event of a ceasefire, but say they would want



Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, British Prime Minister Keir Starmer and French President Emmanuel Macron in London on Sunday. Reuters

support from the US, a proposal referred to as a "backstop".

Zelenskyy says a ceasefire must come with explicit security guarantees from the West to ensure Russia does not attack again. Trump has refused to give any such guarantees.

Trump, meanwhile, said Monday that "America will not put up with it for much longer,"

pointing to recent comments made by Zelenskyy about the end of the war with Russia. In a post on Truth Social that shared an AP story quoting Zelenskyy as saying the end of the war is "very, very far away," Trump said "this is the worst statement that could have been made by Zelenskyy."

"...this guy doesn't want there to be Peace as long as he has

America's backing and, Europe, in the meeting they had with Zelenskyy, stated flatly that they cannot do the job without the US," Trump said.

Starmer hosted a summit of European leaders in London Sunday and said they had agreed to draw up a Ukraine peace plan to present to the US. French President Emmanuel Macron

EXPLAINED  
Russia may drive a harder bargain

KREMLIN SPOKESMAN Dmitry Peskov said Monday attempts by US and Russia "will clearly not be enough" to end the fighting. "An important element is missing," he said. He implied that Russia could now push for a harder bargain than it did during the failed peace talks in 2022 — in which Kyiv rejected the demands of Ukraine adopting a neutral status, not joining NATO, limiting the size of its armed forces and granting special status to east Ukraine.

floated a one-month ceasefire, although so far there has been no public endorsement from other allies. "Such a truce on air, sea and energy infrastructure would allow us to determine if Russian President Vladimir Putin is acting in good faith," French Foreign Minister Jean-Noel Barrot said. "And that's when real peace negotiations could start." **REUTERS**

# Anora wins 5 Oscars including best picture, Adrien Brody is best actor

LISARICHWINE  
LOS ANGELES, MARCH 3

ANORA, THE story of a New York sex worker who gets a chance at a new life when she marries a wealthy Russian client, won five Academy Awards Sunday, including the Best Picture Oscar.

Sean Baker also won for best director, original screenplay and editing for *Anora*, tying the record for most Oscars won by a person in a year with Walt Disney who won four in 1954. The movie's 25-year-old star, Mikey Madison, was named best actress. Madison scored an upset over Demi Moore, who was favored to win best actress for her role in *The Substance*.

"I grew up in Los Angeles, but Hollywood always felt so far away from me," Madison said. *Anora* emerged as the winner in an unpredictable Oscars race that included Papal thriller *Conclave*, Jewish immigrant story *The Brutalist* and blockbuster musical *Wicked*.

Adrien Brody claimed his second best actor Oscar for his role as a Jewish immigrant who chases the American dream in *The Brutalist*. The 51-year-old had previously won for *The Pianist*, when he became the youngest best actor winner at age 29.

"Acting is a very fragile profession," Brody said. "No matter where you are in your career, it can all go away."

Zoe Saldana was named best supporting actress for her role as the fixer for a Mexican drug lord in *Emilia Perez*, a Spanish-language musical released on Netflix.

The movie, which also won best original song for *El Mal*, was a favorite for best picture earlier this year. The actress, the first

And the Oscars Go To...

<b>BEST ACTRESS</b> Mikey Madison, <i>Anora</i>	<b>BEST ACTOR</b> Adrien Brody, <i>The Brutalist</i>	<b>BEST PICTURE</b> <i>Anora</i>	<b>BEST DIRECTOR</b> Sean Baker, <i>Anora</i>
<b>BEST EDITING</b> <i>Anora</i>	<b>BEST ORIGINAL SCREENPLAY</b> <i>Anora</i>	<b>BEST SUPPORTING ACTRESS</b> Zoe Saldana, <i>Emilia Pérez</i>	<b>BEST SUPPORTING ACTOR</b> Kieran Culkin, <i>A Real Pain</i>
<b>BEST DOCUMENTARY FEATURE</b> <i>No Other Land</i>	<b>BEST ADAPTED SCREENPLAY</b> Peter Straughan, <i>Conclave</i>	<b>BEST ANIMATED FEATURE</b> <i>Flow</i>	<b>BEST ORIGINAL SCORE</b> <i>The Brutalist</i>
	<b>INTERNATIONAL FEATURE</b> <i>I'm Still Here, Brazil</i>		

openly transgender person nominated for an acting Oscar, disappeared from the awards circuit but attended Sunday's ceremony.

Kieran Culkin received the best supporting actor award for his role in *A Real Pain*.

Midway through the show, the Oscars host, comedian Conan O'Brien brought a group of Los Angeles firefighters to the stage and thanked them for their work during the January wildfires. He also invited them to deliver a few jokes. **REUTERS**

## No Other Land, Israeli-Palestinian documentary on West Bank, wins

**Los Angeles:** *No Other Land*, a film about Israeli displacement of a Palestinian community, won the documentary feature film Oscar Sunday, and its directors appealed to the world to help end the conflict and accused the US of blocking a solution. The film's co-directors, Palestinian activist Basel Adra and Israeli journalist Yuval Abraham, spent five years making

the film showing Israeli soldiers tearing down homes and encroachment of Jewish settlers on the Palestinian community.

The documentary highlights the parallel realities in which the two live — Abraham with his Israeli number plate that lets him travel anywhere, Adra confined to a territory that only ever gets smaller for Palestinians. **REUTERS**

## 25% RATE MAY NOT BE IMPOSED ON ALL GOODS

# Trump set to declare exact levels for Mexico, Canada tariffs today

REUTERS  
WASHINGTON, MARCH 3

US COMMERCE Secretary Howard Lutnick said on Sunday that tariffs on Canada and Mexico will go into effect on Tuesday, but that President Donald Trump will determine whether to stick with the planned 25% level.

"That is a fluid situation," Lutnick told the *Fox News* program *Sunday Morning Futures*. "There are going to be tariffs on Tuesday on Mexico and Canada. Exactly what they are, we're going to leave that for the president



US Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick

and his team to negotiate."

Lutnick's comments were the first indication from Trump's administration that it may not impose the full threatened 25% tariffs on all goods from Mexico and

non-energy imports from Canada.

He said the two countries have "done a reasonable job" securing their borders with the US, though the deadly drug fentanyl continues to flow into the country.

Trump sowed confusion last week when he mentioned a possible April 2 deadline in connection with tariffs on Canada and Mexico, but later reaffirmed the Tuesday deadline and said he would add another 10% tariff on Chinese goods on Tuesday, effectively doubling 10% duties imposed on Feb. 4. He said Trump is expected to raise tariffs on China on Tuesday unless the country ends fentanyl trafficking into US.

## IFTAR IN GAZA

Amid the holy month of Ramadan, a Palestinian family breaks the day's fast on the rubble of their home, at Jabalia refugee camp in northern Gaza Strip, on Sunday. Israeli fire killed at least two people in Rafah and injured three others in Khan Younis in the south of Gaza, raising fear among Palestinians that the ceasefire could collapse after Israel imposed a total blockade on the shattered enclave. Israeli troops also demolished houses and cleared a wide roadway through the Nur Shams refugee camp in the West Bank on Monday. Reuters

## Pope Francis off ventilation, stable

JOSHUA MCELWEE  
VATICAN CITY, MARCH 3

POPE FRANCIS rested well overnight and is in a stable condition as he fights double pneumonia in hospital for the 18th day, the Vatican said on Monday.

The 88-year-old pontiff no longer requires the use of mechanical ventilation to breathe and has been without a fever, the Vatican said in its latest medical update on Sunday evening.

"The pope rested well all night," said a one-line note from



A balloon with the Pope's image in Rome, Monday

the Vatican on Monday morning that did not provide more details. A full medical update on the pope's condition is expected on

Monday evening.

Francis was admitted to Rome's Gemelli hospital on February 14 with severe respiratory problems that swiftly degenerated into double pneumonia — a serious infection in both lungs that can inflame and scar them, making it difficult to breathe.

The Vatican's updates on the pope's condition have taken a more upbeat tone since Friday, when the pope suffered a constriction of his respiratory airways, akin to an asthma attack, that required him to be aspirated. **REUTERS**

# Trump tariff threats, economic slowdown set to dominate China Parliament session

K J M VARMA  
BEIJING, MARCH 3

US PRESIDENT Donald Trump's tariff threats, along with firm policies to contain China and the economic slowdown, are expected to dominate the annual session of the Chinese parliament beginning here on Tuesday.

Over 5,000 delegates from the National People's Congress (NPC) and the advisory body, the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC), will meet to begin their about two week-long sessions to deliberate on a host of agenda and legislations finalised by the ruling Communist Party China (CPC) to



National People's Congress will convene on Tuesday. File

steer the country for this year.

The NPC, which is called the rubber stamp legislature for its routine endorsement of the policies of the CPC, is the main policy body, while the national advisory body — the CPPCC — compris-

ing representatives from various walks of Chinese society deliberate and forward recommendations to improve the governance.

The NPC will open its session on Wednesday with the submission of the work report and the budget by Premier Li Qiang outlining China's achievement last year, including the accomplishment of the official target of five per cent of GDP, amid the slump of the property market causing billions of losses and expanding the dormant domestic demand.

The twin sessions at the Great Hall of People overlooking the sprawling Tiananmen Square will open this year with Trump's tariff threat on China's exports of USD 436 billion to the

US, which already declined from USD 547 billion in 2018.

Trump said his 10 per cent new tariffs on goods from China will come into force on Tuesday, the day the NPC session begins.

Chinese goods were already hit by 10 per cent tariffs by Trump after he assumed his second tenure. During his election campaign, Trump threatened to slap 60 per cent tariffs on Chinese goods to address US concerns over fentanyl, a potent opioid drug blamed for widespread drug addiction in the US.

The focus of Li's work report will also reveal the likely increase in the defence budget of China, the second largest spender on defence after the US. **PTI**



## BUSINESS AS USUAL

By UNNNY



## MAHAKUMBH

Didn't allow stampede to be highlighted to avoid panic, says UP CM



Dismissed claims of high water pollution at Sangam

**BHUPENDRA PANDEY**  
LUCKNOW, MARCH 3

A MONTH after 30 people died in a stampede at the Mahakumbh in Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said on Monday that his government acted swiftly to control the situation and did not allow the incident to be highlighted "as it could have caused panic" among crores of devotees present at the site on that day.

He also dismissed claims based on a Central Pollution Control Board report (CPCB) about high levels of fecal coliform present in water samples taken at the Mahakumbh, stating that the CPCB too later accepted that the levels were not high.

Addressing a gathering of IIM and Indian Postal Service officials at an event on 'Nation Building through the Successful Organisation of Mahakumbh', Adityanath spoke at length for the first time about the stampede that took place early on January 29 on the occasion of Mauni Amawasya, ahead of the holy bath in the river.

"The crowd is like water current in a river... whenever an attempt is made to stop the current, it will either force its way out or spread and cause damage. This happened that night when there was a huge gathering present at the site and everyone wanted to take the holy bath at 4 am. Since Mauni Amawasya started at 7.30 pm on January 28, the crowd swelled and the incident happened between 1 am and 1.30 am," he said.

"There was a crowd of 4 crore people, including devotees, present in the Mahakumbh area while a similar number of people

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

## 6-DAY TRIP TO UK, IRELAND

# Ukraine, trade talks on table as Jaishankar visits UK today

France proposes Russia-Ukraine truce for one month, Britain distances itself



External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar with Princess Astrid of Belgium in New Delhi on Monday. *PTI*

**SHUBHAJIT ROY**  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 3

DAYS AFTER UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer hosted an emergency meeting of European leaders in support of Ukraine and its President Volodymyr Zelenskyy — after the latter's public showdown with US President Donald Trump and Vice-President JD Vance at the White House — External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar is headed to London to meet the British government's leadership, including Foreign Secretary David Lammy.

Announcing the visit, the

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

## EXPLAINED Diplomatic tightrope

AFTER THE acrimonious meeting between US President Donald Trump and Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, the London summit signalled support for Kyiv. With the world's gaze on Europe's next steps, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar's visit will be watched and Delhi's diplomatic tightrope walk will be put to test.

# Cong leader sparks row with Rohit post; BCCI and minister hit back

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 3

ABOUT 24 hours before India captain Rohit Sharma walks out for the toss for the Champions League semi-final against Australia in Dubai on Tuesday, a social media post about his weight triggered a political slugfest at home.

It all started with Congress national spokesperson Shama Mohamed calling Sharma "fat for a sportsperson". Even as the party distanced itself and said it had asked Mohamed to delete the post, Sports Minister Mansukh Mandaviya said the "body-sham-



Cong spokesperson Shama Mohamed; Rohit Sharma

ing" comments were "deeply shameful" and the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) called it "unfortunate".

Mohamed, however, didn't agree that she had "body-shamed" Sharma. "It is a generic

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

## FIRST FULL-BODY MEETING OF NBWL SINCE 2012



Prime Minister Narendra Modi during a lion safari at the Gir Wildlife Sanctuary in Gujarat's Junagadh district on the occasion of World Wildlife Day on Monday. *PTI*

# PM's wildlife push: Cheetahs in more areas, lion survey, conservation plans

**NIKHIL GHANEKAR & PARIMAL DABHI**  
NEW DELHI, GANDHINAGAR, MARCH 3

PRIME MINISTER Narendra Modi chaired his first meeting of the National Board for Wildlife (NBWL) at the Gir National Park in Junagadh district on Monday, where he announced plans to expand Project Cheetah to

Gandhisagar Sanctuary in Madhya Pradesh and Banni Grasslands in Gujarat.

Modi made a slew of announcements, including on starting the Asiatic Lion population estimation exercise in May, setting up a centre for effective management of human-wildlife conflict, and new conservation initiatives for gharials and Great Indian Bustards. The PM also reviewed the government's flag-

ship wildlife conservation programmes like Project Lion and Project Cheetah.

This was the seventh meeting of the NBWL, the apex body on wildlife conservation and development. The last full-body NBWL meeting, with its 47

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

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## EXPRESS NETWORK

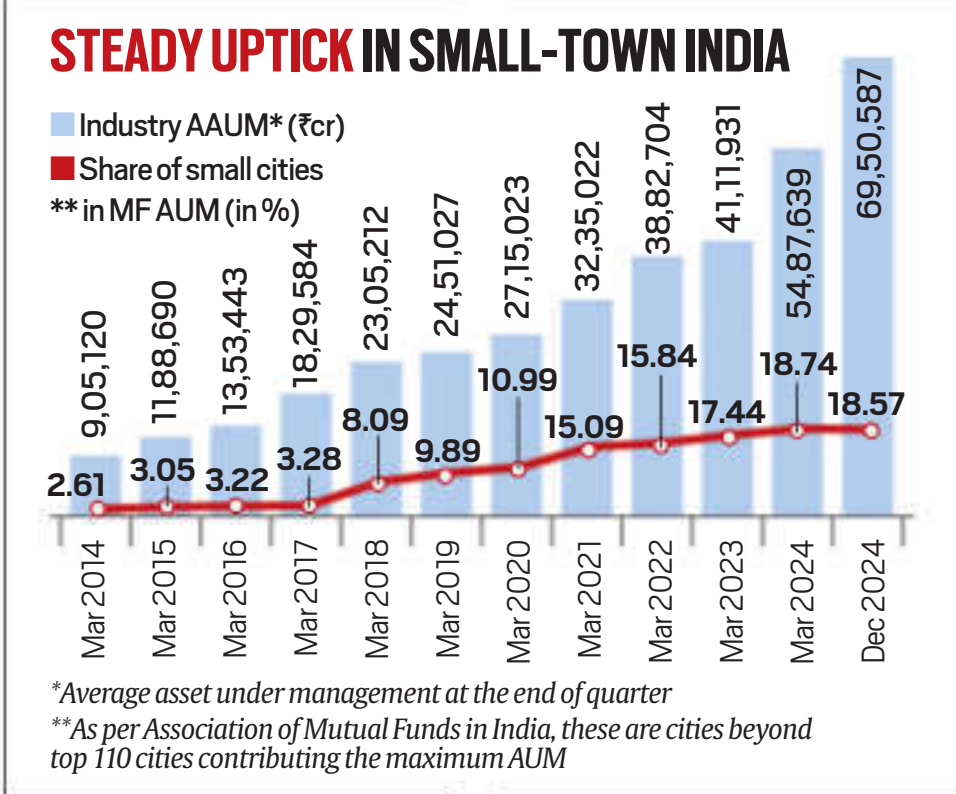


**MAYAWATI EXPELS NEPHEW FROM BSP: 'UNDER INFLUENCE OF FATHER-IN-LAW'**

**BIHAR BUDGET: EDUCATION GETS HIGHEST SHARE**

**U.P. WOMAN, HELD GUILTY OF MURDER, EXECUTED IN UAE**

[PAGES 6, 8 & 12](#)



**SANDEEP SINGH & ANIL SASI**  
MUMBAI, NEW DELHI, MARCH 3

THE SHARP and continuous stock market slide, with Nifty and Sensex dropping 15 per cent or so in the last five months, may not be extraordinary in terms of the quantum of decline, but is

having an outsized impact on a large number of people, given how the investor community has burgeoned, spreading deep and wide into the country.

In fact, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman had just a month ago in the Budget on February 1, extended to these investors, many of them taxpayers,

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

# On the ground, in makhana fields of Bihar, Budget promise holds out hope

**HIMANSHU HARSH**  
SAHARSA, MARCH 3

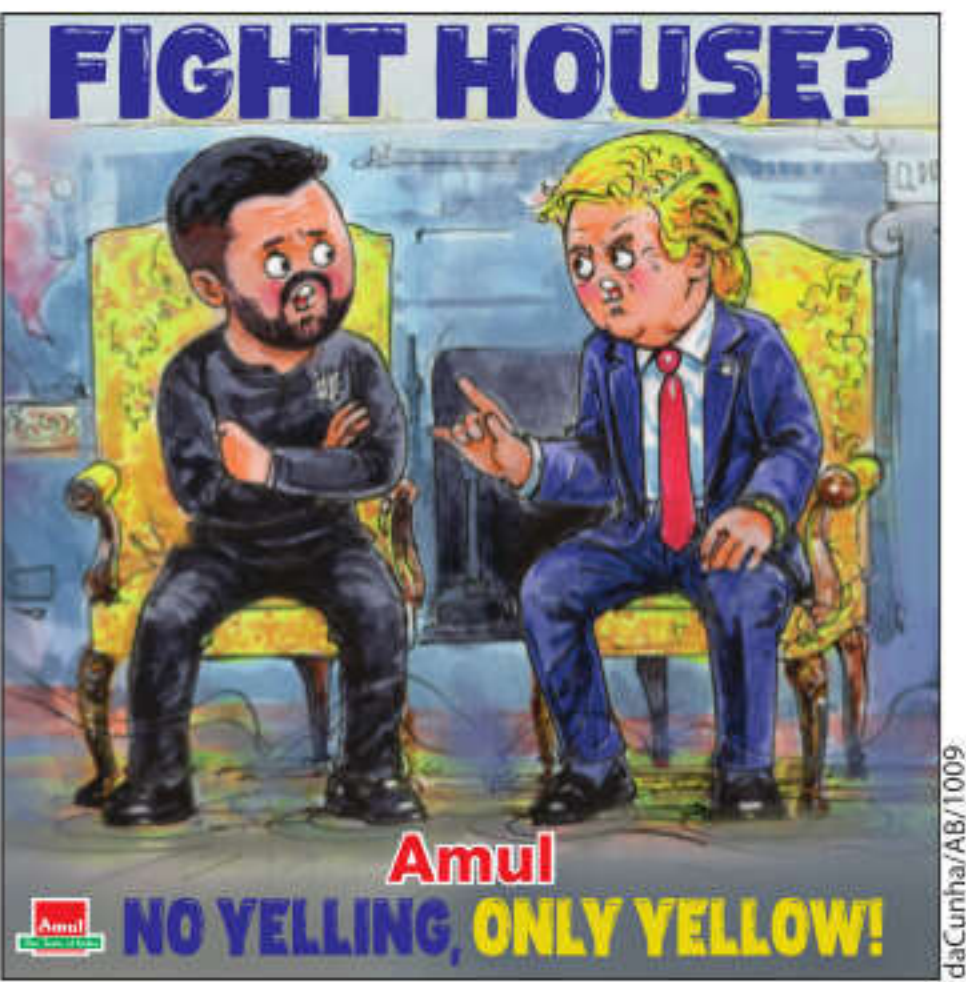
SOME years ago, Joginder Mukhiya, 45, took a dip in a pond, but never came back. A few hours later, his fellow workers found his body. "Makhana nikahne paani ke andar gaye the, andar hi reh gaye..."

(He went inside to pick makhana seeds; never came up)," recalls Joginder's neighbour Sharwan Mukhiya, 29, a makhana farmer from Mahisi village of Bihar's Saharsa district.

In Bihar, a state that accounts for 85 per cent of the country's makhana production, farming practices for the crop have seen

few advancements, often tied to laborious traditional practices that are fraught with risks and poor pay. Yet, for the generations of mallahs (a community of fishermen) in the state's riverine belts of Kosi and Mithanchal, it's the only livelihood they have known. The makhana's recent

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**



## THIRD EDITION OF BIENNIAL AWARDS

# Who are the country's best DMs? Express Governance Awards to honour them today

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 3

EMPOWERING STUDENTS in Arunachal Pradesh with technology so that the classroom becomes a hub for innovation, helping farmers in Tamil Nadu take their produce to the world, floating community-based water conservation efforts in Jharkhand, starting projects for women in Odisha — these are some of the works undertaken by District Magistrates across India that are among those to be acknowledged at The Indian Express Excellence in Governance Awards in New Delhi on Tuesday.

This is the third edition of the awards held every two years that celebrate and showcase the works of DMs who are at the forefront of governance in India. This year's awards will be given over categories such as agriculture, sustainability, e-governance, resource utilisation of Central and State government

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**



Chief Guest Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw; Guest of Honour MoS Jitendra Singh



## 'ANORA' DOMINATES OSCARS NIGHT

**Best Actor:** Adrien Brody, *The Brutalist*

**Best Actress:** Mikey Madison, *Anora*



**Best Picture:** *Anora*  
**Best Director:** Sean Baker, *Anora*. He also won the best original screenplay and best editing awards.

**THE WORLD**

# She lost her baby but is nursing 30 at AIIMS new milk bank: 'My child didn't need it, others did'

**PAGE 1 ANCHOR**

**ANONNA DUTT**  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 3

IN JANUARY last year, Jyoti Maan's baby was born premature at week 29, weighing a mere 780 grams. As the newborn battled it out for nine months in the neonatal ICU of AIIMS, Delhi, Jyoti, lactating and separated from her baby, donated nearly 25 litres of her breast milk to the new milk bank

at AIIMS. While Jyoti lost her baby at the end of those traumatic nine months, she ended up being a lifesaver for nearly 30 newborns.

Jyoti says that when her baby was born, he was put on ventilator support and needed very little of her milk. "As I was lactating, the nurses from the AIIMS milk bank asked me if I could give my excess milk to other babies who needed it. Since my baby didn't need so much milk, I decided to help other mothers instead of letting it go waste," she says.

Payodhi, the milk bank at AIIMS that was inaugurated in



Jyoti Maan (left) joins health workers to inaugurate the milk bank at AIIMS, Delhi. *Express*

February, relies on donor mothers like Jyoti for the pre-term babies — those born before 32 weeks or weighing less than 1.5 kg — under its care. Set up as part of the Health Ministry's guidelines to open more lactation management centres, the facility at AIIMS is the second breast milk bank in a public hospital in Delhi and one of only 90 such centres across the country.

Doctors and public health specialists say milk banks can play a key role in reducing neonatal deaths — in India, an estimated 5.8 lakh newborns die

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

### WESTERN AUSTRALIA

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FROM PAGE ONE

FULL REPORTS ON  
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## Ukraine, trade talks on table as Jaishankar visits UK today

Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said Jaishankar would be on an official visit to the United Kingdom and Ireland from March 4 to 9.

India and the UK share a “comprehensive strategic partnership, which has strengthened across diverse areas including defence & security, trade & economy, health, education, people-to-people ties,” it said. “During the visit, EAM will be holding discussions with his counterpart, Foreign Secretary David Lammy, and will meet several other dignitaries as well as Indian community members.”

While Jaishankar’s six-day visit beginning Tuesday was scheduled earlier, his meetings will be closely watched, in the backdrop of the meeting hosted by Starmer to shore up support for Ukraine on Sunday.

Starmer, who met Zelenskyy on Saturday, has said that Britain, Ukraine, France and some other countries would form a “coalition of the willing” and draw up a peace plan to take to Trump. “This is not a moment for more talk. It’s time to act. Time to step up and lead and to unite around a new plan for a just and enduring peace,” he said.

“Europe must do the heavy lifting, but to support peace in our continent and to succeed, this effort must have strong US backing,” Starmer told a news conference on Sunday. He said European leaders had agreed to

draw up a Ukraine peace plan to present to the US, a vital step for Washington to be able to offer security guarantees that Kyiv says are essential to deter Russia.

Zelenskyy also met King Charles at his private residence in eastern England — signalling support from the British monarch.

Jaishankar’s visit comes at a time when India has chosen not to take sides between Europe, Ukraine, Russia and the US. Last week, India abstained on two resolutions at the UN — moved by Ukraine and the US — signalling foreign policy independence, but also betraying its diplomatic constraints.

It has also nuanced its position on US-Russia direct talks, moving away from “two parties to the conflict” to “parties concerned” — a broader term that would include all four stakeholders — US, Ukraine, Russia and Europe, as of now.

It is now even more unlikely that India will express support for either country. New Delhi has walked the tightrope all along, and it will continue to stay away from taking sides, officials said. India will only point to its stated position — that dialogue and diplomacy is the only path forward, and solutions cannot be found on the battlefield.

Last week, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen expressed “sup-

port for a just and lasting peace”, “based on respect for international law, principles of the UN charter and territorial integrity and sovereignty”.

So, given India’s hedging and diplomatic balancing act in the last few weeks in the light of fast-changing developments — a continuum since the beginning of the Russia-Ukraine war — Jaishankar will have to navigate his conversations with his British interlocutors, followed by the Irish.

Meanwhile, a *Reuters* report on Monday quoted French President Emmanuel Macron and his Foreign Minister as saying that France and Britain are proposing a partial one-month truce between Russia and Ukraine that would cover air, sea and energy infrastructure attacks but not include ground fighting.

“Such a truce on air, sea and energy infrastructure would allow us to determine whether Russian President Vladimir Putin is acting in good faith when he commits to a truce. And that’s when real peace negotiations could start,” French Foreign Minister Jean-Noel Barrot said.

Under the Anglo-French proposal, European ground troops would only be deployed to Ukraine in a second phase, French President Emmanuel Macron said in an interview published in *Le Figaro* on Sunday. “There will be no European troops on Ukrainian soil in the coming

weeks,” *Le Figaro* quoted Macron as saying, according to the report.

But UK-based daily, the *Financial Times* reported that the UK has distanced itself from France’s proposal for a limited one-month truce between Russia and Ukraine, while Kyiv raised reservations about stopping fighting without security guarantees. The differences emerged after the London summit.

While the war in Ukraine is certain to figure in the discussions, despite India’s ambivalence, Jaishankar is also expected to discuss the relaunching of talks on the ambitious India-UK free trade deal, sources said. Late last month, India and the UK relaunched talks on the proposed deal during British Trade Secretary Jonathan Reynolds’ visit to India.

Jaishankar will first be in London to hold talks with Lammy on a range of bilateral, regional and global issues. From London, he will go to Dublin. “India and Ireland share friendly bilateral relations based on shared democratic values, cultural ties and growing economic engagements,” the MEA said.

“EAM will be meeting with his Irish counterpart, Simon Harris, other dignitaries and members of Indian community, during his visit to Ireland on March 6-7, 2025,” it said, adding that his visit would provide “renewed impetus to India’s friendly ties with both UK and Ireland”.

## Govt didn’t want panic: UP CM

were present in Prayagraj city, moving to or from Mahakumbh. Over 2 lakh vehicles were parked in neighbouring districts..., waiting to be allowed to reach the Mahakumbh. We did not allow the news of the stampede to be highlighted as it could have caused panic among such a huge crowd. We managed the situation and circumstances,” the Chief Minister said.

Adityanath said that apart from the huge number of devotees, sadhus from 13 Akharas were also scheduled to take the holy bath that morning. “The bath of Akharas is always a challenge as there used to be violence over who would take the dip first. The bath had to begin at 4 am, and despite the stampede all the Akharas were ready. But at 3 am, I requested them to postpone their bath because an incident had occurred,” he said, adding that officials closely monitored the crowd, evacuated the Sangam area by noon, and ensured that the holy bath resumed by 2.30 pm.

Dismissing reports about the high level of fecal coliform in the Ganga, Adityanath said, “The then Prime Minister of Mauritius had refused to take a dip in the Ganga during the 2013 Kumbh after seeing the filth in the river. We had that in mind from the very first day and had decided that no sewer or nullah leaks into Ganga or Yamuna. The most critical point of Ganga river in Uttar Pradesh is in Kanpur. Over 4 crore litres of sewage water used to flow into Ganga every day at Sisamau point for 125 years. We resolved this three years ago.”

“At Jajmau point in Kanpur, toxic effluents from tanneries were being discharged into Ganga, which also caused death of water species. We controlled that as well two years ago...”

“But there was fake reporting on it (river pollution)... Both gov-

ernment and private labs were conducting investigations and samples of water were exchanged as well to check those. We took samples of water regularly between January 11 and February 26 and, whenever it was taken, the measure of BOD (biochemical oxygen demand) at Sangam was found below 3,” he said.

BOD is a measure of the amount of oxygen required by microorganisms to break down organic matter in water over a fixed period, usually 5 days, at 20°C. High BOD means higher organic pollution in a river. This leads to oxygen depletion resulting in suffocation of fish or other aquatic organisms. The CPCB limit for BOD in instances of “organised bathing outdoors” is 3 mg per litre or less, which means the river is healthy and not very polluted.

High BOD means higher organic pollution in a river. This leads to oxygen depletion resulting in suffocation of fish or other aquatic organisms. The CPCB limit for BOD in instances of “organised bathing outdoors” is 3 mg per litre or less, which means the water is considered safe.

Talking about media reports on pollution, he said: “The claims were based on the CPCB report. It is possible that their samples were taken from points where animal feces contaminated the water or at a point where the river water was already contaminated. Whenever we took samples from Sangam between January 11 and February 13, the measure of fecal coliform was up to 100 while the permissible limit is 25,000.”

“We had been monitoring other points as well and that was the reason we challenged it (the reports)... You take our samples as our teams are challenging it and there are two labs present here and investigate these accordingly. Ultimately, the CPCB had to accept it,” the Chief Minister said.

## Express Governance Awards today

schemes, disaster management, law and order and gender inclusivity.

Ashwini Vaishnaw, Union Minister for Railways, Information & Broadcasting and Electronics & IT, will be the Chief Guest. The Guest of Honour will be Jitendra Singh, Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science and Technology and Earth Sciences; MoS, Prime Minister’s Office; Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions; Atomic Energy and Space.

The winners have been chosen from over 450 entries received from 29 states. The entries were evaluated by PwC, the knowledge partner for the awards, following which the projects were verified through field visits by *The Indian Express*’s team of national correspondents and editors.

The winners were chosen by an eminent jury, chaired by Wajahat Habibullah, former chairperson of the National Commission for Minorities and Chief Information Commissioner of India. Other members of the jury were Nirupama Rao, former Foreign Secretary; K M Chandrasekhara, former Cabinet Secretary; and Amarjeet Sinha, senior fellow at the Centre for Social and Economic Progress.

“The question we wanted to

answer was, how much service have you done for the people of the country? Some of the entries were so exemplary that they deserve to be recognised by the rest of the country. These awards serve as an incentive for the District Magistrates who come next, who want to show everyone what they can do,” said Habibullah.

“The District Magistrate is a unique post in a democratic structure. We’ve inherited it from the British and Mughal Empires. When India became independent, Nehru was against having a bureaucracy or civil service but Sardar Patel was in favour of it,” he added.

The entries came from across the country and showcased a range of initiatives. “There were many memorable entries. I remember one in particular about a District Magistrate who had worked to get the river flowing in his area again, solving the people’s water problem. These awards are a great initiative and we hope more people will participate next year,” said Chandrasekhara.

Ranen Banerjee, partner at PwC that evaluated the entries, said: “It’s important to recognise that these District Magistrates are going above and beyond their normal course of duties for these projects of public service.”

## Cong leader’s post on Rohit

tweet on his fitness. So why are you making it a big thing?” she told *The Indian Express*. “I was watching the India-New Zealand match and I saw the captain. Before him, there was Virat Kohli, Rahul Dravid, M S Dhoni — all of them were fit. Here, his paunch is coming out. So I said the captain needs to be more fit.”

In her now-deleted post on X, she had also questioned Sharma’s leadership: “Need to lose weight! And of course the most unimpressive Captain India has ever had.”

Distancing the Congress from her remarks, Pawan Kherra, chairman of the party’s media and publicity department, said on X: “Shama Mohamed... made certain remarks about a cricketing legend that do not reflect the party’s position... The Indian National Congress holds contributions of sports icons in the highest regard and does not endorse any statements that undermine their legacy.”

TMC MP Sougata Roy also waded into the row, saying that “India wins because the other players play well, but the captain doesn’t contribute much...”

In his statement to the media, Mandaviya said the “Congress and TMC should leave sportspersons alone”. “Remarks made by leaders from these parties, indulging in body shaming and questioning an athlete’s place in the team, are not only deeply shameful but also outright pathetic,” he said.

BCCI secretary Devajit Saikia said it was “very unfortunate” that these “trivial comments” were

## Why market fall hurts

substantive income tax cuts which resulted in a revenue foregone of Rs 1 lakh crore. She raised the tax rebate income limit to Rs 12 lakh from Rs 7 lakh a year, and changed slabs, such that 1.75 crore taxpayers across the country stand to benefit.

In just four weeks since the Budget was presented, said a big fund manager, the positive market sentiment — that the tax cut would kickstart consumption and resuscitate flagging demand — has evaporated with the shock of a more than 5 per cent dip in the benchmark indices.

What has remarkably changed over the last five years to decade is the way equity culture has struck roots across regions in India, going far beyond the metros, and Tier-I and Tier-II cities. Mutual funds have brought a new set of investors beyond the traditional middle class into the stock markets. It is during the BJP-led NDA rule that India witnessed this secular transition of participation of investors from smaller towns contributing to the assets under management of mutual funds.

In other words, equity is a mass product now. The total number of investors registered with the National Stock Exchange has jumped more than five times to almost 22 crore by February 2025. In terms of the extent of geography covered now, one in every five rupee invested in MFs comes from cities beyond the top 110 cities contributing to MF assets.

For a majority of those who took to investing in equities directly or through MFs after the pandemic, a sustained fall is something of an aberration, one that they have not faced ever before. With increase in income or wages remaining stagnant or low, the only significant increase in their net worth has been on account of the rise in net asset values of their MF schemes, and gains in stock prices.

This had been a big, and resilient, sentiment booster till recently. “It is for this reason that the stock market fall matters so much today,” said another independent fund manager, who also did not wish to be named.

### Equity, a mass product now

In March 2014, cities beyond the top 110 cities (as disclosed by industry body Association of Mutual Funds of India) accounted for assets under management of around Rs 23,624 crore, or 2.61 per cent of the overall industry average AUM of Rs 9,05,120 crore.

By March 2020, this rose to Rs 2.98 lakh crore, or nearly 11 per cent of the total industry average AUM of Rs 27,15 lakh crore, and by December 2024, to Rs 12.9 lakh crore, or nearly 18.6 per cent of the industry average AUM of Rs 6.59 lakh crore. In effect, nearly one in five rupee invested now comes from outside of the top 110 cities.

The number of demat accounts as of January 2025 stood at 18.8 crore, a near five-fold increase from just 4.1 crore in March 2020. If equity investment was more of

an investment asset class for well-heeled, evolved investors earlier, over the last 10 years, it has become more of a mass product and the number of households having direct exposure to equity markets — through stocks or mutual funds — is much higher. The impact of a sustained fall, thereby, is far more spread out now, both in terms of income groups and geographical spread.

Among NSE registered investors, the biggest growth is in northern and western states, which have been traditional electoral strongholds for the ruling BJP and allies. While the biggest rise in absolute number of investor was seen in Maharashtra (which added 2.73 crore investors during this period), it was followed by Uttar Pradesh, which added 1.97 crore investors and Gujarat that added 1.28 crore registered investors.

When it comes to highest percentage growth in number of registered investors (among top 20 states with at least 20 lakh registered investors) — Assam comes on top with a 1,114 per cent jump, followed by Bihar with a growth of 680 per cent in the number of registered investors. Next in line are Madhya Pradesh (568%), Chhattisgarh (529 per cent and Uttar Pradesh (497 per cent).

Uttar Pradesh and Bihar are among states that go to polls over the next 24 months.

### Can the market fall dent the economy

“As far as mutual funds are concerned, it is not much of an issue as they are investing for the long term, however, those venturing through direct stock investment and into segments such as futures and options to make money in the short-term will feel the heat, as many of them have not witnessed a slump in their short investing lifecycle,” said the CEO of a large mutual fund.

There is also a feeling that if the markets continue to fall further, or remain weak for a few more months, it could impact the spending and consumption patterns.

“If the pain in equity markets extends for a longer period, which is likely to be the case in the mid and small cap segment, then it may start hurting spending and consumption in the economy. That is because a decline in net worth will weaken the sentiment and also lower their capacity to spend,” said a Mumbai-based economist, who did not wish to be named.

There is also the impact in terms of the market segments. The decline in mid and small caps could end up hurting the lower segment of investors more than the HNIs and the affluent class, as the former typically have a higher share of their portfolio exposed to the mid and small caps. In comparison, the affluent investors have more balanced exposure to the mid and small caps as those investors are more evolved in nature, and typically take longer term bets.

## My child didn’t need it, others did’

within 28 days of birth. Early initiation of breast milk — within an hour of birth — can cut down such deaths by nearly 22 per cent, they say.

“There is an increasing need for milk banks across the country to ensure that all babies are able to go home healthy and strong,” says Dr Ramesh Agarwal, professor of neonatology, AIIMS. “There is evidence to show that donor breast milk can reduce the risk of sepsis (severe blood infection) by 19 per cent as compared to formula. It has also been shown to reduce the risk of necrotising enterocolitis — a severe infection with a mortality rate of 40% — by 79 per cent,” he adds.

Breast milk can also lower the risk of retinopathy — the biggest cause of blindness in premature infants — and reduce feeding intolerance, thus resulting in shorter NICU stays for infants.

At the AIIMS milk bank, mothers can express and store their milk, either for their babies or for donation. The milk that is donated is pasteurised and given to sick babies who, for varying reasons, may not have access to their mothers’ breast milk.

The milk bank is a three-room setup with freezers to store the milk, a machine to disinfect the bottles, and another to pasteurise the milk.

Among those who have already benefited from the milk bank at AIIMS is Baby ‘R’ (names of babies are being withheld to protect their identities), a five-month-old who had undergone an intestinal surgery and couldn’t have formula milk because of the diarrhoea it caused. Since her mother could not produce enough breast milk, it was the

donated milk that helped nourish the infant back to health.

Baby ‘P’, born at 26 weeks, who weighed only 600 gm and could not tolerate formula while her mother’s milk output was low, was also among those for whom the centre proved to be a lifeline. Then, there’s Baby ‘H’, who was born at 7.5 months and weighed just 1.2 kg. The baby could not be breastfed by his mother because she had pulmonary hypertension — a condition with high blood pressure in the lungs — and had to be put on strong medication.

To ensure regular donations to the centre, the nursing staff reaches out to potential donors — mothers who either produce excess milk or, like Jyoti, whose babies, for various reasons, can’t be breastfed. “Most donor mothers are those whose infants are admitted to the NICU for longer durations. We are trying to expand our donor pool by reaching out to mothers whose newborns have undergone surgeries as well,” says Dr Agarwal.

Donating milk benefits the mother as well. “If the mother doesn’t keep expressing frequently, her milk production might be suppressed,” Dr Agarwal says.

AIIMS is also planning to reach out to working women who resume work after maternity leave. They will have the option to express milk and store it for their own babies or donate it. Jyoti is glad she did her bit. “Some mothers are reluctant; I was too. But then I got to meet the mothers and their babies who were in need of donor milk. Every mother who has excess milk should donate it to save newborns. That is the one satisfaction that I have now,” she says.



WAS DELIVERING NEWSPAPERS ON CYCLE

# DU student killed in hit-and-run in Rohini

Never let us pay for studies, had strong sense of responsibilty: Sister

UPASIKA SINGHAL  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 3

IT WAS a usual Saturday morning for 19-year-old Rishal Singh when he was on his way to distribute newspapers on a cycle near Sector 15 in Rohini around 6:30 am. He had been working as a newspaper vendor since he was in Class 11 to fund his education and help his family tackle financial challenges. Singh, who was pursuing a BA degree from Delhi University through correspondence, hoped to get a job as a government stenographer and was enrolled for a course to learn the skillset. The dream was, however, crushed when he was killed allegedly by a speeding car. "A traffic patrol team found him lying on the road and called the PCR around 6:30 am...we saw that there were newspapers strewn all around and circulated his picture on some vendor groups. They immediately recognised him and identified him," said a source. Singh was rushed to Babasaheb Ambedkar



Rishal Singh

Hospital by the police, where he was declared dead. Police confirmed that the car and its driver have not been identified yet. "The accident occurred near the old RTO building on KN Katju Marg. The building is defunct, and the area does not have any working CCTV cameras that could have recorded the incident," said another source. Singh's uncle Ghanshyam recalled that he tried to help his family by taking up different jobs. "His father couldn't earn much because of illness. Rishal was also working part-time at another factory, helping them make inventory lists and doing their billing work," he said. Determined to earn enough to keep his family afloat, Singh

was enrolled in a stenography course apart from his work and studies in hopes of getting a government job, his family told *The Indian Express*. He had finished giving his first semester exams a few days before the accident. "He began working as a newspaper vendor in Class 11. He always had a strong sense of responsibility towards his family...he'd never let us pay one rupee for his studies," said Singh's sister Poonam. "He was a shy boy and an introvert...never the kind to hang out with the neighbourhood boys...He loved playing football too but he couldn't manage his work and studies along with sports," she said. According to the police, Singh's father worked in a thread-cutting factory and was earning around Rs 15,000 a month. As a newspaper vendor, he was able to earn around Rs 10,000 a month. He is survived by his parents and three siblings, including a younger brother and two elder sisters.

DMRC-DAMEPL DISPUTE ORDER

## Comply in letter, spirit: SC warns of coercive action

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 3

THE SUPREME COURT on Monday said its last year's verdict on the DMRC-DAMEPL dispute needs to be followed in letter and spirit or it will be bound to take coercive measures against the officials concerned of the private firm and Axis Bank. A bench of Justices Surya Kant and N Kotiswar Singh told Delhi Airport Metro Express Private Limited (DAMEPL) and Axis Bank, "What is the need to play hide and seek? When there is judgement, you need to comply with it in letter and spirit." Senior advocate Abhishek Singhvi, appearing for the Axis Bank, said it was not party to the dispute for six years and now suddenly he is receiving a contempt notice for payment. The bank was only operating the escrow account in the dispute, he said. The bench also said that it was not concerned with the claim and counterclaim of the bank. The bench, which adjourned the matter, said it is advising the respondents, including DAMEPL, to comply with the judgement in letter and spirit. Attorney General R Venkataramani, appearing for the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC), said that all the orders were passed against Axis Bank

and it cannot be said that they were not aware of the proceedings. The bench asked Venkataramani to collate the names of the persons and their positions, and said the court will take coercive action, if the need arises. In December, last year, the top court issued contempt notices to the directors of Reliance Infrastructure subsidiary DAMEPL and Axis Bank for failing to refund nearly Rs 2,500 crore to the DMRC as per the apex court's verdict of April last year. The arbitral ruling of 2017 had saddled the DMRC with the liability of paying nearly Rs 8,000 crore to DAMEPL. Subsequently, two successive challenges to the award were dismissed by the top court, in September 2021 and November 2021. However, the two verdicts were overturned by the top court on April 10, 2024, on a curative petition filed by the DMRC. The order required DAMEPL to refund DMRC's deposit from an escrow account maintained by Axis Bank. The dispute pertains to the operation of the Airport Express Metro line in Delhi that was done by DAMEPL, which cancelled the contract in 2012 citing structural defects and invoked an arbitration clause to seek a termination fee and associated costs, amounting to Rs 8,000 crore.

# Delhi airport gets AI-enabled system to streamline operations

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 3

THE INDIRA Gandhi International Airport (IGIA) in Delhi has launched an AI-enabled system to streamline airside operations, including landing and take-off, by collecting real-time data from across the airport. Unified Total Airside Management (UTAM), the new AI-powered system, has been launched by Delhi International Airport Limited or DIAL, the operator of IGIA, in collaboration with Akasa Air. Other airlines will be onboarded in a phased manner in the next two to three months, a press statement underlined. "We are the first airport in India to implement this advanced solution. By applying AI and machine learning, we can predict and prevent delays, optimise turnarounds, and ensure smoother coordination between stakeholders like airlines, ground handlers, and security teams," said Videh Kumar Jaipuria, CEO, DIAL. UTAM enables operators to monitor aircraft movement, ground service equipment (GSE), and vehicle activity. It then integrates this real-time data and helps identify issues or delays and triggers alerts to prevent them.



