

AN EXPRESS SERIES

75
YEARS ON
RESHAPING THE
REPUBLIC
CASE BY LANDMARK CASE

1952
STATE OF WEST BENGAL
V ANWAR ALI SARKAR
PAGE 8

SPORT



NEW ZEALAND BEAT SOUTH AFRICA BY 50 RUNS, TO MEET INDIA IN FINAL [PAGE 22](#)

SCHEME FOR WOMEN AGED BELOW 60

₹2,500 pm payout for Delhi women: Annual income cap set at ₹3 lakh

GAYATHRI MANI
NEW DELHI, MARCH 5

WOMEN WHOSE household income is less than Rs 3 lakh per year, and those who do not pay tax will be eligible for the Rs 2,500 grant from the Delhi government, *The Indian Express* has learnt. Only those aged between 18 and 60, who do not hold government jobs and are not receiving any other government financial assistance, will get the grant under the BJP government's Mahila Samridhi Scheme, officials said.

The scheme was one of the top poll promises made by the BJP in the run-up to the Delhi Assembly elections. Prime Minister Narendra Modi had promised that it will be implemented by March 8, International Women's Day. According to sources, the government has estimated that around 15-20 lakh women will meet the criteria. "Several rounds of meetings have taken place to finalise the modalities of the scheme. The Cabinet note will be ready by [CONTINUED ON PAGE 2](#)

BUSINESS AS USUAL
BY UNNY



THE CITY

SHOULD WE RETAIN KEJRIWAL'S EXISTING SECURITY COVER: POLICE TO ASK MHA [P3](#)

6-POINT RESOLUTION PASSED AT ALL-PARTY MEETING CALLED BY STALIN TN parties oppose delimitation: Freeze 1971 Census as basis for 30 more yrs

Call for Joint Action Committee with members from other southern states

ARUN JANARDHANAN & NIKHILA HENRY
CHENNAI, HYDERABAD, MARCH 5

IN A rare display of unity, most political parties across Tamil Nadu came together for an all-party meeting called by Chief Minister M K Stalin at the State Secretariat on Wednesday to oppose the delimitation of Parliamentary constituencies,

which is due in 2026. In a six-point resolution, the parties asked the Centre to extend the 1971 Census-based delimitation framework for another 30 years beyond 2026, to ensure fair representation for states that have effectively controlled their population. It is unjust to reduce Tamil Nadu's parliamentary representation only because it has effectively implemented population control measures in the national [CONTINUED ON PAGE 2](#)



CM M K Stalin arrives for the all-party meet in Chennai. [PTI](#)

Polls ahead, Stalin takes lead as anti-BJP voice

ARUN JANARDHANAN
CHENNAI, MARCH 5

IN his determined campaign to emerge as the voice of the South, and as the face of the Opposition to the largely North-centric BJP, DMK chief and Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M K Stalin will count Wednesday as a success. Stalin, who has been taking

on the Centre over its all-India projects such as NEET for admission to medical colleges and the National Education Policy (NEP), managed to get parties across the divisive political spectrum in Tamil Nadu to join him in opposing any delimitation based on new population data. A delimitation leading to a change in the number of [CONTINUED ON PAGE 2](#)

Trump: High tariffs by India and others unfair, reciprocal tariffs from April 2

RAVI DUTTA MISHRA
NEW DELHI, MARCH 5

CRITICISING THE high tariffs imposed by India and other countries as "not fair", US President Donald Trump on Tuesday announced reciprocal tariffs from April 2. Trump's remarks, in an address to the Joint Session of the US Congress, signalled that negotiations for a trade deal may not yield concessions for New Delhi on sweeping duties. He singled out the auto sector, where, he said, India charges tariffs of over 100 per cent. "Other countries have used

THE WORLD

U.S. SUPREME COURT PUSHES BACK ON USAID FUNDING
[PAGE 14](#)

tariffs against us for decades and now it's our turn to start using them against those other countries. On average, the European Union, China, Brazil, India, Mexico and Canada — have you [CONTINUED ON PAGE 2](#)

EXPLAINED
[PAGE 15](#)

12 DAYS ON, EIGHT STILL TRAPPED IN TELANGANA TUNNEL

5 yrs before tunnel collapse, report red-flagged 'fault zone', weak rocks

NIKHILA HENRY
HYDERABAD, MARCH 5

FIVE YEARS before a part of the SLBC Tunnel in Telangana collapsed, trapping eight men on February 22 this year, a report commissioned by Jaiprakash Associates Ltd warned of a possible "fault zone" in the tunnel — stretches where the possibility of collapse is high. Jaiprakash Associates Ltd is the Noida-based company that was awarded the tunnelling contract in 2005. The report, Tunnel Seismic Prediction (TSP) - 303 Plus, was prepared in January 2020 by



Rescue operation underway to trace the workers trapped inside the tunnel in Nagarkurnool, Wednesday. [PTI](#)

Amberg Tech AG, a company that surveys tunnelling. According to the report, the fault zone existed

between 13.88 km (13,882 m) and 13.91 km (13,914 m) from [CONTINUED ON PAGE 2](#)



UKRAINE, TRADE ON TABLE

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar, UK Foreign Secretary David Lammy with their spouses Kyoko Jaishankar, Nicola Green in London. Jaishankar also met UK PM Keir Starmer. Besides bilateral ties, Ukraine was also discussed. [PTI](#) [PAGE 6](#)

MARUTI SUZUKI

NEXA

WHERE'S YOUR INSPIRATION TAKING YOU NEXT?

Drive home your favourite NEXA car and explore new horizons.

CREATE. INSPIRE.

3 years 100 000 km
WARRANTY*
EXTENDABLE UPTO 6 YEARS

CONSUMER OFFERS OF UP TO ₹1 00 000*

EXCHANGE BONUS OF UP TO ₹1 00 000*

PER LAKH EMI STARTING FROM ₹1 470*

ADDITIONAL SCRAPPAGE BONUS UP TO ₹ 15 000 IS AVAILABLE AGAINST VALID CERTIFICATE OF DEPOSIT.

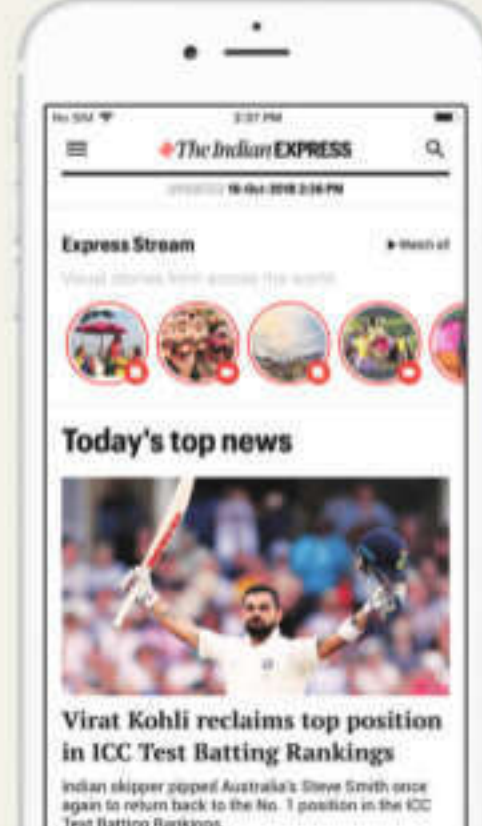


SCAN TO CONNECT TO A SHOWROOM NEAR YOU



E-BOOK TODAY @ WWW.NEXAEXPERIENCE.COM

Contact us at
1800-200-6392
1800-102-6392



DOWNLOAD APP

- VISUAL STORIES
- DAILY BRIEFING
- PODCASTS
- CUSTOMIZABLE NEWS EXPERIENCE

Indian Express
★★★★★ 4.6



SCAN THIS QR CODE TO
DOWNLOAD THE APP



THE 'INVISIBLE' THREAD THAT CONNECTS PONDICHERRY AND VIETNAM: AN INTERVIEW WITH PROFESSOR ANANYA JAHANARA KABIR

Vietnam is like a "public secret" in Pondicherry, says Ananya. In her conversation with *The Indian Express*, she explained the complex colonial history that ties the two territories and the many residues it has left behind

TECH



NOTHING'S PHONE 3A AND 3A PRO REVIEW

Better battery life and cameras, slick software interface & subtle AI



UPSC ESSENTIALS

Scan the QR code and get 'the express edge' in your civil services preparation with our UPSC specials

EXPRESS AUDIO

BJP elections, transgender health clinic shut & techie found dead in Hyderabad

In this episode of 3 *Things*, we discuss the BJP presidential elections and the reasons for the delay. We discuss Mittr, India's first comprehensive transgender health clinic, shutting down due to lack of USAID funds. We discuss a software professional who was found dead at her home in Hyderabad

UP, Bihar population welcome sign, not a problem, says Naidu

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, MARCH 5

ANDHRA PRADESH Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu said Wednesday that the population of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar are a "welcome sign rather than a problem" as demographic dividend is good for the country.

Naidu was addressing a press conference in New Delhi after meeting Union Home Minister Amit Shah, Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and Union Transport Minister Nitin Gadkari to discuss various issues. Stating that many countries across the world are struggling with an ageing population, he said he also wants the southern states to promote population growth. He, however, refused to take a stand on delimitation, since, he said, there has been no Bill yet and that he would not comment on assumptions.

"The ageing population is an issue. Europe, Japan and China have an ageing problem. In North India, Bihar and UP population is a welcome sign rather than a problem. India has a demographic dividend. Promotion of population is important. What we need is demographic management," Naidu said.

The TDP chief's comments come after Tamil Nadu CM M K Stalin recently urged young couples to have children "immediately" after marriage as higher population is a criterion to get more MPs "as the delimitation exercise would be on the basis of population".

Regarding a question on Tamil Nadu's opposition to the three-language formula, Naidu said that it is "better to learn Hindi" for mingling with people in the country. He also said that he wants to pro-



Andhra CM Chandrababu Naidu meets Union Home Minister Amit Shah in New Delhi on Wednesday. PTI

mote English for international exposure and that Telugu is promoted in his state as the mother tongue. He said that he was an advocate of learning not just three but multiple languages.

At present, the DMK-led Tamil Nadu government is at loggerheads with the BJP-ruled Centre over its NEP 2020, which has retained the three-language formula with fewer restrictions on the choices of languages.

"Today, the biggest problem for me is petitions on land grabbing. Even forest land has been grabbed. We want to deal with it firmly. So, the Andhra Pradesh land grabbing provision Bill has been passed," Naidu told reporters. He added that he also discussed with Shah a Bill to counter drug menace, including its cultivation, in the state.

"We have discussed the destruction of Andhra Pradesh under the previous government. The debt is ₹10 lakh crore," Naidu said. He said that during his meeting with Sitharaman, he discussed the intra-linking of rivers in the state so that drought-prone areas of Rayalaseema is benefitted.

Jagan keeps up demand for principal Opp tag, cites Delhi example

SREENIVAS JANYALA
HYDERABAD, MARCH 5

THE YSRCP's demand to be declared principal opposition party in the state continued to roil the Andhra Pradesh Assembly, with the party protesting yet again Wednesday after Speaker C Ayyanna Patrudu rejected party chief Jagan Mohan Reddy's request to be recognised as Leader of Opposition.

Calling former CM Jagan's request to be recognised as LoP "unreasonable", Patrudu said the law required parties to have at least 18 members to qualify for the position. YSRCP has 11 of 175 seats. This is the second time since the Budget Session started February 24 that YSRCP has raised the demand for LoP in the House.

Minister N Lokesh Naidu also made a statement in Assembly supporting the Speaker's stance. However, Jagan opposed the Speaker's ruling.

"The AAP had given BJP opposition party status when it had only three members. We are the only Opposition in Andhra Pradesh — the TDP, the BJP, and the Jana Sena are coalition members," Jagan said in the Assembly.

He also accused the TDP-led Chandrababu Naidu government of disregarding constitutional values "by not allowing the only Opposition party in the Assembly to function properly in the House, not allotted enough time to speak, and not allocated LoP status".

"How will the voice of the people be heard, if the Opposition party is not allowed in the Assembly. We got 40% vote share and if we are given Opposition status then who will be the Opposition?" he asked.

The Speaker reminded Jagan that his writ petition in the Andhra Pradesh HC to be recognised as LoP was still pending, warning that his accusations could amount to breach of privilege and contempt of the House.

FROM PAGE ONE
Tamil Nadu parties oppose delimitation, pass resolution

interest, the resolution said.

Besides underlining that there should not be any reduction in the number of Lok Sabha seats, the meeting also called for a Joint Action Committee (JAC) comprising MPs from Tamil Nadu and other southern states to raise awareness and coordinate efforts in the "fight against delimitation".

Besides the ruling DMK, the Congress, AIADMK, Left parties, Viduthala Chiruthaigal Katchi and Tamilaga Vetri Kazhagam attended the meeting. The BJP, Naam Tamilar Katchi and Tamil Maanila Congress stayed away.

"The sword of delimitation is hanging over South India," Stalin said in his opening remarks. "Tamil Nadu is going to be severely affected by this... It will suppress Tamil Nadu's voice in the national political arena," he said, adding that such an approach would "punish Tamil Nadu for successfully implementing population control measures and contributing significantly to national development."

Recalling that then PM A B Vajpayee had assured Parliament in 2000 that the 1971 Census would be used as the basis for delimitation until at least 2026, Stalin

proposed that the "status quo should continue for at least three decades", until 2056. He said the proposed delimitation was a "direct attack on Tamil Nadu's political representation in India's democracy". "If parliamentary, legislative and Rajya Sabha seats are reduced based on population, it would amount to penalising the southern states, particularly Tamil Nadu, for implementing successful socio-economic welfare schemes over the past five decades," Stalin said.

He called on all parties in the state to stand united on the issue, warning that the loss of seats would have lasting repercussions on Tamil Nadu's ability to assert its rights at the national level. "If the Union Government refuses to acknowledge the concerns raised by our 39 MPs today, imagine the consequences if that number is reduced even further... It would result in irreversible injustice to Tamil Nadu," he said. He said his government would take "all measures to prevent implementation of delimitation".

The resolution echoed these views. Delimitation will "weaken" Tamil Nadu and be a "threat to India's federal structure", it said.

● Trump: High tariffs unfair

heard of them? And countless other nations charge us tremendously higher tariffs than we charge them," Trump said. "It's very unfair. India charges us auto tariffs higher than 100 per cent." "India charges us 100 per cent tariffs; the system is not fair to the US, it never was. On April 2, reciprocal tariffs kick in. Whatever they tax us, we will tax them. If they use non-monetary tariffs to keep us out of their market, then we will use non-monetary barriers to keep them out of our market," Trump said.

This comes weeks after Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to the US raised hopes in the Indian industry that a trade deal could help India secure relief from sweeping US tariffs in exchange for market access for US products. India had proactively slashed tariffs on a number of items, such as bourbon whiskey, even before negotiations began.

Meanwhile, efforts to soften the impact of reciprocal tariffs are ongoing. Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal began his US trip on Monday to meet the new United States Representative, Jameson Greer, who has been tasked with implementing Trump's tariff plan. Greer was also part of Trump's first administration, which broadly targeted China, helping create export opportunities for India, particularly

in the electronics sector.

Push to old US demand

Trade experts said the US has long been pushing other countries to lower tariffs during multilateral negotiations and that reciprocal tariffs represent a more aggressive attempt to achieve a longstanding US goal. Abhijit Das, a former trade negotiator and an expert in international trade policy and the WTO, said the US had sought reductions in tariffs from all countries during the WTO Doha Round in November 2001, but these efforts did not come to fruition at the time. "They wanted all countries to reduce their bound tariffs, which would have been less ambitious than what the US is attempting now. At that point, under the Doha Round, the US failed to achieve its goal. But through Trump's threat of reciprocal tariffs, he might achieve much more than what the US wanted during the Doha Round. Beyond pushing for lower tariffs, he may also gain concessions on government procurement and Intellectual Property Rights (IPRs)," he said.

India's high tariffs on automobiles

Trump's remarks on high tariffs on automobiles are particularly significant, as India exports nearly 30 per cent of its total auto parts and accessories to the US, its

largest export market in this category. In FY24, India exported \$2.12 billion worth of "parts and accessories of motor vehicles" to the US, out of a total of \$7.20 billion in exports for this commodity classification.

Notably, India's auto component exports have been on the rise, primarily driven by the US market, due to the US-China trade war that Trump initiated during his first term. Total auto component exports jumped from \$4.8 billion in FY19 to \$7.2 billion in FY24, with exports to the US rising from \$1.3 billion to \$2.12 billion over the same period.

The Indian automobile industry had hoped to sustain this growth over the next five years, as India currently accounts for only 2 per cent of the US's \$300 billion auto parts imports. A trade war targeting China could have allowed India to secure a larger market share. However, reciprocal tariffs would mean tariffs on Indian auto parts would also increase, as the tariff differential between India and US stands at a steep 23 per cent, according to GTRI.

Reciprocal tariff impact

A Goldman Sachs report suggested that India could be affected by Trump's tariffs at the country level, the product level, or through non-tariff barriers, all of which could complicate trade relations.

At the country level, the report said reciprocity would be the sim-

on population, and we are still standing for the same cause."

Actor-turned-politician Kamal Haasan said delimitation affects all southern states. He said that the BJP "wants to create Hindia", a jibe targeting the Centre's insistence that Tamil Nadu should implement the three-language formula.

According to several parties, including the DMK, the three-language formula would "impose Hindi" on Tamil students who currently study just two languages — Tamil and English.

While VCK leader Thol Thirumavalavan spoke in support of delimitation, he said a "status quo should continue based on 1971 Census". He taunted the state BJP unit and said the party should have joined the meeting if they had "any concern for the people of Tamil Nadu".

Meanwhile, the state BJP, led by state president K Annamalai, called the meeting "funny". "The fear of delimitation affecting the southern states is imaginary," Annamalai said. Earlier, Union Home Minister Amit Shah had said that the southern states, including Tamil Nadu, would not lose a single Parliamentary seat on account of delimitation.

plest to implement. If applied at the product level — where the US matches India's tariffs on each imported product — "this may increase the average tariff differential by ~11.5 percentage points, but would be more complex and require a longer implementation timeline," it said.

"Reciprocity through non-tariff barriers, such as administrative restrictions, import licences, and export subsidies, is the most complicated approach, given the challenges of estimating non-tariff barriers. However, it could lead to even higher tariffs at either the product or country level," the report said. "India's gross exports to the US are among the lowest compared to its emerging market peers, at 2 per cent of GDP. We estimate a potential domestic GDP growth impact of 0.1-0.3 percentage points under different scenarios of an increase in the US's effective tariff rate on Indian exports, depending on whether reciprocity is applied at the country or product level and based on different estimates of US demand elasticity for Indian exports."

However, in the case of global tariffs imposed by the US on all countries, India's exposure to US final demand — factoring in exports via third countries — would be roughly twice as high (~4.0 per cent of GDP). This could lead to a potential domestic GDP growth impact of 0.1-0.6 percentage points, the report added.

arrangement for celebrating the International Women's Day on March 8, when the scheme is likely to be launched.

"The scheme will be launched and the registration process will begin. They also plan to give the money to some eligible women on March 8, during the launch and then with the registration, more eligible candidates will avail the benefit," an official said.

The event to start registration is likely to be held at the Chhatrasal stadium in North Delhi. The Chief Minister and all ministers will attend.

Meanwhile, intensifying its pressure on the government, the AAP staged demonstrations at ITO and various flyovers on Wednesday. They held banners which read: "Bas 3 din aur, har mahila ko har mahina Rs 2,500." The party also put posters at several locations across the city.

Hitting back, Chief Minister Rekha Gupta said: "We don't need anyone to remind us how many days are remaining or dictate how we do our work. We will work as per our agenda and fulfil our promises."

● Stalin takes lead as anti-BJP voice

constituencies was last held in 1973. While the next one — over which the South is concerned — is due in 2026, it is unlikely to happen any time soon as the Census exercise that has to precede it is itself delayed.

What will come around earlier are the Tamil Nadu Assembly elections, due next year, and with the Opposition AIADMK also on board his anti-delimitation plank, Stalin has clearly changed gears.

At the all-party meeting, Stalin said a delimitation based on population would be "a direct attack on Tamil Nadu's political representation in India's democracy".

"The sword of constituency delimitation is hanging over South India's head," he said, adding that the 1971 Census should be the basis for any delimitation till at least 2056.

Apart from the AIADMK, those present included DMK allies Congress and the Left, and actor-politician Vijay's newly launched Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam. Tamil nationalist party Naam Tamilar Katchi and former Union minister G K Vasan's Tamil Maanila Congress and BJP stayed away.

Stalin has upped the ante on delimitation at a time when his war of words with Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan over the three-language policy under the NEP continues.

After Pradhan suggested that Central funds under the Samagra Shiksha scheme, amounting to Rs 2,152 crore, would be withheld unless Tamil Nadu implemented the NEP and adopted the three-language formula, Stalin defined it as an attack on the Tamil language — an issue with much emotional potency in the state.

The DMK government has also been in a near-constant battle of attrition with Governor R N Ravi. When Ravi referred to Tamil Nadu as "Tamizhagam", suggesting that its current name implied it was a separate land (Nadu), Stalin invoked "insult" to Dravidian pride.

The DMK chief has also organised meetings around the theme of "Social Justice" — the party's original political philosophy — which

were attended by CMs of other Opposition-ruled states.

Even via archaeology digs and findings, Stalin has tried to reinforce the Dravidian identity of his party and government, as opposed to the Aryan ideology espoused by BJP co-travellers.

Lately, Stalin has taken on the Centre over its "unfair taxation practices", getting the support of non-BJP CMs of Karnataka, Kerala and Telangana.

On the delimitation front, after Stalin raised the red flag, Telangana CM Revanth Reddy and Karnataka CM Siddaramaiah raised similar concerns. In September 2024, the LDF government in Kerala led by Pinarayi Vijayan had organised a Conclave of Finance Ministers, where the participants spoke about delimitation harming the interests of southern states.

The logic of these states is that since they have managed to control their population compared to their counterparts in the North, a population-based delimitation exercise may leave them with fewer constituencies. Even if the seat numbers are increased, they will be far behind the surge in the North in a population-based exercise, leaving the South inconsequential — in theory — in who comes to power at the Centre.

Tamil Nadu currently has 39 Lok Sabha constituencies. Stalin reiterated Wednesday that the state could lose eight seats if the total number of parliamentary constituencies remains at 543. If the number of MPs is expanded to 848, a delimitation based solely on population would add 10 seats to its tally, the CM said. However, a formula not based on population could get it an additional 12 seats, Stalin argued.

The unanimous six-point resolution passed at the all-party meeting, while demanding the extension of the 1971-based delimitation framework for another 30 years, said that if the total number of MPs in Parliament is increased, Tamil Nadu should receive a proportionate increase in constituencies based on the 1971 population figures.

● Report red-flagged 'fault zone'

the mouth of the tunnel. The report also found a decrease in rock strength in this stretch and highlighted that the stretch was a water-bearing zone.

When contacted, Jaiprakash Associates Ltd confirmed the report but refused to elaborate, saying, "We have no comments on this." Amberg also declined to comment, stating that the report and its data are confidential.

The company calculated the risky transmitting seismic waves into the rock mass and recording and evaluating the portions with anomalies. The remarks in the report read, "Decrease in rock stiffness", "possible jointed sheared rock mass", and "possible water bearing zone".

Rescuers in the know said the collapse happened near this stretch. "The roof caved for three metres around the fault zone," a top official involved in the rescue operations said.

The rescue operations have had to be intermittently stopped because the tunnel keeps flooding, and search and rescue operations are going on after 13.5 km into the tunnel, a rescuer said. Here, the tunnel boring machine is stuck at a dead-end, and the workers are nowhere in sight, the official said.

The report was submitted to Jaiprakash Associates Ltd in 2020, it is learnt. "It is not known whether this report was shared with the Irrigation Department of the state government," a source said. When contacted, a top official from the Irrigation department, who worked on the SLBC project, told *The Indian Express*, "I do not recollect having gone through this report."

Asked whether the conditions on the ground could change in

four years, a geologist said, "In four years, the ground condition would remain the same — that is, the rocks would remain the same. But there could be more chances of water seepage."

Meanwhile, another study on the tunnel had revealed a different anomaly, again in 2020. As per a research paper by former Director General of Geological Survey of India Mandapalli Raju and Jaiprakash Associates' geologist Rituraj Deshmukh, the tunnelling started with poor subsurface exploration.

The paper, Geotechnical aspects of a long tunnel, driven by TBM at SLBC of AMR Project, Telangana State, India, reads, "As the entire tunnel alignment falls in Tiger Reserve Forest, subsurface investigations such as drilling boreholes or excavation of drifts along the tunnel alignment were not permitted. Further, most of the tunnel alignment is inaccessible for physical examination. As a result, excavation of the tunnel was commenced without any firm and confirmed geotechnical data."

Tunnelling started with a "broad preliminary assessment of the terrain" based on "the data available and experience gained in tunnels of Srisailem Left Bank Underground Power Station present in the vicinity, and taking help of aerial photo study and using remote sensing techniques", the paper read.

Those feared dead in the tunnel have been identified as Sunny Singh and Gurpreet Singh of Robbins Tunnel Boring Machines Manufacturing Company, and Manoj Kumar, Srinivas, Sandeep Sahu, Santosh Sahu, Anuj Sahu and Jagath Khes of Jaiprakash Associates Ltd.

Sure Shot Prelims

EKLAVYA Ace

Daily half-Full Syllabus Test (H-FST) to Ace UPSC Prelims

UPSC 2025 Eklavya

Not Coaching Test

40 Tests ₹999/-

www.KalamsAcademy 98878-44044

ENTRY-LEVEL CLASSES
IN PRIVATE SCHOOLS

42,000 EWS and DG seats allotted in first draw of lots

EXPRESSNEWSERVICE
NEW DELHI, MARCH 5

THE FIRST computerised draw of lots for admission of students under the Economically Weaker Section (EWS) and Disadvantaged Group (DG) categories for entry-level classes in private schools was conducted on Wednesday for 42,000 seats, for which over 2.5 lakh applications had been received.

This was the first time that the draw of lots, which was conducted in the presence of Delhi Education Minister Ashish Sood, was held publicly. Multiple screens were installed at the venue so that parents could see the process in real-time.

At the event, two children initiated the draw. Bhavesh pressed the draw button for KG and Class 1, while Bhavika initiated the draw for Nursery.

For Nursery admissions, 24,933 seats were available in 1,299 schools, for which 1,00,854 applications were received. For Kindergarten (KG), 4,682 seats were available in 622 schools, attracting 40,488 applications. In Class 1, 14,430 seats were up for allotment in 1,213 schools, with 62,597 applicants for the same.

All students selected in the draw will receive a message by evening and will be called to the Directorate of Education (DoE) office for document verification, Sood told mediapersons. "Once the DoE verifies the documents and approves the admission, schools cannot deny admission based on any document-related issue," he added.

"We have introduced multiple



For first time, draw of lots was held publicly. File

safeguards to make sure the process remains fair. This includes a redraw option in case of objections, strict restrictions on cell-phone usage at the venue, and complete video surveillance. The entire process was carried out under the supervision of a special committee from DoE, which will also submit a sealed CD of the final results," Sood said.

Maintaining that it was a significant initiative, he added, "We have taken every possible step to ensure that the EWS admission process is fair, transparent and just. Every child deserves an equal chance at quality education."

Last December, L-GVKSaxena had approved the increase of the EWS income limit from Rs 2.5 lakh to Rs 5 lakh, allowing more children from underprivileged backgrounds to benefit from quality schooling. A child who has got admission under the EWS, DG or Children with Special Needs (CWSN) category cannot again seek admission under the same categories in private unaided recognised schools.

Sood, meanwhile, said the registration period for children with special needs, transgender students and other categories has been extended.

After Lankan supervisor exit, PhD scholar quits SAU over Chomsky row

VIDHEESHA KUNTAMALLA
NEW DELHI, MARCH 5

A PHD scholar at South Asian University whose doctoral research proposal on Kashmir's ethnography and politics had earned him a showcase notice from the institution and led to a disciplinary inquiry against his supervisor has left SAU citing personal reasons, *The Indian Express* has learnt. The research proposal had referenced American linguist Noam Chomsky's criticism of the NDA government.

The PhD scholar's exit comes within six months of his faculty supervisor Sasanka Perera quitting over the issue. Perera, a Sri Lankan anthropologist who taught at SAU for 13 years and helped found its Sociology department, had told *The Indian Express* last September that he decided to retire prematurely because he did not see any "semblance of justice" coming from an inquiry that was initiated "on trumped-up and irrational charges". His last day on campus was July 31, 2024.

SAU is an international university sponsored by eight SAARC countries and comes under the Ministry of External Affairs. Sri Lanka is a member state of its Governing Board, and Perera was the only Sri Lankan professor on campus.

As first reported by *The Indian Express* on July 27 last year, SAU issued notices to Perera in April 2024 and the research scholar in May 2024 demanding an explanation regarding his conduct.

The notice issued to the PhD student flagged a private YouTube video of an interview with Chomsky, cited in the scholar's proposal, in which the linguist is heard saying that the Prime Minister is attempting to "dismantle Indian secular democracy" and "impose Hindu ethnocracy".

While Perera subsequently quit over the issue, the researcher appeared before a disciplinary committee and apologised to the university administration for hurting sentiments.

According to sources, in December, officials from his department reached out to the re-

searcher to inquire about his absence. In response, it is learnt that he cited medical reasons and assured the university that he would return to the department in the first week of January 2025. However, on January 24, the university's Proctor office issued an email summoning him to appear before a proctorial committee on January 28. That same day, the scholar informed the office that he had withdrawn from the PhD programme. It is also learnt that he had conveyed that he was no longer associated with SAU, as he had decided to focus on his business and had already communicated this decision to his new supervisor.

When contacted, the scholar did not comment on the matter. SAU President Professor K K Agarwal told *The Indian Express* to direct queries to the press relations office. The press relations officer, O P Yadav, and the Chairperson of the SAU's Sociology Department (in which the PhD scholar was enrolled), Dev Nath Pathak, did not respond to calls and messages.

Should we retain Kejriwal's existing security cover: Police to ask MHA

Will also seek decision on security for Atishi

MAHENDER SINGH MANRAL
NEW DELHI, MARCH 5

A MONTH after the defeat of AAP national convenor Arvind Kejriwal in the Delhi elections, the Delhi Police security unit has decided to ask the Ministry of Home Affairs whether the security cover provided to him should continue or be scaled down.

The Indian Express has learnt that the security unit has sent a letter to the Delhi Police headquarters for the MHA, seeking a decision on the security cover for Kejriwal.

A former Delhi Chief Minister, Kejriwal currently has 'Z plus' security cover, provided by the MHA based on the threat perception, and Z-category security which was given by Delhi Police.

As per protocol, the Delhi Chief



Gets 'Z plus' security from MHA, Z-category from police

Minister is entitled to Z-category security, which can be enhanced after an assessment. Due to multiple security threats, the MHA had granted 'Z plus' security cover to Kejriwal and the Z-category security was given by Delhi Police even after he resigned from the CM post in September 2024.

"Assessment of the threat perception of VIP or VVIPs are conducted by security agencies on the direction of the MHA," a senior officer said.

"A letter has been sent to the PHQ from the security unit, informing it about the current status of his (Kejriwal's) security cover and seeking a decision on whether the current security status should continue or be downgraded," a source said, citing the letter, which is currently in the PHQ and is likely to be sent to the

MHA in the coming days. Along with the letter on Kejriwal's security cover, a source said another letter being sent to the MHA is one informing it about the Z-category security cover of former CM Atishi and asking it for a decision on whether the current security status should be continued or downgraded.

Reached for comment, a senior officer at Delhi Police headquarters confirmed that these letters are being sent because these security covers basically come with the portfolios the persons hold. Now that they no longer hold these portfolios, the letters have to be sent to the MHA, the officer said.

Meanwhile, after providing Z-category security cover to Chief Minister Rekha Gupta, the security unit has provided X-category security cover to ministers Ravinder Indraj Singh and Pankaj Singh. With this, all new ministers have security cover. Manjinder Singh Sirsa has Z-category security while Parvesh Sahib Singh, Kapil Mishra and Ashish Sood have Y-category security cover.

Kingpin of gang who deployed domestic helps to burgle homes arrested in Delhi

EXPRESSNEWSERVICE
NEW DELHI, MARCH 5

FOR ALMOST five years, Ram Ashish Mukhiya evaded the police. The 36-year-old was the alleged kingpin of a gang with a network of domestic workers across the country who would conduct burglaries worth lakhs at his bidding.

Over the years, he had been arrested multiple times but would manage to get bail and slip through the police's fingers. His latest burglary stint was at an upscale locality of Hyderabad in 2019.

On Tuesday, the law caught up with him. Inspector Krishan Kumar of the Delhi Police Crime Branch received a tip-off about Mukhiya's presence at Som Bazar Road in Mohan Garden.

The accused spotted them and attempted to flee but was overpowered and arrested.

According to police, Mukhiya took to crime in 2014 when he hired two men to burgle a home in Rohini. The same year, the gang targeted a house in Gurgaon where Mukhiya's henchman worked. Police said he, his henchman, and their associates would go on to steal approximately Rs 1 crore in cash from the house.

Almost two years later, the gang targeted a house in Rajouri Garden where the family had recently recruited two house help. One evening, they left home for a family dinner.

Knowing that the house would be empty for a while, police said, Mukhiya and the two recently employed house help robbed the house of cash and

jewellery worth Rs 25-30 lakh.

The following year, Mukhiya would widen his ambit to Chennai, stealing jewellery and cash worth Rs 40-50 lakh from a house in Mambalam. He was arrested in this case, said police, and later transferred to Tihar Jail.

After his release in 2019, Mukhiya and three of his accomplices targeted a house in Banjara Hills, an upscale locality in Hyderabad, where the gang stole jewellery and cash worth Rs 1 crore. Mukhiya was arrested again and granted bail in 2020, said police, after which he failed to show up to his court dates despite repeated summons.

According to police, Mukhiya first worked as a caretaker at a coaching institute in Mumbai before spending six months working at a call centre in Muniirka, followed by a two-year

tenure as a team member at a leading food joint in Vasant Kunj.

"During this time, he met [one of his henchman] who introduced him to a network of houses where his acquaintances worked as domestic help. [The henchman] proposed that they commit thefts in these homes and, once they accumulated enough money, start their own business," explained DCP (Crime Branch) Satish Kumar.

"Following his first theft in 2014, Mukhiya expanded his criminal operations across India, forming a network of house help whom he used to carry out burglaries with his gang. Over time, he deployed hundreds of help in different states. Despite multiple arrests, Mukhiya was released from jail multiple times but never faced trial in court after his release," said DCP Kumar.

2015 MANOJ VASHISHT ENCOUNTER Lack of coordination between police and CBI why no action taken on FIR for 10 yrs: Court

EXPRESSNEWSERVICE
NEW DELHI, MARCH 5

NOTING THAT lack of coordination between the two probe agencies was why no action had been taken on an FIR lodged in 2015, a Delhi court on Tuesday pulled up the CBI and the Delhi Police.

Additional Chief Judicial Magistrate Jyoti Maheshwari of Rouse Avenue Court was hearing a case in which businessman Manoj Vashisht was shot inside Sagar Ratna restaurant at Old Rajender Nagar during a Delhi Police Special Cell operation on May 16, 2015.

While initially the Delhi Police set up a special investigation team to probe the incident, the Ministry of Home Affairs had later trans-

ferred the probe to the CBI.

The court, in an order dated March 4, said that a photocopy of the FIR in the case was received by the CBI in New Delhi from Delhi Police DCP (Central District) on October 24, 2015. The letter, addressed to DSP (CBI), mentioned that the FIR, along with relevant documents, was being sent to the CBI for necessary action.

The court noted that the Delhi Police DCP was not the competent authority to transfer or forward any FIR to the CBI for re-registration of a case, without an order of the Union government. "On this basis, it is concluded that the FIR was not forwarded to CBI, through a proper channel... and hence, the question of re-registration of the said FIR does not arise," ACJM Maheshwari said.

PANJAB UNIVERSITY, CHANDIGARH
ANNUAL CONVOCATION
The 72nd Annual Convocation will be held on Wednesday, March 12, 2025 at 9:30 a.m. (Sharp) in the Gymnasium Hall, Panjab University, Chandigarh.
The Degrees for D.Sc., D. Litt., Ph.D. notified since 08.03.2024 till 10.03.2025; M.D., M.S., MDS to all candidates, M.Phil & all other Examinations to First Three divisions for the period 08.03.2024 to 05.03.2025 will be conferred.
Identification Cards to eligible candidates have already been issued to their concerned departments/institutions/colleges with detailed Instructions (<https://registrar.puchd.ac.in/show-noticeboard.php?nbid=1>). Attendance at Rehearsal is mandatory, will be held on Tuesday, March 11, 2025 at 10:00 a.m. (Sharp).
Guests will only be allowed with valid Invitation Cards, which is not transferable.
Prof. Y.P. Verma, Registrar

VETERINARY COUNCIL OF INDIA 'A' WING, 2ND FLOOR, AUGUST KRANTI BHAWAN, BHIKAJI CAMA PLACE, NEW DELHI-110066

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is hereby informed that Veterinary Council of India will be using NEET (UG)-2025 Merit List for admission of students to BVSc & A.H. Degree course for the Academic Year 2025-26 for filling up of seats in recognized Veterinary Colleges under 15% All India Quota (AIQ) Students desirous to take admission to BV.Sc. & A.H. Degree course under 15% All India basis are hereby advised to appear in NEET (UG)-2025 to be conducted by National Testing Agency (NTA) on 4th May. 2025 [Sunday].

Sd/-
SECRETARY, VCI (ADDL. CHARGE)
CBC 01222/11/0002/2425

EXPRESS
Careers

Khandesh College Education Society's
Institute of Management & Research, Jalgaon
An Autonomous Institute Affiliated to Kavayitri Bahinabai Chaudhari North Maharashtra University, Jalgaon & Recognized by All India Council for Technical Education, New Delhi.
LMR Campus, N.H.No.6, Behind DIC, 425 001 Phone No. (0257) 2251281 | Visit us: <http://www.imrac.in> | Email: info@imrac.in

WANTED
Applications in prescribed format are invited from eligible candidates for the following post on permanently non-grant basis to be filled in at Khandesh College Education Society's Institute of Management and Research, Jalgaon

S	Post	SC	ST	VNT	A	B	C	ORC	SEBC	EWS	Open
1	Professor (MBA)	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
2	Associate Professor (MBA)	1	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
3	Assistant Professor (MBA)	1	1	1	-	-	-	1	1	1	2
4	Professor (MCA & MCA Integrated)	1	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
5	Associate Professor (MCA & MCA Integrated)	1	1	1	-	-	1	1	1	1	-
6	Assistant Professor (MCA & MCA Integrated)	3	2	1	1	1	4	2	2	2	1
7	Assistant Professor (BBA)	2	1	1	1	-	2	1	1	1	3
8	Assistant Professor (BCA)	2	1	1	1	-	3	1	1	1	5
9	Librarian						1	(Isolated)			

Qualifications & Experience as per AICTE guidelines.
For more details on how to apply, qualifications, conditions etc. visit the University website at <http://www.nmu.ac.in> and institute website at <http://www.imrac.in>

Application form with educational qualifications, experience etc. along with the required documents should reach at the address of the **President, Khandesh College Education Society, Institute of Management and Research Campus, Behind DIC, N. H. No. 06, Jalgaon-425001**, within **Fifteen (15) days** from date of publication of this advertisement.

