



THURSDAY
06 MARCH 2025

Pages 16 | ₹ 5.00 | LC

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PEOPLE'S PARLIAMENT, ALWAYS IN SESSION



**ZELENSKY WANTS PEACE,
READY TO ACCEPT A
MINERALS DEAL: TRUMP**

P10



**'CONGRESS
AIDING BJP'S
RISE'**

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**'WOMEN FORCED TO
MORTGAGE JEWELLERY
UNDER MODI GOVT'**

P5

**AUS SKIPPER STEVE
SMITH RETIRES
FROM ODIS**

P16



SENSEX 73,730.23 ▲ 740.30

NIFTY 22,337.30 ▲ 254.65

₹ vs \$ 86.93

GOLD 88,955.00

SILVER 1,07,000

BRENT CRUDE (IN \$) 69.31 ▼ 1.73

WEATHER

Generally clear. Hazy in the evening. Maximum and minimum temperatures likely to be around 30°C and 22°C respectively.

RAINFALL: NIL

RELATIVE HUMIDITY

Max. 84% Min. 70%

TEMPERATURE

Max: 36.2°C Min: 29.3°C

SUN RISES 06:04 hrs SUN SETS 17:36 hrs

MOON RISES 00:18 hrs MOON SETS 11:05 hrs

Full Moon on 14 March

THUMBNAILS



People gather at shops to buy colours for the upcoming festival of Holi, in New Delhi on Wednesday. ■ ANI

Successive quakes hit Manipur districts, no casualties reported: Two consecutive earthquakes, including one of 5.7 magnitude, jolted several Manipur districts and adjoining northeastern states, officials said. According to disaster management officials, there was no immediate report of loss of life or damage to property due to the two earthquakes, one of 5.7 magnitude and the other measuring 4.1 on the Richter scale, both taking place in Kamjong district.

India in his sights, Trump talks up reciprocal tariffs

The US President said the reciprocal tax will kick in from 2 April

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, 5 MARCH

In what is expected to upset New Delhi after Prime Minister Narendra Modi's recent successful visit to Washington, US President Donald Trump targeted India and other countries on import duties and announced reciprocal tariffs from 2 April.

In a speech to a joint session of Congress on Tuesday, Mr Trump specifically mentioned Indian tariffs on automobile imports, saying: "India charges us auto tariffs higher than 100 per cent".

The US President said the reciprocal tax will kick in on 2 April.

He said that the US has been "ripped off" for decades by nearly every country on earth and vowed not to "let that happen any longer."

"Under the Trump administration, you will pay a tariff and in some cases a rather large one. Other countries have used 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... charge us tremendously higher tariffs than we charge them. It's very unfair. India charges us auto tariffs higher than 100 per cent," the American leader said.



Other countries have used 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... charge us tremendously higher tariffs than we charge them. It's very unfair. India charges us auto tariffs higher than 100 per cent.

DONALD TRUMP
US PRESIDENT

"America is back," US President Donald Trump said as he vowed to keep up his campaign of "swift and unrelenting action" in reorienting the nation's economy, immigration and foreign policy in an unyielding address before a joint sitting of the US Congress, even as he emphasised his administration's rapid actions, claiming to have achieved more in 43 days than most administrations do in years. "We have just started," he said. (See Page 10)

Mexico and Canada, have you heard of them, and countless other nations charge us tremendously higher tariffs than we charge them. It's very unfair. India charges us auto tariffs higher than 100 per cent," the American leader said.

There was no immediate

reaction from the Indian government.

Mr Trump also spoke about the tariffs imposed by the European Union, China, Brazil and Mexico and announced that the USA will impose tariffs on other nations based on what they are imposing on

his country.

"China's average tariff on our products is twice what we charge them. And South Korea's average tariff is four times higher. Think of that four times higher and we give so much help militarily and in many other ways to South Korea. But that's what happens, this is happening by friend and foe," he said.

Mr Trump said: "This system is not fair to the United States and never was. And so on April 2nd, I wanted to make it April 1st, but I didn't want to be accused of April Fool's Day. That's not - this one day was - cost us a lot of money. But we're going to do it in April. I'm a very superstitious person. April 2nd, reciprocal tariffs kick in. And whatever they tariff us, other countries, we will tariff them."

"That's reciprocal, back and forth. Whatever they tax us, we will tax them. If they do non-monetary tariffs to keep us out of their market, then we will do non-monetary barriers to keep them out of our market. There's a lot of that, too. They don't even allow us in their market."

India will establish National Large Language Model to develop AI capabilities: PM Modi

NIKHIL VYAS

NEW DELHI, 5 MARCH

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday said India will establish a National Large Language Model to develop artificial intelligence (AI) capabilities adding that the country's private sector also needs to be one step ahead of the world in this direction.

The prime minister was speaking in a post-budget webinar on employment via video conferencing.

He highlighted the importance of the theme of the webinar, "Investing in People, Economy, and Innovation," which defines the roadmap for Viksit Bharat.

"The future of the nation is determined by investments in innovation," said Mr Modi, highlighting that AI has the potential to contribute several lakh crore rupees to India's economy, underscoring the need for rapid progress in this direction.

Mr Modi mentioned the allocation of Rs 500 crore in the budget for AI-driven education and research.

Mentioning the plans to establish a National Large Language Model to develop AI capabilities in India, the prime minister urged the private sector to stay ahead of the global curve in this field.



"The world awaits a reliable, safe, and democratic nation that can provide economical AI solutions," he added, emphasising that investments made in this sector today will yield significant advantages in the future.

"India has become the third-largest startup ecosystem in the world," said the prime minister, adding that several measures have been introduced in this budget to promote startups.

Mr Modi mentioned the approval of a Rs 1 lakh crore corpus fund to boost research and innovation. The prime minister emphasised that this will increase investments in emerging sectors through the 'Deep Tech Fund of Funds'.

Mr Modi noted the provision of 10,000 research fellowships at IITs and IISc,

which will foster research and provide opportunities for talented youth.

The prime minister also highlighted the role of the National Geo-spatial Mission and the National Research Foundation in accelerating innovation. He stressed the need for collective efforts at all levels to elevate India to new heights in research and innovation.

Underlining the significance of the Gyan Bharatam Mission in preserving India's rich manuscript heritage, Modi announced that over one crore manuscripts will be digitized under this mission, leading to the creation of a National Digital Repository. This repository will enable scholars and researchers worldwide to access India's historical, traditional knowledge and wisdom, he added.

Tamil Nadu all-party meet demands freeze on delimitation for 30 years

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
CHENNAI, 5 MARCH

Demanding a freeze on the delimitation exercise for the next three decades, the all-party meeting convened by Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M K Stalin on Wednesday, resolved to form a Joint Action Committee comprising MPs from southern states to create awareness on the adverse impact of delimitation based on population.

The meeting, attended by 40 registered political parties, barring the BJP and two other minor parties, endorsed the resolutions placed by Mr Stalin. "The Prime Minister must assure in Parliament that the 2000 agreement - where the then Prime Minister guaranteed that constituency distribution would continue to be based on the 1971 population for fairness - will be extended for another 30 years beyond 2026," one of the resolutions said.

Opposing the population-based delimitation of parlia-



mentary constituencies, another resolution described it as posing "a serious threat to India's federal structure and the political representation rights of Tamil Nadu and other South Indian states."

Further, it said: "It is completely unjust for Tamil Nadu and other South Indian states to have their parliamentary representation reduced solely because they have successfully implemented population control measures for the country's benefit."

The all-party meeting called for a Constitutional amendment if increasing the number of MPs is necessary, by addressing the concerns of southern states. "If the number of MPs in Parliament is increased, the Union Government must amend the Constitution to ensure that distribution of constituencies among states follows the same proportional ratio as in 1971, thereby preserving Tamil Nadu's rightful representation," another resolution read.

While making it clear that Tamil Nadu is not opposed to delimitation in principle, it was pointed out that "it should not be implemented in a way that penalises states that have successfully implemented social and economic development policies for over five decades." To carry forward this demand and to take up awareness campaigns among people, the meeting decided to set up a Joint Action Committee (JAC), comprising MPs from Tamil Nadu and other South Indian states. A formal invitation would be sent to relevant political parties for this purpose. Earlier, speaking at the meeting, Mr Stalin described the proposed delimitation exercise as a "conspiracy and a Damocles sword hanging over the Southern states and said the number of Lok Sabha constituencies in Tamil Nadu might go down to 31 from the present 39. If it was carried on a pro-rata basis, the state could get an additional 22 seats.

SIZZLING KNOCK



Rachin Ravindra scored 108 runs off 101 balls as New Zealand posted a massive total of 362-5 in their Champions Trophy 2025 semi-final against South Africa. The Kiwis won by 50 runs to go through to the final, scheduled for 9 March, where they will face India. ■ BCCI/X (Match report on Page 16)

Vishwas Bill 2.0 to decriminalise over 100 provisions: Sitharaman



AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, 5 MARCH

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said on Wednesday that the government is committed to encouraging global economic partnerships, leveraging technology to strengthen traditional sectors and to significantly enhance the export potential of India.

Addressing a post-budget webinar on the theme 'Regulatory, Investment, And Ease Of Doing Business (EODB) Reforms', she said the government will now bring in the general Vishwas Bill 2.0 to decriminalise more than 100 provisions in various laws. It will further simplify processes for businesses, the minister said.

The Finance Minister emphasised that the government remains committed to ensuring the timely implementation of all budget announcements for the year 2025-26.

Highlighting the focus laid on capex, Mrs Sitharaman said that the pathway for reforms is complemented by the government's unwavering focus on capital expenditure as a driver of economic growth. For the year 2025-26, total effective capex is proposed at 15.48 lakh crores, which is 4.3 per cent of the GDP, with 11.21 lakh crore allocated as core capital expenditure by the Centre, which is 3.1 per cent of the GDP. This unprecedented investment in infrastructure development is already creating jobs, strengthening industries and laying the foundation for private sector participation in India's growth story, the FM said.

Kannada actress arrested for 'smuggling' 14.8 kg gold at Bengaluru Airport

AGENCIES
BENGALURU, 5 MARCH

The arrest of Kannada film actress Ranya Rao, daughter of a senior IPS officer in Karnataka, has exposed a major gold smuggling operation. Investigations by the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) revealed that the 31-year-old actress used an unusual method to evade security checks -- she attached 14 gold bars to her thighs using adhesive, wrapped them with tape, and concealed them under a crepe bandage.

Officials described her arrest as one of the biggest breakthroughs in recent gold smuggling cases.

So far, authorities have seized 17.29 kg of gold and cash in the case. This includes 14.8 kg of gold worth Rs 12.56 crore recovered at the airport, Rs 2.06 crore worth of gold from her Bengaluru residence, and apart from



that Rs 2.67 crore in cash.

Ranya Rao was apprehended on Monday night upon her arrival at Kempegowda International Airport in Bengaluru on an Emirates flight from Dubai. The DRI, acting on prior intelligence, deployed a four-member team at the airport, anticipating her arrival.

Sources revealed that she had made four trips to Dubai

in just 15 days, raising suspicions. Investigators suspect she may have been smuggling gold on multiple occasions.

Authorities say Ms Rao exploited her father's position -- Director General of Police (Police Housing Corporation) -- to avoid scrutiny at the airport.

Upon landing, she would reportedly call police personnel to pick her up, who

then escorted her home.

Officials are now probing whether any police officers were complicit in the smuggling network.

Following her arrest, the DRI raided her upscale Lavelle Road apartment in Bengaluru on Wednesday, where she paid Rs 4.5 lakh in rent. The search led to the discovery of additional gold and cash, taking the

Sources revealed that the actress had made four trips to Dubai in just 15 days, raising suspicions. Investigators suspect she may have been smuggling gold on multiple occasions.

total seizure to Rs 17.29 kg of gold and Rs 2.67 crore in cash.

Her father, Ramachandra Rao, has distanced himself from the case, stating they have not been in touch since her marriage four months ago. Ranya Rao, known for her role opposite Kannada superstar Sudeep in 'Maanikya', has also acted in other South Indian films.

She was produced in court on Tuesday and remanded to judicial custody as investigations continue into her smuggling network and possible accomplices.

Kejriwal faces intense criticism for big cavalcade

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
CHANDIGARH, 5 MARCH

The Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) on Wednesday said that it was condemnable that a curfew-like situation had been created for farmers who were not being allowed to come to the capital to register their protest even as a red carpet welcome was being accorded to Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) convener Arvind Kejriwal with more than 100 vehicles escorting him for a Vipassana session from here to Hoshiarpur.

Asking Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann to explain this state of affairs, senior SAD leader Dr Daljit Singh Cheema said in a statement: "The Chief Minister should tell why Kejriwal was being accorded a welcome reserved for heads of states when he did not have any Constitutional authority and had no relation with Punjab." He said the CM should



also tell Punjabis why he had invited farmers for talks and then insulted them by walking out of the meeting in a huff when reminded about the promises made by him and his boss Kejriwal to farmers.

BJP leader Tarun Chugh said: "Arvind Kejriwal has come with his group to Punjab with the ill-intention of flooding the state... In what capacity is a cavalcade of 100 vehicles accompanying Kejriwal? How is he holding a meeting of government officials and how is he giving them direction?"





Deepak Nigam, divisional railway manager of Sealdah handed over Rail Seva Puraskar to 69 railway employees for demonstrating outstanding devotion to their duties in Sealdah Division. ■ SNS

Furfura Sharif gets ready: At the initiative of state chief minister Mamata Banerjee, steps have been taken to provide amenities to lakhs of pilgrims at Fur-fura Sharif in Jangipara of Hooghly district. The state transport minister, Seshashis Chakraborty, said: "Extra lighting arrangements have been made; medical camps and medical team will be present and 12 ambulances together with a trauma care ambulance have been provided. Among the other arrangements, vehicle parking, arrangements for drinking water with five drinking water vehicles will provide sealed water pouches, large number of bio toilets have been set up."

Violence disrupts Higher secondary exams in Malda

Students attacked teachers over security checks; 11 students involved identified

MANAS R BANNERJEE
SILIGURI, 5 MARCH

Chaos erupted at Chamagram Higher Secondary School in Malda's Baishnabnagar police station area during the Higher Secondary English examination on Wednesday, as students protested against mandatory security checks. The situation turned violent, leaving six teachers seriously injured after a group of examinees allegedly attacked them.

The incident occurred while Chiranjib Bhattacharya, president of the West Bengal Council of Higher Secondary Education, was inspecting another examination centre in the district under Kaliachak police station. A large police force from Baisnabnagar was deployed to restore order.

According to local sources, students from Kamditola High Madrasah, Char Sujapur Higher Secondary School, and Parlapur Higher Secondary School were assigned to the Chamagram exam centre. Tensions flared when teachers began conducting security checks using metal



detectors at the main gate. A section of students reportedly resisted the screening, leading to a sudden attack on the teachers and a clash with school authorities.

When asked about the incident, Mr Bhattacharya termed it "unfortunate" and stated: "Such incidents are unexpected. Out of 2,089 examination centres in West Bengal, this untoward incident occurred at only one centre. The students of Kamditola Higher Secondary School were responsible for the violence. Exams at all other centres proceeded peacefully."

He added: "We have iden-

tified 11 students involved in the incident with the help of CCTV footage. For now, they will be seated in a separate room for their exams. The authorities of both Chamagram and Kamditola Higher Secondary Schools will be summoned for a hearing. If necessary, the 11 students may also be called. Once the full report is ready, appropriate action will be taken."

Mr Bhattacharya confirmed that four to six teachers were assaulted and assured that he would personally visit the school if required. "Overall, the examination process is running smoothly. No major

issues or complaints regarding the question paper have been reported. The district administration has managed the arrangements well, and no other untoward incidents have been reported so far," he said.

The incident has raised concerns over exam security protocols and student conduct, prompting authorities to review measures to prevent such occurrences in the future.

"Security has been tightened, and the administration is cooperating. CCTV cameras are monitoring exam venues to prevent such incidents," Mr Bhattacharya added.

Rhino census begins at Jaldapara National Park

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
SILIGURI, 5 MARCH

The forest department launched a comprehensive rhino census at Jaldapara National Park this morning, aiming to assess the population of the endangered one-horned rhinoceroses.

The census, conducted with the help of nearly several trained elephants, is being carried out by a team of around 400 personnel, including forest officials and members of over 12 NGOs. The elephants are assisting enumerators in navigating the dense forest terrain, ensuring accurate data collection. The census is a critical step in monitoring the health and growth of the rhino population, which is a key indicator of the park's biodiversity.

Jaldapara National Park, known for its rich wildlife and conservation efforts, is home to a significant number of one-horned rhinos. The census will provide valuable insights into their population trends, habitat conditions, and potential threats.

Darjeeling aims to revive orange glory

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
SILIGURI, 5 MARCH

Once renowned for its high-quality Mandarin oranges, Darjeeling has seen a decline in orange cultivation over the past few years due to climate change and pest attacks. Frustrated by mounting losses, many local farmers abandoned orange farming.

However, a renewed effort is now underway to revive this iconic crop, with the state government and international experts joining hands to support farmers.

The 2nd International Workshop on Climate-Resilient Orange Cultivation in the Eastern Himalayas, held today at Cluny Women's College in Kalimpong, brought together experts from Nepal, Bhutan, the US, Iran, and China. Organised by the Directorate of Cinchona & Other Medicinal Plants, Gorkhaland Territorial Administration (GTA), and the department of food processing industries & horticulture, the two-day event aims to equip farmers with innovative techniques and global best practices to rejuvenate orange farming.

Minister-in-charge of food processing industries and horticulture, Arup Roy, was also present at the workshop today after inaugurating it.

GTA chief executive Anit Thapa, who attended the workshop, highlighted key focus areas, including strategies for disease-free saplings, climate-resilient farming techniques, and sustainable growth for the farming community. "This initiative marks a significant step toward securing the livelihood of our farmers and ensuring a thriving orange cultivation ecosystem in the Eastern Himalayas," Thapa said.

He also emphasised the commitment to holding annual workshops to strengthen efforts in making orange farming more sustainable and prosperous. "Together, let's work towards a greener, resilient, and prosperous future for our farmers," Thapa added. The workshop underscores a collective push to restore Darjeeling's orange legacy, offering hope to farmers and revitalising a key agricultural sector in the region.