At IGI airport in Delhi. Archive

The system will be leveraging technologies like Artificial Intelligence (AI), Internet of Things (IoT), and radar systems. The primary goal is to improve operational efficiency and enhance safety, according to the official statement. UTAM allows airport staff to see the location of aircraft and support vehicles like baggage carts and fuel trucks. If there are any delays, the system immediately alerts the staff so they can take quick action. It also monitors the time ground support equipment takes to complete tasks, ensuring that services like baggage loading and aircraft refueling happen on schedule, the statement highlighted. The system tracks whether parking stands are in use or idle, helping optimise space and resources. Additionally, the system keeps track of which runways and taxiways are in use, allowing better coordination and reducing congestion. On the safety side, UTAM makes sure that all vehicles on the airside follow speed limits. If any vehicle is moving too fast, an alert is triggered to prevent accidents. It also keeps an eye on whether vehicles are staying on their assigned paths. If a vehicle moves outside its designated route, the system immediately notifies airport staff so they can correct it. DIAL claims the system will bring all stakeholders, including the airlines, ground handlers, and airport authorities, onto a single platform and has established a centralised control room to monitor operations.

AT NAJAFGARH BUS TERMINAL CONSTRUCTION SITE

## No damage done to trees: DMRC to NGT after Forest dept's notice

SOPHIYA MATHEW  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 3

EVEN AS the Delhi Forest Department issued a notice recently to the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation over the alleged damage to several trees in Najafgarh amid the construction of a DTC bus terminal, the DMRC has maintained that no such damage has been done in the area while executing the development work. The issue of contention emerged in submissions to the National Green Tribunal (NGT) made on February 28. The details were shared publicly on the official

NGT website on Monday. The submissions are related to a matter of an alleged encroachment on a part of a water body in Najafgarh by the Delhi Transport Department to construct the bus terminal and a multi-storey commercial building. The last hearing by the Green Tribunal was held on January 20, and the next hearing is due on Tuesday. The Forest Department had conducted an inspection in the area following the last NGT hearing. In an inspection report dated February 18, it was noted, "On the site (where) the construction work was going on, trees were harmed by JCB and also they were having cut marks of axe



A Forest Department photo shows damage to a tree at the Najafgarh terminal.

on them. One tree was concrete-

tised, ten pruned, and one tree was felled and had a damaged bud, which is an offence under the Delhi Preservation of Trees Act (DPTA), 1994." According to the inspection report by the West Forest Division, 13 trees were found to be affected. An offence was registered under Section 31 of the DPTA. A notice was subsequently issued to the DMRC on February 20. Both the Forest Department and the DMRC, in their respective submissions to NGT, maintained that a previous application for approval for the transplantation of as many as 39 trees at the DTC bus terminal site is still pending. "No

damage is caused to the said 39 trees while executing the development work," stated the DMRC. As per the Delhi High Court's order in 2023, any permission for important projects needs to be intimated to the court. Meanwhile, Amit Gemawat, Deputy Conservator of Forests, West Division, said that the area is being regularly patrolled to ensure no tree damage is done in compliance with the norms. Regarding the matter of alleged encroachment upon a wetland, the DMRC informed the tribunal that the matter doesn't come under its purview. It said it was appointed as the executing

agency to carry out the development activity of the bus terminal as per a memorandum of understanding, and the work was handed over in January last year. Anuj Dayal, Principal Executive Director at the DMRC, told *The Indian Express*, "Provisions are made for the plantation of 10 trees for each tree that is cut. In addition, the transplantation of trees is also done as per the laid down procedure. Since this matter is subjudice, we shall not be able to elaborate further right now. However, we shall definitely re-ascertain the situation on the ground and take necessary measures as needed."

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**BSES**  
BSES Rajdhani Power Limited  
Regd. Off: 202, BSES Tower, New Delhi-110019  
Website: www.bsesdelhi.com

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
Objections / Response to BSES Rajdhani Power Ltd. Appeal (DFR) No. 530 of 2024 filed before the Hon'ble Appellate Tribunal for Electricity against Ld. DERC's True-up Order dated 19.07.2024 related to the "True-up of expenses of BRPL for FY 2020-21 passed in Petition No. 3 of 2022".

1. BSES Rajdhani Power Ltd. ("BRPL") has filed Appeal (DFR) No. 530 of 2024 before the Hon'ble Appellate Tribunal for Electricity ("Hon'ble Tribunal") challenging the True-up Order dated 19.07.2024 passed by Ld. Delhi Electricity Regulatory Commission ("Ld. DERC") in Petition No. 3 of 2022 against specific findings and observations. Notice has been issued in the Appeal on 09.01.2025 and the Hon'ble Tribunal by Order dated 07.02.2025 has directed BRPL to publish a Public Notice to inform the public of filing of the Appeal as also to invite objections and responses (if any) to the Appeal.

2. Findings of Ld. DERC have been challenged on following issues: -

S.No.	ISSUE
1.	NON-CONSIDERATION OF ACTUAL UNITS REVERSED ON ACCOUNT OF OWN CONSUMPTION.
2.	PARTIAL IMPLEMENTATION OF APTEL JUDGMENT RE. REVISION OF AT&C LOSS FOR SECOND CONTROL PERIOD
3.	INCREASE IN EMPLOYEE EXPENSES CORRESPONDING TO INCREASE IN CONSUMER BASE
4.	ERRONEOUS COMPUTATION OF DEPRECIATION FOR THE FIRST 11 MONTHS OF FY 2007-08
5.	NON-REVISION OF O&M EXPENSES FROM FY 2008-09 TO FY 2011-12 NOT REVISED IN LINE WITH FY 2007-08
6.	INCORRECT TRUING UP OF CARRYING COST RATES FOR FY 17-18 TO FY 19-20.
7.	INCORRECT TRUING UP OF WORKING CAPITAL INTEREST RATES FOR FY 17-18 TILL FY 2019-20
8.	OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE (O&M) EXPENSES FOR FY 2018-19. A: O&M EXPENSES FOR FY 2019-20 ALLOWED CONTRARY TO REGULATIONS B: NON-ALLOWANCE OF ADDITIONAL O&M EXPENSES
9.	INCORRECT CONSIDERATION OF CONSUMER CONTRIBUTION AMOUNT CAPITALIZED
10.	DISALLOWANCE OF RELATED PARTY TRADING MARGIN FOR FY 2011-12 TO FY 2013-14
11.	DISALLOWANCE OF POWER PURCHASE COST ON ACCOUNT OF EXCESSIVE TRADING AT UI ABOVE CONTINGENCY RESERVE FOR FY 2013-14 AND FY 2014-15
12.	DISALLOWANCE OF POWER PURCHASE COST FROM FY 2014-15 TO FY 2015-16 ON ACCOUNT OF OVERLAPPING IN BANKING TRANSACTIONS
13.	DISALLOWANCE ON ACCOUNT OF MONTHLY BILLING REBATE
14.	DISALLOWANCE OF POWER PURCHASE COST DURING PERIOD OF REGULATION FOR FY 2011-12 TO FY 2016-17
15.	CAPPING OF EQUITY AT 30% AND RE-OPENING THE STATUTORY TRANSFER SCHEME
16.	ERRONEOUS COMPUTATION OF NET-WORTH
17.	OLD METHODOLOGY FOR COMPUTATION OF FINANCING COST OF LPSC CONTINUED POST FY 2012-13
18.	DISALLOWANCE OF RATE OF SHORT-TERM POWER PROCURED DURING PERIOD OF REGULATION FOR FY 2017-18 AND FY 2018-19
19.	DISALLOWANCE OF COST OF AUDITOR CERTIFICATES ON ACTUALS FOR FY 2012-13 TO FY 2016-17.

20. RATE OF RETURN ON EQUITY CONSIDERED 14% INSTEAD OF 16% WHILE ALLOWING CARRYING COST FOR FY 2007-08 TO 2011-12.

21. DEFERMENT OF CAPITALISATION BASED ON THE ELECTRICAL INSPECTOR CERTIFICATE.

22. R&M AND A&G EXPENSES FOR FY 2004-05.

23. TRUE-UP OF INTEREST RATES OF LOANS FOR FY 2007-08 TO FY 2011-12 (FIRST MYT).

24. DISALLOWANCE OF CAPITAL EXPENDITURE PERTAINING TO RELIANCE ENERGY LIMITED (REL) ON AD-HOC BASIS.

25. REPAYMENT OF LOANS NOT CONSIDERED WHILE COMPUTING WACC FROM FY 2007-08 TO FY 2020-21.

26. LICENSE FEE PAID ON ASSETS.

27. REDUCTION IN MILLION UNITS IN RELATION TO ENFORCEMENT SALES FOR CALCULATION OF AT&C LOSSES.

28. ERRONEOUS TREATMENT OF COLLECTION EFFICIENCY FOR FY 2019-20 AND FY 2020-21.

29. DISALLOWANCE OF INCENTIVE ON SALE OF SURPLUS POWER FOR FY 2020-21.

30. ERRONEOUSLY CONSIDERED NOTIONAL INTEREST EARNED ON ADVANCE FROM CONSUMERS AS PART OF NON-TARIFF INCOME FOR FY 2020-21.

31. INCOME FROM STREET LIGHT MAINTENANCE BUSINESS TO BE CONSIDERED AS OTHER BUSINESS INCOME FOR FY 2020-21.

32. ERRONEOUS INCLUSION OF COLLECTION CHARGES ON ELECTRICITY DUTY IN NTI INSTEAD OF OTHER BUSINESS INCOME FOR FY 2020-21.

33. LOSS DUE TO RETIREMENT OF ASSETS FOR FY 2017-18 TO 2020-21.

34. ERRONEOUS METHODOLOGY FOR BANKING TRANSACTIONS FOR FY 2020-21.

35. DISALLOWANCE OF INTEREST ON INTER-COMPANY LOANS FOR FY 2020-21 BY CONSIDERING IT AS NON-TARIFF INCOME.

36. RPO PENALTY FOR FY 2020-21.

37. ERRONEOUS DISALLOWANCE OF SUSTAINED DEVIATION CHARGES FOR FY 2020-21.

38. DISALLOWANCE OF PROVISIONS ON ACCOUNT OF 7TH PAY COMMISSION IN CAPITALIZATION FOR FY 2017-18 TO FY 2020-21.

3. Copies of the Appeal Paper Books can be obtained from the office of the Counsel for BRPL i.e., Mr. Anupam Varma / Mr. Rahul Kinra, having their office(s) at: J. Sagar Associates, B 303, 3rd Floor, Ansal Plaza, HUDCO Place, August Kranti Marg, New Delhi – 110049 (011- 43110600, 43110617).

4. Anyone who intends to file Objections/Response to the Appeal may file three (3) copies of the same at the Registry, Appellate Tribunal for Electricity, 7th Floor, Core IV, SCOPE Complex, Lodhi Road, New Delhi – 110003, within two (2) weeks of the publication of this notice along with Proof of Service on BRPL addressed to 'Mr. Anupam Varma / Mr. Rahul Kinra, having their office(s) at: J. Sagar Associates, B 303, 3rd Floor, Ansal Plaza, HUDCO Place, August Kranti Marg, New Delhi – 110049 (011- 43110600, 43110617). The above submissions should be supported by an affidavit in the notified format and should carry the full name, postal address and e-mail address, if any, of the sender. Should the objector(s) wish to be heard in person, he/she must appear before the Hon'ble Tribunal, for which no separate notice shall be issued.

For BSES Rajdhani Power Limited  
Head (Regulatory Affairs)

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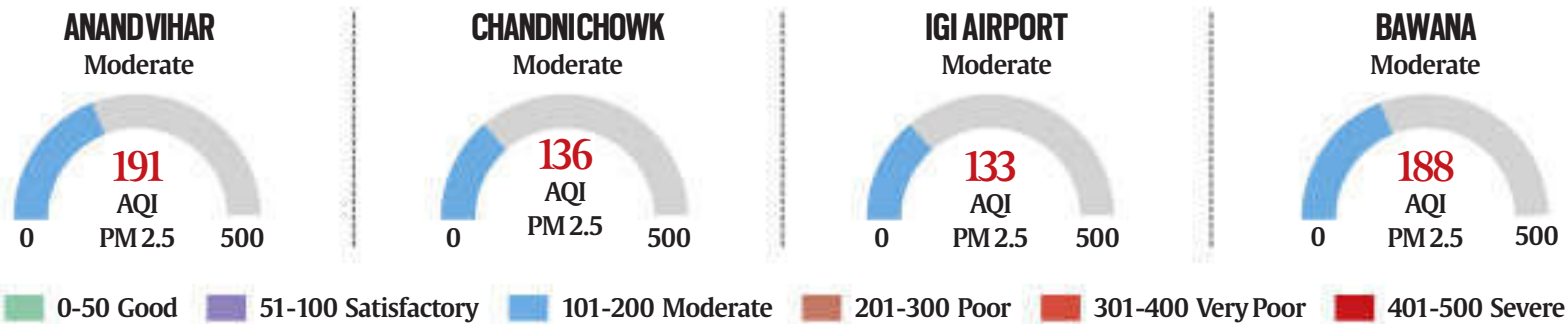
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**PUBLIC WELFARE, DEVELOPMENT TOP PRIORITY, SAYS CM**

# BJP govt to present ‘Viksit Dilli’ Budget, session March 24-26

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 3

ANNOUNCING THAT the BJP government will present a ‘Viksit Dilli’ Budget for 2025-26, Chief Minister Rekha Gupta and six Cabinet ministers launched a WhatsApp number and email ID on Monday, seeking suggestions from the public.

Addressing a press conference, Gupta said the Budget session will take place from March 24 to 26, adding that “public welfare and development will be our top priority”.

“The people of Delhi gave the BJP an opportunity with a majority of seats. Under the leadership of Modi ji, all promises made to the people will be fulfilled.”

“We have given directions to officials of departments to take suggestions from all sections of the society and incorporate them in the Budget. We are also launching an email ID — viksitdelhibudget\_2025@delhi.gov.in — and a WhatsApp number, 9999962025, on which people can send their suggestions,” Gupta said.



Chief Minister Rekha Gupta and other Cabinet ministers during a media address in Delhi on Monday. *Praveen Khanna*

She said the Budget will focus on women’s economic empowerment, expansion of healthcare services, strengthening public transport, pollution control, job creation, improving education, providing affordable and nutritious food for the underprivileged, senior citizen welfare, and the cleaning of the Yamuna River. Delhi’s Viksit Budget will include both short-term and long-term policies to address these areas comprehensively.

Gupta said around 5,000

women from various women’s organisations have been invited to the Delhi Assembly for a consultation on March 5.

“The government will incorporate their insights into policies aimed at enhancing women’s welfare and economic opportunities. We will also consult academic professionals and teachers. Following this, a meeting with Delhi’s trade and industrial organisations will be held on March 6 to gather their inputs,” she said.

Besides this, the 48 BJP MLAs

and cabinet ministers have been directed to consult farmers, slum dwellers, and young people.

“The suggestions received from these consultations will be carefully analysed, and viable recommendations will be incorporated... The government aims to prepare a Budget that brings major benefits to the people of Delhi and enhances their overall well-being,” the CM said.

Taking a dig at the previous Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) government, Gupta said that earlier, there was no focus on public welfare, but in the coming days, Delhi will see changes and development. “We will fulfill all the promises made in the manifesto... We are working day and night... since taking charge. Officials in the Delhi secretariat are working even on Saturdays and Sundays...,” she said.

Gupta also welcomed fruitful discussions from the Opposition, adding, “Rest is their choice.”

A senior Delhi government official said Budget meetings have started and all departments have been directed to submit their budget estimates.



Leader of Opposition Atishi and MLA Jarnail Singh (above) outside the Delhi Assembly on Monday. *Praveen Khanna*

## Ruckus over CAG report on final day of Assembly session

**AAP corrupt, says CM; report on healthcare to be sent to PAC**

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 3

IT WAS a rocky finish to the final day of the Delhi Assembly session on Monday, which saw heated exchanges between the ruling BJP and opposition AAP during a discussion on the Comptroller and Auditor General’s (CAG) report on health services.

Calling the report an “expose”, Chief Minister Rekha Gupta alleged that the previous AAP government committed corruption on the pretext of medicines, tests and treatment and called it a “ghotalon ki sarkar — Kejriwal (government of scams — Kejriwal).”

Speaker Vijender Gupta ruled that the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) of the House shall prioritise the examination of the CAG report and submit its findings within three months. The Assembly Secretariat shall immediately forward the report to the Health Department, which must submit its action-taken note within a month.

The Assembly session, the first since BJP came to power in Delhi, has been marked by sloganeering, protests and 21 of AAP’s 22 MLAs being suspended for three days. Monday was the first time they returned to the House. Three AAP MLAs — Jarnail Singh, Kuldeep Kumar and Anil Jha — were later marshalled out for disrupting House proceedings, following which the rest walked out.

Speaking about the CAG report, CM Gupta said, “The issue is not whether the Budget given by the health department to the hospitals was used or not, the issue is

### AAP MLA WARNED AFTER SHARING PHOTO OF HOUSE PROCEEDINGS ON X

*New Delhi:* A photo of the Delhi Assembly in session, posted on X by AAP MLA Jarnail Singh, led to chaos in the House, with Speaker Vijender Gupta warning him of breach of privilege. “How did you click the picture? You will delete this tweet... assure us you won’t do it again,” Gupta said. Singh later deleted his post. He had clicked the photo and asked who will give a response to the questions raised in the absence of ministers. Gupta said clicking and posting photos was not allowed without his nod. **ENS**

not how many beds were needed and how many were available, the issue is not even that the people did not get the medicines that they should have got. The issue is that AAP is responsible for the millions of people in Delhi who suffered while trying to get admission at these hospitals.”

“These people (AAP) even committed corruption in procuring medical items — PPE kits, masks — which are gathering dust in the hospital storage and warehouses,” she alleged.

The CM continued her attack. “Ever since their (AAP’s) scams are coming out, these people have

## Chaos in MCD amid Budget discussions

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 3

CHAOS BROKE out in Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) Monday soon after the process to pass the Budget for the upcoming financial year kicked off.

As Leader of Opposition Raja Iqbal Singh presented his plans and suggestions on day 1 of four-day-long discussions, he accused the AAP — which is at the helm of affairs in the MCD — of not fulfilling its promises. This prompted a pushback from AAP councillors who condemned his remarks. Even as the BJP leader was yet to finish his Budget speech, Mayor Mahesh Kumar Khichi adjourned the House.

Addressing the media after the adjournment, Singh criticised the AAP and Mayor Khichi and accused the party of stalling a dem-



At the MCD House, Monday. *Tashi Tobgyal*

ocratic process by adjourning the House amid his speech. “The AAP government neither has a vision of its own nor does it want to listen to the constructive suggestions of the Opposition. It is condemnable for the Mayor to adjourn the House on a serious matter like the Budget,” Singh said.

In his speech, Singh talked about increasing the revenue of MCD, reducing expenses, and taking a tough stand on corruption. He also urged cutting the Mayor Fund of Rs 510 crore and giving it back to the departments concerned. Apart from this, he suggested making posts of cor-

poration employees permanent, providing overalls and equipment to sanitation workers, improving hospital facilities, and raising the level of education.

Singh also said councillors should be given an amount of Rs 2 crore to work in their areas. He suggested that the MCD include parking, air pollution control, and cleanliness campaigns in its Budget priorities.

Asserting that BJP has a majority in the House, Singh said that a BJP mayor will be elected in April.

After the 2022 MCD polls, AAP came to power by securing a majority of 134 seats in the 250-member House. However, the MCD’s tenure has been tumultuous, with both AAP and BJP aggressively poaching rival councillors. The anti-defection law does not apply to MCD councillors. The BJP now has 116 councillors, while the AAP has 114.

### 1984 riots: HC refuses to accept state’s appeal against acquittals after 29-yr delay

**SOHINI GHOSH**  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 3

THE DELHI High Court has refused to accept an over 29-year delay by the state in filing an appeal against the acquittals of 16 accused in a 1984 anti-Sikh riots case.

A division bench of Justices Prathiba Singh and Saurabh Banerjee, in its order on February 25, relied on the precedent set by Delhi HC earlier, where it had similarly refused to accept the delay by the state in filing a bunch of appeals against 1984 riot acquittals. The HC earlier dismissed four such appeals by the state against acquittals, where the delay in filing such appeals ranged from 27 to 36 years since the accused in the three cases were acquitted by a trial court.

In the latest case, the state was appealing against a 1995 judgment by a Karkardooma sessions court that had acquitted Rattan Lal and 15 others for rioting and murder. A complaint was filed in the case at the Seema Puri police station in November 1984. All the accused in the case were acquitted, with the trial court granting the accused the benefit of doubt and also observing a delay in recording of statements of prosecution witnesses.

The bench, in its latest order, recorded, “While this Court is conscious of the large-scale loss of human lives and property during the 1984 riots, after having seen the quantum of delay and the discussion in the impugned judgment, following similar orders already passed, the delay is not liable to be condoned and leave is not liable to be granted.”

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### NEW LOOK

**Two historic structures and a well have been restored by the Delhi Development Authority in South Delhi’s Sanjay Van. These were unveiled by L-G V K Saxena on Monday. “We are making all efforts to revive and restore heritage sites and hand them over to the people of Delhi so they become their stakeholder guardians,” Saxena said. Express**

## Accountant robbed, gunned down in Shalimar Bagh: 3, including shooter, held

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 3

THREE MEN were arrested after a brief shootout with the Delhi Police. One of the accused, police said, is wanted for allegedly robbing and killing an accountant in Shalimar Bagh last week.

Police said they nabbed the shooter, Sahil, 22, and his associates, Mohd. Fayaz alias Allen, 25, and Deepak, 32, on Sunday.

The incident took place on Tuesday around 9 pm. The victim was identified as Saroj Pathak, who worked at a utensil-manufacturing factory in Wazirabad Industrial Area.

Police got a breakthrough on March 2 when a Special Staff team, led by Inspector Somveer

Singh and SHO (Ashok Vihar) Inspector Kuldeep Singh, received a tip-off that Sahil would be in Ashok Vihar. “On reaching there, they signalled to him to stop. But he fired at the team,” DCP (Northwest) Bhisham Singh said.

The team fired back in retaliation, with a bullet hitting the accused in his right knee, police said. “He was taken to DCB hospital and we verified his identity,” DCP Singh said.

During questioning, Sahil claimed he planned the robbery with five others after receiving information about the victim from Deepak, a cashier at a nearby factory. “Deepak was in touch with the robbers. They asked him to give them a target, so he told them about Pathak, who carried cash with him daily,” an officer said.

Acting on Deepak’s input, three of the six robbers carried out a recce of the road Pathak took to Shalimar Bagh every day. “They planned to execute the robbery earlier, but they saw some policemen on patrol nearby and dropped the plan,” DCP Singh said.

On the day of the murder, the three accused involved in recce were waiting for Pathak near a T-point. As soon as Pathak drove past on his scooter, they informed the others. “CCTV footage showed three more people arriving on a bike. One of them was Sahil, who shot Pathak,” a police officer said.

Police later arrested Deepak from Bakoli village in Alipur. “Sahil revealed he got the weapon from Allen, who was to get a part of the stolen cash. He was arrested from Bhalswa Dairy,” DCP Singh said.

## Woman murdered in London: Accused at large, kin seek probe by independent agency

**SAKSHI CHAND**  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 3

IT’S BEEN three months since Harshita Brella (24) was found dead in the boot of her husband’s car at Brisbane Road in East London. The suspect in the case, her husband Pankaj Lamba, is yet to be found.

The Delhi Police registered a case under sections 498A (husband or relative of husband of a woman subjecting her to cruelty) and 406 (criminal breach of trust) at Palam Village police station on December 3 last year.

Her family has filed a writ petition in the Delhi High Court, which sought a status report in the case. The report is still awaited.

Harshita’s sister, Sonia Dabas, has sought an inquiry from an independent agency. “Either the Central Bureau of Investigation or any other investigative agency should take up



Harshita Brella (24) was found dead in the boot of her husband’s car at Brisbane Road in East London last year. *Archive*

this case,” she said. “The only ray of hope is that the matter is being heard in the HC; we are optimistic that justice will be served,” she added.

## Runaway Delhi teen found 2,000 km away — at a construction site in Tamil Nadu

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 3

DAYS AFTER he ran away from home, a 17-year-old boy was found over 2,000 km away in the most unlikely of places — he was working at a construction site in Krishnagiri, Tamil Nadu, said police. According to his family, he didn’t want to take his Class XI exams.

Police said the teenager, who reportedly studies at a “reputed school” in Central Delhi, has since been reunited with his

**According to his family, he didn’t want to take his Class XI exams. The teen has been reunited with his parents**

family. The boy’s family reported him missing on February 21 after receiving a message from him saying he had left home and to not look for him. The boy’s father told police that his son was not

doing well in his studies and did not wish to take his Class 11 final examinations.

“The boy wanted to become independent and earn money on his own. While he was in school, he had also tried investing in Bitcoin without much success,” said a police source.

Sources also said the teen was having a difficult time fitting in at school due to his family’s humble background, which most likely prompted him to run away from home.

According to police, the boy took a train to Bengaluru, where

## ‘Seek finance dept’s nod for expenses above Rs 1 cr’

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 3

FOR BETTER “cash management”, the Delhi government’s Finance Department has directed all departments to seek approval for expenses above Rs 1 crore.

According to officials, this is the first such order issued after the Covid pandemic. “A similar order was issued during the pandemic as a cost-cutting method,” said a senior official.

This comes in the wake of Chief Minister Rekha Gupta accusing the previous AAP government of leaving the “public exchequer empty”.

The order issued by the Finance Department last week states: “Considering the current position of resources and for better cash management, for all expenditure having financial implication above Rs 1 crore, the departments will take necessary permission for incurring the expenditure... from the Finance Department other than... expenditure relating to salaries and all allowances (including arrears), wages, salaries of outsourced staff, medical reimbursement, security and sanitation...”

Expenditures such as electricity and water supply, telephone, maintenance of staff car, reimbursement for newspapers, purchase of stationery, and other essential expenditure required for the day-to-day functioning of the department are exempted.

The departments also don’t need permission for expenditures related to payments of pension to senior citizens and widows, unemployment allowances to differently abled persons, and payments relating to immediate assistance to bereaved family members under the Delhi Family Benefits Scheme.

Further, payment of bills of the Delhi government counsel is also excluded from this order.

“Instead of sending files to the finance department for relaxation, the departments may send a letter with the necessary details — nature of expenditure, estimated amount, budget head from which expenditure is proposed to be incurred — after sanctioning the expenditure by the HoD concerned/administrative secretary at his own level...,” reads the order.

tion accusing her husband, in-laws and other relatives of cruelty and demanding dowry.

In January, Sonia, through the family’s counsel Riddhima and Rushab Aggarwal, filed a writ petition in the HC. The matter was heard on January 31, and the HC directed the MHA and Delhi Police to file a status report with regard to the case registered at Palam village.

The court, in its order, said expeditious steps should be taken by the law-enforcement agencies concerned to ascertain whether Harshita’s husband, Pankaj Lamba, is in India, as alleged by Brella’s family.

“The information regarding Lamba having travelled from London to Mumbai and Delhi be also verified and appropriate steps be taken to trace the said individual,” it said in its January 31 order.

Advocate Radhika Bishwajit Dubey, standing counsel for the MHA and the Delhi Police, said, “The matter is sub-judice.”

he saw a recruitment advertisement for construction labourers. “The site was in Krishnagiri in Tamil Nadu... so he took another train there and began working at the site,” said the police source.

Meanwhile, a team from the Anti-Human Trafficking Unit, comprising Inspector Manoj Dahiya, ASI Gopal Krishan and Constable Dharamraj, under the supervision of ACP Arun Chaudhary, was formed to track the boy down. Using his phone’s location, the boy was tracked to Krishnagiri and brought back home, said police.





# Transport corridors at top speed

The state is working in full swing to complete the CharDham Highway Project, Rishikesh-Karanprayag Rail Line, will build its first international airport

Uttarakhand, known for its hilly terrain and scenic beauty, has unique transportation challenges and opportunities. The state has been actively working on enhancing its transport infrastructure to improve connectivity, support economic growth, and boost tourism.

From the Char Dham Highway Project, and Rishikesh-Karanprayag Rail Line to the first international airport in the state and e-mobility initiatives, the Uttarakhand government's double-engine government is working at full speed to improve the state's transport sector

Uttarakhand, the picturesque state nestled in the Himalayan foothills, has embarked on a transformative journey in the realm of transportation.

With a focus on improving connectivity, fostering economic growth, and ensuring environmental sustainability, the state government has launched several ambitious transport projects. These initiatives aim to enhance accessibility to remote areas, boost tourism, and create a robust infrastructure network that aligns with the region's topography and ecological considerations.

Here's an overview of the key transport development initiatives in Uttarakhand:

- ROAD INFRASTRUCTURE**  
**Expansion of National and State Highways:**
- Uttarakhand has focused on expanding and upgrading its network of national and state highways. Key projects include widening roads, constructing new highways, and improving road safety measures.
  - Projects like the Char Dham Highway Project aims to improve connectivity to major pilgrimage sites, enhancing safety and accessibility.
- Rural Connectivity:**
- The Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) has been instrumental in improving rural road connectivity, ensuring that remote villages are connected to main roads and highways.
  - All-Weather Roads: Developing all-weather roads in hilly regions is a priority. These roads are crucial for maintaining connectivity during monsoon seasons and reducing the risk of landslides and roadblocks.

**RAILWAYS**  
**Rail Network Expansion:** Uttarakhand is expanding its railway network to enhance connectivity. Projects include the Rishikesh-Karanprayag Railway Line, which aims to connect the pilgrimage sites in the state with the rail network. The Tanakpur-Bageshwar rail project is another significant initiative aimed at improving connectivity in the Kumaon region.

This ambitious endeavour seeks to link the spiritual town of Rishikesh with Karanprayag, a significant confluence point of the Alaknanda and Pindar rivers. Once completed, this rail line will not only boost tourism but also serve as a crucial transport corridor, connecting remote areas with the broader rail network and facilitating the movement of goods and people.

**Upgrading Existing Rail Infrastructure:** Efforts are underway to upgrade existing rail infrastructure, including modernizing stations, improving track quality, and enhancing safety measures.



**The Honorable Prime Minister has called the 21st century, the decade of Uttarakhand. We are working with a resolve without any alternative to make the state an ideal state in every field in accordance with the vision of the Prime Minister.**

**PUSHKAR SINGH DHAMI**  
CHIEF MINISTER, UTTARAKHAND

**AVIATION**  
**Development of Airports:** Uttarakhand has been developing its aviation infrastructure to promote tourism and improve connectivity. The Jolly Grant Airport in Dehradun has been expanded and upgraded to handle increased passenger traffic and accommodate larger aircraft.

Pantnagar Airport has also seen improvements to facilitate better air connectivity to the Kumaon region.

**Heliports and Helipads:** The state has developed several heliports and helipads to provide air connectivity to remote and hilly areas. Helicopter services are particularly useful for emergency evacuations, medical services, and tourism.

**Uttarakhand Aviation Policy:** Recognising the potential of air connectivity to boost tourism and business, Uttarakhand has formulated a progressive Aviation Policy. The policy aims to develop and upgrade existing airstrips, promote heli-tourism, and facilitate the operation of regional airlines. By improving air connectivity to remote areas like Pithoragarh and Chaukhutia, the state is ensuring that even the most secluded regions become accessible, fostering economic development and reducing travel time.

**PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION**  
**Urban Public Transport:** Cities like Dehradun, Haridwar, and Nainital are improving their public transport systems. This includes introducing new buses, developing bus rapid transit (BRT) systems, and enhancing existing public transport infrastructure.

**Electric and Hybrid Buses:** To promote sustainable transportation, Uttarakhand has introduced electric and hybrid buses in urban areas. This initiative helps reduce pollution and promotes eco-friendly travel.

**SUSTAINABLE AND SMART INITIATIVES**  
**Smart City Projects:** Under the Smart Cities Mission, Dehradun is implementing various projects to improve urban mobility, including smart traffic management systems, integrated public transport solutions, and pedestrian-friendly infrastructure.

**Green Transport Initiatives:** The state promotes the use of electric vehicles (EVs) and has established EV charging stations in major cities. There are also incentives for adopting green transport solutions to reduce the carbon footprint.



cred destinations. The project not only facilitates smoother travel for pilgrims but also promotes tourism, contributing to the economic development of the region.

**Adventure and Eco-Tourism:** To support adventure and eco-tourism, the state has developed infrastructure like trekking routes, camping sites, and eco-friendly lodges. Improved transport facilities make these destinations more accessible to tourists.

**CHALLENGES AND FUTURE PLANS**

Despite significant progress, Uttarakhand faces challenges such as landslides, rugged terrain, and climatic conditions that impact transportation. Future plans include:

**Further Road Network Expansion:** Continuing to expand and upgrade the road network to enhance connectivity between remote areas and urban centres.

**Railway Connectivity:** Completing ongoing railway projects and planning new lines to improve rail connectivity within the state and with neighboring regions.

**Enhanced Air Connectivity:** Developing new airports and upgrading existing ones to handle more flights and passengers.

**Sustainable Transport Solutions:** Promoting the use of renewable energy in transport, expanding EV infrastructure, and encouraging the use of public transport to reduce traffic congestion and pollution.

**THE GOVERNMENT IS INCENTIVISING ADOPTION OF EVs VIA SUBSIDIES, CHARGING INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT, AND CREATING AWARENESS**

**AERIAL ROPEWAY PROJECTS**

To overcome the geographical challenges posed by the mountainous terrain, the state government is investing in aerial ropeway projects. These projects aim to provide efficient and environmentally friendly transportation solutions, connecting remote villages and tourist destinations.

**There are two main pillars of building a developed India in the 21st century. First, pride in its heritage and second, every possible effort for development. Today, Uttarakhand is continuously strengthening both these pillars. This decade will be the decade of Uttarakhand.**

**NARENDRA MODI**  
PRIME MINISTER

tions. A notable example is the proposed ropeway connecting Dehradun with Mussoorie, a popular hill station. Such initiatives not only reduce travel time but also minimize the environmental impact associated with traditional road construction in ecologically sensitive areas.

**E-MOBILITY INITIATIVES**

In alignment with global trends toward sustainable transportation, Uttarakhand is actively promoting e-mobility initiatives. The state has introduced electric buses in urban and inter-city transport systems, reducing carbon emissions and promoting clean energy. Moreover, the government is incentivising the adoption of electric vehicles (EVs) by offering subsidies, charging infrastructure development, and creating awareness campaigns. This shift towards e-mobility not only addresses environmental concerns but also positions Uttarakhand as a pioneer in sustainable transportation.

**Smart Transportation Solutions:** In an era of rapid technological advancements, Uttarakhand is incorporating smart transportation solutions to enhance efficiency and safety. Intelligent traffic management systems, real-time monitoring, and the integration of digital platforms for ticketing and information dissemination are being implemented. These innovations not only streamline transportation processes but also contribute to the overall modernization of the state's infrastructure. The Uttarakhand cabinet has approved the expansion of Pantnagar Airport's runway, signalling the state's aspiration to elevate the facility into an international airport. The existing 1,372-metre runway will be extended to 3,000 m to accommodate larger aircraft. The expansion necessitates the acquisition of 804 acres of land, with neighbouring lands belonging to various government departments.

Uttarakhand's commitment to enhancing transportation infrastructure reflects its vision for holistic development, balancing economic growth with environmental sustainability. The ongoing and proposed projects signify a concerted effort to address the unique challenges posed by the state's topography while harnessing growth opportunities. As these initiatives come to fruition, Uttarakhand is poised to emerge as a model for sustainable and inclusive transportation, setting a precedent for other regions facing similar geographical constraints. Through these transformative transport projects, the state is not only connecting its people but also paving the way for a more prosperous and sustainable future.

## Airports to get international status

CM Dhami also unveiled plans for a new township near Dehradun

During a pre-budget meeting with industrialists in January this year, Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami announced that the airports in Dehradun and Pantnagar would soon achieve international status.

Jolly Grant in Dehradun and Pantnagar in Udhampur Singh Nagar are key airports for the state. Jolly Grant is the primary airport and the nearest gateway to Mussoorie, while Pantnagar serves as the closest airport to Nainital.

CM Dhami emphasised his government's commitment to airport expansion, aiming to elevate Jolly Grant and Pantnagar to international standards. "The Uttarakhand government is prioritising the removal of obstacles to the expansion of both airports," he said. This initiative is expected to enhance connectivity and boost tourism, fostering economic growth in the state.

Dhami also unveiled plans for a new township near Dehradun. The township, to be established in Haripur near Kalsi, will feature modern facilities to meet residents' needs. This development is part of the government's broader agenda to create sustainable urban infrastructure for the state's growing population.

The announcement came after Defence Minister Rajnath Singh inaugurated 35 infrastructure projects by the Border Roads Organisation (BRO) in Joshimath, Chamoli district. The projects, including six roads and 29 bridges across seven states, were completed at Rs 670 crore. Singh praised the BRO's dedication to completing these projects on time.



The projects, including six roads and 29 bridges across seven states, were completed at Rs 670 crore. Singh praised the BRO's dedication to completing these projects on time.

The chief minister, echoing Rajnath Singh's sentiments, highlighted the importance of these infrastructure projects initiated under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership. He noted that projects like the Chardham All Weather Road, Rishikesh-Karanprayag Railway Line, Frontier Area Development Project, and Mountain Range are vital for the state's development and strategic, religious, and environmental significance.

"Schemes like Chardham All Weather Road, Rishikesh-Karanprayag Railway Line, Frontier Area Development Project, and Mountain Range are important for both development and security," he said.

## Big infra push to upgrade Uttarakhand's road network

The central government will invest Rs 2 lakh crore in road infrastructure in Uttarakhand, with the aim of soon making the roads here world class.

According to the Union Ministry of Road Transport and Highways, currently Rs 1.40 lakh crore is being spent on the road infrastructure of Uttarakhand, to which another Rs 60,000 cr will be added soon, taking the total amount to Rs 2 lakh cr. After the completion of these projects, the roads of Uttarakhand will become world class.

According to the Union Ministry, the national highways in Uttarakhand have increased from 2,517 km in 2014 to 3,608 km. While laying the foundation stone of the long-awaited projects in the state's Tanakpur town, Chief

Minister Pushkar Dhami expressed gratitude to the central government and said that the central government is always ready to cooperate in the development of Uttarakhand. Whatever we want, we get it even before asking for it. These projects are expected to significantly enhance connectivity in the Manshand region.

Another important project which is going to be completed soon is the Delhi-Dehradun Expressway. Its completion will reduce the travel time to Dehradun by 2.5 hours and Haridwar by 2 hours. A total investment of about Rs 14,285 crore has been made in the 264 km long expressway and its connectivity to Haridwar, which is fully funded by the government. It is India's first wildlife elevated corridor.



# 6 GOVT & POLITICS



## DELHI CONFIDENTIAL



### TEMPLE RUN

BJP PRESIDENT and Union Minister J P Nadda has in the last 10 days offered prayers at several prominent shrines. On Saturday, when Nadda was in J&K's Katra to address a workshop of party MLAs, he offered obeisance at Mata Vaishno Devi temple. A day earlier, Nadda had prayed at the Jagannath temple in Puri while on a visit to the city to inaugurate the 9th National Summit on Good and Replicable Practices and Innovation in Public Healthcare System. On February 22, the BJP chief took a dip in the Sangam during the Maha Kumbh in Prayagraj and also offered prayers at a prominent Hanuman temple there. A day before that, he offered prayers at Kashi Vishwanath temple during his tour of Varanasi to address 'Kashi Tamil Sangamam 3.0'.

### PERSONAL TOUCH

IN AN unprecedented move, Chhattisgarh Finance Minister O P Choudhary on Monday presented a handwritten 101-page budget speech in Hindi. Photos of the minister writing the budget were also shared with the media. While many people praised Choudhary's handwriting, some journalists were left wondering why he made the extra effort as not every handwritten word may be legible for every reader. The minister is believed to have written the 101 pages in three days, staying up at night.

### KNOW THE BUDGET

AFTER THE Union Budget, the BJP sent its national spokespersons and some other leaders to different cities to address "intellectuals' meets" and spread awareness about "the good aspects of the budget". The meetings were attended by lawyers, teachers, doctors, chartered accountants and writers, besides the Central leader and some local politicians. A few days ago, BJP national spokesperson Prem Shukla addressed one such gathering in Chhattisgarh's Bilaspur. These meetings, being organised by the party for the last few years, are a part of the BJP's strategy to spread goodwill about the budget.

## Odisha govt delinks Panchayati Raj Diwas from Biju Patnaik's birth anniversary

BJD calls move disrespect to statesman

SUJIT BISOI  
BHUBANESWAR, MARCH 3

THE BJP government in Odisha on Monday announced that it will celebrate Panchayati Raj Divas on April 24, in a departure from the previous practice in the state of marking it on March 5 – the birth anniversary of former chief minister Biju Patnaik.

CM Mohan Majhi's government has announced that it will celebrate Biju Patnaik's birth anniversary, but it will no longer be a government holiday.

National Panchayati Raj Day has been celebrated on April 24 since 1993 to commemorate the constitutional status of Panchayati Raj institutions.

However, Odisha has been observing March 5 as Panchayati Raj Divas since the early 1990s to mark Biju Patnaik's contributions. In 1991, when Biju Patnaik was chief minister, Odisha became the first state in the country to reserve one-third of seats in Panchayati Raj institutions for women.

"The decision to celebrate Panchayati Raj Divas on April 24 has been taken to clear the con-

fusion between national and state Panchayati Raj Day celebrations. We will also celebrate Lokseva Divas on April 24," said a senior government officer.

Biju Patnaik's son Naveen Patnaik, during his tenure as chief minister, had in 2020 made March 5 both Panchayati Raj Divas and Lokseva Divas.

The Naveen Patnaik-led BJD has criticised the BJP government's decision. Senior BJD leader Debi Prasad Mishra said Biju Patnaik had played a big role in empowering Panchayati Raj institutions and that delinking his name from Panchayati Raj Divas was a dishonour and disrespect to him.

"Biju Babu is a statesman. He made huge contributions towards strengthening the Panchayati Raj system, not just in Odisha but across India. He pioneered some of the decisions, like reservation of seats for women in Panchayati Raj bodies. The decision of the state government not to celebrate Biju Patnaik's birth anniversary as Panchayati Raj Divas has hurt the sentiments of lakhs of panchayat representatives of Odisha," Mishra said.

## BJP's balance of power: After Maharashtra, may tighten grip on Bihar

LIZ MATHEW  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 3

THE BJP MAY have fallen below the majority mark at the Centre, making it more dependent on its allies. However, after Maharashtra, where the BJP put the Shiv Sena and NCP far behind, the party appears set to steal a march over ally JD(U) in Bihar Assembly polls – in a way, retaining the power balance in the BJP's favour.

In 2020, despite JD(U) winning just 48 constituencies to BJP's 84, BJP had conceded the CM's chair to Nitish Kumar. The uneasiness that resulted was one of the reasons behind Nitish switching sides to the Mahagathabandhan, before returning to BJP again ahead of the last Lok Sabha polls.

Given this recent memory, even if the BJP lets Nitish be the face of the alliance, there could be conditions attached if the seat tallies are similar to 2020. The BJP has additional bargaining power in the form of ally Chirag Paswan-led IJP (Ram Vilas) (in 2020, the understanding between the BJP and IJP-RV was covert).

JD(U) would be taking its cue from Maharashtra, where elections in November last year put BJP in a commanding position compared to its allies, at 132 of the total 288 seats. The Shiv Sena, whose Eknath Shinde held the CM post going into elections, tried to hold out seeking the same again. But BJP dug its heels in.

Given that BJP had near-majority on its own, apart from the support of 41 MLAs of Ajit Pawar-

## Day after sacking nephew Akash, Mayawati expels him from BSP

There will be no successor for me in the party till my last breath, says Mayawati

LALMANI VERMA  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 3

A DAY after she removed her nephew Akash Anand as the party's national coordinator, BSP president Mayawati Monday expelled him from the party, citing a social media post by him for her decision.

In a series of posts in Hindi on X Mayawati said Akash had been removed because he was under the influence of his father-in-law and former BSP MP Ashok Siddharth, who in turn was expelled from the party last month. And that Akash was supposed to show maturity by "repenting", but did not do so.

"On the contrary, the lengthy response given by Akash is not of his remorse and political maturity, but is largely selfish, arrogant... under the influence of his father-in-law... I have been advising people in the party to avoid such acts and have also been punishing them," Mayawati wrote.

She added, "Therefore, in the interest of the self-respect and self-esteem movement of Dr Bhimrao Ambedkar and following the tradition of discipline of the venerable Shri Kanshi Ram

... The lengthy response given by Akash is not of his remorse and political maturity, but is largely selfish, arrogant... under the influence of his father-in-law...  
MAYAWATI, BSP CHIEF

ji, Akash Anand, like his father-in-law, is being expelled from the party."