(Prof. B. V. Pawar)
Director, KCES's IMR, Jalgaon

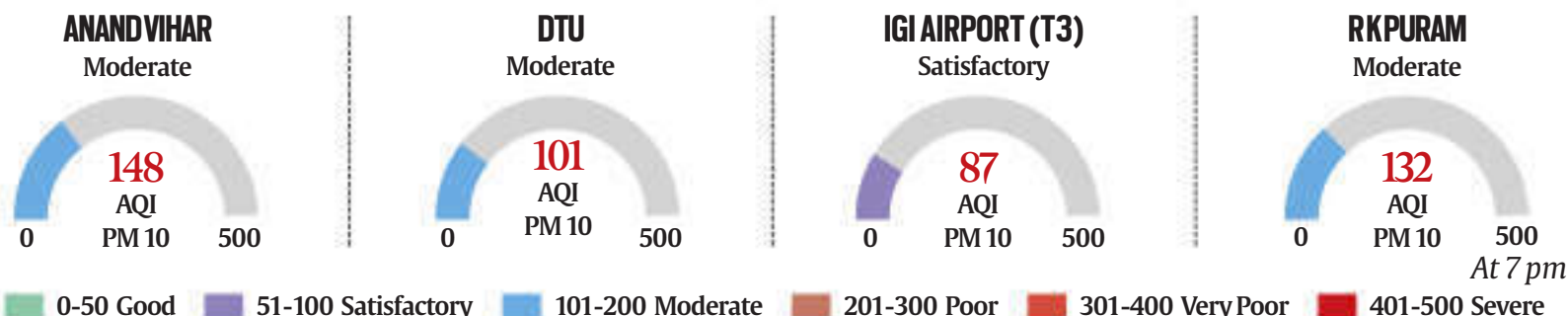
(Shri. N. G. Bendale)
President, K.C.E. Society, Jalgaon

KCES's - A Profound Academic Movement

MIT VISHWAPRAYAG UNIVERSITY
An MIT Pune Initiative
Shaping the Future through Innovative Learning
MITVPU Campus at Solapur | MH INVITE APPLICATIONS
• Dean • Professor • Associate Professor
• Assistant Professor • Professor of Practice
[School of Design]
• User Experience
• Product Design
• Communication Design
[School of Business]
• Fintech
• Business Analytics
• Marketing Management
[School of Electronics]
• Embedded System
• VLSI Design
• IoT
Other Subjects
• Applied Mathematics
• Physics
• Chemistry
[School of Computing]
• Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning (AIML)
• Cyber Security (CS)
• Cloud Computing (CC)
[School of Pharmacy]
• Pharmacovigilance
• Regulatory Affairs
• Medical Coding
• AI in Healthcare
Other Positions
• Director (Training & Placement)
• Officer (Training & Placement)
• Estate Manager
• Hostel Rector (Male & Female)
• Executive - Student Section
Deserving candidates will be offered competitive salaries. Show your resume at
Solapur www.mitvpu.ac.in careers@mitvpu.ac.in

MARATHA VIDYA PRASARAK SAMAJ
JAN SHIKSHAN SANSTHAN, NASHIK (MAHARASHTRA)
Sponsor by -
Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship, Government of India
REQUIRE DIRECTOR
We are leading voluntary agency of Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship Govt. of India located at Nashik We have an excellent track record of performance in the field of skill development. We have been running the Jan Shikshan Sansthan for a number of years / have set up the Jan Shikshan Sansthan to provide skill development training in non formal mode to the neo literates, non literates, school dropouts and other under privileged youths. The Jan Shikshan Sansthan is also responsible for providing vocational and skill development programmes for neo-literates in both urban and rural areas. We are looking for a dynamic person to head the organizations as it's a Director. The Director would be the Member Secretary of the Board of Management (BOM) and would be in charge of providing the organization with leadership, direction and drive. He/She would also be fully incharge of all day to day activities. The Director is expected to have proven capabilities of motivating and leading a team of professional. He /She should have good management skills and be a team-builder. He/She should have fluency in spoken and written knowledge in state language.
Qualification and Experience:
Essential : 1. Second Class Master's Degree from recognized University/ Institution or equivalent. 2. Seven Years Experience in a supervisory capacity, preferably but not necessarily, in the field of education or Social Sciences. 3. Working knowledge of the local language both written and spoken.
Desirable:
1. BBA or MBA-Diploma/Degree 2. Experience in Administration of Management / Accounts. 3. Experience in leading a team 4. Experience in heading an organization 5. Experience in guiding conducting of research or education.
Age - Maximum 55 years as on the date of application.
Terms and Conditions
1. The Position shall be filled purely on contractual basis for a period of ordinarily, not exceeding Five Years out of which the first year of the first term will be probation period.
2. The Board of Management may consider renewal of the contract /extension of the contract period of Director for a further period of five years on expiry of each five years tenure or termination of the scheme whichever is earlier.
3. Age of superannuation of the Director shall be 60 years.
4. The selected candidate will be paid by the Board of Management of the Jan Shikshan Sansthan a remuneration of Rs 30,000/- to 40,000/- p.m. (all inclusive)
Interested Person may send in their application to:
1 **THE CHAIRMAN, JAN SHIKSHAN SANTHAN NASHIK**
C/O THE SARCHITNIS, MARATHA VIDYA PRASARAK SAMAJ, NASHIK / Shivaji Nagar, Gangapur Road, Nashik Pin 422 002.
Phone : 0253-2574511, 2573422 Fax - 2579863
Email - technical@mvp.edu.in, mvpjobs@mvp.edu.in, Web-www.mvp.edu.in
2. The last date of receipt of applications is one month after the date of appearance of Advertisement in the newspaper.
3. Eligible candidates will be short listed and called for interview by the Board of Management. Outstation candidates called for interview will be reimbursed to and fro IAC Rail fare.
4. In case of persons employed in organizations would be required to have applications sent through proper channel. They would be required to have application sent from their employer at the time of interview.
THE CHAIRMAN
JAN SHIKSHAN SANSTHAN NASHIK

After monthly household expenses, saved ₹5,000
Spend now & save later!
Shopping
Movie
Dinner
Bijli bill
School fees
Doodh bill
Saved ₹5,000
Plan your monthly budget and save. Be smart, follow financial discipline.
RBI Kehta Hai...
Financial Literacy, Women's Prosperity
For more details, visit www.rbi.org.in
For feedback, write to rbikehtahai@rbi.org.in
Issued in public interest by
भारतीय रिज़र्व बैंक
RESERVE BANK OF INDIA
www.rbi.org.in



S K Y W A T C H
FORECAST: March 6
Mainly clear sky. Strong surface winds (20-30 kmph) till forenoon

MAX: 28-30
0.6°C above normal

MIN: 12-14
1.4°C above normal

PARVESH SAHIB SINGH TAKES A BOAT RIDE TO INSPECT RIVER

1,300 MT of garbage removed in 10 days from Yamuna, says PWD minister

SOPHIYA MATHEW
NEW DELHI, MARCH 5

AS MANY as 1,300 metric tonnes (MT) of garbage has been removed from the Yamuna in the past 10 days, Delhi Irrigation and Flood Control (I&FC) Minister Parvesh Sahib Singh, who inspected the river by boat on Wednesday, said.

This comes days after it came to light that the Delhi government is planning to launch a ferry and cruise service along the river. The Delhi Tourism and Transport Development Corporation has issued a request for proposals to choose an operator for two solar-powered cruise ships for the purpose.

Cleaning the Yamuna was one of the key promises made by the BJP in the recently concluded Delhi polls. A four-pronged strategy is at the heart of a plan, rolled out by L-G V K Saxena, to clean Yamuna in three years. With trash skimmers, weed harvesters, and



Minister Parvesh Sahib Singh takes a boat tour on the Yamuna river, Wednesday. *Tashi Tobgyal*

a dredge utility craft, the cleaning operation started last month.

Singh on Wednesday took a boat trip from the Boat Club at Civil Lines to the ITO Chhath Ghat. As the boat ferried the minister and officials, workers busily picked up solid waste along the riverbank.

Speaking to the media after the ride, Singh said, "With the help of the DDA (Delhi Development Authority), we have started work on cleaning the river... we are working on mission mode. In the last 10 days, 1,300 MT of waste has been collected from here."

"No work has been done

even on paper to clean the river in the last 10 years," he added.

All drains in Delhi will be connected to sewage treatment plants (STPs) and their capacity will be increased to prevent untreated wastewater from flowing into the river, he said.

"...CTPs (common treatment plants) will be installed in industrial areas to ensure proper disposal of chemical waste. Special drives are being conducted to clean Yamuna's banks and develop green zones along the river," he added.

"We have instructed DDA to develop the Yamuna Riverfront to transform the riverbank into a tourism and cultural hub," Singh said.

Speaking about the ferry service, he said, "The service will have one pick-up and drop point along a single stretch. There will also be a restaurant nearby. The motive is to attract more people to Yamuna."

"The main agenda of our government is to restore the river to

its original form... I want to assure the people that there won't be a flood situation again in Delhi. Repairs, oiling, and elevation of security walls at ITO Barrage gates are being carried out to prevent flooding," Singh added.

Accusing the previous AAP government of "misleading people and indulging in corruption in the name of Yamuna cleaning", Singh said the Union government is looking to transform Yamuna into a clean riverfront, similar to the Sabarmati Riverfront. "The Prime Minister himself is monitoring the cleaning," he said.

Later in the day, he had a review meeting with officials to assess the progress of clean-up efforts. Speaking to *The Indian Express*, Additional Chief Secretary (I&FC) Navin Kumar Choudhary said, "Solid waste is being cleared in an eco-friendly manner from the river, no chemicals are being used. The efforts have started to show... Earlier, people couldn't come near the ghat... now they can."

Makeshift homes and shanties demolished near Yamuna bank

SAMAN HUSAIN
NEW DELHI, MARCH 5

MAKESHIFT HOMES of some jhuggi-jhopri dwellers, who stayed along the Yamuna riverbank, were demolished at Northeast Delhi's Seelampur on Wednesday as part of an anti-encroachment drive, leading to protests from local residents.

A single bulldozer, accompanied by Delhi Police personnel, rolled into the settlement near the Old Iron Bridge around 4 pm, dismantling three makeshift homes of those who live under the bridge and four shanties that stood next to the thickly-forested Yamuna belt.

This comes three days after construction machinery had arrived in the area to carry out redevelopment work along the river.

After the shanties were torn down, officials on Wednesday dug pits into the ground to prevent residents from rebuilding. Before leaving, they announced that the remaining dwellers must vacate their homes by Thursday morning. According to local residents, 70-80 families staying around the Old Iron Bridge received eviction notices.



Homes around the Old Iron Bridge were demolished as part of an anti-encroachment drive. *Gajendra Yadav*

Authorities had issued the eviction notice on Sunday, instructing residents to vacate their homes by Monday. The demolition drive, part of the Yamuna beautification project, was scheduled for Tuesday and Wednesday.

As the bulldozer left, leaving behind mounds of broken tin sheets and scattered belongings, Sushila Devi (65), who has called Yamuna Khadar home for the past two decades, stood amid the rubble, trying to salvage what remained. "I live here with my daughter and son-in-law... My

daughter and I grow potted plants, and my son-in-law sells them on his cart. They have taken away our house, our means to live," she said.

Most of the residents of Yamuna Khadar are daily wage workers, rickshaw pullers, and small scale farmers.

Mohammad Hazrat (25), another resident, said, "They came the night before and announced we must leave. We have been paying rent for the farms to our (landlords). Farming is all we know. We don't have another place to go."

Naxalite living undercover as house help in city held: Police

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, MARCH 5

A 23-YEAR-OLD alleged Naxalite from Jharkhand, who moved to Delhi-NCR in 2020 on the instructions of her faction commander, was arrested by the Delhi Police Crime Branch from Pitampura on Tuesday, said police.

Officers said the woman was 10 years old when she joined the CPI (Maoist) faction led by Jeevan Kandulna. Police said the accused had moved to Delhi under a false name; she first worked in Noida as a domestic help and then picked up small jobs in Pitampura. "She had undergone extensive training in handling sophisticated weapons, including SLR, INSAS, LMG, hand grenade and the 303 rifle, among others. During foot patrols with the gang, she used to carry an INSAS rifle," said DCP (Crime Branch) Vikram Singh.

The DCP said that in 2018, she was part of an encounter with the Jharkhand Police in Kolhan, followed by similar confrontations in Porahat in 2019 and Sonua in 2020, alongside her company commander Kandulna.

"Acting on the instructions of her faction commander, she relocated to Delhi in 2020. She concealed her identity and began working as a house cleaner in Noida, Uttar Pradesh, and various parts of Delhi. She settled in the Pitampura area, where she remained undetected, living discreetly," Singh said.

Police said on March 4, they received credible information regarding a Maoist extremist group member. It was also stated that the woman was living under a false name. A dedicated team was formed, and the woman was taken into custody.

The woman was born in Kudabura, West Singhbhum, Jharkhand. She hails from a farming family and has three brothers and two sisters; she is the eldest among her siblings.

Kandulna had surrendered before police in February 2021.

Eye on Budget, CM holds meetings with women's organisations & educationists

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, MARCH 5

AHEAD OF the BJP government presenting its first Budget, Chief Minister Rekha Gupta Wednesday held a series of meetings with women's organisations, teachers and educationists to address key issues concerning women's safety, financial assistance, education and infrastructure.

As part of the 'Mahila Samvad', she sought suggestions for the 'Viksit Delhi' Budget set to be presented between March 24 and 26.



CM Rekha Gupta. *Tashi Tobgyal*

Participants voiced concerns about security, financial empow-

erment, better educational opportunities, installation of CCTV cameras and access to sanitation facilities. She assured their feedback would be taken into account in the Budget.

"I'm happy that the sisters of Delhi spoke openly on all topics. Along with them, we will give shape to the 'Viksit Delhi' Budget. The work which Delhi government could not do earlier, will be completed now," she said.

The CM will hold more such meetings with other stakeholders, like traders and youth, in the next three days, said officials.

BIDS FAREWELL TO DELHI HC

Justice Mendiratta: Law secy tenure challenging due to centre, state tussle

SOHINI GHOSH
NEW DELHI, MARCH 5

AS HE bid goodbye on Wednesday, Delhi High Court's Justice Anoop Kumar Mendiratta recalled his days as the Delhi Principal Secretary (Law), which came with "challenges" owing to the "differences between the Central and state governments".

Then Principal Secretary (Law), he had locked horns with the AAP government over sanction to prosecute a group of JNU students, including former students' union leaders Kanhaiya Kumar and Umar Khalid, in an alleged sedition case.

In January 2019, with the case stalled in court, the Delhi Home department had sent the file to the Law department for opinion. Mendiratta, as Principal Secretary, had sent the file back saying that the L-G was the competent authority in the matter. Then Delhi Law Minister Kailash Gahlot had issued Mendiratta a showcase notice asking why the file was sent back without being brought to his notice.

At a farewell organised by the



Justice Anoop Kumar Mendiratta

Delhi High Court Bar Association on Wednesday, Justice Mendiratta said "the system of appointment of service judges to the HC" requires "a serious relook", noting that during his tenure, he saw no judge from the judicial services becoming the Chief Justice of a High Court.

"System has to be revisited to ensure selection of service judges at an early age, which would also mean attracting the best talent to join the district judiciary," he added.

Justice Mendiratta was the first serving judicial officer from DHJS (Delhi Higher Judicial Service) to be appointed as secretary in the Ministry of Law and Justice in 2019. He was also the Delhi Joint Secretary (Law, Justice and Legislative Affairs) from 1999 to 2002 and Principal Secretary (Law) from November 2017 until April 2019.

Row over expansion of mosque in NE Delhi: MCD revokes nod for work

PRAGYNESH & SAMAN HUSAIN
NEW DELHI MARCH 5

AMID A row between residents over the expansion of a mosque in Northeast Delhi's Brahmpuri, the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) has revoked permission for the work. "Permission was obtained on material misrepresentation and concealment of facts under the Saral Scheme. After a showcase [was issued], and based on the reply and other facts, the permission so obtained has been cancelled," an MCD spokesperson said.

The Delhi Police has intensified patrolling in the area. Al-Mateen Masjid, constructed in 2013, is in gali no. 13 of Brahmpuri. In 2023, trustees of the mosque purchased an adjacent plot in gali no. 12 and started construction work. However, work stopped in November that year after a PCR call was made by the area's residents claiming the construction was illegal, said police.

The trustees then approached the MCD and got permission to expand the structure on November 23, 2024. This would extend the masjid to gali no. 12, facing an old temple. Construction resumed in



Police have intensified patrolling in Brahmpuri. *Gajendra Yadav*

February this year. On February 13, another complaint was filed by residents alleging the illegal construction of a structure adjacent to Al-Mateen mosque, police said. Following the complaint, on February 18, the MCD issued a showcase notice to Al-Mateen Welfare Society. Construction has been stopped since.

On Wednesday, three police personnel were seen patrolling the area while people sat outside their houses, some of which had 'ye ghar bikau hai' posters stuck on their walls.

Initially, residents had requested that the gate of the under-expansion masjid not be opened. Now, they have called for a complete halt in construction. "Why is it being built in front of

the masjid when it's already in gali no. 13?" asked Suman, 45, a resident of L block in gali no. 12.

People working with the masjid declined to comment.

A police officer said personnel from Usmanpur police station would be present in the area till the situation de-escalated.

On Monday, police said a complaint regarding stone pelting on the intervening night of March 2-3 was filed at New Usmanpur police station. Police, however, said claims of stone pelting couldn't be corroborated. "No corroboration of the alleged incident was made. However, it's pertinent to mention here there was no PCR call about the alleged incident narrated in the complaint," DCP (Northeast) Ashish Mishra said.

Delhi gets 3 arogya mandirs, focus on holistic patient care

ANKITA UPADHYAY
NEW DELHI, MARCH 5

OVER A week after the Ayushman Bharat scheme was passed by the Delhi Cabinet, the central government on March 3 turned three primary health centres (PHCs) in Najafgarh, Palam and Ujwa into Ayushman Arogya Mandirs (AAMs). At these centres, the primary focus will be on a holistic approach towards patient care and disease prevention.

Last year, the Union Health Ministry decided to rebrand its flagship Ayushman Bharat health and wellness centres — a network of 1.6 lakh primary health centres across the country — into Ayushman Arogya Mandirs. A component of the Centre's flagship Ayushman Bharat scheme, it offers free consultations, medicines (up to 172) and diagnostics (up to 63).

Doctors at two centres said certification work to convert the PHCs is underway. "We will get certification of the three PHCs under the National Quality Assurance Standards (NQAS) and Indian Public Health Standards (IPHS)," said a doctor at one of the centres.

At the AAM in Najafgarh, new TV screens have been installed to flash health-related tips and information about various diseases. The centre will also conduct talks to generate awareness on various health issues. "Today, we held a health talk on ear problems that can happen due to loud noise," said a medical officer at the Najafgarh AAM.

The three PHCs come under the Rural Health Training Centre in Najafgarh, which is a part of the Directorate General Health Services, Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. The Najafgarh PHC is one of the oldest in Delhi and was established in 1937.

According to a medical officer at the Najafgarh centre, the facili-



The Ayushman Arogya Mandir in Palam. *Express*

ity will be different from a regular dispensary. "So far, the focus at a PHC was on clinical and immunisation services. Now, the focus will be more on prevention of disease and promotion of health," said the officer.

He added that the staff will be trained to teach patients and the general population yoga, screen them for blood pressure and diabetes during community outreach programmes, and provide lifestyle modification advice.

At the Palam AAM, a batch of nurses is being trained in yoga along with their regular training.

A doctor at this AAM said the staff will remain the same — two medical officers, a specialist doctor on a rotational basis who comes once a week, eight women health visitors who are qualified nurses, and six auxiliary nurses and midwives. "Apart from this, we also have lab technicians, part-time workers, sanitary workers and maternity staff."

An official added that ASHA (accredited social health activist) workers and ANM (auxiliary nurse midwives) workers will be conducting the community outreach programmes under the Ayushman Arogya Mandir. "They will hold health promotion activities like they have been doing under the Information Education Communication (IEC) and Behaviour Change Communication (BCC) programmes," said the officer.

EXHIBITION IN DELHI

250 gamchhas, 14 states: Honouring the simple cloth of the common man

SHINY VARGHESE
NEW DELHI, MARCH 5

THE TRADITIONAL *gamchha* asks the Zebra Question — is it a red cloth with white checks or is it a white cloth with red checks? Is it a turban in a towel sometimes or a towel and a turban all the time? American poet Shel Silverstein's poem affords multiplicities and an exhibition on India's ubiquitous garment, the *gamchha*, does just that.

At the National Crafts Museum and Hastkala Academy in Bharat Mandapam, the show

'Gamchha: From the Extraordinary in the Ordinary' — presented by Dastkari Haat Samiti — showcases the country's regional diversities in fabric as much as it presents the wealth of symbolism and craft.

With over 250 *gamchhas* from 14 states across India, the exhibition honours the chequered fabric and the ordinary men and women who drape them — the farm hand in the field, the mason who lays the brick wall, the fishermen who bring in the fruits of the sea, the labourer carrying his load, the young man on his bike, the lady carrying her baby to

work, and the old man who has stepped into the water for a dip, among others.

The simple and coarse cloth, barely 70 inches x 35 inches, woven from leftover yarn, is what most of India uses to wipe its sweat, steam and grime of daily living. The exhibition is an ode to this toil and tradition.

Curated and designed by architect Suparana Bhalla of Abaxial Design Private Limited, *gamchhas* are displayed on latticed bamboo and steel frames at the exhibition, alluding to their strength and resilience all at once.

"As architects, we examined



the fabric's inherent form — its ability to twist and turn and become a multitude of things. We have also explored idioms around the *gamchha*. For instance, going back to Bengal's great famine, there's a saying — 'if you are hungry, wet your *gamchha* and tie it around your waist'. The exhibition is an ode to toil, in our ability to work hard and to appreciate those who do," says Suparna.

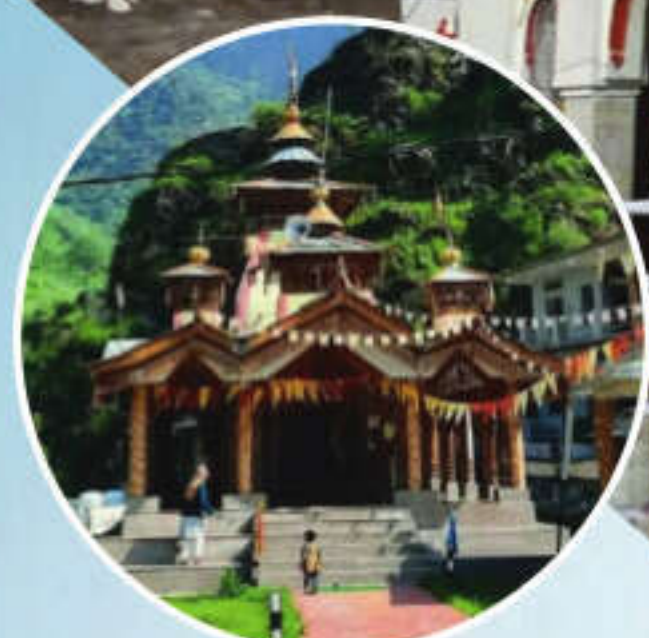
The exhibition at National Crafts Museum and Hastkala Academy in Bharat Mandapam. *Dastkari Haat Samiti*

fabric to people's cultural life, their social rituals and ceremonies. It is also an indication of how each culture feeds from the proximity of their next state or its own ethnic history. People want to make their lives beautiful amidst the drudgery of work and labour. The colourful *gamchha* becomes their companion — that emotional connect with home and family," says Jaya.

The exhibition, which closes on March 10, also has live demonstrations by craftspeople and *gamchha*-inspired textiles besides accessories and lifestyle products.

माँ गंगा का शीतकालीन प्रवास गंगा मंदिर

मुखीमठ, मुखवा (उत्तरकाशी)



माँ यमुना का
शीतकालीन प्रवास
यमुना मंदिर
खरसाली (उत्तरकाशी)



श्री केदारनाथ जी का
शीतकालीन प्रवास
ओंकारेश्वर मन्दिर
ऊखीमठ (रुद्रप्रयाग)



श्री बदरीनाथ जी का
शीतकालीन प्रवास
योगध्यान बद्री मन्दिर
पांडुकेश्वर (चमोली)

देवभूमि उत्तराखण्ड में शीतकालीन तीर्थाटन एवं पर्यटन



नरेन्द्र मोदी
प्रधानमंत्री

पुष्कर सिंह धामी
मुख्यमंत्री, उत्तराखण्ड

मुखीमठ, मुखवा माँ गंगा का शीतकालीन प्रवास स्थान है।
शीतकाल के दौरान गंगोत्री मन्दिर के कपाट बंद होने पर
माँ गंगा की मूर्ति को गंगोत्री से मुखवा लाया जाता है और
शीतकाल के दौरान इसी मन्दिर में माँ गंगा की पूजा की जाती है।

माँ गंगा के शीतकालीन प्रवास

गंगा मंदिर

मुखवा, हर्षिल, उत्तरकाशी, उत्तराखण्ड

आगमन पर

प्रधानमंत्री श्री नरेन्द्र मोदी जी

का

हार्दिक स्वागत एवं अभिनन्दन

बृहस्पतिवार, दिनांक 06 मार्च, 2025 | प्रातः 09.00 बजे

माननीय प्रधानमंत्री श्री नरेन्द्र मोदी जी द्वारा

माँ गंगा मन्दिर में दर्शन एवं पूजा।

उत्तराखण्ड शीतकालीन पर्यटन प्रदर्शनी का अवलोकन।

रैलियों और पदयात्राओं को हरी झंडी दिखाकर रवानगी।

हर्षिल में सार्वजनिक समारोह।

कार्यक्रम का सीधा प्रसारण डीडी न्यूज पर

उत्तराखण्ड: एक अद्वितीय, रोमांचक और प्राकृतिक गंतव्य

- उत्तराखण्ड के पर्वत, कलकल बहती नदियां और मन को शान्ति पहुंचाने वाले मंदिरों से तीर्थयात्रियों व पर्यटकों को मिलता है प्राकृतिक एवं आध्यात्मिक शान्ति का अहसास।
- सर्दियों के महीने में शांत पहाड़ों के बीच ध्यान, योग और आत्म-चिंतन की अनुभूति से जीवन को मिलता है नया अनुभव।
- औली, नैनीताल और मसूरी जैसे लोकप्रिय डेस्टिनेशन में स्कीइंग, पैराग्लाइडिंग, स्नोबोर्डिंग और स्नो ट्रेकिंग की सुविधा पर्यटकों के लिए रोमांचकारी।
- राष्ट्रीय उद्यान और वन्यजीव अभ्यारण्य के लिए विश्व प्रसिद्ध है देवभूमि उत्तराखण्ड।

हर्षिल वैली

बगोरी गांव

गरतांग गली

दयारा बुग्याल

कोटि बनार शैली
में बने मकान

ओली

टिहरी

सूचना एवं लोक सम्पर्क विभाग, उत्तराखण्ड द्वारा जनहित में जारी

www.uttarainformation.gov.in | uttarakhandDIPR | DIPR_UK | uttarakhand DIPR



6 GOVT & POLITICS

At Jaishankar meet with UK PM, trade, tech & Ukraine

SHUBHAJIT ROY
NEW DELHI, MARCH 5

DAYS AFTER he 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 J D Vance at the White House — British Prime Minister Keir Starmer "shared UK's perspective" on the conflict with External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar in London on Tuesday night.

Besides bilateral ties, including on trade and technology, Jaishankar, who is on a six-day visit to the UK and Ireland, also discussed the Ukraine conflict in a meeting with his counterpart, British Foreign Secretary David Lammy. "Delighted to call on Prime Minister @Keir_Starmer at @10DowningStreet today. Conveyed the warm greetings of PM @narendramodi. Discussed taking forward our bilateral, eco-

conomic cooperation and enhancing people-to-people exchanges. PM Starmer also shared UK's perspective on the Ukraine conflict," Jaishankar said in a post on X.

"Held wide-ranging and productive talks with Foreign Secretary @DavidLammy over past two days at the Chevening House. We discussed the entire gamut of bilateral ties, especially our focus on strategic coordination, political cooperation, trade deal negotiation, education, technology, mobility and people-to-people exchanges. Agreed to formulate the next steps to further strengthen and structure them," Jaishankar said.

"We exchanged views on regional and global issues including the Ukraine conflict, West Asia, Bangladesh and the Commonwealth. In an uncertain and volatile world, India-UK ties contribute to stability and prosperity," he said.

Jaishankar also met Chevening Scholars from India. "A vivid expression of our talent and people-to-people ex-



External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar with British Prime Minister Keir Starmer. X/@DrSJaishankar

changes, they surely are great advocates of India-UK ties," he said on X.

The UK-India partnership is expected to strengthen further with the opening of two new Indian consulates in Belfast and Manchester, boosting regional economic ties and delivering on the growth agenda, the British High Commission said in a state-

ment. "It comes as the UK welcomes Indian investment deals worth more than £100 million, which is creating jobs, strengthening growth, and helping working people by putting more money in their pockets," it said.

The "Foreign Ministers drove forward the UK-India Comprehensive Strategic Partnership. This focused on fostering mutual eco-

nomie growth, technological innovation, and collaboration on global challenges including climate change. They also discussed Russia's ongoing war in Ukraine, the Middle East and other global affairs," the statement said.

"One of my first visits as Foreign Secretary was to India because deepening our partnership for our shared growth and security is a key part of this government's Plan for Change," Lammy said. "Dr Jaishankar and I are supercharging our £41 billion trading relationship with India, after trade talks were relaunched in Delhi. It is the floor, not the ceiling of our ambitions that will benefit both our economies," he said.

"The opening of new Indian consulates in Belfast and Manchester demonstrate the growing links between our peoples and how we are working together to deliver growth not only in London, but right across the UK. This expansion of India's diplomatic presence will further boost

our trading relationship and support the valued Indian community in the UK," Lammy said.

The ministers also discussed the Technology Security Initiative, launched during Lammy's visit to Delhi in July 2024. They touched on the opportunities for people in both countries from closer collaboration in sectors such as Artificial Intelligence, telecom and critical minerals. "Opportunities include more effective and affordable healthcare and more resilient supply chains, as well as greater innovation, investment and job creation," the British High Commission statement said.

Earlier, Jaishankar also met Home Secretary Yvette Cooper, and held discussions on areas such as flow of talent and joint efforts to tackle "trafficking and extremism". In his meeting with the Secretary of State for Business and Trade, Jonathan Reynolds, Jaishankar said discussions were held on the progress of talks on a free trade agreement between India and the UK.

MAHARASHTRA BUDGET SESSION

Aurangzeb row: SP's Abu Azmi suspended from Assembly

ALOK DESHPANDE
MUMBAI, MARCH 5

SAMAJWADI PARTY MLA Abu Azmi was suspended on Wednesday from the Maharashtra legislative Assembly till March 26, when the ongoing budget session ends, over his remarks praising Mughal emperor Aurangzeb.

BJP leader and Minister Chandrakant Patil on Wednesday moved the resolution of suspension in the House saying that Aurangzeb's praise amounted to insult of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj and his son Chhatrapati Sambhaji Maharaj.

The motion of suspension was passed unanimously.

"Azmi's comments praising Aurangzeb and criticising Sambhaji Maharaj do not suit the stature of a member of the Assembly and is an insult to the democratic institution of the legislative Assembly," Patil said.

BJP MLA Sudhir Mungantiwar demanded stricter punishment to which Patil highlighted the Supreme Court order where suspension cannot be extended beyond one session.

Congress MLA Vijay Wadetiwar supported the resolution saying the opposition too stands against the insult of Chhatrapati Sambhaji Maharaj. "Action should also be taken against (former journalist) Prashant Koratkar and (Marathi actor) Rahul Solapurkar who insulted Maharaj. The government is keeping quiet on this," he said.

Koratkar is accused of allegedly making a threat call to historian Indrajit Sawant. Countering Sawant's version of the Maratha



Will remain suspended until Mar 26, when the session ends

king's history, Koratkar reportedly made derogatory remarks on Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj. Sawant shared an audio clip of the telephonic conversation between the two.

Based on the complaint filed by Sawant, an FIR has been registered in Kolhapur against Koratkar who has denied his voice in the clip.

Actor Rahul Solapurkar, too, landed in a controversy after his remarks in an interview about the escape of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj from Agra. Solapurkar claimed that the escape of Shivaji Maharaj was not achieved using sweet containers, as popularly believed, but rather by bribing several Mughal commanders.

Azmi had said, "...Aurangzeb built several temples... I do not think he was a cruel administrator." He also said that during the Mughal emperor's reign, India was referred to as "sone ki chiriya (golden sparrow)" with its GDP accounting for 24% of the world GDP.

In a post on X on Tuesday, Azmi said his statements were twisted. "Whatever I have said about Aurangzeb is something that has been stated by historians and writers. I have not made any derogatory remarks against Shivaji Maharaj, Sambhaji Maharaj or any national icons. Still, if anyone is hurt by my remarks, then I take back my comments."

Yogi on Azmi: UP knows to take care of such people

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
LUCKNOW, MARCH 5

UTTAR PRADESH Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath Wednesday hit out at Maharashtra Samajwadi Party (SP) MLA Abu Azmi over his remarks praising Mughal emperor Aurangzeb and issued a stern warning saying that UP does not hesitate in dealing with such individuals.

Speaking at the State Legislative Council during the budget debate, Adityanath also asked the SP to bring Azmi to UP and said "Uttar Pradesh knows well how to take care of such people".

The UP CM accused the SP of abandoning India's cultural heritage and straying from the principles of its founding thinker, Dr Ram Manohar Lohia. He high-



Uttar Pradesh CM Yogi Adityanath

lighted that Dr Lohia had identified Lord Ram, Lord Krishna, and Lord Shiva as the pillars of India's unity. Still, the SP, he claimed, was now idolising "a tyrant like Aurangzeb".

Recalling historical events, Yogi narrated how Aurangzeb had imprisoned his father, Shah Jahan. He urged SP leaders to read Shah Jahan's biography, available in Patna's library, mentioning that Shah Jahan himself had remarked that a Hindu, who serves his elderly parents and performs annual Shradh rituals is far nobler than Aurangzeb.

DELHI CONFIDENTIAL



LEARNING EXPERIENCE

UTTARAKHAND CM Pushkar Singh Dhami has given a cash reward of Rs 5 lakh to a team of 112 personnel of the State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) after they returned from Maha Kumbh duty in Prayagraj. For the Uttarakhand SDRF, Prayagraj Maha Kumbh was a learning experience in managing crowds as the hill state gears to host the 2027 Kumbh in Haridwar. The Dhami government aspires to make the religious event a grand affair. Earlier Uttar Pradesh CM Yogi Adityanath had announced a bonus of Rs 10,000 each for all workers and employees who were on Maha Kumbh duty.

WOMEN FIRST

THE SAMAJWADI Party is already campaigning keeping the 2027 Uttar Pradesh Assembly polls in mind, it seems, going by what the party is promising for women voters. Considering the role women voters played in the Jharkhand, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh and Delhi elections, the Akhilesh Yadav-led party has promised to introduce a "sttri sammaan-smriddhi yojana" if the party comes to power in 2027. The party has roped-in a TV actress for popularising the scheme among the masses. Besides the direct money transfer into the bank accounts of women, the scheme also promises mobile phones, laptops and setting up "PDA pathshalas" for their skill development. Sources in the party say the decision on the scheme as well as how to publicise it was entirely that of Akhilesh.

BENGALURU BAITHAK

THE AKHIL Bharatiya Pratinidhi Sabha 'baithak', the meeting of the highest decision-making body of the RSS, is going to be held between March 21 and 23 in Bengaluru. Sources say besides reviewing the progress of the centenary year celebrations, the members will also prepare a framework for various programmes, events, and campaigns in the months to come. Two resolutions on national issues will be considered for adoption, it is learnt.

Anju Rathi Rana appointed first ever woman Law Secretary

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, MARCH 5

ANJU RATHI Rana, an Indian Legal Service officer, was on Wednesday appointed as the new Law Secretary. She is the first woman to be appointed as Secretary, Legal Affairs, who is also called the Law Secretary.

Rana joined the Law Ministry as a Joint Secretary in 2027. Prior to that, she was a public prosecutor in the Delhi government for 18 years.

A notification announcing her appointment was issued on Wednesday.

Niten Chandra, an IAS officer, was the Law Secretary until a few months ago and the post had been lying vacant since then.



A GIFT FOR THE PRINCESS

Princess Astrid of Belgium receives a plant as she takes part in the Belgian Economic Mission, which aims to bring together the businesses of the two countries, in Mumbai. Sankhadeep Banerjee

No CM face, UDF will fight Kerala polls under collective leadership: Cong leader Satheesan

LIZ MATHEW
NEW DELHI, MARCH 5

SENIOR CONGRESS leader V D Satheesan has said that the party-led United Democratic Front (UDF) is clear that it will not project a chief ministerial face for the Kerala Assembly elections next year but fight under a collective leadership.

Projecting anyone, him included, would only hurt the UDF, Satheesan, the Leader of the Opposition in the Assembly, said. "There is no dispute over a CM candidate... If I am put forward as the CM candidate, the UDF will not win, because my focus will shift. My focus should only be on bringing the UDF back to power," Satheesan said on Varthamanam, a weekly podcast by ieMalayalam, the Malayalam news portal of The Indian Express.

Last week, the Congress high



Was speaking on a weekly podcast by ieMalayalam

command held a meeting of its Kerala leaders in Delhi, where they were told to maintain discipline, toe the party line and not voice their personal opinions in public. This came days after senior Congress leader and Thiruvananthapuram MP Shashi Tharoor said on another show of Varthamanam that the party needed to have a face, and to attract votes beyond its committed support base to avoid a third successive defeat in Kerala. Tharoor gave his own example as a leader who had managed to expand his vote share beyond the party's.

Admitting that there are still "groups" in the state Congress and

their "excessive influence" was one reason for the party's defeat in the 2021 Assembly election, Satheesan claimed he had succeeded in conveying to workers that the party came first, before everything else.

"I am the first CLP (Congress Legislature Party) leader who does not have a group of my own. We did not try to demolish the groups, but the groups will destroy the party. We have created awareness that no group is above the party. Groupism also stymied potential leaders... we have had bitter experiences in our younger days. I myself lost many positions at the last minute. It's not possible to do these things now," Satheesan said.

Suggesting that he was a tough taskmaster, Satheesan, 60, added that the work culture in the Congress in Kerala had changed. "If you are given a responsibility, you have to take care of it... I am trying to build a culture that was absent in the

Congress, which damaged the party gravely."

Satheesan lauded Congress leader and former Kerala MP Rahul Gandhi for taking the lead in fighting the BJP on issues such as secularism and the idea of India. However, he admitted, power was a necessary fuel for political parties.

"The Opposition's fight against populism and hypernationalism is not simple... That's where Rahul Gandhi's leadership is relevant. It's a fight without any compromise. Sometimes I feel he does not fight for power, but for change. It has an ideological frame and a base," Satheesan said, adding that this is a fight that has to be fought. "If the Congress also surrenders, India will not exist... There should be an idea of India."

But, he added, "political parties need power too". **FULL REPORT** www.indianexpress.com

In South, the BJP's final frontier, what three key developments reveal



THE NEERAJA CHOWDHURY COLUMN

Weekly insight into what's changing in national politics — and why

WITH HARYANA and Maharashtra firmly in the BJP's control, tricky Delhi under its belt, Yogi Adityanath firmly in the saddle in Lucknow after the successful completion of the Maha Kumbh, and the Bihar elections, due in the winter, looking promising for the party, the political centre of attention since last week has been on the South.

This southwards shift was underlined by Congress MP Shashi Tharoor, Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar, and Tamil Nadu CM M K Stalin dominating the headlines all at once.

Today, if Congress draws its strength from somewhere, it is from South and two of the three states ruled by the Opposition

party are in the South: Karnataka and Telangana. The party is also the junior partner in the DMK-led government in Tamil Nadu.

The BJP has eyed the South for some time but so far the region has resisted the ruling party's advances. It was only in 2024 that the BJP's NDA ally Telugu Desam Party (TDP) regained Andhra Pradesh.

It was not for nothing that Union Home Minister Amit Shah, who is normally where action promises to be, was in Coimbatore on the day of Maha Shivaratri, sharing the stage with Shivakumar and spiritual leader Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev at the Isha Yoga Centre. Shah could have chosen to be in Prayagraj where the Maha Kumb was set to conclude. But, instead, he chose to be in Coimbatore.

The Tharoor episode

It was Shashi Tharoor who first created a ripple when he told The Indian Express in an interview that opinion polls by independent organisations had shown he was ahead of the others in leadership stakes in Kerala. "If the

party wants to use that, I will be there for the party. If not, I have my own things to do. You should not think that I have no other option. I have my books, speeches, invitations from across the world to give a talk," he said. This, naturally, had the fat in the fire.

Few would disagree that the Congress could, and should, use Tharoor more in Parliament and to win over potential supporters beyond its core constituency. This, as the MP pointed out, is a prerequisite for the party's revival. Tharoor is not only a four-time MP from Thiruvananthapuram, he has nurtured his constituency well and is a persuasive speaker, able to understand and articulate complex national and global issues.

Unlike in the past when Rahul Gandhi easily let those aggrieved quit the party, he met Tharoor without any delay. Soon thereafter, a meeting of the party's Kerala leaders was called to plan the 2026 Assembly election strategy in which the MP was present. Tharoor clarified that he was not going to join the BJP or any other party and reiterated

that the "options" he spoke of were in the realm of literary pursuits and speaking engagements (which he does anyway).

The speed with which the Congress acted shows that the party assesses it is in with a real chance to regain power in Kerala next year. Tharoor may or may not be projected as the party's CM candidate, which some in the Congress believe he is angling for, but he may have assured that his supporters stand a better chance of being given tickets. Clearly, the Congress does not want the Tharoor episode to vitiate the atmosphere for the party.

An unapologetic Shivakumar

Then came D K Shivakumar who expressed his angst at the Congress leadership but did so in a more-difficult-to-pin-him-down manner. He simply sat by the side of Jaggi Vasudev at the Isha Yoga Centre near Coimbatore at its annual mega celebrations on Shivaratri, where Amit Shah was also present.

Since both Vasudev and the Home Minister have repeatedly mocked Rahul Gandhi, this unleashed a storm in the state unit. Shivakumar openly praised Vasudev, saying, "I go where my faith is." He had also taken a dip in the Sangam during Maha Kumbh and was not shy of declaring his Hindu credentials, saying, "I was born a Hindu and I will die a Hindu."