T E N D E R

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL
TENDER NOTICE
E.E. Purulia Division, Social Sector, P.W.Dte invites e-Quotation for 1(One) no work vide No- WB/PWD/SS/EE/PUR/NIQ 05/2024-25 and Tender ID: 2025_WBPWD_822655.1. Estimated Amount: Nil. Last date of submission of bid is 17.03.2025 upto 6.55 PM. For details, visit the website: <http://wbtennders.gov.in> and office notice board during office hrs. Sd/- E.E., Purulia Division, Social Sector, P.W. Dte. ICA-14812(3)/2025

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL
e-TENDER NOTICE
N.I.e.T. No. 18 of EE/ED of 2024-25 Executive Engineer, Electrical Division, PHE Dte. has invited an open e-Tender for "Different works under Electrical Division, PHE Dte." (i) Tender Reference No: WB/PHE/EE/ED/18/2024-25 (ii) Bid Submission End Date: 25.03.2025 (iii) Details of NIT available in website: [www.wbtennders.gov.in](http://wbtennders.gov.in) and www.wbpdcl.gov.in Sd/- Executive Engineer, Electrical Division, PHE Dte. ICA-14779(3)/2025

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL
PWD TENDER NOTICE
EE/PWD/7D, invites e-Tender for Repairing guthols of M.N. road from 0.00 to 2.50 km in stretches under Tamkuli Division, PWD in the district of Purba Medinipur in the year 2024-25. NIT No. 41 of 2024-2025, Tender ID: 2025_WBPWD_822741.1. Bid submission start date (online): 05.03.2025 from 10.00 Hours. Bid submission closing date (online): 17.03.2025 at 14.00 Hours. Corrigendum if any will be published in website only. Details of NIT and Tender documents may be downloaded from <http://wbtennders.gov.in> Sd/- Executive Engineer, P.W.Dte., Tamkuli Division ICA-14819(2)/2025

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL
Date Corrigendum
1st Corrigendum Notice regarding Extension of Dates vide e-NIT/No. 07/18/SE/STADIRCL/PHEDT of 2024-25 (SL No. 3.0 (i) and ID: 2025_PHE_808317.1 for GROUND WATER RESERVOIR HAVING CAPACITY OF 30 ML SONADATA TO ACCOMMODATE TWO VILLAGES UNDER SUKHA POKHRI BLOCK WITHIN DARJEELING DISTRICT UNDER KURSEONG DIVISION. Details, will be available in the website [www.wbtennders.gov.in](http://wbtennders.gov.in). The last date for submission of tender is 24.03.2025 upto 02.00 PM. Sd/- For Superintending Engineer, G. T. A-Circle, P.H.E. Dte. ICA-14774(4)/2025

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL
TENDER NOTICE
THE DURGA PURA PROJECTS LIMITED (A Govt. of West Bengal Enterprise) CIN NO. U40104WB1985SGC039154 NOTICE INVITING TENDER (NIT) NIT No.(1) WBDPL-12018(12)/3/2025-GM-POW(DPL)-DPL/T5/E-319 Tender ID: 2025_DPL_820657.1 For Roof Treatment and Allied Masonary Works in CN and EN Type qtrs. Within B Zone of DPL Township. Bid Submission end date 08.03.2025 Bid Opening Date 13.03.2025. NIT No. (2) WBDPL/DPSP/PUR/NIT(E)-033 D/ 405/2024-25 Tender ID: 2025_DPL_820634.1 For Procurement of Various Spares for Chillers of Unit -8 Bid Submission end date 15.03.2025 Bid Opening Date 21.03.2025. NIT No.(3) WBDPL/DPSP/PUR/NIT(E)-034 D/ 406/2024-25 Tender ID: 2025_DPL_820649.1 For Procurement of Single Phase 60V, 1400MAHV Transformer Rectifier Set for ESP of Unit -7 under AHP-EM Bid Submission end date 15.03.2025 Bid Opening Date 21.03.2025. NIT No.(4) WBDPL/DPSP/PUR/NIT(E)-040 BP/ 469/2024-25 Tender ID: 2025_DPL_820639.1 For Procurement of Unit -CW and ACW Motor DE Side Bearing. Bid Submission end date 08.03.2025 Bid Opening Date 14.03.2025 Extension NIT No.(5) WBDPL-12017/17/2024-GM POW (DPL)/OP/PS/E-285 dated 01.02.2025 Tender ID: 2025_DPL_810433.1 hereby cancelled. www.dpl.net.in ICA-14712(2)/2025

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL
e-TENDER NOTICE
E-tenders are invited by the Commissioner of Police Kolkata for 1. "Repairing of entire Court Room (inside/outside) for the Special Executive Magistrate Court situated at 3/1, Taltala Lane, Kolkata-700014, during the year 2024-2025." 2. "Renovation of Police Kiosk of size 12.00m x 6.00m near Nazrul Mancha, Kolkata, during the year 2024-2025." 3. "Uprooting of trees, replacement of damaged rain water pipe and sewer line of Block A-22, A-21, A-20, A-18, A-15, A-14, A-12, A-10, A-9, A-07 of Western Sector & Block E,F,G,I,J,M,N,O & B-06, B-08, B-09, B-10 of Eastern Sector of Nawdapara PHE, BG Ghosh Road, Kolkata-700057, during the year 2024-2025." 4. "Repairing & painting of Brick Boundary Wall near Block-I,J,M,N,O & P of Eastern Sector of Nawdapara PHE, BG Ghosh Road, Kolkata-700057, during the year 2024-2025." 5. "2nd Call for Emergent repair of Bituminous Road within the premises of at Nawdapara PHE at Eastern Sector (Near Gate) & Near Block B-8 Eastern Sector, during the year 2024-2025." 6. "2nd Call for Repairing & painting after damp treatment of Corridor of the Circular Building within Police Training School, during the year 2024-2025." The last date for submission of the e-tenders is 13/03/2025 upto 12.00 hours. The NIT Document and other details will be available in the website: [www.wbtennders.gov.in](http://wbtennders.gov.in) Sd/- for Commissioner of Police, Kolkata. ICA-14724(2)/2025

The West Bengal Power Development Corporation Limited
(A Govt. of West Bengal Enterprise)
Corporate Identity No. U40104WB1985SGC039154
Kolkata Thermal Power Station
P.O. Mechhada, Dist. Purba Medinipur, Pin - 721137
Notice Inviting E-Tender
Ref. No.: WBPDCI/Tend-Adv/24-25/KTPS/CC-3186 Dated: 20.02.2025
NIT No.: WBPDCI/KTPS/NIT/E3267/24-25
E-Tenders in prescribed format are invited at <http://wbtennders.gov.in> by the General Manager, KTPS, WBPDCI from eligible Agencies/Companies in 2 Part bid system for "OH of Bottom Ash System, Wet Ash System and Dry Ash System of Unit-4". Tender Document Download Start Date: 27.02.2025 at 14.00 hrs. Bid Submission End Date: 28.03.2025 at 15.00 hrs. Contact Person: Mr. Kisanu Gupta, Senior Manager (PS)(Contract Cell), KTPS. Mobile No.: 8336909047. E-mail: kugpta@wbpdcl.co.in For details please visit: <http://wbtennders.gov.in> ICA-14743(2)/2025

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL
PWD TENDER NOTICE
The E.E. South 24 Pgs. Divn., Social Sector, P.W.Dte. invites online e-tender for the works of "Repairing and Renovation of Installation works for the building of quarters, Sub-Centre, including Hospital of Momreghar PHC under Padma River, Jangra Block in the district of South 24 Parganas." Estimated amount put to Tender: Rs. 43,64,102.00, eNIT No. 23/EE/SOUTH 24 PGS/SS/PWDTE of 2024-2025, Tender ID: 2025_WBPWD_822937.1. Bid submission Start Date (online): 07.03.2025 at 2.00 PM. Bid Submission Closing Date (online): 21.03.2025 upto 2.00 PM. Corrigendum if any will be published in the website only. Details of N.I.T. and Tender Documents may be downloaded from <http://wbtennders.gov.in> Sd/- E.E. South 24 Pgs. Divn., Social Sector, P.W.Dte. ICA-14831(3)/2025

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL
PWD TENDER NOTICE
EE, Kalimpong Division, PWD invites online e-Quotation for the work- "Consultancy work for preparation of detailed project report (DPR) for installation of Fire Hydrant and Fire Sprinkler system including supervision for the Work - Construction of New District Collectorate Building at Kalimpong in the District of Kalimpong." e-NIT No. 08 of 2024-25 of EE, Kalimpong Division, Tender ID: 2024_WBPWD_780255.1. Bid submission start date (online): 06.03.2025 from 09:00 A.M. Bid submission Closing date (online): 15.03.2025 upto 12:30 P.M. Corrigendum if any will be published in website only. Details of N.I.T and Tender documents may be downloaded from: <http://wbtennders.gov.in> Sd/- EE, P.W.D., Kalimpong Division ICA-14824(3)/2025

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL
PWD TENDER NOTICE
NIEIRT No. 34 of 2024-25 E.E. - II, Alipore Division, P.W.D. Name of Work - (i) Providing Housekeeping staff / personnel of Minister's Quarter Building and its surrounding premises, at 28 Raja Santosh Roy Road, Alipore - Kolkata-700027, for a period of 01 (one) year under Alipore Division, PWD, during the year 2024-25. (Earnest Money Rs. 1,70,000/-) (ii) Providing Security personnel of Minister's Quarter & its surrounding premises at 28, Raja Santosh Roy Road, Alipore, Kolkata-700027, for a period of 01 (one) year under Alipore Division, PWD during the year 2024-25. (Earnest Money Rs. 1,10,000/-) Bid Submission end date 25.03.2025 upto 15.00 hrs. Details will be available from the web site <http://wbtennders.gov.in> and notice board at all office working days within office hours. Sd/- Executive Engineer - II, Alipore Division, PWD. ICA-14801(3)/2025

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL
TENDER NOTICE
Executive Engineer, Murshidabad Highway Division No-1, invites online e-Tender for the work - Name of Work: Krishnagar - Debpur - Jalangi Road at chainage 4.150 Km. Replacement of damaged Slab Culvert by double cell 3.0 m x 3.0 m RCC Box Culvert under Murshidabad Highway Division No.1 during the year 2024-2025. NIT No.29 of 2024-2025 (SI No.1) Tender ID: 2025_DPL_820639.1 For Submission start date (Online): 10.03.2025 after 11.00 am. Bid Submission Closing date (Online): 24.03.2025 upto 1.00 pm. Corrigendum if any will be published in website only. Details of NIT and Tender documents may be downloaded from <http://wbtennders.gov.in> Sd/- Executive Engineer, Murshidabad Highway Division No. 1, P.W.(Roads) Directorate ICA-14794(3)/2025

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL
TENDER NOTICE
Superintending Engineer, South-Western Circle, P.W.Dte., Midnapore invites online e-tender for the work "Construction of Paddy Godown (2000 M.T. Capacity) at Pingla in the District of Paschim Medinipur - Construction of internal road, Draining system with loading platform, Boaring of a tube well, Construction of toilet block for male and female, Re-location of weigh bridge, Fixing fire extinguisher and other ancillary works - Balance works (Civil), Project ID : ES2425264185000 - Estimated Amount : Rs. 1,53,67,619.00, NIT No. 16 of 2024-2025, Tender ID: 2025_WBPWD_822193.1. Bid submission start date (online) : 10.03.2025 from 10.00 Hours. Bid Submission closing date (online) : 28.03.2025 at 15.00 Hours. Corrigendum if any will be published in website only. Details of NIT and Tender documents may be downloaded from <http://wbtennders.gov.in> Sd/- Tarun Kr. Chakraborty, Superintending Engineer, South-Western Circle, P.W.Dte. ICA-14783(2)/2025

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL
PWD TENDER NOTICE
Superintending Engineer, South-Western Circle, P.W.Dte., Midnapore invites online e-tender for the work (1) Construction of one number 2m x 2m Box Culvert along with construction of Storm Water Drain from east side of Collectorate Gate to west side of Collectorate Gate on Midnapore Town Link Road under Midnapore Division in the District of Paschim Medinipur. Estimated Amount : Rs. 1,02,11,364.00 & (2) Construction of Storm Water Drain at Hoogamhore More (892 m), Keyabad (350 m), Chemia (526 m), Deriapur (250m) and Amlasul (400 m) of total length 2418 m of Hoogamhore - Amlasul Road under Midnapore Division, P.W.Dte., in the district of Paschim Medinipur. Estimated Amount : Rs. 1,78,98,427.00. NIT No. 17(2) of 2024-2025, Tender ID : 2025_WBPWD_822289.1 & 2. Bid submission start date (online) : 10.03.2025 from 10.00 Hours. Bid Submission closing date (online) : 28.03.2025 at 15.00 Hours. Corrigendum if any will be published in website only. Details of NIT and Tender documents may be downloaded from <http://wbtennders.gov.in> Sd/- Tarun Kr. Chakraborty, Superintending Engineer, South-Western Circle, P.W.Dte. ICA-14782(3)/2025

The West Bengal Power Development Corporation Limited
(A Govt. of West Bengal Enterprise)
Corporate Identity No. U40104WB1985SGC039154
Sagarighi Thermal Power Project
P.O. Monirampur, P.S. Sagarighi, Dist. - Murshidabad, Pin - 742237
Notice Inviting E-Tender
Ref. No.: WBPDCI/Tend-Adv/24-25/BTPS/CC-3235 Dated: 27.02.2025
NIT No.: WBPDCI/SGTPP/NIT/E3280/24-25 Dated: 31.01.2025
E-Tenders in prescribed format are invited at <http://wbtennders.gov.in> by the General Manager, BTPS, WBPDCI from eligible Agencies/Companies in 2 (two) Part bid system for "Electrical Material Maintenance under EMOP Department at BTPS". Tender Document Download Start Date: 04.03.2025 at 15.00 hrs. Bid Submission End Date: 02.04.2025 at 15.00 hrs. Contact Person: Mr. Sujit Saha, Dy. General Manager (Contracts), Phone: 033 2684 2342/2312. E-mail: contract.btp@wbpdcl.co.in For details please visit: <http://wbtennders.gov.in> ICA-14733(2)/2025

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL
NOTICE INVITING e-TENDER
e-NIT No. 07-AGRI-DOA-SWM-BWN-2024-25 vide Memo No: 130 dt 03.03.2025
Excavation of WHS in different mouza of Jamuria and Augurim-II Block under the Different Scheme Project under Paschim and Purba Bardhaman District. Last date for downloading tender papers:-11.03.2025(3.30 p.m.). Last date for online submission tender papers:-11.03.2025(3.30 p.m.). Bid Opening date: 11.03.2025 (4.00 p.m. on or after online). Details of advertisement will be available at Deputy Director of Agriculture (Soil & Water Management), 4TH Floor, Krishi Bhavan, District Seed Farm Campus, Kalna Road, Purba Bardhaman & website : www.purbabardhaman.gov.in ICA-14737(3)/2025

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL
WRIDD, e-NIT
Executive Engineer (A-I), Bankura (A-II) Division, WRIDD invites e-tenders for the supply of DGPS Survey Instruments (Trimble DGPS Model R12 (1 Base + 1 Rover + 1 Controller and software)) including 4 (four) days on field training for each set for different offices under Bankura (A-I) Circle, at Bankura vide e-NIT Ref. No.: WBWRIDD/A-I/01/2024-25, dated 13/03/2024-25. Tender ID: 2025_WRIDD_823280.1. Value of work: 57,52,500.00 ; Last dropping date: 28.03.2025 upto 11.00 AM. Interested bidders are requested to visit the website <http://wbtennders.gov.in> for details. Sd/- Executive Engineer (A-I), Bankura (A-II) Division, Bankura ICA-14837(3)/2025

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL
West Bengal State Export Promotion Society
Notice Inviting Tender
e-Tender No. WBSPS/DMS/E-14/24-25/B.Wall/BMSH/Setra
Director & Member Secretary, West Bengal State Export Promotion Society invites e-tender from bonafide, reliable and experienced contractors/agencies/organizations for undertaking the dismantling of existing broken boundary wall and construction of new boundary wall near ladies dormitory and necessary surface drain around broken boundary wall near ladies dormitory at Biswa Gangha Shilpi Haat, Shantiniketan, Birbhum. Detailed e-Tender notice and corrigendum, if any are available in the official website of West Bengal State Export Promotion Society: [www.wbseps.com](http://wbseps.com) and Government of West Bengal e-tender portal: <http://wbtennders.gov.in> from 08/03/2025 at 10 A.M. Last date and time for submission of e-tender: 18/03/2025 at 10.00 PM. Sd/- Director & Member Secretary. ICA-14725(2)/2025

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL
PWD TENDER NOTICE
Superintending Engineer, South-Western Circle, P.W.Dte., Midnapore invites online e-tender for the work "Construction of Paddy Godown (2000 M.T. Capacity) at Pingla in the District of Paschim Medinipur - Construction of internal road, Draining system with loading platform, Boaring of a tube well, Construction of toilet block for male and female, Re-location of weigh bridge, Fixing fire extinguisher and other ancillary works - Balance works (Civil), Project ID : ES2425264185000 - Estimated Amount : Rs. 1,53,67,619.00, NIT No. 16 of 2024-2025, Tender ID: 2025_WBPWD_822193.1. Bid submission start date (online) : 10.03.2025 from 10.00 Hours. Bid Submission closing date (online) : 28.03.2025 at 15.00 Hours. Corrigendum if any will be published in website only. Details of NIT and Tender documents may be downloaded from <http://wbtennders.gov.in> Sd/- Tarun Kr. Chakraborty, Superintending Engineer, South-Western Circle, P.W.Dte. ICA-14783(2)/2025

WEST BENGAL STATE ELECTRICITY DISTRIBUTION COMPANY LIMITED
(A Govt. of West Bengal Enterprise)
Regd. Office - Vajra Bhawan, Block-01, Sector-4, Bhubaneswar, Kolkata-700 091
CIN : U40109WB1900552113477, www.wbsecl.in
WBSECL invites e-Tenders as follows:
1) NIT No.: BNDD/E-Tender/2024-25/1903, Date: 03.03.2025 of the Divisional Manager, Bidhanagar-I Division. Estimated Cost: Rs. 19,49,457/- for the work of "Augmentation of two nos. 33 kV feeder by laying of 33 kV grade three run single core 1000 sq mm AL XLPE cable replacing single run three core 400 sq mm XLPE cable from Salt Lake AIS 132 kV sub-station to SRC 33/11 kV sub-station (Total route length of 500 Meter) under Bidhanagar-I Division".
2) NIT No.: WBSECL/DKL/E-Tender/24-25/04, Date: 03.03.2025 of the Divisional Manager, Domkal Division. Estimated Cost: Rs. 9,81,000/- for the work of "Supply & delivery of 600 nos. G111 kV 'V' Bracket for PCCL Pole 9M long and 1000 nos. Ins Pierce Con (ABC) 50-70 sq mm under Domkal Division".
3) NIT No.: BOPM/Tender/Civil/2024-25/31, Date: 03.03.2025 of the Regional Manager, Purba Medinipur Region. Estimated Cost: Rs. 9,80,078/- for the work of "Construction for foundation of Transformer Plinth, VCB, CT and Cable Trench at Kharipukuria 33/11kV sub-station under Contal Division, Dist.: Purba Medinipur".
4) NIT No.: DM/SSD/E-Tender-25/2024-2025, Date: 03.03.2025 of the Divisional Manager, Siliguri Sub-Urban Division. Estimated Cost: Rs. 6,62,183/- for the work of "Bus Conductor Augmentation (up-gradation) of 33 kV switchyard from ACSR 100 sq mm (D0G) conductor to ACSR 200 sq mm (PANTHER) conductor L.C. Khaprali 33/11 kV sub-station under Siliguri Sub-Urban Division".
5) NIT No.: DM/HBD/TECH/2024-25/13, Date: 03.03.2025 of the Divisional Manager, Habra Division. Estimated Cost: Rs. 5,37,345/- for the work of "Construction of new feeder bay for Banipur 33/11kV sub-station at Banipur, Habra under Habra Division".
For details, visit <http://wbtennders.gov.in> & www.wbsecl.in ICA-14746(2)/2025

The West Bengal Power Development Corporation Limited
(A Govt. of West Bengal Enterprise)
Corporate Identity No. U40104WB1985SGC039154
Bakreswar Thermal Power Project
P.O. BkTPP, Dist. - Birbhum, Pin - 731104
Notice Inviting E-Tender
Ref. No.: WBPDCI/Tend-Adv/24-25/BKTPP/CC-3233 Dated: 27.02.2025
NIT No.: WBPDCI/BKTPP/NIT/E3600/24-25
E-Tenders in prescribed format are invited at <http://wbtennders.gov.in> by General Manager - BKTPP, WBPDCI from eligible Agencies/Companies in bid system for "Deployment of Manpower for Clinker related job of Boiler Unit#1 to 5 and Repairing/Returbination job of AHP for a period of 2 years. BKTPP". Tender Document Download Start Date: 27.02.2025 at 09.00 AM. Bid Submission End Date: 21.03.2025 at 09.00 PM. Contact Person: Mr. Indranil Chakraborty, Dy. General Manager - Engg-CC, BKTPP, WBPDCI. Mobile: 8373055604. E-mail: cc_bktps@wbpdcl.co.in For details please visit: <http://wbtennders.gov.in> ICA-14739(2)/2025

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL
NOTICE INVITING e-TENDER
NIT No. 22 of EE/ED of 2024-25 Tender ID: 2025_PHE_822373.1 to 12 e-Tender is invited by Exe. Engr., EMD, PHED of P-16, India Exchange Place (Extn.), C.I.T. Annex. Bldg., (2nd Fl.), Kolkata-73 on behalf of Governor of West Bengal for "Production of packaged drinking water from R.O. based fully automatic drinking water bottling plant with an hourly Production capacity 3600 bottles of 1000 ml 500 ml/ 2000 ml. capacity at Haringhata and others round the clock O & M Southern and Northern Sector etc. in the district of Nadia, P.H.E. Dte." The last date of bid submission (both technical & financial) is 20/03/2025 upto 13.00 hrs. Details may be had from the office notice board & official website : www.wbphed.gov.in and www.wbtennders.gov.in Sd/- Executive Engineer, Eastern Mechanical Division, P.H.E. Dte. ICA-14748(2)/2025