Mayawati's announcement followed hours after Akash took to X to respond to his removal as the BSP's national coordinator, swearing unflinching loyalty to her.

"I am a cadre of Mayawati ji and under her leadership I have learnt unforgettable lessons of sacrifice, loyalty and dedication... all these are not just an idea for me, but the purpose of my life," he wrote in Hindi. "The decision of Behen Kumari Mayawati ji to remove me from all party posts is personally emotional for me, but also it is a big challenge now, the test is difficult and there's a long battle ahead."

He added that every decision

The decision... to remove me from all party posts is personally emotional for me, but also it is a big challenge now, the test is difficult and there's a long battle ahead  
AKASH ANAND

of "Behen ji (Mayawati)" was like a "patthar ki lakeer (carved in stone for him)", and he respected and stood by them.

Calling himself a true worker of the "Bahujan Mission" and the Movement, Akash said patience and determination were the true companions of an individual in such difficult times. He emphasised he would continue to work for the party and mission with full devotion and fight for the rights of Dalits "till his last breath".

Akash also hit out at political rivals, saying, "Some people from the rival party are thinking that my political career is over... They should understand that the Bahujan Movement is not a career, but a fight for self-respect and self-esteem of crores of

Dalits, oppressed, deprived and poor people... Lakhs of Akash Anands are always ready to keep this torch burning and sacrifice everything for it."

On Sunday, when Mayawati announced Akash's removal as BSP national coordinator, it was the second time in 10 months that she had taken such a decision, after having once labelled him as her political heir.

Akash, the son of Mayawati's brother, was first removed from his post on May 7 last year, in the middle of the Lok Sabha polls. Soon after the then BSP national coordinator was booked for "promoting enmity", following a series of aggressive speeches mostly targeting the BJP, he was sacked by Mayawati.

The following month, the elections over, he was reinstated, and subsequently announced by Mayawati as her political heir.

In the recent Assembly polls, Mayawati made Akash in-charge of Delhi and Haryana, but in both the states, the party – that has been on a steady decline – failed to make any impact.

Announcing Akash's expulsion, Mayawati said Monday: "Now, I have decided that there will be no successor for me in the party till my last breath."

### 'Deport illegal Bangladeshis': BJP reiterates demand for NRC in Jharkhand

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 3

MONTHS AFTER losing the Jharkhand Assembly elections, the BJP has once again raised the matter of purported illegal Bangladeshis, with party MP Nishikant Dubey calling for NRC to be conducted in the state to identify and deport the illegal immigrants.

"This is not an election issue. Our whole demography has changed. The 45% population of tribals in Jharkhand has come down to 28% in the 2011 census. It would be 23-24% now. Jharkhand was made for the tribals and they are becoming extinct in the state," Dubey said.

He said, "Congress only looks at its vote bank. It is time to conduct an NRC in Jharkhand. Then, Bangladeshis should be identified and deported in handcuffs."

Accusing the INDIA bloc government of "appeasement", Dubey said, "They (INDIA bloc) are talking about Friday off for government servants during Ramzan, and office hours only till 4 pm every day. You do not give holidays during the Kanwar Yatra, where 1-2 crore people gather in Deoghar..."

"There are government schools in Jharkhand which have been made Urdu schools. And they have a holiday on Friday. In all other institutions in India and the world, Sunday is a holiday. They made this change in 2007 when Congress was in power at the Centre and its government was in power in Jharkhand."

During the Jharkhand polls last year, illegal immigration from Bangladesh in the Santhal Pargana division emerged as the BJP's main poll plank. The campaign fell flat as the party was restricted to 21 seats.

the Opposition has started claiming that BJP has hijacked the party, with Nitish reduced to a mask. Rumours about the CM's health also keep circulating, adding to JD(U)'s nervousness.

Like in Maharashtra, where both Sena and NCP filled the Maratha vote gap for BJP, the JD(U) too serves a crucial purpose because of its support base – meaning that there will be no jettisoning of the alliance by the BJP. Even those allies in Bihar who are closer to BJP than the JD(U) stress on keeping Nitish within the umbrella.

As per some sources, this may mean retaining Nitish as CM at least for a while, if NDA wins. Incidentally, calls have started growing from the JD(U) side for polls to be fought with Nitish as the CM face.

#### PM MODI RELEASES SURVEY RESULTS



Prime Minister Narendra Modi interacts with eco-guides, trackers and field staff, in Gujarat's Junagadh on Monday. PTI

## India has 6,327 river dolphins, finds first population survey

NIKHIL GHANEKAR  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 3

INDIA HAS 6,324 Gangetic dolphins across the Ganga and Brahmaputra river basins and three Indus river dolphins in the Beas river basin in Punjab, the country's first-ever detailed dolphin population survey has found.

Conducted between 2021 and 2023, the survey covered 8,406 km long stretches of Ganga and Brahmaputra river basins, inclusive of its tributaries, and a 101 km long stretch of the Beas river.

"The dolphin estimate for Ganga is 5,689 (range: 5,371-6,024), while 635 dolphins were estimated in Brahmaputra, totalling a population estimate of 6,234 (range: 5,977-6,688) in the surveyed rivers," the report stated.

PM Narendra Modi released the results of the dolphin population survey during the 7th meeting of National Board for Wildlife held Monday at the Gir National Park. He launched Project Dolphin on August 15, 2020.

The survey was done by Wildlife Institute of India, state forest departments of Punjab, UP, Bihar, Assam, Jharkhand, Rajasthan and non-profit organisations including Aaranyak, World Wildlife Fund, Turtle Survival Alliance and Wildlife Trust of India.

Of the 6,324 Gangetic dolphins, 3,275 were found on the river's main stem, 2,414 were found in Ganga's tributaries while 584 were found in Brahmaputra's main stem. A total of 28 rivers were surveyed by boat for the estimation exercise and 30 river stretches were mapped by road.

Among range states, 2,397

#### DUPLICATE VOTER ID ROW

## Cong, TMC allege EC 'complicity', seek 'clean-up' of rolls

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 3

A DAY after Election Commission admitted that different electors could have the same voter ID number, Congress and TMC Monday intensified their attack. The parties contested the EC's defence that duplicate IDs exist in different states, alleged its "complicity" in voter "manipulation" and sought a "clean-up" of the rolls within the next three months.

At a press conference Monday, TMC RS leader Derek O'Brien called the duplication of IDs an "Epic Scam". He said the issue was first raised by West Bengal CM Mamata Banerjee on February 27.

"On March 2 at 8 am, the TMC sent out a notice for a press conference. Then what happens within two-and-a-half hours... the EC issues a statement. Who was caught red handed?" he said.

He said: "The EC is admitting the error, but it has still not accepted the error."

On behalf of the party, he issued a 24-hour deadline to the EC, urging it to "accept" the alleged discrepancy. "If the error is not accepted, we will share a document at 9 am on Tuesday morning," O'Brien said.

The party also demanded a clean-up of voter lists over the next three months to ensure fair elections in the state.

A Congress panel, which the party has formed to keep an eye on elections, said in a statement Monday: "The same voter ID number is being used for several voters, both from the same constituency in the same state as well as from other states. This is

#### AMONG 'RANGE STATES'

2,397

dolphins were counted in UP, 2,220 in Bihar, 162 in Jharkhand, 95 in Rajasthan and MP, 815 in West Bengal, 635 in Assam and 3 in Punjab.

dolphins were counted in UP, 2,220 in Bihar, 162 in Jharkhand, 95 in Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh, 815 in West Bengal, 635 in Assam and three in Punjab.

In Ganga, a total of 7,109 km was actively surveyed, which included the main stem of Ganga as well as its tributaries – Chambal, Yamuna, Rapti, Sharda, Ghaghara, Mahananda, Kosi, Gandak, Geruwa, Rupnarayan, Torsa, Kaljani, Churni, and Haldi, covering UP, Bihar, Jharkhand, West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh, and Rajasthan.

In UP, the highest encounter or concentration of dolphins was found in the 47-km stretch of Bhind-Pachnada in Chambal River.

The Kanpur-Vindhyachal stretch of 380 km had an encounter rate of 1.89 dolphins/km. The dolphin population in 366-km long Narora to Kanpur stretch was almost non-existent, the report said.

In Bihar, the survey found dolphin populations thriving in most stretches due to relatively higher water depth owing to tributaries such as Ghaghara, Gandak, Kosi and Son, coupled with ideal river morphology. The stretch from Chausa-Manihari, covering the Ganga's main stem has 1,297 dolphins in 590 km, making it one of the most densely populated stretches.

utterly shocking. A unique voter ID for every Indian voter is the fundamental requirement."

"When confronted with proof of (the) same voter ID number used by multiple voters, the Election Commission initially responded claiming that a voter ID number may be the same across states, but it is unique to a particular state. Even that turned out to be a blatant lie as there are cases of the same voter ID number used by several voters in the same state and in the same constituency. After this was pointed out, there has been pin drop silence," said the panel, named 'Empowered Action Group of Leaders and Experts' (EAGLE).

"The Election Commission cannot feign ignorance or incompetence in this matter. It is a deliberate act of voter list manipulation to aid the ruling party and thwart the idea of free and fair elections," it said. "... It is clear that the ruling BJP wins or attempts to win elections by manipulating voter lists in connivance with Election Commission."

On Sunday, responding to reports and social media posts showing multiple people with the same EPIC number, the poll panel had said the duplication did not imply fake voters as different states had used the same alphanumeric series.

The EC said that identical EPIC numbers were issued to some electors in different states due to decentralised and manual system that was used by states before the electoral roll database was shifted to the ERONET platform in 2017. EC said it would update the platform to make sure that unique EPIC numbers are allotted to all.

final word on the selection of personal secretaries and officers on special duty of ministers.

A Shiv Sena leader said: "The CM calls Sena ministers directly to his room for discussions, which has not gone down well." Shinde is the only mass leader in Maharashtra, the leader argued, and the BJP could not ignore him.

However, the party is unlikely to rock the boat, while expecting the central leadership "that backs Shinde" to intervene. "For BJP, it's a win-win situation. Ajit Pawar is a great manager – he can manage things smoothly for BJP in Maharashtra," the leader said, adding that Shinde's hands were tied in comparison as he has been a CM and the face of the government.



Bihar CM Nitish Kumar in Patna, Monday. PTI

led NCP, Shinde finally relented. However, equations within the Mahayuti remain unsettled. Shinde has repeatedly skipped meetings called by CM Devendra Fadnavis while the Fadnavis government has raised questions about some of the schemes introduced when Shinde was the CM, and ensured that Fadnavis has the

EXPLAINED



# Maintain decency standards: SC allows Allahbadia to resume show

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 3

THE SUPREME Court on Monday allowed podcaster Ranveer Allahbadia to resume his show 'The Ranveer Show' subject to an undertaking that he would "maintain standards of decency and morality".

"Subject to the petitioner furnishing an undertaking to the effect that his podcast shows will maintain the desired standards of decency and morality so that viewers of any age group can watch, the petitioner is allowed to resume *The Ranveer Show*," a bench of Justices Surya Kant and N K Singh said.

On Monday, advocate Abhinav Chandrachud, appearing for Allahbadia, submitted that the podcaster has 280 employees and the show is his source of livelihood. The bench accepted the request and modified the condition and also extended Allahbadia's interim protection from arrest until further orders, while asking him to cooperate with the probe.

The top court directed that his shows should not comment upon the proceedings which are sub-judice before the court.

"With regard to telecast or airing of programmes which are not acceptable in terms of known moral standards of our society, some regulatory measures may be required. We have requested the learned Solicitor General to suggest some measures which are effective to ensure the parameters of fundamental rights as delineated in Article 19. Any draft regulatory measure in this regard can then be put in public domain to invite suggestions from stakeholders...," the bench said.

"We don't want any regulatory regime which leads to censorship...but it can't be a free for all. See the quality of humour he



Allahbadia submitted that the show is his source of livelihood

has... humour is something the entire family can enjoy, nobody feels embarrassed. Using all filthy language is not talent," Justice Kant remarked orally.

On Allahbadia's plea seeking consolidation of all FIRs against him over his controversial comments during 'India's Got Latent' show, the SC had on February 18 issued notice and granted him protection from arrest.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, who appeared for Assam and Maharashtra, said he found the "perversity in the programme to be of another level". "Forget a man and a woman, a man and a man cannot sit together and watch the show..." Mehta said. "The very fact that he chose to participate [in such a show]...let him remain quiet for some time," he said.

Justice Kant said, "These youngsters are being over smart... they think we are outdated generation probably... one of them went to Canada and spoke there... they don't know the jurisdiction which this court enjoys and what probably can be done... We don't want to because they are young, we understand..."

He added, "... there is nothing like a fundamental right on platter...the fundamental rights are all followed by a duty...unless those people understand duty, there is no [...] deal with that kind of elements... if somebody wants to enjoy fundamental rights, this country gives a guarantee to enjoy, but guarantee is with a duty so that guarantee will involve performing that duty also."

# Have children quickly after wedding, see population's link to number of MPs: Stalin

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NAGAPATTINAM (TAMIL NADU), MARCH 3

TAMIL NADU Chief Minister M K Stalin on Monday favoured young people having children immediately following marriage and said a higher population appeared to be the criterion to get more MPs. Speaking at a wedding, Stalin said years ago, newlyweds were advised not to have children immediately after marriage. However, the same thing must not be advised now and also there was no need for that.

"A situation has now arisen, according to which only a higher



TN Chief Minister M K Stalin

population would ensure more MPs as the delimitation exercise would be on the basis of population," Stalin said. Tamil Nadu paid attention to population control and succeeded and that was the reason for the "state's plight today", he said.

"I will not tell you to not have

children hastily, have children immediately; but give them beautiful Tamil names," he said, directly appealing to the bride and groom. Further, he said the question of delimitation is related to Tamil Nadu's rights and protecting its interests and hence, the matter must not be evaluated politically.

The Union government is planning to implement the three-language policy through compulsion and similarly in the delimitation exercise, it is attempting to cut down the number of seats for Tamil Nadu, Stalin alleged, addressing the function.

Against this background an all-party meeting has been called on March 5 on the proposed delimitation exercise and most parties out of 40 have confirmed their participation. A few others have said they would not be taking part, the CM said, appealing to such parties to "not evaluate the issue through the prism of politics".

BJP leader and former Union minister G K Vasan-led TMC (Moopanar) has declared that it will not take part in the meeting. "I would like to appeal to them, please give a thought to it. This is not an issue between the DMK and your party. The issue is all about Tamil Nadu and its interests and rights and hence parties that have declared that they would not take part (in the meeting) should also participate," Stalin said.

# HC tells ACB to not act on special court order against Buch, others

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
MUMBAI, MARCH 3

THE BOMBAY High Court Monday said that it will hear petitions against a special court's order to file FIR against former Sebi chief Madhabi Puri Buch and five others, and directed the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) to not act on the order in a case of alleged stock market fraud and regulatory violations.

The petitions seeking quashing of the special court's order have been filed by Buch, three whole-time members and Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE) Chairman Pramod Agarwal and CEO Sundararam Ramamurthy.

The petitions were mentioned before Justice Shivkumar Dige, Monday morning. Solicitor General Tushar Mehta representing Sebi officials, senior counsel Amit Desai representing the BSE officials and lawyer Sudeep Pasbola for Buch, mentioned the petitions. The hearing is likely to take place on Tuesday. Buch and others were present before court.

On March 1, the special court designated under the Prevention



Madhabi Puri Buch

of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) directed ACB, Mumbai, to file an FIR against Buch and five others in connection with the complaint alleging stock market fraud and regulatory violations.

The special court passed the order on an application alleging fraudulent listing of a company on the stock exchange, claiming that it was with the active connivance of regulatory authorities.

One of the petitions said that the special court's order was "erroneous" and without jurisdiction. It said that the complainant before the special court had not been able to make out a prima facie case against the six named.

It also said that under the Prevention of Corruption Act, it

was mandatory to get a sanction from the central government before initiating an investigation and the judge had failed to give reasons as to why he was dispensing with this requirement when issuing directions to investigate the matter.

The complainant before the special court, Dombivli resident Sapan Shrivastava, claimed that he and his family had invested in shares of Cal Refineries in 1994 which was listed at the Bombay Stock Exchange, and suffered huge losses.

The Securities & Exchange Board of India issued a press release stating that Cal Refineries was suspended from trading in August 2017 and continues to remain suspended. It said Buch and the three whole-time members named in the petition were not holding their respective offices at the relevant time.

Sebi also said the special court had allowed the application without allowing it to place the facts on record.

BSE too in a statement has said that the application was "frivolous and vexatious in nature" and the special court had not issued notice to the stock exchange to put forth its stand.

# Rotate LoP post among MVA allies: NCP-SP

Mumbai: Though Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) allies are yet to formally stake claim to the post of Leader of Opposition (LoP) in the Maharashtra Assembly, a key constituent on Monday demanded that the Cabinet-level position be rotated among all three parties of the INDIA bloc.

NCP (SP) MLA Jitendra Awhad demanded that the LoP post be rotated among his outfit, the Congress and the Shiv Sena (UBT) for 18 months each. Awhad argued that the three parties holding the post by turn will help each constituent represent itself in the Assembly. PTI

**Armed Forces Tribunal**  
(Principal Bench)  
West Block-VIII, Sector-1,  
R.K. Puram, New Delhi-110 066

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Date: 24th February, 2025

(Sunil Kumar Sharma)  
Deputy Registrar

# Meghalaya varsity founder gets bail

Guwahati: Ten days after the Assam police arrested him in connection with alleged malpractices in the CBSE class XII examinations, University of Science and Technology Meghalaya owner and chancellor Mahbul Hoque was granted bail by the Gauhati High Court in one of two cases registered against him. Hoque will remain in judicial custody in connection with the second case.

Two cases were registered against Hoque on February 21 over alleged malpractices during the physics examination in a school run by Education and Research Development Foundation, which he founded. His bail plea was rejected by a court Sribhumi, after which he moved the Gauhati HC. ENS

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On Behalf of ICICI Bank Ltd., Kamala Nagar Branch

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Phone: +91-877-2500910 (2 PM to 5 PM, Working Days)

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For more details visit -  
<https://www.iiseradmission.in/examination/eligibility.html>

**\*All admissions will be only through IAT 2025\***

**IMPORTANT DATES**

Application Portal Opens on	March 10, 2025
Last Date for Online Applications	April 15, 2025
IISER Aptitude Test	May 25, 2025

SCAN ME

# Never spoke against people: Patel

Bhopal: Madhya Pradesh minister and BJP leader Prahlad Patel, who sparked a controversy by saying that people have developed a habit of begging from the government and this "army of beggars is not making society stronger", clarified Monday that he never spoke against the people. "I made this remark among my own community members, something I have been saying for years and will continue to say in the future," he said.

Patel said, "(state Congress president Jitu) Patwari should apologise to me and my party...It was not a political programme but a social gathering...in such a situation, without thinking and motivated by greed, giving this kind of reaction is an insult and also very dangerous..."

Reacting to Patel's clarification, Patwari said, "This means that the people of MP, who approach the ministers of BJP for justice, were beggars, are beggars, and will remain beggars... If this is true, then gimmicks like CM Helpline should be shut down..." ENS

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Sd/- DIRECTOR, NIAB

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For eligibility criteria and format of application etc. please visit on website [www.ipa.nic.in](http://www.ipa.nic.in) then click for Whats New/Ports/Other Organization Advertisement/ Indian Port Rail & Ropeway Corporation Ltd. or [www.iprcil.in](http://www.iprcil.in) then click on Careers/Vacancy. Last date of receiving applications in IPRCL Office is 15 days from the date of publication of advertisement in Employment News newspapers. The application in prescribed format along with copies of requisite certificates / documents and detailed CV should be sent only by post or courier within due date addressed to : **Chief General Manager (HR), Indian Port Rail & Ropeway Corporation Limited, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, Nirman Bhavan, M.P. Road, Mazgaon (East), Mumbai-400010.**

**Central Institute of Psychiatry, Ranchi**  
**Nursing Officer Recruitment**  
**Common Eligibility Test (NORCET) 8**  
Notice No.A.12019/02/2024-Estt. Date: 03.03.2025

It has been decided to fill up the vacant posts of Nursing Officer at Level 07 in the Pay Matrix (Rs. 44900-142400) Group-B for **Central Institute of Psychiatry, Ranchi** through the Nursing Officer Recruitment Common Eligibility Test (NORCET)-8, to be conducted by AIIMS New Delhi as per available vacancies in the Institute.

**Eligibility Criteria for appearing in NORCET**

**Essential Qualification**

I a. B.Sc. (Hons.) in Nursing from a recognised University or Institute; or Regular Course in B.Sc Nursing from a recognised University or institute; or Post Basic B.Sc Nursing from recognised University or institute;

b. Registered as a nurse or nurse and mid-wife with State Nursing Council.

**OR**

II a. Diploma in General Nursing Mid-wifery from a recognised Board or Council;

b. Registered as a nurse or nurse and mid-wife with State Nursing Council; and

c. One year experience in a minimum fifty bedded Hospital after acquiring the educational qualification.

**Age Limit:**

1. Not exceeding thirty years. (Relaxable for Government servants upto five years in accordance with instructions or orders issued by the Central Government.)

2. Age shall be counted on the last date of closing of the application form.

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A) General/OBC Candidates - Rs.3000/- (Rupees Three Thousand only)  
B) SC/ST Candidates/EWS - Rs.2400/- (Rupees Twenty-Four Hundred only)  
C) Persons with Disabilities - Exempted

- The candidate can pay the prescribed application fee through DEBIT CARD/CREDIT CARD/ NET BANKING. Transaction / Processing fee, if any, as applicable, will be payable to the bank by the candidate.
- Application fee, once remitted, shall not be refunded under any circumstances.
- Applications without the prescribed fee would not be considered and summarily rejected.
- Application Fees of SC/ST candidates who appear in the Examination will be refunded after the declaration of results in due course of time after verification SC/ST certificate to be uploaded at a later stage.

Online (CBT) for Stage I: NORCET Preliminary, Date: 12<sup>th</sup> April, 2025 (Saturday),  
Online (CBT) for Stage II : NORCET Mains, Date: 2<sup>nd</sup> May, 2025 (Friday)

Related details can be seen on our website [www.cipranchi.nic.in](http://www.cipranchi.nic.in) and AIIMS website [www.aiimsexams.ac.in](http://www.aiimsexams.ac.in)

Sd/-Director



# Nitish govt’s last Budget before polls: Education gets top outlay; outreach to SCs, EBCs & OBCs

SANTOSH SINGH & HIMANSHU HARSH  
PATNA, MARCH 3

THE NITISH Kumar-led NDA government in Bihar Monday tabled a ₹3.17-lakh crore Budget for 2025-26 — its last one ahead of the Assembly polls scheduled for October-November — focusing on education, healthcare, infrastructure, welfare of minorities, and women.

Finance Minister and BJP leader Samrat Choudhary, who is also the Deputy Chief Minister, said in the Assembly that this year's allocation is an increase of around 13% from last year's ₹2.79-lakh crore outlay.

Education got the highest allocation of ₹60,964 crore. "Currently out of 534 blocks of Bihar, 358 blocks lack degree colleges... one degree college will be opened in a phase-wise manner in each of those districts," the Finance Minister said.

The Health Department has

remained among the top five priority areas of the Nitish government since 2005-06, getting an allocation of ₹20,035.80 crore this time with an aim of setting up medical centers in urban areas, particularly targeting underserved populations in slum areas. The Budget has also allocated ₹13,368 crore for several welfare schemes of SCs, STs, minorities, OBCs and MBCs.

The key support base of the NDA, led by the BJP and the JD(U), includes sections of the EBCs and OBCs, which together account for about 63% of the population in the state. The Budget has allocated ₹19,648 crore for various welfare schemes for the SCs and the STs, who make up over 20% of the state's population.

The government has earmarked ₹3,303 crore for student scholarships whose 90% beneficiaries belong to the OBC, EBC and SC communities. Choudhary said the state government will double pre-matric scholarships



Bihar Finance Minister Samrat Choudhary

for general, SC, ST, BC and EBC students.

As about 90% of the people from the OBCs and EBCs live in villages, the NDA government has allotted significant funds for the development of rural infrastructure that mainly involves roads, electricity, water supply and building construction. The Rural Development department has been allocated funds of ₹16,093 crore.

The Budget has allocated ₹5,972 crore for the CM's pet

AMONG THE MAJOR ALLOCATIONS	
Education	₹60,964 crore
Health	₹20,035 crore
Urban and rural roads	₹17,908 crore
Home Department	₹17,831 crore
Rural Development	₹16,093 crore
Energy	₹13,484 crore
Combined budget for welfare depts	₹13,368 crore

scheme Saat Nischay-II, a development plan meant to make Bihar atmanirbhar (self-reliant), which involves construction and repair of village roads, drains, cleanliness drive, education loan, assistance allowance for unemployed youth, employment, and skill development programmes for women.

In line with the Nitish government's focus on women empowerment, the Budget has proposed establishment of a "mahila haat (women's market-

place)" in Patna, setting up "pink toilets" in all districts and running "pink buses" in major cities.

Choudhary also proposed the setting up of "Kanya Vivah Mandaps" in all panchayats to "help poor rural families with girls of marriageable age". He announced the establishment of hostels for working women in major cities.

The Budget includes ₹17,908.18 crore for rural and urban road development, with the government planning to im-

prove transportation links by connecting all district headquarters to Patna with four-lane highways by 2027.

Choudhary announced that three greenfield airports will be built in Rajgir, Sultanganj, and Raxaul, with smaller airports planned for 7 other cities including Muzaffarpur, Bhagalpur, Madhubani and Supaul.

He said that the state's revenue expenditure for 2025-26 is estimated at ₹2.52 lakh crore, with capital expenditure projected at ₹64,894 crore. A fiscal deficit of Rs 32,718 crore is expected.

JD(U) MLC and spokesperson Neeraj Kumar told *The Indian Express*: "We have reached out to the women constituency by proposing several new initiatives such as opening the women driver training centers in major cities. The provision of 33% quota has been made for women in the State Road Transport Corporation. We have looked at rural Bihar with a special focus on the SCs, OBCs and EBCs."

# In Chhattisgarh’s Budget: Homestay policy in tribal areas, survey to link rivers

JAYPRAKASH S NAIDU  
RAIPUR, MARCH 3

ASURVEY for interlinking rivers, a new homestay policy for the tribal areas of Bastar and Surguja, a medi city, an education city and a new fashion technology institute — these are among the major initiatives announced by the state's Vishnu Deo Sai government as it tabled a Budget of ₹1.65 lakh crore for 2025-26.

The handwritten Budget, presented by former IAS officer and Finance Minister O.P. Choudhary, made the highest allocation to the school education department, followed by panchayati raj and agriculture.

The government, according to Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai, was making the "most use of technology for efficient governance". "GATI for us means giving push to the industrial sector which will get us more investments and in turn will create jobs for locals," he said.

The Budget allocation this year is up from the ₹1.47 lakh crore earmarked for 2024-2025. While no new taxes were introduced, the state's capital expenditure (capex) saw an increase from ₹22,300 crore — or 3.93% of the Gross State Domestic Product and 15% of the total Budget — to ₹26,341 crore (4.14% of GDP and 16% of the Budget).

The five departments with the highest allocations were the school education department with ₹22,356 crore, the panchayat and rural development department with ₹18,461 crore, agriculture department with ₹13,506 crore, Public Works Department with ₹9,501 crore, and Food & Civil Supplies Department with ₹9,440 crore.

Months after the state rolled out a new industrial policy, the state has allocated ₹1,420 crore to help implement its key features, such as the emphasis on promoting service sectors, preference to Aginveers and surrendered Maoists and implementation of a single window system for ease of doing business.



Chhattisgarh Finance Minister O.P. Choudhary with CM Vishnu Deo Sai

## SOME OF THE KEY ANNOUNCEMENTS

- One rupee per litre reduction in petrol prices; 17% cut in VAT in bulk diesel prices
- New pension fund; 3% increase in DA for state govt employees
- New National Institute of Fashion Technology; medi city and education city in New Raipur
- Survey for linking of Mahanadi-Indravati and Sikasar-Kodar rivers
- Phase 1 of establishment of sickle cell anaemia screening centres in all blocks
- ₹200 crore to develop the state's 'first Iconic Tourism Destination'; homestay policy for Bastar and Surguja
- Establishing a Special Operation Group, similar to the NSG, and a new State Industrial Security Force, modelled after CISF
- 3,200 new posts in Bastar Fighters, an armed anti-insurgency force with draftees from remote villages

# Union Carbide waste disposal: First trial concludes, samples taken for analysis

NIKHIL GHANEKAR  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 3

THE FIRST trial incineration of 10 metric tonnes of hazardous waste brought from the Union Carbide Bhopal factory and being carried out at a plant in Dhar district, ended on Monday evening, as per the Madhya Pradesh Pollution Control Board (MPPCB). Monitoring of emissions from the plant's chimney showed that the pollutants were within prescribed limits.

The MPPCB and Central Pollution Control Board have collected emission samples from the Pithampur plant's stack and they will be analysed further. Based on that analysis, as well as cleaning and maintenance of the incinerator, it will be decided if the second trial run can happen on Tuesday, MPPCB's regional officer Shrinivas Dwivedi told *The Indian Express*.

The trial incineration is being carried out on the orders of the Jabalpur bench of the Madhya Pradesh High Court.

"Monitoring of emissions from the chimney during burning of waste was done by about 20 officers/employees of Central Pollution Control Board and M.P. Pollution Control Board. Online Continuous Emission Monitoring System (OCEMS) was operational for continuous monitoring

of emissions from the chimney. Emissions from the chimney were found to be within the prescribed standard limits," a note issued by MPPCB said.

Emissions of seven pollutants and gases — Particulate matter, Sulphur Dioxide, Nitrogen Oxides, Carbon Monoxide, Hydrogen Fluoride, Hydrogen Chloride, and Total Organic Carbon — were monitored and all were found within prescribed standards. The peak emission of hydrogen fluoride gas was recorded to be 4.44 microgram/cubic metre during a 24-hour period between Sunday and Monday, against the prescribed limit of 4 microgram/cubic metre, while the average reading the pollutant was 0.82 microgram/cubic metre, as per MPPCB.

"The feeding of Union Carbide waste was started from 03:00 pm, which was done continuously at the rate of 135 kg/hour and the trial run continued till 05:15 pm on 03/03/2025. Also, feeding of 10 tonnes of waste was completed by 05:15 pm. Thereafter, feeding of diesel into the incinerator continued till 06:30 PM so that the waste fed in could be completely burnt," MPPCB's note added.

MPPCB also carried out ambient air quality measurements at five locations at the time of waste burning, around the plant and in villages in the plant's proximity.

# IPS officer summoned over 2021 ‘custodial torture’ of former MP

Hyderabad: The Andhra Pradesh Police has issued a notice to Bihar-cadre IPS officer M Sunil Kumar Naik to record his statement in the alleged murder-attempt case filed in May 2021 by former YSR Congress Party MP K Raghu Rama Krishna Raju.

Raju has since joined the ruling TDP and is the Assembly Deputy Speaker.

Naik, a 2005-batch IPS officer, was sent on deputation to Andhra Pradesh on December 4, 2019, and was posted as DIG (CID). He has since returned to Bihar.

On May 14, 2021, Raju was arrested on sedition charges for alleged hate speeches. He was taken to the Guntur CID office where he was allegedly assaulted. Earlier, he had filed a plea before the CBI special court in Hyderabad to cancel the bail granted to then CM Jagan Mohan Reddy in an assets case.

Prakasam SPAR Damodar issued a notice to Naik last week after determining that he was present in the CID office at Guntur when the former MP was brought in. **ENS**

# Days after chaos during minister’s visit, SFI, ABVP clash at JU, several injured

ATRI MITRA  
KOLKATA, MARCH 3

FRESH violence broke out on the Jadavpur University (JU) campus in Kolkata Monday when members of the ABVP allegedly tried to enter the campus and SFI supporters tried to stop them, resulting in injuries to several persons in both groups, police said.

According to police, it was not part of the ABVP's initial plan to enter the JU campus and they were stopped at least a kilometre away. However, after the rally, some ABVP supporters went to the university's gate number 3. When the guards tried to stop them, a group of SFI supporters also reached the spot, police said. Later, a large police contingent was deployed to control the situation.

The SFI, All India Democratic Students' Organisation (AIDSO) and other Left organisations had called for a strike at universities and colleges Monday to protest Saturday's incident where a student was injured after being allegedly grazed by Education Minister Briyatra Basu's car on the JU campus amid protests by students and SFI supporters.

On Monday, student protesters alleged they were attacked by the police or the Trinamool Congress Chhatra Parishad



Students from Jadavpur University take out a rally in Kolkata on Monday over the clash on the campus during the state education minister's visit. PTI

(TMCP) in different areas. In Siliguri, members of AIDSO alleged they were attacked by TMCP supporters. At Midnapore Vidyasagar university, SFI members were allegedly targeted by the police.

Members of TMCP and the Leftist student bodies exchanged blows at Vidyasagar University

and Medinipur College in Paschim Medinipur district, Panskura Banamali College in Purba Medinipur and North Bengal University in Siliguri as TMCP activists tried to prevent Leftist students from enforcing the strike and suspension of classes. Campuses of Jadavpur and

# Urologist George Abraham, behind Kerala’s first cadaver transplant, dies by suicide

SHAJU PHILIP  
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, MARCH 3

DR GEORGE P Abraham, 77, a renowned urologist and renal transplant specialist was found hanging at his farm house in Ennakulam Monday, police said.

The third surgeon in the world to conduct a living donor laparoscopic renal transplant, Dr George, according to police, has left a suicide note which said age has shadowed his performance as a doctor and he is missing job satisfaction of yesterday.

His body was found at the farm house near Cochin interna-

tional airport under Nedumbassery police limits. George has been head of the department of urology and renal transplant at VPS Lakeshore Hospital in Kochi.

According to police, he used to spend time at the farm house every Sunday. This Sunday, he came to the farm house accompanied by his brother but reportedly sent the latter back before he died by suicide.

Nedumbassery Station House officer KR Arun said: "We have recovered a ten-line suicide note purportedly written by the doctor, in which he said his is missing the job satisfaction. Due to old age, he cannot perform his

duties perfectly. Besides, the doctor had recently undergone surgery and after that he, the note said, is facing health issues affecting his work as a doctor".

The officer said the doctor had no financial woes, and his family has not raised any doubts about the death.

A doctor with over three decades of experience in performing endourological proce-

dures, Dr George leaves behind an illustrious career in the medical world. He had 15,000 endourological procedures in Kerala to his credit and he had performed 2,500 renal transplants.

He also had Kerala's first cadaver transplant, percutaneous nephrolithotomy (PCNL: a minimally invasive surgery that removes kidney stones) and Lap Donor Nephrectomy 3D laparoscopy to his credit and had successfully completed more than 8,000 laparoscopic urological procedures.

One of the doctors behind the first 3D laparoscopic urology workshop, George was also active in the academic world.

Dr Abraham, 77, had performed 2,500 renal transplants



# Flour millers’ federation seeks reduction of import duty on wheat to 5-10%

HARIKISHAN SHARMA  
PANAJI, MARCH 3

A BODY of Indian wheat flour millers has demanded the duty on wheat imports be reduced from 40 per cent to 5-10 per cent, stating that it will help flour millers in South India and increase wheat availability in various parts of the country.

Speaking to reporters on the sidelines of an event in Panaji, Roller Flour Millers' Federation of India president Navneet Chitlangia said, "After the procurement (of wheat by the Centre) is over... the government should reconsider. Once they reassess the crop size, their procurement and the remaining quantity in the market, then they may adjust the 40 per cent duty and calibrate it in a way so that it creates a possibility for import."

"Even if 2-3 million tonnes of wheat are imported, then the narrative of India having a low crop size will be ended. It needs to be ended because our indus-

try goes through a very difficult time... That's why we are asking the government that post-procurement, you should rationalise the 40 per cent duty on wheat imports. Bring it down to zero or whatever you want," he said.

India hiked the duty on wheat imports from 30 per cent to 40 per cent in April 2019, and it has remained at that level since then.

The demand is significant as wheat prices have increased sharply in recent years. The Consumer Price Index-based retail inflation of wheat has risen since February last year, reaching 8.8 per cent in January 2025.

In his message, which was read out at the event, Food Secretary Sanjeev Chopra said that the government has sufficient stocks of wheat to meet its own requirements and also for necessary market interventions.

This year, the government has offloaded 30 lakh metric tonnes of wheat to processors or millers through the Open Market Sale Scheme-Domestic (OMSS), he said.

# Report suggests rethink on quota for Muslims, highlights ‘lost political relevance’

ASAD REHMAN  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 3

SUB-CATEGORISATION of the OBC reservation category to include Muslims, bringing in Dalit Muslims and Christians under the Scheduled Caste (SC) quota, and a revaluation of the existing 50% ceiling on reservation "on a rational basis".

These are among the key suggestions of a report titled "Rethinking Affirmative Action for Muslims in Contemporary India" that was released on February 5 by the Centre for Development Policy and Practice

(CDPP) in collaboration with the US-India Policy Institute.

Written by Hilal Ahmed, Associate Professor of the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies (CSDS); Mohd. Sanjeer Alam, Associate Professor, CSDS; and Nazima Parveen, Associate Research Fellow, Policy Perspective Foundation, the report examines affirmative action for the Muslim community and provides a roadmap ahead.

Ahmed told *The Indian Express* that the report was a "stock-taking exercise of the government's existing policies and programmes". "We wanted to sensitise the policy makers and

the political class to start talking about affirmative action for Muslims in contemporary times. This issue has lost policy and political relevance in recent times," said Ahmed.

A key recommendation of the report is to continue with religion-based quota under the OBC category, as it exists in some states, and formulate "rational" and secular sub-categorisation of OBC. OBCs currently get 27% quota. This is different across states, with different groups classified as OBCs.

The report also speaks of "secularisation of the Scheduled Caste (SC) category" to include Dalit

Muslims and Sikhs in it, and in the process expanding the category.

To strengthen its argument for inclusion of minorities in the SC quota, the report highlights the demand for the same from the Pasmamda Muslim community. "Caste-based exploitation is not exclusively related to Hindus," the report says.

In a chapter titled "Action Plan," the report says the existing 50% ceiling on reservation — as established by the Supreme Court in the 1992 Indra Sawhney v. Union of India case — must be "re-evaluated" to "accommodate new backward communities in the affirmative action

framework".

The report cites examples of states such as Kerala, Karnataka, and Andhra Pradesh, where Muslims do get reservation under the OBC category, and says that "such classifications and sub-quotas have stood judicial scrutiny".

The report points out that Muslims are "concentrated in the lower rungs of occupations of the society". While Muslims fare better than SCs/STs, "they are way behind" HFCs (Hindu Forward Castes), the report notes.

Going ahead, the report suggests a framework of "space-centric affirmative action", focusing on the overall

development of identified spatial units like districts, which are socio-economically backward. This framework, the report says, will "highlight the convergence of different programmes and schemes at the grassroots level".

The report also calls for examining occupations in which Muslims work disproportionately and create sector-specific policies for them.

On education, the report says that "Muslim households are more likely than others to discontinue from study with advancing age". It quotes the Educational Participation Rate (EPR) for Muslims (for the age

group 14–17 years) as per the National Sample Surveys and points out that it is less than the overall average by 13 percentage points and the lowest of all SRGs (socio-religious groups).

"Despite the rising curve of access to upper reaches of schooling, the social pattern of educational participation remains the same as was observed by the SCR (Sachar Committee report) (2006) more than a decade ago... Continuing participation deficit among Muslims in higher levels of schooling relative to other SRGs suggests that they have benefited the least from the educational expansion

process," the report says.

It further says that "whatever economic indicators" are considered, Muslims are worse "off as compared to HFCs (Hindu Forward Castes) as well as HOBs (HINDU OBCs)".

The Sachar Commission, constituted in March 2005 by former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, had used government data to evaluate the socioeconomic and educational status of Muslims in India. It had concluded that Muslims must be treated as a marginalised community as they "fare badly across the indicators of educational participation and attainment".



# A third of India will be obese by 2050: Lancet

**ANONNA DUTT & ANURADHA MASCARENHAS**  
NEW DELHI, PUNE, MARCH 3

The obesity epidemic just got bigger with a recently published Lancet study predicting that 21.8 crore men and 23.1 crore women in India will be overweight or obese — totalling up to 44.9 crore or nearly a third of the country's projected population — by 2050. Globally, more than half of all adults and a third of children and adolescents will become overweight or obese by 2050, the study says.

Worryingly, prevalence of obesity will shoot up among older adolescents — or those between the ages of 15 and 24. Among the young men, the prevalence of overweight or obesity increased from 0.4 crore in 1990, to 1.68 crore in 2021, and is projected to increase to 2.27 crores by 2050. Among young women, this number has increased from 0.33 crore

in 1990, 1.3 crore in 2021, and is projected to go up to 1.69 crore in 2050. India topped the chart in this category in terms of absolute numbers in 2021, surpassing China and the United States who were ahead in 1990.

## Why numbers matter

This projected increase is concerning considering that half of the world's obese and overweight adults lived in eight countries, including India, in 2021. The study says that increasing prevalence of obesity in low and middle income countries — combined with persistent childhood malnutrition and pervasive infectious diseases — can cripple healthcare systems with an added burden of disease. The study goes on to say that childhood undernutrition also triggers adaptations such as accumulation of energy in fat tissues leading to obesity in adulthood. This increases the risk of early onset of a host of lifestyle disorders such as Type 2 dia-

betes, cardiovascular diseases and certain cancers.

The flip-side is the increasing obesity among children as well. The prevalence of obesity and overweight among boys in India increased from 0.46 crore in 1990, to 1.3 crore in 2021, and is projected to increase to 1.6 crore in 2050. Among girls, it has increased from 0.45 crore in 1990, to 1.24 crore in 2021, and projected to increase to 1.44 crore in 2050, according to the study.

## Why is obesity increasing?

One of the key reasons driving the obesity epidemic is the increase in consumption of processed foods high in salt, sugar and fat. "Multinational food and beverage corporations and fast-food chains are shifting their investments from high income countries to low and middle income countries, where population growth, improvement in per-capita income and weaker regulations have created

favourable markets for expansion. Between 2009 and 2019, the largest annual growth in ultra-processed food and beverage sales per capita was observed in Cameroon, India, and Vietnam," the study said.

Dr Aparna Govil Bhasker, who leads the scientific committee for Obesity and Metabolic Surgery Society of India, says: "Increasing urbanisation has led to reduced physical activity, longer commute times, and desk-bound jobs. A shift towards calorie-dense, processed foods high in refined carbohydrates, trans fats, and sugars has significantly contributed to weight gain. — Rising work-related stress, poor sleep, and mental health disorders have been linked to obesity."

## What needs to be done?

The study says that current policies are unlikely to halt the tide of the obesity epidemic because only 40 per cent of the

countries had an operational policy, strategy or action plan to address it. This policy coverage was reduced to just 10 per cent in low and middle income countries, according to the study. The study also added that most interventions to address obesity had been studied in high-income settings and there is a need for evidence on effective obesity interventions from low-income settings as well.

"Obesity must be officially recognized as a major non-communicable disease (NCD) and its prevention and management should be integrated into India's public health policies. A comprehensive National Obesity Programme should include awareness campaigns, school-based interventions, workplace wellness programmes, access to treatment, taxation on unhealthy foods and so on. Establishing a national registry to track obesity trends, outcomes, and interventions is important," says Dr Bhasker.

# SC: Time to consider right against disability-based bias a fundamental right

Visually impaired persons cannot be denied opportunity to join judicial services, court tells Madhya Pradesh govt

**ANANTHAKRISHNAN G**  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 3

THE SUPREME Court on Monday said the time has come to consider the right against disability-based discrimination a fundamental right, as it ruled that "visually impaired candidates are eligible to participate in selection for the posts under the judicial service".

"It is high time that we view the right against disability-based discrimination, as recognised in the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPwD) Act, 2016, of the same stature as a fundamental right, thereby ensuring that no candidate is denied consideration solely on account of their disability," a bench of Justices J B Pardiwala and R Mahadevan said.

The court was deciding a clutch of petitions dealing with certain provisions of the Madhya Pradesh Judicial Service Examination (Recruitment and Conditions of Service) Rules, 1994, and seeking amendments to the Rajasthan Judicial Service Rules, 2010 to bring them in accordance with the RPwD Act.

The judgment "directed the respective authorities... to proceed with the selection process for appointment of the judicial officers in the light of this decision and complete the same as expeditiously as possible, preferably, within a period of three

months from today."

Writing for the bench, Justice Mahadevan cited the cases of "exemplary achievements of distinguished individuals in the legal profession, who have demonstrated that visual impairment is no barrier to attaining professional excellence, competing on equal footing and making significant contributions to the justice delivery system alongside their able-bodied counterparts".

The court said, "The overall analysis would demonstrate that a rights-based approach necessitates that PwDs must not face any discrimination in their pursuit of judicial service opportunities, and instead, there must be affirmative action on behalf of the State to provide an inclusive framework."