Shivakumar who is more than a backroom boy or a fund collector for the party, and has a hold amongst the Vokkaligas, the community to which he belongs, is clearly trying to "Hinduise" his political persona with the future in mind. While the Deputy CM may or may not have been explicitly promised CM-ship half way into the government's tenure, he is shrewd enough to know that the plan could bring down the Congress government with CM Siddharmaiah likely to revolt if shown the door. The rotational two-and-a-half-year formula has never worked anywhere so far.

For all his dissatisfaction,

Shivakumar would like to ensure, at the least, that for all its talk of the one person, one post formula, the Congress leadership allows him to retain both the Deputy CM-ship and the state Congress president's post.

Though the Congress has managed, for the moment, to control the damage in both Kerala and Karnataka, damage has been done nonetheless. Tharoor and Shivakumar's statements have intensified the impression that the Congress is a faction-ridden party and its national leadership is unable to keep its senior leaders in check. This must have made the BJP smile.

Stalin takes on the Centre

Last week, M K Stalin suddenly went ballistic against the Centre's New Education Policy, equating the three-language formula with yet another attempt to impose Hindi on the southern states. Whether the language issue will have the kind of traction in the Tamil Nadu of 2025 that it did in the state in the 1960s re-

mains to be seen.

"Make more babies" is Stalin's latest cry to the people of Tamil Nadu. It is the issue of delimitation that could have a greater resonance in Tamil Nadu and all over the South in the time to come. Though Amit Shah has assured the southern states that their seats in Parliament would not be reduced by the delimitation exercise, expected next year, there is a growing anxiety on this count.

Many in the South fear that with the increase of population in the northern states, their numbers will increase in Parliament, enhancing their political clout nationally. In contrast, the southern states, they feel, will be penalised for their success in family planning, education, and health. This is seen as a time bomb ticking away.

On Wednesday, Stalin chaired an all-party meeting on delimitation that the BJP boycotted. A six-point resolution was passed at the meeting, including the demand to extend the 1971-based delimitation framework for another 30 years

to ensure fair representation for states that have effectively controlled their population. If the total number of MPs in Parliament is increased, Tamil Nadu must receive a proportionate increase based on the 1971 population figures, as per the resolution.

Is there, then, a common thread binding Tharoor, Shivakumar, and Stalin? Or do they represent standalone developments, coincidentally coming together at the same time? Kerala and Tamil Nadu go to the polls in 2026. It is not surprising that with elections only a year away, these leaders start to let off salvos that help prepare the ground sentiment in their favour. The criticality of Karnataka for the BJP does not need to be spelt out. If it can wrest the state from the Congress, it will acquire a direct presence in the South once again.

The latest developments make one thing clear: 2026 may well be a year that belongs to the South. Neeraja Chowdhury, Contributing Editor, The Indian Express, has covered the last 11 Lok Sabha elections

Gravity in Vedic texts long before Newton discovery: Rajasthan Gov

Flags need to connect with Indian knowledge and science

HAMZAKHAN
JAIPUR, MARCH 5

RAJASTHAN GOVERNOR Haribhau Kisanrao Bagde on Wednesday said that the theory of gravity was mentioned in the Vedic texts long before Isaac Newton discovered it in 1687. Addressing the convocation ceremony of the Indira Gandhi National Open University's Regional Centre in Jaipur, the Governor said, "India has been the best in the world in the tradition of knowledge. India gave the decimal system to the whole world. Newton told the world about the theory of gravity much later. In India, this was mentioned in Vedic texts long ago."

Bagde said that several inventions, be it electricity or airplanes, find a mention in our historical texts, including the Rigveda. He said that Maharshi Bhargwadaj wrote a book mentioning airplanes, and that 50



Governor Haribhau Kisanrao Bagde was addressing the convocation of IGNOU's Regional Centre in Jaipur

years ago, NASA wrote a letter seeking this book.

The Governor said that after coming to India, the British tried to suppress Indian knowledge. "Therefore, it is important to increase the intellectual capacity of the students of the country and connect them with Indian knowledge and science," he said.

"You must have heard about Nalanda University and Taxila University. They were such that many students from all over the

world used to come there to study. There used to be Sanskrit then and no other language," Bagde said, adding that Nalanda was destroyed by Bakhtiyar Khilji but now "Nalanda is being set up with a fresh hope and will become the way it was before".

He said that continuous efforts were made to destroy Indian knowledge but they did not succeed. Describing Rajasthan as the land of warriors, the Governor said Bappa Rawal did not allow foreign invaders to come here for a hundred years.

The Governor also said that there is no "shortcut" for studies and that students should not only study books related to the syllabus but also study material related to life and the new changes taking place every day. "This will increase their intellectual capacity and they will be able to succeed in life," he said, calling for special attention to education related to Indian knowledge tradition.

SC asks FRI to carry out tree census in Taj Trapezium Zone

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, MARCH 5

THE SUPREME Court on Wednesday directed the Taj Trapezium Zone (TTZ) authority to appoint Forest Research Institute (FRI) to carry out a tree census in the area.

A bench of Justices Abhay Oka and N Kotiswar Singh said penal provisions against violators could not be implemented sans data of existing trees.

The TTZ, an area of 10,400 square-kilometres approximately, spreads across Agra, Firozabad, Mathura, Hathras and Etah districts in UP and Bharatpur district in Rajasthan.

"This data can be made available through tree census. We direct TTZ authority to appoint Forest Research Institute at Dehradun as an authority to carry out tree census of all existing trees in the area of TTZ. The formal order shall be passed within a week," the bench said.

The apex court said the object of the UP Protection of Trees Act, 1976 was to protect the trees and not to fell or cut the trees.

Without a tree census there cannot be any effective implementation of the provisions of 1976 Act, it said.

The top court had previously outlined the need for a census of trees and to ensure there is no illegal felling of trees.

"Prima facie, we are of the view that there needs to be a census of existing trees in the Taj Trapezium Zone and there needs to be a mechanism for keeping a vigil for ensuring that there is no unauthorised felling of trees," the bench said.

The bench was hearing a plea over the unauthorised felling of trees in the TTZ.

The plea raises environmental concerns and underlines the need for preservation of historical monuments, including the UNESCO World Heritage Site The Taj Mahal, and its surrounding areas.

Amarnath Yatra to begin from July 3, conclude on August 9

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, MARCH 5

THE AMARNATH Shrine Board Wednesday announced that the 37-day Amarnath pilgrimage in South Kashmir Himalayas will begin from July 3.

"This year, Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra will commence on 3rd July, simultaneously from both the routes — the Pahalgam track in Anantnag district and Baltal in Ganderbal district and it will culminate on 9th August, on Raksha Bandhan," said an official statement issued by the Raj Bhawan.

The decision was taken at a meeting of the Amarnath Shrine Board, chaired by L-G Manoj Sinha.

Last year, over 5.12 lakh pilgrims had visited the Amarnath shrine, the highest number in the past 12 years.

BRUHAT BENGALURU MAHANAGARA PALIKE
Office of the Executive Engineer (Project - East),
Nethaji Subhash Chandra Bose Building (PUB),
21st Floor, Mahatma Gandhi Road, Bengaluru - 560001.

No: EE/P-E/tend/11/2024-25

Date: 05-03-2025

INVITATION FOR TENDER (IFT)
(Single & Two Cover System) (Through GOK KPP Portal only)

The Executive Engineer (Project - East Division), East Zone, BBMP invites tenders from eligible Contractors registered in BBMP / KPWD / CPWD / Railways / MES / National Highway or any State Government Organizations for the Construction of works detailed below.

(Standard Tender Document - KW-1 & KW-4)

Sl. No.	Name of the Works / Category
1	Estimate for face lifting, Repairs, up-gradation and other necessary works to Murphy Town School at Merphy road, Halasuru in ward no. 80. (Call-2) / (SC). Estimated Amount of Work (Rs. in Lakhs): 15.00, EMD Amount (in Rs.): 18,750/-
2	Estimate for face lifting, Repairs, up-gradation and other necessary works to Murphy Road Nursery School at works colony, Halasuru in ward no. 89. (Call-2). / (SC) Estimated Amount of Work (Rs. in Lakhs): 09.00, EMD Amount (in Rs.): 11,250/-
3	Construction of Shishuvihara and Primary School at Maya Bazar slum, near Austin Town, Bangalore-51. (Call-2). / (Others) Estimated Amount of Work (Rs. in Lakhs): 140.00, EMD Amount (in Rs.): 2,10,000/-

Calendar of Events: 1) The Tender Documents may be downloaded from the GOK Karnataka Public Procurement Portal Website: <https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in> from **07-03-2025**. 2) Last Date for Uploading the Filled Tender Document is **17-03-2025 upto 4.00 PM**. 3) Date of Opening of the Technical Bid Tenders is **18-03-2025 after 04.30 PM**. Further details can be had from the above office.

Sd/- Executive Engineer (Project - East Division), BBMP.

आयुर्वेद शिक्षण एवं अनुसंधान संस्थान (आईटीआरए),
आयुष मंत्रालय, भारत सरकार, आयुर्वेद कैंपस, जामनगर

योग पाठ्यक्रमों के विचार्यियों के लिए सूचना

इस विज्ञप्ति के द्वारा संबन्धित सभी को यह सूचित किया जाता है कि, ITRA, Jamnagar में Diploma in Naturopathy Yoga (Ayurved) (H.E.) - D.Nat एवं Post Graduation Diploma in Yoga & Naturopathy - PGDYN के पाठ्यक्रमों में जो छात्र वर्ष २०२३ या उससे पहले पंजीकृत हुए हैं और किसी भी कारणवश संबन्धित पाठ्यक्रम पूर्ण नहीं कर पाये हैं, ऐसे छात्रों को शेष परीक्षा देने के लिए अक्टूबर २०२५ (October-2025) तक अंतिम दो प्रयत्न दिये जाएंगे, जिसके पश्चात संबन्धित अभ्यासक्रम से उनका पंजीकरण(Enrollment) रद्द किया जाएगा। अतः जो छात्र उक्त परीक्षा में उपस्थित रहना चाहते हैं उन्हें संस्थान का त्वरित संपर्क करने के लिए सूचित किया जाता है। उपरोक्त संबंधित परिपत्र ITRA की वेब साइट <https://itra.ac.in/circular-notice> पर जानकारी हेतु उपलब्ध है।

(Signature)
निदेशक

Advt. No. Spl/02/2025
राष्ट्रीय होमियोपैथी संस्थान/ National Institute of Homoeopathy
एक स्वायत्त संस्था/ An Autonomous Institute
भारत सरकार/ Govt. of India
आयुष मंत्रालय/ Ministry of Ayush
मेल/E-mail: admin.nih@nic.in, वेबसाइट / Website: www.nih.nic.in

Satellite Campus
Sector - A8,
Chaudhary Ramdev Chowk,
Narela, Delhi - 110040

Headquarter
ब्लॉक-जीई, सेक्टर-3/ Block-GE, Sector-III
साल्टलेक, कोलकाता- 700106/ Salt Lake, Kolkata-700106
फोन नं / Ph. No. 033-2337-0970

NOTICE FOR ENGAGEMENT ON HOURLY BASIS/ON CALL BASIS

Applications are invited from eligible Indian candidates for engagement of various specialist as mentioned below (12 posts) purely on hourly basis/on call basis for a period of one (01) year at NIH, Delhi (A Satellite Institute of NIH, Kolkata). Interested candidates those who fulfil all the criteria may submit their filled-in Application Form (In prescribed application format) and one set of self-attested photocopies of all documents along with a copy of CV addressed to "The Officer In-charge, National Institute of Homoeopathy, Sector - A8, Chaudhary Ramdev Chowk, Narela, Delhi - 110040" within 30 days of publication of the advertisement. All other details such as Essential Qualification, Experience and general Terms and Conditions, prescribed application format etc. may be downloaded from the Institute's website www.nih.nic.in.

Sl. No.	Name of the Specialization	No. of Posts	Place of Engagement
1.	General Medicine	01	National Institute of Homoeopathy, Delhi Sector-A8, Chaudhary Ramdev Chowk, Narela, Delhi-110040
2.	Cardiologist	01	
3.	Neurologist	01	
4.	Pediatrician	01	
5.	General Surgery	01	
6.	Oncologist	01	
7.	ENT Surgeon	01	
8.	Gynaecologist & Obstetrician	01	
9.	Ophthalmologist	01	
10.	Radiologist	01	
11.	Psychiatrist	01	
12.	Dentist	01	

CBC-17209/11/0007/2425

KENDRIYA VIDYALAYA SANGATHAN, REGIONAL OFFICE
SALAWALA, HATHIBARKALA, DEHRADUN - 248001
Website - <https://rodehradun.kvs.gov.in> / E-Mail- ackvsreddr@gmail.com
Phone: 0135-2749510/2743192/2746371

Admission Notice: 2025-26

- Online Registration for Admission in Class-I and Balvatika (in selected KVs) in Kendriya Vidyalayas for the Academic Year 2025-26 will commence at 10:00 am on **07.03.2025** and will close at 10:00 pm on **21.03.2025**. The details of admission are available on website <https://kvsangathan.nic.in/en/admission/>.
 - Link to apply online for Class 1: <https://kvsonlineadmission.kvs.gov.in>
 - Link to apply online for Balvatika 1 and 3 (wherever applicable): <https://balvatika.kvs.gov.in>
- Minimum age for admission in Class-I will be 6 years. Reckoning of age for all Classes shall be as on **31.03.2025**. Reservation of seats will be as per KVS Admission Guidelines 2025-26.
- Age for Balvatika-1, 2 & 3 will be 3 to 4 years, 4 to 5 years and 5 to 6 years respectively as on **31.03.2025**.
- Registration for fresh admissions, in Balvatika-2 & 3 (where online admissions are not taking place), Class II and above (except class XI), will start from **02.04.2025** at 10:00 am to **11.04.2025** up to 04:00 pm, if vacancies exist, in offline mode only. The duly filled up form needs to be submitted to the office of the Principal in the respective KV.
- All information regarding Admission & Registration forms for Balvatika-2 & 3 (where online admissions are not taking place), Class-II and above, if vacancies exist, will be available on the Vidyalaya Websites and registrations can be done as per the Schedule for Admission 2025-26.
- Admission will not be granted, if wrong and misleading information in the application form is found at the time of scrutiny by the KV.
- Contact Principal/Admission In-charge, only when called, in the given time slot.

Deputy Commissioner

Delhi Tourism & Transportation Development Corporation Limited
(A Government of Delhi undertaking)
18-A, DDA SCO Complex, Defence Colony, New Delhi-110024

Notice Inviting Tender (Transport Division)

E-tender is invited for Hiring AC & Non-A/C Coaches, Mini Coaches and Innova for operation of various tours of the corporation through e-procurement system of GNCTD for a period of two years.

Tender ID-2025_DTTDC_269026_1

E-tender forms with other terms & conditions can be downloaded from <http://govtprocurement.delhi.gov.in> web portal of GNCTD and on the website of DTTDC at <http://delhitourism.gov.in>

Corrigendum, if any will appear only at <http://govtprocurement.delhi.gov.in>

Last date for bid submission is 18.03.2025 by 3.00 pm

General Manager Delhi Tourism

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY

Tender Notice No.: AGC-ELG-T-29-2024-25 **Date:** 03.03.2025

E-TENDER NOTICE

Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer (General) N.C. Railway, Agra on behalf of President of India invites "Open Tender" through online only (E-Tendering) for the following works.

Name of work with its location & Completion Period: Electrification work for Provision of Automatic Block signaling works on 3rd & 4th line in MTJ-PWL section of Agra Division of North Central Railway.

Completion Period: 08 months **Approx. Cost of the work:** ₹ 3762343.62

For full details and submission of bid please see the Indian Railways website www.ireps.gov.in. Tenders can only be submitted through web portal www.ireps.gov.in upto 15:00 hrs on 31.03.2025. **416/25(A)**

f North central railways | @CPRONCR | www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in

PUBLIC NOTICE FOR LOSS OF REGISTERED SALE DEED

Notice is hereby given to the public that the **registered sale deed No. 18457 dated 08th December 2005**, executed between SH. ANUMOD SHARMA, s/o Late Sh. V.D. Sharma (THE VENDOR), M/s. Clarion Properties Limited (THE CO-VENDOR) and M/s. Clarion Hotels Pvt. Ltd. (THE VENDEE) for the commercial space on different floors in the said commercial Complex known as 'THE GALAXY' situated at village Silokhara, Tehsil and District: Gurgaon, Haryana, has been lost/misplaced.

All persons are hereby unequivocally informed not to deal or carry out any transaction with anyone on the basis of the said missing document. If anyone has already carried out or is going to carry out any proposed transaction, kindly inform the undersigned in writing on the below mentioned address within 07 days from the present publication.

Sd/- ANUBHAV SHARMA
Place: Gurgaon 32nd Milestone, NH - 08, Sector - 15 Part - II,
Date: 04.03.2025 Gurgaon, Haryana - 122001 M: 9311755675

ग्रेटर नोएडा औद्योगिक विकास
भूखण्ड संख्या-1, सेक्टर-नॉलेंज पार्क-4, ग्रेटर नोएडा सिटी
जिला गौतम बुद्ध नगर

दिनांक: 06/03/2025

ग्रेटर नोएडा औद्योगिक विकास प्राधिकरण क्षेत्र के अन्तर्गत M/s Ocean Infraheight Pvt. Ltd. के भूखण्ड संख्या-11 सेक्टर-टेकजोन-04 ग्रेटर नोएडा को दिनांक 25.08.2021 को पुनरीक्षित मानचित्र स्वीकृति प्रदान की गयी थी। तदोपरान्त विकासकर्ता द्वारा (Tower-T1, Tower-T2, Block-A1, Block-B1, Block-B2, Block-C1) का अधिभोग प्रमाण पत्र (Occupancy Certificate) हेतु दिनांक 08.10.2024 को ऑनलाइन के माध्यम से आवेदन किया गया है, जिसका आवेदन संख्या CC-9067 है, तत्कम में UP Apartment Act 2010, Amendment 2016 in Section-4 Sub Section-B, के अन्तर्गत परियोजना के आवंटियों से आपत्ति/ सुझाव आमंत्रित किये जाने का प्राविधान है। इस सम्बन्ध में विकासकर्ता द्वारा प्रस्तुत कार्यपूर्ति मानचित्र एवं Declarations of UP Apartment Act 2010 का परीक्षण किसी भी कार्य दिवस में सुबह 9.30 से सांय 6.00 बजे के मध्य नियोजन विभाग में तथा प्राधिकरण की वेबसाईट पर किया जा सकता है।

अतः उपरोक्त परियोजना के आवंटियों द्वारा Completion Map एवं Declarations of UP Apartment Act 2010 के सम्बन्ध में सूचना प्रकाशित करने के 30 दिनों के अन्दर आपत्तियां/सुझाव आमंत्रित की जाती हैं। उपरोक्त के निहितार्थ अपनी आपत्तियां लिखित रूप से अपने आवंटन पत्र, नाम, पता एवं दूरभाष नम्बर के साथ कार्यालय, भूखण्ड संख्या-1, नॉलेंज पार्क-04, ग्रेटर नोएडा में स्थित नियोजन विभाग में सूचना प्रकाशित होने के 30 दिवसों के अन्दर जमा करायी जा सकती हैं।

महाप्रबन्धक (नियो0/वास्तु0)
ग्रेटर नोएडा प्राधिकरण

केनरा बैंक
भारत सरकार का उद्योग

RECOVERY & LEGAL SECTION, REGIONAL OFFICE
Dumri Road, Gobarsahi, Muzaffarpur, Dist- Muzaffarpur, Bihar- 842002, Mob: 8437350570

PROPERTY FOR E-AUCTION

E-AUCTION Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with provision to Rule 8 (6) 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 / hypothecated/ Pledged / charged to the Secured Creditor, the constructive / physical possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of **Canara Bank** will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is" and "Whatever there is" on **24.03.2025**. Details are as under:

Sl. No.	Name / Add. Contact No. of the Branch	Name and Address of the Borrower(s) / Guarantor(s)	Outstanding in Rs.	Details of Property	Reserve Price (Rs.) (EMD/Bid Multiplier Amt./A/c No. / IFSC Code)
1	Dumra Branch (6245) Sitamarhi, Bihar Mob: 8210998482	Borrower / Mortgagor - Sri Ram Vijay Ray, Vill - Dhanukhi, PO- Bishunpur, Ward No -1, Sitamarhi -843302 Phone- 9097604480	Rs. 10,71,182.02 as on 22.07.2024 + interest & Other Cost thereon till realization	All that part and parcel of the property consisting in the name of Sri Ram Vijay Ray . The property is a residential property, situated at Location- Mauza-Rupauli Tole Dhanushi, Thana and Anchal- Dumra, District- Sitamarhi, Khata No- 985, Khesra No. 1770, Area- 5 Decimal from naksa and 3 Decimal from Khatian (Sale Deed No. - 14270, Dated. -	Rs. 8,44,500/- Rs. 84,450/- Rs. 10,000/- A/c - 209272434 IFSC Code - CNRB0006245

22.11.2022) Boundary - North - Vinod Ray and Munna Ray, South - Rasta Soling, East - Mali Ray, West - Chathu Ray and Baidhnath Ray, Location -Mauza-Rupauli Tole Dhanushi, Thana and Anchal-Dumra, District-Sitamarhi.

Last Date of EMD 21.03.2025 For Detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please refer to the link provided in www.canarabank.com

Date : 04.03.2025 Place: Muzaffarpur Authorised Officer (Canara Bank)

केनरा बैंक
भारत सरकार का उद्योग

सिंडिकेट Syndicate

Notice for exercising the right of redemption under Section 13 (8) of the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002

REDEMPTION NOTICE

Sl. No.	Name / Add. Contact No. of the Branch	Name and Address of the Borrower (s) / Guarantor (s) / Mortgagor (s)	Date of Demand Notice / Date of Possession / Date of 13 (4) Publication	Outstanding in Rs.
1	Saharsa Branch Bihar	Borrower - M/s Barquat Garments (Proprietor - Nafish Haider), Ward No-06, Mustafa Nagar, Saharsa, Bihar - 852201, Proprietor - Nafish Haider S/o Md Noor Alam, Ward No. -06, Mustafa Nagar, Saharsa, Bihar -852201 Guarantor - Noor Alam S/o Md Tashlim, Ward No-06, Mustafa Nagar, Saharsa, Bihar -852201	16.11.2024	Rs. 19,92,384.55 as on 13.11.2024 + interest & Other Cost thereon till realization
			22.01.2025	
			25.01.2025	
2	Bagoura Branch Siwan, Bihar	1. Sh. Ajay Kumar Yadav, S/o Birendra Yadav, Vill + PO - Bagoura, Dist. - Siwan, Pin -841404 2. Dukhni Devi, W/o - Shivrath Yadav, Vill + PO - Bagoura Dist. - Siwan, Pin -841404	06.02.2024	Rs. 23,74,961.30 as on 06.02.2024 + interest & Other Cost thereon till realization
			26.06.2024	
			02.07.2024	
3	PAKRI Branch Saran, Bihar	1. Sant Kumar Singh, S/o Deo Lal Singh, Vill Chand Barwa, PO Bahrauli - PS Mashrakh, Saran, Bihar -841417 2. Ramesh Singh, S/o Rajendra Singh, VPO - Banasohi, PS- Mashrakh, Saran, Bihar -841417	22.11.2024	Rs. 6,32,427.24 as on 22.11.2024 + interest & Other Cost thereon till realization
			06.02.2025	
			12.02.2025	
4	BARHARIA Branch Siwan, Bihar	1. M/s Choudhary Hotel, Prop. - Rajesh Yadav, S/o Inar Yadav, Vill - Madhu Sareyan, Post - Srirampur Kolhua Pakar, PS+Block - Manjha, District- Gopalganj, Bihar - 841427, 2. Rajesh Yadav, S/o Inar Yadav, Vill - Madhu Sareyan, Post - Srirampur Kolhua Pakar, PS+Block - Manjha, District- Gopalganj, Bihar -841427	20.11.2024	Rs. 18,71,816.22 as on 31.10.2024 + interest & Other Cost thereon till realization
			06.02.2025	
			12.02.2025	
5	SIWAN Branch Siwan, Bihar	1. M/s Siwan Agencies, Mumtaz market, Telhatta Bazar, Siwan - 841226, 2. Smt. Hema Parveen, Mumtaz market, Telhatta Bazar, Siwan - 841226, 3. Shekh Md Wasim, S/o Shekh Mumtaj Ahmad, Mumtaz market, Telhatta Bazar, Siwan - 841226, 4. Shekh Md Naseem, S/o Shekh Mumtaj Ahmad, Mumtaz market, Telhatta Bazar, Siwan - 841226, 5. Md Salim, Mumtaz market, Telhatta Bazar, Siwan - 841226	11.01.2024	Rs. 1,99,98,899.47 as on 11.01.2024 + interest & Other Cost thereon till realization
			06.07.2024	
			09.07.2024	
6	Gopalganj Branch Gopalganj, Bihar	1. M/s Lucky Building Material, Prop. Upendra Kumar, Lucky Building Material, New Bazar, Manjhaagarh, Gopalganj -841427, 2. Upendra Kumar, S/o Shivrath Prasad, Nai Bazar Manjha, Gopalganj - 841427, 3. Shivrath Prasad, S/o Ramswarup Prasad, Nai Bazar, Manjha, Gopalganj -841427	06.09.2024	Rs. 28,71,231.71 as on 19.04.2023 + interest & Other Cost thereon till realization
			06.02.2025	
			12.02.2025	
7	Hajipur Paswan Chowk Branch Vaishali, Bihar	1. M/s Kanak Automobile, Prop. - Sri Sanjay, Mahatma Gandhi Setu Road, Jadhua, Near Om Sai Petrol Pump, P.S. - Hajipur Industrial Area, Vaishali, Hajipur -844101 2. Sanjay Kumar, S/o Bhagwan Prasad Sinha, Kanak Niwas, House No. 65, Road No 02, Rajput Nagar, Hajipur -844101	05.11.2024	Rs. 46,81,052.34 as on 04.11.2024 + interest & Other Cost thereon till realization
			01.02.2025	
			05.02.2025	
8	Barharia Branch Siwan, Bihar	1. M/s Maa Vindhayavashni Biofertilizers, Prop. - Anshu Kumar Singh, S/o Anil Kumar Singh, Vill - Narharpur, Post - Parwa, Siwan - 841232, 2. Anshu Kumar Singh, S/o Anil Kumar Singh, Vill - Narharpur, Post - Parwa, Siwan -841232 3. Anil Kumar Singh, S/o Late Gouri Shankar Singh, Vill - Narharpur, Post - Parwa, Siwan -841232	15.07.2023	Rs. 47,01,756.96 as on 15.07.2023 + interest & Other Cost thereon till realization
			13.12.2023	
			20.12.2023	
9	Asoi Lacchi Ram Branch Vaishali, Bihar	1. M/S Monu Furniture, Proprietor - Geetanjali, W/o Rakesh Das, At Rasha, PO Bhagwanpur, Block Goraui, Dist.- Vaishali, Bihar - 844114, 2. Geetanjali, W/o Rakesh Das, At Rasha Purvee, Ward No. -06, PO + PS, Bhagwanpur, Dist.- Vaishali, Bihar - 844114, 3. Chandeshwar Das, S/o Fudeni Das, B 24, B Block, South Ganesh Nagar, Delhi - 110092, 4. Chandeshwar Das, S/o Fudeni Das, At Rasha Purvee, Ward No. -06, PO + PS, Bhagwanpur, Dist.- Vaishali, Bihar - 844114, 5. Kanti Devi, W/o Chandeshwar Das, At Rasha Purvee, Ward No. -06, PO + PS, Bhagwanpur, Dist.- Vaishali, Bihar -844114	25.10.2024	Rs. 22,85,139/- as on 25.10.2024 + interest & Other Cost thereon till realization
			14.02.2025	
			20.02.2025	

As per Section 13(8) of the Act, you are entitled to redeem the secured Assets at any time before the date of publication of sale notice in Newspapers, failing which your Right to redeem the mortgaged property as per Section 13(8) of the Act shall stand extinguished. This is without prejudice to any other rights available to the secured creditor under the subject Act/ or any other law in force.

Authorised Officer (CANARA BANK)

8 EXPRESS NETWORK

When SC defined equality in union worker’s case

In this series, *The Indian Express* tracks down the women and men who reshaped the Republic

ADRIJA ROYCHOWDHURY & APURVA VISHWANATH
NEW DELHI, MARCH 5

WHO WAS Anwar Ali Sarkar? A freedom fighter? A member of a mob? A union worker? While there are few references to him in court records or history books, it’s a name that is immortalised as the respondent in Appeal No. 297 in a landmark Supreme Court ruling of 1952 on the right to equality.

While striking down a law which fast-tracked his case and tried him in a special court, the apex court said that the move fell foul of the right to equality under Article 14 of the Constitution. The court also for the first time spelt out the nature of the right and how it works.

On February 26, 1949, Sarkar was part of a mob of 50 young men who attacked the Jessop factory, an engineering company in Dum Dum, killing three European supervisory staff. Court records show that the victims were “battered to death and their corpses were thrown into blazing furnaces.”

In what was a coordinated attack led by the Revolutionary Communist Party of India (RCP), a breakaway group of the Communist Party of India (CPI), mobs also captured the Dum Dum airport, where they set a plane on fire, and attacked an

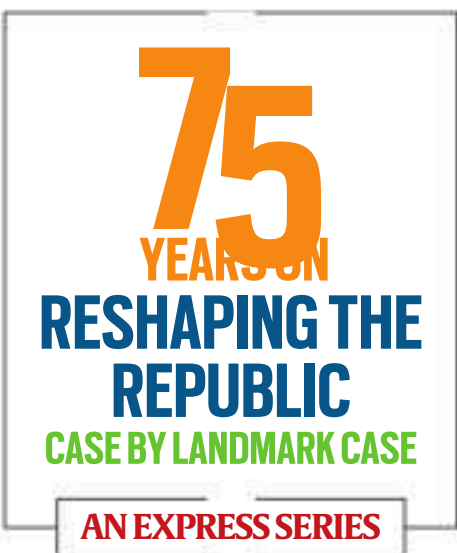
ammunition factory and shot the sentry. Some of the raiders fled to Basirhat, where they attacked a police station, killed two guards and looted about 26 rifles. The “most regrettable incident” led to a diplomatic row and was discussed in the House of Lords in London.

Acting swiftly to mitigate international tensions, the West Bengal government on August 17, 1949, promulgated the Special Courts Ordinance, a law that called for swift trials in special cases. Special courts set up under this law could conduct the trial without the presence of the accused and even refuse to summon key witnesses. Sarkar was arrested on October 11.

On January 25, 1950, just a day before the new Constitution came into force, it was notified that King v Anwar Ali Sarkar would be heard under the Special Courts law.

Court records show that the prosecution alleged that Sarkar was a member of the Executive Committee of the Union of workers of Jessop & Co., and took a leading part in the workers’ agitation against retrenchment and for Puja bonus. The defence, however, argued that he wasn’t present at the spot.

On March 31, 1950, S N Guha Roy, then Sessions Judge of Alipore, awarded Ali and 49 others a sentence of “transportation



for life”, a punishment that involved sending a convict to exile or banishment. Under colonial laws, dissidents of the State were routinely given punishments that included sending them to ‘Kala Pani’ in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

In an appeal filed in the Calcutta High Court, Anwar Ali Sarkar invoked Article 14 of the Constitution that guaranteed his right to equality before the law and equal protection of the law and sought to be treated like an ordinary criminal and thus tried in an ordinary court and not a special one only because he had killed white men.

Sir Arthur Trevor Harries, an Englishman who was then Chief Justice of the High Court, agreed with the petition. The HC held that while “classes of offences” or “classes of cases” could be referred to the special courts, only referring “cases” is violative of Article 14. For example, sexual assault cases are currently tried in special, fast-track courts, but the government cannot pick one

1952

STATE OF WEST BENGAL V ANWAR ALI SARKAR

CASE: In 1949, Anwar Ali Sarkar, a member of the Revolutionary Communist Party of India, and 49 others killed three Europeans at Jessop factory in Kolkata where he was a union worker. Sarkar was tried in a Special Court for speedy disposal. He argued that this violated his right to equality as the Special Courts Act, 1950, allowed the state

government to bypass the ordinary trial procedure without a reasonable justification. The Supreme Court struck down the Act. **RELEVANCE TODAY:** This ruling is the first to establish the “reasonable classification” test, which dictates that a law can provide an exception to the right to equality and apply to a specific class of people.

case, however gruesome, and try it under a different procedure.

As the State went in appeal to the Supreme Court, it was veteran lawyer N C Chatterjee, a Hindu Mahasabha leader and father of former Lok Sabha Speaker Somnath Chatterjee who argued for Sarkar and the other communists.

In a Republic that had placed its hope in the Constitution, the judgment and the conviction jarred and the case ended up being an opportunity to truly decolonise the legal system. Like Chatterjee, many other legal stalwarts picked the brief for similar cases. Hyderabad and Mysore states, which had similar laws on special courts, mounted a concerted effort along with then Attorney General for India M C Setalvad.

On January 11, 1952, in a 6:1 ruling, the Supreme Court upheld the Calcutta High Court rul-

ing in the Anwar Ali case and struck down the Special Courts Act for falling foul of the right to equality. The ruling was one of the rare instances in which the Chief Justice of India, Patanjali Sastri, was the sole dissenter.

Justice Vivian Bose said in the judgment, “We find men accused of heinous crimes called upon to answer for their lives and liberties. We find them picked out from their fellows, and however much the new procedure may give them a few crumbs of advantage, in the bulk they are deprived of substantial and valuable privileges of defence which others, similarly charged, are able to claim...The question with which I charge myself is, can fair-minded, reasonable unbiased and resolute men, who are not swayed by emotion or prejudice, regard...it as that equal treatment and pro-

tection in the defence of liberties which is expected of a sovereign democratic republic in the conditions which obtain in India today? I have but one answer to that. On that short and simple ground I would decide this case and hold the Act bad.”

The ruling became the foundation for the “reasonable classification” test under Article 14 that is now applied almost as second nature. The test dictates when a law can provide an exception to the right to equality and apply to a specific class of people. However, the classification must be based on “intelligible differentia” (clear reasons for singling out that class of people) and must have a “rational relation” to the object of the law.

The ruling also underscored that the lofty protections of the Constitution must extend even to ordinary citizens.

Speaking to *The Indian Express*, Rohit De, Associate Professor of History at Yale University, said that it did not matter who Anwar Ali Sarkar was for the court to recognise his rights. It was clear, he said, that Sarkar and his fellow detainees were not high-profile Communist leaders but just ordinary citizens. “Nor were they being suppressed because of their views. They had carried out a brutal attack, killing people. It was far from being a sympathetic case,” he said.

His name, however, continues to be invoked with every plea for equality and equal protection under the Constitution.



Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan and party leaders during the flag hoisting ceremony ahead of CPI (M) state conference, in Kollam, Wednesday. PTI

At Kerala CPM state meet today, focus on how to retain power

SHAJU PHILIP
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, MARCH 5

THE STATE conference of CPI(M), which begins in Kollam Thursday, will mainly see discussions on giving another push to the development agenda of the Pinarayi Vijayan government, and discuss tactics to retain power for the third consecutive term.

The triennial event, which will examine party organisational matters in the past three years, assumes significance considering that the state will have elections to three-tier local bodies and Assembly over next one year. CPI(M) has already teed up debate on the third Pinarayi regime in Kerala, where Congress is fighting to put on a united face.

CPI(M) state secretary M V Govindan said that the conference will see debates and decisions to bring the party-led government

to power for a third time in row.

“CM Pinarayi Vijayan will present a draft ‘New Kerala, New Ways’, which will reflect the party’s approach towards Kerala development. This will be a continuation of the party policy draft for ‘Nava (new) Kerala Mission’, which was presented in the last state conference in 2022. Our aim is comprehensive development of the state and this meeting will debate on various initiatives aimed at taking Kerala to the next level,” he said.

In the 2022 state conference, CPI(M) had debated about converting Kerala into a hub of higher education with private investment. Three years in, that debate has taken the party-led government to allow private universities to be set up in Kerala.

Earlier this week, the Bill on private universities — Kerala State Private Universities (Establishment and Regulation) Draft Bill (2025) — was referred to the sub-

ject committee of the Assembly.

It was at the party conference in 2022 that trade unions were urged to change their mindsets and factor in concerns of the management. This was meant to change the perception that Kerala is not investor friendly.

The ‘New Kerala, New Ways’ will delve into taking Kerala to the level of a developed middle-income economy and creating more job opportunities in the state.

Vijayan, 79, remains the single face of the party led government, and CPI(M) has not so far projected another face to lead LDF in Assembly polls. On the organisational front, Govindan, who had taken over as CPI (M)’s state secretary in 2022 is set to continue on the job.

As the party has fixed 75 as the age limit for its state committee members, the conference will also be marked by stepping down of a crop of leaders.

Bihar cop’s gun stolen from home when he was out chasing thieves

HIMANSHU HARSH
PATNA, MARCH 5

HE SET out to catch a bike thief, little expecting to become a burglary victim himself. A sub-inspector in Bihar’s Bhagalpur has alleged his flat was burgled when he was out on patrol duty Sunday night.

In an FIR registered based on the complaint, the policeman, Kanhaiya Kumar, claimed that while on duty Sunday night, he felt the need to relieve himself and returned to the rented accommodation that he shared with his wife near Rani Talab. “Once home, I locked my service pistol along with 35 rounds of ammunition in the almirah,” the FIR said. Soon after, he got a call about a motorcycle theft and left home, forgetting to take his gun and ammunition.

When he returned after his shift, he found the lock broken and the house ransacked, the FIR says, adding there was nobody home at the time of the incident.

“As I approached, the lock on my room door was also broken and so was the lock of the almirah,” he said in the FIR. “Upon close inspection, I found that my service pistol, 35 rounds of ammunition, a government-issued laptop, a personal laptop, and some jewellery, including a gold chain, a locket, a ring, and some silver utensils, missing,” he said in the complaint, adding that about ₹5,000 in cash and his wife’s education certificates were also stolen.

“We are interrogating several suspects. Raids are being conducted to recover the stolen weapon and other items. We will also be taking departmental action over the officer’s negligence,” SSP Hriday Kant said.

Sambhal violence: Police to move court to attach assets of absconding accused

AMIT SHARMA
MEERUT, MARCH 5

THE DISTRICT police in Sambhal have been unable to locate over 70 accused despite issuing non-bailable warrants in connection with the violence during a court-ordered survey of the Shahi Jama Masjid in Sambhal town on November 24, in which four persons were killed. Now, the police plan to approach the local court soon to initiate the process of attaching these properties.

The police have put up posters of 74 accused at various locations. However, no one shown in the posters has been traced. “Most of the accused we are trying to trace have settled in nearby districts with their families after locking their houses since last November. We will soon approach the local court to initiate the legal process of attachment of their properties hoping they would be forced to surrender so that our investigation can be completed,” said Kuldeep Kumar, Deputy SP (crime).

The attachment process will begin for those named in the FIRs filed at the Nakhasa police station. Non-bailable warrants have been issued against 24 named accused.

However, only nine have been arrested so far. Further legal action will be taken against 15 others who have disappeared, said the police.

The Sambhal police submitted a chargesheet before the local court on February 21 for six out of 12 FIRs. The cases included

in the chargesheet did not name local SP MP Zia ur Rehman Barq or Sohail Iqbal, the son of local SP MLA Iqbal Mehmood.

The police on November 26 booked Zia ur Rehman Barq and Sohail Iqbal. The MP was accused of inciting violence through provocative speeches. He was also alleged to have participated in the mob that attacked police officers and set fire to private and government vehicles.

According to the chargesheet, weapons and cartridges recovered from the site of violence and other locations bear stamps indicating they were manufactured in Pakistan or in the UK, the US, Germany, and Czechoslovakia.

“We are currently awaiting additional details regarding the WhatsApp messages from the mobile phones of the MP, and we are gathering more evidence about the involvement of the MLA’s son in the violence. The chargesheets for their cases will be filed soon,” said Krishan Kumar, SP, Sambhal, after the SIT submitted a 4,025-page chargesheet before the court of Judicial Magistrate Archana Singh.

The SIT took 87 days to complete the probe into six the 12 FIRs. In cases where the chargesheets have been submitted, 159 people were named as accused. Of these, 80 have already been arrested. “We have identified the accused through various means, including CCTV footage, posters of accused, and interrogations of those arrested, who provided us with the names of local individuals who encouraged them to gather near the site of violence,” said the SP.



Police personnel inspect vehicles entering Chandigarh on Wednesday. Jasbir Malhi

met a delegation of industrialists from Jalandhar, who requested him to ensure the blockades were cleared.

On Tuesday, Mann broke his silence on the walkout. “I am a

custodian of 3.5 crore people of the state... Punjab is losing economically... and is being nicknamed as a state of dharmas. My softness should not be considered my weakness... I have been telling

them (protesting farmers) not to indulge in traffic and rail blockades. But they have not been listening,” Mann said.