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL
Abridged SNIT(e)
The Executive Engineer-I, Joynagar Irrigation Division, I&W Dte. has invited tender notice against SNIT(e) No-WBIIW/EE-I/JOY/SNIT-23(e)/2024-25 on behalf of Government of West Bengal for 06 (Six) Nos. Emergent Restoration of S/E at Gosaba and Basanti Block under his jurisdiction from the eligible outside bonafide contractors. Estimated costs put to Tender From 5,78,630.00 to 26,68,681.00 only. Last date of bid submission (online) is 08.03.2025 upto 17:30 Hrs. *Technical Bid opening date: 10.03.2025 after 14:00 Hrs. Other details may be available from the office of the undersigned during office hours on any working days & websites: www.wbtennders.gov.in & www.wbplwd.gov.in Sd/- Executive Engineer-I, Joynagar Irrigation Division, Barupur, South 24 Parganas. ICA-14708(3)/2025

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL
e-TENDER NOTICE
NIT No. 22 of EE/ED of 2024-25 Tender ID: 2025_PHE_822373.1 to 12 e-Tender is invited by Exe. Engr., EMD, PHED of P-16, India Exchange Place (Extn.), C.I.T. Annex. Bldg., (2nd Fl.), Kolkata-73 on behalf of Governor of West Bengal for "Production of packaged drinking water from R.O. based fully automatic drinking water bottling plant with an hourly Production capacity 3600 bottles of 1000 ml 500 ml/ 2000 ml. capacity at Haringhata and others round the clock O & M Southern and Northern Sector etc. in the district of Nadia, P.H.E. Dte." The last date of bid submission (both technical & financial) is 20/03/2025 upto 13.00 hrs. Details may be had from the office notice board & official website : www.wbphed.gov.in and www.wbtennders.gov.in Sd/- Executive Engineer, Eastern Mechanical Division, P.H.E. Dte. ICA-14748(2)/2025

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL
PWD TENDER NOTICE
Superintending Engineer, South-Western Circle, P.W.Dte., Midnapore invites online e-tender for the work "Construction of Paddy Godown (2000 M.T. Capacity) at Pingla in the District of Paschim Medinipur - Construction of internal road, Draining system with loading platform, Boaring of a tube well, Construction of toilet block for male and female, Re-location of weigh bridge, Fixing fire extinguisher and other ancillary works - Balance works (Civil), Project ID : ES2425264185000 - Estimated Amount : Rs. 1,53,67,619.00, NIT No. 16 of 2024-2025, Tender ID: 2025_WBPWD_822193.1. Bid submission start date (online) : 10.03.2025 from 10.00 Hours. Bid Submission closing date (online) : 28.03.2025 at 15.00 Hours. Corrigendum if any will be published in website only. Details of NIT and Tender documents may be downloaded from <http://wbtennders.gov.in> Sd/- Tarun Kr. Chakraborty, Superintending Engineer, South-Western Circle, P.W.Dte. ICA-14783(2)/2025

WEST BENGAL STATE ELECTRICITY DISTRIBUTION COMPANY LIMITED
(A Govt. of West Bengal Enterprise)
Regd. Office - Vajra Bhawan, Block-01, Sector-4, Bhubaneswar, Kolkata-700 091
CIN : U40109WB1900552113477, www.wbsecl.in
WBSECL invites e-Tenders as follows:
1) NIT No.: BNDD/E-Tender/2024-25/1903, Date: 03.03.2025 of the Division

HC directs police to register FIR on plaint filed by JU student

Justice Ghosh also directed the state government to file a detailed report on the violence which happened when minister Bratya Basu was present inside the campus



Parents of students, teachers and students take out a procession demanding conducive teaching atmosphere on campus and justice for the injured students, on Wednesday ■ SNS

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE KOLKATA, 5 MARCH

Calcutta High Court on Wednesday directed Kolkata Police to register an FIR based on the complaint filed by Indranuj Roy, the student of Jadavpur University (JU) during the ruckus within the university campus on 1 March after being hit allegedly by the vehicle of education minister Bratya Basu.

The single-judge Bench of Justice Tirthankar Ghosh gave this direction acting on a petition filed in his Bench earlier this week accusing the Kolkata Police of conducting a "biased and one-sided probe" in the 1 March ruckus within the university campus.

In the petition, it was alleged that all the seven FIRs filed were either registered suo motu by the cops against the students or on the basis of the complaints filed against the students by the Trinamul Congress-affiliated West Bengal College & University Professors' Association (WBCUPA).



Justice Ghosh also directed the state government to file a detailed report in the matter. The next hearing in the matter will be on 12 March, while the state government and the petitioner will have to file their respective affidavits in the matter to the court on the same day.

During the hearing, Justice Ghosh also made some observations on the intelligence failure on the part of the Special Branch of the Kolkata Police that they did not have prior information about students' agitation while the education minister was there.

JU stakeholders hold protest, demand normality inside campus

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE KOLKATA, 5 MARCH

With participation of teachers, non-teaching employees and parents of students the ongoing protests at the Jadavpur University intensified further on Wednesday, four days after the violence inside the campus.

are doing politics with the injury of Indranuj. I am requesting them not to play politics. Our top priority should be how to bring back democratic and normal academic environment in the campus," Prof Roy said.

Indranuj has been undergoing treatment at a private hospital since 1 March. The protests erupted following campus violence on 1 March, when two students, including Indranuj and Abhinab were injured, allegedly after the car of the education minister Bratya Basu grazed past them.

Trinamul Congress leader Debangshu Bhattacharya has denied the injuries of Indranuj, raising questions on how can it be possible when someone (Indranuj) sustains injuries on his eye only if a big car runs over him? No one can believe it, he claimed.

The agitating students warned of intensified protests if Prof Gupta did not turn up on the campus to meet them within the stipulated time. They claimed that the VC and university authorities

have denied the injuries of Indranuj, raising questions on how can it be possible when someone (Indranuj) sustains injuries on his eye only if a big car runs over him? No one can believe it, he claimed.

National Safety Week observed at Kolkata port

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE KOLKATA, 5 MARCH

The 54th National Safety Week was kicked off today at Syama Prasad Mookerjee Port, Kolkata (SMP Kolkata). The programme inaugurated by chairman, SMP Kolkata, Rathendra Raman at the Netaji Subhas Dock of SMP Kolkata today is to last till 10 March. The theme of the programme, this year, is 'Safety and Well-being Crucial for Viksit Bharat.'



The SMP has planned various programmes from 5-8 March, both in Haldia Dock Complex and Kolkata Dock System of SMP Kolkata for the port employees and dock workers to promote safety. In the Kolkata dock system, quiz competitions on safety protocols for port employees, fire mock drills, safety training, free medical camps and awareness training on AIDS as well as seminars on road and transport safety will be organised by the port author-

ity. In Haldia dock complex, training programmes on fire safety, awareness sessions, quiz competitions, seminars on environmental aspects and plays on safety have been organised during the safety week. The valedictory ceremony of the National Safety Week is to be held on 10 March.

KMC to extend pisciculture facilities at waterbodies for natural balance

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE KOLKATA, 5 MARCH

Aiming to preserve the ecological balance, the environment department of Kolkata Municipal Corporation is working on schemes to extend pisciculture in various waterbodies.



The civic body has around 8,040 water bodies spread over an area of around 1,71,30,045 square metres. The waterbodies that have been geo-tagged by the municipal corporation, cover around 8.36 per cent of the KMC area. The environment department is said to have solved 25 cases in the past year, including relocation of waterbodies. The municipal corporation also carried out satellite surveys along with ground verification using photo documentation for maintaining an inventory of the water bodies in across wards 1 to 144.

As a part of the initiative of curbing filling of ponds within the KMC limits, the civic body has undertaken measures of pisciculture in 70 waterbodies. The municipal corporation is now mulling plans to extend the measures to other waterbodies with the help of the state fisheries department. For this, local youths from various clubs and even interested fishermen are to be provided pisciculture training. Apart from this, the fishermen would also be provided with tools for fishing.

From testing the water quality to fencing the waterbodies and taking care of those, the fishermen would be provided knowledge of capacity building by the fisheries department. With the help of experts, the department and the civic body would also help in taking those fish stocks to the marketplaces.

Students' body condemns police action

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE KOLKATA, 5 MARCH

The AIDS O demanded punishment of all the guilty police officers, including the OC of Midnapore Kotwali women's police station involved in the brutal atrocities committed in police custody of students, who supported the college-university student strike.

The All India Democratic Students Organisation held a press conference today to condemn the torture on its members. The West Midnapore (North) organizational district secretary Tanushree Bez, along with Susrita Soren, Ranushree Bez and Varnali Nayak were present at the meet.

The state president of the organisation, Manishankar Patnaik, said, "On 1 March, in protest against the incident of the state education minister's car running over the chest of a protesting student at Jadavpur University, a student strike was held on 3

March. During picketing at Vidyasagar University, the police arrested the organisers. A female organiser was punched on the chest and made her unconscious. One of the organisers was arrested in an injured state. No medical treatment was provided after the arrest. The women were taken to the Midnapore Women's Kotwali police station. While making the women organisers sign the arrest memo, wax from a burning candle was poured on their hands and feet. They played Bollywood songs during torture. We condemn this behaviour of the police administration and demand punishment for all the police officers."

Mamata to deliver lecture at Oxford University later this month

AGENCIES KOLKATA, 5 MARCH

West Bengal chief minister Mamata Banerjee will visit the United Kingdom to deliver a lecture at the historic Oxford University.



The invitation to deliver the lecture there was sent to the chief minister's office (CMO) last year.

As per the schedule, the chief minister will fly to Dubai first from Kolkata on 21 March, and from Dubai to London.

"Besides delivering the lecture at Oxford University, the chief minister has some other scheduled programmes in the UK. She is also expected to meet some UK-based industrialists and discuss the potentials of their investments in West Bengal," said a state government official.

However, it is not yet clear on which subject the chief minister will be delivering her address at the haloed university.

Adhir urges railway minister for special Eid trains

KOLKATA, 5 MARCH

Senior Congress leader and erstwhile Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha, Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury, has urged today railway minister Ashwini Vaishnaw to introduce special trains on the Malda, Murshidabad, and Dinajpur (North and South) routes ahead of Eid-ul-Fitr to accommodate the surge in passenger traffic during the festive season. In a letter addressed to the railway minister, Chowdhury highlighted that Murshidabad district has the highest concentration of Muslim population in the country, and with the ongoing Ramzan month, passenger traffic to these regions has already risen significantly. The demand is expected to escalate further as people travel to reunite with their families and partake in Eid celebrations, he noted. ■ SNS

STAR-STUDDED



Stars descend on a tram at the Esplanade depot on Wednesday ■ MOUL MONDAL

Yatri Sathi app cab offers service with mobile-free booking at airport

RAJIB CHAKRABORTY KOLKATA, 5 MARCH

In a groundbreaking move to enhance passenger convenience, the West Bengal government has launched the Yatri Sathi app cab service at Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose International (NSCB) Airport, Kolkata.



The initiative aims to assist international and domestic passengers who often face difficulties in booking app-based cabs due to phone battery issues or the absence of an active SIM card while travelling abroad. The Yatri Sathi app cab service has collaborated with a Bengaluru-based IT company to introduce a special booking kiosk at Kolkata Airport. Passengers without a mobile phone can visit the front office of the kiosk, where an executive

will generate a special OTP and book a cab on their behalf. The system does not require the passenger to use their own mobile number or any app-enabled device. This service comes at no additional cost, and passengers will be informed in advance about their route,

fare, and payment details before confirming the booking. A senior official from the IT company behind the Yatri Sathi app, revealed that major airports like Mumbai, Delhi, Chennai, and Bengaluru are also being considered for implementing this service having mobile-free booking. Many international travellers face difficulties in booking app cabs due to non-functional roaming SIMs, making this initiative highly beneficial. State minister of information technology and electronics

Babul Supriyo stated that chief minister Mamata Banerjee has emphasised the need for high-quality transport services for international passengers, business delegates, and tourists arriving at Kolkata Airport from Yatri Sathi app cab.

Speaking at the launch event, Supriyo introduced "The Clean Cab Promise," highlighting Kolkata's nostalgic connection with taxis. "Taxis have a historic and sentimental value in Kolkata. International tourists and travellers from across India have a special fondness for them. That's why we are ensuring clean and well-maintained taxis at the airport," he said. To support this, free cleaning kits have been provided to ensure cabs remain spotless. Suresh Kumar Jain, IG traffic, clarified that Yatri Sathi is not competing

Mine subsidence hits locality in Durgapur

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE DURGAPUR, 5 MARCH

Subsidence fear gripped the coalmine areas of Durgapur as a school building, one concrete residential house and two temporary structures have started sinking. It poses a threat to at least 1,500-odd residents of the locality in Kajora, about 25 km from Durgapur town.

The residents panicked after a large surface area of Anjirbagan locality in Kajora, under Andal PS developed horizontal cracks. Yesterday late afternoon, a portion of a school building cracked and started going down. Further surface cracks devastated the locality this morning. Eastern Coalfields, the functioning Coal India subsidiary erected fencing to prevent entry of the residents to the locality. The ECL runs two mine pits, No. 10 & 11 of Khas Kajora colliery there. The affected Anjirbagan is a bit away from

the currently working mines. ECL field officials blamed that dearth of adequate sand filling in the pre-nationalisation era (prior to 1973) invited the menace of subsidence in the area.

The Khas Kajora mine pits currently operate on the 'R-8' underground coal seam but, in the pre-nationalisation era, the private mine operators had worked desperately on 'R-9' seam at much shallow level. Prashant Kumar, general manager, Kajora Area of ECL said: "We've already rescued the residents, the trapped vehicles, furniture and valuables and have deployed security personnel." The authorities are set to initiate dozing operations there.

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL

NOTICE

1. Applications are invited by the Superintendent of Police Krishnanagar Police District for engagement of 02 (two) numbers of Senior Legal Consultants for Krishnanagar Police District on contractual basis. For further details an application proforma visit <https://wbpolice.gov.in> 2. The application along with the relevant enclosure should be sent addressing to the Superintendent of Police Krishnanagar Police District through mail spkngprdp@gmail.com within 14 (fourteen) days after publication of the said Notice.

ICA - N 923/2025

THUMBNAILS

Congress demands Prahlad Patel's resignation: Opposition Congress in Madhya Pradesh on Wednesday sought the resignation of Madhya Pradesh Minister Prahlad Patel over his "begging remark" and announced protests across the state. Prahlad Patel is the Panchayat and Rural Development Minister in Chief Minister Mohan Yadav's cabinet. Addressing the media, senior Congress leader and former minister Mukesh Nayak said despite being a senior politician, Patel "insulted" people of the state by calling them "beggars", and therefore, should be expelled from the cabinet. "The Congress workers will stage a massive protest against Prahlad Patel to demand his resignation from the cabinet. The protest would be held in Bhopal and several other parts of the state on March 8," Mukesh Nayak, in-charge of MP Congress' media cell, told IANS. Addressing a press conference in Rewa, senior Congress leader Arun Yadav on Wednesday asked the party workers to take this "issue" to the people and "expose" the BJP. Notably, Patel is the minister-in-charge for Rewa district. Patel, who had earlier defended his remark, saying that he had said nothing wrong and instead blamed Congress and a section of media for twisting his statement, took a U-turn on Tuesday, saying that the public is akin to God.

IAS officers always want supremacy over IPS/IFS: SC

The remarks by Justice Gavai came in the course of the hearing of a matter relating to misutilisation of funds

PARMOD KUMAR
NEW DELHI, 5 MARCH

Alluding to the clash of egos between the civil servants belonging to the Indian Administrative Service (IAS), Indian Police Service (IPS) and the India Forest Service (IFS), the Supreme court on Wednesday said that the IAS officers always attempt to show their supremacy over IPS and IFS officers.

Referring to the clash of egos between the IAS, IPS and the IFS, Justice B.R. Gavai, heading a bench also comprising Justice Augustine George Masih remarked: "IAS always wants to show their supremacy over IPS or IFS. This is from my experience as a government pleader and judge as well. This conflict is there in all states and there is heartburn among IPS and IFS that 'though they are from the same cadre, why should they be listening to IAS'."

The remarks by Justice Gavai came in the course of the hearing of an environmental matter relating to mis-utilization of Compensatory Afforestation Fund



Management and Planning Authority (CAMPA) fund for buying things inadmissible under the scope of the fund.

The Solicitor General Tushar Mehta who was present in the hearing of the matter assured the Court that it will try to resolve such internal conflicts between the officers.

In a related matter, the bench took exception to the mis-utilisation of CAMPA fund for inadmissible purposes in Uttarakhand where the fund meant for increasing the green cover across the country was spent on buying iPhones, laptops, fridges, coolers, renovation of buildings and other things.

Calling for an explanation

from Uttarakhand Chief Secretary as to why the funds were utilised for inadmissible purposes, the bench said: "The CAMPA fund is to be utilised for increasing the green cover. Utilization of the same for non-admissible activities and not depositing the interest as per the Compensatory Afforestation Fund Act, 2016, with the state compensatory afforestation funds (SCAF) is a matter of serious concern. We therefore direct the Chief Secretary of the State to file an affidavit on these aspects by the next date" - March 19, 2025.

The top court order came as it took note of the report submitted to it by the amicus curiae K Parmeswar referring

to a report by the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) pointing out that the forest department in Uttarakhand diverted the CAMPA fund to purchase iPhones, laptops, fridges, coolers, renovation of buildings and the court cases, and other things.

Perusing the report of the amicus curiae Parmeswar, the bench noted: "In the said report, the CAG has pointed out various irregularities in the utilization of CAMPA funds. It points out that a huge amount is spent in inadmissible manner on ... renovation of existing buildings, expenses on personage, visits, court cases, purchases of iPhones, laptops, fridges, coolers, etc., the

Women forced to mortgage their gold jewellery under Modi govt, alleges Kharge



STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, 5 MARCH

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge on Wednesday said women have been forced to "mortgage" their gold jewellery under Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led government at the Centre.

Recalling Prime Minister's "snatching mangalsutra" remarks during the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, Kharge said, "Narendra Modi ji, you talked about 'stealing the mangalsutra'. That has now come true. Under your rule, women have been forced to mortgage their gold jewellery."

Notably, Modi during the general elections had said that Congress wants to snatch "mangalsutra" of women as part of its intention to redistribute wealth.

"Between 2019 and 2024, four crore women have taken loans worth Rs 4.7 lakh crore

by mortgaging their gold. Gold loans will account for 38 per cent of the total loans taken by women in 2024. RBI data in February 2025 showed that gold loans increased by a massive 71.3 per cent in a year," the Congress chief said.

Kharge, who is also the Leader of Opposition in Rajya Sabha while attacking the Prime Minister said: "First you made the women's 'stridhan' disappear by implementing demonetization, now due to inflation and falling household savings, they are forced to mortgage their most valuable thing-their jewellery."

He also accused the Prime Minister of worsening the condition of the economy to such an extent that the middle-class families who bought two-wheelers are now unable to pay their loans.

Munde will be back in Cabinet after case cools down: Sena mouthpiece

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
MUMBAI, 4 MARCH

An editorial piece which appeared in the Uddhav Thackeray-led Shiv Sena's Marathi daily print newspaper 'Saamna' claimed on Wednesday that the resignation of Dhananjay Munde on Tuesday was a mere "eyewash" scripted by Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnis and Deputy CM Ajit Pawar to hoodwink people, after assuring Munde that he would be taken back into the ministerial cabinet after the Massajog village official Santosh Deshmukh murder case cools down.

Therefore, neither Chief Minister Devendra Fadnis nor NCP leader and Deputy CM Ajit Pawar can claim that Munde's resignation was sought on moral grounds,



the editorial stated.

The 'Saamna' editorial called 'Agralekhi' in Marathi stated that instead of seeking Munde's resignation, he should have been sacked

from the cabinet and his claim of having quit on moral grounds is a "cruel joke".

Incidentally, Thackeray-led Shiv Sena Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Raut, who is the executive editor of the Marathi daily, is widely believed to have written the editorial, sources said.

The editorial also alleged that the controversial remarks made by the Samajwadi Party MLA Abu Azmi about Mughal emperor Aurangzeb was scripted and choreographed by the Maharashtra chief minister as a "diversionary tactic" to prevent the Opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) from taking credit for Munde's resignation.