"The principle of reasonable accommodation, as enshrined in international conventions, established jurisprudence, and the RPwD Act, 2016, mandate that accommodations be provided to PwDs as a prerequisite to assessing their eligibility," the bench said, adding that "any indirect discrimination that results in the exclusion of PwDs..." The bench said the amendment made in Rule 6A of the MP Rules 1994 "falls foul of the Constitution, and is hence struck down to the extent that it does not include visually impaired persons who are educationally qualified for the post to apply therefor".

The SC also struck down the proviso to Rule 7 of the MP Rules "relating to additional requirements" in its application to differently abled persons who have the requisite educational qualifications for applying to the posts under judicial service, saying it "violates the equality doctrine and the principle of reasonable accommodation..." The provision prescribed an additional requirement of either a three-year practice period or an aggregate score of 70% in the first attempt.

The court, however, added that relaxation can be done in assessing the suitability of candidates when enough PwDs are not available after selection in their respective categories.

The SC said, "The said rule will be applicable to the PwD candidates insofar as it prescribes the educational and other qualifications as eligibility criteria, including the minimum aggregate score of 70% (with relaxation as may be determined like in the case of SC/ST candidates), but without the requirement of either that it should be in the first attempt or that they should have three years' practice."

The ruling also allowed the prayer that a separate cut-off should be maintained and selection made accordingly for visually impaired candidates.

**FULL REPORT ON**  
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# Lord Jagannath tattoo on foreign woman's thigh sparks row in Odisha; artist, shop owner held

**SUJIT BISOIY**  
BHUBANESWAR, MARCH 3

A TATTOO artist and the owner of the parlour were arrested Monday after a viral photo of a Lord Jagannath on the thigh of a foreign woman sparked outrage.

Based on the complaint of Jagannath devotees at the Sahid Nagar police station, a complaint was filed under Section 299 of BNS. The accused have been identified as Rocky Ranjan Bisoi and tattoo artist Aswini Kumar Pradhan, said police sources.

During the course of investigation, Rocky confessed that one of his artists, identified as Ashwini Kumar Pradhan, inked the tattoo on the thigh of the woman at her request, a police officer said.

the foreigner had inked at a parlour in Bhubaneswar, went viral on social media, triggering protests by workers of Hindu outfits and Jagannath devotees. Police sources said the woman works for a non-governmental organisation and an Italy national though they are verifying the details.

Following outrage, the woman and owner of tattoo parlour apologised on social media. In a video message, the woman said, "I didn't want to be disrespectful. I'm a true devotee of Lord Jagannath. I go to the temple every day. I made a mistake and for this, I'm very sorry. I just asked the artist to ink the tattoo in a hidden place. I didn't want to create any situation. I'm very sorry for this. As soon as the tattoo area heals, I will have it removed. Forgive me for my mistake."



## KUPWARA GETS SNOWFALL

People walk on a snow-covered road at Tarathpora Market in Kupwara on Monday. *ANI*

### JAMMU & KASHMIR ASSEMBLY SESSION

# ‘Recognise its emotional, political significance’: J&K L-G reiterates commitment to restore statehood

**ARUN SHARMA**  
JAMMU, MARCH 3

REITERATING HIS government's commitment to "restoring full statehood" for Jammu and Kashmir, its Lt Governor Manoj Sinha said Monday that his government would address the "legitimate desire" of the people in the UT. The Lt Governor, who addressed the J&K Legislative Assembly at the start of its nearly two-month long Budget Session, said: "My government recognises the emotional and political significance of statehood for the people and is actively engaging with all stakeholders to facilitate this process in a manner that ensures peace, stability and progress".

His remarks came amid heightened political activity in the UT, with opposition parties gearing up to challenge the gov-

ernment on contentious issues such as the now-abrogated Article 370 and special status to J&K, and the termination of several government employees on the grounds of national security, among other things.

Referring to the significance of the current budget session — the first by an elected government in Jammu and Kashmir in the last seven years — the L-G called it "a symbol of people's power".

"This Budget is not merely a financial document; it is a testament to the aspirations of the masses, reflecting their hopes for a better future," he said.

The L-G also referred to the Chief Minister Omar Abdullah for the first time, saying he was personally chairing meetings for all the 20 districts, and engaging directly with the elected representatives to understand their aspirations, regional needs and

development priorities in the formulation of the Budget.

"The voices of the people are again shaping the allocation of resources and prioritisation of development goals," he said.

The government, he said, was also committed to the "dignified rehabilitation of Kashmiri migrants back into the Valley by ensuring a safe and secure environment".

There were no interruptions from the Opposition benches in the Central Hall, where MLAs from the Bharatiya Janata Party and Peoples Democratic Party sat listening to the address.

However, Khurshed Ahmed Sheikh, the Awami Ittehad Party MLA from Langate and brother of Engineer Rashid — the sitting MP from Rajouri-Anantnag parliamentary constituency — staged walk out in the beginning of the address.

# Article 370: Omar rules out another resolution

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
JAMMU, MARCH 3

JAMMU AND Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Monday said there was no need to bring another resolution on Article 370 as the one passed by the Assembly during its first sitting last year had not been rejected by the Central Government.

"What we have to do was done in the first (Assembly) session (on November 6, 2024). The resolution is still holding after being passed by the House. The PDP and others helped us in passing the resolution and it is still holding is a big thing," Abdullah told reporters outside the Assembly here when asked about some members planning to bring a resolution condemning the abrogation of Article 370 in August 2019.

He said some people thought that any resolution on J&K's special status would "outrightly get rejected by the Central Government", but "the fact of the



**J&K CM Omar Abdullah**

matter is that it is still holding and so there is no need to talk further on this". "We bought a resolution and the House passed it with majority... The National Conference will not repeat what it has already done," he said.

The CM said all legislators need to work together to help the government fulfil its priorities for public welfare. He also ruled out alliance with BJP and said there is no scope for such a thing. "We both have different ideologies and there is also a difference of heaven and earth in our approach with regard to J&K," he said.

The CM's remarks came amid his criticism by PDP's Mehbooba Mufti, who accused him of acting as the "B team of the BJP and backtracking over the issue of J&K's special status and statehood".

**WITH AGENCIES INPUTS**

A KERALA youth hacked his wife and their next-door neighbour to death after suspecting them of having an affair, police said. The incident took place at Padam village at Kalanjoor panchayat under Koodal police limits in central Kerala's Pathanamthitta district.

According to police, the suspect, Baiju, 34, killed his wife Vaishna, 30, and their neighbour Vishnu, 30, Sunday midnight. The couple's children — a nine-year-old daughter and five-year-old son — were asleep at home when the incident occurred. Baiju allegedly waited at the crime scene until a police team arrived.

Koodal Station House Officer R Ranjith said the suspect was arrested and remanded in judicial custody. "He suspected an affair. We are checking if they were merely suspicions or if there's some truth in it. There was also a dispute between the couple over a WhatsApp message that Vaishna had allegedly sent to Vishnu. We are verifying the details as part of the probe," he said.

Vishnu was staying with his mother Sathi at the rented premises. The mother allegedly told the police that Vishnu had gone to bed at 8 pm, and that she awoke

at around midnight on hearing him cry. When she headed to the sit-out of the house, where she saw Vishnu lying in a pool of blood and the body of Vaishna nearby, Baiju allegedly threatened to attack Sathi too.

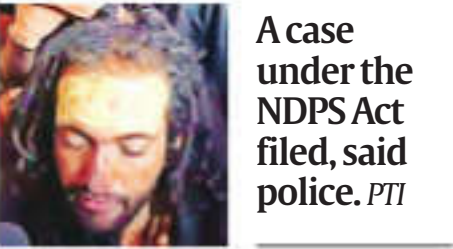
Police said the couple would quarrel frequently over Baiju's suspicions. After a similar argument Sunday, Vaishna, fearing that Baiju would get violent, allegedly sought refuge at Vishnu's house fearing attack.

According to local panchayat member Shoba Devarajan, Baiju and Vishnu were friends and worked in the timber industry, where they cut and loaded wood.

"A day before the murder, they were together at work. We have not heard anything about an affair between the murdered persons," she said, "What we learned is that Baiju was provoked over a message landed in his wife's mobile phone. He rushed out to the house of Vishnu with a sickle. Vaishnavi went after him, pleading that he shouldn't make a scene. However, Baiju had a heated argument with Vishnu, before hacking him, and later Vaishnavi, to death. Vishnu's mother was sleeping in another room in the house."

Baiju had a dispute with wife Vaishnavi over a debt of ₹1.25 lakh which she had availed from Kudumbashree mission, the panchayat member said.

# ‘IIT Baba’, who shot to fame at Maha Kumbh, held with ganja



**A case under the NDPS Act filed, said police. PTI**

**Jaipur:** Abhay Singh, 35, popularly known as 'IITian Baba', was arrested Monday for possessing ganja, Jaipur police said.

Digant Anand, DCP, Jaipur City (South), said that Shipra Path police received information that a person identified as Abhay Singh was trying to commit suicide in hotel Park Classic. SHO Rajendra Godara and his team reached the spot and found Singh, a resident of Jhajjar in Haryana, present at the said hotel.

"When he was asked about the information given to the PCR, the person took out a packet of ganja and said: 'I had consumed ganja and if I have given any information under influence of ganja, then I don't know,'" the DCP said.

Subsequently, a packet of ganja weighing 1.5 grams was found in Singh's possession and it was seized on the spot under the NDPS Act. Police officials said since the quantity of ganja found was low, he was released on bail after presenting his surety.

"However, a case is being registered against Abhay Singh under the NDPS Act and investigation is being carried out," a police official said.

**ENS**

# Pune bus rape: Victim seeks ‘restraining order’ from court against ‘character assassination’

**CHANDAN HAYGUNDE & SUSHANT KULKARNI**  
PUNE, MARCH 3

THE 26-YEAR-OLD woman, who was raped inside an empty bus at the Swargate depot in Pune, on Monday filed an application before a court, seeking a "restraining order" against "statements uttered in public and on social media", leading to her "character assassination".

Advocate Asim Sarode filed the application on behalf of the victim before the court of judicial magistrate (first class) T S Gargole. The same court had remanded Dattatraya Ramdas Gade (37), the accused in the case, in police custody till March 12. During the arguments over police custody of the accused on February 28, the defence lawyers submitted before the court that the accused did not rape the victim and that "they had a consensual physical relation". Meanwhile, speaking to media-

persons, some family members of the accused also claimed that it was "a case of consensual sex".

The victim filed an application through lawyer Sarode seeking a restraining order from the court against such statements.

In the application, Sarode stated that such statements "are causing a serious blow on the mind of the victim. Hence, it is important in the interest of the victim that such an order may kindly be passed in her favour and her interest".

Sarode said the court will hear the matter on March 4 and then decide on the application. He said, "In another application, I have mentioned that freedom of press is important and media persons have to report whatever happens in the court. But some people are spreading false news. Character assassination of the victim is being done and so she is seeking justice."

Meanwhile, the probe into the case was handed over to the crime branch of Pune city police

on Monday. A senior police officer overseeing the case said that the statement of the victim was recorded before a court in Pune on Monday, as per Section 183 of the Bharatiya Nagrik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS). The officer added, "All necessary procedures related to forensic evidence have been completed, including DNA sampling of the accused."

According to the police, the victim was allegedly raped twice by the accused in the government-operated 'Shivshahi' bus stationed at the Swargate depot in Pune in the early hours of February 25. Police told the court that the victim was waiting at the bus depot to catch a bus to her hometown in Satara district around 5.30 am on the day of the incident. Police said the accused, who was loitering at the bus depot, allegedly approached the victim and asked "Tai, kuthe chalis tu? (Sister, where are you headed?)" As she replied, Gade allegedly told her that the bus for her hometown was parked at

another location at the depot.

Police said Gade kept calling her "Tai (sister)", due to which she trusted him, but he allegedly misled her and made her come along with him to the Shivshahi bus (Swargate to Solapur route) in the depot. There were no lights and no passengers in the bus, so she felt suspicious and told the accused, "Dada, mala bahar jau dya, mala ghari jayche ahe (Brother, let me go out of the bus, I have to go home)". But the accused allegedly raped her twice in the bus. As the bus was air-conditioned, its windows are permanently closed, the police said.

After the incident, the accused fled the spot. The victim later boarded another bus for her hometown. She then came to the Swargate police station and lodged an FIR against the accused under BNS sections 64, 351 (2). Police identified Gade from clues obtained from video footage of CCTV cameras inside the Swargate bus depot and other locations.

# Two days after Congress worker's body found in suitcase, man arrested from Delhi

Haryana police say the victim, Himani Narwal, knew the suspect

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
CHANDIGARH, MARCH 3

A SPECIAL investigation team (SIT) of the Haryana Police Monday arrested a man from New Delhi for allegedly strangling Congress worker Himani Narwal with the cord of cell-phone charger after a fight at her home in Rohtak, stuffing her body in a suitcase, and later dumping it on a highway. Police said Himani, 30, had been in a relationship with Sachin, who hails from Jhajjar district, where he runs a mobile phone shop.

Speaking to reporters in Rohtak, Additional DGP K K Rao said immediately after the body was found and identified, eight police teams, including an SIT, were formed to conduct swift investigation and trace out the accused. "Himani used to stay alone at her residence in Vijay



*Express*

**CCTV footage shows the suspect carrying Himani Narwal's body in a suitcase.**

Nagar. The accused used to frequently visit her and also stay there. On February 27, he stayed with Himani at her residence. On February 28, he had a heated altercation with her over some monetary dispute after which he tied her hands with her stole and then used a mobile charger cord to strangle her," Rao said.

He said, during scuffle, Sachin also sustained a few

scratches on his hands. Rao said that after strangling Himani, Sachin took her jewellery, laptop, ring and rode his scooter to Kanaunda village in Jhajjar to hide items in his shop there.

"He returned at 10 pm. The accused used Himani's suitcase to stuff the body into it along with a blood-stained quilt cover. He hired an autorickshaw and travelled a few kilometres on Rohtak bypass. He then got into a bus and then reached near the Sampla bus stand, where he dumped the suitcase containing Himani's body by the roadside," the officer said, adding "So far, it appears that he committed the crime alone".

Sachin is married and has two children. He has no political connection, Rao said, adding he was produced before a court in Rohtak and was sent to a three-day police remand. "There was a monetary issue between the two, but it needs to be verified what it was

all about. The accused has said there was a fight between the two, and during an exchange of words, he strangled her," the ADGP said. "There is also no information, as of now, if there was pressure from either side to get married... but they were friends," he added.

He said Sachin was held in Delhi based on intelligence inputs. Himani, a student of Rohtak's Vaish College of Law, had been missing before her body was found on March 1. She had walked with Rahul Gandhi during his Bharat Jodo Yatra's Haryana leg.

Himani's last rites were performed Monday evening. Earlier, Himani's family had refused to cremate her body until the culprit was arrested, with her mother, Savita, demanding capital punishment for the guilty. "I want capital punishment for the killers of my daughter," Savita said Monday.



The IndianEXPRESS

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RAMNATH GOENKA

BECAUSE THE TRUTH INVOLVES US ALL

At a global crossroads

Can Europe find the path that ensures Ukraine's security, and its own, and bear the costs?

SUMIT GANGULY

IN FULL PUBLIC GLARE

Oval Office showdown shrinks space for all players at global high table. Each one will have to figure out their way forward

ONE OF THE key tenets of diplomacy is that differences between countries and leaders should be dealt with in private and agreements signed in public. This is necessary to ensure and protect room for manoeuvre for all players. On Friday, at the Oval Office in the White House, however, the opposite was on display: The differences — political, geopolitical, personal — between US President Donald Trump and Vice President J D Vance, on one side and Ukraine's embattled leader, Volodymyr Zelenskyy on the other, were aired in full global view. The agreement on providing the US access to rare earth minerals is now on the back burner. The meeting, which saw Vance and Trump attack the Ukrainian president for “not saying thank you” and all but bullied for “not having the cards”, is important for its implications for the conflict between Russia and Ukraine, and broader European security. It is also an illustration of a more fundamental disruption, in the Trump era, of diplomacy-as-usual.

The speed with which Trump has upended Washington's positions on Ukraine and diminished the transatlantic alliance has left many stunned. Clearly, the US's external orientation is now visibly informed by Trump's domestic political compulsions. The attack on Zelenskyy reiterated issues that have become part and parcel of the Trump-Vance camp's appeal to the MAGA base: That the American taxpayer is subsidising Ukraine's war and Europe's security. In this anti-interventionist pitch, Zelenskyy has been painted as a prime antagonist. It also appears that Trump is willing, if not quite ready, to pull the plug on US support in the continent. This rapid unsettling of the transatlantic alliance, in place since World War II, has placed Europe in a profound crisis. Soon after Zelenskyy left the US, a summit-level meeting of European leaders was held in London, in which UK PM Keir Starmer and French President Emmanuel Macron spoke of an alternative peace plan for Ukraine, which they will present to Washington. Another “special summit” for “Ukraine and European defence” is to be held in Brussels on March 6. Two things are clear from the reactions in Europe since the Trump-Zelenskyy meeting fiasco. First, Europe must be ready to do more of the heavy lifting with Washington threatening to withdraw from its role as a security provider. Second, for all the voices in support of Ukraine and Zelenskyy, Europe realises that it still needs the US for any peace plan to succeed.

The public attack on Zelenskyy and its aftermath is an indication that international relations are going through a churn in both form and substance. Given that the US continues to be the pre-eminent economic and military power, leaders and diplomats must now learn to deal with the volatility and politicisation of inter-state ties. In Europe, the task appears to be one of developing a new architecture for how it approaches the world and its place in it — the US may no longer be “everywhere” on the global stage to back it up. It must find ways to engage with Russia on its terms and more broadly, make its agreements with other powers even as it tries to keep the channel open across the Atlantic.

THE DIMINISHING

Mayawati's expulsion of nephew Akash Anand draws attention to a once powerful force struggling to remain relevant

B AHUJAN SAMAJ PARTY (BSP) leader Mayawati's decision to expel her nephew Akash Anand — a day after she removed him from the position of national co-ordinator for the second time in 10 months — draws attention to a beleaguered party. The BSP's continuing internal disarray, combined with its unchecked electoral decline, has dulled the lustre of a party that once held out a radical promise of representation and empowerment of the most marginalised. Its failure is writ large in times when the question of “social justice”, riding on renewed demands for a caste census, has resurfaced. Mayawati's party has neither been able to frame a fresh narrative of inclusive politics — as it once did through its social engineering experiments, be it the *bhaichara sammelans* or the shift from *bahujan* to *sarvajan* in its slogans and rhetoric — nor has it been able to adequately step up to the challenges of an intensifying political competition, or adapt to the needs of politics in the social media age.

The BSP had marked many firsts in Indian politics. Kanshi Ram's emergence as a Dalit icon in the 1980s, amid the dominance of the Dalit Panthers in the discourse, argued for the importance of strategic alliances. The rise of a Dalit woman as chief minister of India's most politically influential state, the renaming of institutions to commemorate Dalit icons, the installation of statues of Ambedkar in public parks — all these were not only strategies to mobilise the Dalits, but also helped open up public spaces and acknowledged the exclusions that had long been inscribed and routinised in them. Mayawati's outreach to upper castes took it to its zenith in the 2007 assembly elections, when it received a 30.46 per cent vote share in Uttar Pradesh. The party's fall to 12.9 per cent in the 2022 assembly election and 9.39 per cent in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections calls for urgent introspection.

The BSP has been challenged by the BJP's purposeful and organised outreach to non-Jatav and Jatav Dalits, Chandrashekhar Azad Ravan's energetic claims on Kanshi Ram's legacy, and SP's politics of *pichda*, Dalit and *dalpasankhyak* (PDA). But it has been debilitated, more, by its own weaknesses and hesitations. The party's inability to put together larger coalitions, for instance, a strategy that delivered for it in the past, has taken a toll. Kanshi Ram's politics showed a recognition of why Ambedkar called political power the *gurukilli* or master key. But that could only be achieved by an agile politics, and the framing of new electoral strategies, that, for now, seem to have gone missing from the BSP's repertoire.

SEEN AND HEARD

Best Documentary Oscar for ‘No Other Land’, about dispossession of a Palestinian community, offers hope

IF THE CRACKS in Hollywood's enduring self-image as a progressive bastion have widened in recent years — who can forget the #TimesUp and #OscarsSoWhite campaigns that exposed the industry's rampant sexism and racism? — this year's Academy Awards offered a moment of redemption. For the Israeli-Palestinian collective that won the Best Documentary trophy for *No Other Land* — about the dispossession of a West Bank community by the Israeli military — the Oscar stage offered a space that has been shrinking across the western world.

“Hollywood's biggest night”, as the event is billed, has never been shy of politics, with the richest and most glamorous residents of Los Angeles often using the platform to “speak truth to power”. Yet, a question mark hangs over the actual impact of these interventions, and if critics have accused the Oscars of hijacking issues so that it can pat itself on the back, they have had good reason to do so. Marlon Brando, for example, refused his 1973 trophy for Best Actor to protest against the treatment of Native Americans in the industry, but it took another 46 years for an actor with Native American ancestry (Wes Studi in 2019) to be honoured on the Oscar stage.

Yet, the Oscar for *No Other Land* — a film that distributors in Hollywood were unwilling to back — matters, as do the words spoken on stage by Israeli journalist Yuval Abraham and Palestinian activist Basel Adra, two of the people behind the documentary. “We created this film together... because together our voices are stronger,” Abraham said, while Adra hoped his daughter won't have to live like him, “always fearing settlers, violence, home demolitions and forcible displacements”. Adra and Abraham live a reality that is increasingly being made invisible by Hollywood itself. That they could speak, and be heard, on one of the most prominent stages in the world, therefore, offers hope in a time of growing polarisation.

WHEN PRESIDENT VOLODYMYR Zelenskyy of Ukraine met with US President Donald Trump and Vice President J D Vance in the Oval Office on February 28, a curious feature was that this meeting was held under the full glare of the press, replete with cameras. The conversation between Trump, Vance and Zelenskyy started out amicably enough with Trump welcoming him to the White House. However, when a reporter from the press pool asked Vance a question, matters quickly unravelled.

Vance proceeded to disparage the Biden administration's policies toward Ukraine and then suggested that Trump was offering a diplomatic pathway to end the war. When Zelenskyy intervened, questioning Trump's diplomatic efforts, as is now well known, matters quickly became heated, soon degenerating into a three-way exchange of harsh words. A lunch that had been planned for the Ukrainian presidential delegation was left untouched as Zelenskyy left the White House upset and, no doubt, shocked and dismayed.

In its wake, the vast majority of Republican politicians have supported the Trump administration and seemed nonchalant about the obvious diplomatic contretemps. Most, in fact, chose to criticise Zelenskyy. A rare exception was Senator James Lankford of Oklahoma who sharply criticised Russian President Vladimir Putin on a national television show on Sunday. Nevertheless, he found occasion to support Trump's efforts to start a dialogue with Moscow to end the war.

If anyone following this administration's approach to the brutal war in Ukraine had any lingering doubts about its stance, the Trump-Vance meeting with Zelenskyy should have effectively ended them. For Trump, forging a working relationship with Putin is far more important than standing by an ally in dire need of American diplomatic and military support.

The reasons for Trump's willingness to

reach a rapprochement with Putin do not need one to resort to any squalid conspiracy theories. Instead, at least three key factors can be easily adduced. First, Trump has a clear penchant for authoritarian leaders ranging from Putin in Russia to Viktor Orban in Hungary. He had, during his first term in office, expressed an admiration for Xi Jinping even as he had been at odds with the People's Republic of China on a host of issues. Second, though unstated, it is not difficult to infer that he sees Putin as a fellow Christian, White nationalist compatriot. Third, at a very different level, that of geopolitics, Trump and some of his key foreign policy advisers believe that reaching an understanding with Russia might enable Washington to help undermine the growing closeness between Moscow and Beijing.

If pursuing these goals requires breaking with European allies and abandoning Ukraine, it is evident that the current administration has few, if any qualms, in pursuing this strategy. If the likes of President Emmanuel Macron of France and Prime Minister Keir Starmer of the United Kingdom had entertained hopes that they could charm and flatter Trump to restrain, if not dispense with, his worst instincts, the recent meeting with Zelenskyy has put paid to such pipe dreams.

In the wake of this very public diplomatic meltdown, what ramifications ensue both for Europe and Ukraine? It is already more than evident that with predictable exceptions, the major European countries are now rallying around Zelenskyy. Giorgia Meloni, the right-wing prime minister of Italy, to no particular surprise, has urged Zelenskyy to go back and try to repair relations with Trump. However, from Starmer to Macron, and beyond, there has been a clear expression of solidarity with Ukraine. Olaf Scholz, the outgoing German Chancellor, at a conference on the security of Ukraine in London, reiterated his country's support for Ukraine's sovereignty and made clear that the war could not end on Russia's terms.

After the end of World War II, despite occasional vicissitudes stemming mostly from policy differences, the transatlantic alliance had endured. It had even weathered some serious crises; most notably, when France and the United Kingdom had embarked upon the ill-conceived and ill-fated invasion of the Suez in 1956. In its wake, Sir Anthony Eden, the British prime minister, felt compelled to resign using the subterfuge of ill health. However, after the crisis had ended, the transatlantic relationship, including the “special relationship” with the United Kingdom, moved on. More recently, several European countries, most significantly, Germany, had been at odds with the George W Bush administration's decision to invade Iraq. Yet again, after a period of frostiness, the ties between Europe and the United States were not only restored but strengthened.

In the wake of Trump's unwillingness to protect Ukraine, his feckless readiness to erect a swath of trade barriers in the form of tariffs on European goods while constantly chiding European allies for not sharing what he deems to be their fair share of the defence burden, most of Europe is now concluding that America, at least under Trump, simply cannot be seen as a trustworthy and reliable ally and partner. The strategic transformation that is under way is nothing short of the political equivalent of a tectonic shift. Starmer, when unveiling a four-step plan for Ukraine at a conference in London, did not exaggerate the gravity of the situation when he said, “We are at a crossroads in history.” Whether most of democratic Europe can take the fork in the road that, despite the costs that it will have to bear, guarantees the security of Ukraine and the continent, remains the key question that will be addressed in the next few weeks and months.

*The writer is a senior fellow and the director of the Huntington Programme on Strengthening US-India Relations at the Hoover Institution, Stanford University*

SMALL FILM, BIG CINEMA

‘Anora’s’ Oscars triumph is a win for indie films that touch without trying too hard

SHALINI LANGER

THE ACADEMY OF Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, a club notoriously made of old, White male voters, rarely picks films that delight, over a grand narrative, when it comes to Best Picture.

So serious are the Oscars about themselves that it's only four times that a film has taken home both the Cannes festival's best honour — known to go to more edgy, experimental and foreign cinema — and the Academy's. The last one was *Parasite* in 2019; before that it happened in 1955. On Monday, *Anora* joined the list.

Even in that august company, *Anora* is an exception, with explicit content that usually leaves the Academy cold and its unusually humanising depiction of the group of Russians whose paths cross with the titular character — Hollywood has rarely accorded them such warmth in a mainstream film.

As *Anora* proceeds — a trot at 2 hours and 19 minutes compared to some of its more “serious” and heavy-on-their-feet contenders — none of them sticks to form.

*Anora* or Ani, as she prefers to be called, is neither the sex worker with a heart of gold nor one with a pot of bad luck. She is anti-Cinderella and anti-Pretty Woman, a 23-year-old who isn't looking out for a fairy grandmother or a Prince Charming. The only crystal on her is the shiny diamond ring that she demands from Ivan, who turns out to be riding — like all princes are — on his parents' coattails.

Mikey Madison, just 25 and the Best Actress winner, is phenomenal as the gutsy, feisty, fearless Ani who confounds the Russian prince's Russian keepers, trying hopelessly to

keep her down or to keep Ivan up — literally. A large part of the film is shot in the New York quarters inhabited by Russians, with Ani herself partly Russian. It would be so easy to paint them as the usual gruff, cruel, bloodthirsty Russians — or lawless migrants like the ones who run rampant through *Emilia Perez* — who are apparently threatening America's cities.

However, in Sean Baker's hilarious script, they are as much powerless cogs in the wheel as Ani. They are sent scurrying at the command of a Russian oligarch, who flies in and out of America on a jet unhindered by any sanctions, showing that money oils all wheels.

It's amidst the urgency to get a divorce — another of the film's ironies — that the drama and romance of *Anora* blossoms. As snowfall engulfs a car in which the last scene unfolds, this could be as much a dream that may end at the first ray of sun, or the start of a new day.

On a night that *Anora* took five Academy awards, Yuriy Borisov — the watchful, almost silent, completely disposable henchman, who is the only one who comes remotely close to a heart of gold in the film — lost out on Best Supporting Actor. As geopolitics goes, notwithstanding President Donald Trump's full tilt at the windmills, there is only so far the Oscars could have gone with Borisov; his nomination was celebrated back home in Russia as a ‘victory’ of Olympian magnitude.

\$100 million) that touches without trying too hard — for example, not going much into the hard lives of sex workers, or the easy lives of princelings, or the blowback of hard-partying, drug-addled ways.

Of the nine other films in contention for Best Picture, one dealt with a dirty Vatican power play behind the selection of a Pope (*Conclave* seemed “right”, given Pope Francis's ailment); another with the stark cruelties of war and migrant life (*The Brutalist*, more the Academy's style); the third adapted a popular Broadway play (crowd favourite *Wicked*); the fourth was a grand spectacle as well as a hardworking sequel (a made-to-overwhelm *Dune 2*); the fifth was a polished biopic of Bob Dylan (*A Complete Unknown*, with Timothee Chalamet); the sixth brought a movie veteran in from the cold (*The Substance*, seen as Demi Moore's redemption); the seventh put a trans woman front and centre (*Emilia Perez*, though it ran into difficulties of its own); and eighth and nine films that had a chance if the Academy were thus inclined (*I'm Still Here* about Brazil's forced disappearances, and *Nickel Boys* about an abusive reform school, based on a Pulitzer Prize-winning novel).

In such larger schemes of things, *Anora* matters little. But it invoked what Baker, who made history winning four individual Oscars — for Best Director, Screenplay, Editing and Picture for *Anora* — harked to in his speech: The magic of small films making big cinema.

shalini.langer@expressindia.com



MARCH 4, 1985, FORTY YEARS AGO

REUNITED PARTY

THE TWO FEUDING groups of the Kerala Congress — both constituents of the ruling United Democratic Front — formally came together to form a single party, marking an end to 68 months of mutual bickering and mud-slinging. P J Joseph, Revenue Minister and leader of the Joseph group, will be the chairman of the united Kerala Congress and K M Mani, Finance Minister and leader of the Mani group, the leader of the parliamentary party. With the inclusion of P C Thomas, who moved over from the Democratic Janata Party, the united Kerala Congress will have 15 members in the state assembly. Both the Mani and Joseph groups will have equal representation in the party forums at all levels.

INDIA BEAT AUSTRALIA

INDIA BUNDLED AUSTRALIA out of the World Championship of Cricket on March 3, winning the final group 'A' match by eight wickets. Australia lost the toss and, sent in to bat, were 163 all out in 49.3 overs. India reached 165 for two in 36.1 overs to lead the points table in group 'A' and go through to the semi-finals, along with Pakistan, who finished runners-up after victories over Australia and England. Australia, disappointingly for the host country, ended with two points and England with nil. Ravi Shastri, the Indian all-rounder, was named man of the match after taking one wicket for 34 from 10 overs and hitting a valuable 51.

REPOLL IN UP, BIHAR

REPOLLING WILL BE held in 24 polling stations in Uttar Pradesh and 123 booths spread over 16 districts in Bihar following booth capturing and violence. While the Election Commission secretary, V K Rao, made the formal announcement with regard to the repolling in UP, the decision on fresh elections in Bihar was made in Patna. One of the commission secretaries, who is now camping in Patna, is looking into the complaints of violence in the state. The death toll in the poll violence in Bihar shot up to 29, according to reports received from various parts of the state. There have been a large number of complaints of violence, snatching of ballot papers or ballot boxes in both UP and Bihar.



# THE IDEAS PAGE

## Mapping her work

More rural women are now self-employed.  
The reasons for this shift are unclear



FARZANA AFRIDI

THE LATEST ROUNDS of the periodic labour force surveys show that overall employment, particularly self-employment, among rural women, has increased significantly since 2017-18. Most of these women report being helpers in a home-based enterprise. This increase in women's time allocated to income generating work begs the question: How and where are women saving time and reallocating that saved time to work?

Women spend a majority of their daily time cooking, as shown by the 2019 Time Use Survey of India. A granular 24-hour time use survey of almost 3,000 primary cooks in households in rural Indore by my co-authors and I finds that of the 60 hours of time spent on domestic work by rural women per week, the majority (more than 40 hours) is spent on cooking and cleaning — almost four hours per day, on average, which is equivalent to a part-time job. Almost 75 per cent of these women use firewood and cow dung for cooking, which not only makes cooking and cleaning more time-consuming, but also exposes these women to cardiovascular and lung disease due to indoor smoke inhalation.

Could the Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY) programme have increased the home productivity of rural women and reduced the time they spend on cooking and fuel collection? In the same survey, we asked the primary cooks what fuel they used for cooking the last meal along with estimating the time taken to cook that entire meal for the family. Comparing the average time taken by the primary cook to prepare the last meal for the family in households that do not have LPG access (and therefore use solid fuels or the traditional *chulha* for cooking) versus those households that have LPG access, we find that it takes approximately 30 minutes less time to prepare a meal if LPG is used rather than solid fuels for cooking.

Subsequently, when households with and without LPG connections are matched on similar characteristics (including income), the time use data show lower time spent on fuel collection and fuel making by women in households with LPG access relative to those who do not have an LPG account in rural Indore. There is potentially a large reduction in time spent in dung collection of almost 70 minutes per week, although the time savings in firewood collection are small (about 10 minutes per week). Other domestic work falls by about 20 minutes per day. Hence the daily time saving is at most 30 minutes for these women.

However, we find no increase in time spent by these women on income-generating work (either work for pay or as helpers in household enterprises or self-employment) in households with LPG access. But almost all the daily time saved is reallocated to leisure (about 20 minutes per day). While LPG can indeed improve women's welfare, why do we not observe an increase in their labour force participation?



C R Sasikumar

First, it is worth noting that fuel collection is an activity undertaken once a week or about four times a month by most rural households. Hence, a shift to LPG does not entail daily time-saving. Second, the 20-30 minutes of daily time-saving from cooking is not sufficient for women to step out of the home and take up a full-time job. Not surprisingly, our analysis suggests that the time saved is reallocated to leisure.

Most importantly, how do we value this time that women are saving daily, of about 30 minutes approximately? In rural areas, paid work available is primarily manual and low skilled with low wages. The potential time saving of about 30 minutes estimated is valued at only about 5 per cent of rural monthly household income, given the rural daily wage for unskilled, manual labour (corresponding to these women's primary level of education and lack of vocational or technical skills). Access to manufacturing jobs or service-sector jobs, which give you higher returns and increase the opportunity cost of women's domestic work, is almost absent in most rural areas. Not only is the value of women's time relatively low, there are very few opportunities for flexible work for women in this context. The average female employment rate in the context is only 15 per cent and primarily in agricultural self-employment. Hence, these households do not have a large enough incentive to save women's time in cooking and fuel collection by shifting to regular usage of LPG.

While households may have an LPG connection, the usage of LPG continues to be low in rural India. The PMUY programme has undoubtedly been a huge success. However, these households do not use LPG

How do we value this time that women are saving daily, of about 30 minutes approximately? In rural areas, paid work available is primarily manual and low skilled with low wages. The potential time saving of about 30 minutes estimated is valued at only about 5 per cent of rural monthly household income, given the rural daily wage for unskilled, manual labour (corresponding to these women's primary level of education and lack of vocational or technical skills). Access to manufacturing jobs or service-sector jobs is almost absent in most rural areas.

regularly for cooking. They engage in mixed-fuel cooking, as a result of which the usage of LPG cylinder refills is very low. While the maximum usage by a four-member household would be about 12 cylinders, if the only fuel used by the household is LPG, the data shows that the average annual usage is only about three LPG cylinder refills.

Clean cooking technology, either LPG or induction, is unlikely to save large chunks of time in one go to allow women to work full-time and bring in a substantial amount of income to the household. The disincentives for adopting clean technology are heightened by the fact that typically it is men who make decisions about the purchase of LPG refills. Thus, the low bargaining power of these women further binds them to using dirty fuels.

The fact sheet on the 2024 Time Use Survey shows a 1.5 percentage point increase in overall employment and 24 more minutes spent on employment activities by women, relative to 2019. The reasons behind the observed 20 percentage point increase in women's self-employment between 2017-18 and 2023-24, therefore, remains unresolved.

We await more granular, recent data on women's time use to better understand how much of the rise in women's work participation is attributable to methodological changes in the PLFS survey and how much of it is a real, meaningful change in Indian women's time allocation.

*The writer is professor of Economics, ISI Delhi, and head, Digital Platforms and Women's Economic Empowerment (DPWEE) Programme*

## WHAT THE OTHERS SAY

"The US has prioritised theatrics over security commitments in a volatile world."  
— THE GLOBAL TIMES

## An education for the real world

New UGC guidelines will address disconnect between academia and industry, bridge the gap between universities and job market



MAMIDALA JAGADESH KUMAR

FOR A LONG time, the inability of Indian higher educational institutions (HEIs) to integrate job-oriented skill courses in BA, BCom, and Bsc programmes — these attract a significant share of students in higher education — has significantly impacted the employability of graduates. Outdated curricula, regulatory inertia and a substantial disconnect between academia and industry were the immediate reasons for this shortcoming. However, with the introduction of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, regulators such as the UGC are facilitating transformation in higher education through innovative regulations, frameworks and guidelines.

Recently, the UGC announced comprehensive guidelines to incorporate skill-based education and micro/nano-credentials as part of the degree programmes offered by HEIs. These guidelines, aligned with NEP 2020, extoll skill and experiential education, aim to overhaul the conventional educational framework and bridge the gap between academic learning and the job market.

The most reasonable path for students to seize opportunities in high-demand and emerging areas is by acquiring credits in skill-based courses as part of their regular degree programmes. This enhances employability without burdening the students with extra academic stress.

A core feature of the UGC guidelines is permitting students to plan their learning by designing personalised educational journeys and earning stackable credits by choosing courses from academic disciplines and skill domains through the National Credit Framework (NCrF). The guidelines allow students to earn micro/nano-credentials through flexible and multidisciplinary learning pathways. Incorporating micro/nano-credentials in regular degree programmes is a progressive way to provide targeted skill development opportunities to students specialising in specific competencies.

UGC guidelines advise that Indian enterprises or multinational corporations (MNCs) who desire to offer skill-based courses can submit their proposals to the UGC. A committee comprising subject experts and industry representatives will evaluate the proposals based on their adherence to UGC guidelines and quality standards. Courses approved by the UGC are listed on the SWAYAM Plus platform and linked to the academic bank of credits, making them accessible to students nationwide.

The UGC's comprehensive assessment framework for skill-based courses and micro-credentials emphasises a structured, multi-tiered approach to evaluating students' competencies through internal and external assessments. Its guidelines recommend diverse areas for skill-based courses and micro-credentials. The principal areas advised by the UGC include advanced tech-

nologies such as artificial intelligence, blockchain, machine learning, cybersecurity, robotics, and data analytics courses. These will equip students with skills in high-demand sectors.

Skill-based courses in traditional crafts, textiles, tourism and hospitality management programmes could support regional economic growth in areas with a rich cultural heritage. Micro-credentials in communication, leadership, and entrepreneurship ensure students develop essential soft skills, enabling success in diverse professional environments.

The UGC guidelines encourage HEIs to align their skill-related courses with national priorities and local strengths. These institutions must, therefore, identify specific industry demands in their area and choose skill-based courses accordingly. For example, institutions in regions with agricultural sectors might offer agri-tech or sustainable farming courses, while those in financial hubs could focus on fin-tech-related courses. By using the localised approach, HEIs could ensure their education aligns with regional economic development. The adoption of these guidelines by HEIs could place Indian higher education on par with international standards by adopting global best practices in competency-based evaluation, blended learning, and collaborative assessments and ensuring that Indian graduates are globally competitive.

A closer examination of the challenges of graduate unemployment today provides a deeper sense of why skill-based courses must be an integral part of degree programmes. Regrettably, some academicians stick to an archaic view of higher education as a purely academic pursuit rather than a possibility for making students career-ready. Because of unjustified misconceptions, they view the introduction of skill-based education as a dilution of the intellectual scope of traditional degree programmes, perpetuating an elitist mindset that prioritises theoretical knowledge over practical application. Their resistance to change in higher education harms students and undermines India's progress. The understanding that it is impossible to carry on one's way into the future with a stagnant educational framework should caution us to the necessity of transforming higher education.

Considering the potential of skill-based courses to enhance student employability, more Indian HEIs must operate with accountability for the outcomes of their graduates. HEI administrators must work toward creating value for our students. They should remain concerned about whether students secure employment after completing their degrees or if they are forcing the students to pursue costly additional training to become employable. To overcome the existing mindset that constrains pragmatism, HEIs must rethink curricula, restructure faculty roles, and speedily integrate industry-relevant skill-based courses into regular degree programmes. As much as it challenges HEIs to free themselves from the conventional way of imparting education, this approach has real value. One thing is clear: HEIs must realise that our students deserve more than obsolete degrees. They merit an education that invigorates them to succeed in the real world.

*The writer is chairman, UGC and former VC, JNU. Views are personal*



MRINAL PANDE

## What Hindi-baiters don't get

How can divisive policies of the past threaten to become our future?

I AM BOTH sad and outraged by the diatribes against Hindi by those who speak in Indian English and shout against "Hindi imposition". They include many educated Indians from the Hindi heartland. This is a cop-out. The English used here, one can see, has segued smoothly from being the language of India's former colonial masters to being the code that identifies the UN-certified thought leaders in India, from science to the arts, philosophy to warfare.

India before the 20th century was a deeply multilingual nation. Each region had a language, each language had its own tradition of oral literature and area dialects that fed into the pool. And then there was a particularly fractious history of Hindi vs Urdu. For long, Hindi, Hindvi or Hindustani in spoken form had been the people's language in the area.

Controversy and bitterness first began to be crystallised after the Bhakha Munshis appointed by the British carved out two languages from Hindustani. One was Hindi written in Devanagari (or Nagari for short) script borrowed from Sanskrit. The other was Urdu, in a slightly indigenised version of the Persian script. Hindi and Urdu thereafter were propagated through school books and governmental correspondence as the languages of Hindus and Muslims, in that order.

The term *bhasha* that the anti-Hindi lobbyists are using freely to underscore its Hindu roots (backed perhaps unknowingly by the venerable JLF) is baffling. *Bhasha* or

*bhakha* has always been the term for an inclusive mélange of dialects spoken in the northern plains: Braj, Awadhi, Kauravi, Maithili, Bhojpuri et al. Around the 13th century, this prototype of Hindi had begun trickling slowly down south, thanks to a two-way movement that Ramanand introduced the north to ("*Bhakti David upji laaye Ramanand*"). No one saw it as an "imposition" either in the north or the south.

Since then, there was a regular flow of pilgrims and sadhus chanting and singing the poems of the northern Bhakti poets. Classical musicians singing the kritis (output) of a hundred poets and vaggeyakaras, the Deccani poets, gave it more muscle and as Mumbai became the capital of visual entertainment, this hybridised Hindi entered Bollywood and TV. Like Elizabethan English the Hindi-Urdu mix in films like *Mughal-e-Azam* and *Garam Hawa* has always been more of a liquid bubbling with steam, fumes and a certain fury against a system deemed divisive and supremacist.

The real difference between this easy camaraderie of the early Independence years when my generation in the north studied in the Hindi medium, and our present diglossia is that today English enters the minds of Indian children before they have finished setting down their first language. So they end up not with a mother tongue learnt at home and a language learnt simultaneously in school, but a single competence that is less optimised for picking up

local lore and street-smart phraseology and more suited for the ultimate aim — a well paid job. It is a short route for the rich, a long one for the poor. It is this diglossia that is killing local dialects, most of which had no script (except Kaithi and Maithili, now mostly dead in those areas).

The Hindi that the government today wishes to crown as the national language is a different kettle of fish. It is firmly moored to a Sanskrit with all its casteist baggage intact. And its highly associational vocabulary is being used to purge thousands of words it assimilated through the centuries from dialects, Islamic and European languages to create the ultimate template for a *shuddh*, sanitised Hindi.

It is ironic that while daggers are being drawn on both sides over the language issue ever since the BJP reignited it, the young in the Hindi belt are abandoning Hindi en masse for English. The parents, including most vociferous supporters of the BJP leadership and Hindi, when it comes to their own children, will root for an English medium education in relatively expensive private schools.

Critics of Hindi must talk more to Hindi writers, journalists and educationists. They will then begin to see that whatever is being made to look real and permanent today was not there yesterday and will be gone tomorrow. But India is well on its way to becoming the world's largest diglossic speaker of English where the young are fast being

reduced to a mob of cultural ignorants on social media. Many simply throw away books and talk about the Hindu faith as though they are Shankaracharyas.

It's a pity today that most of our incisive historians, social scientists, philologists and feminists continue to write their well researched books exclusively in English. And those who are from the non-Hindi speaking areas, while cursing Hindi imposition, will not introspect honestly as to why they have failed to write their own books in their native Bangla, Tamil, Kannada or Oriya.