Mann added that he was unhappy that the SKM was unwilling to call off their March 5 protest. “At the meeting, I asked them about their plan for the March 5 protest. They said it will continue. I then asked them why they made me sit for over two hours. Their demands were not related to the state. They were related to the Centre. The protest will continue, but they will talk to me for two hours. Is it justified? I walked out. They told me had they not announced the protest, I would not have called them for the meeting. I told them I have not held

this meeting because I was scared of their protest. I have held several meetings with them,” Mann said.

Sources privy to the government’s action against farmers said that the thinking in the administration is that the farmers have “lost the common man’s support”. “Despite the Opposition bashing the CM, there is a feedback that the people of Punjab are sick of agitations by farmers. Punjab is paying a price. Mann told this to farmers at the meeting. He told them that a delivery portal had increased the delivery fee in Punjab because of these agitations. Mann appeared soft on farmers, but now he has taken a strong stand that is likely to continue,” a source said.

Bofors case: CBI sends request to US, seeks info from pvt sleuth

Letter Rogatory sent in February, process begun in October last year

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, MARCH 5

THE CBI has made a judicial request to the US after sending a Letter Rogatory (LR), requesting information from private investigator Michael Hershman, who had expressed willingness to share with Indian agencies crucial details about the ₹64 crore Bofors case.

An LR is a written request sent by the court of one country to the court of another to obtain assistance in the investigation or prosecution of a criminal matter.

A source said the process to send the LR was initiated on October 14 last year, and it was sent in February after approval from the court concerned. CBI has also informed the special court hearing the agency’s plea for further probe into the alleged bribery case about recent developments.

On March 18, 1986, India signed a ₹1,437 crore deal with Swedish arms manufacturer AB Bofors for the supply of 400 155 mm Howitzer guns for the Army. A year later, on April 16, 1987, a Swedish radio channel alleged that the company had bribed top Indian politicians and defence personnel to secure the contract.

The scandal rocked the Rajiv Gandhi-led government. On January 22, 1990, the CBI lodged an FIR against the then Bofors president Martin Ardbo, alleged middleman Win Chadda, and the Hinduja brothers for criminal conspiracy, cheating and forgery.

It was alleged that certain public servants and private people in India and abroad had entered into a criminal conspiracy between 1982 and 1987 in pursuance of which the offences of bribery, corruption, cheating and forgery were committed.

The first chargesheet was filed on October 22, 1999, against Chadda, Ottavio Quattrocchi, the then defence secretary S K Bhat-

nagar, Ardbo and Bofors company. A supplementary chargesheet was filed against the Hinduja brothers on October 9, 2000.

On May 31, 2005, Justice (retired) R S Sodhi of Delhi HC had quashed the CBI case in Bofors case. Before that, Justice (retired) J D Kapoor, had on February 4, 2004, exonerated Gandhi in the case and directed that charge of forgery be framed under IPC Sec 465 against Bofors company.

On March 4, 2011, a special CBI court in Delhi had discharged Quattrocchi from the case saying the country could not afford to spend hard-earned money on his extradition which had already cost ₹250 crore. Quattrocchi, who had fled India on July 29-30, 1993, never appeared before any court in India. He died on July 13, 2013. Bhatnagar, Chadda and Ardbo were the other accused who died.

CBI appealed against the 2005 decision in Supreme Court in 2018 but the plea was dismissed on the grounds of delay. The SC, however, allowed it to raise all the points in an appeal filed by advocate Ajay Aggarwal in 2005.

Hershman, head of the Fairfax Group, visited India in 2017 to attend a conference of private detectives. During his stay, he appeared on various platforms, alleging that the investigation into the scam was derailed by Congress government and stated he was willing to share details with CBI. The agency took note of his claims in several interviews and announced in 2017 that the matter would be investigated according to due process.

Earlier, CBI had informed the special court that following Hershman’s revelations, it plans to reopen the probe. The agency had previously also sent letters and reminders to US authorities on November 8, 2023, December 21, 2023, May 13, 2024, and August 14, 2024, but received no information, with the US authorities requesting additional time.

Imphal-based group’s proposed march to hill districts opposed

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
IMPHAL, MARCH 5

THE KUKI Village Volunteers Wednesday issued a stern warning against a proposed “march to hills” on March 8 by the Federation of Civil Society Organisations (FOCS), an Imphal-based conglomerate of Meitei civil society bodies.

The FOCS termed the proposed march as a “peace Initiative” following a directive by Union Home Minister Amit Shah to security forces to ensure free movement of all the people in the state from March 8.

In a statement, the Kuki Village Volunteers-Eastern Zone said, “There will be no free movement in Kuki areas before the es-

tablishment of a separate administration/Union Territory with a legislature for the Kuki people”.

“The relentless injustices, inhumane atrocities, and systematic oppression committed against our people cannot be ignored... under the pretence of peaceful marches. Those who have inflicted suffering on Kuki-Zo people, those who have taken innocent lives... will not be allowed free passage into our lands. Our demand for a separate administration is not just a political aspiration but a necessity for our survival, security and dignity,” it said.

The statement said any attempting to reconcile with the “perpetrators” through the government before a separate administration/UT was established would face severe consequences.

have met CMs in the past, including Parkash Singh Badal, Captain Amarinder Singh and Charanjit Singh Channi. But this is a first.”

Leader of Opposition and Congress MLA Partap Singh Bajwa slammed Mann for his “aggressive and arrogant behaviour”. “Mann has apparently got drunk with power and the people of Punjab will certainly teach him a lesson,” Bajwa said.

Sukhbir Singh Badal, senior Akali Dal leader, said, “First CM Bhagwant Mann threatened farmer leaders he had invited for talks. Early Tuesday morning, police raided residences of farmer leaders and detained many of them in a crude attempt to foil the March 5 protest. Such dictatorial methods can never stifle the voice of the annadata (farmers).”

Delhi HC rejects plea against order granting Bhatkal aide phone facility

SOHINI GHOSH
NEW DELHI, MARCH 5

REFUSING TO entertain a petition by Delhi’s DG of prisons against a trial court order granting an associate of Indian Mujahideen’s co-founder Yasin Bhatkal e-mulakat and phone facilities, the Delhi High Court said the plea was not maintainable as the accused was availing e-mulakat/telephone facilities prior to April 22, 2024.

At Tihar jail, accused Asadullah Akhtar was availing phone and e-mulakat facilities. Later, he was shifted to Mandoli jail.

Akhtar, a “high risk prisoner”, was awarded the death penalty for the 2013 Dilsukhnagar twin blasts that killed 18 people. He is facing trial for charges under IPC and UAPA in a 2012 NIA case.

On March 3, dismissing the plea, Justice Jasmeet Singh orally remarked, “Please understand the plight of prisoners...let’s not make it an ego problem.” Justice Singh also said in the order whether the trial court is vested with the power to pass such orders “is not required to be adjudicated”, adding that the state is at liberty to avail appropriate remedies.

The state had challenged the Patiala House sessions court order of September 21, 2024 granting phone facilities/e-mulakat facility to Akhtar pending verification by jail authorities.

The state, in its plea, contended that the sessions court “acted in excess of the powers vested” in it as “administrative matters pertaining to the governance of prisons cannot be subject to judicial scrutiny by a court that does not bear any constitutional powers,” and thus could not have granted availing of phone/e-mulakaat facilities to Akhtar.

The prison authorities contended that circulars issued in September and December 2022 and April and May 2024 by the Tihar headquarters, it is mandatory for inmates phone and e-mulakat facilities under Rules 631, Delhi Prison Rules, 2018, an NOC has to be taken from the concerned agency.

11 madrasas sealed in Dehradun, Muslim bodies say drive illegal

AISWARYA RAJ
DEHRADUN, MARCH 5

FOLLOWING AN order by the district administration on February 28, authorities have sealed 11 madrasas in Dehradun, citing non-registration with the state madrasa board or the education department.

In January, before the local body elections, the state government ordered a verification drive and data from Dehradun was made public. The Dehradun District Magistrate, Savin Bansal, had stated that Sadar Dehradun tehsil had 16 unregistered and eight registered madrasas, Vikasnagar tehsil had 34 unregistered and 27 registered ones. Doiwala had one registered and six unregistered madrasas, and Kalsi had a single unregistered madrasa.

According to the Sub-District Magistrate of Vikasnagar tehsil, Vinod Kumar, nine madrasas have been sealed since March 3. The other two institutions are in Doiwala and Sadar. “Last

November, I submitted a report

to the district administration that madrasas were running without registering with the departments concerned. A team comprising the education, minority welfare, revenue departments and the police was formed for inspection. Following this, a report was submitted, and it was found that 20 madrasas in Vikasnagar were operating without registration,” he said.

“After the inspection, a few madrasas complied and registered with the departments. After raids were conducted following a DM order on February 28, we sealed nine madrasas after violations were found,” Kumar said.

After the Dehradun District Magistrate submitted a report stating that 57 madrasas in the district are running without registration, Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami said that authorities would look into the “source of funding and the origins of such institutions”.

As the sealing exercise was being carried out, Muslim groups

staged a protest in the city.

President of Muslim Sewa Sangathan, Naeem Qureshi, said, “No recognition is required to operate a madrasa. The sealing is illegal because no order or notice was given to the managers of the madrasas before they were sealed. They have not explained the grounds. We carried out a protest at the collectorate on Tuesday and one today at the Mussoorie Dehradun Development Authority for illegally sealing a mosque. We submitted a memorandum as well. We said that if they do not stop this illegal sealing, we will protest outside the secretariat.”

Though a state-wide inspection was carried out by the DMs of all 13 districts, the findings are yet to be made public.

Recognised madrasas come under the state boards for madrasa education, while unrecognised ones follow the curriculum prescribed by the bigger seminaries such as the Darul Uloom Nadwatul Ulama and Darul Uloom Deoband.

The Uttar Pradesh govern-

ment had initiated an inspection of madrasas in the state, which the Uttarakhand government had emulated.

Speaking to *The Indian Express*, Uttarakhand Madrasa Board chairman Mufti Shamoom Qasmi said the exercise is to merge these students with the “mainstream”. “Since February 28, we have approved ‘recognition’ to 51 madrasas out of 88 applications. The madrasas need to comply with norms, and the children should be allowed to follow modernity. We have initiated the NCERT curriculum so they can get mainstream education along with religious education. The madrasas need to register with either the madrasa board or the education department,” he said.

He said that Sanskrit will also soon be an option, and they have proposed it to the education department since it is the second language of the state. “As soon as the education department gets us teachers, we will kickstart this. Our aim is that the kids know the culture of others,” he said.

Kokate gets relief from court after conviction in fraud case

Mumbai: In a relief for Maharashtra Agriculture Minister Manikrao Kokate, a sessions court in Nashik on Wednesday temporarily stayed his conviction in a housing fraud case.

Kokate and his brother were found guilty on charges of cheating and forgery by a magistrate court in Nashik on February 20, for which they were sentenced to two years in jail. As a result of the stay, the detailed order of which is yet to be made available, Kokate will not be disqualified from the Legislative Assembly.

As per the Representation of People Act, a legislature member is disqualified if convicted and sentenced to imprisonment for not less than two years. **ENS**

TO KEEP TRACK ON NEWS

Maharashtra to spend ₹10 crore on media monitoring centre

ALOK DESHPANDE
MUMBAI, MARCH 5

THE MAHARASHTRA government will set up a media monitoring centre at an estimated cost of ₹10 crore that will monitor news coverage related to the state government in print, electronic, social and digital mediums. It will also prepare a report by analysing the coverage and bring to the notice and take action on the spread of negative or misleading news related to the state government.

“Government schemes and policies are publicised through various print, electronic, social and digital mediums. The state government was considering to initiate a media monitoring centre where these news items will be monitored and analysed under one roof,” said a Government Resolution (GR) issued on Wednesday.

The government will set up the cell as an independent project, under which a system will be set up to analyse positive and negative news published on all print and digital platforms, including news applications and online news websites. The system will activate a mechanism that will take real-time action on negative or misleading news be-

ing published.

The centre will use Artificial Intelligence (AI) to keep a tab on fake or misleading news as that could create unrest in the state.

A professional and private consulting agency will compile and analyse the news items, which include PDF files of paper cuttings on important developments. It will be classified as positive/negative, department, subject, incident wise and individual personality. News items and information on electronic, digital mediums will be monitored every hour to analyse the trend, mood and tone, based on which alerts will be given.

The centre will work from 8 am to 10 pm and will give updates on regular interval. During this, it will generate reports under subject, district, division, incident and individual categories on daily, weekly and monthly basis. A dashboard will be set up as well as mobile application will be established. The centre will also analyse and prepare report on public response to government policies and schemes.

As per the GR, the Directorate General of Information and Public Relations (DGIPR) will prepare a detailed project report (DPR). The DGIPR will also study similar model, if any, established by other states.

MINISTER SAYS OVERALL DECLINE IN NEW CASES

‘Rise in number of drug abusers admitted to hospitals in J&K’

ARUN SHARMA
JAMMU, MARCH 5

THE NUMBER of drug addicts getting admitted at health facilities across Jammu and Kashmir has “increased significantly” despite an overall decline in new cases in the past three years, the UT’s health minister Sakina Itoo told the Assembly Monday.

The minister’s remarks were part of her written response to National Conference’s Mubarak Gul. Itoo acknowledged before the session that drug addiction was a growing problem in J&K, although she said the UT saw a decline in the overall number of cases being registered in the last three years.

She also said government measures such as expansion of the in-patient department, real-time surveillance and campaigns such as the ‘Nasha Mukht Abhiyan’ launched in September 2022

helped bring down the numbers. The reporting mechanisms and interventions have also meant there was a “significant increase” in the number of drug addicts getting themselves admitted.

“It is a fact that there was an alarming increase of drug addiction among the youth of J&K. But after the initiation of Nasha Mukti Abhiyan in September 2022, as per record, registration of new cases has shown a slight decreasing trend,” she said, adding “there is no evidence of an increase in drug addiction cases”.

Referring to the decrease in number of drug addicts visiting the OPDs, she said that 25,402 drug addicts received treatment at various centres across J&K over the past three years—9,775 in 2022, 8,702 in 2023, and 6,925 in 2024.

The minister also outlined measures such as a drug de-addiction policy and a committee

Goa BJP leader accuses govt of corruption, says ‘ministers busy counting money’

PAVNEET SINGH CHADHA
PANAJI, MARCH 5

BJP LEADER and former Goa Transport Minister Pandurang Madkaikar Tuesday said that the ministers in the ruling BJP government are “busy in counting money”.

He also said that he recently paid a bribe to the PA of a minister to process his file.

Madkaikar, who served as a minister in the Manohar Parrikar-led Cabinet, made these remarks after he met BJP national general secretary (organisation) BL Santhosh in Panaji. Santhosh on Tuesday met with several MLAs and party leaders in Goa to assess the party’s work. “I will tell you very frankly, it’s not corruption, it’s loot. Loot is going on in Goa... All Ministers are busy in counting money,” Madkaikar said.

“Last week, I paid ₹15 to 20 lakh to one minister for a small work. He took one file...home and left a message that if someone comes to inquire about that file, tell that fellow to come and meet me... So, I know what procedures are followed in that department,” he said.

Madkaikar said he did not want to name the said Minister, adding, “...but when I leave the party, I will take the name.”

CELEBRATING DIVERSITY

President Droupadi Murmu with Union Ministers Jual Oram, Giriraj Singh and Gajendra Singh Shekhawat during the inauguration of the second edition of *Vividhata Ka Amrit Mahotsav* at Rashtrapati Bhavan, Wednesday. *PTI*

Akhilesh hits back at Yogi over Ansal Group issue

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
LUCKNOW, MARCH 5

A DAY after Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath targeted the Samajwadi Party (SP) over its alleged links with the real estate developer Ansal Group, after which an FIR was registered against M/s Ansal Properties & Infrastructure Ltd and its promoters, SP president Akhilesh Yadav Wednesday said, “If everything was wrong, why did you go there for the inauguration instead of sending a bulldozer?”

During a discussion on the Budget in the state Assembly on

Tuesday, Adityanath said that all its assets would be seized if Ansal Group had defrauded even a single homebuyer. He emphasised that the culprits would be tracked down and would face strict punishment. The CM also accused the SP of shielding the Ansal Group and said the company was a product of the erstwhile SP government. He alleged that during the SP’s rule, Ansal’s illegal demands were met at the cost of investors and homebuyers, who were cheated. While claiming that the SP government had extended undue favors to Ansal, the CM Yogi highlighted that his government had cur-

tailed these privileges and begun cornering the company.

Reacting to the issue, Akhilesh Yadav posted on X that to hide their failures, people often invoke someone else’s name, forgetting that they themselves inaugurated the mall and hospital in the city named after that very person. “They also hosted G20 guests at a newly built hotel in the same grand complex—the very place where billions of rupees in real investment have flowed,” he wrote.

Yadav also hit out at the BJP government in the state, saying that “levelling allegations at investors and discouraging them

will neither promote investment nor benefit the state”. The dis-cerning people of Uttar Pradesh are asking — if everything was wrong... Why did you arrive for the inauguration?

He also said on X that the public is saying if they are willing to dig deep, they should also examine the real reason their throne is shaking. The widespread talk of their possible ouster is fueling their frustration. The fear of displacement is echoing in their loud rhetoric.

On Tuesday evening, the Lucknow police registered an FIR against M/s Ansal Properties & Infrastructure Ltd and others including Pranav Ansal, Sushil

Ansal, Sunil Kumar Gupta, Vinay Kumar Singh and Francette Patricia Atkinson.

They were booked for allegedly being involved in large scale “irregularities” in the development of a high-tech township project along the Lucknow-Sultanpur road. They are reportedly accused of conspiring to defraud the public and government by selling land illegally, misappropriating public property and engaging in organised crime. They are also accused of reportedly being engaged in misconduct, threatening authority personnel and failing to comply with directives by RERA and other agencies.

Amid row over 1931 ‘martyrs’, BJP MLAs walk out of J&K House

ARUN SHARMA
JAMMU, MARCH 5

THE BJP MLAs walked out of the J&K Assembly Wednesday after Speaker Abdul Rahim Rather announced expunging of “derogatory remarks” of the Leader of Opposition and BJP leader Sunil Sharma about the July 13, 1931 “martyrs” amid ruckus in the House.

During a discussion on the motion of thanks to the address of L-G Manoj Sinha in the House, PDP legislator Waheed-ur-Rehman Para demanded the restoration of public holidays on July 13 in the memory of the “martyrs” killed by Maharaja Hari Singh’s forces in Kashmir, and December 5, the birth anniversary of National Conference founder Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah. This prompted Sharma’s remark on the 1931 “martyrs”.

Both holidays were scrapped by the LG-led administration after the abrogation of Article 370 in August 2019 and replaced with September 23, Maharaja Hari Singh’s birthday, and October 26, the day the Maharaja signed the Instrument of Accession in 1947.

Para described July 13

protests as “not communal” but a “significant moment” in democratic history of J&K, adding that “it was a day of resistance against monarchy and lives were sacrificed for that cause”. “Unless the lives lost on July 13 are acknowledged and the holiday is restored, the BJP will not be able to do justice to the people of J&K”

LoP Sharma said anything spoken against Maharaja Hari Singh will not be tolerated. “I can feel the pain of Para after his party’s performance (in Assembly elections). You are enjoying the state of Maharaja (Hari Singh)...,” he said, triggering protests from Treasury Benches led by NC, PDP and several others, demanding that he retract his remarks.

Para asked why they did not shed tears when civilians were killed in police action to quell violence during both the NC and PDP dispensations. Amid protests, the Speaker expunged “derogatory remarks” by Sharma, prompting all 28 BJP MLA to walk out.

Later, People’s Conference leader and MLA Sajad Gani Lone urged the Assembly to pass a resolution seeking restoration of public holidays for both the Martyrs’ Day and the birth anniversary of Sheikh Abdullah.



बिहार सरकार

CAT/MAT तथा प्रबंधन से संबंधित रोजगार परक प्रतियोगिता परीक्षा

विधि पाठ्यक्रम प्रवेश परीक्षा यथा CLAT एवं न्यायायिक सेवाएं

NET, GATE, JRF (CSIR), Ph.D, M.Phil आदि प्रतियोगिता परीक्षा

Ph. No. 020982 (B.C. & EPC Welfare) 0. 2024-25

पिछड़ा वर्ग एवं अति पिछड़ा वर्ग कल्याण विभाग

मुख्यमंत्री व्यवसायिक पाठ्यक्रम मार्गदर्शन एवं उत्प्रेरण योजना

पिछड़ा वर्ग एवं अति पिछड़ा वर्ग के छात्र/छात्राओं के लिए राज्य के 10 संचालित केन्द्रों में निःशुल्क प्रशिक्षण (कोचिंग)

प्रत्येक व्यवसायिक पाठ्यक्रम मार्गदर्शन एवं उत्प्रेरण केन्द्र पर 60–60 (कुल–120) छात्र छात्राओं के दो बैच (प्रशिक्षण अवधि–6 माह) संचालित है । उपलब्ध सीटों में पिछड़ा वर्ग के लिए 40 प्रतिशत एवं अति पिछड़ा वर्ग के लिए 60 प्रतिशत सीट अनुमान्य है । दोनों कोटियों में छात्राओं के लिए 33 प्रतिशत शैतिज आरक्षण अनुमान्य है ।

छात्र/छात्राओं के लिए सुविधा: –

- छात्र–छात्राओं को 75 प्रतिशत उपस्थिति के आधार पर रु० 3,000 / – (तीन हजार रुपये) मात्र की दर से प्रोत्साहन राशि ।
- डिजिटल अध्ययन केंद्र ।
- केंद्रस्तरीय पाक्षिक एवं राज्यस्तरीय जाँच परीक्षा ।
- उन्नत पुस्तकालय ।
- प्रेरणा एवं मार्गदर्शन सत्र ।

पात्रता:–

- छात्र / छात्राएं बिहार राज्य के स्थायी निवासी हों ।
- पिछड़ा वर्ग अथवा अति पिछड़ा वर्ग के सदस्य हों ।
- छात्र / छात्रा की आय सहित उनके अभिभावक की अधिकतम वार्षिक अद्यतन आय सभी स्रोतों को मिलाकर रु०–3,00,000 / – तक होनी चाहिए ।
- छात्र / छात्रा की आयु सीमा एवं न्यूनतम शैक्षणिक योग्यता संबंधित कोर्स के अंतर्गत होने वाली प्रतियोगिता परीक्षा के लिए निर्धारित न्यूनतम अर्हता के अनुरूप होनी चाहिए

योजना से संबंधित विस्तृत जानकारी तथा दिशा निर्देश विभागीय वेबसाईट <https://bcebconline.bihar.gov.in> पर उपलब्ध है ।





The IndianEXPRESS

FOUNDED BY

RAMNATH GOENKA

BECAUSE THE TRUTH INVOLVES US ALL

AIMING HIGH

India needs deeper, wider reforms to ensure the sustained higher growth needed to become a high income country

IN 2007-08, INDIA was classified as a low middle income country. India then had a per capita income of \$1,022 as per the International Monetary Fund. By 2024, more than a decade-and-a-half later, the average individual income is estimated to have risen to \$2,697 as per the Fund. In 2024-25, the per capita income required to transition from low middle income to upper middle income status has been pegged at \$4,516 by the World Bank. Going by current projections — the IMF expects the country's per capita income to rise to \$4,195 by 2029 — India is unlikely to enter this category by the end of the decade. But, as per the World Bank, India is on track to become an upper middle income economy by 2032. The challenge, however, is to become a high income developed country by 2047.

This is a daunting task. Over the past several decades, only a handful of countries such as South Korea, Czech Republic and Romania have been able to transition from middle income to high income status. Several others such as Brazil, South Africa, Malaysia, have been unable to make this transition. These countries have been caught in the “middle income trap”. The question is: Can India escape the fate of these countries? In a recent economic memorandum titled 'Becoming a high-income economy in a generation', the World Bank estimates that India would need to grow at 7.8 per cent over the coming decades to become a high income country by 2047. To put this growth in perspective — the country grew at 6.7 per cent over the two decades prior to the Covid pandemic. Thus, a business as usual scenario, while it may lead to “tangible welfare gains”, will not suffice to deliver such high growth consistently over such a long period.

The Bank has outlined the policy agenda required to achieve this. This revolves on promoting structural transformation, increasing investments, facilitating the creation of more productive jobs, technology adoption, and enabling states to grow faster. Its “accelerated reforms” scenario envisages the investment to GDP ratio rising to 40 per cent by 2035, the female labour force participation rate increasing to 55 per cent by 2050, and higher productivity. The investment to GDP ratio is currently around 33 per cent, with subuded private investments. The female labour force participation, while rising sharply over the past few years, is at 41.7 per cent (15 years and above). And rather than exiting agriculture, more are now employed in the sector — the percentage of workers engaged in the farm sector has risen to 46.1 per cent in 2023-24 from 44.1 per cent in 2017-18. Putting India on a sustained higher growth trajectory will require deeper and wide-ranging reforms by both central and state governments.

CRIME & ACCOUNTABILITY

Maharashtra Minister Munde's resignation is welcome. Law must take its course in murder case that is casting a long shadow

LAST MONTH, AT a Loksatta event, Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis spoke of his government's position on corruption: “I am not saying political extortion is rampant. But wherever middle-level leaders are indulging in ‘dadagiri’ it will be dealt with firmly...” With the resignation of Food and Civil Supplies minister Dhananjay Munde from his post a day after the Budget Session, ostensibly on grounds of ill health, but actually in the shadow of a case of brutal murder, the CM seems to be walking the talk, even if belatedly. Ever since the killing of Santosh Deshmukh, the 45-year-old sarpanch of Beed's Massajog village on December 9, for trying to stop an extortion bid on a windmill energy project, accusations have singed Munde. Beed has long been a Munde stronghold, and his close aide, Walmik Karad, is among the prime accused in the case. The minister's resignation is welcome.

For a government that came to power in November with an overwhelming mandate and assurances of tackling the real challenges facing people — unemployment, agrarian distress, issues of law and order, including corruption and women's safety — a crime such as this one has a troubling fallout. Already under fire following the rape of a 26-year-old in a Pune bus stand, the attack on actor Saif Ali Khan and the conviction of another NCP minister, Manikrao Kokate, in a housing fraud case, now temporarily stayed, the delay in action in the Deshmukh case draws unflattering attention to the new Mahayuti government. Videos of the abduction and torture of Deshmukh went public on Monday. Munde's resignation raises questions about his induction in the first place — the cabinet expansion that gave him a ministerial berth took place on December 14, five days after the murder and three days after the FIR naming Karad was filed.

There are economic fallouts to consider as well. In 2024, Maharashtra ranked 13th in India for ease of doing business. As CM, in his first foreign assignment to the World Economic Forum in Davos in January, Fadnavis said that the state had signed 54 MoUs with investments worth Rs 15.75 lakh crore and that about 98 per cent of it would be through FDI. In a state starved of employment opportunities, this would work out to 16 lakh new jobs and an opportunity to reinforce its position as an economic powerhouse. Incidents of organised extortion and the suggestion of political patronage can spark apprehensions that stand in the way of realising such opportunities. The work of transparency and accountability in governance has to continue beyond Munde's resignation.

MAMMOTH PROBLEM

Scientists have unveiled the woolly mouse, a precursor to bringing back the woolly mammoth. The question is: Why?

FOR ABOUT TWO years now, people have been promised a discount Jurassic Park, come to life. The woolly mammoth, which has been extinct for about 4,000 years, has been on the verge of being “brought back”. The company that is seeking to achieve this feat has received much publicity for its claims. Perhaps that's why, to sate an eager public, it has “created” woolly mice as a trailer to the much larger main attraction in years to come. But, as science imitates science fiction, it might do well to look at the lessons from the latter.

The new species — mice that sport a luxurious coat (imagine the pesky rodent with the fur of a chestnut golden retriever) — has been created through gene editing. Colossal Biosciences, the company behind the creature, has cited the critter as further support for the case for bringing back the mammoth before the end of the decade. Questions, though, remain. First, a species isn't just about how it looks. Will “de-extinct” mammoths behave in ways that the originals did? A mammoth that doesn't act like one is just a hairy elephant. More important than the how, though, is why. Why bring back animals that have died out? Wouldn't working towards preserving the ones that are still around be a better bet?

In recent years, there has been a sense that the sci-fi future is now. Unfortunately, it often appears to be a dystopic one. Advances in AI and robotics make it seem like artificial consciousness is in the offing. While tech bros may revel at the thought, for many it's the threat of being obsolete that looms large. And that's without thinking of *The Terminator*. There are no flying cars, and EV comes with the complications of mining the minerals that make up the batteries — and where they are concentrated (think Frank Herbert's *Dune*). Perhaps, before a gene-edited mammoth is unleashed, it might be worth rewatching *Jurassic Park*.



SHYAM SARAN

HOW SHOULD WE describe the topsy-turvy world we are living in today? Children's playbooks have a “joining the dots” game, which traces an image when the dots are joined together. We are now attempting to join dots that are constantly moving and no recognisable pattern is appearing. How can one navigate an unstable and shifting geopolitical terrain where familiar landmarks and reassuring anchors vanish with bewildering rapidity? And how should one deal with the most powerful country in the world, which under Donald Trump has transitioned from being the upholder of the global order to its ruthless undertaker? During Trump 1.0, which was a much milder version of Trump 2.0, a prescient Henry Kissinger had said, “I think Trump may be one of those figures in history who appears from time to time to mark the end of an era and to force it to give up its old pretences. It doesn't necessarily mean that he knows this, or that he is considering any great alternative. It could just be an accident.”

Kissinger may have been right about Trump marking the end of an era. He may not have anticipated that Trump 2.0 has a blueprint that is being rolled out both at home and abroad. If one considers the welter of ordinances issued by Trump so far and the dismantling of the federal bureaucracy by Elon Musk, who heads the new Department of Government Efficiency, the playbook seems to follow very closely the “Project 2025” document formulated by The Heritage Foundation, a right-wing, conservative think tank. Several of the authors of the report now occupy senior posts in the Trump administration. The professional bureaucracy is being replaced by a cohort of loyalists owing personal allegiance to Trump.

On the foreign policy and security front, there is also a dramatic change in direction, overturning the ideological and strategic foundations of the American state. It is no longer an internationalist liberal state. It is avowedly right-wing and seeks closer association with similar ruling dispensations and political entities in other parts of the world. It is a mistake to think that these new equations are manifes-

Trump marks end of concept of a liberal West. His diplomacy is driven by older ideas of imperialism

tations of Trump being a deal-maker and transactional. He and his close lieutenants see themselves as part of an emerging global mainstream which is the antithesis of the old conception of a liberal West. There is no longer a “West” in terms that the world has been accustomed to using the term.

It is not eccentricity alone which explains Trump's sense of affinity with Vladimir Putin of Russia and even Xi Jinping of China. The readiness to do deals with them is the consequence of ideological affinity. I have also argued elsewhere that Trump seems driven by a 19th-century concept of imperialism when land became a marker of power. The US itself was an example of how the acquisition of large tracts of land in its westward expansion went hand in hand with its emergence as a major power. In this way of thinking, the US, Russia and China are great powers by virtue of being the largest countries area-wise. Each is entitled to its sphere of influence and will continue to contend but also collaborate within these parameters. Other states are pawns in this bigger game and must accept the roles assigned to them.

Ukraine's refusal to acquiesce in its role as a bargaining chip is what lies behind the US voting against a resolution at the UN which condemns Russian aggression against Ukraine. It also led to the televised brawl in the Oval Office on February 28 where Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy was subjected to a carefully choreographed assault by Trump and Vice-President J D Vance. What may have been missed is Trump openly expressing empathy for Putin as a fellow victim of a political witch-hunt during his previous term as president. It is this frame which devalues Europe as a credible power and makes its attempts to salvage the situation for Ukraine futile.

The sooner Europe acknowledges that there is no longer a West that it has been accustomed to be a part of, the more likely it would be to come together, develop its own capabilities and acquire independent agency. A fragmented Europe with each mid-size or small country having to deal with the great

powers on its own, will stop to count geopolitically. The new chancellor of Germany, Friedrich Merz, has read the situation most clearly. In remarks post the recent elections, he said, “I would never have thought that I would have to say something like this in a TV show, but after Donald Trump's remarks last week ... It is clear that this government does not care about the fate of Europe. My absolute priority will be to strengthen Europe as quickly as possible so that, step by step, we can really achieve independence from the US.”

What does this mean for Asia and, in particular, India? Those who believe that a US-Russia détente will drive a wedge between China and Russia may be disappointed. The two countries have built up a solid, comprehensive and mutually supportive relationship which is unlikely to be diminished by Washington reaching out to Moscow. Trump does not see India as a big power in the same league as China and Russia. India has to be careful and ensure that it does not come to be seen as a convenient pawn for the US in the big power game. One expects that while the Quad (comprising India, Japan, Australia and the US) will continue to play a role in the Indo-Pacific, it may no longer be a strategic component of an American determination to retain its dominance in the region, but as a tactical bargaining tool vis-a-vis China. India must be alert to this shift.

It will be prudent for India to remain out of harm's way by maintaining a friendly relationship with Trump's America, being accommodating on lesser issues while quietly resisting on more critical ones. India must develop much closer relations with Europe, with countries in East and Southeast Asia and most importantly with its own sub-continental periphery, which may become a zone of strategic vulnerability. The ideological affinity which Trump shares with PM Modi is an asset for Delhi in handling a complicated relationship with Washington. But Trump's great power vision does not align with India's preference for a multipolar world order.

The writer is a former Foreign Secretary



RAMA SRINIVASAN

I AM A German citizen of Indian origin with undisputed left-liberal credentials. Given that the editorial (IE, February 25, ‘The New Right’) on German elections and the rise of the far-right globally was on how “liberals” need to listen without having a meltdown, I think your advice was partially targeted at me. Perhaps you did not imagine a person of colour as a German and European by choice when you wrote it. Neither do the far-right parties that you have defended. I cannot imagine holding a conversation with someone who disputes my identity — and my right — to call myself German and expects to strip me of my citizenship and re-emigrate/deport me.

The editorial is brought together by Giorgia Meloni's argument that “the Left” exposes its double standard when it dubs Trump, Meloni or Modi a threat to democracy and strives to keep them at arm's length. It conflates this amorphous Left with liberal politics in general although, in Europe, liberal mostly stands for neoliberal policies which the Left parties oppose, but far-right parties are generally in favour of. The editorial appears to deploy Indian disenchantments with (left-) liberal politics to analyse political developments elsewhere. As the editorial concludes, the far-right holds “multitudes” and, for this reason, such comparisons must be undertaken with extreme caution.

At the broadest level, far-right parties across the world have one thing in common: They manufacture outsiders and hold them responsible for all the challenges their countries face. These parties are doing well because communication is easier when you offer sim-

A NAIVE FANTASY

Engaging with far-right politics isn't the solution liberal politics needs

DEAR EDITOR,
I DISAGREE,

A column in which readers tell us why, when they differ with the editorial positions or news coverage of ‘The Indian Express’

In their effort to work around immigration, progressive parties have failed to underline their commitment to universal human rights that the anti-immigration politics positions itself against.

ple solutions for increasingly complex problems. The established political parties and actors can have a conversation with them only on their terms.

Progressive parties such as the outgoing coalition in Germany may have foreclosed the possibility of a conversation — as the editorial mentions in a somewhat perplexed fashion — but they have actually addressed these concerns during their tenure with visible reluctance. The conservative parties (CDU+CSU) have, on the other hand, enthusiastically appropriated the increasingly shrill anti-immigrant rhetoric and even cooperated with the Alternative for Germany (AfD) on passing a non-binding parliamentary resolution on the issue. The famed “firewall” that had separated the established parties from those reminiscent of the country's fascist past no longer exists in practice.

The editorial is perhaps accurate in its analysis that progressive politics lack agility and imagination. In their effort to work around immigration, progressive parties have failed to underline their commitment to universal human rights that the anti-immigration politics positions itself against.

Their biggest problem is not that they have not listened to right-wing politicians, but rather that they have passively absorbed too much without articulating their position on the most pervasive political topic in Germany and Europe currently. While AfD's electoral ascendancy did not come as a surprise, *Die Linke's* (The Left) last-minute surge underlines how articulate messaging on core democratic values still has resonance in Western democ-

racies. The Left in countries like Germany and France — the real one — has not only survived but thrived.

What the political ascendancy of the far-right in the West shows is the need to offer compelling answers to the multiple crises ailing different nation-states. Yes, parties must improve their communication strategies and speak to sections that have gravitated to them in search of solutions. But opening channels of communication is not the same as conversing with political actors who cynically manipulate said fears and pose a threat to both people and democratic institutions.

The editorial appears to endorse Meloni's view that far-right parties are unfairly labelled as threats to democracies. If its contention is to accept the shifting definitions of democracy where those working to hollow out its provisions are not to be perceived as threats as such, then the real challenge for left-liberals is to find ways to continue engaging people within the framework afforded by the constitution and the rule of law.

Such a space is shrinking in Western democracies not only for racial and ethnic minorities but also for progressive parties. The leaders of the Green Party have faced physical threats for pursuing policies they deem fit. They may or may not have the right idea, but keeping communication channels open with political actors who advocate actual physical harm appears to be a naïve fantasy.

The writer is an anthropologist and author of *Courting Desire: Litigating for Love in North India*



MARCH 6, 1985, FORTY YEARS AGO

CONGRESS SWEEPS MP

THE CONGRESS (I) STORMED back to power in Madhya Pradesh by winning 161 seats in the 320-member house and was holding out the promise of putting up an equally impressive show in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, as early results of the just concluded state assembly elections poured in.

POLL VIOLENCE

AT LEAST 22 people killed, 16 of them in Bihar, and more than 100 injured in group clashes and police firing during polling in the second and final phase of the assembly elections. In

Bihar, which witnessed widespread violence in the first round of voting, the police opened fire at more than ten places to quell violent groups and stop snatching of ballots. More than 500 people were rounded up.

SIACHEN DEMARCATION

INDIA IS READY for proper demarcation of the disputed Siachen glacier zone in Numbra area along the border with Pakistan in Ladakh. Pakistan made several attempts to capture the high altitude snow mountains during the past one year, but Indian troops repulsed the attack resulting in heavy casualties on the other side. General A S Vaidya,

the chief of army staff, who came here to visit some forward areas and meet the troops, said, in the Simla Agreement between India and Pakistan, the area had somehow escaped “strict” demarcation.

INDIA, CHAMPIONS

INDIA SWEEPED TO a seven-wicket victory over New Zealand in the World Championship of Cricket on March 5 to stand within one match of winning their second major one-day title in two years. Set a target of 207 to win under the Sydney Cricket Ground lights, India won the first semi-final with more than six overs to spare.

The delimitation promise

While it raises concerns about gerrymandering, delimitation is necessary to devolve power to the margins



ASHWANI KUMAR AND KHUSHBOO SRIVASTAVA

AS INDIA STANDS on the brink of the “Second Republic”, the proposed delimitation has reignited the debate over the persistent paradox of the imbalance between demography and democracy. Despite its central role in the democratic theory of political equality, the process of delimitation often grapples with a lingering democratic paradox in large republics, which face the challenge of balancing conflicting territorial, demographic, ethnic, and factional political considerations.

Delimitation in India aims to ensure fair representation in Parliament by adjusting constituency boundaries in line with population changes. However, since 1976, the process has been frozen to avoid penalising states that have successfully controlled population growth, particularly in the south. As a result, states like Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, with much larger populations, remain under-represented compared to southern states like Tamil Nadu and Kerala, which have smaller populations but more parliamentary seats. This imbalance, referred to as malapportionment, has fuelled political tensions, with concerns that the upcoming delimitation exercise in 2029 will shift power toward the politically hegemonic North.

The Indian Constitution mandates delimitation under Article 82, with an independent Delimitation Commission implementing it. Delimitation was conducted in 1952, 1962, and 1972, but was frozen in 1976 through the 42nd Constitutional Amendment and postponed in 2001, extending the freeze until 2026. This delay has created a peculiar situation where states that have successfully controlled population growth may lose seats, while states with higher birth rates will gain more representation.

Opponents of the proposed delimitation argue that the South consistently surpasses the North across various indicators, such as per capita income, contributions to the central treasury, infrastructure, healthcare, and education. Furthermore, the South has higher urbanisation rates, lower infant mortality, and longer life expectancies. These disparities have led to claims that the South is subsidising the North, shouldering the burden of population growth, unemployment, poverty, inadequate infrastructure, and social underdevelopment. The concern is that without addressing these inequalities, delimitation could create distorted forms of intrastate inequalities in India. In this sense, if population growth in the North is not controlled or economic growth matched with the South, the delimitation process could produce a Red Queen effect.

Globally, different countries handle delimitation in various ways. For example, New Zealand and South Africa have clear constitutional provisions, while countries like India



C R Sasikumar

and Japan manage the process through ordinary legislation. The role of the courts in reviewing delimitation decisions has been an ongoing debate. In the landmark Meghraj Kothari v Delimitation Commission (1966) ruling, the Supreme Court upheld the finality of delimitation orders, arguing that judicial intervention could lead to indefinite election delays. More recently, the Court dismissed a petition challenging the Jammu & Kashmir delimitation, despite claims that it marginalised minority communities.