"A contract was given to Samajwadi Party MLA Abu Azmi and as soon as Azmi made a statement on Aurangzeb, the BJP started

a ruckus criticising Azmi's statement. When the Opposition raised its voice about Munde's resignation, a diversion was created by the ruling party and the assembly meeting came to an end in that ruckus. At the national level, people like Owaisi and at the state level, people like Abu Azmi are the BJP's brand ambassadors. The BJP's moral bubble burst in the Munde case and the Aurangzeb controversy was created by the government. Do you think people are stupid," the 'Saamna' editorial stated.

Meanwhile, veteran politician Sharad Pawar's daughter and NCP MP Supriya Sule has demanded that Dhananjay Munde must be made a co-accused in the Massajog village official Santosh Deshmukh murder case.

In a related development,

Maratha activist Manoj Jarange Patil also made a serious allegation on Wednesday that Valmik Karad, who is the main accused in the Santosh Deshmukh murder case, had called up Dhananjay Munde after Deshmukh was murdered. He also said that since Valmik Karad was looking after all extortion-related businesses on behalf of Dhananjay Munde, the CID and SIT must investigate Dhananjay Munde.

He alleged that it is Dhananjay Munde had helped the still absconding accused number 8, Krishna Andhale, escape. It is necessary to get a call details record (CDR) of eight days before the Deshmukh murder and the time from the murder to Munde's resignation, he said, adding that many things will be revealed if it is done.

8 men arrested in Rajasthan for raping, threatening woman



STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
JAIPUR, 5 MARCH

The Rajasthan police on Wednesday claimed to have arrested eight men from Bhilwara district of the state for allegedly sexually abusing a woman and threatening her since the last one year.

According to the FIR lodged at the Kotwali police station on Sunday night, the victim had visited a cafe at Badla square of Bhilwara in

March last year, where two of the accused spiked her drink. They then raped her and filmed the act.

The duo later threatened the victim with the video and raped her. The accused also went on to share the video with their friends who all blackmailed the woman and subjected her to more brutality, police said.

The police nabbed the culprits on Monday and Tuesday. All the eight men were produced before the trial court Tuesday evening from where they were remanded in police custody for two days. District police superintendent Dhamendra Yadav has ordered the setting up of a special investigation team (SIT) for a comprehensive probe in the case.

ESTATE OFFICER
SYAMA PRASAD MOOKERJEE
PORT, KOLKATA (SMPK)
(Appointed by the Central Govt. Under
Section 3 of Act 40 of 1971-Central Act)
Proceedings No. 2126, 2126/O of 2024
Order No. 02 Dated 27.02.2025

To
Mrs. V. Madhukar & Co.,
48, Ezra Street,
Kolkata-700 001

AND Any person's interested in
the property
As mentioned herein

Whereas proceedings against Mrs. V.
Madhukar & Co., the O.P. herein, have been
initiated u/s 4 & 7 of the P.P. Act for
adjudication of the prayer of Syama Prasad
Mookerjee Port, Kolkata (SMPK) for eviction
and recovery of dues & damages alongwith
interest in respect of Syama Prasad
Mookerjee Port's land measuring about
3427.19 Sq.mts (Under Plate No. HL-230)
situated at eastern side of Foreshore Road,
Shilpur, Howrah.

Whereas the next date of hearing/filing reply
to show cause etc is fixed on 26.03.2025 at
3 PM at Office of the Estate Officer, Syama
Prasad Mookerjee Port, Kolkata, at the
1st Floor of 'Fairlie Warehouse', 6 Fairlie
Place, Kolkata-700 001, failing which the
matter would be decided ex-parte, without
further reference. For further details
please refer to SMPK's website
http://smpk.kolkata.in
Date: 04.03.2025.

GIVEN UNDER MY HAND & SEAL
Sd/-
(SWARUP NANDY)
ESTATE OFFICER

ECI to devise unified IT architecture to facilitate stakeholders

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, 5 MARCH

The Election Commission of India (ECI) on Wednesday said that a unified IT architecture with a customised dashboard would be devised to facilitate different stakeholders.

The decision was taken during the two-day conference of CEOs of all States/UTs at the India International Institute of Democracy and Election Management (IIDEM), which concluded here today.

"In line with Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Gyanesh Kumar's vision and conviction to deploy technology to bring in system efficiencies in elections, it was decided that a unified IT architecture with a customised dashboard would be devised to facilitate different stakeholders. The single window platform would



streamline input and output flow of information with role-based access," the ECI said in a communiqué.

This will smoothen communication between the functionaries with in-built cross-verification to minimise any human error, it said.

Adopting a modern approach to capacity building, it was also decided that a capsule of animated videos will be produced for each stakeholder, comprehensively covering all aspects of elections related to them. These animated videos will be a handy way for

each stakeholder for self-paced continuous learning.

On the last day of the conference, the CEC, along with Election Commissioners (ECs) Sukhbir Singh Sandhu and Vivek Joshi, reviewed the actionable points presented by each CEO for the

timely delivery of key deliverables. Each CEO has been assigned a distinct stakeholder.

Kumar reiterated that all officials should work as per the existing constitutional and legal framework, including the RP Act 1950 and 1951, the Registration of Elector Rules 1960, the Conduct of Election Rules 1961, and the instructions issued by the ECI from time to time.

"The sessions also signaled a renewed energy to be channeled into strengthening communication at CEO and DEO level for quick response to misinformation and local issues within their domain. The CEOs also discussed the need to enhance reach on social media for continuous engagement with voters in the fast-evolving medialandscape," the ECI said.

DRDO successfully conducts high-altitude trials of indigenous integrated life support system for LCA Tejas

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, 5 MARCH

In a major breakthrough for India's defence aviation sector, the Defence Bio-Engineering and Electro Medical Laboratory (DEBEL), a Bengaluru-based laboratory under the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), has successfully conducted high-altitude trials of the Indigenous On-Board Oxygen Generating System (OBOGS)-based Integrated

Life Support System (ILSS) for the Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) Tejas.

The cutting-edge ILSS, designed to generate and regulate breathable oxygen for pilots, eliminates reliance on traditional liquid oxygen cylinder-based systems. The system underwent rigorous testing on the LCA-Prototype Vehicle-3 aircraft, developed by Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) and the Aeronautical Development Agency (ADA). Trials were conducted



at extreme altitudes of up to 50,000 feet Above Mean Sea Level, along with high-G maneuvers, ensuring com-

pliance with stringent aeromedical standards.

Performance evaluations included testing oxygen concentration levels, demand breathing, availability of 100% oxygen, and full functionality of critical components such as the Anti-G Valve and Breathing Oxygen System (BOS) during various flight phases, including taxiing, take-off, cruise, G-turns, and landing. The trials followed flight clearance from the Centre for Military Airworthiness

and Certification (CEMILAC) and successfully met all specified parameters.

Beyond OBOGS, the ILSS incorporates 10 Line Replaceable Units, including the Low-Pressure Breathing Regulator, BOS, Emergency Oxygen System, Oxygen Sensor, and Anti-G Valve, among others. These components work together to ensure real-time oxygen generation, significantly enhancing pilot endurance and operational effectiveness.

Revisiting the Indian Ocean Tsunami 20 years later

Rijuta Dey

How does one recalibrate their place on earth when the ground beneath them shifts? It has been just over 20 years since a vicious earthquake shattered the seabed in the Indian Ocean and set off killer tsunami waves that destroyed lives across much of Asia. But the catastrophe's particular impact on me lingers on, decades later.

I was part of a group of 50 school students from Loyola School, Jamshedpur, visiting Port Blair (now Sri Vijaya Puram), the capital of the Union Territory of Andaman and Nicobar Islands, in December 2004. That trip, the first one away from parents, turned out to be more memorable than any of us had bargained for.

The morning of December 26 was supposed to be the day we would take a ferry ride to a neighboring island. I often think about the vagaries of fate, and what would have happened if the earthquake measuring 9.1 on the Richter scale had hit just an hour later.

When the earthquake struck, my roommate and I were jolted awake, and we ran down the stairs of our hotel as the building continued shaking ominously. Such was the terrible rush that most of us hardly had time to wear proper clothes or footwear. I had fled sans my eyeglasses, and it was doubly disconcerting to be unable to see the contours of the buildings or even the road that we were standing on. It is that sense of being rudely awakened, the amorphous terror of realizing that I am not safe, that has continued to haunt me, literally and metaphorically, for the next twenty years. For a few years after the earthquake and the ensuing tsunami, I would approach a beach tentatively, and feel uneasy looking at the unending maw of the seemingly calm ocean.

I overcame my fear of the open ocean only when, coaxed gently by my university friends, I swam off the coast of England. My feet cut into the pebbly beach of Brighton after my swim, but I felt invigorated by the realization that the vast ocean had held me and let me explore as my heart desired. The waves were ceaseless but remained in a form I could rely on.

In the immediate aftermath of the earthquake, we were completely cut off from the rest of the world. Roads had cracked open, and we heard that the runways in the small airport were not in a condition to support rescue flights. I called my mother from a phone booth two days later, blithely informing her I was ok, and complained that the ferry ride was never rescheduled. She did not tell me that the earthquake had unleashed monster waves that had wreaked havoc in multiple countries. Instead, I heard her sobbing quietly, and I assured her I was unharmed.

After the initial shock had worn off, we students mostly had fun, camping under the open skies in a local park, as the hotel buildings were too damaged for us to sleep in. We were the first ones to be evacuated, after Jamshedpur-based Tata Steel bigwigs had a word with authorities at Indian Airlines that a bunch of their employees' children were stuck in a disaster zone.

It was only after we had been rescued off the beleaguered island, and I rested my head on my own bed, that the recurring nightmares began. The morning after I was back in my childhood home, I got up in a panic, feeling the bed shake, and realized after several agonizing moments that it was all in my head. I was safe on terra firma, and when I glanced at the clock on the wall, it was just after 6.30 am, right about the same time that the earthquake had struck on December 26.

Over the next two decades, this recurring nightmare took on an insidious life of its own. After the first few months, I was no longer woken up in the mornings by apparitions of an earthquake. The time shifted, as did the frequency. It could catch me unaware at any time of night, my body holding onto the trauma of that December morning with a stubbornness that continues to surprise me.

Anyone who has shared a bedroom with me has witnessed it; me waking up in absolute panic and asking for reassurance that the earth was not shaking - be it my college roommates or later my partners, they all had to tell me decisively: "No, it is just in your head." But just because it was in my head did not make it less real. The crippling fear I feel is the same, and though this does not happen every night, I have become used to self-soothing, opening my eyes wide and willing it to see beyond what my brain shows; that the world is not spiraling out of control. "It is not real," I have told myself repeatedly, be it in New Delhi, London, or New York.

I have gone months without the nightmare, but it seems to have seeped deep into my bones, because it always resurfaces, like a monster of the deep which awakens every time something is awry with the state of the world.

I was driving across Sri Lanka's sun-drenched coast in the summer of 2023 and came across a memorial of a village that had been devastated by the cruel waves that had appeared out of nowhere and left unimaginable destruction in its wake. I remember taking in the quiet calm of the honey-hued beach, and then walking into the azure sea with a smile on my face. Our tremendous tenacity in the face of precariousness is what keeps us going. The normal and the quotidian can turn terrifying in a moment, but our resilience forces us to find our footing every time, even the ground beneath us insists on shifting.

Author bio - Rijuta Dey is a business journalist who has worked across three countries and multiple trade publications. Her work has been published in Al Jazeera, The Times of India, and The Hindu. She lives in New York City.

THUMBNAILS

Kerala anti-ragging measures: Expressing concern at the present set of ragging laws, the Kerala High Court on Wednesday orally pointed out that rules need to be framed under the Kerala Prohibition of Ragging Act, 1998, to effectively tackle the menace. The court also pointed out that the UGC has come up with detailed guidelines to curb ragging in colleges and the state might need to look into the need to introduce changes into the existing law. It asked for a notice to be sent to the UGC and the case posted for further hearing on March 19. Incidentally, on Tuesday, the court said that it will constitute a special bench to hear ragging cases in the state. A division bench, headed by Chief Justice Nitin Jamdar, made the announcement while considering a PIL filed by the Kerala State Legal Service Authority (KLSA) to curb the issue of ragging in the state. The court on Wednesday said that the state can consider constituting a working group from different disciplines and can invite suggestions from the public for the purpose of formulating the rules. The working group should also look into whether the existing state legislation needs to be amended, it added.

Congress aiding BJP's rise, says Kerala CM

Satheesan said Cong has always maintained an uncompromising stance against the Sangh Parivar

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, 5 MARCH

Senior CPI-M leader and Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan has on Wednesday launched a scathing attack on Congress, questioning its credibility regarding secularism and its ability to hold together a broad alliance of secular and regional forces against the BJP, both at the national and state levels.

In an article written in the party mouthpiece, *'Desabhimani'* published ahead of the 24th state conference of CPI-M that begins in Kollam on Thursday, CM Pinarayi Vijayan said that secular forces could no longer trust the Congress. He pointed out that it was Congress which had ensured the victory of the BJP in Delhi and Haryana.

"Congress claims that only they can resist the Sangh Parivar. But, what is the truth? In the states of Rajasthan, Haryana, Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, and Maharashtra, the farmer anger against central policies significantly impacted the BJP in the last Lok Sabha elections and subsequent assembly elections.



Despite this, it is Congress's policy that brought the BJP to power in those places," Pinarayi Vijayan said in the article.

"In both 2015 and 2020, Congress failed to win even a single seat in the Delhi Assembly. Yet, instead of focusing on defeating the BJP, Congress made its primary goal the defeat of the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), which is the main opposition force in Delhi. Congress leaders openly stated that helping AAP win was not their job," he alleged.

He claimed that the Left has been at the forefront of resisting and exposing the anti-people policies of the Sangh Parivar-led central government, mobilising the public while also challenging the Congress's claim of being the

sole force capable of countering the BJP. Pinarayi Vijayan further claimed that from resisting bulldozers on Delhi's streets to leading the legal battle against religious-based citizenship laws in the Supreme Court, the Left has been at the forefront of key struggles, including the historic farmers' protest, the fight to restore Jammu and Kashmir's statehood, and the challenge against the BJP's corporate-funded Electoral Bond Scheme.

"At every stage, the Left has consistently been at the vanguard in defending India's secular and democratic fabric from these relentless attacks," he claimed in the article, and urged secular parties, especially the Indian Union Muslim League (IUMI), to reconsider their alliance with

the Congress.

Coming out strongly against the criticisms leveled against the Congress by Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan, senior Congress leader and Opposition Leader in the Kerala assembly VD Satheesan said that the only party that has compromised with the BJP is the CPI-M, the party of Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan.

Addressing a press conference here, Satheesan said that the Congress has always maintained an uncompromising stance against the Sangh Parivar.

"Where has Rahul Gandhi ever compromised with the BJP? It is Pinarayi Vijayan's CPI-M that has made settlements with the BJP. "The party that has compromised with the BJP is Pinarayi Vijayan's party. While all other opposition parties in India, except CPI-M, have taken a firm stance that Narendra Modi's government is a fascist government, the CPI-M is the only party that has taken a position saying the BJP is not a fascist party. The stand taken by former General Secretary Sitaram Yechury that the BJP is a fascist party, has now been rejected by the CPI-M," Satheesan said.

Karnataka govt to give four per cent reservation for Muslim contractors



LAKSHMANA VENKAT KUCHI
BENGALURU, 05 MARCH

The Congress governments in the states, the few remaining ones that is, appear to compete with one another in giving a handle to the BJP to beat it with—on minority appeasement. After Telangana gave time off to minority office goers to participate in Ramadan, Karnataka government presented the BJP with fresh ammunition with its proposal to give 4 per cent reservation for muslim contractors in government tenders of value upto Rs 1 crore.

The Karnataka government is likely to introduce this reservation through an amendment to the Karnataka Transparency in Public Procurement Act, like it already exists for contractors from scheduled caste and scheduled tribe.

Even before the government can come forward with the formal proposal of amendment it has been hit by an

avalanche of criticism from the BJP, with its state president BY Vijayendra accusing the Congress of indulging in "appeasement politics". The Congress government perceives minorities as only Muslims ignoring other genuinely underrepresented minority communities, the BJP leader said. Earlier Muslims may have been a minority, today they are well-organised and stay in the forefront, the BJP state president said.

It is clear that Muslims are a significant vote bank for the Congress and this is why the party gave reservations in jobs and education, against the spirit of the Constitution. It is the same appeasement tactics at work in this reservation for contractors, Vijayendra alleged.

Demanding that the government withdraw this proposal immediately, the BJP state unit chief said the move would divide society and the state along religious lines. His party colleague

and MLA Mahesh Tenginkai said after Congress came to power two years ago, the influence of Muslims and alleged that the Hubli incident happened only because of the muslims.

Predictably, the Congress defended the decision saying that it aimed to provide equal opportunities to all disadvantaged sections of the society. Congress MLA Rizwan said: "We believe in giving equal opportunities for every minority community, particularly the weaker sections of society. It's not for huge contracts. Small contractors should also get Rs 50 lakh. Small contracts should be available for the multiple small minorities also."

The Congress MLA said that the contracting business is dominated by the upper class. And the Congress government is providing opportunities to the disadvantaged people from various sections like backward classes and Dalits. Every small disempowered and marginalised community should be given this opportunity, and which is why the Congress is thinking of this 4 per cent reservation for Muslim contractors. At present the proposal is before the cabinet for discussion, and it is expected to clear it, the government sources said.

Will fight legally, says advisor to CM Siddaramaiah on MUDA case review plea

AGENCIES
BENGALURU, 5 MARCH

Responding to the development of filing an appeal writ petition against Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and others in the Mysuru Urban Development Authority (MUDA) scam, the Legal Advisor to Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, legislator C.S. Ponnanna on Wednesday said the petitioner has the right to appeal in the case and they will fight it legally.

Speaking to the media here, Ponnanna noted: "The law provides in terms of appeal or revision. The petitioner in the MUDA scam is entitled to appeal, subject to its maintainability. We have always maintained that we fully respect the due process of law and bow down to the decisions and judgments made by the courts

of law. If the petitioner is adopting due process, no one can object, and we don't object to it."

Ponnanna said: "But the whole issue is, they are creating a case for politicising and political gains, which is condemnable. We criticise it. The petitioner makes an allegation that the Lokayukta police are colluding. He is the one who went to the Lokayukta and sought an investigation by the Lokayukta police. Overseen by the judge of the High Court, ADGP and IGP level officer probed it. Now he wants to make allegations against them which are political... One should not mix the two issues. Legal battle, he is entitled to and we will defend it," he stated.

When asked where the MUDA case stands at this stage, whether the court can accept the closure report by

the Lokayukta police or go for a trial, Ponnanna stated: "The final report of the investigation is before the court, the court can decide to take cognizance in the matter, decide to accept the closure report. It can also decide to direct further investigation. There are various options available to the court in law, and it also depends on what the complainant is going to do... We do not know what the complainant is going to do," he said.

Ponnanna stated while answering a question: "About the judgment in the issue relating to transfer of investigation of the MUDA case to the CBI... the order of the quashing the appeal for CBI probe, has been already passed by learned judge, that is the law of the land and that needs to be followed."

Pawan Kalyan names Naga Babu as Jana Sena candidate for MLC polls

AGENCIES
AMARAVATI, 5 MARCH

Andhra Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan has announced his brother K. Naga Babu as his Jana Sena's candidate for the Legislative Council election.

Pawan Kalyan, who is the Jana Sena President, cleared the candidature of Naga Babu, who is a General Secretary of the party.

Naga Babu, the elder brother of Pawan Kalyan and the younger brother of actor Chiranjeevi, is also an actor and film producer. He had actively campaigned for the party in the last year's elections.

TVK chief Vijay calls for Freezing number of Lok Sabha seats based on 1971 census: Tamil actor and Tamilaaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK) President Vijay, on Wednesday called for the indefinite freezing of Lok Sabha seats based on the 1971 Census. In a statement, he emphasised that any delimitation exercise based on new population data would disproportionately disadvantage southern states. Vijay pointed out that the 84th Constitutional Amendment Act had already frozen the number of Lok Sabha seats until 2026, ensuring representation remained aligned with the 1971 Census. However, with the Union government expected to begin the delimitation process next year, he expressed concerns over the lack of transparency regarding the methodology and criteria that would be used. The TVK chief strongly opposed any move to revise seat allocation using updated population data, arguing that it would penalise states that had successfully implemented policies for healthcare, education, and population control over the past five decades. "If the number of seats in southern states is reduced while states like Uttar Pradesh and Bihar gain disproportionate representation, it would be an unjust outcome," Vijay stated.