As for literary historians of Hindi and Urdu, they too have remained trapped in writing angry competing historical narratives for Hindi and Urdu. A calm, composite, comprehensive history of Indian literature that spans both Hindi and Urdu as peoples' languages, differing in little but in scripts, has yet to be written.

How can the regressive and divisive policies we thought we had buried come back to haunt us and threaten to be our future? The answer lies in one of the cruellest questions Krishna asks Gandhari, as she curses him for causing the death of her sons. "*Cheernam charasi Kshatriye?*" Why wail, O brave Kshatriya Queen, over that which your own arrogant and deliberate myopia had pre-ordained?

*The writer is former chairperson, Prasar Bharati*

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### GENDER BARRIER

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'The woman's hour' (IE, March 3). A study by the International Labour Organisation corroborates that unpaid work is one of the most critical barriers preventing women from joining and continuing in the workforce. There is a need to recognise women's unpaid work and invest in an inclusive care economy.

**Vaibhav Goyal, Chandigarh**

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'The woman's hour' (IE, March 3). The Time Use Survey 2024 has exposed how women suffer disadvantages on account of the gendered division of labour. They are found to spend more time on unpaid domestic chores and caregiving, which constrains their potential for economic mobility and forces them to settle for low-paid or part-time informal work. The question is: Who is supposed to remunerate women for domestic work? Should it be the family head in a typical household? Or is it to be considered an essential service for the nation and paid for by the state?

**LR Murmu, New Delhi**

### TIRED ANTICS

THIS REFERS TO the article, 'When the bully wins' (IE, March 3). The showdown

in the Oval Office was not a spectacle but a realistic picture of what is at stake. Volodymyr Zelenskyy grossly misread the room. His tired antics of portraying Vladimir Putin as the devil spectacularly backfired on him. In the space of a few minutes, Donald Trump and J D Vance dismantled the mechanism of the puppet that he has become owing to Western support. Both Emmanuel Macron and Keir Starmer, who preceded him in their visits to the White House, were embodiments of tact and diplomacy. Zelenskyy's act of defiance could only have been matched by the dressing down he received. He effectively became Jean de la Fontaine's "frog who wished to be as big as the ox".

**Animesh Rai, Noida**

THIS REFERS TO the article, 'When the bully wins' (IE, March 3). The manner in which US President Donald Trump and Vice President J D Vance treated Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy at the White House is definitely a pointer to the arrogance of right-wing arm-twisters. It was foolish of him to expect Zelenskyy to sign an agreement without offering any security guarantees. The challenge for European leaders is to pacify the US President and stop him from rushing headlong into a deal skewed in Russia's favour.

**SS Paul, Nadia**



# Uttarakhand: Liquor shops near religious places to lose licence

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
DEHRADUN, MARCH 3

THE UTTARAKHAND Cabinet on Monday approved a new excise policy that includes a mandate to revoke the licence of liquor shops near religious areas.

According to the state government, the policy was formulated "with a focus on the importance of religious areas".

The definition of a religious area and the distance from such an area at which the sale of liquor can be allowed will be made clear in a Government Order to be issued soon, a senior official said. Currently, there is a ban on setting up liquor shops in a seven-km radius of Har Ki Pauri and Rishikesh Municipal Council. Liquor is banned in the Char Dham circuit and Hemkund Sahib.

The new policy also says that a shop can lose its licence if it sells liquor for more than its maximum retail price. "MRP rules will also apply to departmental stores to protect consumer rights," a government statement said.

A senior official said the system of metro liquor and sub-shops have been abolished under the new policy.

The policy also mandates that wholesale liquor licences

can only be issued to residents of Uttarakhand as part of an effort to "ensure economic benefits within the state".

"To promote wineries in hill regions, units producing wine from locally grown fruits will receive excise duty exemptions for the next 15 years," the statement said. This is aimed to benefit farmers and those engaged in horticulture.

Investment in the liquor industry is encouraged by reducing export duties, and malt and spirit industries in hill areas will receive special incentives, the Cabinet said.

Further, distilleries will be encouraged to use local agricultural products, which will increase farmers' income and open new markets for them.

The revenue target for 2025-26 is Rs 5,060 crore.

In 2023-24, against a target of Rs 4,000 crore, the state earned Rs 4,038.69 crore and in 2024-25, the target was Rs 4,439 crore, out of which nearly Rs 4,000 crore has already been collected, the statement said.

The Cabinet has also approved a decision to educate students about "Uttarakhand's movement and cultural heritage", and a supplementary book titled Our Heritage and Icons will be included in the curriculum for classes 6-8.



## BEATING THE HEAT

Elephants Janaki and Meera take a dip at the Pune Zoo on Monday. Pavan Khengre

# Karnataka IPS officer shifted day after she accused senior of planting files

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
BENGALURU, MARCH 3

A DAY after IPS officer Vartika Katiyar accused her immediate boss and IGP D Roopa Moudgil of using police personnel to plant confidential documents related to other departments in her chamber, the Karnataka government Monday shunted Katiyar from the Internal Security Division, where she was posted as a DIG.

According to the order issued Monday, "Vartika Katiyar has been transferred as Deputy Inspector General of Police and Additional Commandant General, home guards and ex-officio additional director, civil defence, Bengaluru in the downgraded vacant post."

Katiyar, a 2010-batch IPS officer, filed a complaint on February 20 before Karnataka Chief Secretary Shalini Rajneesh and marked it to DGP Alok Mohan. In the complaint, Katiyar alleged that

on September 6, 2024, head constable Manjunath TS and home guard Mallikarjun entered her chamber after receiving directions from Moudgil to keep some files and took photos of them as well.

Katiyar alleged that the photos were shared on WhatsApp.

She also alleged that D Roopa threatened to submit a negative annual performance report. D Roopa, a 2000-batch IPS officer, is awaiting promotion to the rank of ADGP from 1 January, 2025.

# UAE executes UP woman convicted last year over infant killing: MEA to HC

Family in Banda to seek Centre's help in bringing body back

MANISH SAHU  
LUCKNOW, MARCH 3

SHAHJADI SABBEER Khan (30), a caregiver from Uttar Pradesh's Banda district who was sentenced to death last year in the United Arab Emirates for the alleged murder of a four-month-old infant, was executed on February 15, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) informed the Delhi High Court on Monday.

Upon learning of her execution on Monday, her family in Banda said they would approach the Central government for help in bringing her body back home. The MEA informed the Delhi High Court about her execution during a hearing on the family's petition seeking information about Shahjadi's well-being. They were "extremely shocked" to learn about the execution since they had spoken to Shahjadi over phone earlier that day (February 15), the family said.

Her father Sabbeer Khan had repeatedly appealed to the central and state authorities for help, claiming she was falsely implicated in the murder case. The family maintained that she was wrongfully accused of murdering

the infant child of a couple she was working for in Abu Dhabi, the UAE capital city, since 2021.

"The government told the Delhi High Court that she was executed on February 15, but they never informed us despite our requests for help for months. We will approach the External Affairs Ministry to bring the body of my sister back to India," said Shahjadi's brother Shamsheer Khan.

She had been imprisoned in Abu Dhabi's Al Wathba prison since 2022 following the child's death. "We had no choice but to approach the Delhi High Court, as no authorities came forward to assist us. We have been tirelessly reaching out to local, state, and central authorities for help. We all failed to save her," said another family member.

Their efforts intensified after Shahjadi informed the family in September last year that her appeal had been rejected and that she could be executed anytime.

Shahjadi, who was unmarried, was the youngest of the three daughters of Shabbir and his wife Nazra Begum. She studied up to the sixth grade and had suffered severe burn injuries on her face and other parts of body when she was six, it is learnt.

Shahjadi's family blamed one Uzair, also known as Panna Chaudhary, a native of Agra, for falsely framing her in the case. She came in contact with Uzair through social media while working with an NGO, they said.

According to the family, Uzair lured Shahjadi with the promise of a well-paying job at his uncle Faiz and aunt Nazia's home in Abu Dhabi, assuring her that she could also receive treatment for her burn injuries there.

The family said Nazia gave birth to a baby who died four months old in 2022 when Shahjadi was working as the child's caretaker.

A few months later, Faiz and Nazia accused Shahjadi of killing their child and forced her to confess, they alleged.

In July last year, on Sabbeer Khan's complaint, the Banda police had registered an FIR against Faiz, Nazia, Uzair, and Faiz's mother Anjum Sahana Begum on the court's order. The complaint listed several allegations, including accusation that Uzair and others sent Shahjadi on forced labour. The investigating officer of the case has filed a closure report in the matter, a Banda district police official said.

# 'Must understand freedom of speech': SC pulls up Gujarat Police over case against MP

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 3

THE SUPREME Court on Monday pulled up the Gujarat Police over the FIR it filed against Congress MP Imran Pratapgarhi over an Instagram post earlier this year and said that "75 years after the existence of the Constitution, freedom of speech and expression has to be at least now understood by the police."

Justice A S Oka was presiding over a two-judge bench as it reserved judgment on the appeal filed by Pratapgarhi challenging the January 17, 2025, Gujarat High Court order refusing to quash the FIR against him.

According to the prosecution, after attending a wedding function at Jamnagar, Pratapgarhi uploaded a video with the poem "Ae khoon key pyase baat suno" running in the background. The words in the poem were deemed objectionable. Hearing the appeal on Monday, the bench — also comprising Justice Ujjal Bhuyan — expressed its reservation over the police action.

Justice Oka said the police should have shown some sensitivity before lodging the FIR. He was of the view that the poem propagates a message of non-violence. "This actually promotes non-violence. It has nothing to do with religion, this has nothing to do with any anti-national activity. Police have shown lack of sensitivity," he said.

Appearing for Gujarat, Solicitor General Tushar Mehta said that people may have appreciated its meaning differently.

To this, Justice Oka said, "This is the problem. Now nobody has any respect for creativity. If you read it plainly, it says that even if you suffer injustice, you suffer it with love... Those who are blood-thirsty, listen to us. Even if the fight for justice is met with injustice, we will meet that injustice with love."

Mehta said that Pratapgarhi's contention was that it was his social media team which uploaded the video and that he ought to take responsibility for the team's actions.

Justice Oka said the police ought to have shown sensitivity in the matter. "They must at least read and understand."

Senior Advocate Kapil Sibal, appearing for Pratapgarhi, urged the court to say something about the HC's judgment. Mehta opposed this. Acting on a complaint, the Gujarat Police had booked Pratapgarhi on January 3 under several sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita.

The MP then moved the HC seeking quashing of the FIR.

Dismissing the Congress MP's plea, the HC had said, "looking to the tenor of the poem, it certainly indicates something about the throne. The responses received to the said post by other persons also indicate that (the) message was posted in a manner which certainly create(s) disturbance in social harmony."

# Rajasthan cancels allocation of govt bungalow for rebel minister Kirodi Lal Meena

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
JAIPUR, MARCH 3

RAJASTHAN'S GENERAL Administration Department (GAD) has cancelled the allotment of a government bungalow to rebel cabinet minister Kirodi Lal Meena, who levelled snooping allegations against his own government last month.

According to GAD's order from February 28, Meena was allotted a bungalow under the Rajasthan Ministers' Salaries Act, 1956. The allotment, according to the order, was "cancelled with immediate effect as per the minister's request".

Meena, who has been vocal about his dissatisfaction with the Bhajan Lal Sharma-led BJP government, had not taken possession of the bungalow allotted to him in February last year. Meena had also previously returned the government vehicle given to him.

In a video that went viral last month, Meena accused his own government of tapping his phones after he sought the cancellation of the 2021 Sub Inspector recruitment exams over paper leak allegations. Minister of State for Home Jawahar Singh Bedam has denied the snooping allegations in the Assembly.

Meena, who had also been served a notice by the party over the accusations, publicly admitted that he "made a mistake" and that it was "the party's internal matter", although he subsequently repeated the allegations.

**बिहार सरकार**

**बिहार तकनीकी सेवा आयोग,**  
19, हार्डिंग रोड, पटना-800001

**आवश्यक सूचना**  
विज्ञापन सं०-02/2025, प्रयोगशाला प्रावैधिक

स्वास्थ्य विभाग, बिहार, पटना के अन्तर्गत प्रयोगशाला प्रावैधिक के कुल-2969 रिक्त पदों पर नियुक्ति हेतु दिनांक-04.03.2025 से 01.04.2025 तक Online आवेदन करने की तिथि निर्धारित की गयी है।  
उक्त से संबंधित विस्तृत विज्ञापन आयोग के Website- **www.btsc.bihar.gov.in** पर दिनांक-04.03.2025 से देखा जा सकता है।

PR- 20702 (B & C) 2024-25 **प्रभारी सचिव,**  
नशे की मार, बर्बाद करे सुखी परिवार। बिहार तकनीकी सेवा आयोग, पटना।

**बिहार सरकार**

**बिहार तकनीकी सेवा आयोग,**  
19, हार्डिंग रोड, पटना-800001

**आवश्यक सूचना**  
विज्ञापन सं०-03/2025, शल्य कक्ष सहायक

स्वास्थ्य विभाग, बिहार, पटना के अन्तर्गत शल्य कक्ष सहायक के कुल-1683 रिक्त पदों पर नियुक्ति हेतु दिनांक-04.03.2025 से 01.04.2025 तक Online आवेदन करने की तिथि निर्धारित की गयी है।  
उक्त से संबंधित विस्तृत विज्ञापन आयोग के Website- **www.btsc.bihar.gov.in** पर दिनांक-04.03.2025 से देखा जा सकता है।

PR- 20708 (B & C) 2024-25 **प्रभारी सचिव,**  
नशे की मार, बर्बाद करे सुखी परिवार। बिहार तकनीकी सेवा आयोग, पटना।


**Govt. of Bihar**

**Patna Municipal Corporation**  
Short Quotation No. 03/PIU-PMC/2024-25

PIU-PMC invites online Bid for: Comprehensive maintenance work of Vertical Garden Area water fountain & PMC Office, landscaping area in the Premises of Mauryalok complex through [www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in](http://www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in) from the supplier/agency, fulfilling eligibility criteria's.

SL. No.	Name of Work	Cost of Tender fee (Non-Refundable) (Paid Through <a href="http://www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in">www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in</a> )	EMD (Paid Through <a href="http://www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in">www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in</a> )
1	Proposal for comprehensive maintenance of all Vertical Gardening work, selfie point, landscaping work at 2 <sup>nd</sup> floor Block-C PMC Building, Gate No-01,03 & Gate No-05 at mauryalok campus for 5 years @Rs-35,500.00 per month.	Rs. 5000	Rs.42,600

In case of Bank Guarantee, EMD shall be payable in favour of "Executive Engineer PIU-01, Patna Municipal Corporation" payable at Patna.  
**Key Dates:**  
Start of online bid/downloading of bid documents : From 06.03.2025 (10:00 Hrs.)  
Last date of Online Bid Submission : 11.03.2025 till 15:00 Hrs.  
Financial Bid Opening date : 12.03.2025 at 16:00 Hrs.  
The preferred agency/supplier would be selected through a single-stage one-part competitive bidding process based on evaluation of financial bid. The bidder is expected to submit their proposal in accordance with the instruction provided in the bid document. Detailed bid document incorporating instruction for submission of bids, detail of items and their quantity and other relevant information will be available on [www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in](http://www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in) and [www.pmc.bihar.gov.in](http://www.pmc.bihar.gov.in) from bid start date.  
Amendment/Corrigendum to NIT, if any would be published on website [www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in](http://www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in) only.  
PIU-01, Patna Municipal Corporation  
1<sup>st</sup> floor, Maurya Tower, Maurya Lok Complex, Buddha Marg, Patna, Bihar, 800 001.  
W:[www.pmc.bihar.gov.in](http://www.pmc.bihar.gov.in)  
Email:[id-pmcpiu01@gmail.com](mailto:id-pmcpiu01@gmail.com)  
This information is available on [www.state.bihar.gov.in/prdbihar](http://www.state.bihar.gov.in/prdbihar) also  
PR. No.20421 (B & C) 2024-25 **Executive Engineer, PIU-01**  
नशे की मार, बर्बाद करे सुखी परिवार। **Patna Municipal Corporation**

**Govt. of Bihar**

**BIHAR STATE ROAD DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION LIMITED**  
(A Govt. of Bihar Undertaking)  
Regd. Office: RCD Central Mechanical Workshop Campus, Near Patna Airport, Sheikhpura, Patna-800014  
Tel: 0612-2226711, Email:bsrdcltd@gmail.com, website: <http://bsrdcl.bihar.gov.in>  
Letter No.-BSRDC Ltd-4473/2025-558 Patna  
**NOTICE INVITING TENDER**  
(SBD based tender through e-procurement made only- [www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in](http://www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in))

1. Designation and Address of the Advertiser: Chief General Manager, Bihar State Road Development Corporation Limited, RCD Mechanical Workshop Campus, Near Patna Airport, Sheikhpura, Patna 800014, Bihar 28.02.2025.

2. Date of Issue of Notice Inviting Tender: 29.03.2025 till 15:00 hours on <https://eproc2.bihar.gov.in>

3. Period for downloading and uploading of Tender Document by bidder (From Website:<https://eproc2.bihar.gov.in> ): 01.04.2025 till 12:30 hours at BSRDCL HQ (address as mentioned in S.No.1)

4. Date, Time & Place of Pre-Bid meeting: 17.03.2025at 15:00 hours at BSRDCL HQ

5. Last Date & time for uploading Tender Documents by Bidder through E-proc2: 29.03.2025 till 15:00 hours on <https://eproc2.bihar.gov.in>

6. Last date, time and place for submission of Original Instrument of EMD: 01.04.2025 at 15:30 hours, at BSRDCL HQ (address as mentioned in S.No.1) through <https://eproc2.bihar.gov.in>

7. Date, time & Place of opening of Technical Bid: 01.04.2025 at 15:30 hours, at BSRDCL HQ (address as mentioned in S.No.1) through <https://eproc2.bihar.gov.in>


8. Details of Works:

Bid No.	Name of work	Estimated Cost/ECV* (₹ in Lakh)	Amount of Earnest money (₹ in Lakh)	Cost of BOQ + Bid Processing Fee (Non-refundable) (In ₹)	Time of completion of work
1	2	3	4	5	6
1	Construction of ROB with Limited Height Subway (LHSW) (Between Siwan – Pachrukhi Railway Stations) and Approach Road in lieu of L.C. No. 91 Spl on SH-89 (Babunia – Siwan) Road in Siwan District.	8670.00	96.70	10,000/- + As applicable/-	30 Months

\* Estimated Cost/ECV is inclusive of GST and all other applicable taxes.  
For further details please visit : [www.state.bihar.gov.in/prdbihar](http://www.state.bihar.gov.in/prdbihar)

**Chief General Manager**  
**Bihar State Road Development Corporation Limited, Patna**  
PR. No.20656 (B & C) 2024-25

**बिहार में शराब का व्यापार, बिक्री एवं सेवन अवैध है।**  
इससे संबंधित शिकायत इस नंबर पर दर्ज कराये, आपकी जानकारी गुप्त रखी जाएगी।  
**टॉल फ्री नं- 15545 या 1800 345 6268**

**बिहार सरकार**

**जल संसाधन विभाग**  
कार्यपालक अभियंता का कार्यालय  
बाढ़ नियंत्रण प्रमण्डल, बख्तियारपुर  
अल्पकालीन निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना संख्या- 08 एस०बी०डी०/2024-25  
राष्ट्रीय स्पर्द्धा निविदा आमंत्रण  
(केवल ई-टेंडर पद्धति के अनुसार वेबसाइट [www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in](http://www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in) पर)

1. कार्य का विवरण –

सुप सं०	कार्य का नाम	प्राक्कलित राशि (लाख रु० में)	अप्राप्त की राशि (लाख रु० में) (श्रीन लाईन अथवा क्विकल /मिनुअल मोड में मुगलेय)	परिमाण-विपन्न का मुख्य (अप्रत्यक्षीय) (सेवल ऑन ऑनलाइन मोड में मुगलेय) रु०	बेल्टहॉम को देय "बीड प्रोसेसिंग फी" (अप्रत्यक्षीय) (सेवल ऑन लाईन मोड में मुगलेय) रु०	कार्य पूर्ण करने की अवधि
01	नालन्दा जिला के सल्फे प्रखण्ड अन्तर्गत गोपालबाद जमींदारी बीस का पुर्नस्थापन कार्य। (एलेक्वा सं०-226/03/2025)	240.63	4.82	10,000.00	3,540.00	15.5.2025

2. विज्ञापन दाता का नाम : कार्यपालक अभियंता, बाढ़ नियंत्रण प्रमण्डल, बख्तियारपुर.

3. निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना निर्गत करने की तिथि : दिनांक –27.02.2025

4. निविदा कागजात डाउनलोड एवं अपलोड करने की अवधि : दिनांक 08.03.2025 के 10:00 बजे पूर्वाह्न से 11.03.2025 के 03:00 बजे अपराह्न तक (केवल वेबसाइट [www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in](http://www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in) पर)

5. ग्री-बीड मॉडिंग का समय स्थान एवं नियंत्रण एवं जल निस्सर्जन, जल संसाधन विभाग, पटना का कार्यालय। : दिनांक 11.03.2025 के अपराह्न 03:30 बजे (केवल वेबसाइट [www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in](http://www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in) पर)।

6. तकनीकी बीड खोलने की तिथि एवं समय : सक्षम पदाधिकारी द्वारा बाद में वेबसाइट [www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in](http://www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in) पर घोषित की जायेगी।

7. वितीय बीड खोलने की तिथि एवं समय : केवल वेबसाइट [www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in](http://www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in) पर।


8. निविदा खोलने का स्थान : निविदा की वेबसाइट [www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in](http://www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in) / [www.wrd.bih.nic.in](http://www.wrd.bih.nic.in) / [www.state.bihar.nic.in](http://www.state.bihar.nic.in) पर देखा जा सकता है।

9. निविदा की वेबसाइट : [www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in](http://www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in) / [www.wrd.bih.nic.in](http://www.wrd.bih.nic.in) / [www.state.bihar.nic.in](http://www.state.bihar.nic.in) पर देखा जा सकता है।

10. विशेष जानकारी प्राप्त करने हेतु : विस्तृत जानकारी [www.state.bihar.gov.in/prdbihar](http://www.state.bihar.gov.in/prdbihar) से प्राप्त की जा सकती है।

**कार्यपालक अभियंता,**  
**बाढ़ नियंत्रण प्रमण्डल, बख्तियारपुर**  
**मो० – 7463889518**  
**नशामुक्त हो जाए बिहार, सुरक्षित रहे घर परिवार।**

PR. No.20516 (WRD) 2024-25

**KALYANA KARNATAKA ROAD TRANSPORT CORPORATION**  
Stores & Purchase Department, Central Offices, Sarige Sadana, Main Road, Kalaburagi-585 102. Mobile No. 77606 86172 (COSP), 77609 92029 (S.O.).

No. KKRTC/CO/COSP/14/2024-25 **Dated:03.03.2025**

**TENDER INVITING NOTICE (THROUGH KPP PORTAL MODE ONLY)**

Tenders through KPP portal (pre-qualification & commercial) are invited for supply of following items.


Sl. No.	Tender No. & date	Tender Nomenclature	Value	Last date for submission of tender
1	KKRTC/2024-25/SE4892 Dtd: 27.02.2025	Reconditioning of Engine Components.	Rs. 0.58 Crores	01.04.2025
2	KKRTC/2024-25/INDO101/ Call-2 Dtd:03.03.2025	Procurement of Piston Assy and Ring Sets.	Rs. 0.89 Crores	01.04.2025
3	KKRTC/2024-25/INDO103/ Call-2 Dtd:03.03.2025	Procurement of Engine Valves, Guides and Inserts.	Rs. 1.71 Crores	01.04.2025
4	KKRTC/2024-25/INDO105/ Call-2 Dtd:03.03.2025	Procurement of Tie Rod, Drag Link And Repair Kits.	Rs. 1.24 Crores	01.04.2025
5	KKRTC/2024-25/INDO124 Dtd:03.03.2025	Procurement of Malleable Components.	Rs. 1.60 Crores	01.04.2025
6	KKRTC/2024-25/INDO125 Dtd:03.03.2025	Procurement of Oil Seals.	Rs. 0.90 Crores	01.04.2025
7	KKRTC/2024-25/INDO126 Dtd:03.03.2025	Procurement of Wiper Arm, Blades and Motor.	Rs. 1.75 Crores	01.04.2025
8	KKRTC/2024-25/INDO127 Dtd:03.03.2025	Procurement of Dash Bard Instruments.	Rs. 2.11 Crores	07.04.2025

All the details of Tender, Registration, Tender form documents etc. are available at <https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in/>. Mail to [cospnekrtd@gmail.com](mailto:cospnekrtd@gmail.com) or [support@eproc2helpdesk.com](mailto:support@eproc2helpdesk.com) for further information if required. Further, any addendum /corrigendum related to changes in terms and conditions of tender, specification and calendar of events etc. will be uploaded only through KPP portal.

**Sd/- Controller of Stores and Purchases**  
(Tender Inviting Authority)  
DIPR/Kalaburagi/1029/KSMC&A/2024-25


epaper.indianexpress.com






GOLD

₹87,900




USD RATE

₹87.32



OIL

\$76.63



SILVER

₹94,860

Note: Gold, silver rates at Mumbai spot market, gold per 10g, silver per 1 kg; Crude oil (Indian basket) per barrel as of February 28

International market data till 1900 IST

GOLD LOANS DOMINATE; RISE IN BUSINESS LOANS

# Number of women seeking retail credit nearly trebles in five years

GEORGE MATHEW  
MUMBAI, MARCH 3

A SIGNIFICANT SURGE in women seeking credit has been reported in the financial system, with a threefold increase in credit demand from women borrowers between 2019 and 2024. The number of women borrowers availing retail credit in India has increased at a compounded annual growth rate (CAGR) of 22 per cent in the last five years ended 2024, according to a report.

This growth reflects a significant shift in financial behaviour, with women increasingly leveraging credit to meet personal and professional goals. Significantly, around 60 per cent of women borrowers who availed credit are from semi-urban or rural areas, the report released by TransUnion Cibil and NITI Aayog said.

Women's share in business loans and gold loans has increased by 14 per cent and 6 per cent, respectively, since 2019. Interestingly, women under 30 account for only 27 per cent of retail credit uptake, compared to 40 per cent for men in the same age group. The number of women opening business loan accounts has grown fourfold over the past six years.

By 2024, 42 per cent of loans

## NEW TRENDS

**WOMEN'S SHARE** in business loans and gold loans has increased by 14 per cent and 6 per cent, respectively, since 2019. **WHILE CREDIT** supply to women in business climbed, majority of loans availed by them are against gold. In 2024, 36 per cent of all loans availed by women were gold loans

**HOWEVER, WOMEN** borrowers continue to face challenges to accessing credit such as credit aversion, poor banking experiences, barriers to credit readiness and constraints around collateral. **CREDIT FOR** personal finance continues to be a major share of loans

availed by women were for personal finance, a slight increase from 39 per cent in 2019.

While credit supply to women in business sectors has improved, the majority of loans availed by women continue to be against gold. In 2024, 36 per cent of all loans availed by women were gold loans, up from 19 per cent in 2019.

The report, jointly published by TransUnion CIBIL, Women Entrepreneurship Platform (WEP) of NITI Aayog, and MicroSave Consulting (MSC), highlights the notable growth in women's participation in credit origination.

## Segment-wise loan uptake

Credit for financing business purpose (business loans, com-

mercial vehicle & commercial equipment loans, loans against property) witnessed about 37 lakh new loan accounts opened by women, with disbursement totalling Rs 1.9 lakh crore. While the number of accounts opened for business purpose has grown 4.6 times since 2019, these loans constitute only 3 per cent of overall loans availed by women borrower in 2024, the report said.

Credit for personal finance needs (personal loans, consumer durable loans, home ownership, vehicle loans) continues to be a major share of loans availed by women.

As many as 4.3 crore such loans of value Rs 4.8 lakh crore were opened. These accounted for 42 per cent of all loans availed by women in 2024, according to

the report.

Gold loans have gained popularity among women borrowers with 4 crore loans of value Rs 4.7 lakh crore accounting for 38 per cent of all loans availed by women borrowers in 2024, a growth of 5.1 times by volume since 2019, it said.

On the growing awareness about credit health among women entrepreneurs, Bhavesh Jain, MD & CEO, TransUnion CIBIL, said: "The number of women self-monitoring their credit information report and score grew by 42 per cent, from 18.94 million in December 2023 to 26.92 million in December 2024. While this is an encouraging trend, this must continue for women to progress from being participants to leaders in India's economic story. Borrowers can make better informed financial decisions by being vigilant about their credit status."

Since 2019, women's share in business loans origination increased by 14 per cent and of gold loans by 6 per cent, the report said.

As of December 2024, women accounted for 35 per cent of business borrowers in India. Despite these encouraging signs of improving credit awareness and credit health, women borrowers continue to face challenges to accessing credit such as credit aversion, poor banking

experiences, barriers to credit readiness and constraints around collateral and guarantors.

## Credit monitoring among women

The report also highlights that the share of women in the total self-monitoring base increased to 19.43 per cent in December 2024, up from 17.89 per cent in December 2023.

As more women enter the workforce or become entrepreneurs, access to formal credit offers them a pathway to further their careers or support their business growth trajectory. Additionally, monitoring their credit helps women borrowers maintain their financial health, secure better loan terms, and protect against identity theft.

According to the Cibil report, additionally, younger, Gen-Z (those born between mid-1990s and mid-2010s) women are leading the way in credit monitoring, with the number in this cohort rising by 56 per cent year-over-year (YoY).

This put their share in the self-monitoring women population at 22 per cent in 2024. The number of Millennial women witnessed a 38 per cent YoY increase leading to a share of 52 per cent among self-monitoring women population for the same period.

TOP US OFFICIAL VISITS INDIA

# Cooperation in critical minerals, academic exchanges on agenda

AGGAM WALIA  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 3

AT A TIME when India and the United States are stepping up the bilateral engagement on critical minerals, a top American official has visited India to operationalise cooperation between the two countries in advancing research in this sector. Dr Tom Lograsso, director of the Critical Materials Innovation Hub, visited Mumbai and Pune during February 24-28 to strengthen research and development (R&D) linkages between India and the US.

The visit comes days after Prime Minister Narendra Modi's trip to Washington on February 13, where India and US launched the Transforming Relationship Utilizing Strategic Technology (TRUST) initiative, which aims to focus on the recovery and processing of critical minerals, including lithium and rare earth elements (REEs).

In addition to the TRUST initiative, the visit also operationalised the Catalyzing Opportunities for Military Partnership, Accelerated Commerce & Technology (COMPACT) initiative, also launched during PM Modi's visit to the US. "Dr Lograsso's visit outlined a clear roadmap for future cooperation, which includes launching a bidirectional student exchange programme and a lab-to-lab agreement between Iowa State University, the Ames National Laboratory's Critical Materials Innovation Hub and Indian institutions," a press release by the US



Dr Tom Lograsso, director of the Critical Materials Innovation Hub at the US Ames National Laboratory, at an event during his India visit. Facebook/ Consulate General Mumbai

Consulate General Mumbai said.

"The visit also included high-level discussions with executives from some of India's leading conglomerates, establishing partnerships to develop and license technologies for more efficient production of critical mineral supply chains to boost prosperity and security," the release added.

The TRUST initiative followed India's induction into the US-led Minerals Security Finance Network in September last year. India joined the Minerals Security Partnership (MSP) in 2023.

Unlike previous multilateral partnerships, however, the TRUST initiative will build on bilateral engagement. It also positions India and the US to accelerate existing efforts, and counter China's dominance in critical minerals supply chains.

The emphasis of the TRUST initiative on reducing barriers to technology transfer, addressing export controls, and enhancing high-tech commerce lays the

groundwork for deeper coordination between India and the US in the critical minerals space.

The India-US collaboration in critical minerals and advanced materials comes after the two countries announced major national programmes over the past few years to boost this sector – from exploration and recycling to research and development (R&D) in processing technologies. In 2020, the US Energy Act authorised \$675 million for the Critical Minerals and Materials (CMM) programme to diversify and expand supply chains and build a circular economy.

The US also launched the Battery and Critical Mineral Recycling programme in 2024, with grants worth \$125 million for R&D to increase the reuse and recycling of batteries.

And in January, India approved the National Critical Minerals Mission with a budgetary outlay of Rs 16,300 crore over seven years, of which roughly Rs 7,000 crore is allocated for exploration of critical minerals.

## BRIEFLY

### Railway PSUs IRCTC, IRFC get Navratna status

New Delhi: The Centre has approved the upgradation of IRCTC and IRFC to Navratna Central Public Sector Enterprises on Monday, an official statement said, adding that with this all seven listed railway PSUs have achieved the same status now. PTI

### ED sends notice to Paytm in FEMA case

New Delhi: The Enforcement Directorate on Monday said it has issued a notice to Paytm's parent company, its MD and linked entities for "contravention" of FEMA involving Rs 611 crore. According to Paytm's FY24 annual report, Vijay Shekhar Sharma, is its CMD and CEO. A Paytm spokesperson said the company was working to resolve the matter in accordance with applicable laws and regulatory processes. PTI

### India's February factory PMI slips to of 56.3

New Delhi: The seasonally adjusted HSBC India Manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) registered 56.3 in February, down from 57.7 in January, but remained firmly within the 'expansionary' territory. PTI

### Relevance of gold as asset class to rise, says CEA

New Delhi: Gold will remain relevant for investors as a portfolio diversification mechanism with a "likely ascending importance" as an asset class in the coming years, Chief Economic Advisor V Anantha Nageswaran said. PTI

### Jio Platforms announces Open Telco AI grouping

Barcelona: Jio Platforms Ltd, announced plans to form an Open Telecom AI Platform, together with AMD, Cisco, and Nokia, at the Mobile World Congress 2025. ENS

## WHY CRYPTO PRICES ARE RISING

# Trump reiterates focus on virtual digital assets, backs 5 coins for 'crypto reserve'

SOUMYARENDRA BARIK  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 3

AFTER TALKING about creating a "strategic reserve" of cryptocurrencies during his presidential bid last year, Donald Trump has for the first time announced five virtual coins he plans to include in the US reserve stockpile—a move which has given a booster shot to the crypto trading market, helping it upend the downward trajectory it seemed to be headed on over concerns around Trump's uncertain trade decisions.

The market prices of the five coins he named—Bitcoin, Ethereum, XRP, Solana and Cardano—all swiftly jumped after the announcement. In a post on his social media site Truth Social, US President Trump said, "A US Crypto Reserve will elevate this critical industry after years of corrupt attacks by the Biden Administration, which is why my Executive Order on Digital Assets directed the Presidential Working Group to move forward on a Crypto Strategic Reserve that includes XRP, SOL, and ADA. I will make sure the US is the Crypto Capital of the World".

Around an hour later came another post from Trump: "And, obviously, BTC and ETH, as other valuable Cryptocurrencies, will be



The market prices of Bitcoin, Ethereum, XRP, Solana and Cardano swiftly rose after Trump's announcement. Reuters

the heart of the Reserve. I also love Bitcoin and Ethereum".

Despite the rise, fall and rise in crypto prices, concerns remain around the volatility, and potential for perpetuating fraud through cryptocurrencies. Last month, Argentina's President Javier Milei promoted a crypto meme coin — Libra — on his social media platform, only for the currency to implode in a few hours, which saw him backtracking, retail investors losing out, but promoters of the coin cashing tens of millions of dollars. Milei, who claimed to have no connection with the coin or its promoters, joined the list of world leaders like Trump to get associated with promoting meme coins.

## Trump's post boosts cryptocurrencies

Last Friday, Bitcoin fell below

\$80,000 for the first time since November 2024 (after it crossed \$100,000 for the first time ever in December), wiping out nearly all post-election gains, primarily due to economic uncertainty over President Trump's tariff wars with countries around the world.

Trump's posts, however, marked a new upward turn for crypto prices. Bitcoin was up more than 8 per cent, trading over \$90,000, while Ethereum was up more than 10% per cent trading at over \$2,000. Other virtual currencies mentioned by Trump gained much more—XRP jumped close to 25 per cent, Solana spiked over 18 per cent, and Cardano ballooned by close to 60 per cent.

As of now, it is unclear how the strategic crypto reserve will work, but clarity is expected later

this week when Trump hosts the first Crypto Summit at the White House, expected to take place on Friday.

## Crypto on the move

The crypto market has picked up since Trump won the US presidential elections, responding to signals that he could go easy on the virtual currency.

It was also anticipated that Trump having Tesla and SpaceX founder Elon Musk — who has long been an advocate for cryptocurrency — as a key adviser could further bolster investors' belief in bitcoin and other digital virtual assets, even if concerns around conflict of interest remain.

Trump's pick to lead the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), Paul Atkins, is widely considered a cryptocurrency advocate.

The agency has also recently dropped multiple investigations and lawsuits against cryptocurrency firms over alleged securities violations.

Among them are probes against discount brokerage firm Robinhood and crypto exchange operator Coinbase. Robinhood CEO Vlad Tenev had earlier said that he made a \$2 million donation to Trump's inaugural campaign fund.



File

"Going forward, we will reinvest in frontline resources, including our expanded network. We remain committed to strengthening both our infrastructure and workforce," the company had said at the time.

Ola has been focusing on improving gross margins and optimising costs while expanding its product lineup, including e-motorcycles and e-scooters aimed at gig workers. Its share of the electric two-wheeler market more than halved from 52 per

cent in April, 2024 to 19 per cent by December, 2024. This was partly due to rising customer complaints over poor after-sales service and partly due to launches by competitors.

After months of decline, the company reclaimed the top spot in India's E2W market in January overtaking TVS Motor and Bajaj Auto, selling 24,353 units to secure 25 per cent market share. However, in February, it sold only 8,647 units, capturing an 11 per cent market share, shows Vahan data. The company, however, claims to have sold over 25,000 units in February, with a 28 per cent market share. Ola had earlier informed the stock exchanges it is renegotiating contracts with vehicle registration agencies to cut costs and improve efficiency, which may have impacted its February data on Vahan portal. FE

# Race to secure copper: Decoding recent moves by India, China, US

AGGAM WALIA  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 3

ON FEBRUARY 27, the government announced the securing of a 9,000-sq-km block to explore copper and cobalt in a region in Zambia known for high-grade deposits. With production in domestic mines faltering, the project is a crucial step for India to establish overseas mining operations.

On February 25, the White House warned in a fact sheet on "threat to national security from imports of copper" that the "overreliance on foreign copper" could "jeopardise US defense capabilities, infrastructure development, and technological innovation".

On February 17, Bloomberg reported that with supply of copper ore tightening, China is moving to rein in smelting overcapacity — companies looking to build new smelters must secure long-term contracts with copper mines, many of which are in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Chile, and Peru. China controls half of the world's smelting and refining capacity.



## Why mining matters

With the demand for copper, led by electric vehicle (EV) batteries and clean energy technologies, projected to outstrip supply from mines by 2035, countries such as India, China, and the US are scrambling to secure supply chains and strengthen domestic capabilities. The race for copper will only intensify over the next decade.

In the copper value chain, ore is processed into concentrate, smelted into anode, and refined into cathode — this is essential to produce rods, sheets, wires, and other industrial inputs.

While more recycling and alternative battery chemistries could ease pressure on primary supply, mining remains critical to meeting global demand.

## India's overseas focus

Copper is listed as a critical mineral in India. Domestic ore production in 2023-24 was 3.78



Copper demand, led by EV batteries and clean energy tech, may outstrip supply from mines by 2035. Reuters

million tonnes (mt), 8 per cent lower than in 2018-19. Between April and January in the current financial year, ore production by government-owned Hindustan Copper Ltd (HCL), the sole domestic copper miner, was 6 per cent lower year-on-year.

Due to stagnant domestic ore production, India's copper concentrate imports have doubled in value terms to Rs 26,000 crore in 2023-24 from 2018-19.

While India has large copper deposits, they require extensive exploration before mining can commence. Globally it takes up to 17 years on average to operationalise a copper mine.

To meet demand in the short term, India has been looking to secure both greenfield and brownfield mineral assets in copper-rich countries such as Zambia, Chile, and the DRC.

Deposits in these countries are typically of higher grade than in India — and because of their extensive focus on mining, projects could develop faster.

However, investments in overseas mineral assets carry significant geopolitical risks.

## Spotlight on Africa

The share of Africa in the production of critical minerals such as copper, lithium, and natural graphite is rising. "The continent already accounts for 70 per cent of global cobalt production and 16 per cent of global copper production... The DRC is on course to become the world's second-largest copper supplier by 2030," the International Energy Agency (IEA) said in a report last year.

India has got the 9,000-sq-km block in Zambia's Northwestern province on a government-to-government basis. The Geological Survey of India (GSI) will explore the land, which is roughly six times the

size of Delhi. In the neighbouring Copperbelt province, the Vedanta Group owns a large copper mine.

Zambia is the seventh largest producer of copper in the world. (Chile, Peru and DRC are numbers 1, 2, and 3 respectively.) Canada-based First Quantum Minerals and China's state-owned Nonferrous Metal Mining are among the largest producers of copper in the country. India's Ministry of Mines is working through nodal officers in the DRC, Tanzania, Mozambique, and Rwanda to acquire more critical mineral assets for exploration, but competition from other countries will remain fierce.

## China and Trump

On February 25, President Donald Trump signed an executive order to launch an investigation into "how copper imports threaten America's national security and economic stability".

The White House fact sheet noted that "Copper plays a vital role in defense applications, infrastructure, and emerging technologies like clean energy, electric vehicles, and advanced electronics", and is the "Defense Department's second-most utilized material". Despite ample copper reserves, however, "America's smelting and refining capacity lags behind global competitors like China, which controls over 50 per cent of global smelting", and the US does not figure in the top five countries in copper smelting capacity, the fact sheet said. The probe, it said, would identify the "vulnerabilities in the [US] copper supply chain", and recommend potential tariffs, export controls, and incentives to raise production and "enhance the resilience of America's domestic copper industry". FULL REPORT ON

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# After successful private landing on Moon, more missions to follow

AMITABH SINHA  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 3

AN AMERICAN private space company called Firefly Aerospace successfully landed its spacecraft on the Moon on Sunday, the first of several arrivals that the lunar surface is expecting this year.

Firefly's Blue Ghost mission is the second time that a private space company has landed on the Moon, after Intuitive Machines' Odysseus spacecraft achieved this feat last year.

NASA is currently facilitating a host of private missions to the Moon, as it tries to build a larger ecosystem of space transportation companies in anticipation of more frequent travels to the celestial body in the coming years.

## Probing the Moon

The first rounds of the private space mis-

sions are carrying a variety of scientific instruments, mostly those of NASA, to further understanding of the Moon's surface and its surroundings.

Blue Ghost has taken 10 instruments that will test robotic drilling technology, carry out studies of the surface and sub-surface characteristics, and explore dust mitigation methods, among other things. These will be operational for roughly one lunar day — or about 14 Earth days.

On March 14, the mission is hoping to capture high-definition images of a solar eclipse on the Moon, with the Earth slated to come between its satellite and the Sun. The Blue Ghost mission does not have a rover to move around on the Moon's surface, meaning that the payloads deployed from the lander will remain static.

The spacecraft has landed some 20 degrees north of the lunar equator, on the side

of the Moon that always faces Earth. The site is known to have been hit by a large asteroid about three billion years ago.

## Commercial private operators

Firefly is the third private operator to have sent a Moon mission under a special NASA program called Commercial Lunar Payload Services (CLPS). More than a dozen space companies have been contracted by NASA so far to carry out scientific sorties to the Moon.

Although NASA will likely be sending the majority of the payloads in these missions, the companies are free to take payloads of other parties such as universities, research institutions, private corporations, and even other countries.

CLPS is aimed at expediting the exploration of the Moon, and building capacities in

the private sector to undertake complex space missions. This is part of NASA's larger, and more ambitious, Artemis program that aims to establish a long-term human presence on the Moon, exploit its natural resources, and use it as a base for further exploration of deep space.

The first flight to Moon under the CLPS initiative was launched in January last year, with Astrobotic Technologies sending its Peregrine mission. The mission could not reach the Moon due to technical problems.

Intuitive Machines' Odysseus spacecraft, launched just a month later, became the first private mission to reach the Moon, although its landing was not perfect. The spacecraft was unable to slow down adequately before landing, and at least one of its landing legs broke on impact. But it still managed to stay

upright, and relayed data back to the control station.

Sunday's landing of the Black Ghost mission was almost flawless, which prompted Firefly Aerospace to claim that it had become the first private company to "successfully" land on the Moon.

The missions carried out so far have been fairly straightforward, but future missions plan to have rovers and return modules as well.

## Heavy traffic to the Moon

The entry of private operators ensures a greater frequency of trips to the Moon, and consequently the deployment of a larger number of scientific instruments. Even as Blue Ghost landed on Sunday, the next CLPS mission is already on its way with Intuitive Missions launching its Athena spacecraft on February 26. Athena is supposed to land at the relatively unexplored southern pole of

the Moon on March 6.