Another pressing issue is the question of women’s representation. The Women’s Reservation Bill (2023), which aims to reserve one-third of seats in Parliament and state assemblies for women, is directly tied to delimitation. The bill will only take effect after the next delimitation exercise, delaying meaningful gender representation until at least 2029.

Delimitation also affects Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs), migrants, and other socio-religious minorities. According to Article 330(2) of the Constitution, reserved seats for SCs and STs should be proportional to their population in each state. However, since the seat allocation still relies on the 2001 Census, communities that have grown significantly since then remain underrepresented. For example, the Bihar Caste-Based Survey (2023) found that the SC population increased from 15.9 per cent to 19.65 per cent and the ST population from 1.2 per cent to 1.68 per cent. Yet, the seat allocation does not reflect these demographic shifts, leaving many SC/ST communities underrepresented.

Notably, a purely population-based seat allocation could drastically shift power toward the Hindi heartland, diminishing representation for southern states. Political scientist Alistair McMillan proposes expanding the Lok Sabha to accommodate demographic shifts without reducing representation for

We prefer a more optimistic perspective on the expansion of seats in Parliament through delimitation. We propose linking this process to the devolution of power to subnational units, which would enhance the representational and participatory aspects of democracy. Our focus should be on empowering women and lower castes.

any state. Another proposal, by political scientist Milan Vaishnav, suggests reforming the Rajya Sabha to provide a counterbalance to northern dominance in the Lok Sabha.

The process of delimitation often raises concerns about gerrymandering and the potential establishment of permanent electoral or political majorities. However, we prefer a more optimistic perspective on the expansion of seats in Parliament through delimitation. We propose linking this process to the devolution of power to subnational units, which would enhance the representational and participatory aspects of democracy. Our focus should be on empowering women and lower castes. This approach aligns with Alexis de Tocqueville’s vision of the gradual development of “equality of conditions” in India.

Ultimately, the delimitation exercise in India is a complex interplay of demographic data, constitutional law, and political interests, all of which must be navigated carefully to ensure fair and equitable representation in the electoral system. For India to remain a vibrant and robust democracy, a broad consensus must be built across political parties — both national and regional — regarding the updating of the nation’s electoral infrastructure. The unprecedented political consensus surrounding the 127th Constitutional Amendment Bill suggests that India is rapidly evolving into what Dutch political scientist Arend Lijphart described as a consociational or power-sharing democracy within a majoritarian polity. Delimitation has the potential to enhance the quality of India’s electoral democracy and rejuvenate its democratic longevity in the long term.

The writers teach at Centre of Electoral Studies, TISS, Mumbai. The views and opinions expressed here do not necessarily reflect the official position of affiliated institutions

WHAT THE OTHERS SAY

“While Pakistan is right in blaming the Afghan Taliban for doing little to curb cross-border terrorism, if ties deteriorate further, it will negatively affect counterterrorism cooperation.” — DAWN, PAKISTAN

Two crimes, one message

From Beed to Pune, criminals count on a climate of impunity — because of a criminal justice system that is seen to be crumbling



MEERAN CHADHA BORWANKAR

A POWERFUL MINISTER of Maharashtra has had to resign because of the allegation that his supporters killed Santosh Deshmukh, sarpanch of Massajog village, in Beed district. It is alleged that Deshmukh lost his life because he did not allow a politically strong gang of criminals to extort money from a windmill energy company. Investigations carried out by the state CID and the chargesheet show it to be a case of merciless torture of someone who had the courage to raise his voice against the organised crime of extortion.

The state government is already facing flak over the rape of a woman in a bus that was parked in Swargate, the busiest bus depot in Pune.

Such crimes show that respect for law and fear of conviction in courts has virtually disappeared from the minds of criminals, and that the area dominance of the police has dipped sharply. It is rare to see uniformed police personnel patrolling a street. This is because there are hardly any police men and women in police stations or in the chowkis. We have only around 160 police officers per lakh of population as against the internationally recommended ratio of 222 per lakh. Over and above this, the police in most states, including Maharashtra, have about 15–20 per cent vacancies.

One may laugh at the half pant-clad constable and his stick, made famous by RK Laxman’s cartoons, but he had a power of deterrence when it came to roadside criminals as well as habitual thieves. Jeep patrolling by police is no substitute for the “lathi wielding” hawaldar who could skillfully negotiate the narrow labyrinthine lanes of cities. Street dominance and effective beat patrolling prevent crimes and we should not underestimate their usefulness. Instead, we need to build public pressure to restore the beat system and strengthen it with the latest technology.

The manpower crunch faced by police stations is further aggravated by the enormous burden of VIP movement, their security and protection. In our vehicle-obsessed society, traffic constables too are generally drawn from police stations. While megapolises have separate traffic branches, they have to be regularly and routinely aided by local police stations. All this results in lax monitoring of habitual criminals or potential ones. The quality of investigation suffers and documentation required by the courts is often found wanting.

While the accused in the Swargate bus depot case of Pune reportedly has a criminal record, I am sure the gang involved in the Beed murder too are not first-timers either. The cruelest way of murdering the sarpanch and the heinous conduct of defiling the dead have shaken the whole state. The investigation has disclosed that the killers used a gas pipe, clutch wires, sharp weapons, to first torture and then kill Deshmukh. First-time offenders are hardly ever seen to show the harsh mentality seen in this shocking case.

And last but not the least is the political patronage that criminals apparently continue to enjoy not only in Maharashtra but all over the country. The functional autonomy for police sought by Prakash Singh through his Public Interest Litigation (PIL) and the subsequent police reforms initiated by the Supreme Court are only on paper. The harsh truth is that scarcely any police chief of a district or SHO of a police station can go against the local MLA or MP, who can get them transferred in a jiffy. Many politicians support and engage local criminal gangs for extortion and to silence their opponents.

And yet they also maintain a discreet distance from them so as not to be caught in the police investigations. Just as it is difficult to link a gang leader to the criminal involved and arrested, similarly it is very tough to fix a political leader who could be behind a crime like that of the cruel murder of Sarpanch Santosh Deshmukh. Scientific evidence is difficult to come by for proving the connection between the politician and the criminals who purportedly act at his behest. And statements of the accused, even if they confess to the relationship, have no value in the court.

The enormous pendency of court cases further emboldens criminals. After each heinous crime there is an outcry for speedy trial through a special court because a routine trial takes years to conclude. Instead, we should seek 50 judges per million population, as recommended by the Law Commission’s 1987 report. Presently the judge-population ratio in the country is around 21 judges per million population. We also need to pursue police officers as per the international norms and functional autonomy for police. The Supreme Court mandated reforms whereby politicians cannot interfere in the postings and transfers of police officers should be implemented urgently and in earnest.

Today it is Maharashtra, tomorrow it will be another state. The crumbling criminal justice system is an unfortunate reality in our country. ‘Viksit Bharat’ cannot have a society where women are afraid to participate in the workforce for the fear of rapists and the economy does not grow because of lethal meddling in projects by criminals supported by politicians.

The writer is a retired IPS officer of Maharashtra cadre



CHHAVI RAJAWAT

Her panchayat, in fact

Government’s initiative to dissuade proxy leadership is a much-needed move

THE DREAM OF a truly developed India extends beyond infrastructure and economic growth — it lies in the empowerment of its people. True progress requires inclusivity, equality, and dignity for all. A significant step toward this was the establishment of the Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) with 33–50 per cent of seats reserved for women.

The intent was clear: To ensure the inclusion of marginalised voices in local governance. While these quotas have undoubtedly brought more women into leadership roles, the system has revealed a persistent challenge of proxy leadership. Many elected women sarpanches find themselves overshadowed by male family members, not just due to patriarchal mindsets but because of systemic weaknesses, lack of education and inadequate institutional support.

As India’s first MBA sarpanch, my own journey in rural leadership began in 2010 through a seat reserved for women. My re-election in 2015, in a general seat, was a testament to the power of inclusive and performance-driven governance. But my case is an exception. Across many panchayats, women leaders continue to struggle.

Many elected women panchayat members lack formal education and sufficient knowledge of governance structures. As a result, they are often left isolated, with little institutional support from government-appointed functionaries even within the panchayat. This vacuum creates a space for male relatives or other power brokers to step in, effectively rendering the elected woman leader powerless.

In some cases, men’s involvement is just-

tified as a means of supporting women leaders by offering them guidance in construction projects, supervising work, or even ensuring their safety and protecting their position of power from being misused. While well-intentioned, this too ultimately undermines the spirit of the reservation policy, which was designed to bring women into positions of actual authority, not symbolic representation.

Recognising these issues, the government’s initiative to dissuade proxy leadership is a much needed move. However, its success depends on tackling deeper societal and institutional biases. Change must begin not just within households but also within government structures that oversee PRIs. Gender disempowerment often leaves women leaders voiceless despite holding office. Voters’ trust may erode, leading to a loss of faith in local governance.

I have witnessed first hand how the attitudes of officials can either enable or hinder women leaders. In many training programs I attended, the resource persons displayed a dismissive attitude toward women sarpanches, treating them as unformed and incapable, using phrases including, “Ye to gaon ki anpad, ganwaar mahilayen hain, inko kuch samajh nahi aana.” (They are illiterate village women who understand nothing) This condescending approach turns capacity building efforts into mere tokenism and a major roadblock to real empowerment.

At the same time, regions where women leaders have thrived have seen proactive support from family members and local of-

ficials. I recall our block-level development officer ensuring that male relatives stepped out of meetings so that elected women could speak for themselves. This simple but crucial intervention gave women the confidence to engage in governance.

What is needed is capacity building through high-quality training programmes like the one I recently had the pleasure of being invited to as a resource person. The programme for Jharkhand panchayat leaders showcased how structured learning can empower local representatives. The training included aspects of governance, budgeting, planning, funding, risk and conflict management, communication and digital literacy — including AI tools like ChatGPT. Such programmes must become the norm, not the exception.

The government committee’s nine key recommendations outline a strong framework, but the policy can be made more robust with former sarpanches, including inclusive male sarpanches with higher emotional intelligence, participating in creating such policies.

I strongly advocate a minimum education qualification of 12th grade to ensure that elected leaders can independently handle governance responsibilities effectively and earn respect within the system. The current honorarium for sarpanches is shockingly low in some states. In Rajasthan, for instance, a sarpanch receives only Rs 4,500 per month — barely enough to cover basic expenses. Similarly, other panchayat representatives receive a sitting fee of just Rs 250 per month. If we expect serious participation,

we must provide dignified remuneration.

A smartphone should be provided to the woman panchayat leaders for independent access to technology, information and governance resources. Provision of an official transport to be able to travel freely and safely to conduct inspections, with a civil engineer or supervisor appointed as a personal and technical assistant to assist in interactions with officials and in overseeing construction and development projects, is another way of ensuring that reliance on male family members is reduced.

The capacity-building programmes should start immediately after elections and be conducted quarterly for at least two years with hand-holding provisions for the elected women leaders. Government officials must be added in women sarpanches’ WhatsApp groups to provide real-time guidance and prevent misinformation. And the whistleblowing mechanism needs to be well thought out. While the new mandate encourages reporting proxy leadership, a poorly executed system could be misused by political opponents to discredit women leaders, causing unnecessary fear and distraction instead of fostering empowerment.

When women leaders receive the right support, their governance transforms villages. Issues concerning women, children and marginalised groups gain priority, leading to holistic development. The mandate has the potential to be a game-changer, ensuring that those elected truly lead. It is about the very soul of democracy in rural India.

The writer is India’s first MBA sarpanch

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

TWO-WAY STREET

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, ‘Tariff and turmoil’ (IE, March 5). All countries, in their national interest, resort to differential protectionist policies and tariffs. Donald Trump’s decision to hike tariffs against China, Canada and Mexico, and call for reciprocal tariffs is akin to igniting America’s economic nationalism. This shift away from a more globalisation-oriented scheme, which the US had previously espoused, has now created uncertainty and volatility in the global business environment. Nonetheless, Trump’s tariff hike is not a one-way street. The US will be impacted as well. For instance, American farmers will lose out to their competitors once their agricultural products become expensive. **L R Murmu, New Delhi**

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, ‘Tariff and turmoil’ (IE, March 5). An impulsive step by US President Donald Trump to hike tariffs on certain goods imported from a host of countries evoking equally snappy responses from countries like China, Canada and Mexico has triggered ripples in the global economy. It will be challenging for India to cope with the emerging situation. But it should take it as a blessing in disguise and explore other profitable avenues to export its goods and services. Delhi must exploit the economic turmoil to its advantage without feeling let down by the self-defeating and arbitrary decisions of the Trump administration. **Ravi Mathur, Noida**

A PRAGMATIC PEACE

THIS REFERS TO the article, ‘Russia in Trump’s world’ (IE, March 5). Trump has

provided an opportunity to Russia to be the part of a single global order with shared interests. Russia, while showing intentions to cease this ongoing war in Ukraine, may respond positively. When Trump calls Putin to the table, assuring to alleviate all apprehensions regarding the expansion of NATO, both Russia and Ukraine both accept this proposal of conflict resolution without delay. Trump’s initiative is pragmatic. War only brings mayhem to humanity, and peace is the solution that is being offered by the US president. **Devendra Awasthi, Lucknow**

PATIENCE NEEDED

THIS REFERS TO the article, ‘At a global crossroads’ (IE, March 4). The way Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy had to endure the humiliation at the hands of US president Donald Trump and Vice President JD Vance at the Oval Office on February 28 not only showcased Trump’s disrespect for the tenets of diplomacy but also his penchant for despots, be it Vladimir Putin of Russia or Viktor Orban of Hungary. It will be interesting to see how the Trump administration’s leniency towards Russia with the aim of undermining its closeness with China could wither the transatlantic alliance, down to the level from where it can’t be restored. Only time will tell whether the initiatives of European leaders like British PM Keir Starmer and French President Emmanuel Macron will bear any fruit in guaranteeing the security of Ukraine while formulating a peace deal with Washington. It will need a great deal of effective and patient diplomacy to end the war for good. **Amandeep Bains, Sirsa**

BRIEFLY

TELANGANA

Student from Telangana shot in US: Family

Hyderabad: A 26-year-old student from Telangana was allegedly found dead with bullet wounds in the US, but the circumstances leading to his death were not clear, his family members said on Wednesday. G Praveen was pursuing MS in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. His family was informed by US authorities on Wednesday morning (Indian time). Some friends said that Praveen's body was found with bullets, his cousin Arun told PTI. Some say Praveen was shot dead by unknown assailants at a store, but the cause of death was not known to the family, he said. Arun said Praveen called his father in the early hours of Wednesday, but the latter could not take the call as he was sleeping. PTI

GUJARAT

Lioness kills farmer, drags body for 100m

Ahmedabad: A lioness on Tuesday mauled a farmer to death and dragged his body for 100-120 metres and sat on top of it, refusing to leave till forest officials intervened. The incident happened on the border of two districts in Gujarat that are part of the larger Gir forest, the last natural habitat of the Asiatic Lion. The animal was later tranquilised and captured. The area — about 1 km east of Kakidi Moli village of Una taluka in Gir-Somnath district — falls under Jasadhhar Forest Range in Gir-East Division of Junagadh Wildlife Circle. Forest officials said that the deceased was identified as Manga Bogha Baraiya (35). The Forest Department were informed about the incident around 6.45 pm. Baraiya's body has been sent for postmortem. ENS

MAHARASHTRA

INS Ranvir blast: gas-supplying firm booked

Mumbai: Three years after an explosion on board Indian Navy's INS Ranvir killed three personnel and injured 11 others, Colaba police have registered a case against a gas-supplying company. According to the police, the case was filed on a complaint by Indian Navy personnel under relevant sections of negligence and mischief after a Board of Inquiry determined that the company had supplied Freon R152a gas instead of the required R22 in a Freon condenser, allegedly triggering the blast in the ship's AC compartment. The explosion occurred between 4.30 pm and 5 pm on January 18, 2022, while the warship was docked. INS Ranvir was on a cross-coast operational deployment from the Eastern Naval Command since November 2021 and was due to return to its base. ENS

RANYA RAO WAS HELD AT THE AIRPORT FOR ALLEGEDLY SMUGGLING 14.2 KG GOLD

Day after actor held, cash and jewellery worth ₹4.7 cr seized from her residence

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
BENGALURU, MARCH 5

A DAY after Kannada film actor Ranya Rao was arrested at Bengaluru International Airport for allegedly smuggling 14.2 kg of gold worth ₹12.56 crore, the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) said on Wednesday that a raid at her residence has led to the seizure of jewellery worth Rs 2.06 crore and ₹2.67 crore in cash. Rao, 33, who is the step-daughter of a senior Karnataka IPS officer of the Director General of Police rank, was intercepted at the airport early on Tuesday when she was returning from one of her frequent trips to Dubai. “Acting on specific intelligence, DRI officers intercepted an Indian lady passenger aged

around 33 years, who had arrived from Dubai to Bengaluru via Emirates flight on March 3, 2025. Upon examination, gold bars weighing 14.2 kg were found ingeniously concealed on (her) person,” the DRI said in an official statement on Wednesday. The gold bars seized on Tuesday “is one of the biggest seizures of gold at Bengaluru International airport in recent times”, the DRI stated. Following the arrest, Rao was remanded to DRI custody till March 18 by a special court for economic offences. A search was also carried out at her residence. “Following the interception, DRI officers conducted a search at her residential premises located at Lavelle Road, Bengaluru, where she resides with her husband. The search resulted in the



Kannada film actor Ranya Rao, 33, is the step-daughter of a senior Karnataka IPS officer of DGP rank. Express

seizure of gold jewellery worth Rs 2.06 crore and Indian currency amounting to Rs 2.67 crore,” the DRI said. The total seizure in the case stands at Rs 17.29 crore, according to the DRI. “The lady passenger has been

placed under arrest under the relevant provisions of the Customs Act, 1962 and remanded to judicial custody,” the DRI said. Rao, who entered the Kannada film industry in 2014 at the age of 22, played the lead role in three Kannada films. She had been trying to make a mark in other southern language films. Rao’s step-father has had a controversial career and was linked many years ago in Mysuru to a suspicious robbery of a gold consignment that was being transported to Kerala from Karnataka on a bus by a jeweller. Several lower-level police officers were accused of being hand-in-glove in the robbery case that occurred over a decade ago. The senior police officer was transferred from his

posting but no official or legal action was initiated against him in the gold robbery case. Last year, the son of the police officer was questioned by a Karnataka Police special investigation team over his alleged association with international hacker Srikrishna Ramesh alias Sriki as part of investigations into the hacker’s transactions and with specific reference to the purchase of a Porsche Macan bought by associates of the hacker in January 2018 by paying Rs 57 lakh. The car was later returned to the showroom for a refund. The DGP’s son married the daughter of a renowned former Kannada film actress-turned-politician last month. Rao is also reported to have been associated with senior politicians in Karnataka.

Discharged in sleaze CD case, Baghel says: ‘Satyamev Jayate’

JAYPRAKASH S NAIDU
RAIPUR, MARCH 5

A SPECIAL Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) court Tuesday discharged former Chhattisgarh chief minister and senior Congress leader Bhupesh Baghel in a 2017 fake sleaze CD case involving a former minister in Chhattisgarh. The scandal, in which Baghel was accused of circulating the clip that involved former Chhattisgarh minister Rajesh Munat, erupted just before the 2018 Chhattisgarh Assembly elections. Munat was a minister for transport, housing and public works department under the previous Raman Singh-led BJP government. On Tuesday evening — after the court discharge — Baghel wrote on X: “*Satyamev Jayate* (Truth Alone Triumphs)”. “We argued before the court that all the allegations made against my client are false and baseless. There is absolutely no evidence to prove and substantiate those allegations,” his lawyer, senior advocate Manish Datt, told *The Indian Express*. In his complaint, former Chhattisgarh minister Rajesh Munat accused Baghel of circulating a fake video involving him and other BJP politicians “to ma-



align” their image and get political mileage. In September 2018 — weeks before the assembly polls — Baghel was held in the case. Although the charges were bail-able, Baghel refused to seek bail claiming the attack was political. He was eventually granted bail. Days later, Congress won the assembly polls and Baghel went on to become CM for the next five years. In February, Baghel, an MLA from Patan in Chhattisgarh, was appointed the All India Congress Committee general secretary in charge of Punjab. According to a source close to Baghel, since the Congress party’s loss in the 2023 assembly polls, Baghel’s role in state politics has remained limited. But with Punjab polls two years away, he is now preparing to visit the state often, the source said. “He has visited Punjab once, has held meetings with political leaders and has started preparations for Punjab polls. He also met with Punjab leaders in Delhi. He will travel more to Punjab now,” the source said.



SNOWFALL IN PAHALGAM

Tourists in Jammu & Kashmir’s Pahalgam after fresh snowfall on Wednesday. PTI

Physical test for forest jobs: Odisha govt orders inquiry after 3 applicants die in past 24 hours

SUJIT BISOIYI
BHUBANESWAR, MARCH 5

PRAVIN KUMAR Panda from Odisha’s Rourkela completed his BTech and bagged a lucrative job at a leading private company, but he wanted a government job. He applied for the post of foresters and forest guards of the state government and cleared the medical tests. Then, like all other candidates, 30-year-old Panda was asked to complete a 25-km walk in four hours as part of the physical fitness examination during the recruitment process. According to officials, Pravin collapsed after completing

around 4 km and was rushed to the Sundargarh medical college where the doctors declared him dead. Not just Panda, two others — 27-year-old Byomkesh Naik of Keonjhar and 26-year-old Gyanaranjan Jena of Jagatsinghpur — also died during the physical tests, conducted by the Odisha Sub-ordinate Staff Selection Commission (OSSC) in the past 24 hours. Expressing concern over the death of three candidates during the physical tests, Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi announced an ex-gratia of Rs 4 lakh to each of the deceased’s families. Odisha Forest Minister Ganeshram Singh Khuntia said

an inquiry has been ordered into the deaths of three candidates. “If anyone is found guilty during the inquiry, we will take action,” the minister said. Pravin’s father Khadal Panda, who accompanied his son to Sundargarh to appear for the physical test, said it was still unclear to him what happened since his son had cleared the medical tests. “He cleared all the medical tests after which he was allowed to appear for the physical test. I don’t know what happened. The officials told me that my son had collapsed. We immediately rushed to the hospital where I came to know that he is no more,” Khadal Panda told reporters. The family conducted

Pravin’s final rites on Wednesday. A close relative of Pravin’s told *The Indian Express* that Pravin wanted a government job as he considered it more secure despite working at a private company for the past three years. Pravin is second among three siblings. Naik, on the other hand, completed the endurance test but was rushed to the Keonjhar district headquarters hospital after he reported feeling “uncomfortable”. Naik was referred to the SCB Medical College and Hospital, where he died. Like Panda, Naik, a native of Ostapanga village in Keonjhar district, was also a BTech gradu-

ate. He was working at a clerical post and had applied for the foresters and forest guards position for better prospects. Amid concerns over the death during the physical test, conducted during the day with temperature above 30, the OSSC directed that authorities conduct the test early morning starting at 4.30 am. Sources in Naik’s family said that he had recently cleared the Panchayat Executive Officer exam but confident of landing the forester job, he didn’t join. Sundargarh Additional DM Rabinarayan Sahu said arrangements were made and adequate staff, including paramedics, was deployed.

SPORTS EXCELLENCE FORUM

Union Minister schools Gujarat MoS on his ‘sports superpower’ claim

RITU SHARMA
GANDHINAGAR, MARCH 5

IN RESPONSE to Minister of State for Sports Harsh Sanghavi’s push for Gujarat, calling it “a rising sporting powerhouse” and promoting it as a “land of opportunities” and transforming it into a future destination for sports, Union Minister of State for Youth Affairs and Sports, Raksha Khadse, retorted on “the need to focus on other states too” — envisioning for an India, which is a “sports superpower”. The ministers were speaking at inaugural ceremony of a two-day Australia-India Sports Excellence Forum in GIFT City on Wednesday.

“Harsh Sanghavi said that Gujarat is a state where we can develop all these infrastructure, but I would like to say that ... we have to focus on other states too. In the coming days, we can increase to the maximum the culture of sports so that every state is taken forward. When the Olympics will be hosted in 2036, India, as a country, will move forward,” Khadse said, while also mentioning that “all industries present” retorted to Sanghavi’s push for promoting Gujarat as a land of opportunities, citing one of the best sport manufacturing policies. Further, to Sanghavi’s statements, Khadse said that India’s ambition to host the 2036 Olympics is a proof of the country’s increasing strength, determination and commitment. “Financially, I am confident that an exchange like this forum will contribute towards making India ‘a sports superpower,’” she added. “The passion for sports is a common thread that connects India and Australia. So far, this passion for sports has been seen only in cricket and hockey. Now



Union Minister of State for Youth Affairs and Sports Raksha Khadse; Gujarat Minister of State for Sports Harsh Sanghavi

through this forum, it is said to reach new areas like talent development, sporting event management, inclusivity in sports, role of private sector and education science in sports. It will also provide trade tourism and investment in sporting industries,” she further stated. In his address, Sanghavi said, “Gujarat is a rising sporting powerhouse. Gujarat has always been a land of champions, warriors and trailblazers. Today we are scripting a new chapter as a sports hub, aligning with PM Narendra Modi’s vision of Make in India with global sporting superpower. The Narendra Modi Stadium, the world’s largest, has become an iconic venue witnessing historic sporting moments and other cultural events. Gujarat is investing heavily in sports infrastructure, training academies, and grassroots development, ensuring the next generation of athletes gets the world-class exposure they deserve.” Inviting all stakeholders present to explore opportunities in Gujarat, Sanghavi also said, “Gujarat is having one of the best sports manufacturing policies. For those who are interested in setting up their unit in sports sector, Gujarat is one of the best lands where they can get most of the opportunities.”

2017 WALAYAR RAPE, SUICIDE CASE

CBI to make parents accused in all 11 cases

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, MARCH 5

IN A new twist in the probe of 2017 Walayar rape and suicide case of two minor girls, the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has decided to name the parents of the victims as accused in all 11 cases registered in connection with the incident. On Wednesday, when the matter came up before its consideration, the CBI court accepted the six charge sheets already filed against the parents. The girls, aged 9 and 13, were found hanging in their house at Walayar in Palakkad in early 2017. Police found that the girls had died by suicide after allegedly being subjected to sexual abuse by five persons, including a juvenile. In 2019, a special POCOS court acquitted four accused, citing no scientific evidence to connect them to the offences mentioned in the chargesheet. Following appeals by the state government and the girls’ mother, a sessions court in August 2022 ordered a CBI probe. The CBI has submitted six

charge sheets against the parents of the girls at the court in Kochi on charges of abetting the repeated sexual abuse. They will be made co-accused in two other cases before Juvenile Justice Board in Palakkad, in which a minor boy is the accused. CBI special prosecutor, Pious Mathew, said the court has accepted the six charge sheets filed against the parents. The court will consider the case again on March 25. The parents will be accused in three more cases in which further investigations are going on. Altogether, they will be accused in 11 cases, he said. The father and mother of the girls were witnesses in the cases when the police probed the case. “The father had witnessed one of the accused named V Madhu, sexually abusing the girl... He used to consume liquor with one of the accused Kutti Madhu at their home even after the eldest daughter attained puberty. The father allowed Kutti Madhu to sleep at the house, allowing him to ill-treat the daughter” said the charge sheet. The parents were charged under section 109 of the IPC, section 21 of the POCOS Act and section 75 of the Juvenile Justice Act.

ENGINES REQUIRED FOR ‘HEAVY’ SPACE LAUNCHES

ISRO conducts crucial test for semi-cryogenic engines, key to future launches

ANJALI MARAR
BENGALURU, MARCH 5

THE INDIAN Space Research Organisation (ISRO) recently successfully conducted the hot test on a semi-cryogenic engine (SE2000), going a step closer to finalising the crucial cryogenic stage where powering the booster stages of launch vehicles is realised. Scientifically, this test is known as the Power Head Test Article (PHTA) and is the first hardware test for the development of semi-cryo engines. “The Power Head Test Article, without the thrust chamber, has been successfully realised. It is about 3 metres in height. This is one of the propulsion systems we have been developing and it may take about two years to succeed,” said

V Narayanan, chairman, ISRO, during the recently held Physical Research Laboratory (PRL)-organised Amrut Vykhayaan (PKAV). PHTA is a significant precursor test done to validate the integrated performance of some of the engine’s critical subsystems, such as the gas generator, turbo pumps, pre-burner and control components. The test involves performing a hot-firing for an extremely brief duration of not more than 4.5 seconds. Earlier, in July 2023, a similar test attempt at the space agency’s facility at Mahendragiri had to be aborted following a technical glitch. And since then, the ISRO team continued working on developing this semi-cryogenic engine that offers an enhanced thrust of 2000 kiloNewton (kN).

A propulsion system, be it the earth-to-orbit or the in-space, is the one that gives a rocket muscle power to lift off from the Earth, across the dense atmosphere and later reach its destination. The selection of an appropriate propellant system is based on the thrust required, reusability, cost and core competency. ISRO has been using environment-friendly and green propellants like Liquid Oxygen (LOX), Liquid Hydrogen (LH2) and LOX-kerosene based propulsion systems. A cryogenic engine uses liquid oxygen and liquid hydrogen. Handling liquid hydrogen is challenging, given that it needs to be stored at minus 253 degrees Celsius and it is highly inflammable. A semi-cryogenic engine uses liquid oxygen-kerosene combination, where



Priests and officials during bhoomi puja for the construction of the second rocket launchpad of ISRO at Kulasekarapattinam, in Thoothukudi on Wednesday. PTI

kerosene is in the readily storable form; this combination offers advantages like high density

impulse (with respect to cryogenic), less toxic (with respect to storage) and cost effectiveness.

During his address, the ISRO chief elaborated the overall ongoing research activities that were directed towards improving the performance of Launch Vehicle Mk III (LVM3). He said that for many of its future space missions, the LVM3 will be equipped with the C32 cryogenic upper stage. The advantage of C32, over its predecessor C25, is that the latter allows carrying additional quantities of propellant onboard, thereby adding more life to the space mission. “With C32 in the upper stage, the payload (carriage) will increase by 25 per cent. We are working on two systems to increase the spacecraft’s launch capacity from 4 ton to 5.1 ton at Geosynchronous Transfer Orbit, that too, without increasing the cost. In addition, we are also de-

veloping a Liquid Oxygen (LOX) and kerosene-based propulsion system which will be powered by a 2000 ton thrust engine,” he said. With activities for the unmanned and manned Gaganyaan missions picking pace, Narayanan said that the development of the Next Generation Launch Vehicle (NGLV), which will be deployed for all the Gaganyaan missions, was on track. NGLV is a new generation, human-rated launch vehicle offering both high payload capability and reusability. It offers a maximum payload capability of 30 tons to Low Earth Orbit, with a reusable first stage. “It is a new vehicle. The first and second stages will use LOX engines and the upper stage will be a cryogenic stage. The design is complete and we have moved

on to the development,” said Narayanan, who is also the Secretary, Department of Space. ISRO is taking up activities for developing technologies that will allow the recovery of propulsion systems and reusing the launch vehicles. Recently, the space agency tasted success in the experiments performed towards recovery of the first stage NGLV, Narayanan said. The ISRO chairman said that a team has been identified to study the feasibility of developing advanced propulsion systems. These systems are expected to work as follows: after a normal take off, just like in an aircraft, it would switch to a cryogenic engine when required, travel and cover long geographical distances, typically of the order of thousands of kilometers, in just a few hours.

GOLD	USD RATE	OIL	SILVER
₹89,300	₹87.06	\$70.74	₹99,000
Note: Gold, silver rates at Delhi spot market, gold per 10g, silver per 1 kg; Crude oil (Indian basket) per barrel as of March 4			

PSMC PRESIDENT MARTIN CHU

‘Actively bringing fab construction suppliers from Taiwan to Dholera’

SOUMYARENDRA BARIK
GANDHINAGAR, MARCH 5

TAIWANESE SEMICONDUCTOR company Powerchip (PSMC), which is working with Tata Electronics to build India’s first commercial fabrication plant, is attracting fab construction companies from the island nation to Dholera in Gujarat, where the site is coming up, a top company official said Wednesday.

“Under Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s leadership... strategic initiatives have created a welcoming environment for an international company like PSMC, and an ecosystem which is conducive to innovation, investment and long-term success,” Martin Chu, President, PSMC, said during the Gujarat SemiConnect conference.

The Tata-PSMC fab, being built at a cost of roughly \$11 billion, is among the five semiconductor projects the government has greenlit under the India Semiconductor Mission. Apart from the fab, four assembly and testing plants by US-based Micron Technology, the Tatas, Murugappa Group’s CG Power in partnership with Japan’s Renesas, and Kaynes Semicon, are also under Chu said that PSMC and Tata have begun collaborating on multiple fronts. “We are proud to partner with Tata Electronics to build India’s



The Tata-PSMC fab, being built at a cost of roughly \$11 billion, is among the five semiconductor projects the government has greenlit under the India Semiconductor Mission.

X/ @Bhupendraphjp

first commercial 12 inch wafer fab in Dholera. We have already begun collaborating on multiple fronts— from fab construction and technology transfer, to talent development and ecosystem building,” he said.

“We are actively bringing fab construction suppliers from Taiwan to Dholera, doing our best to build India’s semiconductor ecosystem... We encourage more international partners to join us in this endeavour and support the development of lo-

cal suppliers and capabilities,” he added.

Chu said he was “confident that the government of India and government of Gujarat will provide a favourable business environment and investment protection for Taiwanese businesses interested in investing in India”.

The Indian Express had earlier reported that the Indian government had mobilised officials to Taiwan bearing a key message: an explicit assurance of policy stability. Senior officials from the

IT Ministry had earlier met with industry executives in Taipei and government officials, to assure them of policy stability, especially with regard to changes in rules governing imports and tweaks in customs duties on inputs. Tata and PSMC also announced a memorandum of understanding with Himax Technologies, a Taiwan-based fabless chip company that makes display driver ICs and semiconductor products. Himax’s display driver ICs and timing controllers

have been adopted at scale across multiple industries worldwide including TVs, PC monitors, laptops, mobile phones, tablets, automotive, ePaper devices, industrial displays, among others.

As part of the agreement, the entities will engage in end-to-end production of display semiconductor solutions for their mutual customers, from chip design to chip manufacturing and packaging, as well as electronics manufacturing services (EMS) to deliver system-level solutions, to both the Indian and global markets. The partnership also encompasses designing and manufacturing next-generation solutions to meet global demand while enhancing supply chain resilience.

Randhir Thakur, CEO and MD of Tata Electronics, said, “This MoU with Himax and PSMC will enable the development of differentiated solutions for display-related semiconductor products for our mutual customers... Together, we will drive innovation and develop next-generation technologies to meet the growing demands of display and ultralow power AI sensing technologies across key industries while contributing to a resilient semiconductor supply chain”.

(The reporter was in Gandhinagar at the invitation of the India Electronics & Semiconductor Association.)

GEORGE MATHEW & SANDEEP SINGH
MUMBAI, MARCH 5

INDIAN MARKETS defied expectations by rebounding strongly despite Donald Trump’s announcement of reciprocal tariffs on India starting April 2. The Sensex and Nifty jumped over one per cent to 73,730.23 and 22,337.30 respectively on Wednesday, a surprising move given the 16 per cent decline over the last five months.

The rebound was apparently fuelled by the fact that all the negative news has already been factored in, and fundamentally, the Indian economy remains strong. This optimism is driving hopes of a recovery in large-cap stocks which, in turn, can eventually lead to an overall broad recovery in the battered stock market. Has the market seen the bottom? Here is a look at reasons why the markets have risen:

Markets shrug off tariff talk

US President Donald Trump once again targeted India for its high tariffs, signalling that negotiations for a trade deal may not yield concessions for New Delhi on sweeping levies such as reciprocal tariffs, which are set to take effect from April 2.

This hard talk did not bother the Indian stock market participants and they rose strongly and closed the day with strongest gain over the last one month. Experts say that the tariff talk is nothing new and the US President has been talking about it for some time now. “For whatever impact they may have, it has already been factored in by the markets and it does not come as a surprise to the markets. Hence, there is no impact of the Tuesday’s announcement on the markets,” said a fund manager who did not wish to be named.

It is important to note that Asian and European markets traded strong on Wednesday. While the key indices in Germany and France were up by 3.3 per cent and 2 per cent respectively, even in Asia, the Hang Seng in Hong Kong rose 2.8 per cent and Nikkei in Japan was up in the

WHY MARKETS ROSE ON WEDNESDAY



File

STOCK MARKETS have already factored in the impact of Trump tariffs and it does not come as a surprise... which is why there is no impact of the Tuesday’s announcement, said a fund manager

DIIs ARE looking to buy at current levels as many of them see them attractive to pick from a long-term perspective

tinue,” said Rajesh Bhosale, technical analyst, Angel One Ltd.

A Bajaj Broking Research report said the equity market experienced a strong rebound on Wednesday after the recent sharp decline, since value buying emerged around the key support range of 21,700-22,000. “This pullback can be attributed to several factors, including the strength in Asian markets, bargain buying in oversold stocks and value buying in blue-chip stocks. The Nifty index had been extremely oversold, having declined in 18 out of the last 19 trading sessions, making the pullback overdue from the deeply oversold zone,” it said.

Large caps stabilised: Rebound to continue?

Market participants feel that while the large caps may have stabilised at current levels and may see upward movement from these levels, there may still be some pain left in the mid and small cap segment. “The movement will, however, be stock specific as some blue chips may be available at a good bargain, but at the same time another one may be expensive. So, investors are likely to be very choosy in what they pick given that everything has fallen,” said a fund manager.

Further, a technical rebound from oversold zones helped boost investor sentiment. The Nifty’s Relative Strength Index (RSI) appeared to have bottomed out, indicating a potential revival.

FULL REPORT ON
www.indianexpress.com

BRIEFLY

‘Uttarakhand performed better than Himachal’

New Delhi: A hike in insurance limit on bank deposits above Rs 5 lakh is expected to have a “marginal but notable” impact on lenders’ profit, rating agency Icra said on Wednesday. Currently, deposits up to Rs 5 lakh by an individual customer is covered by the Deposit Insurance and Credit Guarantee Corporation (DICGC), which collects premiums from banks for protecting customers’ money in case a lender goes down. It said the failure of New India Cooperative Bank may have prompted deliberations, but added that such a move could drill a hole of up to Rs 12,000 crore on banks’ profit. PTI

EY award for KV Kamath, Nithin Kamath

New Delhi: Founder and Chief Executive Officer of Zerodha Nithin Kamath has been awarded the EY Entrepreneur of the Year Award 2024 on Wednesday. Union Minister Bhupendra Yadav presented the award to Nithin. Chairman of Jio Financial Services KV Kamath received Lifetime Achievement award and former ISRO chief S Somanath received the Special Jury award. ENS

Integrated traffic mgmt in Gurgaon by Maruti

New Delhi: Maruti Suzuki India on Wednesday said it has partnered with the Gurugram Metropolitan Development Authority and Utkrisht Society for Safe Haryana to implement an integrated traffic management system in the city. PTI

Reliance Infra settles debt with J&K Bank

New Delhi: Reliance Infrastructure Ltd on Wednesday said it has entered into a one-time settlement with Jammu and Kashmir Bank for the settlement of its debt amounting to Rs 90.50 crore, including interest. ENS

NITI Aayog flags national security risk with quantum technology

AGGAM WALIA
NEW DELHI, MARCH 5

COUNTRIES THAT develop quantum capabilities will secure an “unprecedented strategic edge”, which can “jeopardise” national security and economic competitiveness, NITI Aayog’s Frontier Tech Hub said in a quarterly release on Wednesday.

Quantum technologies can crack modern encryption, destabilise financial markets, and transform military capabilities, hence India needs to assess vulnerabilities, adopt post-quantum cryptography, and forge bilateral partnerships for technology access, the release said.

Unlike classical computers, which process information in binary (0s and 1s), quantum computing uses quantum bits (qubits) that can exist in multiple states at the same time, allowing it to perform certain tasks much faster.

A sufficiently powerful quantum computer can also break public-key encryption algorithms, in turn making modern internet security, online banking, and secure communications obsolete.

Corpus in quantum

Public sector investment in

HIGH-PROTECTION SECTOR

QUANTUM TECH can crack modern encryption, destabilise financial markets, and transform military capabilities, hence India needs to assess vulnerabilities, adopt post-quantum cryptography, and forge bilateral partnerships for technology access, the release said

PUBLIC SECTOR investment in quantum development has increased rapidly, with over \$40 billion pledged by more than 30 governments. China leads with a \$15 billion commitment, the US has invested \$5 billion, and India plans to invest \$750 million

quantum development has increased rapidly, with over \$40 billion pledged by more than 30 governments. China leads with a \$15 billion commitment, the US has invested \$5 billion, and India plans to invest \$750 million, primarily through the National Quantum Mission (NQM) launched in 2023, the release noted. On India’s lower public spending compared to China and the US, NITI Aayog CEO BVR Subrahmanyam pointed to the country’s success in “frugal innovation”.