T E N D E R

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL NOTICE INVITING e-TENDER [(N.I.T. No. 801/CE(M)/WBSTC dated-04.03.2025)] (Abridged e-Tender) e-Tender, in prescribed form in two parts viz. Technical & Financial Bids are invited for the work: 1. For the work of Jetty for Cruise Vessel Operation on long term basis. Tender I.D.: 2025_WBSTC_820146_1. To be Published on 06.03.2025 at 09:00 A.M. Please visit website: www.wbtenders.gov.in in Sd/- OSD & EO Chief Engineer (Marine), For W.B.STC Ltd. ICA- T4764(3)/2025	GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION DEPARTMENT WEST BENGAL Bhabani Bhawan, Alipore, Kolkata-700027 TENDER NOTICE CID, West Bengal is going to upload e-NIT for procurement of 08 (eight) nos. of Real Time Viewing System (RTVS) for BODS Unit, CID, West Bengal. Tender documents will be uploaded in NIC website: https://wbtenders.gov.in in the month of March, 2025. Sd/- Spl. Supdt. of Police (HQ), CID, West Bengal. ICA- T4789(3)/2025	GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL ANNEXURE B.D.O. Khandagosh, Purba Bardhaman invites e-tender for 03 Nos. works, for details visit: www.wbtenders.gov.in refer. Tender Id: 2025_DMB_823294_1 to 2025_DMB_823294_3. Block Development Officer Khandagosh Development Block Memo No. 154(2)/YCA/PUB/BD/NA(DVT), Date: 05-03-2025
GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL PWD TENDER NOTICE Publication of E-Tender of Supply of Protective Kit for VCT and Uniform for VST, Supervisors under Vector Borne Diseases Control Programme at different Blocks, vide this office Notification No. 743 / E-Tender / DPHC / 74 / VBD/CP(H) dated: 05-03-2025. For detailed information regarding terms & conditions in this regard, please login to South 24 Parganas Zilla Parishad's official website i.e. www.zps24pgs.wb.gov.in / s24pgs.gov.in Sd/- Secretary South 24 Parganas Zilla Parishad Memo No. 450(3)/DICO/S-24 PGS. Dt.: 05-03-2025	GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL PWD TENDER NOTICE EE, Kallimpong Division, PWD invites online e-Tender for the work:- "Slope stabilisation work to protect landslide at 7.20 km of 12th Mile to Nimbong Fatak Road Kallimpong Division, PWD in the district of Kallimpong" Estimated Amount:- Rs.14,43,609.00 e-NIT No. 34 of 2024-25 of EE, Kallimpong Division. Tender ID:- 2025_WBPWD_822569_1 Bid submission start date (online): 05.03.2025 from 09:00 A.M. Bid submission Closing date (online): 23.03.2025 upto 12:30 P.M. Corrigendum if any will be published in website only. Details of N.I.T and Tender documents may be downloaded from: https://wbtenders.gov.in Sd/- EE, PWD, Kallimpong Division ICA- T4804(3)/2025	GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL PWD TENDER NOTICE EE, Kallimpong Division, PWD invites online e-Tender for the work:- "Slope stabilisation work to protect landslide at 31.60 km of 12th Mile to Nimbong Fatak Road Kallimpong Division, PWD in the district of Kallimpong" Estimated Amount:- Rs.11,28,416.00 e-NIT No. 33 of 2024-25 of EE, Kallimpong Division. Tender ID:- 2025_WBPWD_822563_1 Bid submission start date (online): 05.03.2025 from 09:00 A.M. Bid submission Closing date (online): 23.03.2025 upto 12:30 P.M. Corrigendum if any will be published in website only. Details of N.I.T and Tender documents may be downloaded from: https://wbtenders.gov.in Sd/- EE, PWD, Kallimpong Division ICA- T4802(3)/2025

Classified

LEGAL NOTICE I, Ram Samujh Sharma, son of Satya Narayan Sharma Manorama Devi wife of Ram Samujh Sharma of C/13-14, Taratala K.O.P.T. Colony, P.O.- Brace Bridge, P.S.- Taratala, Kolkata- 700088, District- South 24 Parganas, Had purchased Scheduled land/property by Deed No. I-4011/2022 from POA, holder Manjit Kaur Banya wife of Balbir Singh Banya, Bearing POA No. 2590, Consulate General of India, Vancouver BC, (Canada). If anybody has any objection on Mutation of said land/property, please inform office of the BL & LRO, Kolkata Block K.M.C. Building, Room No. 328, 5, S.N. Banerjee Road, Kolkata- 700013 in writing or over e-mail: bilrotrm@gmail.com within one month from the date of this advertisement.	PUBLIC NOTICE Sri Shyam Sundar Singha and Sri Asit Kumar Singha alias Asit Singha, both sons of late Anil Kumar Singha on 21/09/2007 appointed Sri Santosh Kumar Agarwal as his constituent attorney vide Bengali Ammoktranama or General Power of Attorney being no. 00711 for the year 2007, the said Sri Santosh Kumar Agarwal being the constituent attorney of Sri Shyam Sundar Singha and Sri Asit Kumar Singha alias Asit Singha on 04/04/2008 sold a Plot of Land measuring about 16.5 Decimals at R.S. Dag No. 874 corresponding to L.R. Dag No. 903 under L.R. Khatian no. 33, Mouza - Unansi, J.L. No.-10, P.S.- Jagacha to my client K.B. Motors Pvt. Ltd. by virtue of the Deed of Conveyance being no. 04985 for the year 2008, registered in D.S.R., Howrah. The said K.B. Motors Pvt. Ltd. had applied for mutation of its name in the record of B.L. & L.R.O., Bally Jagacha, Howrah vide case no. 1606/25. If any persons have any objections in regards to that may contact the Office of the B.L. & L.R.O., Bally Jagacha, Howrah.	PUBLIC NOTICE That my client TASNEEM AKHTAR, W/o. Rizwan Akhtar, of 39D, Broad Street, P.S.: Karaya, Kol.-19, want to purchase land with two stored building measuring 1 cottaah 6 chittas at Premises No. 168, Ustad Bado Golam Ali Khan Sarani, Ward No. 065, Kol.-19, from Shikha Ghosh, W/o. Sushib Ghosh & Lipika Das, W/o. Subir Kumar Das, both daughter of Lt. Dwijendra Nath Day, of 16/B, Broad Street, Kol.-19, if anybody has any claim or demand please contact me within 15 days from this notice.	CHANGE OF NAME Mondal is the same and identical person and my father's name Kanaiail Mondal and Kanaiail Mondal is the same and identical person.
LEGAL NOTICE I, Ram Samujh Sharma, son of Satya Narayan Sharma Manorama Devi wife of Ram Samujh Sharma of C/13-14, Taratala K.O.P.T. Colony, P.O.- Brace Bridge, P.S.- Taratala, Kolkata- 700088, District- South 24 Parganas, Had purchased Scheduled land/property by Deed No. I-4011/2022 from POA, holder Manjit Kaur Banya wife of Balbir Singh Banya, Bearing POA No. 2590, Consulate General of India, Vancouver BC, (Canada). If anybody has any objection on Mutation of said land/property, please inform office of the BL & LRO, Kolkata Block K.M.C. Building, Room No. 328, 5, S.N. Banerjee Road, Kolkata- 700013 in writing or over e-mail: bilrotrm@gmail.com within one month from the date of this advertisement.	PUBLIC NOTICE That my client TASNEEM AKHTAR, W/o. Rizwan Akhtar, of 39D, Broad Street, P.S.: Karaya, Kol.-19, want to purchase land with two stored building measuring 1 cottaah 6 chittas at Premises No. 168, Ustad Bado Golam Ali Khan Sarani, Ward No. 065, Kol.-19, from Shikha Ghosh, W/o. Sushib Ghosh & Lipika Das, W/o. Subir Kumar Das, both daughter of Lt. Dwijendra Nath Day, of 16/B, Broad Street, Kol.-19, if anybody has any claim or demand please contact me within 15 days from this notice.	PUBLIC NOTICE That my client TASNEEM AKHTAR, W/o. Rizwan Akhtar, of 39D, Broad Street, P.S.: Karaya, Kol.-19, want to purchase land with two stored building measuring 1 cottaah 6 chittas at Premises No. 168, Ustad Bado Golam Ali Khan Sarani, Ward No. 065, Kol.-19, from Shikha Ghosh, W/o. Sushib Ghosh & Lipika Das, W/o. Subir Kumar Das, both daughter of Lt. Dwijendra Nath Day, of 16/B, Broad Street, Kol.-19, if anybody has any claim or demand please contact me within 15 days from this notice.	CHANGE OF NAME Mondal is the same and identical person and my father's name Kanaiail Mondal and Kanaiail Mondal is the same and identical person.
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GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL PWD TENDER NOTICE Superintendent Engineer, South-Western Circle, P.W.Dte., Midnapore invites online e-tender for the work "Construction of a Cell/Twin Nos. Road Safety works & (One) No. Construction of Box Culvert with under Barasat Highway Division No.1, inviting from bonafied bidders having credential for similar nature of work. Bid submission closing date (online) will be on 26/03/2025 upto 13:00 hrs. Tender id: 2025_WBPWD_822519_1/2/3 Other details may be seen from website http://wbtenders.gov.in & http://wbpwd.gov.in Sd/- EE/BHD-I/PW(R) Dte. ICA- T4796(3)/2025	GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL PWD TENDER NOTICE Executive Engineer, PWD, Alipurdur Division invites online e-tender for the work of (i)Alipurdur-Volka Road from 11.275 km. to 17.70 km. (in stretches) - Restoration of damaged shoulder due to thorough trench cutting for laying pipe line by P.H.E. Department, Govt. of West Bengal under Alipurdur Division, P.W.D. in the District of Alipurdur. NIET No. 30 of 2024-25 of EE/PWD/APDD Tender ID:- 2025_WBPWD_822582_1 Estimated Amount 10,41,883.00 Bid submission start date (online) 07.03.2025 from 12.00 P.M. Bid submission closing date (online) 21.03.2025 upto 04.00 P.M. Corrigendum if any will be published in website only. Details of NIET & Tender documents may be downloaded from http://wbtender.gov.in Sd/- Tarun Kr. Chakraborty, Superintending Engineer, South Western Circle, P.W.Dte. ICA- T4814(3)/2025	GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL PWD TENDER NOTICE E-Tenders are invited by the undersigned for the work "Annual Maintenance of the Electrical Installation of Main Building, Annex Building-I & Annex Building-II within Sales Tax Complex, Beliaghata-- Special repairing and renovation of garden Light, gate light and allied electrical installation works." NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER NO: WBPWD/EE/63/IR/T/KCED/II/ of 2024-25 & Tender ID- 2025_WBPWD_822357_1 Bid Submission end date - 21.03.2025 upto 02.00 P.M. Website: http://www.pwdwb.in for details contact at the office of the undersigned. Corrigendum if any will be published only the said website. Sd/- B.Mandal, Executive Engineer, PWD, Kolkata Central Electrical Division. ICA- T4786(3)/2025	GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL TENDER NOTICE E-Tenders are invited by the undersigned for the work "Annual Maintenance of the Electrical Installation of Main Building, Annex Building-I & Annex Building-II within Sales Tax Complex, Beliaghata-- Special repairing and renovation of garden Light, gate light and allied electrical installation works." NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER NO: WBPWD/EE/63/IR/T/KCED/II/ of 2024-25 & Tender ID- 2025_WBPWD_822357_1 Bid Submission end date - 21.03.2025 upto 02.00 P.M. Website: http://www.pwdwb.in for details contact at the office of the undersigned. Corrigendum if any will be published only the said website. Sd/- B.Mandal, Executive Engineer, PWD, Kolkata Central Electrical Division. ICA- T4786(3)/2025
GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL PWD TENDER NOTICE Executive Engineer, PWD, Alipurdur Division invites online e-tender for the work of NIET No. 29 of 2024-25 of EE/PWD/APDD. Face Lifting of the University Old Building of Alipurdur University in the district of Alipurdur. Tender ID:- 2025_WBPWD_822538_1 Estimated Amount: Rs.9,95,758.00 Bid submission start date (online) 07.03.2025 from 12.00 P.M. Bid submission closing date (online) 14.03.2025 upto 04.00 P.M. Corrigendum if any will be published in website only. Details of NIET & Tender documents may be downloaded from http://wbtender.gov.in Sd/- EE, PWD, Alipurdur Division. ICA- T4800(3)/2025	GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL TENDER NOTICE E-Tenders are invited by the undersigned for the work "Annual Maintenance of the Electrical Installation of Main Building, Annex Building-I & Annex Building-II within Sales Tax Complex, Beliaghata-- Special repairing and renovation of garden Light, gate light and allied electrical installation works." NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER NO: WBPWD/EE/63/IR/T/KCED/II/ of 2024-25 & Tender ID- 2025_WBPWD_822357_1 Bid Submission end date - 21.03.2025 upto 02.00 P.M. Website: http://www.pwdwb.in for details contact at the office of the undersigned. Corrigendum if any will be published only the said website. Sd/- B.Mandal, Executive Engineer, PWD, Kolkata Central Electrical Division. ICA- T4786(3)/2025	GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL e-TENDER NOTICE WBSD/EE/CED-II/NIT-22(e)/2024-25 E-Tenders are invited by the Executive Engineer, Civil Engineering Division No-II, Sundarban Development Board from the reliable bonafide resourceful contractors for the Construction of B.P. Road & Providing utility services and maintenance of garden in Sagar, Kalkdwip, Namkhana & Patharpratima Block of South 24 Pargana, West Bengal. Details may be had from the office of the EE/CED-II/SDB on working days during office hours or in website: https://wbtenders.gov.in Publishing date: 07.03.2025 at 18.00 hrs. Bid submission start Dt.- 08.03.2025 at 11.00 hrs. Bid submission end Dt.- 21.03.2025 at 15.00 hrs. Sd/- Executive Engineer, Civil Engineering Division No-II, Sundarban Development Board. ICA- T4718(3)/2025	GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL TENDER NOTICE E-Tenders are invited by the Executive Engineer, Civil Engineering Division No-II, Sundarban Development Board from the reliable bonafide resourceful contractors for the Construction of B.P. Road & Providing utility services and maintenance of garden in Sagar, Kalkdwip, Namkhana & Patharpratima Block of South 24 Pargana, West Bengal. Details may be had from the office of the EE/CED-II/SDB on working days during office hours or in website: https://wbtenders.gov.in Publishing date: 07.03.2025 at 18.00 hrs. Bid submission start Dt.- 08.03.2025 at 11.00 hrs. Bid submission end Dt.- 21.03.2025 at 15.00 hrs. Sd/- Executive Engineer, Civil Engineering Division No-II, Sundarban Development Board. ICA- T4718(3)/2025

Furious BJP MLAs walk out from J&K Assembly

After Speaker Abdul Rahim Rather expunges remarks of Leader of Opposition Sunil Sharma

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
Jammu, 5 March

All BJP legislators walked out from the J&K Assembly on Wednesday after Speaker Abdul Rahim Rather expunged the “derogatory remarks” on the 13 July “martyrs” made by Leader of Opposition (LoP) Sunil Sharma.

The House witnessed noisy scenes over the remarks made by Sharma, also a BJP leader. BJP MLAs later staged a walkout after the Speaker Abdul Rahim Rather expunged his remarks.

During the discussion on the Motion of Thanks on the Lieutenant Governor’s address, People’s Democratic Party (PDP) MLA Waheed-ur-Rehman Para, demanded restoration of the 13 July Martyrs Day holiday.

As Para concluded his speech, Leader of Opposition Sunil Sharma stood up and objected to his demand.

“They were not martyrs but……,” Sharma said, evoking widespread protests from the Treasury benches as well as from Kashmir-based opposition parties. The leaders demanded that the remarks be expunged from the records of the House.

“These remarks were humiliating and divisive and should be withdrawn or expunged from the records,” demanded MLA Bandipora Nizamuddin Bhat.

Amid continuous sloganeering between the treasury benches and BJP, Speaker Abdul Rahim Rather announced that the remarks had been expunged from the records of the House.

All BJP MLAs staged a



walkout from the House in protest against the expunging of Sharma’s remarks.

Later, Peoples Conference MLA Sajad Gani Lone demanded that the House pass a resolution for the restoration of holidays on Martyrs Day and on the birthday of National Conference founder Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah.

Cutting across party lines, the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly members expressed grave concern over the rising drug addiction in the region, prompting Speaker Abdul Rahim Rather to order a discussion to seek suggestions from the House on anti-drug measures.

Several MLAs questioned the effectiveness of existing

mechanisms to combat the drug menace. They called for the establishment of an expert panel and a House committee to examine the issue in depth.

Minister for Health Sakina Itoo said: “There has been an alarming increase in drug addiction among the youth of J&K. However, after the launch of ‘Nasha Mukht Abhiyan’, records indicate a slight decline in new registrations.”

The Health Minister made the statement responding to a question by National Conference (NC) MLA Mubarak Gul during the Question Hour.

She informed the House that 25,402 drug addicts have been receiving treatment at various centres in Jammu and Kashmir over the past three years.

Nuclear energy critical for India’s net zero goal: Jitendra Singh



STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, 4 MARCH

Pointing out the crucial role of nuclear energy in India’s transition to clean energy and achieving net zero emissions by 2070, Union Minister for Science and Technology Jitendra Singh on Tuesday called for private sector participation, regulatory reforms, and sustained public engagement.

The Union Minister further announced the launch of a Small Modular Reactor (SMR) R&D Mission, with the objective of developing five SMRs by 2033. These reactors, known for their adaptability, could

be deployed in industrial zones, remote areas, and hard-to-abate sectors like cement and steel manufacturing.

Addressing a post-budget webinar organised by NITI Aayog, Dr. Singh emphasised that Nuclear energy is critical for India’s Net Zero goal.

He highlighted the Union Budget 2024-25’s vision for India’s nuclear power expansion, which sets a target of achieving 100 GW by 2047.

Highlighting the growing energy demand, Dr. Singh said India’s electricity needs are expected to increase four to five times by 2047. While renewable energy sources are

expanding, they alone cannot meet the base-load demand, making nuclear power a key component of India’s energy strategy.

“Achieving 100 GW of nuclear power will require a focused and determined approach, adding around 4 GW annually from now onwards,” Dr. Singh said, expressing confidence in meeting the goal with proper planning and execution.

A major shift in India’s nuclear policy is the proposed involvement of the private sector in designing, building, and operating nuclear power plants.

The Union Minister acknowledged that legislative amendments to the Atomic Energy Act, Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage Act, and Electricity Act would be required to enable this participation. “Opening up the nuclear sector will send a strong policy signal to industry players, boosting investor confidence and encouraging long-term investments,” he noted.

Haryana DGP reviews crime control measures

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
CHANDIGARH, MARCH 5

Haryana DGP Shatruijeet Kapur on Wednesday held a meeting of officers of the State Crime Branch (SCB), and sought a report from officers regarding the action taken so far regarding the pending major cases in the State Crime Branch.

In the meeting, the DGP directed the officers to complete the investigation of the pending cases in a time-bound manner.

This meeting was held at the Police Headquarters located in Sector 6, Panchkula. ADGP-SCB, Mamta Singh, along with DIG-SCB Hamid Akhtar, SSP Mohit Handa, Amit Dahiya, Pooja Dabla, Dhaarna Yadav, Sandeep Malik along with DSSPs and Inspectors participated in

this meeting.

In the meeting, detailed discussions were held regarding major cases related to economic crimes and corruption. During the meeting, officers gave detailed information about the investigation or police action taken so far in the cases.

Kapur said that before investigating any case, the officer should go to its root and prepare a blueprint of when, what and how they have to investigate the case so that appropriate action can be taken against the guilty person.

He also guided the officers regarding solving the pending cases. He clearly said that the investigation of the case should be fair so that no innocent person faces any kind of problem.

Kapur asked the officers

to set a time limit for the investigation of the case and try to ensure that the investigation is completed during this period. He asked ADGP Mamta Singh, who was present in the meeting, to review the pending cases in SCB every week so that the investigation process can be expedited. Legal experts can also be consulted for the investigation of cases.

Kapur said that the State Crime Branch is a strong and important unit of Haryana Police, so it is very important to investigate any case thoroughly. He said that the team of the State Crime Branch should study all aspects of the cases carefully. Along with this, they should work by establishing better coordination with their subordinate officers and employees.