A Japanese private mission is also on its way to the Moon right now. The Hakuto-R Mission 2, by a company called ispace Inc, was launched by the same SpaceX rocket as Blue Ghost in a unique double Moonshot on January 15. It is taking a different, more energy-efficient route to the Moon, and is scheduled to land in May or June.

Japan's first and only successful Moon landing mission, called SLIM, had also taken a similar extended route last year. Hakuto-R has a lander called Resilience and a rover called Micro. Hakuto-R's first mission in 2023 had been unsuccessful.

There could be a few more Moon landings this year, though their schedules are not firmed up yet. Astrobotic Technologies has planned to send its mission later this year, and Intuitive Machines might also launch its third mission, IM-3, by the year-end.

# Mamata claims voter fraud:

## Can two electors have identical EPIC numbers?

DAMINI NATH  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 3

WEST BENGAL Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee has raised concerns over the integrity of the electoral roll.

Flagging several instances of electors having identical Electors Photo Identity Card (EPIC) numbers, the Trinamool Congress chief last week accused the BJP of using the Election Commission of India to create fake voters for next year's Assembly elections in West Bengal.

The ECI on Sunday accepted that some electors do have identical EPIC numbers, but maintained that this does not imply the existence of "fake voters".



Mamata during a party meeting in Kolkata on February 27. Partha Paul

## What are EPICs? How are they allotted?

The Registration of Electors Rules, 1960 provides for an Electors Photo Identity Card to be issued to all electors in order to prevent impersonation. State governments began issuing EPICs from 1993 onwards.

The EPIC is only an identity document. It does not give the holder the right to vote, which is only available to those whose names are in the electoral roll of their constituency. An EPIC contains an elector's name, age, residence and any particulars specified by the ECI; a photograph of the elector; and the facsimile signature of the registration officer.

As per the ECI's Manual on Electoral Rolls, 2023, "every EPIC is issued under a unique EPIC Number" — an alphanumeric series with three alphabetical codes followed by a seven-digit number. This number includes a Functional Unique Serial Number (FUSN) for each Assembly constituency.

Starting in 2017, EPICs have been issued using the ECI's ERONET portal. The 2023 manual says that "a unique EPIC Number is allotted to every elector" whenever she is first issued an EPIC. This number remains constant even if a replacement identity document is issued at a later stage.

## So what is the TMC's allegation, and how has the ECI responded?

The TMC has said that many electors have the same EPIC number, alleging that

the BJP and EC were adding fake voters to West Bengal's electoral rolls.

"After Maharashtra and Delhi, now you (BJP) are targeting Bengal. We will give you a befitting reply. Once again 'khela hobe'," Mamata said at a TMC event in Kolkata last week, recalling her war cry, "the game will be on", of the last election.

The TMC on Monday doubled down on this allegation, saying that non-residents were being brought into West Bengal to cast their vote using duplicated EPIC numbers.

The ECI on Sunday said that while there were indeed duplicate EPIC numbers, this did not mean the existence of fake voters. It said that before the ERONET platform was introduced, different states were using the same alphanumeric series for the EPIC cards issued by them.

This allowed for duplication of EPIC numbers, although other details on the identity document — name, address, constituency and polling booth — would be different.

According to the ECI, "irrespective of the EPIC number, any elector can cast a vote only at their designated polling station in their respective Constituency in their State/UT where they are enrolled in the electoral roll and nowhere else".

The Commission assured the duplication would be rectified soon. ECI sources said that new EPIC numbers would be issued to those with numbers that have been duplicated.



HARISH DAMODARAN

INDIA'S AGRICULTURE exports have risen 6.5%, from \$35.2 billion in April-December 2023 to \$37.5 billion in April-December 2024. That's more than the 1.9% overall increase in the country's merchandise exports for this period.

That said, the difference is even starker in imports. While India's total goods imports during April-December 2024 were 7.4% up over April-December 2023, there was an 18.7% rise in imports of farm produce (from \$24.6 billion to \$29.3 billion) for the same period.

The agricultural trade surplus has thus reduced from \$10.6 billion in April-December 2023-24 to \$8.2 billion for the corresponding nine months of the current fiscal (April-March).

## Narrowing surplus

India is a net agri-commodities exporter, with the value of its outward shipments consistently exceeding imports (see *chart*).

However, the trade surplus, which peaked at \$27.7 billion in 2013-14, shrunk to \$8.1 billion by 2016-17. It rose thereafter to \$20.2 billion in 2020-21, before falling to \$16 billion in 2023-24. It is set to further decline this fiscal.

The expansion or narrowing of the surplus has largely to do with exports.

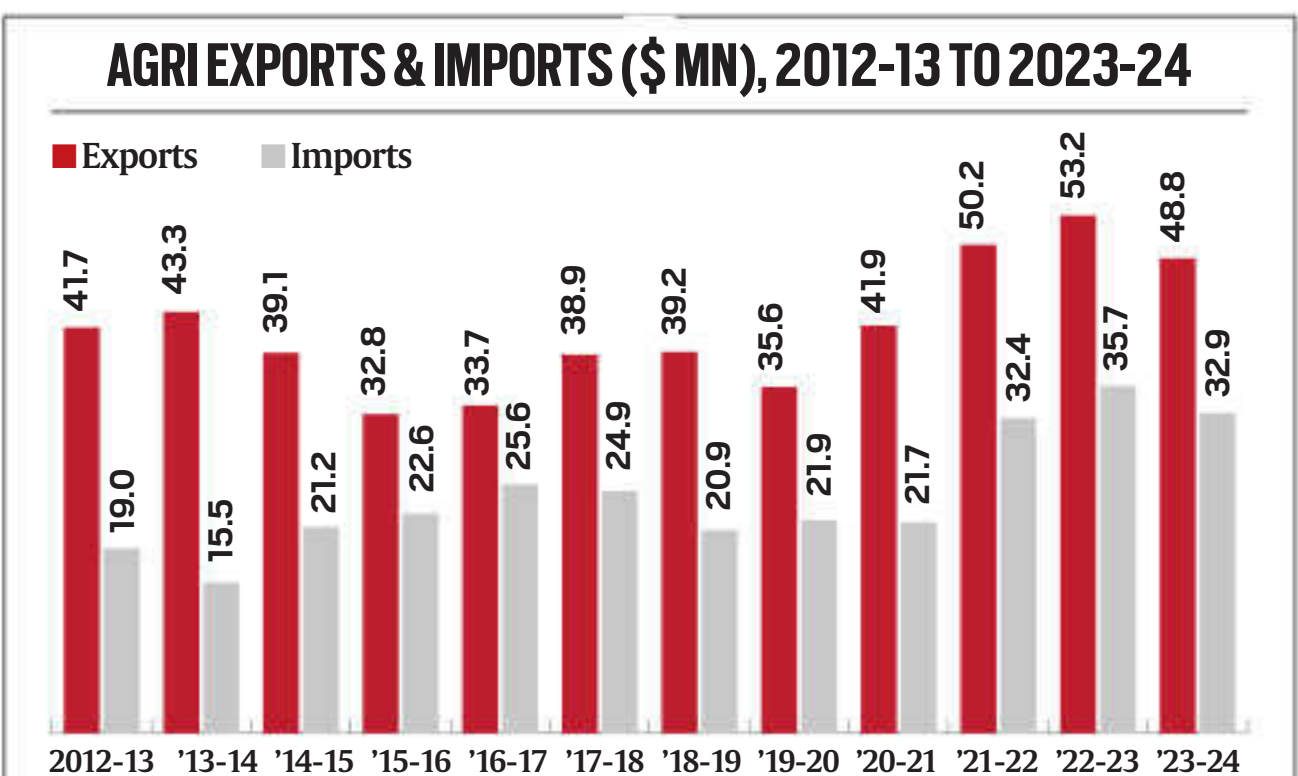
These dipped during the initial years of the Narendra Modi-led government, from \$43.3 billion in 2013-14 to \$35.6 billion in 2019-20, even as imports climbed from \$15.5 billion to \$21.9 billion. This was linked to a crash in international commodity prices.

The UN Food and Agriculture Organization's (FAO) food price index (base period: 2014-16=100) plunged from an average of 119.1 to 96.4 points between 2013-14 and 2019-20. Low world prices made India's agricultural exports less cost competitive, and its farmers more vulnerable to cheaper imports.

But the supply disruptions post the Covid-19 pandemic and the Russian invasion of Ukraine led to a global price recovery. As the benchmark FAO index soared to an average of 133.1 in 2021-22 and 140.6 points in 2022-23, India's agri exports surged to \$50.2 billion and \$53.2 billion in these respective years. With the index easing somewhat after that, to 121.5 in 2023-24 and 123.4 in 2024-25 (April-January), exports, too, have come off their all-time-highs.

## Drivers of exports

The accompanying *tables* show India's top agricultural export and import items by dollar value.



TOP EXPORTS (\$ MN)				
	2022-23	2023-24	Apr-Dec 2023	Apr-Dec 2024
Marine products	8,077.98	7,372.00	5,852.32	5,678.65
Basmati rice	4,787.65	5,843.30	3,971.13	4,322.59
Non-basmati rice	6,356.71	4,573.41	3,347.46	4,404.98
Spices	3,785.36	4,248.56	2,909.24	3,158.63
Buffalo meat	3,193.69	3,743.26	2,758.42	2,927.14
Tobacco	1,213.39	1,449.54	1,110.56	1,530.59
Sugar	5,770.83	2,824.74	1,990.20	1,476.44
Fruits & Vegetables	1,791.05	2,037.58	1,362.94	1,348.73
Processed F&V	1,417.59	1,624.22	1,149.56	1,324.20
Coffee	1,146.18	1,286.28	876.84	1,247.06
Oil meals	1,601.72	1,713.98	1,227.04	1,017.14
Oilseeds	1,337.69	1,437.02	1,031.50	1,009.38
Castor oil	1,265.64	1,071.55	771.40	854.52
Raw cotton	781.43	1,116.52	626.29	575.74
Wheat	1,520.46	56.74	35.35	1.44
Other cereals	1,194.07	517.79	454.60	191.29
TOTAL	53,153.55	48,821.67	35,195.24	37,479.83

TOP IMPORTS (\$ MN)				
	2022-23	2023-24	Apr-Dec 2023	Apr-Dec 2024
Vegetable oils	20,837.7	14,871.66	11,638.03	13,518.96
Pulses	1,943.89	3,746.78	2,467.93	3,789.75
Fresh fruits	2,483.95	2,734.97	2,032.64	2,230.2
Cashew	1,805.67	1,431.39	1,193.04	1,414.36
Spices	1,336.65	1,455.57	1,123.81	1,220.61
Raw cotton	1,438.69	598.66	498.81	918.69
Natural rubber	937.6	739.18	554.15	875.7
TOTAL	35,686.2	32,870.03	24,641.45	29,251.41

Source: Department of Commerce

The No. 1 export commodity, marine products, has registered a drop from \$7.8 billion in 2021-22 and \$8.1 billion in 2022-23 to \$7.4 billion in 2023-24. The fall has persisted in the ongoing fiscal as well.

India's marine exports — of which frozen

shrimp accounts for roughly two-thirds — are mainly to the US (34.5% share in 2023-24), China (19.6%), and the European Union (14%). With the US being the biggest market, any move by President Donald Trump to impose tariffs can further hurt Indian seafood exports.

# Why olive ridleys came to Odisha nesting ground in larger numbers this year

SUJIT BISOIYI & ALIND CHAUHAN  
BHUBANESWAR, NEW DELHI, MARCH 3

OLIVE RIDLEY turtles returned to the Rushikulya rookery in Odisha's Ganjam district for a 10-day mass nesting event last month after having stayed away last year.

Nearly seven lakh olive ridleys laid eggs at the nesting ground between February 16 and February 25. The number of turtles was more than in 2023, when around 6.37 lakh laid eggs in the same stretch of the Odisha coast.

## Olive green shells

Olive ridleys (*Lepidochelys olivacea*) are among the smallest and most abundant of all sea turtles, which inhabit warm waters of the Pacific, Atlantic, and Indian oceans.

Individuals of the species, which gets its name from the characteristic heart-shaped, olive green shells, can grow to about two

feet in length, and weigh around 50 kg. The turtles reach maturity around age 14, and like other sea turtles, are likely long-lived.

## Mass nesting behaviour

These marine reptiles are best known for their unique mass nesting, known as *arribada*, Spanish for "arrival" — thousands of females swarm at the same beach to lay eggs.

*Arribada* nesting behaviour is typical of the genus *Lepidochelys*, which includes the Kemp's ridley and olive ridley sea turtles.

More than 600,000 females could typically emerge from the sea over a period of five to seven days to lay eggs in one-and-a-half-foot-deep conical nests that they dig in the beach sand with their hind flippers.

## Biggest nesting in Odisha

*Arribada* nesting is seen only at a few beaches. The largest olive ridley mass nesting sites are at Rushikulya and Gahirmatha



Female olive ridleys on the beach in Rushikulya in Ganjam district last month. Video grab/Express

(in Kendrapara district) in Odisha, followed by beaches in Mexico and Costa Rica. Experts say Rushikulya and Gahirmatha make for ideal mass nesting sites due to favourable weather conditions, warm sandy beaches, and an undisturbed coastal ecosystem.

Marine scientist Pratap Mohanty of Dharanidhar University, Keonjhar, who

studied the nesting behaviour of the turtles when he was with the Department of Marine Sciences at Berhampur University, said the mass nesting at Rushikulya mostly occurs to the north of the Rushikulya river mouth — where conditions in the nearshore water and beach sand are favourable both before and during the nesting event.



The turtles prefer beaches with a mild slope, medium width, and a greater percentage of medium sand with low salinity, Prof Mohanty said. "Lower wind speed, low to moderate waves, and moderate south-westward current before nesting are conducive for the turtles to inhabit the coastal waters in large numbers. During the mass nesting, enhancement in wind speed generates relatively higher wave height, helping the sea turtles to move to the beach," he said.

## Larger numbers this year

The Odisha coast typically witnesses *arribada* in the first quarter of the year. The arrivals in large numbers this year could be due to several factors, experts said.

Sunny Khokhar, a divisional forest officer in Berhampur, said absence of rain this February would have meant less erosion, creating sufficient space near the river mouth for the turtles to nest in large numbers.

"A second reason is the beach gradient, the slope of a beach from the top to the water's edge, which is less this year compared to previous years," Khokhar said.

Basudev Tripathy, a senior scientist at the Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) in Pune, agreed that Rushikulya beach provided enough space for large numbers of olive ridleys this year. Gahirmatha too, might witness mass nesting soon, Dr Tripathy said.

The fact that the nesting had taken place in mid-February could help more eggs to hatch, Dr Tripathy said. "The eggs will hatch around 50 days from now. Fewer eggs will be lost due to high temperatures and coastal erosion. The later the nesting takes place, the more the eggs that are lost to erosion, which intensifies in April," he said.

Asked about the absence of *arribada* in 2024, Dr Tripathy said: "In some years, sea turtles do skip nesting. We do not know the exact reason for this."



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Chaudhary Devi Lal University, Sirsa

Applications on the prescribed form or nominations with bio-data of the candidate are invited for the position of Vice Chancellor of Chaudhary Devi Lal University, Sirsa. Applicant or the nominated person should be an Indian national, a reputed academician (minimum 10 years experience as Professor or equivalent in a reputed organization) with administrative experience and leadership qualities. In addition, the person should possess high level of capability, honesty and institutional commitment so as to achieve excellence in all spheres.

Availability of application form: [www.highereduhry.com](http://www.highereduhry.com)  
Applications or nominations to be sent at: [applicationve123@gmail.com](mailto:applicationve123@gmail.com)  
Last date for receipt of applications or nominations: 15.03.2025.

Director  
Department of Higher Education, Haryana  
Shiksha Sadan, Sector-5, Panchkula

Department of Higher Education,  
Haryana

Advertisement for the position of Vice Chancellor,  
Bhagat Phool Singh Mahila Vishwavidyalaya  
Khanpur Kalan (Sonapat)

Applications on the prescribed form or nominations with bio-data of the candidate are invited for the position of Vice Chancellor of Bhagat Phool Singh Mahila Vishwavidyalaya Khanpur Kalan (Sonapat). Applicant or the nominated person should be an Indian national, a reputed academician (minimum 10 years experience as Professor or equivalent in a reputed organization) with administrative experience and leadership qualities. In addition, the person should possess high level of capability, honesty and institutional commitment so as to achieve excellence in all spheres. Preference will be given to women applicants.

Availability of application form: [www.highereduhry.com](http://www.highereduhry.com)  
Applications or nominations to be sent at: [applicationve123@gmail.com](mailto:applicationve123@gmail.com)  
Last date for receipt of applications or nominations: 15-03-2025

Director General  
Department of Higher Education, Haryana  
Shiksha Sadan, Sector-5, Panchkula

Department of Higher Education,  
Haryana

Advertisement for the position of Vice Chancellor,  
Indira Gandhi University, Meerpur (Rewari)

Applications on the prescribed form or nominations with bio-data of the candidate are invited for the position of Vice Chancellor of Indira Gandhi University, Meerpur (Rewari). Applicant or the nominated person should be an Indian national, a reputed academician (minimum 10 years experience as Professor or equivalent in a reputed organization) with administrative experience and leadership qualities. In addition, the person should possess high level of capability, honesty and institutional commitment so as to achieve excellence in all spheres.

Availability of application form: [www.highereduhry.com](http://www.highereduhry.com)  
Applications or nominations to be sent at: [applicationve123@gmail.com](mailto:applicationve123@gmail.com)  
Last date for receipt of applications or nominations: 15.03.2025

Director  
Department of Higher Education, Haryana  
Shiksha Sadan, Sector-5, Panchkula

Department of Higher Education,  
Haryana

Advertisement for the position of Vice Chancellor,  
Chaudhary Ranbir Singh University, Jind

Applications on the prescribed form or nominations with bio-data of the candidate are invited for the position of Vice Chancellor of Chaudhary Ranbir Sing University, Jind. Applicant or the nominated person should be an Indian national. reputed academician (minimum 10 years experience as Professor or equivalent in reputed organization) with administrative experience and leadership qualities. addition, the person should possess high level of capability, honesty and institution commitment so as to achieve excellence in all spheres.

Availability of application form: [www.highereduhry.com](http://www.highereduhry.com)  
Applications or nominations to be sent at: [applicationve123@gmail.com](mailto:applicationve123@gmail.com)  
Last date for receipt of applications or nominations: 15.03.2025

Director  
Department of Higher Education, Haryana  
Shiksha Sadan, Sector-5, Panchkula

Department of Higher Education,  
Haryana

Advertisement for the position of Vice Chancellor,  
Dr. B.R. Ambedkar National Law University, Rai (Sonipat)

Applications on the prescribed form or nominations with bio-data of the candidate are invited for the position of Vice Chancellor of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar National Law University, Rai (Sonipat). Applicant or the nominated person should be an Indian national, a reputed academician (minimum 10 years experience as Professor or equivalent in a reputed organization) with administrative experience and leadership qualities. In addition, the person should possess high level of capability, honesty and institutional commitment so as to achieve excellence in all spheres.

Availability of application form: [www.highereduhry.com](http://www.highereduhry.com)  
Applications or nominations to be sent at: [applicationve123@gmail.com](mailto:applicationve123@gmail.com)  
Last date for receipt of applications or nominations: 15.03.2025

Director General  
Department of Higher Education, Haryana  
Shiksha Sadan, Sector-5, Panchkula

Department of Higher Education,  
Haryana

Advertisement for the position of Vice Chancellor,  
Gurugram University Gurugram

Applications on the prescribed form or nominations with bio-data of the candidate are invited for the position of Vice Chancellor of Gurugram University Gurugram. Applicant or the nominated person should be an Indian national, a reputed academician (minimum 10 years experience as Professor or equivalent in a reputed organization) with administrative experience and leadership qualities. In addition, the person should possess high level of capability, honesty and institutional commitment so as to achieve excellence in all spheres.

Availability of application form: [www.highereduhry.com](http://www.highereduhry.com)  
Applications or nominations to be sent at: [applicationve123@gmail.com](mailto:applicationve123@gmail.com)  
Last date for receipt of applications or nominations: 15.03.2025

Director  
Department of Higher Education, Haryana  
Shiksha Sadan, Sector-5, Panchkula

Department of Higher Education,  
Haryana

Advertisement for the position of Vice Chancellor,  
Maharshi Valmiki Sanskrit University, Kaithal

Applications on the prescribed form or nominations with bio-data of the candidate are invited for the position of Vice Chancellor of Maharshi Valmiki Sanskrit University, Kaithal. Applicant or the nominated person should be an Indian national. a reputed academician (minimum 10 years experience as Professor or equivalent in a reputed organization) with administrative experience and leadership qualities. In addition, the person should possess high level of capability, honesty and institutional commitment so as to achieve excellence in all spheres. Preference will be given to an eminent Sanskrit scholar devoted to deliver for the cause of upliftment of Sanskrit language and literature.

Availability of application form: [www.highereduhry.com](http://www.highereduhry.com)  
Applications or nominations to be sent at: [applicationve123@gmail.com](mailto:applicationve123@gmail.com)  
Last date for receipt of applications or nominations: 15.03.2025

Director General  
Department of Higher Education, Haryana  
Shiksha Sadan, Sector-5, Panchkula

**NORTHERN RAILWAY**  
**Invitation of Tenders through E-Procurement System**  
Principal Chief Materials Manager, Northern Railway, New Delhi-110001, for and on behalf of the President of India, invites e-tenders through e-procurement system for supply of the following items:-

S. No.	Tender No.	Brief Description	Qty.	Closing Date
1.	092522224	AIR BRAKE HOSE COUPLING SUPPORT	34966 Nos	24.03.2025

**Note:-** 1. Vendors may visit the IREPS website i.e. [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in) for details. 2. No manual offer will be entertained.

**Tender Notice No.: 102/2024-2025 Dated: 03.03.2025 681/2025**

**SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE**

**भारतीय रिज़र्व बैंक**  
**RESERVE BANK OF INDIA**  
[www.rbi.org.in](http://www.rbi.org.in)

**Premises Department, Central Office, Mumbai**  
**Notice inviting Expression of Interest**

Reserve Bank of India invites Expression of Interest (Eoi) from Construction Agencies/Companies/Firms for empanelment of prospective Design and Build (DB) Developers for the Bank's Construction Projects on Design-Build basis under categories upto ₹300 cr, ₹300 cr to ₹600 cr, ₹600 cr to ₹1000 cr & ₹1000 cr to ₹1600 cr.

For full details as well as for downloading the Eoi document/Application form, please visit our website at [www.rbi.org.in](http://www.rbi.org.in) under the link Tenders and [www.dgciiscl.org.in](http://www.dgciiscl.org.in) under the link of Indian Trade Journal. The Eoi document will be available for downloading from February 26, 2025 to March 12, 2025.

The last date for submission of duly filled applications is March 12, 2025 upto 03:00 PM. Further information/corrigendum/addendum if any, will be uploaded on the Bank's website and will not be published in any newspaper.

The Bank reserves the right to reject any or all the applications for this Eoi.

**Mumbai Chief General Manager-in-Charge**

**"Don't get cheated by E-mails/SMSs/Calls promising you money."**

**कार्यालय प्रधानाचार्य, राजकीय चिकित्सा महाविद्यालय, कोटा**  
फोन/फैक्स: E-Mail: [principalpmck@gmail.com](mailto:principalpmck@gmail.com)

क्रमांक: एक ( ) वि.महा./लेखा/काय/एम.टी.एस./2024-25/32 दिनांक: 17/02/2025

**ऑनलाइन बोली सूचना संख्या**  
(20/2024-25) (ई-उपपत्र)  
बुकीएन. संख्या CMK2425SL0800290

राजस्थान के राज्यपाल महोदय की और से राजकीय चिकित्सा महाविद्यालय, कोटा को निम्नांकित सेवा की आपूर्ति हेतु अनुपत्री इच्छुक अभिकृत आपूर्तिकर्ताओं से ई-उपपत्र पद्धति से खुली प्रतियोगी बोलीयाँ आमंत्रित की जाती है:-

क्र. सं.	कार्य का नाम	पद का नाम एवं योग्यता	अनुमानित मूल्य	बोली प्रतिपूर्ति राशि	बोली पर मूल्य	आर.आई.एस. एल. प्रक्रिया शुल्क
1	सर्वेदक के माध्यम से चिकित्सा महाविद्यालय, कोटा में दिनांक 28.02.2025 के लिए राजस्व सरकार द्वारा निर्धारित जेपी अंकुशाल कार्यालय की सेवा उपपत्र का कार्य:-	मॉल टाक वॉकर (सैक्रेडरी एवं सैक्रेडरी वॉकर से प्राप्त)	3.00 करोड़	6,00,000/-	5000/-	2000/-

क्र.सं.	विवरण	दिनांक	समय
1.	बोली एल.पी.सी.पी. पर प्रकाशन दिनांक	18-02-2025	प्रातः 10-00 बजे
2.	बोली ई-प्रक्रिये में पेंडिंग पर प्रकाशन की दिनांक व समय	18-02-2025	प्रातः 10-00 बजे
3.	बोली ई-प्रक्रिये में पेंडिंग पर प्रकाशन की दिनांक व समय	18-02-2025	प्रातः 10-00 बजे
4.	बोली ई-प्रक्रिये में पेंडिंग पर प्रकाशन की दिनांक व समय	10-03-2025	सोम 05-00 बजे तक
5.	राजकीय बोली खोलने की दिनांक व समय	11-03-2025	दोपहर 02-00 बजे

1. बोली प्रपत्र शुल्क व बोली प्रतिपूर्ति राशि ई-चालान जो कार्यालय प्रधानाचार्य, मेडिकल कॉलेज कोटा के पक्ष में एवं आर.आई.एस.एल. प्रक्रिया शुल्क एम.डी. राजकीय इन्फो सर्विसेज लि. (आर.आई.एस.एल.) के पक्ष में देय हो। बोली खोलने से पूर्व कार्यदायक के दौरान ई-चालान की प्रति कार्यालय की Email ID- [principalpmck@gmail.com](mailto:principalpmck@gmail.com) पर अनिवार्य रूप से प्रस्तुत करना होगा अन्यथा बोलीदाता द्वारा प्रस्तुत बोली पर विचार नहीं किया जायेगा।

2. बोलीदाता को वेबसाइट <http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in> पर ऑनलाइन बोली प्रक्रिया में भाग लेने हेतु सूचना प्रौद्योगिकी एक्ट 2000 के अन्तर्गत पंजीकृत एवं डिजिटल सिग्नेचर सर्टिफिकेट होना आवश्यक है।

3. बोली आमंत्रण सूचना एवं प्रपत्र वेबसाइट [www.sppp.raj.nic.in](http://www.sppp.raj.nic.in) एवं <http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in> एवं विभागीय वेबसाइट पर भी देखे एवं डाउनलोड किये जा सकते हैं। सूचना का प्रकाशन नियमानुसार समाचार पत्र/पत्रों में भी किया जा रहा है। किसी भी पृष्ठान्त हेतु कार्यालय समय में सम्पर्क किया जा सकता है।

हस्ता./-  
(डॉ. संगीता सरस्वती)  
प्रधानाचार्य एवं निदेशक  
राजकीय चिकित्सा महाविद्यालय कोटा  
DIPRC/2493/2025

**BRUHAT BENGALURU MAHANAGARA PALIKE**  
Office of the Executive Engineer (Bangalore South Constituency),  
Lakes Division, Room No. 309, 3rd Floor, New Building, BBMP,  
N.R.Square, Bengaluru-02.

No. EE-BSC(Lakes)/TN-12/2024-25 Date: 03.03.2025

**SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION**  
(Only through GoK KPP Portal)

The Executive Engineer, Bangalore South Constituency, Lakes Division, BBMP, Bengaluru on behalf of the Commissioner, BBMP invites Tenders from eligible contractors registered in BBMP or equivalent registration with CPWD / KPWD / Railways / MES / National Highway or any State Govt. Organisations for the following works.

Sl. No.	Name of the Work
1	Development of Chikkabegur Lake by constructing wetland areas, increasing storage capacity of lake through desilting and removal slush, sewage diversion drain, water body protection, other allied works.

Value of work : **Rs. 801.00 lakhs. EMD : Rs. 8,01,000/-**

Stipulated Period of Completion : **11 months.**

**Calendar of Events:** (1) Tender documents may be downloaded from KPP Portal <https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in> from **06.03.2025.** (2) Date of Pre-bid meeting: **15.03.2025 at 3.00 PM in the office of the C.E (FECC), Room No. 307, 3rd Floor, Annex-2 Building, BBMP, N.R. Square, Bengaluru-560002.** (3) Last date & time for receipt of tenders: **25.03.2025 upto 16.00 hrs.** (4) Date of opening of Technical bid document: **27.03.2025 at 16.30 hrs.** Further details may be obtained from the above office during office hours or from KPP Portal <https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in>

Sd/- Executive Engineer  
Bangalore South Constituency, Lakes Division, BBMP

**S. E. RAILWAY – TENDER**

**Tender Notice No.: e-Tender/2025/06** for and on behalf of President of India, the Divisional Railway Manager (Engg.), South Eastern Railway, Kharagpur-721301 invites e-Tender for the following works **before 15.00 hrs.** on the date mentioned against items and will be **opened at 15.30 hrs.:** **Sl. No.; Tender No.; Description of work; Tender Value; Earnest Money :** (1); **E-KGP-EAST-16-2025:** Execution of works of Howrah-Kharagpur-TSR(P)-69.408 TKm under the jurisdiction of DEN/EAST/KGP ; **₹1,20,78,409.22 ; ₹60,400.00;** (2); **E-KGP-EAST-17-2025:** Execution of works of Howrah-Kharagpur-TRR(P)-46.048 TKm under the jurisdiction of DEN/EAST/KGP ; **₹1,82,97,452.80 ; ₹2,41,500.00;** (3); **E-KGP-SOUTH-11-2025:** Manufacturing and Supply of Aluminum Thermic welding portions of 60 Kg/90 UTS rails (613 Nos. Joints) and 60 Kg/60 EI-R260 grade rails (2896 Nos.) as approved by RDSO and welding in situ with single shot crucible as per IR Specification in connection with track renewal and maintenance work in Kharagpur division under the jurisdiction of Sr. DEN (South)/KGP. (Total 3509 joints) ; **₹79,33,185.80 ; ₹1,58,700.00;** (4); **E-KGP-HQ-06-2025:** Execution of Through Rail Renewal (Primary) i.e., TRR(P) of 8.25 Tr. Km. in the section of Panskura-Haldia section under the jurisdiction of ADEN/Tamluk. ; **₹1,11,24,496.48 ; ₹2,05,600.00;** (5); **E-KGP-WEST-03-2025:** P.Way works for strengthening and maintenance of track & other miscellaneous works at KGP-TATA section for PWI/GII & PWI/GUD under the jurisdiction of ADEN/Jhargam ; **₹3,58,04,480.73 ; ₹3,29,000.00;** (6); **E-KGP-WEST-04-2025:** P.Way works for strengthening and maintenance of track & other miscellaneous works at KGP-TATA section for PWI/JGM under the jurisdiction of ADEN/Jhargam ; **₹3,06,86,337.47 ; ₹3,03,400.00;** (7); **E-KGP-WEST-05-2025:** Construction of 03 Nos. Gate Goomty at LC Gate KA-3, KA-9 and KY-11 (consisting of 3 rooms of size 4.2m x 3.1m, 3.2m x 3.1m, 2.5m x 3.1m), 01 No. Gate Lodge of size 4.2m x 3.1m, at KY-11 and 03 Nos. Electrical Rooms of size 2.5m x 3.1m at KA3, KA-9 and KY-11 in connection with interlocking of LC Gates under th jurisdiction of DEN/West/KGP ; **₹61,28,916.00 ; ₹1,22,600.00;** (8); **E-KGP-EAST-18-2025:** Execution of work of Painting of Steel Structures at different Coaching Maintenance Sheds at Santargachi, Tikiapara & Padmapukur under the jurisdiction of DEN/EAST/KGP (2nd call) ; **₹99,17,580.00 ; ₹1,98,400.00;** (9); **E-KGP-EAST-19-2025:** Execution of work of Mcheda . Increasing of CSL of UP Main, Middle line, UP Loop (L.No.-6) & Common Loop (L.No.-9) under the jurisdiction of DEN/EAST/KGP ; **₹3,27,68,955.69 ; ₹3,13,900.00;** (10); **E-KGP-HQ-07-2025:** Mutation of Railway land, qualy converting the ownership details, survey of mutated Railway land and supply of Railway land boundary maps in Kharagpur division at Tamluk-Digha section on Purba Medinipur district under the jurisdiction of ADEN/TMZ (1st phase) ; **₹46,75,000.00 ; ₹93,500.00;** (11); **E-KGP-SOUTH-12-2025:** Execution of the work of Through Fittings Renewal i.e. TFR of 28.789 Tr Km in Rupsa-Ranital section for PWI/GII & PWI/GUD under the jurisdiction of Sr. DEN (South)/KGP. (Total 3509 joints) ; **₹61,33,392.15 ; ₹1,22,700.00;**

**Tender Document Cost:** ₹0.00 (for Sl. No. 1 to 11). **Date of opening:** 10/03/2025 (for Sl. No. 1), 13/03/2025 (for Sl. No. 2 & 3), 19/03/2025 (for Sl. No. 4 to 7), 20/03/2025 (for Sl. No. 8 to 11). **Completion period of the work :** 12 months (for Sl. No. 2, 3, 9 and 11); 18 months (for Sl. No. 1, 7 & 10); 8 months (for Sl. No. 4); 15 months (for Sl. No. 5 & 6); 6 months (for Sl. No. 8); **Bidding Start Date : For Sl. No. 1 from 24/02/2025 and up to 15:00 hrs. on 10/03/2025; For Sl. No. 2 to 5 from 27/02/2025 and up to 15:00 hrs. on 13/03/2025; For Sl. No. 4 to 7 from 03/03/2025 and up to 15:00 hrs. on 19/03/2025; For Sl. No. 8 to 11 from 06/03/2025 and up to 15:00 hrs. on 20/03/2025.** Interested tenders may visit website [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in) for full details/descriptions/specifications of the tenders and submit their bids online. In no case manual tenders for these works will be accepted. N.B.: Prospective bidders may regularly visit [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in) to participate in all tenders.

(PR-1197)

**SALUTE THE SOLDIER**

**CENTRAL RESERVE POLICE FORCE**  
**3 March 2016**

Effective operations from CRPF had created an atmosphere of panic and frustration in the Maoist cadres. To reclaim lost reputation the Maoists attacked troops of CoBRA 208 Bn CRPF when its troops had penetrated into the bastion of Maoists in the jungles of Dubbamarka & Potakpalli PS Kistarnam Distt. Sukma Chhattisgarh. The Maoists attacked with an overwhelming strength in a formidably advantageous position but the troops of CRPF had nerves of steel and roared with their might. After an encounter lasting for several hours and the troops of CRPF repulsing the attack even when outnumbered, the Maoists found it in their best interest to run for their lives. In this encounter two jawans, CT/GD Laju N.S and CT/GD Fatte Singh Kudopa laid down their lives for the nation the same day while CT/GD Laxman Purty succumbed to his injuries the next day attaining martyrdom. These bravehearts did not let down the hopes that this nations has from them.

**4 March 2004**

On this day, troops of 16 Battalion of CRPF launched an operation against insurgents in Dasapara, PS Manikpur, Bongaigaon. A fierce encounter ensued, with troopers advancing under heavy fire, eliminating two insurgents. Leading the assault, Constable Jagtar Singh sustained severe injuries but fought gallantly, playing a key role in the operation's success. He later succumbed to his wounds, attaining martyrdom. His courage remains an inspiration to all. Honouring his supreme sacrifice, he was posthumously awarded the President's Police Medal for Gallantry.

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**SOUTHERN POWER DISTRIBUTION COMPANY OF TELANGANA LIMITED**  
**e-Procurement Tender Notice (Paper Notification)**

TSPPDCL intends to float tender for procurement of (a) Single phase 5-30A Electronic Energy Meter (IDA & DMS with and without Box (b) 220V DC Numerical Relays (c) 11KV Feeder CTS 400, 200/1-1A (d) 33KV CTS 600-300/1-1A (e) 11 KV CTS 900-450/1-1-0.577A (f) 11KV and 33KV Indoor CTS of various ratios (g) 11KV Polymer Insulators (C&T) (h) 33KV Polymer Insulators (BAS) (i) 33KV Polymer Pin Insulators with GI Pins (j) 11KV Post Type Insulators (k) 11KV 200A (TT) GOAB Switches with Post type Insulators (l) 11KV 3 Ph HG Fuse Sets with Solid Core Insulators on e-procurement platform. For further details of each item above, please visit [www.tsouthernpower.org](http://www.tsouthernpower.org), [www.tender.telangana.gov.in](http://www.tender.telangana.gov.in)

Phone: 040-23431360, 1033, 1035, 1026 **CHIEF ENGINEER (P&MM)**  
**R.O.No.: 1067-PP/LC-AGENCY/ADVT/11/2024-25, Date:03.03.2025**

**Office of the Resident Commissioner**  
**Govt. of Jharkhand, Jharkhand Bhawan,**  
**Vasant Vihar, New Delhi – 110057**

**Corrigendum**

Please refer to Notice No. PR 346582 (Cabinet) 24-25 D dated 18.02.25 regarding Facility Management Services at New Jharkhand Bhawan, Bangla Sahib Lane, New Delhi.

Sr. No. 05 of above notice is hereby modified as follows:-

“ Date & Time of opening of technical bid – 08.03.2025, 11.00AM”

Rest will remain the same.

**PR 347653 Cabinet(24-25)#D Chief Administrative Officer**

**CONSTRUCTION/REPAIR WORKS IN RANGIYA DIVISION**

**Tender Notice No.: 83-ENGG-RNY-2024-25, Dated: 27-02-2025.** E-Tender are invited by the undersigned for the following work: **SN-1: Brief Description of Item: Construction/Repair of road against the work:- New Bongaigaon Jn.-Gopalpara Town-Kamakhyia Jn. (DN&SL)-CTR(P)-53.70 Tkm for removal of D mark rails.**

**Tender Value: ₹1,32,27,590.80/- Earnest Money : ₹2,16,100/-.** Date & time of closing of tender at 15:00 hrs. on 24-03-2025 and opening of tender on 24-03-2025 after closing. For complete information with the tender document of above e-tender will be available in website <http://www.ireps.gov.in>.

**DRM (Works), Rangiya**

**NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY**  
Serving Customers With A Smile

**NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY**

**Tender Notice**

The Dy. Chief Material Manager, North Western Railway, Wagon Stores Depot, Loco Workshop, Ajmer-305001 for and on behalf of President of India invites Open E-Tender No. 43225140D on [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in) site as follows. This E-Tender will be closed at 14.25 Hrs, **No.1 Tender No. 43225140D; Brief Description:** Set of prefabricated body Side walls, End walls, Flap doors & Crib angle (Cold rolled formed section) as per RDSO specification No.WD-16-BOXNR-2010 (Rev.1) of June 2016 and Amendment No. 02 of December 2018; **Quantity:** 12 Sets; **Unit:** Set; **Due Date:** 11.03.25; (1) Interested Tenderers may visit the website for full details/description/specification/EMD & tender cost etc. All tenderers are requested to obtain digital signatures and get them registered on above site and quote electronically only. (2) For any information please see our solution centre, click our website: [www.nwr.indianrailways.gov.in](http://www.nwr.indianrailways.gov.in)

**270-AN/25**

Please join us on <https://www.facebook.com/NWRRailways>

**DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL-I, DELHI**  
4TH FLOOR, JEEVAN TARA BUILDING,  
PARLIAMENT STREET, NEW DELHI-110001.  
TA 2638/2022  
CANARA BANK  
VS  
MIS MAA KALKA TRADERS AND ORS.  
To,  
(1) Maa Kalika Traders  
(Through Prop. Shri Surender Chauhan)  
1st Floor-D-65 Jhansi Colony Delhi-110065  
(2) Shri Mohit Ranjan (Guarantor)  
S/o Shri Jankumar Ranjan S/o Shri Jankumar  
M-33, L/G Floor Chatejaan Park New Delhi-110019  
Whereas the above-named applicant has instituted a case for recovery of **Rs.24,74,908.18 (Rupees TWENTY FOUR LAKH SEVENTY FOUR THOUSAND NINE HUNDRED EIGHT AND EIGHTEEN PAISA Only)** against you and whereas it has been shown to the satisfaction of the Tribunal that it is not possible to serve you in ordinary way. Therefore, this notice is given by advertisement directing you to make appearance before Hon'ble Pt on 12.03.2025 at 10.30 A.M. (for further details kindly visit DRT website [www.tribunal.gov.in](http://www.tribunal.gov.in) Phone Number 011-2748473). Take notice that in case of your failure to appear at the above-mentioned day before this Tribunal, the case will be heard and decided in your absence.  
All the matters will be taken up through Video Conferencing and for that purpose:  
I. All the Advocates/Litigants shall download the "Clicks Webex" application Software  
ii. "Meeting ID" and "Password" for the next date of hearing qua cases to be taken by Registrar/ Recovery Officer-I and Recovery Officer-II shall be available one day prior to the next date at DRT Official Portal i.e. "[drt.gov.in](http://drt.gov.in)" under the Public Notice Head.  
iii. any agency qua the call, the Advocates/ Litigants can contact the concerned official at Ph. No.011-23748473.  
Given under my hand and seal of the Tribunal on this 19th November 2024.  
By order of this Tribunal

**WESTERN RAILWAY**  
**Material Management Department**  
**VARIOUS MATERIALS SUPPLY**  
**E-PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTICE No. S/13/2025 Date 28.02.2025**

S.N.	Short Description of item	Quantity	T.O.D.
106	Supply of fully assembled Flat bogie	20 Nos	26-Mar-25
107	Flexible poly vinyl chloride (PVC) flooring sheeting rolls	1051 Nos	27-Mar-25
108	Dump valve GV12-ESRA for the use of the disc brake System of LHB Coaches. Item conforming to Part No.1164108/0090024 of M/s Knorr Bremse MAKE	248 Nos	27-Mar-25
109	Punched grid permanent field diverter resistance (RPS)	20 Nos	27-Mar-25
110	BL switch complete	160 Nos	27-Mar-25
111	Supply, installation and commissioning of retro fitment of revised WSP	52 Set	28-Mar-25
112	Traction motor wound Stator assembly and Rotor assembly	4 Nos	31-Mar-25
113	Engine AR-C18 as per caterpillar	1 Nos	31-Mar-25
114	High Capacity Slide Buffer 15 KJ	416 Nos	01-Apr-25
115	6400 mm over riding Curved Switches 1 in 8.5, BG, 52 Kg. Rail	71 Set	02-Apr-25

Regarding detailed notice EMD, Purchase restrictions and detailed tender conditions, please visit website [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in) and [www.indianrailways.gov.in](http://www.indianrailways.gov.in).

**1141**

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**BRUHAT BENGALURU MAHANAGARA PALIKE**  
Office of the Executive Engineer SWD, Dasarahalli Zone, BBMP,  
9th Floor, Jayanagara Shopping Complex, 4th Block,  
Jayanagar, Bengaluru-560 011

No.EE/SWD/DHZ/TEND/01/2024-25 Date: 03.03.2025

**INVITATION FOR SHORT TERM TENDER (IFT)**  
(Through KPP Portal only) TWO COVER SYSTEM

1. The Executive Engineer SWD-Dasarahalli Zone, BBMP, Bangalore invites tenders from eligible Contractors registered in Bruhat Bangalore Mahanagara Palike or equivalent registration with CPWD/KPWD/ Railways/ MES /National Highway or any State Government Organizations for the construction of works detailed in the table below. The Tenderers are advised to note the minimum qualification criteria specified in Clause 3 of the Instructions to Tenderer's to qualify for award of the contract (Standard Tender Document - KW4). 2. Tender documents may be downloaded from Government of Karnataka KPPP (Karnataka Public Procurement Portal) website <https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in> under login of Contractors from **05.03.2025**. 3. Other details can be seen in the tender document.

Sl. No.	Name of the Work/Approximate value of work (Rs in Lakhs)/ EMD amount in Rs.
1	Expansion/Widening of narrow water vents for construction of U-shape drain, Box Drain and culverts/Bridges to storm water drains at various locations in Dasarahalli Constituency of Dasarahalli zone "Package DHZ-01" (Project No.16, 17, 18 and 19). Approximate Value of work (Rs. in Lakhs) : <b>₹179.20/-, EMD : Rs. 2,68,800.00.</b>

**Calender of events :**

1) Pre-Bid Meeting is on **12.03.2025 at 15.00 hours** at Office of the Executive Engineer SWD, Dasarahalli Zone, BBMP 9th Floor Jayanagar Shopping complex, 4th Block Jayanagara, Bangalore- 560011.

2) Last Date for receipt of Tenders is on **24.03.2025 up to 16.00 hours**.

3) Date of Opening of the bid is on **25.03.2025 by 16.30 hours** or next working day.

4) Date of Opening of the financial bid will be intimated to technically qualified contractor/ successful bidder in KPP portal.

Sd/- Executive Engineer, (SWD Dasarahalli Zone), BBMP.