“If you throw some money, you won’t necessarily get a good solution. Again, our mission to Mars was the cheapest in the world. I am sure that India can

genuinely come up with very economical solutions,” Subrahmanyam said.

Debjani Ghosh, distinguished fellow at NITI Aayog and chief architect of the Frontier Tech Hub, said, “The race hasn’t even started. It’s very early days, and I’m glad that we have got a foot in the door with the quantum mission. We are at least thinking about it and building a foundation.”

India’s quantum plans

The NQM, with a budgetary outlay of Rs 6,003 crore, was set up to build quantum-related capabilities in key domains, namely, computing, communications, sensors, and materials. The esti-

mated expenditure for the ongoing financial year under the mission was reduced from Rs 427 crore to Rs 86 crore in the latest Union Budget. For FY26, it is projected to rise to Rs 600 crore.

“The Indian quantum mission caught the trend very early and they started the investment early. They had a specific goal, which was to address the hardware issue, because that is going to be a key limiter in quantum. Later on, we’ll realise how important that is going to be, not right now. The mission also started growing the startup ecosystem,” Ghosh said.

“Companies are focusing on producing ultra-high purity materials, cryogenic systems, specialised lasers, and control electronics tailored for quantum computing,” the release noted.

The release also flagged an expected surge in export controls on quantum technologies as a key risk. “As quantum technologies become critical to national security, export restrictions are tightening on components like Arbitrary Waveform Generators, Digital-to-Analog Converters, Microwave Components, specialised lasers, and cryogenic dilution refrigerators,” it said.

FULL REPORT ON
www.indianexpress.com

RBI announces steps to infuse liquidity worth Rs 1.87 lakh cr

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU
MUMBAI, MARCH 5

THE RESERVE BANK The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Wednesday announced fresh measures that would infuse close to Rs 1.87 lakh crore of liquidity into the banking system. The central bank said it would go for open market operation (OMO) auctions to purchase government securities worth Rs 1 one lakh crore in two tranches of Rs 50,000 crore each on March 12 and March 18. Additionally, a USD/INR buy-sell swap auction for \$10 billion (around Rs 87,000 crore) with a tenor of 36 months is scheduled for March 24.

The RBI move is aimed at tackling the tight liquidity conditions by the end of the current financial year (FY25) amid tax outflows and banks rushing to meet targets.

After conducting a \$5 billion dollar-rupee swap in January, the Reserve Bank decided to inject



The RBI cut interest rates by 25 bps last month. Reuters

rupee liquidity for longer duration through another \$10 billion dollar-rupee buy-sell swap arrangement in February. The central bank’s initiative is designed to provide a durable solution to the system’s liquidity requirements, while also stabilising the value of the rupee and bolstering the nation’s foreign exchange kitty.

Responsible innovation must for new fin entities: RBI governor

Mumbai: Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Governor Sanjay Malhotra on Wednesday underscored the need for responsible innovation and emphasised the need for ensuring compliance by the entities that are new to regulatory space.

In an interaction with non-bank payment system operators and fintechs along with their as-

sociations/SROs, he recognised the role played by fintechs including payment system players, account aggregators, and digital lending service providers, in the growth of India’s financial system and economy, RBI said in a statement.

RBI values such interactions with the ecosystem participants, he said. PTI



Tesla’s first showroom will be in Mumbai

New Delhi: US electric carmaker Tesla has signed a lease deal to open its first showroom in Mumbai, as it moves towards a goal to sell imported cars in India, registration papers show, after it dropped similar plans last year.

Tesla did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

The papers show the company has signed a five-year lease from February 16, 2025, and will pay rent of about \$4,46,000 for the first year for a 4,003 square feet (372 sq m) space, almost the size of a basketball court.

The rent will increase by 5 per cent every year reaching about \$5,42,000 for the fifth year, according to the registered lease document provided by analytics firm CRE Matrix.

The showroom will be situated in the Maker Maxity building in the business and retail hub of Bandra Kurla Complex near Mumbai’s Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International airport, according to the papers.

In February, Tesla reportedly selected locations for two showrooms in New Delhi and Mumbai, days after the carmaker’s chief Elon Musk met Prime Minister Narendra Modi in the US. Reuters

TOPOF THE WORLD



A painting of the Pope at Rome's Gemelli hospital on Monday

VATICAN CITY Pope Francis off ventilation again after rest

Vatican City: Pope Francis, who has been struggling to overcome double pneumonia for almost three weeks, was taken off mechanical ventilation on Wednesday after using it through the night to help with his breathing, the Vatican said. The 88-year-old pope was admitted to Rome's Gemelli hospital on February 14 with a severe respiratory infection that has required continuously evolving treatment. The Vatican said Francis was reconnected to non-invasive mechanical ventilation overnight after it was removed during the day on Tuesday, underscoring his continued difficulty in shaking off the dangerous illness.

REUTERS

NEPAL Protesters seek restoration of monarchy

Kathmandu: Nepal witnessed multiple rallies across the country by activists demanding the return of monarchy. While the protest in the Parliament was mainly focused against what members said dictatorial ways of the Prime Minister K P Sharma Oli and certain repressive measures of the government, Kathmandu witnessed huge motorbike rally by pro-monarchy activists to have the monarchy back. Wednesday's rally in Kathmandu had participants from both Rashtriya Prajantatra Party (RPP) and "save the nation, culture and dharma" campaign.

ENS

PAKISTAN Toll in suicide blast rises to 18, mass funeral held

Peshawar: Thousands of people poured on to the streets of Bannu in north-western Pakistan for the funerals on Wednesday of 18 people, including six children, killed in a suicide attack on a security installation. Suicide bombers drove two vehicles packed with explosives into the town's military base in an attack staged by more than a dozen militants on Tuesday. At least 13 civilians and five soldiers were killed in the attack, the military said. Md Nauman, spokesperson for a nearby hospital said six children were killed.

REUTERS

PRESIDENT'S FIRST ADDRESS TO CONGRESS

Ukraine is willing to come to negotiating table, Russia ready for peace, says Trump

REUTERS

WASHINGTON, MARCH 5

US PRESIDENT Donald Trump said on Tuesday he received a letter from Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy in which the he expressed willingness to come to the negotiating table over Russia-Ukraine war.

"Ukraine is ready to come to the negotiating table as soon as possible to bring lasting peace closer. Nobody wants peace more than the Ukrainians," Trump said in an address to Congress on Tuesday while quoting from the letter. Trump also said he had been in "serious discussions with Russia" and had "received strong signals that they are ready for peace".

"Wouldn't that be beautiful?" he said. "It's time to stop this madness. It's time to halt the killing. It's time to end this senseless war. If you want to end wars you have to talk to both sides."

The Kremlin, meanwhile, said it welcomes Zelenskyy's statement that Kyiv is willing to negotiate over the war, but it is not yet clear to Moscow who it might be negotiating with. Dmitry Peskov, Kremlin spokesperson, said: "The question is who to sit down with. For now, the Ukrainian president is still legally prohibited from negotiating with the Russian side. So, overall, the approach is positive, but nuances have not changed."

Trump said Ukraine was ready to sign a minerals deal with the US, which Washington says is crucial to secure continued US backing for Ukraine's defence.

US Treasury Secretary Scott



US President Donald Trump during a joint session of Congress in the House Chamber of the U.S. Capitol, Tuesday. Reuters

Bessent told Fox News, "There is no signing planned," according to a post on X by a Fox reporter.

Early on Tuesday, Zelenskyy pledged to repair ties with US after what he described as a "regrettable" Oval Office clash with Trump. He said he wanted to "make things right" and was ready "any time and in any convenient format" to sign the minerals deal. His statement came a day after US halted military aid to Ukraine.

"My team and I stand ready to work under President Trump's strong leadership to get a peace that lasts," Zelenskyy said on X. "Our meeting... did not go the way it was supposed to be. It is regrettable that it happened this way. It is time to make things right."

US cuts off intelligence-sharing with Ukraine, says CIA chief

REUTERS

MARCH 5

THE US has cut off intelligence-sharing with Kyiv, said CIA chief John Ratcliffe Wednesday in a move that could seriously hamper the Ukrainian military's ability to target Russian forces.

The decision to cut off intelligence-sharing and military aid to Ukraine starkly illustrates the Trump administration's willingness to play hardball with an ally



CIA director John Ratcliffe

the military front and the intelligence front, the pause (that prompted Zelenskyy to respond) I think will go away," Ratcliffe told Fox Business Network.

"I think we'll work shoulder to shoulder with Ukraine as we have to push back on the aggression that's there, but to put the world in a better place for these peace negotiations to move forward," he said. Three official sources also confirmed that US intelligence-sharing had stopped, but was not clear to what extent.

to force it to the negotiating table. US President Donald Trump said Tuesday he received a letter from Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy in which the Ukrainian leader expressed willingness to negotiate over the Russia-Ukraine war. "I think on

ISIS-K terrorist charged for role in 2021 Kabul airport bombing that killed 13 American soldiers, Trump thanks Pak for arrest

YOSHITA SINGH

WASHINGTON, MARCH 5

AN ISIS-K terrorist has been charged by the US with conspiring to provide material support to a designated foreign terrorist organisation resulting in death and faces life in prison for his role in the 2021 Kabul airport bombing, with President Donald Trump thanking Pakistan for help in his arrest.

Mohammad Sharifullah, also known as "Jafar", has been arrested and is expected to appear in the Eastern District of Virginia

Wednesday to face charges for his role in the August 26, 2021 Abbey Gate bombing at the Hamid Karzai International Airport in Kabul that killed 13 US military service members and about 160 civilians.

If convicted, Sharifullah faces a maximum penalty of life in prison. President Trump, in an address to the Joint Session of Congress, said that a "top terrorist" responsible for the August 2021 Abbey Gate bombing at Kabul airport as American forces withdrew from Afghanistan has been apprehended and is being brought to the country to face

justice. He did not name Sharifullah and thanked the Pakistan government for "helping arrest this monster".

US Attorney General Pamela Bondi said that the "evil ISIS-K terrorist" orchestrated the brutal murder of 13 heroic marines. "Under President Trump's strong leadership on the world stage, this Department of Justice will ensure that terrorists like Mohammad Sharifullah have no safe haven, no second chances, and no worse enemy than the United States of America," she said.

FBI Director Kash Patel said that thanks to the assistance of

the FBI, Department of Justice, and the CIA, "we have secured Sharifullah's apprehension and transport to the US to face American justice".

Sharifullah was interviewed by FBI agents on March 2 and according to the court documents in the case seen by PTI, Sharifullah told FBI agents that he was recruited into ISIS-K in or around 2016 and has since then been a member of the terror group.

"He admitted to supporting and conducting activities on behalf of ISIS-K in support of multiple lethal attacks," including the attack on Embassy Guards in

Kabul, Afghanistan on June 20, 2016 and the attack at the Crocus City Hall, a popular concert venue complex near Moscow, Russia on March 22, 2024 that killed approximately 130 people and injured numerous others.

The Abbey Gate attack came just days after the Taliban took over Kabul. Abbey Gate was the main entry control point for the operation. Thousands of civilians were at or near Abbey Gate on August 26 for evacuation processing. The attack was carried out by lone suicide bomber ISIS-K member named Abdul Rahman al-Logari at Abbey Gate.

PTI

Israel gets new military chief, Gaza truce in balance

JAMES MACKENZIE

JERUSALEM, MARCH 5

ISRAEL SWORE in a new commander of its military on Wednesday as a standoff over the fragile ceasefire in Gaza increased the risk of a resumption of fighting without an agreement to bring home the rest of the hostages still held by Hamas.

Eyal Zamir, who had retired after 28 years, was promoted to Lieutenant General before formally assuming command from General Herzi Halevi, who stepped down over the security disaster of Oct 7, 2023. "We will not forgive, we will not forget. This is an existential war," he said.



Lt Gen Eyal Zamir

Fighting in Gaza has been halted since January under a truce brokered by Qatar and Egypt and supported by the US that has allowed the exchange of 33 Israeli hostages for around 2,000 Palestinian prisoners and detainees. Israel has called for an extension of truce until after the Jewish Passover in April to allow the release of remaining hostages, while Hamas has insisted on proceeding to talks on a permanent end to the war.

REUTERS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

DHAKA, MARCH 5

BANGLADESH INTERIM government's Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus has said that Dhaka had sent "formal letters" to India seeking deposed prime minister Sheikh Hasina's extradition but received "no official response" from New Delhi.

In an interview with UK's Sky News, Yunus said Hasina will stand trial for "crimes against humanity", the state-run BSS news agency reported.

Hasina, 77, has been living in India since August 5 last year, when she fled Bangladesh fol-



Bangladesh Chief Advisor Muhammad Yunus. File

lowing a massive student-led protest that toppled her Awami League's 16-year regime.

Bangladesh's International Crimes Tribunal (ICT) has issued arrest warrants for Hasina and

several former Cabinet ministers and officials for "crimes against humanity and genocide".

"A trial will be taking place. Not only against her, but also all the people associated with her - her family members, her clients or associates," Yunus said.

Yunus said they had sent "formal letters" but received "no official response" from New Delhi. Last year, India confirmed receiving the *note verbale* or diplomatic communication from the Bangladesh High Commission in New Delhi but refrained from commenting on it. He insisted, however, that Hasina would face the court, whether physically present or in absentia.

Supreme court rejects Trump's efforts to freeze \$2-bn foreign aid

Apex court votes 5-4 in major setback to one of President's signature projects

ADAM LIPTAK

WASHINGTON, MARCH 5

THE SUPREME Court on Wednesday rejected President Trump's emergency request to freeze nearly \$2 billion in foreign aid - one of his signature projects - as part of his efforts to slash government spending.

The court's brief order was unsigned, which is typical when the justices act on emergency applications. It said only that the trial judge, who had ordered the government to resume payments, "should clarify what obligations the government must fulfill."

But the ruling represented one of the court's first moves in response to the flurry of litigation filed in response to Trump's efforts to dramatically reshape government. The vote was 5 to 4, with Chief Justice John G. Roberts and Justice Amy Coney Barrett joining the three liberal members to form a majority.

Justice Samuel Alito, writing for the four dissenting justices, said the majority had gone profoundly astray.

"Does a single district-court judge who likely lacks jurisdiction have the unchecked power to compel the government of the US to pay out (and probably lose forever) two billion taxpayer dollars?" he asked. "The answer to that question should be an emphatic 'No,' but a majority of this court apparently thinks otherwise. I am stunned."

EXPLAINED Signals more scrutiny on Trump's plans

ALTHOUGH THE language of the order was mild, the bottom line was that a bare majority of the court ruled against President Donald Trump on one of his signature projects. The order suggested that Trump's many programs and plans will face close scrutiny from a deeply divided court. That, in turn, is likely to give rise to major rulings testing and perhaps recalibrating the constitutional separation of powers.

The order was released first thing in the morning, which is not typical when the court acts on emergency applications. The majority may have wished to avoid releasing the order thwarting Trump hours before he delivered his first address to the Congress since taking office in January.

The order noted that the deadline for complying with the lower court's order requiring the disbursement of the funds had passed and that litigation would continue to make its way through the courts.

The administration halted the aid on January 20, Trump's first day in office.

NYT

'Changes unseen in a century': China ramps up stimulus to guard economy

ANTONI SLODKOWSKI, LAURIE CHEN, JING XU & EDUARDO BAPTISTA

BEIJING, MARCH 5

CHINA UNLOCKED more fiscal stimulus on Wednesday, promising greater efforts to support consumption and cushion the impact of an escalating trade war with the United States on an economy that Beijing is determined to grow by another 5%-or-so this year.

Premier Li Qiang, in a speech at the opening of the annual meeting of China's parliament, warned that "changes unseen in a century are unfolding across the world at a faster pace".

"An increasingly complex and severe external environment may exert a greater impact on China in areas such as trade, science, and technology," Li said.

The trade war with U.S. President Donald Trump's administration is threatening China's economic jewel, its sprawling industrial complex, at a time when persistently sluggish household demand and the unravelling of the debt-laden property sector are leaving the economy increasingly vulnerable. Trump has also dan-



Chinese President Xi Jinping at the National People's Congress on Wednesday

gled tariffs at a long list of countries, disrupting a decades-old global trade order that Beijing has built its economic model around.

Pressure has been building on Chinese officials for consumer-focused stimulus to fend off deflationary pressures and reduce the world's second-largest economy's reliance on exports and investment for growth. An advancement was given more space in Li's speech this year compared with 2024, with promises to foster its application in sectors including electric vehicles, smartphones and robots.

REUTERS

DURING THE ENGLISH CIVIL WAR IN THE 1600s, THE EROTIC, PLAYFUL LOVE POEM WAS USED AS AN APPEAL TOWARD POLITICAL LOYALTY

Rare version of a Shakespeare sonnet suggests it was more political than romantic

AMELIA NIERENBERG

LONDON, MARCH 5

IF YOU have already had the good fortune of encountering "Sonnet 116" by William Shakespeare, you were probably at a wedding.

It is not, by most accounts, a sexy poem. It is not exactly a happy one, either. Instead, it celebrates commitment to devotion: "Love's not time's fool," perhaps its most famous phrase, is held up as a toast to living together and aging together. It is one of the poems that, however often it is read aloud, still pricks

tear ducts and quiets fidgets.

But during the English Civil Wars in the mid-1600s, the poem may have had a different resonance. That's, at least, according to research published last month in The Review of English Studies by an Oxford researcher, Leah Veronese, who found a rare, handwritten version in an archive.

Such discoveries are rare. "It's incredibly exciting when somebody finds any manuscript trace of Shakespeare's poems," said a Columbia University professor, James Shapiro, an expert on Shakespeare who was not involved in the find.

And experts are celebrating the discovery as an early example of the ways that Shakespeare's work has been adapted to meet a charged moment.

"Shakespeare has always been political," Professor Shapiro said, adding, "People repurposed it in their own day - as in ours - for different political ends."

This variation - which has a different opening, ending and seven additional lines - reads more as a celebration of political loyalty than romantic love. It may come from one of the greatest upheavals in British history: A



A statue of Shakespeare in Stratford-upon-Avon in England.

NYT

fight between royalists (who supported the monarchy) and parliamentarians (who did not). For a brief period, Britain was not ruled by a monarch.

Much suggests that the newly discovered version was a royalist adaptation.

Dr. Veronese discovered the variant in the papers of Elias Ashmole, a supporter of the monarchy who was born in 1617 - the year after Shakespeare died. It was among other politically charged works, which included banned Christmas carols and satirical poems from the 1640s. And it had been set to

music by the composer Henry Lawes, which can be found in the New York Public Library.

That alone would have been rebellious: The Republican regime banned the public performance of songs, Oxford said in a news release published on Monday.

"What was once a kind of erotic, playful love poem," Professor Shapiro said, had "been repurposed to speak to people in the midst of a civil war - in which their loved ones are fighting and dying."

Practically, the additional lines were added to create more singable verses, according to

Oxford. But in the context of the civil wars, the Oxford release said, "the additional lines could also be read as an appeal toward religious and political loyalty."

Professor Dobson noted that the language of devotion is often similar, whether applied to love or politics. "You know: 'my king - right or wrong - I will die a royalist,'" he said, describing both versions as odes to "eternal, quixotic constancy."

He said it was not clear whether the poem was a copy of a draft written by Shakespeare or an adaptation written by someone else.

NYT



@ieExplained
#ExpressExplained

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

The Egyptian alternative to Trump’s Gaza ‘Riviera’ plan

EXPERT
EXPLAINS

BASHIR ALI ABBAS

ON MARCH 4, an Emergency Summit of the Arab League adopted a \$53-billion Egyptian plan for the reconstruction of Gaza as a “comprehensive Arab strategy”.
The Summit was held in Cairo a day after Israel cut off all humanitarian aid to the devastated Palestinian enclave at the end of the first phase of the Israel-Hamas Agreement.
The Cairo Declaration is the first collective Arab proposal for Gaza’s “day after”, contending on the “full implementation of the ceasefire agreement...especially by Israel”.
It is also the first plan for the reconstruction of Gaza presented since United States President Donald Trump’s proposal last month that the Palestinians should be permanently evicted from the enclave, which

America should then “own” and turn into a “Riviera”.

Elements of continuity...

The Cairo Declaration follows the Bahrain Declaration from the last Arab League Summit in Manama in May 2024.
It calls for “a Gaza administration committee” comprising “qualified Gazans, for a transitional period”, pledges a “trust fund” for recovery-and-reconstruction projects, and commits financial, political, and material support for the Egypt-led reconstruction plan based on studies by the World Bank and the UN Development Fund.
The proposal repeats the Bahrain Declaration’s call for United Nations peacekeeping forces in Gaza and the West Bank — a plan a version of which Israel supported at least until March 2024.
In line with consecutive Arab League declarations, the Cairo proposal reiterates support for a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.
It maintains the continuity of the Arab position that was first articulated in the Arab Peace Initiative of 2002, but notes that the

Arab acceptance of Israeli sovereignty has always been contingent on the establishment of “a Palestinian state based on the two-state solution in accordance with international law, and guarantee [of] an independent, sovereign Palestinian state within the June 4, 1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital, living peacefully alongside Israel”.
The Declaration also reiterates the League’s emphasis on “the importance of uniting all Palestinian factions under the Palestine Liberation Organization (after essential reforms), the legitimate and sole representative of the Palestinian people”.
The PLO, an umbrella grouping of Palestinian political parties such as Fatah, does not include Hamas.

...And of change in proposal

The Cairo Declaration does not mention Hamas or the need to remove it, arguably leaving some room for the group to continue in the interim. Both Israel and the US criticised the Summit’s outcomes — the lack of mention of Hamas is among the reasons why.
The Declaration sees the proposed interim administration as a preparatory body

until the Palestinian Authority (PA) can take over — to bring back unified governance of Gaza and the West Bank — and eventually hold legislative and presidential elections. Israel has consistently rejected such a role for the PA over the last 17 months.
Hamas has welcomed the Declaration and the reconstruction plan, arguably because of the commitment to hold fresh elections. The last elections, held in 2006, returned a Hamas majority — and a rejection of the result by Mahmoud Abbas’s Fatah led to its violent ejection from Gaza.
The question remains: what if Hamas or Hamas-linked candidates win again? The popularity of Hamas in Gaza has been evident in its replenished strength despite a significant loss of experienced fighters.
The Cairo Declaration categorically rejects the “ethnic cleansing” of Palestinians and recognizes the “crucial role of Jordan and Egypt in confronting displacement and the liquidation of the Palestinian cause” — directly countering Trump’s demand that Egypt and Jordan should absorb 2.3 million displaced Gazans.
It also doubles down on the Arab demand

for Israel’s “complete withdrawal from the Strip, including the Philadelphi Corridor”. Such a withdrawal remains the litmus test for whether the ceasefire can hold and usher in the “day-after” in Gaza.
The future of Palestine
The order of events for peace in Palestine would be thus: cessation of all Israeli military action in Gaza and the West Bank, followed by a reconstruction and interim governance plan accepted by all parties including Israel and Hamas, and the settlement of the political question of Palestinian statehood.
The Cairo Declaration is a preparatory document for an on-ground scenario that is yet to manifest. While Israel will seek to force new terms for the ceasefire, there are now two visions for the reconstruction of Gaza — those of Palestine and the Arab states, and of Israel and the US.
The Cairo Declaration, which followed the “mini-Arab Summit” in Riyadh on February 21, was likely geared towards presenting a robust counter — replete with visuals of potential luxurious landscapes and architecture in Gaza, presented by Egypt —

to Trump’s proposals for the Strip.
In reality, the plan cannot be implemented without cooperation from Israel — which will require Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to give up his insistence on the complete elimination of Hamas from Gaza.
Also, while the Declaration reiterates the demand for the two-state solution, the prospects of its implementation remain bleak.
The Israeli settler population in the West Bank was 700,000 in 2023 — and Netanyahu had committed to more than 1,000 new settler homes in the West Bank that June. In 2024, he promised another 5,300 new homes.
In March 2024, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights linked the record rise in illegal settlement expansion with the elimination of “any practical possibility of establishing a viable Palestinian state”.
Unless Israel ceases the expansion of settlements and withdraws existing settlement infrastructure, the two-state solution in any presently envisioned form will be impossible to achieve.
Bashir Ali Abbas is a Senior Research Associate at the Council for Strategic and Defense Research, New Delhi

EXPLAINED GLOBAL

COULD EUROPE’S EUTELSAT HELP TO REPLACE STARLINK IN UKRAINE?

SUGGESTIONS THAT Ukraine could lose access to Elon Musk’s Starlink satellite Internet system, which has been vital in maintaining its military communications, have focused investor interest on Starlink’s smaller European rival Eutelsat.
The stock price of Eutelsat, a Franco-British company, has more than quadrupled since the February 28 public show-down between Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and US President Donald Trump.



A satellite model is placed on the Eutelsat logo. Reuters

How crucial is Starlink to Ukraine?
Starlink users access the Internet for data or voice communication by using a small satellite dish to bounce signals off a constellation of satellites overhead.
Ukraine’s fixed-line and mobile networks have been badly damaged by bombing since Russia invaded in February 2022, and Starlink has helped Kyiv fill the void by sending tens of thousands of its dishes with terminals.
Some are made available to civilians, often trying to contact relatives on smartphones. But most are used by Ukraine’s armed forces, which also have to contend with heavy signal jamming and interception of communications. Ukrainian units often talk to each other via Starlink, and its services have become virtually indispensable for battlefield command and control.
Ukraine also used Starlink to guide attack drones until Musk’s rocket firm SpaceX curbed the practice two years ago.
Initially, SpaceX helped to fund the provision of Starlink to Ukraine. The US government then took over, though last month Poland said it had been paying Ukraine’s Starlink subscription and would continue to do so.
How does Eutelsat compare with Starlink?
Eutelsat already supports government and institutional communications

in Ukraine, and can provide an alternative for certain government and defence applications, according to the company.
Since its merger in 2023 with Britain’s OneWeb, Eutelsat controls the only operational global-coverage constellation, besides Starlink, of satellites in low earth orbit (LEO).
Starlink’s more than 7,000 LEO satellites, suited to real-time communication, allow it to reach more users around the world and offer higher data speeds.
But Eutelsat says that even with only 630 or so LEO satellites, backed up by 35 linked satellites in higher, geostationary orbit, it offers the same capabilities as Starlink in Europe.
Starlink promises broadband at up to 200 megabits per second, Eutelsat 150.
OneWeb terminals, however, cost as much as \$10,000, plus a monthly subscription. Starlink charges Ukrainian users a one-time payment of \$589 in addition to a monthly subscription of \$95-\$440, depending on the usage.
Are there any other alternatives?
Luxembourg-based SES delivers some satellite services to NATO via its medium earth orbit constellation of O3b mPOWER satellites. But it prioritises corporate customers, governments and militaries, offering no direct-to-consumer services. **REUTERS**

RAVI DUTTA MISHRA
NEW DELHI, MARCH 5

UNITED STATES President Donald Trump on Tuesday announced reciprocal tariffs on trade partners regardless of the level of their economic development — a decision that could significantly impact developing countries such as India, which typically extend higher protection to domestic industry compared to the richer, developed world.
“...On 2 April, reciprocal tariffs kick in,” Trump said during his Joint Address to Congress on Tuesday night.
“Friendly as well as unfriendly” countries had unfairly used tariffs against the US for decades, Trump said. He said the European Union, China, Brazil, India, Mexico, and Canada imposed significantly higher tariffs on the US on average than the US imposed on them.
“India charges us auto tariffs higher than 100 per cent. China’s average tariffs on our products are twice what we charge them. And South Korea’s average tariffs are four times higher. We give so much help militarily and otherwise to South Korea, but that’s what happens. This is done by friend and foe...,” Trump said.

Tariff uncertainty for India

A bilateral trade agreement (BTA) between India and the US is in the works — and Indian officials hope to secure concessions on sweeping tariffs such as the 25% duty on steel and aluminium announced earlier, as well as the upcoming reciprocal tariffs.
Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal is currently in the US to meet United States Trade Representative (USTR) Jamieson Greer, who has been given the task of implementing Trump’s tariff plan.
Trade experts have noted that the 25% tariffs on Canada and Mexico, which went into effect on Tuesday (provoking retaliation from Canada) indicate the Trump administration’s disregard for trade deals aligned with World Trade Organization (WTO) norms, and put a question mark over American adherence to any future trade agreement with India.
“The North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), the trade deal between the US, Canada, and Mexico, had been in place since January 1994. However, Trump



US President Donald Trump addresses Congress on Tuesday night. Reuters

SECTORAL IMPACT OF RECIPROCAL TARIFFS

Sectors	US exports to India	India's exports to US	Indian tariffs on US products	US tariffs on Indian products	Tariff differential
Agri, meat & processed food	1.94	6.04	37.66%	5.29%	32.37%
Automobiles	0.42	2.8	24.14%	1.05%	23.1%
Diamond, gold products	1.92	11.88	15.45%	2.12%	13.32%
Chemicals & pharma	3.52	18.44	9.68%	1.06%	8.63%
Electrical, electronic products	1.34	14.4	7.64%	0.41%	7.24%

Source: GTRI. Data for 2024 calendar year. Tariffs in terms of weighted average. Exports in \$billion

was dissatisfied with its terms and, during his first term, replaced it with the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) in 2018-19. Trump’s tariffs on Canada and Mexico violate USMCA and highlight his disregard for negotiated trade agreements,” Ajay Srivastava, a former trade officer and head of the think tank Global Trade and Research Institute (GTRI) said.
Vulnerability of farm sector
While several sectors could be hit by reciprocal tariffs, agriculture is the most vulnerable for India, given the wide tariff gap between the two countries. Agricultural trade is a sensitive issue, with farmers unions in India leading sustained protests demanding a legally guaranteed Minimum Support Price (MSP) for their produce.
A report by the Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations (ICRIER) released last month says India imposes tariffs at a simple average rate

of 17%, compared to 3.3% by the US. Trade-weighted tariffs highlight this difference further, standing at 12% for India and only 2.2% for the US.
“The most striking difference is in the agriculture sector, where India’s tariffs are notably higher. The simple average tariff for agricultural goods in India is 39%, while the trade-weighted average is 65%, indicating strong protectionist policies. In comparison, the US maintains relatively low agricultural tariffs, with a simple average of 5% and a trade-weighted rate of 4%,” the ICRIER report said.
Auto, pharma could be hit too
The automobile and pharmaceutical sectors are also expected to be affected at a time when several countries are pushing for greater access to India’s highly protected markets. Both industries are among India’s most successful, with substantial value-addition and export strength, particularly to

Europe and the US.
The tariff differential in the automobile sector is 23.1%; for chemicals and pharmaceuticals, 8%. Pharma products accounted for 21.9% of the \$20 billion of final consumer goods exported by India to the US in 2023.
“Sectors such as automobiles, pharmaceuticals, electronics, chemicals, and textiles face the highest tariff differentials, making them vulnerable to price increases in the US market,” GTRI said in a report, *Trump’s Reciprocal Tariffs and India: Sectoral Impact, Neutralisation Strategies*, published last month.
“Industries should expand export markets beyond the US, focusing on regions where tariffs remain low, such as Europe, Southeast Asia, and Africa,” the report said.
“Similarly, forming joint ventures with American firms or setting up assembly units in the US could help bypass tariffs.”

Challenge to WTO framework

The US 2025 Trade Policy Agenda released on 3 March argues that the “viability and durability of the WTO is increasingly in question”, and “in fundamental respects, the organization...has lost its way”.
The document also criticises the concessions and carve-outs sought by developing countries such as India under the WTO’s special and differential treatment (SDT) provisions.
“SDT status provides several benefits, including generous transition periods, higher tariff bindings, and the ability to use prohibited subsidies,” the policy says.
“...Countries can obtain SDT benefits by merely self-declaring as ‘developing’ — regardless of their per capita gross national income or their income classification according to the World Bank.”
When the WTO was established 30 years ago, its purpose was to encourage participation in a world trading system based on open, market-oriented policies, the policy says.
However, “when China abandoned the market-oriented reform path on which its 2001 accession was premised and embraced state-led, non-market economic practices, the WTO was neither able nor willing to address China’s economic system, which is fundamentally incompatible with the open, market-oriented direction...and is contrary to the original principles of the WTO and its agreements,” the policy says.

What the first-ever comprehensive survey of India’s river dolphins found

NIKHIL GHANEKAR
NEW DELHI, MARCH 5

THE FINDINGS of the first-ever comprehensive exercise to determine the population of riverine dolphins in India were published on Monday. It estimated the aquatic mammals’ population to be 6,327, spread mostly across the Ganga and Brahmaputra river systems.
The Indian subcontinent boasts two extant species of riverine dolphins: the Ganges river dolphin (*Platanista gangetica*), and the related but smaller Indus river dolphin (*Platanista minor*). Both are classified as endangered, and accorded the highest protection under the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972. They face threats from pollution, riverbed mining, excessive damming, low water depth, habitat damage, prey decline, and climate change.
The survey
The survey was carried out by the

Wildlife Institute of India between 2021 and 2023. It covered the main channels and tributaries of the Ganga and Brahmaputra rivers, as well as the Beas river in Punjab. In total, 28 rivers were surveyed by boat, and 30 were mapped by road.
The survey covered 7,109 km of the Ganga and its tributaries in Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh, and Rajasthan. In the Brahmaputra basin, 1,297 km was covered including tributaries Subansiri, Kulsi, Beki, Kopili, and Barak. Only 101 km of the Beas were surveyed as well.
Since river dolphins live in opaque, turbid waters and surface only briefly, making estimates of their population is not easy. According to the report, the length of an average dive is 107 seconds, after which the mammals surface for only 1.26 seconds. Not only is it difficult to sight all surfacing dolphins, not all dolphins may surface at the time surveyors are at work.
To get over this problem, a combination



The Ganges river dolphin is the national aquatic animal of India. Wikimedia Commons

of visual and acoustic surveys was used.
ACOUSTIC SURVEY: Being functionally blind, dolphins navigate using echolocation, the same principle used by SONAR aboard submarines. The mammals make clicking sounds which bounce back after hitting objects. An acoustic survey uses multiple underwater microphones (or hydrophones) to capture these clicks, in order to counter observer error.
VISUAL SURVEYS: Depending on the vessel available, water depth and channel width, different kinds of visual surveys can be deployed. For deep and wide channels, the double observer method was used, in which two teams positioned on different decks covered different angles around the vessel, scanning for dolphins surfacing around them as the boat travelled at a speed of 8-10 km/hour. The boat’s speed, which is

faster than that of a dolphin, prevents double counting.
Key findings
Only three were Indus river dolphins were identified, all in the Beas in Punjab. The rest of the population — 6,324 dolphins — belonged to the larger species, and were found in the Ganga and Brahmaputra river systems.
Some 3,275 dolphins were estimated to be living in the Ganga’s main channel, with another 2,414 residing in its tributaries. An estimated 584 dolphins resided in Brahmaputra’s main channel, and another 51 in its tributaries.
Uttar Pradesh (2,397) and Bihar (2,220) boasted the largest populations of the Ganges river dolphin, followed by West Bengal (815), Assam (635), Jharkhand (162), and Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh (95).
But not all stretches of the river were equally populated. The survey identified dolphin ‘hotspots’ and ‘coldspots’.
For instance, the survey found dolphins to be near-absent in the 366 km stretch

from Narora to Kanpur in UP, with an encounter rate of 0.1 per km — meaning that on average only one dolphin encounter was reported every in every 10 km of the river the boat travelled. A number of coldspots were also identified on the Yamuna.
On the other hand, the 590 km Chausa-Manihari stretch in Bihar, and the 59 km Manihari-Rajmahal stretch in Jharkhand boasted encounter rates of 2.2 and 2.75 respectively, making them the most densely populated stretches of the Ganga. In general, Bihar (1.62) boasted a much higher encounter rate than UP (0.62), something that the survey attributed to the Ganga being deeper in the state, particularly at the confluence of tributaries such as Ghaghara, Gandak, Kosi and Son.
In Assam, although the Brahmaputra itself is fairly deep, its tributaries are shallow. The Barak river was identified as a coldspot. Notably, compared to past estimates, the dolphin population in the Subansiri and Kulsi rivers was declining, according to the estimation report.

National Competetive E- Tender Notice

The Superintending Engineer, 3rd Circle, Public Works Department, Pithoragarh invites tender through E-Tendering (**Two Bid System**) on behalf of Hon'ble Governor of Uttarakhand for following works. All other information will be available online from date 06-03-2025 at 5.00 PM onward on website <http://www.uktenders.gov.in>.

S. No.	Name of Work	Earnest Money (in Lac)	Cost of Tender (in Rs.)	Validity of Tender (day)	Period of Completion (months)	Contractor's category of registration
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	Improvement and reconstruction work of Baluwakote Payyapodi motor road km.7.00 Rorjhard to Pantagon motor road and 3 years maintenance work in assembly Dharchula of District Pithoragarh under state plan (Length 3.100 Km.)	4.63	5000.00 + 18% GST	120	12	Category 'B' and Above for road works in any State Govt./ Govt. of India/Govt. undertaking



ODISHA STATE CIVIL SUPPLIES CORPORATION LTD.

(A Govt. of Odisha Undertaking)

REGISTERED OFFICE: C/2, NAYAPALLI, BHUBANESWAR-751012

Tel No. 0674-2395391, Fax No: 0674-2395291,

website: www.oscsc.in

(Re-Tender) Request for Proposal (RFP) for
"Selection of agency to undertake Operations & Maintenance and Other Services of IRIS Scanners installed at Fair Price Shops (FPS) & Paddy Purchase Centres (PPC) across the State of Odisha"
(Re-Tender) RFP Advt. No. 3637/OSCSC, Date:03/03/2025

Odisha State Civil Supplies Corporation Limited invites proposals from interested bidders being registered in India as per Government of India Company Registration Act 1956/2013, for "Selection of agency to undertake Operations & Maintenance and Other Services of IRIS Scanners installed at Fair Price Shops (FPS) & Paddy Purchase Centres (PPC) across the State of Odisha". The tender document with all information relating to the tender process, including cost of tender document, EMD, eligibility criteria, scope of work, terms & conditions, evaluation criteria and formats of submission of bid proposals, may be downloaded from the website www.foododisha.in & www.oscsc.in

Sl No	Event Description	Date
1	Publication of RFP in website	06/03/2025
2	Pre-Bid meeting	12/03/2025 at 1600 Hours Conference Hall, OSCSC Ltd., C/2, Nayapalli, Bhubaneswar-751012
3	Last Date and time for submission of Proposal	28/03/2025 by 1700 Hours
4	Opening of Technical Proposal	29/03/2025 by 1600 Hours
5	Presentation by Bidders Qualified in Eligibility Criteria	The date and time will be intimated to the bidders by e-mail. Venue will be the Conference Hall of OSCSC Ltd., C/2, Nayapalli, Bhubaneswar-751012.
6	Opening of Financial Bid	To be intimated to the Technically Qualified Bidders through registered mail ID.

Any amendment in the tender document due to decision in pre-bid meeting/extension of bid if any, shall only be notified in the websites mentioned above. The proposals shall be submitted through Speed Post/Registered Post/courier only to 'Managing Director, Odisha State Civil Supplies Corporation Ltd, C/2 Nayapalli, Bhubaneswar, PIN-751012, Odisha'. The authority reserves the right to cancel any or the entire selection process without assigning any reason thereof.

Sd/-
OIPR-07002/11/0032/2425
Managing Director, OSCSC Ltd



POSTGRADUATE INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL EDUCATION & RESEARCH CHANDIGARH

CORRIGENDUM

Ref : Global Tender Enquiry Notice No. PHEP/24-25/G/07
Following changes are made:-

S. No	Equipment/Item Name	Original Bid Submission Date	Revised Bid Submission Date	Original Bid Opening Date	Revised Bid Opening Date	Deptt. Name
19	Next Gen Sequencing Machine for DNA/RNA	04.03.2025	08.03.2025	05.03.2025	10.03.2025	Immunopathology

All other details shall remain the same.

Professor In-Charge (EP)

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR

DIRECTORATE OF FLORICULTURE (G&P) KASHMIR

Tel:- 0194-2474234, Fax:2482032, Email: kashflori@rediffmail.com

Subject: - Extension Notice No. 01.

In view of poor response, the Bid Submission end/opening date (Online) of technical/financial bid in respect of e-NIT No. 02 of 2025 dated:- **07.02.2025** invited by this office under endorsement No. DOFK-GS0/proc/2/2024/E-7472046/F-727-I1 Dated:-07.02.2025 with regard to "Supply of different kinds of Hybrid Flower Seeds (summer and winter)" is hereby extended as per details given below:-

1.	Bid Submission End date & time	17.03.2025	up to 02:00 PM
2.	Date & time of opening of Bids (Online)	20.03.2025	at 02:00 PM

Other terms & conditions shall remain same as laid down in the concerned e-NIT.

Sd/-
Accounts Officer,
(Member Secretary)
Floriculture Department, Kashmir.

No. DIPK-12612

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR

DIRECTORATE OF FLORICULTURE (G&P) KASHMIR

Tel:- 0194-2474234, Fax:2482032, Email: kashflori@rediffmail.com

Subject: - Extension Notice No. 01.