Punjab Police bust drug smuggling network operated by US-based smuggler

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
CHANDIGARH, 5 MARCH

In a major blow to trans-border smuggling amidst the ongoing ‘Yudh Nashian Virudh’ campaign launched on the directions of Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann, Amritsar Rural Police has recovered a 23-kg heroin consignment from the village Devi Daspura in Jandiala.

Divulging details, Director General of Police (DGP) Punjab Gaurav Yadav on Wednesday said that preliminary investigation has revealed that the consignment is linked to a smuggling network operated by USA-based smuggler Jasmit Singh alias Lucky.

In this case, accused Sahilpreet Singh alias Karan of village Devi Daspura, who retrieved the consignment, has been nominated, he said, adding that multiple police teams are actively working to arrest him.

The DGP said that further



investigations are underway to trace both backward and forward linkages in the smuggling network.

Deputy Inspector General of Police (DIG) Border Range

Satinder Singh, accompanied by Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Amritsar Rural Maninder Singh, while addressing a press conference said that Police teams at Naka

Director General of Police (DGP) Punjab Gaurav Yadav on Wednesday said that preliminary investigation has revealed that the consignment is linked to a smuggling network operated by USA-based smuggler Jasmit Singh alias Lucky.

Bandi received a reliable input that accused Sahilpreet Singh alias Karan has retrieved a consignment of heroin from across the border.

Acting swiftly, teams from Police Station Jandiala launched an intelligence operation and recovered 23 packets of heroin, weighing one kg each, kept in a white bag from a pinpointed location in the village Devi Daspura, he said.

He said that the probe revealed that the accused Sahilpreet was in direct touch with USA-based smuggler

Jasmit Singh alias Lucky, who arranged the consignment.

According to the information, Jasmit Singh alias Lucky has a criminal background, and cases on the Arms Act and Attempt to Murder are registered against him.

The DIG said that police teams are on a manhunt to nab the accused, Sahilpreet alias Karan.

In this regard, an FIR dated 4 arch has been registered under section 21C of the NDPS Act at Police Station Jandiala in Amritsar Rural.

Punjab Police demolish illegal construction of drug peddler in Jalandhar: In the ongoing crackdown on drug peddlers, Commissionerate Police Jalandhar, in coordination with the municipal corporation, on Wednesday, demolished an illegal property belonging to a drug smuggler. The encroached structure, constructed on government land allegedly using drug money, was razed as part of the ongoing campaign “Yudh Nashian Virudh.” Divulging the details about the case, Commissioner of Police Jalandhar stated that the municipal corporation received information about an illegal construction on government land by a notorious drug smuggler, Dharminder, son of Mohan Lal, a resident of Dhankiya Mohalla, Jalandhar. The property was reportedly built using proceeds from his illegal drug trade. Acting on the info, teams of the municipal corporation and police swung into action and demolished the encroachment, sending a strong message that drug-related activities won’t be tolerated in Jalandhar. The CP Jalandhar further revealed that Dharminder is a habitual offender with six cases registered against him under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act. ■ SNS

HC anguished over failure of J&K, Ladakh in filing response on ‘poor’ health facilities

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, 5 MARCH

Taking serious note of the authorities’ failure to file their response on “poor medical facilities”, a division bench of the High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh on Wednesday expressed anguish over the non-serious approach of the Union Territories (UTs) of J&K and Ladakh regarding the issue. The court directed that if the needful is not done within two weeks, the Administrative Secretaries of both UTs must appear in person before the bench on the next date of hearing on 24 March.

During the hearing of a petition, Advocate Sheikh Shakeel Ahmed highlighted the ordeal of a tribal woman who delivered a baby on the road in broad daylight in the Jhelum constituency of Kishtwar district.

The division bench comprised Chief Justice Tashi Rabstan and Justice MA Chowdhary.

The bench was hearing a PIL titled Balwinder Singh v/s UT of J&K and Others regarding inadequate health infrastructure and the shortage of doctors and paramedics in rural areas of J&K and Ladakh.

The bench expressed displeasure over the failure of both UTs to file their response as per its order dated February 4, 2025, which had directed them to respond to petitioner Balwinder Singh’s suggestions for improving health infrastructure in the erstwhile state of J&K.

Form No. 3
See Regulation-15(1)(a) / 16(3)
**DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL
KOLKATA (DRT 3)**
8th Floor, Jeevan Sudha Building
42-C, Jawahar Lal Nehru Road
Kolkata - 700071

Case No. : OA/638/2023
Summons under sub-section (4) of section 19 of the Act, read with sub-rule (2A) of rule 5 of the Debt Recovery Tribunal (Procedure) Rules, 1993
Exh. No.: 5371
BANK OF BARODA
VS
OISHI DATTA AND ANR.

To
(1) **Oishi Datta And Anr.**, DW/S/O- Kisor Datta, 39/D, East End Park, City Apartment, 1st Road, Flat No. 02, 2nd Floor, South Twenty Four Parganas, West Bengal - 700099
(2) **Mr. Kisor Datta**, 39/D, East End Park, City Apartment, 1st Road, Flat No. 02, 2nd Floor, South Twenty Four Parganas, West Bengal - 700099

SUMMONS
WHEREAS, OA/638/2023 was listed before Hon’ble Presiding Officer/ Registrar on 03.01.2025.
WHEREAS this Hon’ble Tribunal is pleased to issue summons/ notice on the said Application under Section 19(4) of the Act, (OA) filed against you for recovery of debts of Rs. 30,20,214.29 (application along with copies of documents etc. annexed).
In accordance with sub-section (4) of section 19 of the Act, you, the defendants are directed as under-
(i) to show cause within thirty days of the service of summons as to why relief prayed for should not be granted;
(ii) to disclose particulars of properties or assets other than properties and assets specified by the applicant under serial number 3A of the original application;
(iii) you are restrained from dealing with or disposing of secured assets or such other assets and properties disclosed under serial number 3A of the original application, pending hearing and disposal of the application for attachment of properties;
(iv) you shall not transfer by way of sale, lease or otherwise, except in the ordinary course of his business any of the assets over which security interest is created and/or other assets properties specified or disclosed under serial number 3A of the original application without the prior approval of the Tribunal;
(v) you shall be liable to account for the sale proceeds realised by sale of secured assets or other assets and properties in the ordinary course of business and deposit such sale proceeds in the account maintained with the bank or financial institutions holding security interest over such assets.
You are also directed to file the written statement with a copy thereof furnished to the applicant and to appear before Registrar on 01.04.2025 at 10:30 A.M. failing which the application shall be heard and decided in your absence.
Given under my hand and the seal of this Tribunal on this date: 13.01.2025.
Signature of the Officer authorised to issue summons
sd/-
Registrar-in-Charge
Debts Recovery Tribunal-3, Kolkata

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON
See Section 82 CrPC
Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused person **Sisir Kumar Dey S/o Lt. Prakesh Chandra Dey**, Prop. of M/s Sisir Kumar Dey Bijoy Pali Kalna Road (Hafijulla Road North) Bardhaman Sadar, Distt.-Burdwan, West Bengal, has committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence in **CT No. 649/2017, U/S 138 NI Act, P.S. Patel Nagar, West Distt., New Delhi-08** and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said accused **Sisir Kumar Dey** cannot be found, and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said accused **Sisir Kumar Dey** has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant);
Proclamation is hereby made that **Sisir Kumar Dey** the said accused of **CT No. 649/2017, U/S 138 NI Act, P.S. Patel Nagar, West Distt., New Delhi-08**, is required to appear before this Court to answer the said complaint on or before **22.04.2025**.
By Order
Sh. Shubham Gupta
Judicial Magistrate First Class (NI Act)-4,
West Distt., Room No. 04, Annexe-I
Tis Hazari Courts, Delhi

CALL FOR EMPANELMENT OF NATIONAL WASH EXPERTS BY SPM NIWAS, KOLKATA
Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee National Institute of Water & Sanitation (SPM-NIWAS), Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation, Ministry of Jal Shakti, Govt. of India, Kolkata, invites online applications from sector experts for Empanelment as National WASH Experts under the following categories:
• Regional / Bulk Water Supply Expert
• In-Village Water Supply Expert
• Hydrogeology Expert
• Solid & Liquid Waste Management Expert
• Community Mobilization Expert
• Water Quality Expert
Eligibility:
• Maximum age 69 years as of 01-04-2025
• Engagement till the maximum age of 70 years
Last date for submission of online application: **11-03-2025 till 6 P.M. IST.**
How to Apply:
• Applications must be submitted online only at <https://tinyurl.com/NWE25app>
Scan QR CODE
• Detailed eligibility criteria, terms & conditions may also be seen in above URL.
• Only online applications shall be accepted. Applications submitted by any other mode shall be ignored without any notice.
SPM NIWAS, near IIM Calcutta, D.H. Road, Joka, Kolkata-700104, E-mail: spm.niwas@gov.in
CBC 45128/11/0001/2425

JADAVPUR UNIVERSITY
Kolkata-700 032
B.P. Ed. Admission (session 2025-2026)
Applications are invited for admission to 2-year B.P.Ed. course to be made on-line through the University website <https://jadavpuruniversity.in/> on and from March 5 to March 19 (upto 4 pm), 2025. Details will be available in the University web page on and from 05/3/2025. Reservations for admission to B.P.Ed. quota is as per State Govt. rules. It is to be noted that Ragging is prohibited as per the decision of the Supreme Court of India in Writ Petition No.(c)656/1998. Dean Faculty Council of Arts

WEST BENGAL STATE UNIVERSITY
Barasat, Kolkata-700126
NOTICE
Ph.D. Course 2025
For "Notification for admission to Ph.D. Courses in March 2025 in different subjects". Please refer to the Website: www.wbsubregistration.org or [https://wbsu.ac.in](http://wbsu.ac.in)
Sd/- Registrar (Officiating)

पंजाब एण्ड सिंद बैंक
(Punjab & Sind Bank)
Kolkata Branch
Zonal Office : Kolkata, 14/15, Old Court House Street, Kolkata- 700001, Phone No. 033-22485867 E-mail : zo.kolkata@psb.co.in
RECRUITMENT
Punjab & Sind Bank (A Government of India Undertaking) invites applications for post of: Medical Consultant (on Contractual Basis) at its Zonal Office Kolkata. For details, please visit Bank's Website : <https://punjabandsindbank.co.in/content/recruitment>
ZONAL MANAGER

HDFC BANK
HDFC Bank Limited
Branch: 4, Mangoe Lane, 5th Floor, Surendra Mohan Ghosh Sarani, Kolkata- 700001.
Tel: (033)- 6608-6234 CIN L65920MH1994PLC080618 Website: www.hdfcbank.com
DEMAND NOTICE
Under Section 13 (2) of the Securitisation And Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (Act) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.
Whereas the undersigned being the Authorised Officer of **HDFC Bank Limited** (erstwhile HDFC Limited having amalgamated with HDFC Bank Limited by virtue of a Scheme of Amalgamation approved by Hon'ble NCLT-Mumbai vide order dated 17th March 2023) (**HDFC**) under Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement Of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13 (12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002, issued Demand Notices under Section 13 (2) of the said Act, calling upon the Borrower(s) / Legal Heir(s) / Legal Representative(s) to pay the amounts mentioned in the respective Demand Notices, within 60 days from the date of the respective Notices, as per details given below. The undersigned have, caused these Notices to be pasted on the premises of the last known respective addresses of the said Borrower(s) / Legal Heir(s) / Legal Representative(s). Copies of the said Notices are available with the undersigned, and the said Borrower(s) / Legal Heir(s) / Legal Representative(s), may, if they so desire, collect the respective copy from the undersigned on any working day during normal office hours.
In connection with the above, Notice is hereby given, once again, to the said Borrower(s) / Legal Heir(s) / Legal Representative(s) to pay to **HDFC**, within 60 days from the date of publication of this Notice, the amounts indicated hereinafter in their respective names, together with further interest @ 18% p.a. as detailed in the said Demand Notices from the respective dates mentioned below in column (c) till the date of payment and / or realisation, read with the loan agreement and other documents/writings, if any, executed by the said Borrower(s). As security for due repayment of the loan, the following Secured Asset(s) have been mortgaged to **HDFC** by the said Borrower (s) respectively.
Borrower(s) / Legal Heir(s) / Legal Representative(s) attention is invited to the provisions of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available to redeem the secured assets.

Sr. No	Name of Borrower(s) / Legal Heir(s) / Legal Representative(s)	Total Outstanding Dues	Date of Demand Notice	Description of Secured Asset(s) / Immovable Property (ies)
(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)
1.	Borrower : Mr. Abhishek Ghosh Co-Borrower : Mrs. Padmabati Ghosh	Rs. 9,59,851/- as on 30.09.2024 *	18.02.2025	The property being Apartment No.: MN-VIII 3D, admeasuring 650 sq. ft. (60.40 sq. mtrs) (sbu) approx., on the Third Floor of Block: Manasi-VIII of the housing complex known as "Sunrise Junction", constructed upon land admeasuring 354 cottahs 13 chittaks more or less, situated at Mouza: Kumharhat, RS Dag Nos.: 2652, 2666, 2667, 2654, 2759, 2655, 2742 - 2749, 2750 - 2762, 2742/3568, 2764, 2768, 2769, 2767, 2765, 27763, 2652, 2654 - 2658, 2660, 2661, 2846, 2854, 2856/3561, 2874, 2848, 2843, 2846/3561, 2845/3606, 2843, 2766, 2844, 2843, 2846, LRP 332, 2845, 2769, Khatian No.: 69, 449, 450, 296, 448, 75, 354/1174, 47, 74, 307, 223, 307, 308, 6, 74/1125, 48/47, 43, 999, 70, 316, 54, 6050, 49, 31, 272/216, 272/169, LR815, 52, LR208, 77, 145, LRP 332, 170, 171, 373, 1162, LR592, 188, 145, 653, 296, 448, 62, Hal 42, 543, 946, within the limits of Dhapdaphi - I Gram Panchayat, P.S.: Barupur, Dist.: South 24 Parganas, Pin: 743357, alongwith the undivided proportionate share of the land and construction thereon present and in future (the said property).
2.	Borrower : Mr. Sanjay Kumar Co-Borrower : Mrs. Anindita De	Rs. 24,82,104/- as on 30.09.2024 *	18.02.2025	The property being Flat No.: B/E-2, admeasuring 945 sq. ft. (87.82 sq. mtrs) (sbu) approx., on the Fifth Floor of Block: B, together with one four wheeler car parking space admeasuring 104 sq. ft. (9.66 sq. mtrs) in the common car parking area of the Ground Floor of the building known as "Gokuldham", constructed upon land admeasuring 73 sataks more or less, situated at Mouza: Hirapur, JL No.: 18, RS Plot No.: 4245, 3782, RS Khatian No.: 179, LR Plot No.: 4729, 4208, LR Khatian No.: 5630, within the limits of Ward No.: 106 of Asansol Municipal Corporation, P.S.: Hirapur, Dist.: Paschim Burdwan, Pin : 713325, alongwith the undivided proportionate share of the land and construction thereon present and in future (the said property). The premises is butted and bounded as follows : On the North: River side Road, On the South: Property of RS Plot No.: 4245(P), On the East: Property of RS Plot No.: 4245, On the West: Property of RS Plot No.: 3781
3.	Borrower : Mrs. Shampa Chakraborty	Rs. 26,59,580/- as on 31.08.2024 *	18.02.2025	The property being a flat admeasuring 780 sq. ft. (72.49 sq. mtrs.) (sbu) approx., on the South - East side of the Second Floor of the building constructed upon land admeasuring 02 cottahs 13 chittaks more or less, situated at Mouza : Khanpur, JL No.: 46, EP No.: 746, SP No.: 392, CS Plot No.: 283(P), 284(P), within the limits of Ward No.: 98 of Kolkata Municipal Corporation, Premises No.: 170/384, Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose Road, Postal Premises No.: 1/41A, Netaji Nagar, P.S.: Netaji Nagar, Kolkata : 700092, alongwith the undivided proportionate share of the land and construction thereon present and in future (the said property). The premises is butted and bounded as follows : On the North : Property of EP No.: 745, On the South : Property of EP No.: 748, On the East : Property of EP No.: 759, On the West: 18 feet wide Colony Road

*with further interest @ 18% p.a. as applicable, incidental expenses, costs, charges etc incurred till the date of payment and / or realization.
If the said Borrowers shall fail to make payment to **HDFC** as aforesaid, then **HDFC** shall proceed against the above Secured Asset(s) / Immovable Property (ies) under Section 13 (4) of the said Act and the applicable Rules entirely at the risk of the said Borrower(s) / Legal Heir(s) / Legal Representative(s) as to the costs and consequences. The said Borrower (s) / Legal Heir(s) / Legal Representative(s) are prohibited under the said Act to transfer the aforesaid Secured Asset (s) / Immovable Property (ies), whether by way of sale, lease or otherwise without the prior written consent of **HDFC**. Any person who contravenes or abets contravention of the provisions of the Act or Rules made thereunder shall be liable for imprisonment and/or penalty as provided under the Act.

Date: 06.03.2025
Place: Kolkata

For **HDFC Bank Limited**
Sd/- **Hirak Kumar Parai**
Authorised Officer

Regd. Office: HDFC Bank House, Senapati Bapat Marg, Lower Parel (West), Mumbai - 400013

epaper.thestatesman.com

Hunger lost

India's economic ambitions rest on its ability to foster a generation of entrepreneurs willing to take risks, build industries, and create jobs. Yet, a troubling trend has emerged ~ many young business heirs and well-educated professionals prefer managing inherited wealth rather than venturing into operational businesses. This shift away from production and innovation toward financial management poses long-term concerns for India's industrial and economic future. The younger generation of business leaders often gravitates toward investment management, trading, and running family offices rather than engaging in manufacturing or core business operations. Unlike their predecessors, who built enterprises from the ground up, many of today's wealthy young entrepreneurs focus on maintaining and growing financial assets. While wealth preservation is important, an economy thrives when individuals create and scale businesses, generating employment and industrial growth. This preference for financial management over business creation is not confined to business families. Even among the middle class, a similar trend is visible. Engineering graduates increasingly opt for finance, consulting, or managerial roles rather than engaging in core engineering or manufacturing. The rapid growth of the services sector, particularly IT and financial services, has made desk jobs in metro cities more attractive than factory-based roles. The perception that managing money is more prestigious and rewarding than building tangible businesses has gained ground over decades, further discouraging industrial entrepreneurship. Several factors contribute to this shift. Cultural attitudes play a major role ~ working in finance or technology is often seen as more sophisticated than managing production on the factory floor. In many business families, young successors now prefer urban lifestyles over the demanding realities of running manufacturing operations in remote industrial hubs. Additionally, regulatory changes and technological advancements have enabled many Indian entrepreneurs to manage their businesses remotely from overseas financial centres. This detachment from core business operations weakens India's manufacturing potential. Unlike countries such as China, where industrial entrepreneurs aggressively expand their operations, India's next-generation business leaders often shy away from the challenges of scaling production. As a result, India continues to lag in manufacturing, missing opportunities to create globally competitive industrial enterprises. Reversing this trend requires a cultural and structural shift. Business families must encourage young successors to gain hands-on experience in operations rather than taking a shortcut to wealth management. Educational institutions should emphasise entrepreneurship in manufacturing and industrial sectors, not just finance and services. The government, too, must make manufacturing more attractive by ensuring ease of business, reducing compliance burdens, and incentivising industrial investment. India needs entrepreneurs who are hungry to build, not just manage. Sustainable economic growth depends on individuals willing to innovate, take risks, and drive industrial expansion. If the country fails to revive its manufacturing and entrepreneurial spirit, it risks stagnation, with wealth merely circulating within financial markets instead of creating real economic value.