**GOVERNMENT OF HARYANA CORRIGENDUM**

SR. No.	NAME OF BOARD/CORP/ AUTH	OLD REFERENCE/ NIT NO.	NATURE OF CORRIGENDUM	WEBSITE OF THE BOARD CORP/AUTH	NODAL OFFICER/ CONTACT DETAILS/EMAIL
1	THE BALLABGARH COOP. MILK PRODUCERS UNION LIMITED, MILK PLANT BALLABGARH	MPE/ADMN./2025/ 6166-70025 HBC- 428017.1	THE LAST DATE OF ONLINE BID SUBMISSION WAS 25.02.2025 AT 10:30 HRS. OD FURTHER EXTENDED UP TO 17.03.2025 AT 10:30 HRS.HIRING OF ROAD MILK TANKER	<a href="http://www.vitaindia.org.in">www.vitaindia.org.in</a>	9968604717 vitabid@gmail.com



Classifieds

PERSONAL

I, Nagendra Choudhari, S/o Sh Laxmi Narayan Choudhary, resident of Plot Number T 15, KP 2 Sectors, Jaypee Wishtown, Sector 131, NOIDA, Uttar Pradesh - 201304, have changed my name from Nagendra Choudhari to Nagendra Choudhary. Henceforth I will be known by the name Nagendra Choudhary for all future purposes. 0070954308-1

I, Manoj S/O Shri Hari Singh R/O C-5/120 Third Floor, Sector-6, Rohini, Delhi-110085, have Changed my name to Manoj Kumar. 0040777788-7

I, MANJU KASHYAP W/O MOTI LAL R/O 48, SHIVALIK APARTMENT, PITAM PURA, DELHI-110034 HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO MANJIT KASHYAP FOR ALL FUTURE PURPOSES. 0070954393-1

I, Leenna Verma W/o Karan Arora, R/O -Ranjit Vihar, Phase-1, Society-C, 206,2nd-Floor, Sector-22,Dwarka,New Delhi, have change my minor daughter name Edha to Mahikka, for all future purposes. 0040777665-1

I, Hasrat Malik S/O Babuddin R/o 104, Street No.20, Ziyaduddin Pur, New Mustafabad, North East, Delhi-110094 have changed my name Hasmat to Hasrat Malik for all future purposes. Hasmat and Hasrat Malik both are same person. 0040777685-1

I, Farha Hamed W/o Junaid Ahmed R/o D-1202, Kuc Srishti Nn-58 Near VVIP Raj Nagar Extension, Ghaziabad Uttar Pradesh-201017, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as Farha Ahmed. 0070954355-1

I, Anil Singh S/o Sita Ram Singh R/O Bhakhri, Patna, Bihar-804451, have changed my minor son's name from Ayush Kumar Aged 14 Years to Anubhav Patel forever. 0070954395-1

I, Amritpal Singh S/o Gurdeep Singh R/o Flat No.4A, Gf, Block-58, Janta Flats, Sector-122, Noida, UP-201316 have changed my name AMRITPAL SINGH to AMRITPAL SINGH BAJWA for all purposes. 0070954397-1

I, Ajay Kumar @ Ajay Kumar Kanoyiya S/o Late Shri Banwari Lal R/o H. No.-A-109, Gali No.3, Gangra Ram Oil Depot, Kaithwada, Delhi-110053 That both the names, i.e., Ajay Kumar and Ajay Kumar Kanoyiya, Refer to one and the same person. 0070954380-1

I Vivek Singh S/o Naresh Kumar Singh R/O E-53, Jeevan Park, Free Hold, Pankha Road, VTC: Uttam Nagar, Po: D.K. Mohan Garden, West Delhi, Delhi-110059 have changed my name to Vivek Kumar Singh for all purposes. 0040777669-1

I Usha W/o Sh.Raj Kumar Khurana R/o B-5, 3rd Floor, New Krishna Nagar, Delhi-110051 have changed my name to Usha Khurana for all purposes. 0040777669-7

I Sibb John S/o Kuchknj John R/O Block-B, House No.853, Gali No.26, Sant Nagar, Burari, Delhi-110084 have changed the name of my minor son from Reuben to Reuben Sibb John for all purposes. 0040777669-5

I Renu D/o Satpal Singh R/O C-5/107, 2nd Floor, Sector-11, Rohini, Delhi-89 have changed my name to Ranno Singh for all future purposes. 0040777673-1

I Raj Rani W/o Dinesh Kumar R/O D-283, Sarvodaya Enclave, Malviya Nagar, New Delhi-110017 have changed my name to Rajni for all purposes 0040777669-4

I Raj Kumar S/o Late Sh.Kishan Chand Khurana R/O B-5, 3rd Floor, New Krishna Nagar, Delhi-110051 have changed my name to Raj Kumar Khurana for all purposes. 0040777669-6

I RAJENDER KUMAR S/O RAMESH CHAND R/o H.NO.214, SHIVAJI MARG, KEWAL PARK, AZADPUR, DELHI-110033, have changed my name to RAJENDER KUMAR SAHU for all future purposes. 0070954367-1

I Pushpanjali D/o Antaryami Nayak W/o Satya Sunda Sahu R/O Staff Quarters No.1, Orissa Bhawan, 1- Niti Marg, Chanakya Puri, South West Delhi, Delhi-110021 have changed my name to Pushpanjali Sahu for all purposes. 0040777669-8

I Mohit S/o late Deep Singh R/o C -107-Z dda flats Jahangirpuri Delhi 110033 have changed my name to Mohit Khurana 0070954379-1

I Himanshi D/o Ashok Kumar R/O D-39 1st Floor, Ashoka Road, Near Guru Nanak Public School, Block D, Adarsh Nagar, North West Delhi, Delhi-110033, have changed my name to Himanshi Thakral 0070954399-1

I Hadapada Pushpavathi D/o Channabasappa and W/o Nagaraj H R/O Sri Sharadadevi Blind Vikasa Kendra, Left Side, Shivamogga, Gopala, Shimoga, Shivamogga, Karnataka-577205, have changed my name to Pushpamma 0070954369-1

I,Manish kumar,S/o Mohan Jha,R/O-D-4 48 FF,Gali No-04,Vasishth Park,Delhi-110046, changed my name to Manish Kumar Jha. 0040777762-1

I Govind S/o Devi Ram R/o H.No.1262, Pana Paposani, Narela, North West Delhi, Delhi-110040 have changed my name to Govind Bhardwaj for all purposes. 0040777669-2

I Dimple Kapoor W/o Hiren Sharma R/O 392, SFS Flats, Ashok Vihar Phase-4, Delhi-110052 is also known as Dimple Kapoor Sharma. Both names are of one and the same person. 0040777669-3

I Bhageshwar Tyagi, s/o Sh. Sunder Lal Tyagi state that 11/5 Moulisri Road, Shipra Sun City Indirapuram, Ghaziabad, U.P.-201012, I have changed my Address in my Aadhar and my Permanent and present Address is Tower no. o6, Flat No.207, Niho Scottish Garden, Ahinsa Khand-2, Indirapuram, Shipra Sun City Ghaziabad 201014 vide affidavit date 01/03/2025 Notary Shashi Kant Advocate Reg. No. 1567 Ghaziabad U.P. 0040777686-1

I Kunal Amit Deshpande S/O, Amit Prabhat Deshpande R/o 543, Plot No.1, Shri Niketan Cghs, Dwarka Sec-7, New Delhi, Delhi-110075 have changed my name to Kunal Deshpande. 0040777675-1

I,hitherto known as Krish S/O Sanjay Kumar R/o Rzg-47,Nihal Vihar, Nangloi, West Delhi, Delhi-110041, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as Krish Kumar. 0040777662-9

I,Vijay S/o Inderveer,R/o VPO,Bupania, P.O.Bhupania, Teh-Badli, District-Jhajjar, Haryana-124507,have changed my name to Vijay Lohchab. 0040777784-1

I,Sunita/Sunita Kanoyia,D/o Bindu Bhardwaj,R/O A-807,Star Rameshwarnagar, Rajnagar Extension,Ghaziabad,UP-201017 have changed my name to Sunita Kaushik. 0040777752-2

I,Sunita w/o Rajeev Gupta,R/O-217,Block-A,Omaxe city,sec-8 Sonipat have changed my name to Sunita Gupta, for all purposes. 0040777662-2

I,Siddhart,S/o-Ajay Prakash,R/O Kharsa No.-28/2/2,Ground Floor, Road.No-10,Sangam-Vihar,Burai, Delhi-110084,have changed my name to Siddhart Prakash. 004077752-6

I,Shard Kumar S/O Dhanpat Rai Arya, R/O,H.No.745/9,Shivpuri, Gurugram (Haryana)-122001,have changed my name to Sharad Arora. 004077751-2

I,Sargam Preet Kaur,D/o-Gurmeet Singh R/O GA-8,Street No-3,G-Block,Hari Nagar, Delhi-110058,have changed my name to Sargampreet Kaur. 0040777788-4

I, Kanika W/o Yuvraj saluja, R/O H.no 621/14, guru nanak pura, rohtak haryana 124001 have changed my name to Kanika Batra 0070954377-1

I,SURENDAR SINGH BISHT,S/O BHASWANT SINGH BISHT,R/O ASHUTOSH-NAGAR BADOWALA PREM-NAGAR DEHRADUN UTRAKHAND-248007, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME FROM SURENDAR SINGH BISHT TO SURENDRA SINGH BISHT VIDE AFFIDAVIT IN DL43917603413868X DATED-01/03/2025 BEFORE NCT-DELHI 0040777784-8

I,SHREYA /SHREYA PALIWAL,W/O PRAKHAR GOYAL,R/O-5A LAJPAT KUNJ,KHANDARI AGRA-282002 UP,have changed my name to SHREYA GOYAL,for all,future purposes. 004077752-4

I,SANDHYA W/O SH.RAJIV UPPAL,R/O PNB-15, PINNACLE TOWER,DLF PHASE-V,GOLF COURSE ROAD,GURUGRAM, HARYANA-122009,HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO SANDHYA UPPAL. 0040777751-8

I,Rohit Sehgal,S/o-Dalip Kumar R/O,Flat.No.189,Sanjay-Colony, Opp.GTK Depot,Adarsh-Nagar, N.S.Mandi,North West-Delhi-110033,have changed my name to Rohit Kumar. 0040777751-7

I,Rajimol Kurian,W/O-Thomas Mathew R/O,H.NO-1/15,ground floor Old Rajinder Nagar Central Delhi-110060,Have Change My Name From Rajimol Kurian To Rajimol Thomas. 0040777752-3

I,Rajeev Kumar,S/o Kamal Kishore,R/o M-30,3rd-Floor,Sham-Nagar Tilak Nagar,Delhi-18,have changed my minor Son's name,from Vivaan to Vivaan Nigam (DOB 02/09/2015). 004077784-7

I,Rafia Zaidi,W/o Ammar Husain,R/O-B-315,Third Floor,Gali No.5,Opp.,Chand Masjid, Mandawali,Fazalpur,East Delhi-110092,have changed my,name Rafia Jaidi to Rafia Zaidi, in my Passport.No.N4800907,for all,future purpose. 0040777751-12

I,RAJESH GOEL S/O KRISHAN CHANDER GOEL,R/O WZ-558,UPPER GROUND-FLOOR,SRI-NAGAR,GALI.NO.1,RANI BAGH,DELHI-110034.HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO RAJESH KUMAR GOEL. 0040777784-3

I,Alpana Mohanty W/o Debapriya Das R/O C-90, Sector-41 Noida(U.P) have changed my name to Alpana Sarat Chandra Mohanty for all future purposes 0040777730-2

I,AMIT KUMAR,S/O OM PRakash,H.NO.E-7,KH.NO-88/23,SHIV VIHAR, KARALA,DELHI-110081, changed my name to AMIT 0040777743-4

I,Preeti Gupta,W/o Dinesh Kumar,R/o,o,C1/22,Opp Park,SDA, Hauz Khas,South-Delhi-110016,that in my Passport no.J2525378,my husband name was wrongly-written/printed as Dinesh Kumar,instead of Dinesh Kumar Goel,Which may be amended accordingly. 0040777697-5

I,Pooja Garg,w/o-Mohan Goel,R/o-216,kath mandi,Near Hindu girls college,Sonipat have changed my name to Pooja Goel,for all purposes. 0040777762-4

I,Niraj Kumar Verma,S/o, Gajendra Prasad Verma,R/o, 3072/6M,3rd floor,Ranjit nagar,Patel-nagar Delhi-110008,have changed my name to Neeraj Verma. 0040777743-5

I,Naveen Kumar Chaurasia,S/o Kedar Nath,R/o-3724,Charkha Walaun Hauz Qazi,Delhi,G.P.O., North-Delhi,Delhi-110006,have changed my name to Navin Kumar. 0040777752-7

I,Nampreet Kaur,D/o Gurdeep Singh R/O 3071,Gali-No.10,Ranjeet Nagar,Central Delhi,Delhi-110008,have changed my name to Nampreet Kaur. 0040777784-2

I,NITIN AGGRWAL,S/O-TARUN AGGRWAL,R/O A-81,Upper Ground Floor, Pandav Nagar,Delhi,have changed my name to NITIN AGGARWAL. 0040777743-3

I,Mayanka Malhotra W/o Rishabh Kapoor R/o Flat-No.34, Vesta Assotech Celeste Apartment Sector-44, Noida (U.P-201301) have changed my name to Mayanka Kapoor for all purposes. 0040777730-1

I,NAYAN PARVEZ AKHTAR,S/O PARVEZ AKHTAR,R/O,E-277/A JAIPUR EXT PART-2 BADAPUR NEW DELHI-110044,IN MY PASSPORT MY NAME WRONGLY-MENTION NAYAN PARWEZ MY CORRECT NAME IS NAYAN PARVEZ AKHTAR. 0040777697-4

I, Murad Khan, S/o Shamssuddin, R/O 257/20, Pui Pehlud Pur, Badapur, South Delhi, Delhi-110044, declare that in my service record my name is mentioned as "Murad" instead of " Murad Khan". Both "Murad" and "Murad Khan" are one and same person. Kindly use "Murad Khan" in all my Service Records. 004077752-9

I,Mohinder Kumar S/o Panju Mal Sanpal R/O H.No.197,Vaishali,Enclave,Pita mpura Delhi-110034,have changed my name to Mahender Kumar Sanpal. 0040777751-1

I, Murad Khan, S/o Shamssuddin, R/O 257/20, Pui Pehlud Pur, Badapur, South Delhi, Delhi-110044, declare that in my service record my name is mentioned as "Murad" instead of " Murad Khan". Both "Murad" and "Murad Khan" are one and same person. Kindly use "Murad Khan" in all my Service Records. 004077752-9

I,Shard Kumar S/O Dhanpat Rai Arya, R/O,H.No.745/9,Shivpuri, Gurugram (Haryana)-122001,have changed my name to Sharad Arora. 004077751-2

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I, Kanika W/o Yuvraj saluja, R/O H.no 621/14, guru nanak pura, rohtak haryana 124001 have changed my name to Kanika Batra 0070954377-1

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I,RAJESH GOEL S/O KRISHAN CHANDER GOEL,R/O WZ-558,UPPER GROUND-FLOOR,SRI-NAGAR,GALI.NO.1,RANI BAGH,DELHI-110034.HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO RAJESH KUMAR GOEL. 0040777784-3

I,Alpana Mohanty W/o Debapriya Das R/O C-90, Sector-41 Noida(U.P) have changed my name to Alpana Sarat Chandra Mohanty for all future purposes 0040777730-2

I,AMIT KUMAR,S/O OM PRakash,H.NO.E-7,KH.NO-88/23,SHIV VIHAR, KARALA,DELHI-110081, changed my name to AMIT 0040777743-4

I Ajay Kumar Tyagi S/o Mam Chand Tyagi R/O 125, Sharda Niketan, Saraswati Vihar, Pitampura, Delhi-110034 have changed my name from Ajay Kumar To Ajay Kumar for all Purposes. 0040777826-1

I Anuj Kumar S/o Ajay Kumar Tyagi R/o 125, Sharda Niketan, Saraswati Vihar, Pitampura, Delhi-110034 have changed my name from Anuj Kumar Tyagi To Anuj Kumar for all Purposes. 0040777826-2

I, HITHERTO KNOWN AS BABU LAL S/O TAPESHWAR PRASAD R/O MOHANAPUR KARAJA , VTC- BARAHLA, POST- BARAHARA, DISTT- BHOJPUR, BIHAR- 802311 HAVE CHANGED MY NAME AND SHALL HEREFTER BE KNOWN AS BIRENDRA PRASAD.IT IS CERTIFIED THAT I HAVE COMPLIED WITH OTHER LEGAL REQUIREMENTS IN THIS CONNECTION. 0040777826-3

I,Harish Chander Juneja,S/o-Sant Ram Juneja,R/o-A-48/22,DLF phase-1,Gurgaon,Haryana 122001,have changed my name to Harish Juneja. 0040777752-8

I,Ishank Goel,S/o-Gopal Goyal R/o,H.No.152,Third/Floor,Pocket-6, Sector-22,Rohini,Delhi-110086,have changed my name to Ishank Goel. 0040777751-6

I,ISHIKA KHOT PATIL,D/O VIJAY KHOT,R/o House.No-R-246,Mohan Garden,Pipal-Chowk Uttam-Nagar,Delhi-110059,have changed my name to ISHIKA PATIL. 0040777743-6

I,Harish Chander Juneja,S/o-Sant Ram Juneja,R/o-A-48/22,DLF phase-1,Gurgaon,Haryana 122001,have changed my name to Harish Juneja. 0040777752-8

I,Harish Chander Agarwal,S/o Banwari Lal Aggarwal,R/O,D-329, First-Floor,Vivek-Vihar, Phase-1, Delhi-110095,HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO HARISH AGGARWAL. 0040777697-1

I,HUMERA D/O-MOHAMMAD KHALID QURESHI,HOUSE.NO-1059,CHURCH GALI KAILA-BHATTA,GAZIABAD,UP-201001 have changed my name to HUMERA MAHAK QURESHI. 0040777784-4

I,Gopal Goel,S/o Jyoti Prasad,R/O H.No.152,Third Floor,Pocket-6, Sector-22,Rohini,Delhi-110086, have changed my name to Gopal Goyal.I,Gopal Goel,S/o Jyoti Prasad,R/O H.No.152, Third Floor,Pocket-6, Sector-22,Rohini,Delhi-110086, have changed my name to Gopal Goyal. 0040777751-5

I,Geetanjali D/o,Ashok Kumar Ahuja,R/O S-66,Villa,First-Floor, Uppal-Southend,Sector-49,South City-2,Gurugram (Haryana)-122018,have changed my name to Geetanjali Ahuja. 0040777751-3

I,Geetanjali Ahuja,R/o,S-66,Villa, First-Floor,Uppal-Southend, Sector-49,South City-2,Gurugram (Haryana)122018,have changed my-Minor Son name,from Bhavy Sapra to Bhavy Ahuja. 0040777751-4

I,Dinesh Kumar,S/o Suraj Bhan R/O,C1/22,Opp Park,SDA,Hauz Khas, South Delhi-110016, changed my name to Dinesh Kumar Goel. 0040777697-6

I,Dev Goyal S/o-Vikas Goel,H.No.113,2nd Floor,AM-Block,Shalimar Bagh,New Delhi-110088, have changed my name to Dev Goel. 0040777784-6

I,DEVESH GARG,S/O SH.BHIKCHANDA AGRAWAL R/O-S-168,GROUND FLOOR, PANCHSHILA PARK,NEW DELHI-110017,have changed my,Son's Name from VIAAN GARG to ABHYUDAY GARG,for all future purpose. 0040777762-6

I,Dinesh Kumar,S/o Suraj Bhan R/O,C1/22,Opp Park,SDA,Hauz Khas, South Delhi-110016, changed my name to Dinesh Kumar Goel. 0040777697-6

I,DEVESH GARG,S/O SH.BHIKCHANDA AGRAWAL R/O-S-168,GROUND FLOOR,PANCHSHILA PARK,NEW DELHI-110017,have changed my Name from DEVESH GARG to DEEVESH GARG,for all,future purpose. 0040777762-5

I,D N SHUKLA,S/O TIYUGI NARAIN SHUKLA,R/O,Flat No.302,7ower-8,Panchsheel Prime Rose,Hapur-Road, Ghaziabad(UP),have changed my name to DHRUV NARAIN SHUKLA. 0040777743-2

I,Bhoomi D/o Manjeet Singh R/O,A-276,Qutub Vihar Phase-1,Goyla Dairy,Chhawla, Delhi-110014,have changed my name to Bhoomi Singh. 0040777788-2

I,Kawal Jeet Kaur,D/o Charanjeet Singh W/o Gurmeet Singh,R/O GA-8,Street No-3,G-Block,Hari Nagar,Delhi-110035, have changed my name to Kawaljeet Kaur. 0040777788-5

I,Kavitaa W/o Lal Singh Thakur,R/o,Flat-No.301 Dps- Apartment Plot-No.16 Sector-4, Dwarka,New Delhi-110078 have changed my name to Kavita Thakur. 0040777788-6

I,KHALID QURESHI,S/O,MOHAMMAD TAYYAB QURESHI,HOUSE NO-1059,CHURCH GALI KAILA-BHATTA,GAZIABAD,UP-201001,have changed my name to MOHAMMAD KHALID QURESHI. 0040777784-5

I,Jai Prakash,S/o,Virender Kumar R/O.198/13, Ramesh-Market, Garhi,East of-Kailash,Delhi-110065,have changed my minor son's name from Yash to Yash Mathur, Permanently 004077752-1

I,JIVESH GUPTA,D/o SH.NARENDER KUMAR GUPTA,R/O HOUSE.No-26,FIRST FLOOR,MANAK VIHAR, DELHI-110092,have changed my,minor daughter's name from ANANYA GARG to ASHVITA GARG,for all,future purposes. 0040777751-10

I, hitherto known as T R GYANTI HANS D/O BIJENDER SINGH R/O C-802, BPTP PARK SERENE, SECTOR-37D, BASAI SO, NEAR-NEXT TO SIGNATURE HOSPITAL DIST, GURUGRAM, HARYANA-122006,have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as MAAHI SINGH. 0070954376-1

I, hitherto known as T R GYANTI HANS D/O BIJENDER SINGH R/O C-802, BPTP PARK SERENE, SECTOR-37D, BASAI SO, NEAR-NEXT TO SIGNATURE HOSPITAL DIST, GURUGRAM, HARYANA-122006,have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as MAAHI SINGH. 0070954376-1

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I, hitherto known as T R GYANTI HANS D/O BIJENDER SINGH R/O C-802, BPTP PARK SERENE, SECTOR-37D, BASAI SO, NEAR-NEXT TO SIGNATURE HOSPITAL DIST, GURUGRAM, HARYANA-122006,have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as MAAHI SINGH. 0070954376-1

I, Sanjeev Mehra R/o 57, West Avenue Road, Punjabi Bagh, New Delhi-110026, have changed my minor son's name from Aryan Mehra to Aryan S Mehra (DOB: 03-10-2008) permanently. 0040777740-1

I, SEEMA, W/o Fahim Ahmad R/O Mohalla Khwajbaksh, Deoband Distt. Saharanpur, U.P.-247554 have changed my name to Seema Fahim in future purposes. 0070954383-1

I,Rakesh Kumar S/O Jaibir Singh R/O 1851/29, Durga Colony, Rohtak Road, Jind, Haryana-126102, have changed the name of my minor daughter aged 5 years From Sakshi To Sakshi Kharb 0070954381-1

I,Prakriti Sharma D/o Trilok Nath R/o House-394, Alpha-2 Greater Noida Distt-G.B Nagar U.P-201310 Declare that my Father's Correct name is Trilok Nath & Other name is Trilok Sharma Confirm that Trilok Nath & Trilok Sharm both are same person 0070954387-1

I, Nirmalla Kumar Kaul W/o Maharaj Krishen Kachru R/o M-3 Kashmir Apartment Pitampura, North West Delhi-110034 have changed my name to Nirmal Kachru for all future purposes 0070954378-1

LOST & FOUND

Shri Narendren Sharma S/o late Sh. Ram Murti Sharma R/o Flat No. 210, Nirman Apartments, Mayur Vihar Ph-I, Extn, Delhi-91 inform that he has lost/misplaced his original Share Certificate, Allotment letter, Possession Letter against Flat No. 210, Nirman Apartments, Mayur Vihar Phase-I, Extn., Delhi-110091. A LR No. 2443156/2024d2, 28-12-2024 (So No. 430/2014 Delhi Police) is lodged to P.S. Crime Branch, Delhi. If found please contact at Mobile no 9871916859 0070954390-1

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is hereby informed to the general public at large that my clients namely Aditya Bansal and Megha Bansal, both Children of Late Mr. Rajan Bansal, Mr. Navin Bansal and Mrs. Preeti Bansal, both S/o Late Prof. Ramesh Chander Singh, All R/O M-124, Greater Kailash-1, New Delhi-110048, measuring 500 Sq. Yards, are the absolute joint owners in possession of property bearing No. M-124, Greater Kailash-1, New Delhi-110048, measuring 500 Sq. Yards (referred to as "SAID PROPERTY"). That my clients Mr. Navin Bansal and Mr. Bipin Bansal Singh and their elder brother Sh. Rajan Bansal (Since Deceased), have entered into an Agreement to Sell dated 07.02.2024, in short ATS 07.02.2024 (Un-Registered) with Pralpen Chopra (R/o Ss Anun Chopra, R/o A- 8/22 C, Vasant Vihar, New Delhi - 110057 for sale of 87.5% undivided share and reconstruction of the SAID PROPERTY alongwith Agreement for Construction dated 07.02.2024 with Earthz Urban Spaces Private Limited, through its Director/Authorized Signatory Mr. Ramani K. Das having Regd. Office at F - 712, Vasanti Vihar, New Delhi - 110057. That the company namely Earthz Urban Spaces Private Limited is owned and operated by Mr. Pralpen Chopra who is having 99% shareholding in Earthz Urban Spaces Private Limited. That a Public Notice dated 13.03.2024 was further published in newspapers detailing the execution of ATS 07.02.2024 by the Counsel Mr. Nareesh Gupta, Advocate, C-75, GK-1, New Delhi-110048.

That the limitation to complete the sale by making full and final cash payment, on the part of Mr. Pralpen Chopra, was agreed to be 07.06.2024 (including 30 days grace period) which was further agreed to be extended till 07.07.2024, subsequently to 29/30.08.2024, and finally till 25.10.2024 till 01.02.2024. That since the time is the essence of Contract and in spite of several extensions in regard to completion, Pralpen Chopra has miserably failed to complete the terms of Agreement to Sell dated 07.02.2024 in regard to finalize the sale by making full and final cash payment or to provide the unequivocal proof of funds to My Clients, hence, the ATS 07.02.2024, the Construction Agreement dated 07.02.2024, The Public Notice dated 13





**NMDC Limited**  
(A Govt. of India Enterprise)  
'Khanji Bhavan', 10-3-311/A, Castle Hills, Masab Tank,  
Hyderabad-500028. CIN : L13100TG1958GOI001674  
Email : kvprakash@nmdc.co.in, jvnkatesan@nmdc.co.in

**OPEN TENDER NOTICE (E-PROCUREMENT MODE ONLY)**  
Tender No.NMDC/HO/MM/PURCH/2024/25/440, Dtd. 04.03.2025  
(MSTC REF: NMDC/Head Office/Materials Management/26/24-25/ET/809)  
E-tenders are invited for following items from reputed manufacturers  
directly or through their dealers /accredited agents through MSTC portal  
website <https://www.mstccommerce.com/eprocen>

Description	Qty (No.)	Pre Bid Meeting is Scheduled on	Display of Tender Documents Period	Last date & time for submission of offer	Earnest Money Deposit
Supply and Supervision of E & C of 05 Nos. Front End Loaders 8-9 Cu.m derated bucket capacity along with Cost cap for 06 Years or 18000 hours whichever is earlier	05	11.03.2025 At 11.00 AM	17.03.2025 To 07.04.2025	07.04.2025 By 02.30 PM	Rs. 25,00,000/-

Prospective bidders may visit our websites: [www.nmdc.co.in](http://www.nmdc.co.in); CPP Portal  
<https://eprocure.gov.in>; <https://mstccommerce.com> and may  
download the tender documents. Any corrigendum to the above tender  
notice will be uploaded on our website and MSTC e-portal only.  
**GM (Materials)**



**BRUHAT BENGALURU MAHANAGARA PALIKE**  
Office of the Executive Engineer, BBMP,  
K.R. Pura Division, Old Madras Road, K.R. Pura,  
Bengaluru - 560 036.

**No: EE/KRP/TND/13/2024-25** **Date: 01.03.2025**  
**INVITATION FOR SHORT TERM TENDER (IFT)**  
**(Two Cover System) (Through GOK KPP Portal only)**  
The Executive Engineer (K.R. Pura) invites **Item Rate** tenders  
from eligible appropriate class tenderers registered in BBMP/  
CPWD/KPWD/Railways/MES/any State or Central Govt.  
Organisations for the work detailed in the table below.


Sl. No.	Name of the Work
1	Filling of Potholes in ward roads of K.R. Pura Assembly Constituency. (Call-2). Est. Cost: 165.00 Lakhs. EMD Amount: Rs.2,47,500/- Tender Processing Fee (Rs.): As per E-Proc Portal. Period of Completion: 12 Months. Eligibility of Contractor: Class III & above.

**Calendar of Events:** 1) Tender documents may be downloaded  
from GOK KPP portal website: <https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in>  
(2) Last date for submission of Tender queries & clarifications:  
**05.03.2025 upto 16.00 hrs.** (3) Pre-bid meeting will be held on  
**06.03.2025 at 11.30 hrs.** in the Executive Engineer Office,  
K.R.Pura, BBMP. (4) Last date for submission of tender  
documents: **11.03.2025 upto 16.00 hrs.** (5) Technical Bids will  
be opened on: **13.03.2025 at 16.30 hrs.** (6) Financial Bids will be  
opened on **14.03.2025 at 16.30 hrs.**  
Further details can be had from the office of the  
above during office hours on all working days or visit  
KPP portal website: <https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in>  
**Sd/- Executive Engineer, K.R. Pura Division, BBMP**



**No.2 AIR FORCE SCHOOL, PALAM**  
Applications are invited for the post of NTT  
teacher and Ayah in AF School on Regular  
basis for AY 2025-26.  
**Mandatory Qualification:**  
NTT - Senior Secondary with Nursery  
Teachers Training diploma or diploma  
in Nursery / Montessori / Pre-Primary  
Teachers Training from a Govt  
recognised institution.  
**Ayah** - No education qualification required  
**Age Criteria**  
NTT - 21 to 50 years as on 01 Jul 25  
Ayah - 21 to 40 years as on 01 Jul 25  
Applicants are to forward Resume/typed  
or hand written application by post or hand  
over to Teacher In-charge, No. 2 Air  
Force School, Rock View area, near  
Hanuman Mandir, Delhi Cantt 110010,  
Latest by 16 MARCH 2025.  
For Further details contact: 011-  
25672865, 8618135746 email-  
no2airforceschoolpalam@gmail.com  
Timing - 0900h to 1330h Monday -  
Friday

**"IMPORTANT"**  
Whilst care is taken prior to  
acceptance of advertising  
copy, it is not possible to verify  
its contents. The Indian  
Express (P) Limited cannot  
be held responsible for such  
contents, nor for any loss or  
damages incurred as a result of  
transactions with companies,  
associations or individuals  
advertising in its newspapers  
or Publications. We therefore  
recommend that readers  
make necessary inquiries  
before sending any monies  
or entering into any  
agreements with advertisers  
or otherwise acting on an  
advertisement in any  
manner whatsoever.



**बैंक ऑफ बड़ौदा Bank of Baroda**

**REGIONAL OFFICE:**  
Bank of Baroda, First Floor, Diamond Complex,  
Dilli More, Darbhanga-846004 Cont. No. 8969513429  
Website: [www.bankofbaroda.com](http://www.bankofbaroda.com)

**POSSESSION NOTICE (for Immovable Property)**  
[As per Appendix IV read with rule 8(1) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002]  
Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorised Officer of the **BANK OF BARODA** under the Securitisation  
and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of  
powers conferred under Section 13(12) read with rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002  
issued a demand notice calling upon the borrower(s) to repay the amount mentioned in the notice within 60  
days from the receipt of the said notice.  
The borrower(s)/guarantor(s)/mortgagor(s) having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the  
borrower(s)/guarantor(s)/mortgagor(s) and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession  
of the property/ies described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him under Section 13(4) of the  
said Act read with rule 8 of the said rules.  
The borrower(s)/guarantor(s)/mortgagor(s) in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to  
deal with the property/ies and any dealings with the property/ies will be subject to the charge of the **BANK OF  
BARODA** for the amount stated herein below and further interest thereon at the contractual rate plus costs,  
charges and expenses till date of payment.  
The borrower's attention is invited to provisions of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time,  
available to redeem the secured assets.  
**Name of Borrower / Guarantors & Description of Immovable Properties**

Branch / Name of Borrowers/ Date of Demand Notice / Date of Possession / Amount Outstanding	Description of the properties
<b>Branch:</b> Supaul Branch <b>M/s Shivam Old Plastic Recycle Proprietor-Mrs. Bevi Devi (Borrower) and Mr. Shyam Sunder Chaudhary (Guarantor)</b> <b>Date of Demand Notice:</b> 07.12.2024 <b>Date of Possession:</b> 27.02.2025 <b>Amt:</b> ₹13,35,699.58/- (Rupees Thirteen lakh thirty five thousand six hundred ninety nine and fifty eight paise only) together with unapplied interest from 24.07.2023 plus other charges (if any) thereon at the contractual rate plus costs, charges & expenses till date of payment. <b>Date :</b> 27.02.2025 <b>Place :</b> Supaul	Equitable mortgage of land and building. Total Area-16 Dhur 8 Dhurki (3.5 Decimal). <b>Name of Title holder:</b> Mr. Shyam Sunder Chaudhary S/o Late Srilal Chaudhary, situated at Mauza-Supaul, Thana No.152, Khata-669(N), Khesra No.718/3544, Area-16 Dhur 8 Dhurki (3.5 Decimal) Ward No.19, Old Ward No-9. Boundaries as per Sale Deed N-R C Road, S-Ashok Singh, E-Indrakant Karn, W-Saharsa Main Road, At present boundary: N-R C Road, S-Ashok Singh, E-Indrakant Karn, W-Saharsa Main Road.

**Authorised Officer**  
Bank of Baroda



**UJVN Limited**  
(An Uttarakhand Govt. Enterprise)  
H.O.: "UJJWAL", Maharani Bagh, G.M.S Road, Dehradun-248006  
Telephones: 0135-2763808, Fax: 0135-2763508  
CIN No. U40101UR2001SGC025866 Website: [www.ujvn.com](http://www.ujvn.com)

**पत्र सं० 159** **दिनांक 03/03/2025**  
**Short Term Tender Notice**  
Office of the Executive Engineer (Quality), Lakhwar Project, Dakpathar, Dehradun invites sealed and separate tender from interested contractors/firms for the following work. Brief summary of work and detail of tender is given below:  
Tender No- 03/EE/Quality/LMP/2024-25  
Name of work- Construction of Pre-fabricated site office at Juddo for Quality control work of Lakhwar MPP in Distt. Dehradun  
Estimated cost: Rs. 9,33,115.00 (Excluding GST)  
Date of availability of bid document on website: From 04-03-2025 at 15:00 Hrs  
Last date for submission of bids : 18-03-2025 upto 11.00 Hrs.  
For fuller & further details, kindly visit "www.ujvn.com"  
**Executive Engineer (Quality)**  
Lakhwar Project Dakpathar, Dehradun  
"Avoid wasteful use of Electricity"




**OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR GENERAL, MEDICAL EDUCATION & TRAINING, UTTAR PRADESH**  
6<sup>th</sup> FLOOR, JAWAHAR BHAWAN, LUCKNOW  
**No. ME-3/2025/516** **Lucknow: Dated-03 March, 2025**  
**Important information regarding opening of registration portal for online counseling of UP NEET PG-2024**

In view of the reduction of cut-off percentile for NEET PG-2024 by NBEMS, New Delhi Notice dated 25.02.2025, the dates for online registration of admission to MD/MS/Diploma and DNB courses in government/private medical colleges for UP NEET PG-2024 counseling are as follows-


S.No	Description	Dates	Total Days
1	Date of online Registration & deposition of registration fee/ Security money	04 <sup>th</sup> March 2025 (From 11:00 AM) to 06 <sup>th</sup> March 2025 (Till 05:00 PM)	03 Days


- The registration portal is being opened due to the cut-off percentile being lowered by NBEMS, New Delhi for online registration of all the upcoming round for eligible candidates under UP NEET PG Counseling-2024.
- There is no need for re-registration of eligible candidates already registered for UP NEET PG-2024 counseling.
- Only new candidates who would register on the prescribed dates and previously registered eligible candidates will be eligible to participate in the counseling. The list of all the above registered candidates will be sent to NBEMS New Delhi for preparation of State Specific Merit List, in which the state merit rank list of previously registered candidates may change.
- For the UP NEET PG 2024 counseling, it is mandatory for the eligible new candidates to register by logging on the website <https://www.upneet.in> by depositing the registration fee of Rs. 2000/- (Rs. Two thousand only) online.
- The registration fee will not be refunded under any circumstances. i.e registration fee is not refundable.
- To participate in the counseling, it is mandatory to deposit security amount of Rs. 30,000/- (Rs. thirty thousand only) for the seats of MD/MS/Diploma and DNB courses in the government colleges and Rs. 2,00,000/- (Rs. two lakh only) for the seats of MD/MS courses in the private colleges online. On depositing the security amount of Rs. 2,00,000/-, the candidates will be eligible for both government and private seats.
- Candidates whose registration fee & Security money is not deposited will not be eligible for choice filling in the counseling process.
- All information related to UP NEET PG 2024 counseling will be uploaded on website <https://upneet.gov.in> and [www.dgme.up.gov.in](http://www.dgme.up.gov.in).

(Director General)




**NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY**

**E-TENDER NOTICE**  
DRM (TRD & GSU) NWR Ajmer on behalf of The President of India invites E - Tenders for the following work up to 15.00 Hrs. on the mentioned date.  
**Tender No.** DRM-TRD-26-2024-25;  
**Name of Work:** Replacement of rusty and damaged bond, bond painting and retro reflective number plate over Ajmer division. **Approx. Cost of the work (Rs.):** Rs. 2,50,36,050.00; **Bid Security:** Rs. 2,75,200 /-; **Date & Time of closing E-Tender:** 24.03.2025 at 15:00 Hrs. **Date & Time of opening E-Tender:** 24.03.2025 at 15:30 Hrs. The details of above E - tender are available on website [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in)  
**272-AN/25**  
Please join us on  / NWRRailways



**NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY**

**E-TENDER NOTICE**  
Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer/TRD, North Western Railway, Bikaner for & on behalf of the President of India, invites E- tenders for the following work. 1. Complete details of tenders can be seen on Website No: <http://www.ireps.gov.in>; 2. Date & time of closing of e-tenders: 27.03.2025 at 15.00 hours. 3. Date & time of opening of e-tenders: After 15.00 Hrs on 27.03.2025 **Tender Notice No:** 25-TRD-BKN-E-Tender-2024-25; **Name of work:** Strengthening of traction power supply system in Batinda-Suratgarh section by provision of Traction sub-station (TSS) at Mandi Dabawal station over Bikaner **Approx Cost of the work:** 6.07,84,836.7; EMD/SD (Rupees): 4,53,900.00  
**273-AN/25**  
Please join us on  / NWRRailways



**AGRA CIRCLE, P.W.D AGRA**  
**Short Term Notice inviting E-Tender**

**Dated: 14-02-2025**  
1. The Superintending Engineer, Agra Circle, P.W.D, Agra on behalf of Governor of Uttar Pradesh invites the Percentage rate bids from the eligible and approved Contractors registered with UP, PWD, Bridge work. The Bidder may submit bids for any or all of the works. Bidders are advised to note the minimum qualification criteria specified in Clause 4 of the Instructions to Bidders to qualify for the award of the contract.


Sl. No	District	Name of Work	Estimated cost (Rs. in Lac)	Total Cost (Rs. in Lacs)	Bid Security (Rs. in Lacs)	Cost of Document (in Rs.)	Time of Completion	Address of Executive Engineer-executing the work	Address of Superintending Engineer	Address of Chief Engineer	Category of Contractor	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1	Agra	New construction work of bridge (Span 2x5) on Hamul drain on Kurgra road from village Thalgathi of Tehsil Etmadpur Agra, district Agra.	218.59	8.63	227.22	13.36	Rs. 2000.00 STC +3000 TC+ 60.00 GST= 2360.00	12 Months	Executive Engineer, Construction Division-2, P.W.D., Agra	Superintending Engineer, Agra Circle, P.W.D., Agra	Chief Engineer, Agra Zone, P.W.D., Agra	Class A
2	Agra	Construction work of bridge (Span 2x18) and access road on Karvan river from Buharampur to Dhanru link road in Agra district.	392.36	11.52	403.88	22.19	Rs. 2000.00 STC +3000 TC+ 60.00 GST= 2360.00	12 Months	Executive Engineer, Construction Division-2, P.W.D., Agra	Superintending Engineer, Agra Circle, P.W.D., Agra	Chief Engineer, Agra Zone, P.W.D., Agra	Class A
3	Agra	Work of new construction of bridge (Span 2x18) on Karvan river of Sher Kha to Semra Gahri Sadashuk road of Agra district.	397.85	12.06	409.91	22.50	Rs. 2000.00 STC +3000 TC+ 60.00 GST= 2360.00	12 Months	Executive Engineer, Construction Division-2, P.W.D., Agra	Superintending Engineer, Agra Circle, P.W.D., Agra	Chief Engineer, Agra Zone, P.W.D., Agra	Class A

3. Bid document with detailed terms and conditions will be available online on website <http://tender.up.nic.in> and Prabhari (<http://sms.upnwd.gov.in/Prabhari>) From 06-03-2025 to 12-03-2025. Bids must be submitted online only at e-tendering portal of <http://tender.up.nic.in> and Prabhari App with all documents as per GO No 14/2020/879(1)/ 23-7/2020/176(k0)/06 Dt.25-08-2020 on or before 12:00 pm Dt. 12-03-2025. Technical Bid received online will be opened on 12-03-2025 at 12:30 pm.

(G.K. Varshney)  
Executive Engineer  
CD-2, P.W.D., Agra

UPID-230311 Dt. 28.02.2025  
[www.upidadv.gov.in](http://www.upidadv.gov.in)

(C.P. Singh)  
Superintending Engineer  
Agra Circle, P.W.D., AGRA



**पंजाब नैशनल बैंक**  
...भरोसे का प्रतीक !

**पunjab national bank**  
...the name you can BANK upon !

(A Govt. of India Undertaking)  
CIRCLE SASTRA ARRAH, 2ND FLOOR, HOTEL REGAL, NEAR RAMANA MAIDAN, ARRAH, BHOJPUR, BIHAR-802301, PHONE NO. 7004519963, EMAIL:-cs8187@pnb.co.in

**SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES**  
**E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 9 (1) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.**  
Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower (s) and Guarantor (s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor, the Constructive Possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of the Bank/ Secured Creditor, will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is", and "Whatever there is" on 19/03/2025, for recovery of Rs. 1,62,06,064.67 due to the Secured Creditor from M/S GOLDEN RICE MILL, PROP. SH ASHOK KUMAR and MD. NAIM @ MD. NAIEM RAIEN @ MD. NAIM (MORTGAGOR/GUARANTOR) S/O- MD. ABDUL KARIM. The reserve price will be Rs. 48,35,000/- and Rs.63,60,000/- respectively the earnest money deposit will be Rs.4,83,500/- and Rs.6,36,000/- respectively.