In view of poor response, the Bid Submission end/opening date (Online) of technical/financial bid in respect of e-NIT No. 01 of 2025 dated:- **07.02.2025** invited by this office under endorsement No. DOFK-GS0/TNDR/6/2024/E-7428038/F-709 Dated:-07.02.2025 with regard to "Supply of Plant Material" is hereby extended as per details given below:-

1.	Bid Submission End date & time	17.03.2025	up to 02:00 PM
2.	Date & time of opening of Bids (Online)	20.03.2025	at 02:00 PM

Other terms & conditions shall remain same as laid down in the concerned e-NIT.

Sd/-
Accounts Officer,
(Member Secretary)
Floriculture Department, Kashmir.

No. DIPK-12610

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT, DURG CIRCLE DURG (C.G.)

Durg, Dated: 25.02.2025

e- Procurement Tender Notice
(1st Call)

Online tenders in form "A" percentage rate basis are invited on behalf of Governor of Chhattisgarh dated 17-03-2025 :-

NIT No.	Name of work	P.A.C. (Rs. In lacs.)
167/Durg(Durg)/ 2024	PATCH REPAIR WORK OF VARIOUS ROADS UNDER SUB DIVISION NO. 1, DURG	49.94
168/Durg(Rajnand.)/2024	CONSTRUCTION OF HIGHER SECONDARY SCHOOL BUILDING (PHASE -I & II) AT JADUTOLA I/C WATER SUPPLY, SANITARY FITTING & ELECTRIFICATION, BLOCK - A,CHOWKI, DISTT- MOHLA- MANPUR-A,CHOWKI	117.96
169/Durg(Rajnand.)/ 2024	CONSTRUCTION OF HIGHER SECONDARY SCHOOL BUILDING (PHASE -I & II) AT KANDADI I/C WATER SUPPLY, SANITARY FITTING & ELECTRIFICATION, BLOCK -MANPUR, DISTT- MOHLA-MANPUR-A,CHOWKI	117.96
170/Durg(Rajnand.)/ 2024	Construction of High School Building at Vicharpur Nawagon, Block - Dongargaon, Distt. Rajnandgaon	67.50
171/Durg(Rajnand.)/2024	Construction of High School Building at Morkutumb, Block Chhuriya, Distt. - Rajnandgaon -	67.60

Note :-
1- General Conditions, detailed NIT, Tender documents & other information of the above construction work downloaded from the Eprocurement web portal or departmental website <http://eproc.cgstate.gov.in>.
2- NIT No. & Name of the Work should be essentially mentioned on the envelope through the Registered Post/Speed Post in this office.

Sd/-
Superintending Engineer
P.W.D., Durg Circle Durg (C.G.)
Tel. 0788-2210876

GRO No. 242505659-3

कार्यालय अधीक्षण अभियंता,
लोक निर्माण विभाग, बिलासपुर मंडल, बिलासपुर

ई-प्रोक्वेस्ट नितिदा सूचना

Portal: <http://eproc.cgstate.gov.in>

छत्तीसगढ़ शासन, लोक निर्माण विभाग, बिलासपुर मण्डल, बिलासपुर में निम्नलिखित कार्य नवीन ई-पंजीयन में पंजीकृत ठेकेदार हेतु सरल क्र. 1 एवं 2 हेतु दिनांक 17.03.25 तक एवं सरल क्र. 3 से 11 हेतु दिनांक 24.03.2025 तक निविदा आमंत्रित की जाती है:-

क्र.	नि.आ.सू. क्र./ दिनांक	कार्य का नाम	लगत (लाख में)
1	366	जिला मुंगेरी के जिला अस्पताल पहुंच मार्ग का निर्माण कार्य। द्वितीय आमंत्रण। मुंगेरी संभाग, मुंगेरी।	31.89
2	367	जिला रायगढ़ के टिनीमिनी पहुंच मार्ग लंबाई 2.00 कि.मी. निर्माण कार्य। द्वितीय आमंत्रण। रायगढ़ संभाग।	162.82
3	368	निचिल लार्देन स्थित शासकीय आवास क्र. की 51 बिलासपुर में आयुष्मन्न गर्भना, अन्य स्थिति कार्य एवं शासकीय चिकित्सा महाविद्यालय बिलासपुर के बालक एवं बालिका छात्रावास के पीछे नाली एवं सेड निर्माण कार्य। प्रथम आमंत्रण। संभाग क्र. 1, बिलासपुर।	28.41
4	369	वि.छ. बिल्दा के शासकीय हाईस्कूल गढ़वट पहुंच मार्ग निर्माण कार्य लंबाई 200 मीटर एवं खुदबाधा पारवादा मार्ग का लिंक रोड (चैनज 230-460) लंबाई 230 मीटर का सी.सी. रोड निर्माण कार्य। प्रथम आमंत्रण। संभाग क्र. 1, बिलासपुर।	34.98
5	370	गुड्री पोड्री करमा मार्ग लंबाई 10.10 कि.मी. में रोड फर्नीचर का कार्य। प्रथम आमंत्रण। संभाग क्र. 1, बिलासपुर।	20.11
6	371	जिला बिलासपुर के एफ.सी.आई. गोडान परिसर बिल्दा में सड़क निर्माण कार्य लंबाई 0.421 मीटर कार्य। प्रथम आमंत्रण। संभाग क्र. 1, बिलासपुर।	150.02
7	372	जिला अस्पताल बिलासपुर में मरच्युरी भवन, इलेक्ट्रिकल पैनल रूम का रनोवेशन कार्य, शासकीय उन्नत शिक्षा अभ्युत्थन संस्थान तावदाहर बिलासपुर के गर्ल एवं बॉयस हाउस का मरम्मत एवं शासकीय बिलासा कन्या स्नातकोत्तर महाविद्यालय बिलासपुर के छात्रावास एवं बाथरूम का उन्नयन कार्य। प्रथम आमंत्रण। संभाग क्र. 1, बिलासपुर।	40.90
8	373	जिला बिलासपुर विकासखण्ड कोटा के राजापाली में हाईस्कूल भवन का निर्माण कार्य। प्रथम आमंत्रण। संभाग क्र. 2, बिलासपुर।	66.50
9	374	ग्राम बिलासपुर के मेडपार बाजार मुख्य मार्ग से गनिवारी पुल तक मार्ग निर्माण लंबाई 1.413 कि.मी.। प्रथम आमंत्रण। संभाग क्र. 2, बिलासपुर।	183.14
10	375	मुख्य मार्ग से सती दाई मंदिर तक पहुंच मार्ग लं. 1.325 कि.मी. का निर्माण कार्य। प्रथम आमंत्रण। मुंगेरी संभाग।	154.48
11	376	मुंगेरी लोरमी मुख्य मार्ग से मोहनवतली पहुंच मार्ग लंबाई 1.075 कि.मी. निर्माण कार्य। प्रथम आमंत्रण। मुंगेरी संभाग।	174.44

निविदा में भाग लेने की प्रक्रिया एवं निविदा के संबंध में विस्तृत जानकारी विभाग के उपर्युक्त वेबसाइट में देखे जा सकते हैं।

हस्ता./-
अधीक्षण अभियंता
लो.नि.वि., बिलासपुर मण्डल, बिलासपुर

RO 242505716-2

कार्यालय अधीक्षण अभियंता, राजस्थान राज्य कृषि विपणन बोर्ड, बृत कोटा

क्रमांक :- राजकाज लं. । 13963690 दिनांक :- 04/03/2025

विड आमंत्रण सूचना संख्या 05/2024-25

बृत कोटा के अनर्गत खण्ड कोटा एवं बारा के विभिन्न निर्माण कार्य की ऑन-लाईन बिड्स ई-प्रोक्वेस्ट (www.eproc.rajasthan.gov.in) के माध्यम से उपयुक्त श्रेणी में पंजीकृत बिडर्स से क्र.सं. 1 व 3 पर ओपन कार्य की निविदा दिनांक 26.03.2025 तक एवं क्र.सं. 2 व 4 पर अर्जित कार्य की निविदा दिनांक 17.03.2025 तक आमंत्रित की जाती है। निविदा से संबंधित विस्तृत विवरण बोर्ड की वेबसाइट www.agriculture.rajasthan.gov.in/samb एवं www.sppp.rajasthan.gov.in पर की देखा जा सकता है। (UBN No. AGM2425WSO800720 to 723)

क्र.सं.सद/ली/24/10635

अधीक्षण अभियंता

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON

See Section 82 Cr. P.C.

Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused person(s) (1) Krishan Kumar Mathur S/o: Pratap Singh, (2) Niyang W/o: Austin R/o: Premises Nearby Plot No. 34, Khasra No. 8/25, Block B, Qutub Vihar, Phase-2, Najafgarh, New Delhi 110071 Near Pole No. NJFMJ 45 has committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence in Ct Cases No: 491/2020, U/s: 135 Indian Electricity Act, P.S.: Chhawla, Delhi and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said accused person(s) (1) Krishan Kumar Mathur (2) Niyang cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said accused person(s) (1) Krishan Kumar Mathur (2) Niyang has absconded (or are concealing themselves to avoid the service of the said warrant). Proclamation is hereby made that the said accused person(s) (1) Krishan Kumar Mathur (2) Niyang of Ct Cases No: 491/2020, U/s: 135 Indian Electricity Act, P.S.: Chhawla, Delhi are required to appear before this Court to answer the said complaint on or before 04.04.2025.

By Order
Vinod Kumar Meena
Additional Sessions Judge Special Court (Electricity) Court No. 609 Dwarka Court, New Delhi

DP/2716/DW/2025 (Court Matter)

उ.प्र. पावर ट्रांसमिशन कारपोरेशन लि. ई- निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना अनुभवों कार्यदायी संस्थाओं से विद्युत पारेषण मंडल, ग्रेटर नोएडा के अनर्गत निम्न कार्यों हेतु ई-निविदायें ई-पोर्टल etender.up.nic.in पर निविदा खुलने की दिनांक को 12.00 बजे तक आमंत्रित की जाती है। ई-निविदा खुलने की तिथि पर अवकाश की स्थिति में ई-निविदा अगले कार्य दिवस में खोली जायेगी। 1. निविदा संख्या टी-01/2025-26: विद्युत 400 के.वी॰ उपकेन्द्र खण्ड, ग्रेटर नोएडा के अनर्गत विद्युत 400 के.वी॰ उपकेन्द्र, ग्रेटर नोएडा पर क्षतिग्रस्त बस सेक्शन बदलने हेतु सामग्री की आपूर्ति। धरोहर राशि ₹० 4,000/- निविदा प्रपत्र शुल्क ₹० 590/- (कर सहित)। खुलने की दिनांक 01.04.2025। ई-निविदा के प्रथम भाग उसी दिन निर्धारित समय पर सार्वजनिक रूप से खोला जायेगा एवं भाग द्वितीय (प्राइजबिड) खुलने की तिथि तदनुसार वेबसाइट पर सूचित की जायेगी। ई-निविदाओं को बिना कोई कारण बताये अस्वीकार/विभाजित करने का अधिकार अधोस्थास्रकारता के पास सुरक्षित रहेगा। कृपया विस्तृत जानकारी, डाउनलोड, अन्य संशोधनों एवं ई-निविदा प्रस्तुत करने के दिनांक तक विस्तार आदि के सम्बन्ध में कृपया etender.up.nic.in पर लॉग आन करें। हस्ता./- अधीक्षण अभियंता विद्युत पारेषण मंडल उ.प्र.पा.ट्रा.का.लि., 400 के.वी. उपकेन्द्र, पाली, ग्रेटर नोएडा। (मोबाईल संख्या:- 07290059731) "राष्ट्रहित में ऊर्जा बचावें" पत्रांक:- 196/ वि.पा.मं./ग्रे.ना./ टी-01/2025-26 दिनांक:- 05.03.2025

कार्यालय : उप वन संरक्षक, योजना, जनजातीय क्षेत्र,राँची।
वन भवन, डोरण्डा, राँची
Gmail- dcftpa@gmail.com Phone & Fax no. 0651-2481161

शुद्धि पत्र
RFP No. 01/2025
Ref. No. PR No. 347263 dt. 25.02.2025

एल्ट द्वारा सर्वसाधारण को सूचित किया जाता है कि Selection of consultancy firm as PMU to Assist Principal Chief Conservatrpr of Forest (HOFF) संघी RFP No. 01/2025 के निविदा अभिलेख के पृष्ठ संख्या 8 में Evaluation Criteria के बिन्दु C एवं बिन्दु D में निम्नवत् संशोधन किया गया है तथा पृष्ठ संख्या 14 के बिन्दु 26.2 Payment Terms के प्रथम पैरा में 6 Resources के स्थान पर 12 एवं 2 year period के स्थान पर 1 year किया गया है।

Point C – 1 to 2 projects 5 Marks
3 to 5 projects 7 Marks
6 or more projects 10 Marks

Point D – Team Composition:
1. Forest Management Expert - 10 Marks Total:- 50 Marks
2. Legal matter Expert (5x2) - 10 Marks
3. Service Matter (HR) - 5 Marks
4. Forest Conservation Act Expert - 5 Marks
5. Climate Change - 5 Marks
6. Multi Task Executives (2x5) - 10 Marks
7. Training Manager (5x1) - 5 Marks

ह० / -
उप वन संरक्षक,
योजना, जनजातीय क्षेत्र, राँची।

PR 347847 Forest, Environment and Climate Changes(24-25)D



खोपोली नगर परिषद

खोपोली, ता. खालापूर, जि. रायगड, पिनकोड नं. ४१०२०३.
फोन नं. (०२११२) २६२२२२, २६३३५६, २६४२११

जा.क्र.केएमसी/नगररचना/फेर ई-निविदा/ ३४६८ दिनांक : ०५.०३.२०२५

नगर रचना विभाग

फेर ई-निविदा सूचना क्र.५ सन- २०२४-२०२५

खोपोली नगर परिषदेच्या बांधकाम विभागाकडील फेर ई-निविदा सूचना क्र. ५ मधील कामासाठी नोंदणीकृत शासन मान्यताप्राप्त अधिकृत कंपनीकडून/संस्थेकडून द्वि-लिफाफा पद्धतीने ई-निविदा मागविण्यात येत आहेत. सविस्तर ई-निविदा सूचना www.mahatenders.gov.in या संकेतस्थळावर दिनांक ०६.०३.२०२५ पासून उपलब्ध होईल. सदर कामाच्या निविदा प्रक्रियेत कोणताही बदल/सुधारणा असल्यास वरील संकेतस्थळावर प्रसिद्ध करण्यात येईल.

Tender ID- 2024_DMA_11198193 सही/- ×××

सहाय्यक नगर रचनाकार
खोपोली नगर परिषद

Government of Jharkhand
Urban Development And Housing Department
Dhanbad Municipal Corporation, Dhanbad

e-Procurement Tender Notice No. DMC/37/2024-25
Reference No. : DMC/37/2024-25 Date : 05.03.2025

क्र.सं	Group No.	योजना का नाम	प्रांशकलित राशि	अवधन राशि	परिमाणु शिप का मूल्य	कार्य समाप्ति का अवधि
1	DMC/37/2024-25/01	Construction of Bitumenous Road from Naya More via Denobili School via Sijua Area Office to Sijua Stadium under DMC, Dhanbad.	9660600.00	2 % of BOQ	10000.00	180 दिन
2	DMC/37/2024-25/02	Construction of Bitumenous Road from Rajkiya Madhya Vidyalaya Kusunda to Mahesh Kirana Store Jalan Factory via Kharikabandh Harijan Basti and from Near Jalan Factory gate to Near Kusunda Durga Mandir via Gondadih Thana in ward no. 14 under DMC, Dhanbad.	14935400.00	2 % of BOQ	10000.00	180 दिन
3	DMC/37/2024-25/03	Construction of Bitumenous Road from Rahmatganj (Yunus Shop) to Ansar Nagar Khawajanur house and Bharat Chowk to Kumhar Patti to Das Tola via Mangru Hotel under DMC, Dhanbad	10761200.00	2 % of BOQ	10000.00	180 दिन
4	DMC/37/2024-25/04	Renovation of Bitumenous Road from Polytechnic more to Bypass Road via Patel Chowk, Patel Chowk to Ara More under DMC, Dhanbad	9028900.00	2 % of BOQ	10000.00	180 दिन

Date of Publication of Tender on website :- 10.03.2025 At 03.00 PM
Online Last Date / Time for receiving of bids :- 26.03.2025 (Online) till 03:00 PM
Date of Bid Opening :- From 27.03.2025 at 03:00 PM (Online)
NOTE:- (i) Only e-Tenders will be accepted. Further details can be seen on website <http://www.jharkhandtenders.gov.in>.
(ii) Contractor should be registered in appropriate class as per NIT
(iii) Estimated Cost/ Quantity May Vary
(iv) Municipal Commissioner, Dhanbad reserves the right to reject any or all the tender(s) received without assigning any reasons thereof.

Sd/-Executive Engineer,
Dhanbad Municipal Corporation, Dhanbad
PR 347853 (Urban Development and Housing)24-25"D



Mahakumbh 2025

Department of Urban Development,
Government of Uttar Pradesh

through
Prayagraj Mela Authority

Triveni Bhawan, Triveni Bandh, Daraganj, Prayagraj
+91 532 2500775 / +91 532 2504011, mahakumbh25@gmail.com



The Prayagraj Mela Authority Invites below mentioned bids :-
1. Empanelment of Agencies for Designing and Publication of Coffee Table Books on Mahakumbh 2025.
The Request for Proposal Documents shall be made available on the Uttar Pradesh E-Procurement website <https://etender.up.nic.in> from Sr. No. 1 - 06 th March 2025 onwards. Interested parties may download/ upload their proposal and details regarding the tender shall be made available on Uttar Pradesh E-Procurement website <https://etender.up.nic.in>.

Meladhikari,
Kumbh Mela, Prayagraj

पत्र संख्या 10790 / पन्द्रह-मं कुं-2025 (2024-25) दिनांक 05 मार्च, 2025
epaper.indianexpress.com

16

WWW.INDIANEXPRESS.COM
THE INDIAN EXPRESS, THURSDAY, MARCH 6, 2025

Sports Authority of India
KISCE, TGSS Hakimpet, Hyderabad, Telangana

Vacancies are invited in online mode from the eligible candidates for recruitment on contract basis to (08) vacancies at Khelo India State Centre of Excellence, TGSS Hakimpet, Hyderabad, Telangana State from 07.03.2025 to 21.03.2025.
The detailed information along with the notification containing application form, eligibility conditions, mode of selection, interview etc., is available at
URL: <https://satsrecruitment.telangana.gov.in/>
The Vacancies are tentative and may subject to change.

Date: 05.03.2025
R.O. No. - 10974-PP/LIC/ADVT/1/2024-25

Sd/-
A. Sonbala Devi, I.F.S.
Vice Chairman and Managing Director,
Sports Authority of Telangana



Mahila Arthik Vikas Mahamandal (MAVIM),
A Government of Maharashtra Undertaking
Griha Nirman Bhawan (MHADA) Mezzanine Floor,
Kalanagar, Bandra (East)-400051

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

"Hiring a consultancy service for development of Study Trip and Guidance tools for Mahila Arthik Vikas Mahamandal (MAVIM)"
For detailed REOI document visit Website: www.mavimindia.org
Last Date & Time for submission: 7th April, 2025 by 4 pm
Email ID : procurement.mavim@gmail.com

Sd/-
Varsha Ladda-Untwal
Managing Director,
MAVIM, Mumbai

ALLOTMENT OF REGIMENTAL SHOPS
AT 4 GRENADIERS

1. Shops (Wet Canteen & Tailor Shop) are available for Rent at 4 GRENADIERS, C/o 274 Transit Camp, Khanpur (South) New Delhi.
2. Ex-Servicemen, Veer Naris & Widows are invited for applying for allotment.
3. Applications be addressed to Commanding Officer, 4 GRENADIERS, PIN-910804, C/o 56 APO in sealed Envelope by 31st March 2025.

RAJASTHAN HOUSING BOARD

No. :- 611 Dated :- 05/03/2025

CORRIGENDUM
NIB No.- 06/2024-25

The last date for submission of the bid for Construction of HIG-I (10.00 X 20.00 Mtr)-52 Nos., HIG-II (12.00 X 20.00 Mtr)-36, MIG-B-I-(8.00 x 16.00 Mtr)-94 Nos., MIG-B-II (10.50 x 18.00 Mtr)-63, MIG-A-I (6.00 x 14.50 Mtr)-137 Nos., MIG-A-II (8.00 x 15.00 Mtr)-182 Nos. & LIG (5.75 x 12.50 Mtr)-103 Nos. Total-667 Nos. Houses (SR5 2024) at Sector-3 & 4, Barli Housing Scheme, Ph-V, Jodhpur is invited from interested bidders from 30.01.2025 to 10.03.2025 is extended upto 15.04.2025 06.00 PM. Other particulars of Bids are available on the procurement portal (<https://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in> & sppp.rajasthan.gov.in) of the State and RHB's website www.urban.rajasthan.gov.in/rhb.

UBN No. :- RHB2425WLOB00326
Raj.Samwad/C/24/12701 Addl. Chief Engineer-II, Jodhpur

PROVISION OF GRID CONNECTED ROOFTOP SOLAR POWER PLANT

E-Tender Notice No. Dy.CEE/PS/MLG/HQ/035R/24-25 Dated: 03-03-2025. E-Tenders are invited by the undersigned for the following works: Name of work: At Mallgaon (H3) Division - (Part A) Provision of 1733 KWp Grid connected rooftop Solar Power plant including 5 years AMC/CAMC at rooftop of Service building & residential buildings in Goshala & Nambari Area. Tender Value: ₹9,21,77,460.92/- Earnest Money: ₹6,10,900/- Date and time of closing of tender: 15.00 hrs. of 18-03-2025. The complete information with the tender documents of above e-tender will be available in website www.ireps.gov.in

Dy.CEE/PS/MLG/HQ
NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY
Serving Customers With A Smile

S&T WORK

TENDER NOTICE NO.: S&T_CON_2024_08. E-tenders are invited by the undersigned for the following work:- Tender No. DyCSTE_C_NJP_2024_08_07. Name of work: Supply, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of Electronic Interlocking of Indoor and Outdoor Signalling gears and associated works at Five Stations, viz. Maniyani (MNYN), Kuretha (KUO), Labha (LAV), Kumedpur (KDPR) and Kathihar (Kathihar-North Panel) stations in connection with Kathihar-Kummedpur Double Line Project along with Automatic Block Signalling work in the section of KIR (Kathihar) to KDPR (Kummedpur) in Kathihar Division with the provision of interlocking of all Engineering Gates in Kathihar-Kummedpur section (29.53 Km) of N.F. Railway (Construction). Tender Value: ₹72,76,13,233.85. Earnest Money: ₹37,88,100.00. E-Tender will be closed at 15:00 hrs. on 25-03-2025. For details please visit www.ireps.gov.in

Dy.Chief Signal & Telecomm.
Engineer/Con, New Jalpaiguri
Northeast Frontier Railway
(Construction Organisation)
"Serving Customers with a smile"

SUPPLY WORKS AT
NEW BONGAIGAN WORKSHOP

E-Tenders are invited by the undersigned for the following works: SN.1. Tender No. NB255016A. Name of work: Turbocharger of Cummins make 500 KVA DG Set engine model no. KTA-A19-G10 (Part no. 35 94134). Make: Cummins only [Warranty Period: 30 Months after the date of delivery]. Earnest Money: ₹1,24,490/- SN.2. Tender No. NB245814A. Name of work: Supply and installation of Fully Automated Computerized Single Car Test Rig for Rolling Stock maintenance depot (To be supplied, Installed and Commissioned as per specification and conditions stated in Annexure-A Attached). [Warranty Period: 30 Months after the date of delivery]. Earnest Money: ₹1,40,270/- SN.3. Tender No. NB255220. Name of work: 500KVA, 750 Volt, 3-Phase brushless Alternator along with fitted flexible coupling suitable for Greaves Cotton CPCB-II Engine of high capacity LHB power car confirm to RDSO spec: RDSO/PE/SPEC/AC/0084-2008 Rev 1 or latest. Make: KEL/KEC/ CGL. [Warranty Period: 30 Months after the date of delivery]. Earnest Money: ₹1,02,130/- Date and time of closing of tender: 14.30 hrs. of 24-03-2025. The complete information with the tender documents of above e-tender will be available in website www.ireps.gov.in

Dy. CMM/D New Bongaigaon workshop
NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY
Serving Customers With A Smile

"IMPORTANT"

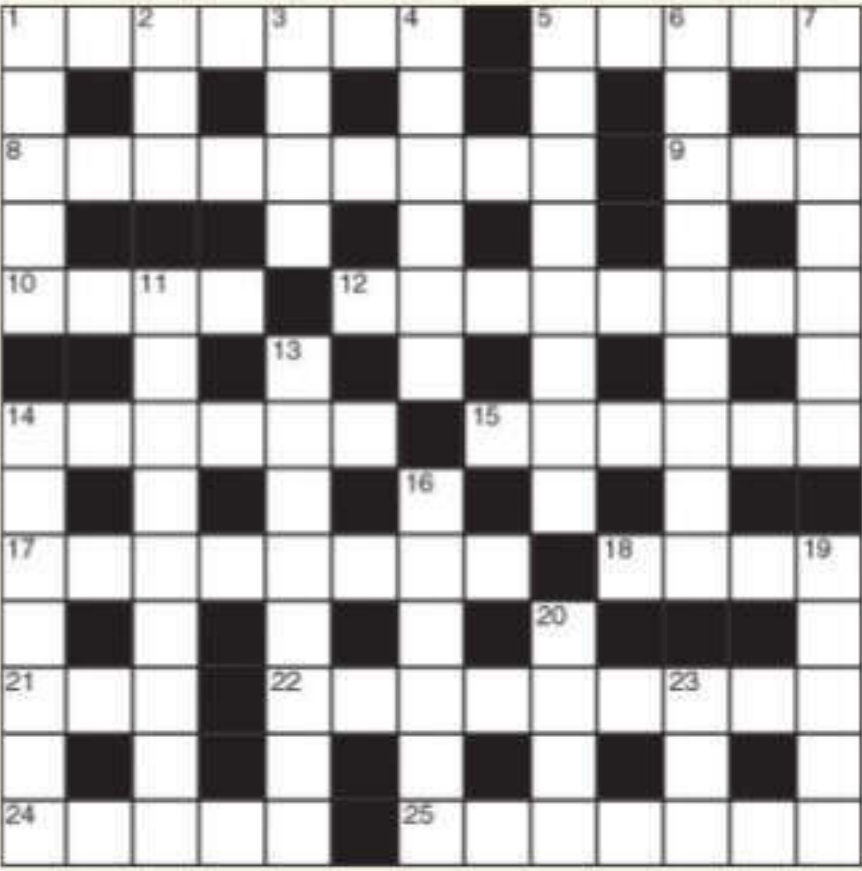
Whilst care is taken prior to acceptance of advertising copy, it is not possible to verify its contents. The Indian Express (P) Limited cannot be held responsible for such contents, nor for any loss or damage incurred as a result of transactions with companies, associations or individuals advertising in its newspapers or 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.

कार्यालय अधीक्षण अभियंता, राधिकापल विद्युत विभाग नि. वि. विद्युत नगरीय विवरण मण्डल, लाल डिग्री, अलीगढ़ (CIN: U31200UP200305G0027460)

ई-निविदा सूचना

ई-निविदा संख्या एच-ई-निविदा का संक्षिप्त विवरण निम्नवत् है:-
(1) निःसंश विनिर्दिष्ट-35/2024-25 क्षेत्रीय वितरण कार्यालय, अलीगढ़ व शिविर कार्यालय में स्थापित कम्यूटरों के रख-रखाव एवं कार्टेज रिफिलिंग का कार्य।
(2) निःसंश विनिर्दिष्ट-36/2024-25 क्षेत्रीय वितरण कार्यालय, अलीगढ़ व शिविर कार्यालय की साफ-सफाई एवं गाईडिंग का कार्य।
(3) निःसंश विनिर्दिष्ट-37/2024-25 क्षेत्रीय वितरण कार्यालय, अलीगढ़ कार्यालय में इलेक्ट्रोमेटेरी मशीन उपलब्ध कराने का कार्य।
(4) निःसंश विनिर्दि

CROSSWORD 5617



- ACROSS**

1 Intercept an order to execute? (4,3)

5 New range of emotion (5)

8 But players may be seated here in the park (9)

9 Fool who doubles in for a killer (3)

10 Not the end of the team (4)

12 Wool gatherer? (8)

13 Pay a brief visit and ask for help (4,2)

15 A vote to the other side? (6)

17 Moneylender's overtures? (8)

18 Ever changing wind movement (4)

21 A high point in history (3)

22 No longer in the cast but in touch (3,2,4)

24 Acted as a beginner (5)

25 Sure to be specific? (7)
- DOWN**

1 Vagrants join fireside circles (5)

2 It grows on grass in lawns (3)

3 Get out of position (4)

4 Run round the wood showing off (6)

5 Interview people in the house (8)

6 Much-hyped raid's gone wrong (9)

7 Leaves singers all at sea (7)

11 Made a speech when released (9)

13 It shows the way to finish correspondence (8)

14 In confusion it is sent up in wrong coach (7)

16 He joins a hundred twitching and feverish (6)

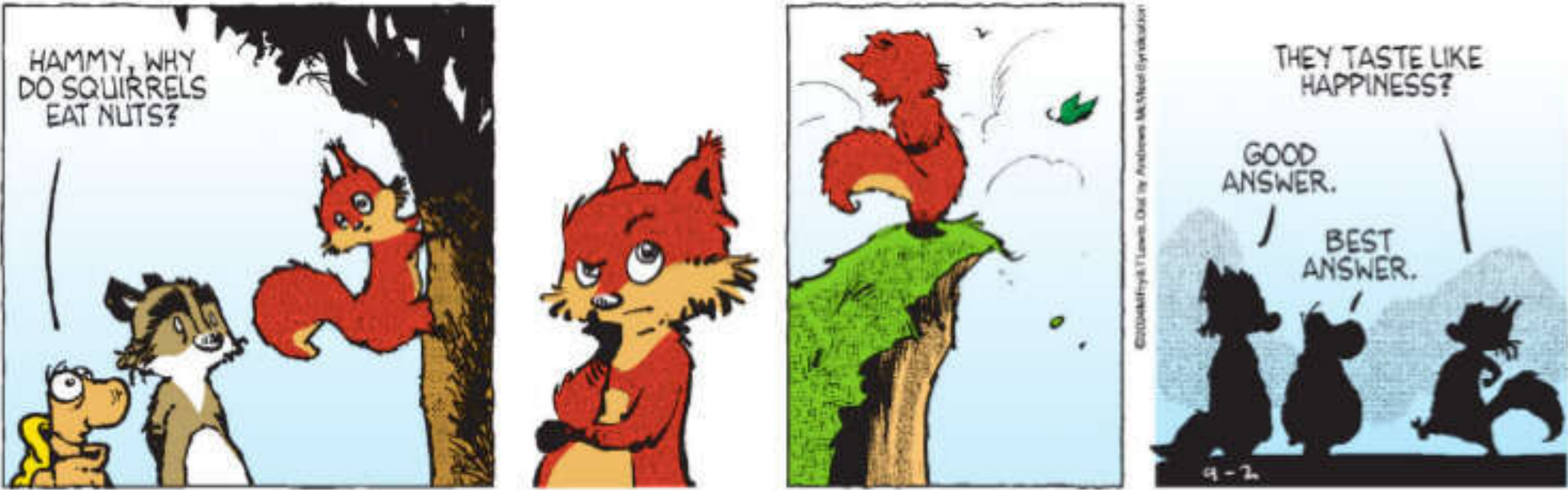
19 Material that's light when worn (5)

20 A long way off a seafaring centre (4)

23 Area of grass in a clearing (3)

Solutions Crossword 5616 Across: 1 Platform, 5 Ewer, 9 Eagle, 10 Flowing, 11 Block letters, 13 Stripe, 14 Impede, 17 Little wonder, 20 Transit, 21 Tiara, 22 Duty, 23 Vendetta Down: 1 Peek, 2 Angular, 3 French polish, 4 Ruffie, 6 Whine, 7 Register, 8 Contaminated, 12 Isolated, 15 Elegant, 16 Swathe, 18 Trait, 19 Data

OVER THE HEDGE by Michael Fry & T Lewis



CALVIN & HOBBS by Bill Watterson



MARVIN by Tom Armstrong



JUMBLLED WORDS

Given below are four jumbled words. Solve the jumbles to make proper words and move them to the respective squares below. Select the letters in the shaded squares and jumble them to get the answer for the given quip. Science is a wonderful thing if one does not have to _____ at it. - Albert Einstein (4,4,6)

IAEER

--	--	--	--	--

AAULNN

--	--	--	--	--

CNIIO

--	--	--	--	--

AIGNSV

--	--	--	--	--

Solution: AERIE, IONIC, ANNUAL, SAVING
Answer: Science is a wonderful thing if one does not have to earn one's living at it. - Albert Einstein

SUDOKU 5886

Difficulty Level 3s
Instructions
To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from 1 to 9 must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Difficulty Level
1s = Very easy; 2s = Easy;
3s = Medium; 4s = Hard;
5s = Very Hard;
6s = Genius

		3	1					5
5					4			
		8	6					1
9					2	4		
1			2	8	3			7
		6	2					8
	2				7	4		
			3					9
		6				1	7	

SOLUTION SUDOKU 5885

5	4	1	7	9	8	6	3	2
2	6	3	5	1	4	9	7	8
9	7	8	2	6	3	5	1	4
8	5	9	3	4	1	2	6	7
3	1	4	6	7	2	8	5	9
6	2	7	9	8	5	1	4	3
1	9	5	4	2	7	3	8	6
4	3	2	8	5	6	7	9	1
7	8	6	1	3	9	4	2	5

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON

See Section 82 Cr.P.C.

Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused Namely: 1. Israr Khan, S/o. Imran Khan, R/o.: H. No. C-34/1, Shaheen Bagh, Abdul Fazal Enclave Part-2, Jamia Nagar, Okhla, Delhi and Namely: 2. Ravi Varma, S/o.Pratap Varma, C-99/4, Shaheen Bagh, Abdul Fazal Enclave Part-2, Jamia Nagar, Okhla, Delhi and Namely: 3. Zorden Methu, S/o. Mickel Methu, R/o.: E-16/853, Block-E-16, Bapa Nagar, Karol Bagh, Delhi and Namely: 4. Mohd. Khalid, S/o.:Mohd. Mashkur, R/o.H.No.6, Taimoor Nagar, New Friends Colony, Delhi and Namely: 5. Wahid Khan, S/o.: Murshid Khan, R/o.H.No.C-3, Okhla Vihar, Jamia Nagar, Delhi and Namely: 6. Salman Baig, S/o. Suleman Baig, R/o.H.No.174, Aali Village, Near Shiv Mandir, Delhi and Namely: 7. Rakesh, S/o.: Harpal, R/o. 2/1994, Ram Nagar, Shahdara, Delhi and Namely: 8. Shafiq Khan, S/o.: Habib Khan, R/o.191, Haddo Mohalla, Madan Pur Khadar, Delhi have committed (or are suspected to have committed) the offence in a case vide FIR No.217/2022 Dated 04.12.2022 U/S 420/468/471/120B IPC registered at P S Chanakyapuri, New Delhi and it has been returned on a warrant of arrest thereupon issued stating that the said Accused Nos.1 to 8 could not be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that accused Accused Nos.1 to 8 are absconded (or are concealing themselves to avoid the service of the said warrant). Proclamation is hereby made that the said accused Accused Nos.1 to 8 are required to appear before the court to answer the said complaint on or before 13.05.2025.

By Order
ANIMESH KUMAR
Judicial Magistrate First Class-02.
Room No.32, Lok-Up Building,
Patiala House Courts, New Delhi.

DP/2767/NDD/2025

"IMPORTANT"

Whilst care is taken prior to acceptance of advertising copy, it is not possible to verify its contents. The Indian Express (P) Limited cannot be held responsible for such contents, nor for any loss or damage incurred as a result of transactions with companies, associations or individuals advertising in its newspapers or 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.

bida
बिवाड़ी इंस्टीट्यूट ऑफ बिजनेस, एजुकेशन, रिसर्च एंड डेवलपमेंट
प्लॉट-5, कानौनगढ़ चौकी, दिल्ली, भारत, पिन कोड :- 01402-230819
ई-मेल :- bida.bhiwadi@rajasthan.gov.in

क्रमांक :- बीए/आर/6781/25 दिनांक :- 04/03/2025

Notice Inviting Bid

Bid for "Installation of open gym, S&F of outdoor games in BIDA parks, Repair and maintenance work of EWS sector 3 and BIDA's quarter's, P&F of new street light at various location in BIDA" is invited from interested Bidders up to 12:00 Noon date 17.03.2025. Other particulars of the bid may be visited on the procurement portal <http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in>, <http://sppp.raj.nic.in> of the state; and <https://bida.rajasthan.gov.in> in departmental website.

UBN :- BDA2425WSOB00075, BDA2425WSOB00076, BDA2425WSOB00077, BDA2425WSOB00078, BDA2425WSOB00079 Executive Engineer
BIDA, Bhiwadi
Raj.Samwadi/C/24/12672

कार्यालय कार्यपालन अभियंता
लोक स्वास्थ्य यांत्रिकी खण्ड, दन्तेवाड़ा
(फोन / फैक्स नं. 07856-252362, ई मेल eedan-phe-cg@nic.in)

निविदा सू. क्र./70/ले.शा./ का.अ./ लो.स्वा.या./2025 दन्तेवाड़ा, दिनांक 27/02/2025

// निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना //

एकीकृत पंजीयन व्यवस्था प्रणाली अंतर्गत सक्षम श्रेणी में पंजीकृत टेकदारों से प्रपत्र आइटम दर पर निम्नलिखित कार्य हेतु (Online) निविदा क्रमांक 66 आमंत्रित की गयी थी किन्तु समाचार पत्र में प्रकाशन नहीं होने के कारण उसे निरस्त कर पुनः निविदा क्रमांक 70 आमंत्रित की गयी है।

कार्य का नाम :- Empanelment of the Third Party Inspection Agencies (TPIs) under Jal Jeevan Mission work.

क्र. सं.	सिस्टम टेंडर क्रमांक	कार्य का विवरण/ग्राम/विकासखण्ड	निविदा आमंत्रण	अनुमानित लागत (करोड़ में)
1	165240	The submission of proposal by a consultant/organization/agency as Third Party Inspection Agencies (TPIs) for inspection of different works under rural water supply which includes in-village infrastructure works in:- (1) Retrofitting of 53 Villages, (2) New single village schemes in 172 Villages (3) Solar based schemes as a part of SVS or Retrofitting schemes. It implies that consultant/organization/agency has read the detailed Eol	तृतीय काल	113.33
कुल योग				111.33

निविदा की सामान्य शर्तें एवं अन्य जानकारी वेबसाईट पोर्टल <http://eproc.cgstate.gov.in> पर दर्शित है।
टिप :- निविदा डाउनलोड करने की अंतिम तिथि दिनांक 13.03.2025 है।

हस्ता./-
कार्यपालन अभियंता
लोक स्वास्थ्य यांत्रिकी खंड
दन्तेवाड़ा

RO No. 242505704-3

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON

See Section 82 Cr.P.C.

Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused Gurmeet Singh@Ajay S/o Ratan Lal R/o 670, Nehru kutiya, Kabir Basti, Malka Ganj, Subzi Mandi, Delhi has committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence in Case FIR No. 182/19 U/s 174A IPC P.S.: Roop Nagar Delhi, it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said accused Gurmeet Singh@Ajay, cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said accused Gurmeet Singh@Ajay, has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant).

Proclamation is hereby made that the said Gurmeet Singh@Ajay, accused of FIR No. 182/19 U/s 174A IPC P.S.: Roop Nagar Delhi, it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued th is required to appear before this Court to answer the said complaint on or before 09.04.2025.

By Order
Sh. Raj Kumar Singh
JMFC-05, Room No. 241
Tis Hazari Court, Delhi

DP/2577/N/2025
(Court Matter)

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON

See Section 82 Cr.P.C.

Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused Arjun @ Ankit, S/o : Sh. Vishwanath, R/o: Karan Ka Makan, Village Gharoli, East Delhi has committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence in Case FIR No. 26/2022 U/S 498a/406/34 IPC, P.S.: Ghazipur, Delhi and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said accused Arjun @ Ankit cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said accused Arjun @ Ankit has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant).

Proclamation is hereby made that the said Arjun @ Ankit accused of Case FIR No. 26/2022 U/S 498a/406/34 IPC, P.S.: Ghazipur, Delhi and is required to appear before this Court to answer the said complaint on or before 31.07.2025.