Trapped Refugees

The forced deportation of Afghan refugees from Pakistan underscores the grim reality faced by displaced populations who find themselves at the mercy of shifting political priorities. For decades, Pakistan has hosted millions of Afghans, many of whom fled conflict, persecution, and economic collapse in their homeland. However, as geopolitical tensions rise and Pakistan enforces stricter immigration policies, these refugees are being pushed into an impossible choice ~ live in fear or return to a country where their safety is far from assured. The situation is particularly dire for those with past associations with Afghanistan's former government and security forces. Despite the Taliban's assurances of a general amnesty, reports continue to surface of targeted killings and persecution. Families that sought refuge in Pakistan after the Taliban takeover in 2021 are now being forced back, with little consideration for the dangers they might face. Many have spent years in Pakistan, building lives, raising children, and contributing to local economies, only to find themselves labeled as illegal migrants and subjected to mass arrests and deportations. Pakistan's decision to expel undocumented Afghans is not happening in isolation. It reflects broader regional tensions, particularly concerning cross-border security issues. Pakistan has accused Afghanistan-based militant groups of orchestrating attacks on its soil, leading to a hardening of policies towards Afghan refugees. While national security concerns are legitimate, the indiscriminate crackdown on vulnerable refugees ~ many of whom have no ties to militancy ~ raises serious ethical and humanitarian questions. The plight of these refugees is compounded by the bureaucratic inertia of international organisations and resettlement programmes. Thousands of Afghans who were promised relocation to Western countries remain in limbo, unable to access legal pathways to safety. Reports suggest that even those recognised by international refugee agencies as deserving of protection have not been spared from deportation. The slow-moving resettlement process has left many stranded, exposing them to arbitrary arrests, poor detention conditions, and forced returns. The broader issue at play here is the lack of a sustainable, humane refugee policy in the region. Pakistan is not a signatory to the 1951 Refugee Convention, which means it does not formally recognise asylum seekers under international law. Instead, Afghan refugees in Pakistan exist in a legal grey zone ~ permitted to stay for decades yet never granted real security. This policy vacuum has made them vulnerable to shifting political winds, where one moment they are tolerated and the next they are treated as a national burden. A lasting solution requires a multi-pronged approach. International organisations must expedite the resettlement of vulnerable Afghans, while Pakistan and other host countries should be encouraged to adopt a more compassionate approach to refugees. Afghanistan's Taliban-led government must also be held accountable for creating conditions that force millions to flee. Until these measures are taken, Afghan refugees will continue to live in fear ~ unwanted in the countries they fled to and unsafe in the land they once called home.

Fatuous Sagacity~III

It may sound almost blasphemous to say that economists have, more often than not, done more harm than good to society and the world at large. No doubt economists have made significant contributions in creating awareness about the need to improve material life and showing the possible road maps for human progress, human welfare and economic development of the global community. But history has also been a saga of failed economic experiments

Mathematization of economics propelled the discipline of political economy to the pedestal of pure science making it a complex discipline. The fact that economic theories can never be proved by scientific experiments is enough to show that it cannot be categorized as a 'science' subject. The entry of a large number of mathematicians encroaching upon the domains of economics led to an adage: "bad mathematicians make good economists." While many of the Classical and Neo-Classical economists had been mathematicians, none of them tried to mathematize economics and only used graphical and geometrical figures to explain things. It is only after the publication in 1958 of the book, Linear Programming and Economic Analysis authored by Dorfman, Samuelson and Solow (DOSSO) that many mathematical techniques and models developed during the wartime like linear programming, input-output analysis, game theories etc. invaded economics in a big way making economics almost a part of mathematical science (mathematics is considered as the "purest" science). Among Indian economists, US-turned scholars like Sukhamoy Chakravarty started teaching DOSSO at Presidency College and later in the Delhi School of Economics but students like me could hardly understand anything except his dancing teaching style.

Today, the world boasts of thousands of good economists all over the world and millions of students study economics in schools, colleges, universities and academic institutions making it the most popular and sought after discipline. More students take economics as the mainstream subject than any other discipline making it one of the most important, if not the most important, subject of study. Greater job opportunities beckon students doing post-graduate and PhD in economics. In many democratic countries like India there are economic advisory councils to the prime ministers and the presidents, economic advisors to the government and an organized economic service in the bureaucracy. The Central banks, the commercial banks and corporates appoint teams of economists to play the role of advisors.

It may sound almost blasphemous to say that economists have, more often than not, done more harm than good to society and the world at large. No doubt economists have made significant contributions in creating awareness about the need to improve material life and showing the possible road maps for human progress, human welfare and economic development of the global community. But history has also been a saga of failed economic experiments. Conflicting economic theories, models and ideological bias have created considerable confusion at the macroeconomic level. At the microeconomic level too, concepts and theories which are mostly abstract models have had indirect adverse psychological effects on humanity.

From the philosophical point of view, concepts like 'insatiable human desire,' 'maximization of consumer utility', 'maximization of production' 'maximization of profits', 'maximization of



sales', 'no limits of economic development' and popular economic jargon have given rise to crass consumerism, materialism, greed, unethical competition, unethical production, unethical advertising and sales completely ignoring the social cost and the environmental damage.

Economic failures are never attributed to economists who take the high moral ground of invincibility of their theories and easily shift the burden to politicians who fail to understand the inherent flaws in the economic models. Development models like the Harrod-Domar model, the Solow-Swan model, the Lewis model, Rostow's stages of economic growth and endogenous growth models for economic development for the under-developed countries have hardly made any good and met with failures not because of the politicians but because of the basic flaws in the models which were abstract mathematical formulations. There is perhaps no instance where the prescriptions given by the top economists of the IMF for structural adjustments in the developing countries have succeeded in reviving their economies. This is obvious because there are too many variables in society and economic models built with restricted variables are bound to be abstract and impracticable ignoring the social, political and cultural factors.

A monumental failure of the economic community was observed in 2007-2008 when the world was passing through its worst economic crisis in history. At that time, at least one hundred top economists including dozens of Nobel laureates in economics were living in the USA but except for an indication from one economist, Joseph Stiglitz, none of the top economists could predict the coming disaster. Over confident (or arrogant) economists working in the IMF, the World Bank, the Reserve Banks and in the governments exude a belief that they have solutions for every economic ill. But their macroeconomic predictions about national income, growth rates, inflation, foreign trade, FDI and the nation's economic health have, more often than not, gone wrong. By what name should we call them ~ economic astrologers?

According to many experts, the discipline of economics cannot be regarded as an exact and integrated 'science' because of the multiplicity of theories and models on the same economic phenomena. The theories are also based on assumptions rather

than on reality making their validity controversial. Since economics deals with human activity and behaviour which cannot be exactly predicted, economic theories are at best an indicator of what may actually happen. Economics as a discipline is also fragmented into multiple disciplines and the economists are sharply divided among themselves being worshippers of different political ideologies and therefore, are not able to reach unanimity on any matter.

It appears no economist is free from political bias and their political convictions have coloured their economic ideas, theories and models. Economics has branched out into different disciplines cultivated by various schools of thought ~ the Cambridge School, the London School, the Lausanne School, the Austrian School, the Chicago School, the Harvard-MIT School, the historical school, the Marxist School etc. Accordingly, the economists are branded as capitalistic or free-market economists, Marxist economists, Socialist economists, mixed economists and Islamic economists depending on their political ideology. Economists are vertically divided into two major camps ~ the capitalist camp and socialist camp. The capitalist or the free market democratic economists do not consider socialist economics as part of mainstream economics while socialist or left economists consider the capitalist economists as reactionary. Economic theories, ideas and models, often conflicting and contradictory, developed by the opposing schools of thought, especially by the Marxist and Socialist Schools, have created more confusion and disaster than providing real time solutions to economic problems, which the economists are supposed to do.

It will be seen that the discipline of economics cannot be divorced from politics and political bias and that is why the classical and neo-classical economists had named the subject as Political Economy and they were all known as political economists. Application and validity of economic theories are dependent on the political and economic system a country has adopted. Success of Macroeconomic theories and models concerning Money, Capital, Taxation, Trade, Inflation, Growth, Public Finance and Economic Development etc. will depend on the political system, the governance system and basically the political will. The manner in which the largest economy

of the world, the United States, is functioning today, can there be any distinction between politics and economics? Increasing mathematization of economics has made it an abstract science which has little utility in the world in providing practical solutions to economic problems. Therefore, there is a need to revisit the core issues of economics and its utility to society and whether economists should de-mathematize economics to make it a practical and useful discipline of political economy for the welfare of the people. A word needs to be said about the so-called Nobel Prize in Economics and the Nobel Laureates in Economics. The Nobel Prize in Economic Sciences officially known as Sveriges Riksbank Prize for Economic Sciences in Memory of Alfred Nobel was instituted in 1968 by an endowment from Sweden's central bank Sveriges Riksbank to commemorate the 300th anniversary of the bank and the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences was assigned the task of selecting the winner/winners of the prize. This prize is commonly known as the Nobel Prize in Economics.

The first prize awarded in 1969 went to the Dutch economist Jan Tinbergen and the Norwegian economist Ragnar Frisch "for having developed and applied dynamic models for the analysis of economic processes." As of 2024, 56 prizes in economic sciences have been given to 96 individuals. The University of Chicago has produced the maximum number of laureates in economics (17) followed by Harvard (13) and MIT (15).

The award of the prize has been mired in controversy from its very inception. The Riksbank prize has nothing to do with the will and endowment of Alfred Nobel for award of prizes in five areas only ~ physics, chemistry, medicine, literature and peace. Therefore, to designate the Riksbank prize as a Nobel Prize would be unfair and a misnomer notwithstanding the fact that the same process of selection of Nobel laureates by the Swedish Academy of Sciences had been adopted. Because of this reason, three of Alfred Nobel's inheritors distanced themselves from this prize. Moreover, awarding the Prize to non-economists and controversial reactionary economists has invited further criticism. A number of economists like Gunnar Myrdal suggested abolishing the Prize. Since the question of misusing Nobel's name had surfaced, suggestions for an alternative name have come from many quarters. One suggestion has been to name it as the Riksbank International Prize in Economics or simply International Prize for Economic Sciences on the same pattern as the International Prize for Statistics, which is also popularly known as the Statistics Nobel. The International Prize in Statistics modelled after Nobel Prizes is awarded every two years at the World Statistical Congress for outstanding scientific work in the field of Statistics, the last recipient being the famous Indian Statistician, C R Rao. Statistics as a scientific tool with wider applications in all disciplines and activities and great contributions to humanity makes it a more deserving candidate for being called a 'Nobel Prize' than economics.

(Concluded)

A MEMBER OF THE ANN ASIA NEWS NETWORK

ASIAN VOICES

New quality productive forces an innovative engine

New quality productive forces are advanced productive forces, a new development paradigm, which help improve labor resources and objectives, leading to improved total factor productivity. President Xi Jinping proposed the concept of new quality productive forces in 2023, and the third plenary session of the 20th Communist Party of China Central Committee in July 2024 has been promoting the development of new quality productive forces based on local conditions to propel high-quality development.

Developing new quality productive forces is crucial for achieving high-quality development, and promoting high-level openness can cultivate a favorable environment for the development of new quality productive forces. Technological innovation will lead the construction of a modern industrial system, which is key to transitioning from traditional to modern productivity systems and advancing new quality productive forces.

And promoting higher-level openness will break down the barriers hindering the flow of innovative elements across the world, and unleash domestic innovation potential. China should therefore take measures to create a high-level international business environment conducive to attracting global elements of new quality productive forces. To create such an environment, China can learn from high-standard global market rules, regulations and management, and expand institutional

CHINADAILY

openness. To build a transparent, stable and predictable institutional environment, China needs to strengthen regulations for intellectual property rights (IPR) protection, industry subsidies, environmental standards, labor protection, government procurement, e-commerce and finance.

To attract talents, it should explore high-level talent immigration systems across the world, especially in sectors such as artificial intelligence (AI) and quantum computing. And to advance technology, it should build world-class element transaction markets, and develop new transaction methods for fields such as intellectual property securitization, technology options trading, and carbon financial derivatives.

Besides, China can attract global digital giants if it embraces high-standard trade rules such as those adopted by the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership and the Digital Economy Partnership Agreement ~ which is a pioneer in digital economy and green trade ~ strengthen IPR protection, establish world-class IPR dispute resolution centers, update the negative list for cross-border service trade, expand pilot projects for service sector openness, and encourage professional global services.

The country also needs to build a modern industrial system by strengthening cooperation in global industry and supply chains, while leveraging its massive market demand, rich application scenarios, and comprehensive industrial supporting systems to provide favorable conditions for transnational corporations' innovative development.

Besides, China ought to expand openness and reduce limits to foreign investment in manufacturing, hi-tech, energy conservation and environmental protection, and introduce pilot programs for foreign investment in the fields of technological innovation, foreign-funded R&D centers, and foreign companies in national projects. It needs to improve foreign investment management and protection mechanisms to strengthen cooperation in global industry and supply chains. Through a "scientist-entrepreneur-investor" development mechanism, and a global innovation chain of "research-tech breakthroughs-achievements-tech finance", the country can create a new global industrial ecology.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

editor@thestatesman.com

Enslaved

SIR, It is indeed a matter of concern that human exploitation crosses its limits and takes the form of slavery. It took so many years for nations to do away with slavery, bonded labour and such abominations. Deterrent legal provisions are in place to punish those practicing or encouraging such inhuman systems. Still they are not eradicated.

Pro-rich policies being pursued in a majority of the countries and leave many employable youth jobless, rendering them vulnerable to abject exploitation. There is no effective check over the way money seeks to multiply

itself. Many a times it takes predatory forms also. The process of earning profit knows no bounds and even leads to gaining control over governments.

Luring youth, exploiting them in inhuman ways and forcing them to indulge in fraudulent financial activities cannot happen without the knowledge of the countries concerned. The undue time they take to punish the culprits and repatriate victims confirm their callousness.

Exploitation and practicing slavery has many faces. Girls of poor vulnerable families are lured with offers of fabulous jobs abroad, where they are married to rich persons to serve as housemaids without any rights or priv-

ileges. Some of them are used as concubines of the rich masters. Even paying low salaries, employ-

ing under different systems such as contract, outsourced, casual, contingent, etc., for a meagre

salary is a form of slavery. Yours, etc., A G Rajmohan, Anantapur, 4 March.

AN ANTIDOTE

SIR, The birthday of Sri Ramakrishna, as per the Bengali lunar calendar, was celebrated on March 1. Sri Ramakrishna asked us to rescue ourselves from religious dogma. He said, "There are many doors to God's house... No matter which door you enter through, you get in the house." He was the one who walked the talk. He practiced Islam for some days and religiously followed its path. Then again, he practiced Christianity for a brief period. He thus practiced what he preached.

"Many opinions, many paths." Swami Vivekananda said. "Each human being embodies God. This is what I have learned from my Master, Sri Ramakrishna." Sri Ramakrishna's message is an antidote to inhumanity, religious hatred, and untouchability.

Yours, etc., Sujit De, Kolkata, 3 March.



New armour for an age-old battle

A K GHOSH

As languages of the West flourish. This was a Tamil poet's fear in the early 20th century. But Subramania Bharati's apprehensions were unfounded. Tamil found its savior in none other than the Government of India. Tamil was made a classical language.

The UPA government's elevation of Tamil was, of course, far from disinterested, and seemed to be done against the recommendations of some of the academic members of the Centre's committee of languages. A promise to this effect was in the UPA's common minimum programme, and the then President's first address to Parliament had also raised hope—particularly of M Karunanidhi, leader of the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam. Ironically, the DMK's anti-Hindi movement in the mid-1960s was set off by the Congress' insistence on making Hindi the country's sole official language.

Keeping the heat on the Centre over its recent stand on the 3-language formula to be made mandatory for the release of funds for the state under the SSA programme, and quoting a poem of yet another poet Bharathidasan, the TN chief minister made it clear that manipulation to impose Hindi would never succeed with the Tamils. A rough translation of the poem is "Hindi, if you step into the Dravidian land of happiness, your feet will be chopped off".

Recently, condemning the public sector LIC for making Hindi the default language in its widely used website, MK Stalin described it as linguistic tyranny and demanded its immediate rollback.

As if it were an ill-conceived idea of the Centre to celebrate Hindi nationalism to revive the latent but divisive language controversy plaguing the nation for quite a long time, there have been protests from southern states warning the Centre that ham-handed attempts to popularize Hindi would lead to serious consequences.

Under attack from then TN chief minister Jayalalitha and political parties in the states, the UGC had to withdraw, in 2014, its controversial circular directing universities to teach Hindi as one of the primary languages in undergraduate courses.

Karunanidhi's push for Tamil as an official language was grounded in

his belief that Tamil, as "the first mother tongue in the world" is superior to both English and Hindi. The argument necessarily relegated other languages to an inferior status. This was a case of linguistic chauvinism.

Not surprisingly then, the Tamil Nadu government's decision to make Tamil not only a compulsory language of study but also the medium of instruction from nursery to middle schools from the 1999-2000 academic year stirred a hornet's nest. The chief minister announced that recognition would be granted only to schools following the new guidelines.

Sometime ago, there was a row over Hindi when Home Minister Amit Shah stirred the hornet's nest by seeking to assert the need for a common language for India, that is Hindi. It aroused the fear that Hindi imperialism, as envisaged, would jeopardize Nehru's assurances about the continuing importance of English as India's official language.

Interestingly, there is a great myth about Hindi being given the haloed status of the official language of the Union of India by the eighth schedule of the Constitution. This has won a sizable number of opponents among the non-Hindi speaking states.

In fact, Hindi began to be regarded as having a distinct identity in the 19th century when movements were launched to replace Urdu with Hindi as the language of law courts and administration in the northern States. Nagari Pracharini Sabha, founded at Benaras in 1893, helped to further its cause. Brahmo Samaj, Arya Samaj and intellectuals like Bhudeb Mukhopadhyay paved the way for the acceptance of Hindi as the link language in India.

So, notwithstanding Gandhi's claim that Hindi and Urdu were but one language written in two different scripts, the few decades preceding Independence saw bitter rivalry between the two.

Hindi won in the end. Members of the Constituent Assembly had no doubt about what it would be like. Article 351 declares: "It shall be the duty of the Union to promote the spread of the Hindi language... and to secure its enrichment by assimilating, without interfering with its genius, the forms, style and expressions used in Hindustani and in other languages of India specified in the Eighth Schedule and by drawing whenever necessary or desirable, for its vocabulary, primarily on Sanskrit and secondarily on other languages." Had



this been followed faithfully by our Central leaders in the past 70 years, Rashtrabhasha would have by now acquired a true all-India character.

At the outset there was an attempt to follow this constitutional directive. In 1962, BV Keskar was replaced as the Minister of Information and Broadcasting by B Gopala Reddy, and the Persianization (Urduization) of Hindi began. Gradually it became incomprehensible to the non-Hindi speakers, prompting C Rajagopalachari to coin the slogan, "Hindi never, English ever". Hindi now meets with as much opposition as did English before independence and on similar grounds.

What the rashtrabhasha advocates do not appear to understand is that even the slightest hint of compulsion revives the controversy and politicizes the entire issue. As the language of almost the whole of North India, Hindi undoubtedly enjoys a pre-eminent place among the Indian languages. Being the language of India's thriving cinema industry, its popularity is not confined to any geographical region. But this has come about because of the natural logic of the market place and not through imposition. If the Centre left the question of language to economics rather than politics, its purpose would be served gradually, but far more effectively.

Hasty decisions seemed to have paid scant attention to the plight of the linguistic minorities in the state. The 1965 anti-Hindi agitation in Madras was largely responsible for the Congress losing power in the state

and the Dravidian parties occupying Fort St. George.

The 1965 agitation was given up following the assurance that English would continue to be the official language as long as the non-Hindi speaking people wanted it. The agitation had led to major political changes. The DMK captured power in the 1967 assembly elections and thereafter the Congress never came to power in Tamil Nadu. The Official Languages Act was eventually amended in 1967 to guarantee the indefinite use of Hindi and English as official languages. This effectively ensured the current "virtual indefinite policy of bilingualism" of the Indian Republic. Also, there were smaller agitations in 1968 and 1986, which had varying degrees of success.

C Rajagopalachari, the first Governor-General of independent India gave the slogan "English ever, Hindi never" in 1967 to the anti-Hindi agitators and ensured continued use of English as an official language. As Congress Chief Minister of Madras Province in 1937, he had tried to propagate Hindi in southern India. On 21 April 1938, he issued a government order making the teaching of Hindi compulsory in all higher secondary schools in the Presidency. It was met with instant opposition and he had to resign. He learned the hard way and became a supporter of anti-Hindi imposition.

A row over the Union Home Ministry's directive asking for the use of Hindi on the Government of India's social media platforms snowballed,

and more political leaders and chief ministers came out with sharp criticism of it. DMK president M Karunanidhi, whose party had successfully led the anti-Hindi agitation in the 1960s, dubbed the move as a beginning of "imposition of Hindi" that would make non-Hindi speaking people second class citizens.