**Other details of E-Auction**

S.N	Name of the branch; Name of the account; Name & addresses of the Borrower/ Guarantors account	Description of the Immovable Properties	(a) Date of demand Notice u/s 13 (2) of SARFAESI Act 2002 (b.1) O/S amount as on date of 13 (2) notice (b.2) O/S amount as on 31.01.2025 (c) Possession date u/s 13(4) of SARFAESI Act 2002.	(a) Reserve Price (b) EMD (c) Last date of EMD Bid (d) Bid Increase Amt.	Date/ Time of E- Auction	Details of the encumbrances known to the secured creditors.
01	BIHIYA (600200): M/s GOLDEN RICE MILL, PROP. SH ASHOK KUMAR A/C NO: 15114015002381 M/S GOLDEN RICE MILL, PROP. SH ASHOK KUMAR S/O- SHIV KUMAR, R/O: TILATH ROAD, WARD NO. 12, PO+PS- PIRO, BIMLI, DISTRICT- BHOJPUR, BIHAR-802207. MD. NAIM @ MD. NAIEM RAIEN @ MD. NAIM (MORTGAGOR/GUARANTOR) S/O- MD. ABDUL KARIM, R/O: TILATH ROAD, WARD NO. 12, PO + PS - PIRO, BIMLI, DISTRICT- BHOJPUR, BIHAR-802207.	All the Part and Parcel of Immovable Properties (land & Building) Situated at- Mauza- Piro, Thana No 88, Ward No-12, Khata No- 878, Holding No- 239, Plot No 2009, 2010, Thana –Piro, Dist- Bhojpur, Bihar, Area-04 Decimal. <b>Owner/ Mortgagor</b> – Md. Naeim Raien, S/O Md. Abdul Karim. Boundary: North-Ara Sasaram Road, South-Manjorjo Miya, East- Gali, then Abdul Khan, West- R/O: Tilath Road, North- Manjorjo Miya, East- Yahi raien and Salauddinn Raien. Registered Mortgage Deed No -11853 dated 30.11.2017. All the Part and Parcel of Immovable Properties (land & Building) Situated at- Mauza- Piro, Thana No 88, Khata No- 195, Plot No 700, Thana –Piro, Dist- Bhojpur, Bihar, Area-26.50 Decimal. <b>Owner/Mortgagor</b> – Md. Naeim Raien, S/O Md. Abdul Karim. Boundary: North- Sadru Khan, South- Sadru Khan, East- Istekhar Ali and Ahmadi Khatoun, West- Karha and Rasta Registered Mortgage Deed No -11853 dated 30.11.2017.	(a) 18.10.2023 (b.1) Rs.2,12,64,597.26 as on 10.01.2024 + further interest & other charges. (b.2) Rs.62,06,064.67 as on 28.02.2025 (c) 11.01.2024	(a) Rs.48,35,000/- (b) Rs.4,83,500/- (c) 18/03/2025 (d)Rs 20,000/-	19/03/2025, 11:00 AM to 04:00 PM	Not Known

Litigations known to the secured creditors in respect to SARFAESI Action:-NIL


**TERMS AND CONDITIONS**

The sale shall be subject to the Terms & Conditions prescribed in the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002 and to the following further conditions.

- The properties are being sold on "AS IS WHERE IS BASIS" and "AS IS WHAT IS BASIS" and "WHATEVER THERE IS BASIS".
- The particulars of Secured Assets specified in the Schedule hereinabove have been stated to the best of the information of the Authorised Officer, but the Authorised Officer shall not be answerable for any error, misstatement or omission in this proclamation.
- The Sale will be done by the undersigned through e-auction platform provided at the Website <https://banknet.com> on 19/03/2025 from 11:00 AM to 04:00 PM.
- The particulars of Secured Assets specified in the Schedule hereinabove have been stated to the best of the information of the Authorised Officer, but the Authorised Officer shall not be answerable for any error, misstatement or omission in this proclamation.


**STATUTORY SALE NOTICE UNDER RULE 9 (1) OF THE SARFAESI ACT, 2002**

(Sh. Sunil Kumar Sinha, Chief Manager)  
**AUTHORISED OFFICER**  
**PUNJAB NATIONAL BANK**  
**SECURED CREDITOR**  
M-7004519963



**PUNJAB STATE POWER CORPORATION LIMITED**  
(Regd. Office: PSEB Head Office, The Mall, Patiala - 147001)  
Corporate identity Number U40109PB19048SGC033813  
Website: [www.pspcl.in](http://www.pspcl.in)

**Tender Enquiry No. 332/3-CSIT** **dated 03/03/2025**  
**Chief Engineer/IT, PSPCL, Patiala** invites e-tender for Selection of Service Provider for Customer Services Call Center (OPEX Mode) for PSPCL by Owning, Operating and Maintaining it. For detailed NIT and tender specifications please refer to <https://eproc.punjab.gov.in> from 03/03/2025, 15:00 hrs onwards.  
**Note:** Corrigendum and addendum, if any will be published online at <https://eproc.punjab.gov.in>  
No. 42134/PB C-152/25



**केनरा बैंक Canara Bank**  
सिस्टिक्टेड Syndicate


**Regional Office: Punea**  
**POSSESSION NOTICE**  
Whereas: The undersigned being the Authorized Officer of the Canara Bank under Securitization And Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (Act 54 of 2002) and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13 (12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002, issued Demand Notice calling upon the Borrower / Guarantor mentioned herein below to repay the amount mentioned in the notice within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice. The Borrower/ Guarantor having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrower / Guarantor and the public in general, that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him under Section 13(4) of the said Act, Read with Rule 8 & 9 of the said Rule. The Borrower / Guarantor in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the properties herein below and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of Canara Bank for the amount mentioned against their names and interest thereon. The borrower's attention is invited to provisions of sub-section(8) of section 13 of the act, in respect of time available to redeem the secured assets.  
**PURNIA LANE BAZAR BRANCH (5745)**  
**Name of the Borrower-** Md. Khalid (Prop -M/s Sun Enterprises). **Liabilities-** Rs. 30,82,025.00 (Rupees Thirty Lakhs Eighty Two Thousand And Twenty Five Only) and interest thereon. **Date of Demand Notice-** 11.01.2019. **Date of Possession Notice-** 01.03.2025. **Description of the Immovable Property-** Khata No – 868, Khesara No - 338, Area – 01 katta. **Boundaries-** North – Safi Ahmed, South – Shami Ahmed, East – Private Rasta, West – Private Kachhi rasta  
**Name of Title holder-** Md. Khalid s/o-Lt. Md Mahmood  
**Date-** 01/03/2025 **Authorized Officer**  
**Place-** PURNIA LANE BAZAR (Canara Bank)



**केनरा बैंक Canara Bank**  
सिस्टिक्टेड Syndicate

**Muzaffarpur II Branch** **सिस्टिक्टेड Syndicate**  
**POSSESSION NOTICE (SECTION 13 (4)) (For Immovable Property)**  
Whereas: The undersigned being the Authorised Officer of the **Canara Bank** under Securitization And Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (Act 54 of 2002) and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13 (12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002, issued a **Demand Notice dated 22.10.2024** (Paper Publication Date 15.11.2024) calling upon the Borrower **M/s Friends Construction** through its **Partner Vinay Kumar Singh**, S/o Late Hari Keshav Prasad Singh, Vijay Sharma S/o Late Chandradeo Prasad Sharma and Ram Krishna S/o Sri Ajay Kumar Sharma; **Head Office** H/o Sri Bimal Singh; Mohalla Bawan Bigha; PO Kanhauli Bishnudatta, Dist- Muzaffarpur, **Partner 1/Mortgagor-** Sri Vinay Kumar Singh, S/o Late Hari Keshav Prasad Singh, R/o Village Sahoni, P.O- Saidpur via PUSA Form; PS Chakmehshi, Dist- Samastipur Pin 842125, **Partner 2 / Mortgagor-** Sri Arvind Kumar Singh urf Vijay Sharma S/o Late Chandradeo Sharma, R/o Manik Vishunpur Chand, P.O- Manik, P.S- Mushahari Dist Muzaffarpur, **Partner 3-** Sri Ram Krishna S/o Late Ajay Kumar Sharma, R/o Village+ P.O- Pilikhi Gaggatti, P.S- Sakra, Dist- Muzaffarpur, **Guarantor 1/ Mortgagor-** Smt. Mitihlesh Sinha W/o Late Hari Keshav Prasad Singh, R/o Village Sahoni, P.O- Saidpur via PUSA Form, P.S- Chakmehshi, Dist- Samastipur Pin 842125, **Guarantor 2 -** Smt. Sushila Sharma W/o Ajay Kumar Sharma, R/o Village+ P.O- Pilikhi Gaggatti, P.S- Sakra, Dist- Muzaffarpur, **Guarantor 3 -** Shyam Krishna, S/o Ajay Kumar Sharma, R/o Village+ P.O- Pilikhi Gaggatti, P.S- Sakra, Dist- Muzaffarpur, **Guarantor 4 -** Anupama Kumari W/o Ram Krishna, R/o Village+ P.O- Pilikhi Gaggatti, P.S- Sakra, Dist- Muzaffarpur, **Guarantor 5 -** Ajay Kumar Sharma, R/o Village+ P.O- Pilikhi Gaggatti, P.S- Sakra, Dist- Muzaffarpur, **Guarantor 6/ Mortgagor-** Ram Niwas Prasad Singh@ Ram Niwas Sharma S/o Chandradeo Sharma, R/o Manik Vishunpur Chand, P.O- Manik, P.S- Mushahari, Dist- Muzaffarpur, **Guarantor7-** Hari Mohan Mishra, S/o Late Madhu Mangal Mishra H/o Sri Bimal Singh, Mohalla Bawan Bigha, P.O- Kanhauli Bishnudatta, Dist- Muzaffarpur, to repay the amount mentioned in the notice, being amounts to **Rs. 68,29,329.02/- (Rupees Sixty Eight Lakhs Twenty Nine Thousand Three Hundred Twenty Nine and Two Paise Only) with further cost, charges and interest** within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.  
The borrower having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower and the public in general, that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him / her under section 13 (4) of the said Act, read with Rule 8 & 9 of the said Rule on this **01st day of March of the year 2025.**  
The borrower in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of **Canara Bank Muzaffarpur II Branch** for an amount of **Rs. 68,29,329.02/- (Rupees Sixty Eight Lakhs Twenty Nine Thousand Three Hundred Twenty Nine and Two Paise Only)** with further cost, charges and interest thereon. The borrower's attention is invited to the provisions of Section 13 (8) of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.  
**Description of the Immovable Property**  
All that part and parcel of the property consisting of 1. **Property in the name of Smt. Mitihlesh Sinha**, situated at Mauza Village Sahani P.S- Chak Mehshi, Thana No. 9, Khata No. 238, Khesra No. 1121, Area- 5 Katha 7.5 Dhur and Khata No. 239 Khesra No 1120, Area- 13 Katha 8 Dhur **Boundary- North-Nij, South-Road, East- Sitaram Singh, West- Boundary of Basirani, Registry and District Samastipur. Vide Deed No. 1280 Dated -21.01.1974.** 2. **Property in the name of Smt. Mitihlesh Sinha** W/o- Late Harkeshav Prasad Singh situated at Mauza Sahani, Tauzi Thana No 9, Halika No- 2, Khata No 124(Old) 520 (New), Khesra No. 1201(Old) 2258 (New), Area-5 Katha 1 Dhur, **Boundary- North- Bhola Prasad Singh, South- Bhola Prasad Singh & Road East- Bhola Prasad Singh, West- Bhola Prasad Singh, Paragana Kasma, Thana Chak Mehshi, Sub Registry Kisanpur, Anchal-Kalyanpur, District-Samastipur vide Deed No 7029 Dated 14.05.2002.** 3. **Property in the name of Sri Vinay Kumar Singh** S/o- Late Harkeshav Prasad Singh situated at Mauza - Sahauri, Tauzi Thana No-9, Halika No-2, Khata No.117(Old) 514(New), Khesra No. 1294(Old) 2306(New), Area 4 Katha 16 Dhur, **Boundary- North-Nij, South - Ram Autar Das, East - Road, West - Ram Autar Das and Shiv Shankar Choudhary, Thana Chak Mehshi, Anchal Kalyan, Sub Registry - Kisanpur, Dist- Samastipur vide Deed No. 15599 Dated 27.11.2004**

**Date : 01.03.2025 Place: Muzaffarpur** **Authorised Officer (Canara Bank)**



**LIC Housing Finance Ltd.**  
2nd Floor Biscouman Tower, Gandhi Maidan (West), Patna - 800001, Tel. No. - 0612 - 2332129

**[Rule 8 (1)] POSSESSION NOTICE (For Immovable Property)**  
Whereas, The undersigned being the authorized officer of the **LIC HOUSING FINANCE LTD.** under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act 54 of 2002 (3 of 2002) and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13 (12) read with rule 3 of the Security interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a demand notices on following date calling upon the following loanee under below mentioned loan A/c to repay the below mentioned amount within 60 days from the dates of receipt of the said notice.  
The borrower having failed to repay the amount, notice in hereby given to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him / her under section 13 (4) of the said Act read with rule 8 and 9 of the said Rules on the following date  
The borrower in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of the **LIC HOUSING FINANCE LTD** for below mentioned amount.  
The borrower's attention is invited to provision of Sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available to redeem the secured assets.

Name & Address of Borrower	Date of Demand Notice & Amount Dues/ A/c No./ Date of Possession	Description of the Immovable Property
<b>Mr. Rakesh Kumar Pandey / Suresh Kumar Panday</b> , Phuladh P.O- Phuladh, Via - Gayaspur, Thana - Paroo, Muzaffarpur, Bihar - 843107	<b>10.12.2024</b> A/c No. 212100002591 <b>Rs.</b>	







## Veteran spinner Shivalkar passes away at 84



PADMAKAR SHIVALKAR  
1940-2025

DEVENDRA PANDEY  
MUMBAI, MARCH 3

PADMAKAR SHIVALKAR, one of the finest left-arm spinners the country has produced, passed away in Mumbai on Monday. He was 84 and was unwell for the past few months.

Shivalkar, one of the stalwarts in the 1960s and 70s when Mumbai ruled the domestic scene unchallenged, never got to represent the country as it was a period when Bishan Singh Bedi was the incumbent left-arm spinner in the Indian team. In 124 First-Class games, he amassed 589 wickets.

After retirement, Shivalkar also coached the Mumbai Ranji Trophy team.

Shivalkar's demise comes on the heels of former Mumbai captain Milind Rege's death and cricket legend Sunil Gavaskar expressed grief at the loss.

"This is very sad news indeed. Within a short time, Mumbai cricket has lost two of its stalwarts, Milind and now Padmakar, who were the architects of many a victory," the master batsman said.

"One of my regrets as India captain is not being able to convince the national selectors to include 'Paddy' in the Test team. He deserved the India cap far more than some others who got it. That's fate. He was the bowler who would get the best batter from the opposition out and set up wins for Mumbai. He could bowl the whole day with his economical run-up and beautiful action. Paddy was one of a kind and am deeply saddened by his passing away."

In 2017, Shivalkar was conferred with the BCCI CK Nayudu Lifetime Achievement Award along with his contemporary left-arm spinner Rajendra Goel, who too didn't get a chance to represent India.

Former India opener Wasim Jaffer also consoled the death.

"One of Mumbai's greatest match-winners, a stalwart of the game who, despite his immense record in First-Class cricket, was unfortunate never to don the Indian cap," Jaffer said. "A cricketer of remarkable humility and simplicity, he was admired both on and off the field. My deepest condolences to his family during this difficult time."

After his playing days, Shivalkar involved himself in coaching at Shivaji Park. He spotted young talents like Harmeet Singh, who went on to play for India Under-19 and Mumbai, before representing the USA.

Mumbai Cricket Association (MCA) president Ajinkya Naik said, "Mumbai cricket has lost a true legend today. Padmakar Shivalkar Sir's contribution to the game, especially as one of the finest spinners of all time, will always be remembered. His dedication, skill, and impact on Mumbai cricket are unparalleled. His passing is an irreplaceable loss to the cricketing fraternity."

Shivalkar was never one to crib about the past and the absence of an India cap.

"Hope you have listened to the iconic composition *Main Zindagi ka saath nibhata Chala Gaya* (from the movie Hum Dono). It has a line, *Jo Mila Usiko Muqaddar samajh liya* (Whatever you get is destiny). For me, I have reached that stage of life where these things have become trivial," he was quoted by PTI after receiving the BCCI award.

# Advantage India, but don't miss the nuance

It's not about schedule, team selection or travel but familiarity with the pitches; squad's strength must not be underestimated



EXPRESS AT  
CHAMPIONS  
TROPHY

VENKATA KRISHNA B  
DUBAI, MARCH 3

FOR TWO weeks now, Indian cricketers have woken up from the same hotel rooms, travelled on the team bus on the by-now familiar route, and most importantly, practiced and played on the sluggish tracks at the Dubai International Cricket stadium. There is no denying the India advantage; not in the trivial familiarity of rooms or non-existent flight travel but because of the contrasting nature of the pitches on offer in sluggish Dubai and batting-friendly Pakistan. But there is a nuance to this advantage.

The understandable whining over India's advantage misses the point about the all-round strength in the Indian squad. It has been said that if they knew they were only playing in Dubai, a few other teams also would have packed their squad with more spinners. The fact is India have quality options not many others have. That's why only New Zealand, who also played a majority of their games in Pakistan thus far, have still stacked their squad with enough tweakers. Also, in this day and age, taking one flight from Lahore or Karachi to Dubai isn't much.

But the main advantage isn't that of schedule or squad-selection, but of the nature of the pitches. As even India found out in the 2023 ODI World Cup, a slow turner at Ahmedabad couldn't help them as they themselves had played just one game, against Pakistan, in that tournament there. The more regularly a team trains and plays on sluggish tracks, the more equipped and ready they get.

Other teams haven't had that luxury. In tournament cricket, there is nothing new in terms of a team playing each of their matches at different venues. Unless the event is taking place in Bangladesh or Sri Lanka, it happens all the time. However, no team has got this sort of advantage when it comes to playing all their matches at one venue, which has allowed India to get acclimatised to the conditions here. They came here six days before their first match and after their second outing, got a week's break to get further used to the conditions and it shows in the middle.

Of course, teams these days have the luxury of replicating such conditions in practice arenas. But this hasn't been a dust bowl or a crumbling pitch where there is sharp turn and bounce to get used to. Instead, it is on the slower side, which even if teams want to replicate it can only be possible to an extent and will know the actual nature of it when they are in the middle as it is a natural wear and tear.

### Pre-knowledge won't help

When New Zealand boarded the flight from Rawalpindi to Dubai last week, they knew what to expect here. As their pacer Matt Henry admitted after the humbling on Sunday, they knew India would take the field with four spinners, particularly with just one rest day in between the semi-finals. But no pre knowledge is going to help any of the teams to play in Dubai. In terms of personnel, there is a familiarity around all of India's spinners – Axar Patel, Ravindra Jadeja, Kuldeep Yadav and Washington Sundar. With regards to Varun as well, by now all teams have access to his videos. There is enough time to just play him off safely, and target the other bowlers. Against New Zealand, India put this plan to good use by playing Mitchell Santner safely and going after Michael Bracewell and Rachin Ravindra.

But so far in the three matches, no opposition has been able to do that against the Indian spinners. While their exceptional control of the craft has definitely had a role in it, what also can't be overlooked is how little



Indian players celebrate the wicket of New Zealand's Mitchell Santner during Sunday's match.

PTI

time their opponents have had when it comes to getting used to the conditions in Dubai.

Bangladesh, Pakistan and New Zealand had just two sessions before their match here. That will be the case with Australia, who landed here on Saturday and managed time for two sessions and just one on stadium. Though the practice pitches at the ICC Academy are similar in nature, the square at Dubai International Stadium has been slow in nature. It hasn't been sluggish like Premadasa or Mirpur, but it is definitely slow enough for batsmen to come in and get adjusted to it no matter how hard you prepare on the practice pitches. Add the slow outfield and the big boundaries they have to cover and the new angles to score off, these are not easy conditions for batsmen to get used to immediately.

Perhaps tired of the advantage talk, India's captain Rohit Sharma sought to point out how the pitches have presented varying challenges.

"Look, the three matches we played, the nature of the surface was the same. But in all three games, the pitch has behaved differently. Today (Sunday), we saw the ball was swinging a little. We didn't see that in the first two games when our bowlers were bowling," Rohit said. "Because of the different pitches, the pitch is giving you different challenges as a batsman. We have to think whether it's necessary to play these shots or not... This is not our home, this is Dubai. So, we don't play so many matches here. This is new for us too."

Only, it's been totally new-er to the rest. Next up is Australia, a team that could face more problems when it comes to solving the puzzle. With Pat Cummins, Mitchell Starc and Josh Hazlewood not around, their attack is already thin on experience. Much of their hope is on Adam Zampa's leg-spin and Glenn Maxwell and they could even be tempted to play Tanveer Sangha. But more than the bowling, what will decide the outcome is how soon their batting unit can get used to the conditions here. If Travis Head can give a quickfire start and Steve Smith decides to drop anchor, it is not beyond their limits.

But can they do it against India spinners overcoming these conditions is the lingering question. And if they do, in some ways, this would be even sweeter than the ODI world cup final; the odds are stacked here far more than it was in 2023.

## Shreyas, Rohit: The risk managers

VENKATA KRISHNA B  
DUBAI, MARCH 3

AS PITCHES in Dubai seem to be getting slower with each outing, all eyes are on the Indian spinners. However, for India to go the distance a lot is riding on the batting unit, which so far has adapted exceptionally to the sort of tracks that have been their biggest undoing in recent times. With a century each to Shubman Gill and Virat Kohli, they have two in-form batsmen in the top three to go with Rohit Sharma to provide rapid starts. In the middle overs where they need to be flexible with their approach against spinners, they have a solid middle-order which includes an enforcer in Shreyas Iyer and two busy players in Axar Patel and KL Rahul before the job is handed over to Hardik Pandya and Ravindra Jadeja.

This is as good a top 8 as a team could get in these conditions where batting depth is absolutely a non-negotiable factor. But two of those, Rohit and Shreyas, strategically placed at the top and at No 4 provide the right sort of impetus for the rest of the batting unit to go about their game without having to sacrifice much. Though the pitches have behaved differently in these three matches because of conditions which have been hotter during the day and chilly in the evening, they have consistently remained slow. On such slow surfaces, runs with the new ball have become a gold reserve irrespective of whether the team is batting first or chasing. In each of his three innings, Rohit's intention has been clear. Carrying on a role he first embraced during the World Cup, he is ensuring India has a head start when the pitch is fresh and the ball is new. In their two chases here, India had 69 and 64 runs by the end of first powerplay.

### Cushion for middle order

While Rohit may not have been as effective in the Champions Trophy as he was at the World Cup, what it is doing is giving some valuable run cushions for the middle-order to count on. It is giving the in-coming batsmen the time to get used to the slowness of the pitch without having to bother about keeping pace with the run-rate. Against New Zealand,



Shreyas Iyer's 98-ball 79 salvaged India from 30/3 to a total of 249 against NZ.

PTI

when Rohit fell early, even Virat Kohli – when was the last time we saw him play the cut off seamers? – tried to make the most out of the fielding restrictions as rotating the strike in the middle overs hasn't been easy.

With Rahul, Pandya and Axar around, if India went their old school way of keeping wickets in hand before unleashing in the last 10 overs, there is no guarantee it could work. At the death, seamers have repeatedly taken pace off the ball, and teams have even employed spinners. With that being the case, demoting Rahul to No 6 with Jadeja to follow fits perfectly with their plan. If Rohit provides the charge at the top, there is Shreyas for the middle overs. Against Pakistan, with a 67-ball 56 he made a tight chase look routine, charging at the spinners and using his positive intent to good effect. On Sunday, he had an even tougher job at hand. Earlier in the tournament while talking of his method as a middle-order batsman, Shreyas mentioned how he prefers to go on the offensive if they have lost early wickets to put the pressure on the opposition.

To do so on this pitch was easier said than done, particularly when the Kiwi quicks were generating movement off the seam. Instead, he would take 31 deliveries to get his first boundary and once he got that, he would find

two more in the next three deliveries and from there on he looked a different beast. An exceptional player against spinners, even when Mitchell Santner tempted him by slowing down the pace and invited him to step down by giving enough flight, Shreyas would resist. Happy to even defend, as on this pitch, he was fully aware of the damage that Santner could do. Instead, when Michael Bracewell and Rachin Ravindra came on, he wasted no time to put them under early pressure. He brought out his trademark lofted shots on the leg-side, while also improvising at the same time.

When Shreyas acers his role, which he has been consistently doing in the middle-order, it is also allowing the rest of the batsmen to play their game without looking at the scoreboard. So far in this tournament, he has hit 11 boundaries (behind Gill's 16 as an opener) – all in the most challenging middle-overs and three sixes. Batting at No 4 he has a strike-rate of 82.41, showing the game to adapt to these conditions. It is for this reason that Australia, prior to the World Cup final, spent most of their time in the planning room around how to take down Shreyas, celebrating his plotted dismissal with glee. On Tuesday, at the Champions Trophy final, he will remain the focus of their crosshairs.

## Australia must counter India's spinners: Smith

AUSTRALIA'S HOPES of making it into the Champions Trophy final hinge on how well their batters can perform against India's potent spin attack in their semi-final meeting in Dubai, captain Steve Smith said on Monday. India claimed a 44-run victory over New Zealand in a Group A clash on Sunday to qualify for the semi-finals unbeaten, with spinner Varun Chakravorthy taking 5-42 in a match-winning display. "It's not just Chakravorthy, I think the rest of the spinners are quality as well, so I think for us the game's probably won and lost how we play this spin," Smith told reporters ahead of Tuesday's match. "Particularly in the middle overs, the way we get through there. It's going to be a challenge. There's going to be some spin by the looks of it, looking at the surface.

REUTERS

## Axar finds 'self-belief' in his journey as all-rounder

AXAR PATEL is quickly positioning himself as an useful all-rounder in white ball formats, and for him "self-belief" is the

key ingredient in that transformation. In

the latest instance, Axar made a handy 42 and then claimed the prized wicket of Kane Williamson with his left-arm spin to play an important role in India's 44-run win over New Zealand in a Champions Trophy match here on Sunday. "I was not able to click earlier and it was in the back of the mind that I was not able to show my talent. Maybe, I was putting more pressure on myself back then, despite knowing that I have the talent," Axar said in a mixed zone interaction with reporters here. But an unbeaten 35-ball 64 against the West Indies at Barbados in 2022 unlocked his mind. The knock helped India chase down a daunting 312.

PTI

## Connolly replaces Short in Australia squad

YOUNG SPIN-BOWLING all-rounder Cooper Connolly has replaced injured Matthew Short in the Australian squad for the knock-out stages of the ongoing Champions Trophy. Short was ruled out of the ICC event due to a calf injury sustained during the match against Afghanistan. Connolly was initially named as a travelling reserve for the tournament.

PTI

### CHAMPS TROPHY



Heinrich Klaasen during South Africa's win over England.

Reuters

## Klaasen brushes off travel woes ahead of semis

SOUTH AFRICA should have no ill-effects from their whistlstop and, in the end, pointless 18-hour trip to Dubai as they prepare to face New Zealand in Lahore in Wednesday's second semi-final of the Champions Trophy, according to batter Heinrich Klaasen. "It was not ideal for the bodies, but we had some time to get out and walk about. We knew ahead of time that two teams were going to have to travel," he told reporters on Monday. "We haven't travelled a lot in this competition to be fair, it was just a crazy 18 hours. It is part of professional cricket these days. There is not much more to say about it."

REUTERS

## India's familiarity with conditions helped: Henry

NEW ZEALAND pacer Matt Henry said India's familiarity with the conditions here helped them pick a suitable bowling unit as their spin quartet, particularly Varun Chakravorthy, kept his side under constant pressure during the Champions Trophy match here. India, who are playing all their matches in Dubai, fielded Chakravorthy, Kuldeep Yadav, Ravindra Jadeja and Axar Patel against the Kiwis here on Sunday during their 44-run victory in the final Group A match. "I think, obviously, the way to have four frontline spinners was a really effective way to play. I think having that luxury of knowing (conditions)... they played to the conditions beautifully. That was probably the challenge for us," Henry said in the post-match press conference.

PTI

## NZ will 'lean on tri-series experience' against SA

SENIOR BATTER Tom Latham said New Zealand will take confidence from their recent win over South Africa in the tri-series when they face the same

opponents in the semifinal of the Champions Trophy in Lahore on Wednesday. Recently, New Zealand successfully chased 305 against South Africa in Lahore and then went on to win the tri-series, beating Pakistan in the final, and Latham feels those experiences will hold them in good stead on Wednesday. "Yeah, the (South Africa) team that we played potentially will be slightly different, they had a lot of guys that that weren't in that side. They were still playing in their SAT20 back in South Africa so will be slightly different. But I guess from our point of view, we'll lean back on those experiences of Lahore in playing against South Africa," Latham said after the loss to India.

PTI

## Gaffaney, Illingworth to be umpires for Ind-Aus semi

NEW ZEALAND'S Chris Gaffaney and England's Richard Illingworth will officiate as on-field umpires in the semifinal between India and Australia here on Tuesday. Englishman Michael Gough will be the third umpire while Andy Pycroft of Zimbabwe will perform match referee's duties as per the ICC.

PTI



BRIEFLY

Mooney smashes 96 as GG thrash UPW

**Lucknow:** Beth Mooney smashed an unbeaten 96 as an all-round Gujarat Giants thrashed UP Warriorz by 81 runs in a one-sided Women's Premier League match here on Monday. Mooney missed out what could have been the first century for any player this WPL season but her 59-ball unbeaten knock with 17 fours powered Gujarat Giants to a formidable 186/5, against which the hosts crumbled without any resistance. Chasing a target of 187, UPW could only make 105 from 17.1 overs as the Giants climbed up from the fifth spot to the second in the points table. UPW, who were placed third before the game, are now fifth.

PTI

**BRIEF SCORES:** GG 186/5 (Beth Mooney 96\* ; Sophie Ecclestone 2/34) defeated **UPW** 105 all-out (Chinelle Henry 28, Kashvee Gautam 3/11) by 81 runs.

ISL: NEUFC qualify for playoffs

**Chennai:** NorthEast United FC qualified for the Indian Super League (ISL) play-offs after their 3-0 thumping of Chennaiyin FC here on Monday. It all started with a goal from Nestor Albiach (7th minute) early on before Jithin MS (26th) and Alaeddine Ajarai (38th) also got into the act in a first-half blitzkrieg. Chennaiyin FC had their moments in the second half but they failed to convert chances. With this win, the Highlanders collected 35 points from 23 games and qualified for the playoffs for the first time after the 2020-21 season.

PTI

Murray to join Novak at Indian Wells

**London:** Novak Djokovic will have old rival Andy Murray back in his coaching corner as he attempts to win the Indian Wells title for the first time in almost a decade. Murray's management team confirmed the 37-year-old Scot had flown to California on Monday to continue his coaching arrangement with the Serbian 24-times Grand Slam champion. Djokovic hired Murray ahead of this year's Australian Open and reached the semi-final before being forced to retire against Alexander Zverev because of an injury. His only match since then was a defeat by Italian Matteo Berrettini in Doha last month when Murray was not present.

REUTERS

World Para Athletics GP to be held in Delhi

**New Delhi:** Para athletes from more than 20 countries will participate in 90 events across three days as India hosts its first-ever World Para Athletics Grand Prix here from March 11-13. The athletes participating in the Grand Prix to be held at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium are from countries such as Germany, Japan, Australia, Saudi Arabia, Brazil, Russia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, among others. The event will be attended by Majid Rashed, the Asian Paralympic Committee (APC) president, and Tarek Souei, CEO of the Asian Paralympic Committee.

PTI

ICC CHAMPIONS TROPHY

Is Head the luckiest opening batsman?



Travis Head has scored 302 runs after being dropped in 21 ODI innings since 2023. Shubman Gill, who has played 38 ODIs in the same period, has scored 441 runs. Reuters

Going by numbers, the Aussie star will continue to offer a hoard of chances early on and it's up to India to seize the first given opportunity

LALITH KALIDAS  
MARCH 3

NO AUSTRALIAN cricketer in recent memory, not even Steve Smith, has lived rent-free in Indian fans' head as much as their dazzling opener Travis Head. Re-runs of Head's knock in the 2023 ODI world cup final might have vanished from Indian television and streaming devices but his assault has lived on in the minds. And with a caveat: the lingering chance-laden Powerplay, where Head was beaten and squared up by Bumrah and Shami but not felled in that final, continues to make the fans squirm.

Not that Head's tryst with India is limited to that game. Before that in the home Test series in India, or in WTC final at the Oval, and now more recently in Australia, he has repeatedly stunned the Indians. But is there any truth about Head's "lucky streak" or is it just a parochial fan's lament?

Perhaps no cricketer has straddled with fortune as often as Head has in recent years. But what the 31-year-old does with that added vial of opportunities defines his beligerence across formats.

When Mohammad Shami steps up with the new ball on Tuesday, it will be hard to suppress memories from that cold, fragile night in Ahmedabad. There will be no Jasprit Bumrah and Mohammed Siraj to share the burden – the pain of those close shaves with Head's outside edge, his off-stump and the wickets in total that never converted into a single-digit dismissal off a deviously snaking white Kookaburra. He would total 137 in 120 balls. Australia, a sixth World Cup.

Shaky starts

India will need not look beyond Head's two Champions Trophy outings to reaffirm that he will continue to offer a hoard of chances early on. It is up to Rohit's men to

seize the first given opportunity.

When Jofra Archer offered a wide, out-swinging delivery on length under lights in Lahore, Head's half-baked swipe chipped straight back to the bowler's pocket, falling

for 6 (5) in the third over. Chasing 274 in a rain-marred clash against Afghanistan at the same venue six days later, Head teased the brutality of a contrast. Left-arm seamer Fazalhaq Farooqi swung the ball away from

LIVING A CHARMED LIFE					
Top openers in first 10 overs since 2023 in ODIs					
Player	Inns	Runs	False Shot%	Beaten%	Edged%
Travis Head	21	565	29%	11%	16.40%
Rohit Sharma	34	1069	19%	7%	10.70%
Shubman Gill	38	853	15%	5%	10.20%
Travis Head vs New Ball across formats (ODIs +T20Is+Tests) since 2023					
	Inns	Runs	False Shot%	Beaten%	Edged%
ODIs	21	565	29%	11%	16.40%
T20s	21	590	30.50%	11.30%	17.90%
Tests	16	290	19.10%	6.90%	10.60%

Credit: Cricket-21

a similar patch of Archer's from a shorter length. Batting on 6\* (5) this time, Head's mistimed pull was put down by a fumbling Rashid Khan at mid-on. He smothered eight boundaries in the next 34 balls before a washout sealed Australia's knock-out spot.

Rohit would remember an IPL night from last year too when the South Australian butchered Mumbai Indians on his SunRisers Hyderabad debut. Dropped on nine in the second over of the match, Head would immediately clobber 20 off four deliveries in the next over, finishing on 62 off 24 as SRH posted a colossal 277 on board.

Head and the Powerplay 'opening'

Risk and chances, a slew of them in succession, are intrinsic to Head's gameplay across formats. The fatalities of a drop or missed opportunity are pronounced in the white-ball set-ups where Head nearly leaves no delivery unattended.

According to Cricket-21 data, Head has left only two percent of the total deliveries (433) he has faced against the new ball in the first Powerplay across 21 ODI outings since 2023. In comparison, India openers Rohit and Shubman Gill leave about seven percent of their respective deliveries in the Powerplay.

Head's protracted reliance on boundaries exaggerates the risks in the Powerplay. His non-boundary strike rate sticks at 27.1, with Gill (32.71) and Rohit (31.54) posing relatively higher emphasis on running between the wickets. Stacking up against the four highest run-scoring ODI openers (Rohit, Gill, Will

Young and Pathum Nissanka) in this period, Head's false-shot percentage (shots not middle) stands the highest at 29. The Aussie left-hander is also beaten more than his contemporaries, with 11 percentage (47.8) deliveries making up his Powerplay shares. The corresponding figures for Rohit and Gill read 7% and 5% respectively. Head's erratic starts have also borne more than 70 edged strokes in this period, collectively indicating a chance for the opposition nearly every 3.4 deliveries he faces in the ODI Powerplay. Perhaps it's not a coincidence then that Head's T20I strokeplay displays similar strands of streakiness in the first six overs, with negligible deviation in the false shot percentages.

Head, however, has mastered leveraging his second chances to its fullest. A third of Head's 905 runs in ODIs since the last World Cup year have come on the back of dropped chances. Dropped on a staggering 12 of the total 29 dismissal chances he has offered in 21 innings, Head has gathered 302 runs -- each let-off adding 37.8 more runs to his and Australia's tally.

While Gill aggregates more (44.1) with each dropped catch and Rohit (34.1) nearly matches up to the Aussie's effectiveness from a reprieve, the Indian openers offer significantly condensed false strokes (7.6) per dismissal when stacked up against Head who exudes about 10 false shots between each of his 17 dismissals in the last two years.

Dubai could be no different for the nerveless Head. He will leave breadcrumbs for India and wield the willow as hard as ever, but make 'em pay for any loose ends early on.

Madrid derby takes centrestage in Champions League Round of 16

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
MADRID, MARCH 3

THE MADRID derby takes center stage in the round of 16 of the Champions League, with Atletico Madrid in a commanding position to try to finally get the best of rival Real Madrid in the European competition.

Madrid, the record 15-time European champion, has been a thorn for Atletico in the Champions League over the years, beating the city rival in two finals and eliminating it from the competition the other two times they faced off in the knockout rounds.

But this Atletico arrives for Tuesday's first leg at the Santiago Bernabeu Stadium playing some of its best soccer since coach Diego Simeone took over more than a decade ago, and showing the confidence that it can take on the longtime rival head-on.

The round of 16 will begin this week to cap the inaugural season of a new Champions

League format that featured a league phase and a playoff round.

The other last-16 matchups will include the local rivalry of German clubs Bayern Munich and Bayer Leverkusen, and powerhouse Paris Saint-Germain and Liverpool going against each other. Atletico Madrid enters the match against Madrid in good form and enjoying one of its best seasons under Simeone. The team is ahead of its rival in the Spanish league standings, and is only one point behind leader Barcelona.

Atletico hasn't lost any of its matches this season against either Madrid or Barcelona. In the Spanish league, it beat the Catalan club 2-1 in Barcelona and drew 1-1 in both games it played against Madrid. Atletico hasn't lost to Madrid in four consecutive matches, having eliminated the city rival in the round of 16 of the Copa del Rey last season.

"When you choose to be a coach, you want to face the strongest opponents, and to compete in every competition with the intention of



Atletico Madrid's Antoine Griezmann in training ahead of the Champions League tie against Real Madrid. Reuters

winning," Simeone said ahead of the matchup against Madrid. Simeone's team finished fifth in the league phase of the Champions League, while Madrid was only 11th and had to play extra playoff games against Manchester City.

The last time Atletico faced Madrid in the Champions League, it was eliminated in the

semifinals in 2017. It also lost to Madrid in the final both in 2014 and 2016, and in the 2015 quarterfinals. Overall, Atletico has won only three of its 10 meetings against Madrid in UEFA competitions, with five losses and two draws.

Madrid is coming off a loss at Real Betis in the Spanish league, while Atletico won 1-0 against Athletic Bilbao.

Meanwhile, Premier League leader Liverpool finished the league phase in first place but there was little reward as it will have to take on France powerhouse Paris Saint-Germain in the round of 16. PSG struggled in the league phase, finishing in 15th place, but picked up momentum in the playoffs by routing fellow French club Brest 3-0 in the first leg and 7-0 in the return game at home, when seven different players scored.

Liverpool won seven of its eight Champions League matches this season, with the lone defeat coming at PSV Eindhoven in the final matchday, when it had little to lose. An in-form Barcelona, which had the second-best cam-

paign in the league phase, will face a familiar foe in Benfica. The two teams met in the league phase, with the Barcelona winning a 5-4 thriller in Lisbon. Benfica stunned Barcelona 3-0 at home in the group stage in 2021-22, and held the Spanish powerhouse to a 0-0 away draw in results that helped keep the five-time champion from advancing to the knockout stage at the time. PSV vs. ArsenalPSV Eindhoven brought one of the surprises of the league phase with its 3-2 win over Liverpool, and then it got past Juventus with an extra-time victory in the playoffs. It will now another face another Premier League team in top form: An Arsenal squad that is second in the Premier behind Liverpool and that finished third in the league phase of the Champions League.

Bayern Munich vs. Bayer LeverkusenThe all-German encounter will feature a Leverkusen side that finished sixth in the league phase and a Bayern team that needed a stoppage-time goal by Alphonso Davies to get through the playoffs against Celtic.

Paul-Tyson and other influencer bouts compromise safety, says World Boxing chief

PRITISH RAJ & SHASHANK NAIR  
MARCH 3

WORLD BOXING (WB) President Boris van der Vorst on Monday expressed concern over pugilists' safety being compromised in the recent surge of influencer boxing events and stressed on the need for the use of protective gear in these bouts.

Van Der Vorst's comments gain significance in the light of the fight between YouTube influencer Jake Paul and former world heavy-weight champion Mike Tyson, which went ahead last November after being postponed due to the 58-year-old boxing legend suffering an ulcer ailment.

Admitting that "even my daughters were hooked to the event," and he himself had conducted a much smaller influencer boxing event in the Netherlands, Van Der Vorst indicated that not all precautions are taken over such high-profile bouts.

"Such fights are nice for newer audiences but the safety of the boxers is a big question. The event I sanctioned in the Netherlands had thicker gloves with head guards in order to guarantee a safe outcome," Vorst told *The Indian Express*. World Boxing was recently given provisional status by the International Olympic Committee, and replaces the International Boxing Association (IBA) as the



World Boxing president Boris van der Vorst. Facebook

premier world body of the sport. But the challenge for World Boxing will be to deal with issues like sporting integrity, governance and the recent controversy surrounding boxers like Imane Khelif of Algeria and Lin Yu-Ting of Chinese Taipei competing in women's categories at the 2024 Paris Olympics despite speculation about them being transgenders.

Van Der Vorst has backed the International Olympic Committee's Paris Boxing Unit's rules that allowed both pugilists to participate but said boxers' safety was "paramount". World Boxing is in the process of drafting its competition rules.

"We have recognised for some time now that gender clarity is an extremely complex is-

sue. There are significant welfare concerns and so we have established a working group of our medical committee on developing a policy based on sex, age and weight. Experts from other disciplines, including the Independent Council of Women's Sport, are developing a policy that will determine the eligibility of boxers to participate in competitions," he said.

Focus on transparent scoring

One of the biggest problems with Olympic boxing over the years has been the divisive scoring system that often leaves the audience second-guessing the winner of a close bout.

"Lack of sporting integrity was one of the key concerns that the IOC had with the previous organisation. I think one of our main priorities is to restore the trust of all stakeholders, including IOC, fans, spectators, coaches, and boxers," said Van Der Vorst.

Post the 2012 London Olympics, the scoring system that involves five judges giving points out of 10 to both boxers after each round has lacked clarity in the parameters considered. When asked if World Boxing will look at an alternative to the current system, its president said, "We want the best boxer to win, not the most influential one. The Paris Boxing Unit conducted a decent tournament at the 2024 Olympics. We have already done several projects which involve the usage of modern technology such as AI to make the scoring system more transparent and fair. We would explore

all the avenues that could be useful in making scoring more transparent. We would also train the technical officials and referees."

Established in 2023, World Boxing emerged as the alternative when the IOC banned Umar Kremlev-led International Boxing Association (IBA) on grounds of poor governance, corruption, and lack of efficient administration.

Subsequently, the IOC decided to keep boxing out of the LA 2028 programme. World Boxing, led by Van Der Vorst, started meeting national federations in order to campaign as an alternative to govern the sport. Despite facing some early resistance, WB garnered the support of India, the Netherlands, USA, Italy, Brazil and Britain.

"We have provisional recognition but it is a long road ahead of us. We have to deliver a better environment for the sport. We have met most of the requirements laid out by the IOC, like coming under CAS jurisdiction, and have applied for signatory status of World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA)," explained Van Der Vorst. Currently, World Boxing has 78 members from five continents. It has also formed four continental confederations - Americas, Asia, Europe, and Oceania.

It will conduct events such as the Boxing World Cup and the World Championships this year. The World Boxing Cup Finals and the World Boxing Congress will be held in India in November.

Delhi HC stays IOA order on forming boxing ad-hoc panel

SOHINI GHOSH  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 3

THE DELHI High Court on Monday stayed an ad-hoc committee to manage the affairs of the Boxing Federation of India until it conducts its elections.

The BFI had moved the court terming IOA's February 24 order, signed by president PT Usha, "arbitrary and illegal", claiming that the national sports federation (NSF) has the exclusive authority to regulate, promote and manage boxing activities in the country. The plea before Justice Sachin Datta stressed that BFI is an independent and autonomous body, governed by its own constitution, rules and regulations.

The federation alleged that the IOA order was issued without any prior notice, discussion or correspondence with BFI, and was in clear violation of the principles of natural justice. BFI also claimed that the IOA constitution doesn't confer any power on its president to constitute an ad-hoc committee.

Seeking quashing of the IOA order, the BFI said that the "sudden and illegal interference" in its functioning would cause confusion and instability at a time when it's in the process of conducting elections. The IOA move, it added, provided a dangerous precedent with regard to the governance of other sports federations.

Justice Datta issued a notice, seeking a re-

sponse from the IOA and the sports ministry, and posted the matter for consideration on March 27. He also directed the BFI to hold its elections within three months, failing which the IOA was free to take appropriate disciplinary action. As per the IOA counsel, a meeting is scheduled between its president and BFI officials for reaching an amicable resolution in the matter.

In its order notifying the constitution of a five-member ad-hoc committee with Madhukant Pathak as its chairperson, the IOA had argued that it had "received numerous complaints from stakeholders, including athletes, coaches, and concerned authorities, regarding the non-participation of Indian boxers in various important National/International events in recent months."

It added that "this situation is detrimental to the growth and performance of Indian boxing on the global stage and necessitates immediate coercive measures."

While staying the IOA order, Justice Datta also took into account a recent verdict when he had set aside an IOA decision to appoint an ad-hoc committee to manage the affairs of the Bihar Olympic Association. The court had ruled that the IOA president "cannot be considered to have the power to constitute an ad-hoc committee to 'look after the affairs'" of a state Olympic association.

"BFI will conduct the elections within the next 45 days from today," a federation spokesperson told *The Indian Express*. (With inputs from Pritish Raj)