By Order
Sachin
Judicial Magistrate, First Class-03
Court No. 16, Karkardooma Court, Delhi

DP/2531/ED/2025
(Court Matter)

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON

See Section 82 (2) (ii) Cr.PC

Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused Namely: Deepak, Proprietor of M/s.Balak Nath Textiles, At: D-8/B Basement, Central Market Lajpat Nagar-II, Delhi-110024 has committed (or is suspected to has committed) the offence in a case vide CC No.522310/2016, 511589/2016 & CC No.522319/2016 U/S 138 NI ACT registered at P.S Subzi Mandi, Delhi and it has been returned on a warrant of arrest thereupon issued stating that the said Deepak could not be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that accused Deepak is absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant). Proclamation is hereby made that the said accused Deepak is required to appear before the court to answer the said complaint on or before 07.04.2025.

By Order
Ms. Deshna Dolechha
Ld. Judicial Magistrate First Class (NI ACT)-07
Court No.507, Extension Block
Tis Hazari Courts, Delhi

DP/2613/N/2025

DAY TODAY

BY PETER VIDAL

ARIES (Mar 21 - Apr 20)
You certainly cannot go far wrong if you stick to a creative and individualistic path. Only if you push your own interests to one side and conform to a routine that doesn't suit you, will the planets kick up a stink.

TAURUS (Apr 21 - May 21)
It's not surprising that Taureans often don't see eye to eye with other people. After all, this is one of the famously obstinate fixed signs. However, if anyone is genuinely trying to reach agreement, do make allowances for them. You might even want to set a good example.

GEMINI (May 22 - June 21)
There are certain complications or drawbacks relating to a financial matter but, on the whole, I think it is safe for you to proceed. Happily, you're heading for a windfall within a few weeks. However, its size cannot be predicted, so don't get too excited.

CANCER (June 22 - July 23)
Don't let anyone persuade you to forego certain benefits or rights. If you're going to give something up, and you probably will, it must be in a manner and at a time of your own choosing. That much is clear. However, I don't think other people will agree.

LEO (July 24 - Aug 23)
You may enjoy laying down the law over personal issues, but you must allow other people their say. Nobody will thank you if things that go wrong are your responsibility, so share the burden, and then others will share the blame. Even the best-laid plans might come unstuck.

VIRGO (Aug 24 - Sep 23)
The Moon, emotional as ever, is about to increase its role in your financial affairs. This is astrological jargon for saying that domestic costs are likely to rise, but that money invested in the fabric of your home should be well spent. Good news from far away should cheer you up.

LIBRA (Sep 24 - Oct 23)
The odds now seem to be definitely on your side, though the outcome is not assured. You should now decide what's right for you and then carry it through with the courage of your convictions. Take precautions to be completely insured in matters of money.

SCORPIO (Oct 24 - Nov 23)
The Sun's current magnificent position plays a powerful role in the Scorpionic psyche yet, bearing in mind that nothing in astrology comes without effort, you must expect someone in authority to disagree with your plans before long.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov 24 - Dec 22)
It would be the easiest thing in the world to refuse to have anything to do with people who are in trouble or otherwise in need of assistance. Yet can you really stand and look the other way? It doesn't look as if you can, so lend whatever help is necessary.

CAPRICORN (Dec 23 - Jan 20)
The relationship between Venus and Neptune is a lively one, and full of promise for pleasant social and romantic encounters. Therefore, please do your best to keep the peace, and see to it that other people benefit.

AQUARIUS (Jan 21 - Feb 19)
Nobody should expect you to play a secondary or supporting role, especially not when you have so much to give. However, I must say that all your planets are lined up in regions of your chart that are putting charity, idealism and philanthropy before self-interest.

PISCES (Feb 20 - Mar 20)
Your chart is in a profoundly powerful position, but you don't always make the most of your many talents. As a Piscean, you know that you are a born worrier, but this may not be the best time to dwell on the future. Please live for today and stop thinking about what might happen tomorrow.

U.P. RAJYA VIDYUT UTPADAN NIGAM LTD.
OBRA-SONEBHADRA

Tender Reference no.- 13/CMC-II/CMD-VI/OTPS/24-25 Publish date: 03.03.2025
Tender ID- 2025_RVUNL_1012708_1

Name of Work- RFP for ash evacuation and transportation through railway and/or establishment of cement plant if required at Obra TPS.

Evacuation of Dry fly ash to utilise 100% ash generated as per MoEF&CC guideline at Obra TPS, following works are to be carried out-

1. Work of Developement, Operation and Maintenace of Dry Fly Ash Extraction System at Obra TPS.
2. Work of Developement, Operation and Maintenace of Railway Track and FlyAsh Loading Terminal at Obra TPS.
3. Establishment of cement plant on the land provided on lease by Obra TPS if required.

RFP Document Fee- Rs. 25,000.00 (Rs. Twenty Five Thousand only) (GST included) EMD- Rs. 2,60,00,000.00 (Rs. Two Crore Sixty Lac only)

RFP submission end date- 02.04.2025 (Till 06:00 PM)

Detailed information and documents are available on website <https://etender.up.nic.in>. Further all information will be shown on website only.

पत्रांक : 10/ज0स0का0/निविदा दिनांक: 05/03/2025

"Save Electricity for Nation"

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON

See Section 82 Cr.PC

Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused Namely: Nitin, S/o.: Dhara Singh, R/o. R-925, Mangolpuri, Delhi has committed (or is suspected to has committed) the offence in a case vide FIR No.2435/2014 U/S 195A IPC registered at P.S Mangolpuri, Outer District, Delhi and it has been returned on a warrant of arrest thereupon issued stating that the said Nitin could not be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that accused Nitin is absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant). Proclamation is hereby made that the said accused Nitin is required to appear before the court to answer the said complaint on or before 08.04.2025.

By Order
REETIKA JAIN
Judicial Magistrate First Class,
North West District, Court No.105,
Rohini Courts, Delhi

DP/2751/OD/2025

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON

See Section 82 Cr.P.C.

Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused Arjun @ Vikas, S/o : Sh. Raj Kumar, R/o: H. No. 436, Gali No. 18 K-1st Block, Sangam Vihar, New Delhi and Armaan, S/o: Sh. Munna, R/o: H. No. 44, Gali No. 18, K-1st Block, Sangam Vihar, New Delhi have committed (or are suspected to have committed) the offence in Case FIR No. 98/2021 U/S 392/411/34 IPC, P.S.: Sangam Vihar, Delhi and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said accused Arjun @ Vikas and Armaan cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said accused Arjun @ Vikas and Armaan have absconded (or are concealing themselves to avoid the service of the said warrant).

Proclamation is hereby made that the said Arjun @ Vikas and Armaan accused of Case FIR No. 98/2021 U/S 392 / 411 / 34 IPC, P.S.: Sangam Vihar, Delhi and are required to appear before this Court to answer the said complaint on or before 07.04.2025.

By Order
Sankalp Kapoor
Judicial Magistrate, First Class-04
Room No. 211, Saket Court, Delhi

DP/2595/SD/2025
(Court Matter)

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON

See Section 82 Cr.P.C.

Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused Kuldeep Singh@Karan S/o Surender Singh R/o Flate No. -8, B-9y DDA Flat Jahangir Puri Delhi has committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence in Case FIR No. 124/18 U/s 129/55 GC Act P.S.: Mahendra Park Delhi, it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said accused Kuldeep Singh@Karan, cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said accused Kuldeep Singh@Karan, has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant). Proclamation is hereby made that the said Kuldeep Singh@Karan, accused of FIR No. 124/18 U/s 129/55 GC Act P.S.: Mahendra Park Delhi, it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued th is required to appear before this Court to answer the said complaint on or before 15.04.2025.

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

DP/2373/NW/2025
(Court Matter)

My love for the game still alive: Kohli

ENS/PTI
DUBAI, MARCH 5

ARCHITECT OF India's win over Australia in the Champions Trophy semifinal, Virat Kohli said that as long as his love for the game remains and he continues working for the team, he has no doubt that success will follow.

Kohli once again showcased his big-match temperament with a knock of 84 off 98 balls against Australia in the semifinal, guiding India to a clinical 4-wicket win, chasing down the 265-run target in challenging conditions on Tuesday.

He had struck a century against arch-rivals Pakistan in the group stage. "I just love playing this game, I just love batting. As long as love for the game and batting is alive, all other things can take care of themselves," Kohli said in a video posted on BCCI.TV. "You are not going to a desperate situation and put your head down, thank God. Just keep working towards what the team wants, you will have results like these more often than not."

Kohli's knock included some quick singles and doubles, with only five boundaries in his innings. Reflecting on his approach to the sport, Virat said, "For me, at this stage of my career, it is about getting up for these games, getting excited, coming out here, hopefully doing the job for the team, working hard as much as I can, run hard between the wickets, play according to the situation. When all these things come together and it comes off, you feel great. To get the team across the line, it is a great feeling."

The 36-year-old also praised his teammates for their contributions in the semifinals.

"Obviously, as a team, you feel good when people step up throughout the innings. Hardik (Pandya) hit those crucial shots at a nervous point for us. KL (Rahul) played outstandingly to close the game. Shreyas had a fine partnership with me. All-around effort counts. People are in a great space. You qualify for finals, a couple of days off, everything to look forward to," he concluded.

India will face New Zealand in the final on March 9 in Dubai.

Meanwhile, Kohli received high praise for his knock against Australia.

"It was a pretty clinical run chase. They have got the best chaser in the history of the game. Virat Kohli. And around Kohli, they have so much talent all the way through. Spin bowling all rounders. Guys that go hard at the ball in the power play. A wicket keeping batter in KL Rahul. That's magnificent and an all-rounder in Hardik Pandya makes things easy," Nasser Hussain told *Sky Sports Cricket* post the game.

While India won the match by four wickets, Kohli missed in what could be his 29th ODI hundred while batting second. He tried to hit an Adam Zampa googly for a six before he was caught at mid-on by Ben Dwarshuis. The Indian batsman now holds the record for the most number of 50-plus scores (24) in ICC tournaments after surpassing Tendulkar's mark of 23 such innings. Kohli took 53 innings to achieve the feat while Tendulkar's 23 fifty-plus scores had come in 58 innings.

Former England captain Michael Atherton too showered praise on Kohli.

"You just expect him to get a 100 in a run chase like this. Once he's got himself in you beautifully. He gave that one chance that he got away with but his manipulation of the ball today was outstanding. In fact, funnily enough, that early shot he played one of them against New Zealand as well he is quite prepared to take it on. Early but then when he gets in. He is really an expert of just knocking the ball around and finding the gaps with the precision expected. He was going to get the hundred because that's what he does all the time in a run chase. It would have been his 29th ODI hundred. And then he just holed out. But that's fine," Atherton told *Sky Sports Cricket*.

Healy 'angry' with Connolly's shot selection

FORMER AUSTRALIAN wicket-keeping great Ian Healy has questioned the tactical acumen of Cooper Connolly, saying he was "angry" with the way the opener handled India's pace spearhead Mohammed Shami in the Champions Trophy semifinal in Dubai. Connolly, a late addition to the Australian squad and a surprise pick to open the batting against Rohit Sharma's side ahead of Jake Fraser-McGurk in the last-four clash on Tuesday, was dismissed for a nine-ball duck by Shami. India defeated Steve Smith's side by four wickets with Virat Kohli's brilliance shining through on a slow wicket to make the final. "I got so angry. (Opening partner) Travis Head was gesturing about how slow the wicket was to his partner (in Connolly)," said Healy on SEN Radio. **PTI**

Rahul, India's Mr Adaptable

The wicketkeeper has batted at the difficult No.6 position but has adjusted well to make an impact during the Champions Trophy



EXPRESS AT
**CHAMPIONS
TROPHY**

VENKATA KRISHNA B
DUBAI, MARCH 5

KL RAHUL couldn't help himself in the moment. Just as Virat Kohli was walking past him, dismissed playing a big shot in the end moments of the semifinal against Australia, Rahul blurted out in apparent exasperation, 'Mein maar raha tha...' (I was hitting) – words to that effect. And he was. He had perfectly sussed out the match situation, had taken the aggressive role, letting Kohli flow through unhindered, but an instinctive reaction had felled Kohli, who would later be seen explaining why he played that shot to his teammates Shubman Gill and Rishabh Pant.

But that understanding and playing the situation is the reason why Gautam Gambhir has chosen to go with Rahul, rather than Pant. In this Indian team, with Hardik Pandya the designated big hitter in the lower order, and with allrounders like Ravindra Jadeja and Axar Patel on either side, Gambhir and Rohit Sharma's punt has been to go with the solidity of Rahul, especially considering the sluggish conditions in Dubai.

It has worked out rather well for India, thus far. And especially when Rahul is more than capable of the big hitting; he even has been exclusively working on them in the training sessions.

One of the constant themes in India's net sessions in Dubai has been the sight of Rahul invariably walking in among the first set of batsmen and indulging in some big hits. It hasn't mattered whether he is facing the seamers or spinners or throwdown specialists. His intention has been very clear – to bring out a big shot, especially via aerial, as early as possible.

Sometimes it happens off the first ball, if not the second or later, but there have been at least three such big hits by the time he has faced 10 deliveries.

These haven't been the power-hitting that many T20 globetrotters put themselves through, but more of him getting used to the situation he is going to come across more often than not when he walks out at No 6.

It isn't an easy role that Rahul has chosen to embrace. When there are failures, which will definitely be there because that's the nature of the beast, questions will be raised over his spot particularly when Pant is warming the bench. Rahul admitted there is little margin of error.

"There is... I won't lie. I mean, he's obviously a very, very talented player and he's shown all of us what he can do and how aggressive and how quickly he can change the game. So yes, there's always the temptation for the team as well, whoever's the captain, the coach too, to either play him or play me. There's always that. But yeah, for me, I just if I'm given the opportunity, I try and see what I can do best." So far, he has been nailing

VENKATA KRISHNA B
DUBAI, MARCH 5

A DAY after captain Rohit Sharma dismissed any talks of India being at home in Dubai and familiar with the conditions, it was the turn of their head coach Gautam Gambhir to drive home the point even when he was not questioned about it. Speaking shortly after the four-wicket win over Australia, Gambhir was not only assertive but also typically pugnacious with most of the questions put forward.

Right through the tournament which Pakistan are hosting, there have been several criticisms directed at the advantage India have gained by playing all their matches in Dubai. Now with India making it to the final, all those talks aren't going to die down and Gambhir, who seemed bothered about it, weighed in with his thoughts in his own way.

'Bilateral series is government decision'

BCCI VICE president Rajeev Shukla on Wednesday said it is "very categorical and clear" that resumption of bilateral cricket between India and Pakistan is subjected to Indian government's clearance. The senior BCCI official, who is here on the invitation of the Pakistan Cricket Board to watch the Champions Trophy semifinal between New Zealand and South Africa, also said India team doesn't depend on favourable pitches to excel. "As far as you are asking about (cricket) between the two countries, it is very categorical and clear that it is the (Indian) government's decision. Whatever the government of India says, we will go as per them," Shukla said on Wednesday. "Pakistan is hosting an international tournament after a long time and it is a good thing." **PTI**



KL Rahul took it upon himself to hit the big shots during his partnership with Virat Kohli in the semifinal against Australia in Dubai. **PTI**

those opportunities.

It isn't easy being Rahul, though. Irrespective of the format, there are always some talk going around him good and bad both. These days his stocks as a T20 batsman may have gone down, in the Test arena he is still figuring out whether to bat at the top or in the middle-order. Sometimes, he doesn't have a choice. He is moved up and down because somebody isn't available and he has to be accommodated, even if it means he has to keep wickets.

In ODIs, there is little to no doubt that he is amongst the first names in the teamsheet, for multiple reasons, where he is amongst those players who has shown flexibility like no other.

Versatile batsman

Take this Champions Trophy for instance, with no third opener in the squad, if one of Rohit Sharma or Shubman Gill were to be unavailable, India just need to look at Rahul. Then in the middle-order, he can be used as a floater. In the lead up to the 2023 World Cup, when India embraced a new intent-driven approach, having Rahul at No.5 gave them stability.

Even if they ended up losing wickets while trying to play the aggressive brand of cricket, India knew they could fall back on Rahul.

With 1,299 runs in 31 innings at an incredible average of 56.47 (which is higher than even MS Dhoni) as No.5, he owned that spot.

Now, since Gambhir came on board as head coach, Rahul's ODI career has taken another new path. With India not having any left-handers in the top 4, and Gambhir being a huge advocate of keeping a left-right combo going in the middle, one of them had to be moved around.

Despite having the numbers to continue batting at No.5, one that has earned the demotion has been Rahul, who since the ODIs in Sri Lanka has walked out to bat at No.6 on six occasions and once at No 5 and 7.

Batting at No.6 means, he is invariably playing the finisher's role where there are more chances of him getting only few deliveries to leave an impact in the game. In conditions like Dubai, it is an altogether different challenge to walk in and straight away get down to finding boundaries and sixes. It is these scenarios, which haven't arrived so far in the Champions Trophy that is making Rahul bat the way he does in the nets. Make no mistake, it has been quite an exhibition to watch him take the left foot out of the way and hit the ball anywhere between long-on or mid-wicket.

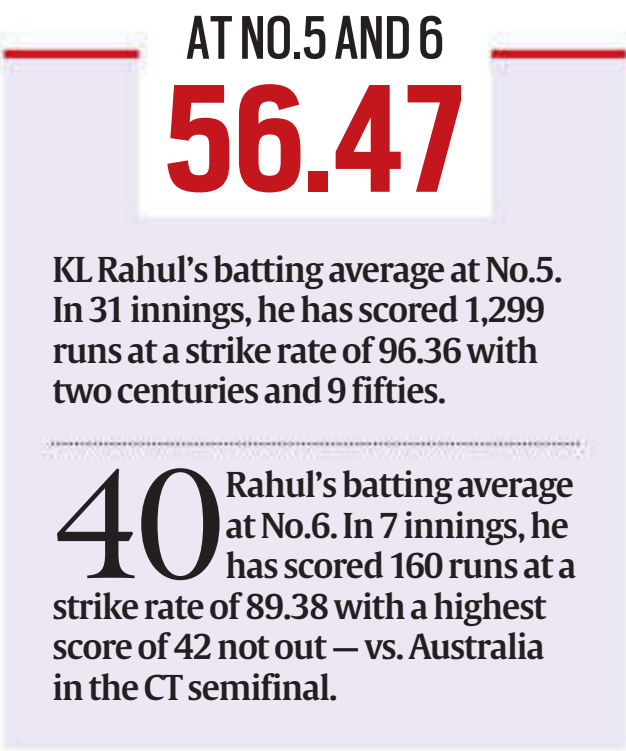
He has also provided some jaw-dropping moments as well when the left foot moves

"Some people are just perpetual cribbers, man. They've got to grow up. So, I feel that there was nothing like we had any undue advantage or we had planned something like that."

GAUTAM GAMBHIR
HEAD COACH, INDIA

Gambhir was then asked if India knew the conditions would be spinner-friendly in Dubai when they picked five spin bowling options, which again didn't sit well with him.

"First of all, this is as neutral a venue for us as it is for any other team. We have not played here. I don't remember which tournament



across and he effortlessly lofts the ball through the off-side.

"I don't think anyone prepares for an ideal scenario. All of us prepare for a realistic scenario that we might walk in," Rahul said last week about his approach in the nets.

He would then go on to elaborate. "I've moved from number five to number six and sometimes to number seven. So, I realized I need to have that skill to hit sixes probably from ball one or sometimes be able to play with a really high strike rate. So that's why

we played in this stadium last. And in fact, we didn't plan anything like that. The plan was that if you pick two front-line spinners in the 15-man squad, then even if we played in Pakistan or anywhere, we would have picked two front-line spinners because it was a competition on the subcontinent. So, it was nothing like we wanted to set up a spinners' trap. If you look at it, we only played one frontline spinner in the first three matches. We only played two frontline spinners in this match or the previous match. So, it was nothing like that," Gambhir said.

From the moment India picked five spinners there have been several questions as to whether they picked one too many.

There has also been criticism over the decision to demote KL Rahul from No 5 to 6 even as Rishabh Pant continues to warm the bench. With India now in the final, Gambhir was asked if all his decisions now seem vindicated.

you see me practicing all of that," he said.

So far in this Champions Trophy, he has batted on three occasions, out of which two have been chases.

Against New Zealand, when India batted first, he came to bat in the 30th over, but got out in the 40th over. However in two tricky chases, it has been his calmness and ability to play those high-risk shots under pressure that has helped him to take India across the line by staying unbeaten. In the first match against Bangladesh, where he remained unbeaten on 41, he scored just one boundary and two sixes.

Against Australia in the semi-finals, with Kohli dropping anchor after the loss of Shreyas Iyer and Axar Patel, when Rahul walked India were still 87 runs away with 15 overs to go.

So for 17 deliveries he faced, Rahul kept working the angles, but the moment the asking rate went over 6 runs an over, he walked Tanveer Sangha and Ben Dwarshuis for boundaries in successive overs before hitting Adam Zampa for a straight-six despite long-on and long-off in place.

And once Kohli fell, and Pandya came in, he went back to deal in singles and twos before finishing the game with a six. It isn't easy being Rahul, but then it's a state he is intimate with all through his career.

"KL averages 50 in one day cricket, that's the answer," he would say before adding, "I don't care about it (criticism). I don't even care about it honestly. My job is to be honest to 140 crore Indians and to my players in the dressing room. I don't care what people say about it, how they talk about it, whether they've got agendas, whether they've not got agendas, I don't even care about it. If I'm honest to my job, that is all that matters and I can sleep in peace."

"And when you talk about the spinning combination we've got three all-rounders in those five spinners. I don't know why people keep forgetting about it and those three all-rounders are quality all-rounders. Actually, in the entire squad we've only picked two front line spinners and that is okay in a 15-member squad if you pick two front line spinners that's not too much to be asking for," Gambhir said.

Right time to make way: Smith retires

AUSTRALIA'S STAND-IN skipper and batting mainstay Steve Smith on Wednesday announced his retirement from ODIs after his team's semifinal loss to India in Dubai. The 35-year-old, who top-scored in the match with a 96-ball 73, informed his teammates of the decision after the four-wicket loss on Tuesday night, according to a statement from Cricket Australia. He will continue to play Tests and T20 Internationals. "It feels like the right time to make way. It has been a great ride and I have loved every minute of it," Smith said. "Test cricket remains a priority and I am really looking forward to the World Test Championship Final, the West Indies in the winter and then England at home. I feel I still have a lot to contribute on that stage," he added. **PTI**



Steve Smith made 5,800 ODI runs in 170 matches with 12 centuries. **PTI**

ward to the World Test Championship Final, the West Indies in the winter and then England at home. I feel I still have a lot to contribute on that stage," he added. **PTI**

Cannot build pressure on Kohli, says Agar

AUSTRALIAN SPINNER Ashton Agar said that it was pretty difficult to build any pressure on Virat Kohli when he is in such hot form. "It is not the damage that he can do to the fence, it's just the fact that you cannot build pressure on him. So it's really hard to get him out in a sense. You never really feel like you're on top of him unless the ball is really spinning. And you don't get a lot of pitches in one-day cricket like that," Agar said on *ESPNcricinfo's* Match Day. "That's the frustrating part about bowling to him. He has this fantastic ability to hit your best ball, the top of middle stump, slightly spinning away, he holds the bat's face slightly longer than other batters do, opens it in the last second, and hits it in the cover point gap. He's probably the best in the world at doing that." **ENS**

ICC ODI rankings: Kohli moves to 4th spot

INDIA'S VIRAT Kohli rose to No.4 spot in the ICC ODI rankings for batters after his match-winning knock against Australia in the semi-finals on Sunday. Thanks to Kohli's knock, India defeated Australia by four wickets to enter the final of the event where they will await the winner of the second semi-final between South Africa and New Zealand. While Kohli rose one rank in the ODI batting charts, India captain Rohit Sharma fell two spots to No 5. Sharma has focussed on giving India blistering starts in the Champions Trophy. Kohli has scored 217 runs in four matches at the Champions Trophy is also No 4 in the top run-scorers at the tournament. Sharma is 25th in the top run-scorers list with 104 runs in four games. **ENS**

BRIEFLY

Real beat Atletico 2-1, Arsenal thrash PSV

Madrid: A superb goal from Brahim Diaz helped Real Madrid maintain its dominance of the Madrid derby on Europe's biggest stage with a 2-1 victory over bitter rival Atletico in the first leg of their Champions League last 16 tie on Tuesday. Atletico has been beaten by the record 15-time European champion in both Champions League final matchups and has won only three of 11 meetings with their city rivals in UEFA competitions. Also Tuesday, Arsenal made a massive step toward a quarterfinal spot with a 7-1 win at PSV Eindhoven. It was the biggest victory in an away match in the knockout stage of the Champions League, UEFA said. AP

Ayush, Prannoy enter Orleans Masters 2R

Orleans: India's Ayush Shetty produced a sensational straight-game victory over former world champion Loh Kean Yew of Singapore, while HS Prannoy also advanced to the second round of the USD 240,000 Orleans Masters with a gritty three-game win on Wednesday. World No. 42 Ayush, the 2023 World Junior Championships bronze medallist, stunned third seed Loh 21-17, 21-9, recording one of the biggest wins of his career to move into the second round. He will next face Hong Kong's Jason Gunawan. PTI

ISL: Odisha stay alive in race for playoffs

Jamshedpur: Hugo Boumous struck a brace as Odisha FC defeated Jamshedpur FC 3-2 to remain in the hunt for a playoffs berth in the Indian Super League (ISL) here on Wednesday. Boumous scored in the 37th and 53rd minutes after team-mate Dori had given their side the lead in the 21st minute. Jordan Murray (84th) and Stephen Eze (90+1) were the scorers for Jamshedpur. With the win at the JRD Tata Sports Complex, the Juggernauts climbed to the sixth spot with 33 points from 24 matches, but their league campaign has wrapped up. PTI

Prague Masters: Pragg held to a draw

Prague: Grandmasters R Pragganandhaa and Aravindh Chithambaram continued to remain in joint lead after drawing their sixth-round games in the Prague Masters Chess tournament here. Pragganandhaa was held to a draw by Sam Shankland of the United States, while Aravindh split the point with Quang Leim Le of Vietnam to be on four points out of a possible six, on a day when all the games were drawn for the first time in the tournament. PTI

Hamilton feeling 2007 flashbacks

Maranello: Lewis Hamilton's first race for Ferrari in Australia next week is reminding him of how he felt ahead of his Formula One debut for McLaren in Melbourne in 2007. "It's been a long winter, but it's also been very short. But I'm really grateful we had good testing last week," said the 40-year-old Briton. "I can't believe the race is already next week... it'll start to sink in a little bit as the weekend arrives. And I feel excited. I feel we are as best prepared as we could be, given the short space of time that I have had." There's still things to learn but I'm just excited to get going. I love racing... being at Melbourne is going to be very reminiscent of my first grand prix there." REUTERS

PIONEER PADDLER

ANIL DIAS
MUMBAI, MARCH 5

WHEN ACHANTA Sharath Kamal started playing table tennis in the 1990s, the scoring system was different, the ball was faster, the rubber used was much different, and frankly, there wasn't much technology. India had some brilliant players but weren't on the sport's global map. At the national level, there was always fierce competition, but they struggled at the international level.

When Sharath first won his national title in 2003, he was content but thought just being a national champion wouldn't be enough for him. He wanted to be among the best in the world.

The only problem was that no Indian had done it before. It was up to Sharath to find a path for himself. And he did. He was the first Indian paddler to train abroad and play for a club, the first to win international medals, and surely the first Indian paddler recognised globally.

And by doing it for himself, he inspired a generation of paddlers in India who took

UNLIKELY TO BE A CAKEWALK

Why India should be wary of New Zealand in the final

Spin bowling options, batting depth and athletic fielding make Kiwis a formidable side

IN SUNDAY'S ICC Champions Trophy final, India will face New Zealand, a side that will give them a stiff challenge. Having already played India at the venue last Sunday, New Zealand know what to expect in terms of conditions, which South Africa wouldn't have had, if they had made it. The Indian Express takes a look at the reasons that make New Zealand a strong side to overcome in the final.

SPIN IN THE TALE

If there is any team in the Champions Trophy that could match or come close to India in terms of spin bowling resources, it is the Kiwis. Led by left-arm spinner Mitchell Santner, they have three other spin bowling options in Michael Bracewell, Glenn Phillips

and Rachin Ravindra. So in terms of variety in the spin department, they have their bases covered. In their group match, India came out prepared to deal with them. But this time, New Zealand will come back fully aware of what exactly to do in these conditions. With the final set to be played on the same pitch that was used for India's game against Pakistan, the Kiwi spinners will have a big role to play.

PACE VALUE

What caught India by surprise against the Kiwis was the movement their seamers were able to generate with the new ball. In the other three matches that India have played here, seam movement has been non-existent. But against Kiwis, it was different. Part of it can be



Kiwis' skipper Mitchell Santner has been in fine form. Reuters

attributed to the height of their pacers - who are all tall - and because they bowl a good length and there is more air time, there is more chance of movement in the air. To go with their movement, the extra bounce that they generate has also troubled India's top order in recent times across all formats in ICC events. India need to come up with a definite plan to counter this as runs in the first Powerplay are crucial.

GUN FIELDING

As they showed last Sunday with their fielding, New Zealand are capable of saving 30-40 runs in the field. If that isn't enough, they often convert half-chances into catches. In any other team, the likes of Santner, Will Young and Michael Bracewell could be considered top fielders, but here they have Glenn Phillips, who can change the course of the game with his exceptional fielding. With all their best fielders in the ring when the spinners operate, they can apply pressure by cutting off singles. And if the

ball is anywhere in their range, they dive around to take blinders. So India know they have to earn every run, and that in itself adds to the pressure.

BATTING DEPTH

Like India, the Black Caps have a batting line-up well suited to the conditions. Though they didn't quite pull it off during their chase on Sunday, they have the quality to not be written off. In Rachin, Young and Kane Williamson, they have a top three that can not just provide rapid starts, but also hang around long enough to build a base for the middle order. While most teams have struggled against India's spinners, the Kiwis can change that trend thanks to the likes of Tom Latham, Daryll Mitchell and Phillips, who are all good against tweakers. The other night, they were undone by a special performance from Varun Chakaravarthi, but come Sunday they will be prepared. EXPRESSNEWSERVICE

Kiwi class aces Proteas test

After expert partnership between Rachin and Williamson, Santner shows his nous with the ball to lead NZ to victory

SRIRAM VEERA
MARCH 5

THERE WAS a moment when Kane Williamson was still new to the crease and struggling to find his touch, when he stood peering at an offending spot on the pitch, somewhere on a good-length area. He had a quizzical look on his face as if to suggest 'this pitch isn't quite what we expected, we have to adapt'.

It was the end of an over from Kagiso Rabada during the first Powerplay, and he walked across to have a chat with his partner Rachin Ravindra, who would later say that "the pitch held up at times, looked a bit crumbly," but how "Kane helped me". The ball had begun to show signs of stopping a touch and it was clear then that it was a great toss to win.

Not only did the New Zealanders adapt, they didn't even settle for a lower target. Instead, the pair changed the way they batted, and instead of attempting to hit on the up and through the line, smartly used the crease and angles so brilliantly that South Africa didn't have answers. Only Lungi Ngidi impressed, with a slew of slower cutters, but the rest floundered.

'Masterclass' is a word often used as a throwaway remark, but the way Williamson and Rachin stitched together their match-winning partnership worth 164 runs deserves the tag. It was their stand that was the architect of the 50-run win that took the Kiwis into the ICC Champions Trophy final against India.

Especially when juxtaposed with South Africa's lame effort with the bat in the chase. Admittedly, the target of 363 was mammoth, but they batted as if they hadn't bowled on the pitch, sticking to their old methods and looking surprised when the ball got stuck in the pitch and stopped on them.

David Miller helped himself to a hundred in the end, but the game had ceased to be a contest much before that.

Suffice to say here that India have the tougher opposition on their hands in the final; if anyone can upset their applecart, it's New Zealand - not South Africa. Such was their clinical professionalism, smarts - with bat and ball- and composure.

When Williamson's punches and drives on the up didn't bring the desired results, he began to unfurl his trickery - the late-cut, dabs, flicks, wristy on-drives. Suddenly,



Rachin Ravindra (L) and Kane Williamson both hit centuries and combined for a 164-run partnership on Wednesday. Reuters

he was up and running. Once Williamson found his touch, South Africa began to crumble.

As compared to Williamson, Rachin was always flowing. When the ball was new in the Powerplay, he punched it to get boundaries. Initially, South Africa thought a short-ball ploy could work. Mistake. Rachin crunched a couple of pulls off the front foot. They then hurled it fuller, and the balls were thrown back from the straight boundary as he creamed them with the full face of the bat.

Lone ranger

The scorecard won't reveal how well Keshav Maharaj bowled. If he were bowling to his own batsmen, one can easily imagine a five-for, he was that good. But Williamson came into his own against him.

He employed two tactics to throw Maharaj off the perch. He would occasionally step outside leg-stump, and mix it up by moving down the track but getting outside off in the process.

He could either cut or ping cow corner with that approach. Against such inventiveness, especially in the calm manner that

'Masterclass' is a word often used as a throwaway remark, but the way Williamson and Rachin stitched together their match-winning partnership deserves the tag.

Williamson pulled it off, Maharaj didn't stand a chance. And the left-handed Rachin hurt him more by moving down the track to smear him straight or hit with the turn.

Barring Maharaj, there was only Ngidi who tried to be smart with his cutters. Even Rabada had begun to flounder. In the end overs, they got smacked all around the park by Glenn Phillips and Daryl Mitchell.

The South African chase got off to a meandering start. Temba Bavuma couldn't get going initially but to his credit, recovered in the company of Rassie van der Dussen with a 105-run partnership in almost 17 overs. This was where the New Zealand captain revealed his trump card: himself.

If Maharaj was good, Mitchell Santner was even better. Unlike Maharaj, whose

range went from slow to slower, Santner also gets quickish turn. Admittedly, the pitch had begun to help him a lot more by then, but he was skilful and cerebral with his art. One gripped and broke past the iffy prod from Van Der Dussen to clatter his off-stump.

Four overs before that, he had slowed up the pace on one and got it to turn, inducing Bavuma's intended hoick to spiral up to backward point. Suddenly, South Africa were 161 for 3 in the 27th over.

Much then depended on Heinrich Klaasen but Santner intervened again. Increasingly playing the ball off the pitch, Klaasen kept going back. But such was the match situation that he still had to try and conjure big shots, and he made the mistake of trying to punch-heave Santner off the backfoot.

The ball stuck in the pitch, popped up ever so slowly and the catch was swallowed at long-on. It was 167 for 4, and when Aiden Markram patted a ball from Rachin, that again stopped a touch, back to the bowler South Africa were wobbling away like intoxicated men at 189 for 5 in 33 overs.

SCOREBOARD	
SOUTH AFRICA VS NEW ZEALAND	
GADDAFI STADIUM, LAHORE	
Toss: New Zealand, chose to bat	
NEW ZEALAND	
W Young c Markram b Ngidi	21 (23b, 3x4)
R Ravindra c †Klaasen b Rabada	
	108 (101b, 13x4, 1x6)
K Williamson c Ngidi b Mulder	102 (94b, 10x4, 2x6)
D Mitchell c Rabada b Ngidi	49 (37b, 4x4, 1x6)
T Latham b Rabada	4 (5b)
G Phillips not out	49 (27b, 6x4, 1x6)
M Bracewell c Rickleton b Ngidi	16 (12b, 2x4)
M Santner not out	2 (1b)
■ Extras (lb 5, w 6)	11
■ Total (6 wickets; 50 overs; RR: 7.24)	362
■ FoW: 1-48 (Will Young, 7.5 ov), 2-212 (Rachin Ravindra, 33.3 ov), 3-251 (Kane Williamson, 39.5 ov), 4-257 (Tom Latham, 41.1 ov), 5-314 (Daryl Mitchell, 46.1 ov), 6-360 (Michael Bracewell, 49.5 ov)	
■ Bowling: Marco Jansen 10-0-79-0, Lungi Ngidi 10-0-72-3, Kagiso Rabada 10-1-70-2, Wiaan Mulder 6-0-48-1, Keshav Maharaj 10-0-65-0, Aiden Markram 4-0-23-0.	
SOUTH AFRICA (TARGET: 362 RUNS)	
R Rickleton c Bracewell b Henry	17 (12b, 4x4)
T Bavuma c Williamson b Santner	
	56 (71b, 4x4, 1x6)
R van der Dussen b Santner	69 (66b, 4x4, 2x6)
A Markram c & b Ravindra	31 (29b, 3x4)
H Klaasen c Henry b Santner	3 (7b)
D Miller not out	100 (67b, 10x4, 4x6)
W Mulder c Ravindra b Bracewell	8 (13b, 1x4)
M Jansen lbw b Phillips	3 (7b)
K Maharaj c †Latham b Phillips	1 (4b)
K Rabada c Phillips b Henry	16 (22b, 2x4)
L Ngidi not out	1 (2b)
■ Extras (w 7)	7
■ Total (9 wickets; 50 overs)	312
■ FoW: 1-20 (Ryan Rickleton, 4.5 ov), 2-125 (Temba Bavuma, 22.2 ov), 3-161 (Rassie van der Dussen, 26.5 ov), 4-167 (Heinrich Klaasen, 28.4 ov), 5-189 (Aiden Markram, 32.6 ov), 6-200 (Wiaan Mulder, 35.6 ov), 7-212 (Marco Jansen, 37.6 ov), 8-218 (Keshav Maharaj, 39.3 ov), 9-256 (Kagiso Rabada, 45.3 ov)	
■ Bowling: Matt Henry 7-0-43-2, Kyle Jamieson 7-1-57-0, Will O'Rourke 8-0-69-0, Michael Bracewell 10-0-53-1, Mitchell Santner 10-0-43-3, Rachin Ravindra 5-0-20-1, Glenn Phillips 3-0-27-2.	

NUMBER PLATE

7

New Zealand spinners combined for seven wickets; joint-most in the Kiwis' ODI history. Matt Henry also took his 10th wicket of the tournament, most for any bowler.

Table tennis legend Sharath retires; leaves unmatched legacy

up the sport by just watching him.

Seven gold medals in the Commonwealth Games and two Asian Games bronze medals later, it's safe to say that the 42-year-old, who announced on Wednesday that the World Table Tennis (WTT) Star Contender at his hometown Chennai (from March 25-30) would be his last professional tournament, has been a catalyst for Indian table tennis's meteoric rise over the past decade.

"I played my first international tournament in Chennai, I will be playing my last international also in Chennai. This will be my last tournament as a professional athlete," he revealed.

More than his medals, Sharath must be remembered for how his drive and love for the sport constantly drove him to break the toughest of barriers.

The younger players are now reaping the huge benefits of those barriers broken by him.

Then, there's also the fact that he always put the country first.

Fresh from the high of winning three gold medals and one silver at the 2022 Birmingham Commonwealth Games,



Seven-time CWG gold medallist Achanta Sharath Kamal announced his retirement on Wednesday. File

Sharath refused to bask in glory. Then, at the age of 40, he had only one focus, one dream — getting India to qualify for the men's team event at the 2024 Paris

More than his medals, Sharath must be remembered for how his drive and love for the sport constantly drove him to break the toughest of barriers.

Olympics.

Only the top 16 teams in the world make it, and India had never even come close to qualifying for the team event at an Olympics.

Qualifying meant that the team would be just two wins away from a medal round. A table tennis medal at the Olympics is the ultimate dream.

When Sharath first started competing over two decades ago, back in 2002, he would never have fathomed that India could stand a chance at medalling at the Olympics.

They could maybe compete at the Asian level, but the Olympics was a far cry.

Having begun his Olympic journey at Athens 2004 as a 21-year-old, Sharath knew that winning a medal in singles was

almost impossible. The top players were just unbeatable. He realised, though, that India as a team could be really strong.

He did everything in his capacity to ensure that India qualified. He constantly co-ordinated with the players and advised them which tournaments they should and shouldn't play. He trained with them and became their 'older brother'.

He was instrumental in their performance at the World TT Championships last year, where they reached the quarterfinals, thereby qualifying for the Olympics. They qualified, but then came his biggest challenge. His poor ranking meant that he could lose his place.

Not one to back off from a challenge, he showed he still had it in him by registering the best-ever performance by an Indian male by reaching the quarterfinal of the Singapore Smash last year.

His performance in Singapore cemented his spot in the team for the Paris Olympics, where they lost in the Rd of 16 to eventual champions China.

Manav Thakkar, who is India's highest-ranked male paddler after Sharath, told *The Indian Express* that the Indian team will

miss his presence but knows that he's just a call away.

"When I first started playing and competing internationally, it was Sharath who took me under his wing. He allowed me to train with him and other senior international players in Denmark. He told me to train in Chennai and gave me all the facilities.

"More than anything, his presence in the team inspired us. He saw to it that we competed hard with each other but also ensured that we always supported each other. We know that we can always call him for advice"

TTFI secretary Kamlesh Mehta said that while Sharath may be retiring from the sport, he has and will always support table tennis away from the table.

"As a player, his medals don't do justice to the impact he's had on the sport in India. He's had to struggle to break barriers throughout his career, so he knows exactly what athletes go through.

"He deserved his role as co-chair of the International Table Tennis Federation's (ITTF) Athletes Commission since he has always looked out for players. I'm sure he has great post-retirement plans," he said.