Heritage is linked with languages and so political parties would have to devise ways and means to get through. Why then are some political leaders hastening the process without considering the sentiments of non-Hindi speaking people?

That many Tamils wish to learn Hindi now in an apparent reversal of history says much of the intricate, often ironic, links between language and power. Of the learners of Hindi language courses and degrees in Hindi medium taught by the Dakshina Bharat Hindi Prachar Sabha, many are from Tamil Nadu. Almost the same is the case with the students of correspondence courses in Hindi taught by the Central Hindi Directorate. With New India's growing prosperity, Hindi has become a language of power, not only because Bollywood dominates entertainment, but because good jobs demand mobility. Both English and Hindi are good to learn. The leaders concerned seem to have lost the key to history.

(The writer is former Associate Professor, Department of English, Gurudas College, Kolkata and author of Auntie English, English, Quo Vadis and Nobel Prize in Literature: a case for India.)

100 YEARS AGO OCCASIONAL NOTE

THE result of the fifth Test match was anticipated after the M.C.C. failure in the first innings, and disappointment was discounted in advance. A decisive Australian victory, the M.C.C.-scoring only 167 and 146, after the three previous wins, leaves no doubt of Australian superiority. They seem able to keep on unearthing new prodigies, and to afford to drop anyone, however brilliant, whose form has temporarily deserted him. This last game was in many respects a contrast to its predecessors. Scoring was low; there were no centuries; Sutcliffe, Hobbs, and Collins all failed, and generally the bowlers took the middle of the stage. Yet even Grimmett's 11 for 82 does not dwarf the excellence of the wicketkeeping. Strudwick caught and stumped four, and extras totalled 11 in the two Australian innings. Oldfield caught and stumped six, and extras totalled 9. The belief that the abolition of the long stop spoilt wicket-keeping, because wicket-keepers were so anxious about leg-balls that they missed chances of stumping and catching, lived bravely on from the far-off ages, but any spark of life it has retained can hardly survive these expositions of skill.

NEWS ITEMS

FOUR MONTHS' LEAVE SECRETARY OF STATE'S INVITATION

(BRITISH OFFICIAL WIRELESS.) (LEAFIELD (OXFORD))

IT is officially announced that the Secretary of State for India in Council has invited the Earl of Reading to come Home in April next for short leave not exceeding four months, in order to secure an opportunity of personal discussion with His Excellency. The Earl of Reading has accepted the invitation.

The King has been pleased to approve of the appointment of the Earl of Lytton, Governor of Bengal, to act as Viceroy and Governor-General during Lord Reading's absence on leave.

BENGAL MINISTRY OF TWO

HINDU AND MOSLEM AS PROBABLES

IN informed circles yesterday the opinion was expressed that the new Bengal Ministry is likely to consist of only two Ministers, of whom one would be a Mohammedan and the other a Hindu, with two Secretaries, also from the two communities, the Mohammedan Minister having a Hindu Secretary and vice-versa.

Nawab Nawab Ali Choudhuri Khan Bahadur is mentioned as a probable selection for one office, while for the other Babu Surendranath Roy, or, in the second place, Raja Manmatha Nath Roy Choudhuri of Santosh, is considered the most likely selection.

The opinion expressed amongst members of the Legislative Council was that votes for the salaries of a Ministry constituted on this basis would probably be defeated.

PRESIDENT COOLIDGE SIMPLE INAUGURATION CEREMONY

WASHINGTON, MAR. 4.

As the result of President Coolidge's economy campaign, the ceremonies of the inauguration of Mr. Coolidge and General Dawes (Vice-President) were of the simplest kind, causing displeasure to merchants, tradespeople, and the citizens.

The day's events consisted in the taking of the oath by General Dawes in the Senate Chamber of the Capitol at noon, and Mr. Coolidge, outside the Capitol at one o'clock in the afternoon, in the presence of a vast throng. Mr. Taft administered the oath, after which there was a comparatively meagre inaugural procession from the Capitol to the White House, where Mr. Coolidge and General Dawes reviewed soldiers and sailors and met the Governors of States.

DISASTER AVERTED

HUGE BLAZE IN DANGER ZONE AT WOOLWICH

LONDON, MAR. 4.

FIRE engines from all over London rushed out to-night to a blaze near Woolwich Arsenal. Thousands of persons watched the flames, which started in a tailor's shop and spread towards a gas factory. The damage already done is estimated at several thousands of pounds.

No casualties are reported so far. Had the wind been in the opposite direction, the fire would have reached the explosive factories and would have resulted in an appalling disaster.

A world gone horribly wrong

MAHIR ALI

Say what you like about Imran Khan but his sense of timing is impeccable. As prime minister in February 2022, he managed to turn up in Moscow on the day that Vladimir Putin launched his invasion of Ukraine. Last Friday, a comment bearing his byline appeared in Time magazine. After the usual breast-beating and self-aggrandisement, it hailed Donald Trump's resurrection as a remarkable "testament to resilience and the will of the people".

On the day that Trump and his deputy went out of their way to humiliate Ukraine's elected leader Volodymyr Zelenskyy in the Oval Office, Imran looked "forward to his administration reaffirming its commitment to democratic principles, human rights, and the rule of law — particularly in regions where authoritarianism threatens to undermine these values". Imran and his acolytes still seem to be counting on the elusive phone call that will mutate into a 'get out of jail free' card for him, and shameless flattery is the only way to grab Trump's attention — as Emmanuel Macron and Keir Starmer recently demonstrated.

It should be common knowledge, though, that Trump is also a fan of authoritarianism, and keen to emulate the likes of Javier Milei and Viktor

Orbán. He and the bunch of reprobates he has recruited have sowed chaos at both the domestic and international levels during the first 50 days of the second Trump regime.

Peace in Ukraine is desirable, but on what terms? It's understandable at this stage for Zelenskyy to bristle at the absence of Western security guarantees in Trump's ceasefire scenario — which relies on the hope that the involvement of American companies in excavating Ukraine's minerals (with the US banking half the profits) would suffice in Vladimir Putin's eyes as a deterrent to further military assaults. Demanding that Ukraine pay back all that it received in US military assistance since 2022 is extortion rather than a peace plan. Yet Zelenskyy has been advised by the likes of Peter Mandelson, British ambassador to the US, to accept whatever Trump is proposing.

That was before the US suspended military aid to Ukraine on Monday, possibly as a means of coercing Zelenskyy to accept the same advice that Mandelson had proffered. The latter's boss, Starmer, might take a marginally different tack, but is equally desperate not to annoy Trump. Which is tricky, given that no one can be sure what might trigger the US president. Starmer's proposal for a European "coalition of the willing" to bolster Ukraine's defences with boots

on the ground and warplanes in the air echoes the appellation attached to the military misadventure the UK walked into under Tony Blair by co-sponsoring the 2003 disaster in Iraq.

Starmer's attitude aligns with that of his counterparts in Nato and the European Union, which is to pursue the war until Putin cries uncle, or is overthrown and replaced by a more user-friendly Russian leader along the lines of Boris Yeltsin. Never say never, but that is unlikely. Some of the EU's American frenemies, meanwhile, have been suggesting that Zelenskyy should resign — for the crime of not bending the knee to Emperor Donald and J.D. Vance, the president's pet Chiuhuahua who likes to pretend he's a Rottweiler. In subsequent social media comments, Trump again slammed Zelenskyy for saying that a ceasefire was "very, very far away", and mocked European powers for acknowledging "that they cannot do the job without the US".

What exactly, though, is "the job"? Viewed in a broader historical context, it's understandable why western Europe might have latched on to America as its saviour and security guarantor in the immediate aftermath of World War II, although even that arguably was an error, but what prevented it from seeking full independence in the decades that followed? And what on earth persuaded European nations that



ought to have known better from embracing the American hegemon with even greater gusto once the Warsaw Pact perished and the Soviet Union imploded in 1989-91?

The sovereignty of the independent Ukraine that emerged in 1991 should not have been violated in 2014, let alone bludgeoned in 2022. But, while Putin's government alone bears responsibility for its aggression three years ago, for which there was no immediate provocation, Moscow could hardly have been expected to ignore the years-long wooing of Kyiv by Washington and Brussels, accompanied by

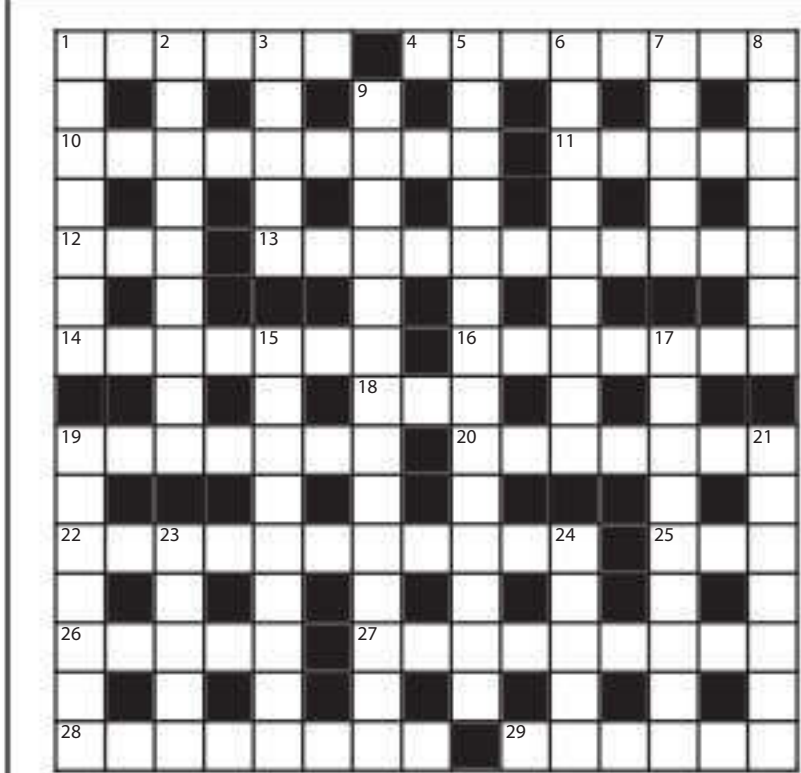
consequential political interventions. It's not that Moscow wasn't culpable in the context of influence operations, or the naked aggression that followed their failure. However, as in the 1970s, some kind of entente with Russia is the obvious alternative to rearmament on steroids and hostility based on variants of age-old Russophobia.

Trump, Putin, the EU and Nato are ultimately the wretched consequences of a world gone wrong. What comes next is anyone's guess.

Dawn/ANN.

CROSSWORD

NO-293068



YESTERDAY'S SOLUTION

D A A B G G M B
A L B U M E V O C A T I V E
U C O G A L I R L E R
P A R V E N U D R I V I N G
H T B L E S E
I M I T A T I O N H O U R S
N V E L L E K
O N E C O U N T R Y U S E
I E R E L A U P
S E L B Y O N S L A U G H T
A O B T B E I
B R Y N N E R C H R O N I C
A M T I A O T T
W H I T C H E E R A I L A S
L E N S N D D Y M

ACROSS

- See 19
- Bad motion edit close to release (2,4,2,3)
- With which one sees stars become smaller (9)
- Number with hatred for decimalisation? (5)
- Albanian yeoman keeps whichever is chosen (3)
- Reports latest bands crossing fine line (4,7)
- Beetle, or small mobile home? (7)

- Contemtable male American gets around in love (7)
- See 4
- Elite soldiers police volunteers without aggression (7,6)
- Following on is straightforward (7)
- One leaving coaches to consider electrical device (11)
- Hang from gallows again? (3)
- See BBC boss back to the Masonic premises (5)

- College group has three miles on climber (3,6)
- Groom to get on as horse moves (8)
- Hit with a band? (6)
- Wealthy types act fast to become corrupt (3,4)
- Rarely in trouble, expert passing competition (5,4)
- Odd characters from East Sheen in German city (5)

- Sooner or later does he say? Often that's nonsense (3,2,5,4)
- One remedy having answer for universal solitude (9)
- Urban district contained within barrier it has (5)
- One trapped in large marsh for slow absorption (7)
- Progressive splitting outside in-patient lavatory? (7-7)

- Pagan woman that is seen on street in crowd (9)
- Complain open clothes will show boob (9)
- Resolved to live permanently with duke (7)
- Knife cut drawn up over ambassador's brain (7)
- Two daughters introduced to beer become confused (5)
- Old beak in female bird (5)

NOTE: Figures in parentheses denote the number of letters in the words required. (By arrangement with The Independent, London)

Trump says Zelenskyy wants peace and is ready to accept a minerals deal after White House blowup

AGENCIES

In an interview with Fox News Channel's Sean Hannity, Vance said the economic pact with Kyiv sought by Trump "is a way better security guarantee than 20,000 troops from some random country that hasn't fought a war in 30 or 40 years."

A Canadian senior government official said Lutnick called Ontario Premier Doug Ford after Ford's press conference and asked him to stand down. The official, who spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorised to speak publicly about the call, said Ford told the U.S. commerce secretary he'll go harder.

Francis' treatment continues as the Vatican prepares for Lent, the solemn period beginning with Ash Wednesday and leading up to Easter on 20 April. A cardinal has been designated to take Francis' place at Vatican celebrations, with a traditional service and procession in Rome

Difficulty Level ★★ ★

Answer to previous puzzle

0	5	6	8	3	2	1	4
1	4	3	9	2	6	0	7
6	0	1	4	7	5	8	9
6	2	4	5	3	1	7	9
0	3	8	2	7	9	1	4
9	1	7	3	4	5	6	8
3	1	2	4	6	0	9	5
4	0	9	7	5	2	0	3
8	5	1	3	9	1	4	7

answer to previous puzzle

epaper.thestatesman.com

CSR activity by SBI
Bhubaneswar circle: Ashwini Kumar Tewari, Managing Director (CB & S) Corporate Centre has inaugurated the renovated premises of PBB Bapujinagar branch on 4th March 2025. On this occasion, Shri Tewari has donated one School Van to Nayaghar Kala Parishad for the benefit of SC, ST and drop-out children from class I to Class 10th. Besides, A Water Purifier cum Cooler has been donated to the NGO Sakhaa, Telengapentha for the benefit of destitute persons. Likewise, Refrigerator and Crockery items were donated to destitute shelter home namely Ashraya managed by the NGO Odisha Patita Udarh Samiti.

Notably, in 2024, the USA led the world with a 5.2 per cent increase in its population of HNWLs. The Asian region grew at a rate of 5 per cent, while Africa saw a 4.7 per cent rise, albeit from a smaller base. Meanwhile, the Australasia region's HNWL population grew by 3.9 per cent, bolstered by its strategic connections to both the Asian and North American markets.

Quite significantly, quick commerce is reshaping retail dynamics in metros and Tier 1 cities, with 42 per cent of metro and Tier 1 consumers prioritising rapid delivery for urgent needs. Over 65 per cent of consumers in these areas rely on quick commerce for essentials like packaged foods. This trend has reduced foot traffic to physical stores by 28 per cent, highlighting the shift towards convenience and immediacy.

Champions League: Real Madrid beat Atletico in last-16 first leg

Reigning European champions outclass city rivals 2-1 to open up crucial advantage going into second leg

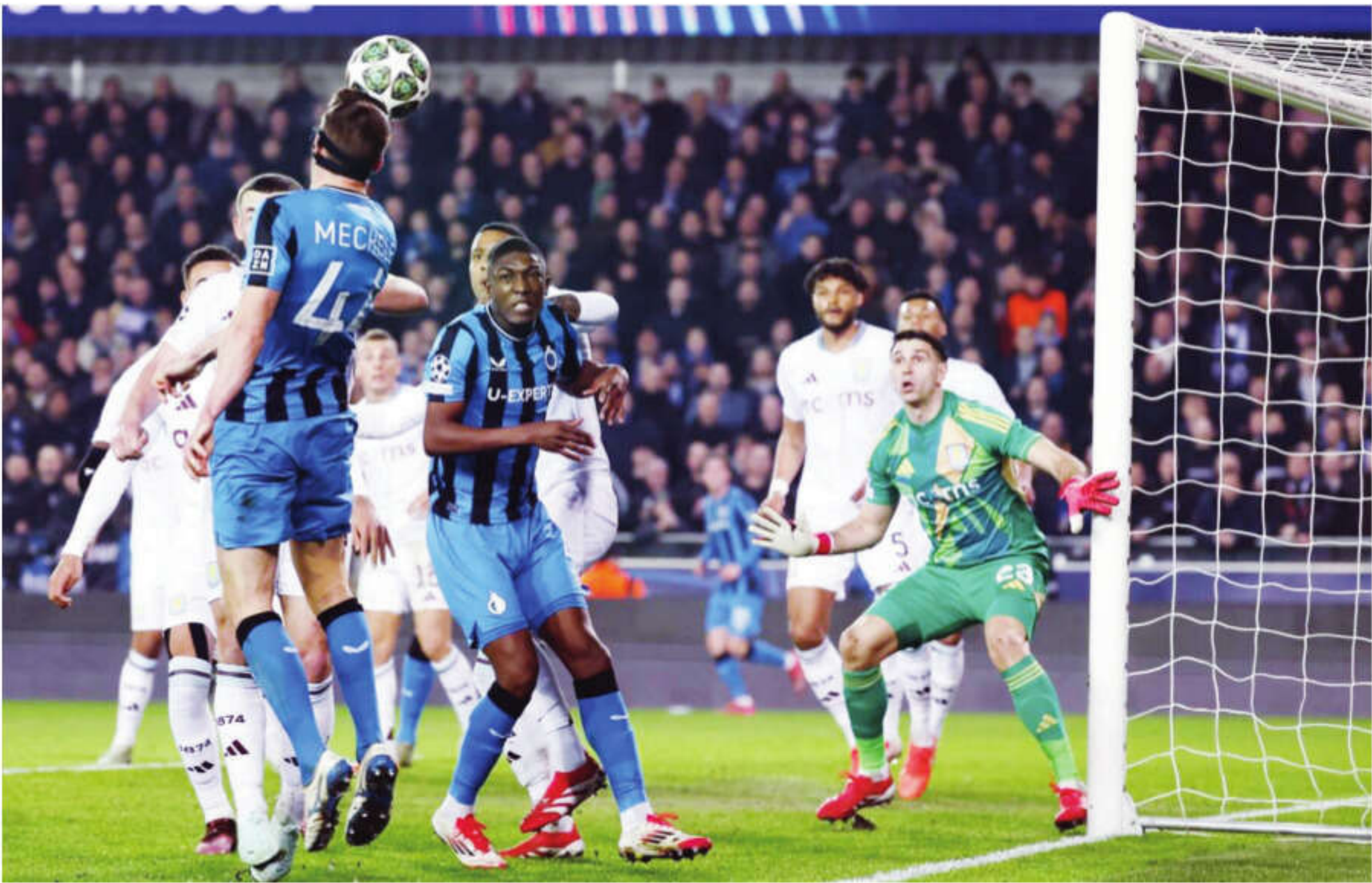
AGENCIES
MADRID, 5 MARCH

Reigning champions Real Madrid overcame Atletico 2-1 in the first leg of the Champions League last-16 tie to claim the upper hand in the tie.

In another match, Arsenal delivered a historic performance on Wednesday (IST), defeating PSV 7-1 in Eindhoven in the first leg of their UEFA Champions League last-16 tie, and became the first team to score seven goals away from home in a knockout stage match of the competition.

Rodrygo gave Real Madrid the lead after just four minutes and Julian Alvarez drew level in the 32nd minute. In the second half, Brahim made it 2-1 with a wonderful piece of skill.

Madrid raced into an early lead in the tie. After just four minutes, Valverde caught Galan by surprise with a precise pass to Rodrygo, who beat the Atletico defender on the run, cut inside from the right wing and fired home a beautifully struck left-footed strike. Two minutes later, Rodrygo again beat Galan for pace and when he entered the area he was pulled down by the defender. In the 22nd minute, Vini Jr. had a shot from the edge of the area that Oblak caught, and on the half-hour mark, Rodrygo had a free-kick that almost beat the keeper. On 32', Atletico equalised when Alvarez's angled drive from the edge of the area flew past Courtois. The two sides went into the break with the score at 1-1. After the restart until the 55th minute, when



Brahim's brilliant piece of skill gave the Whites the lead once again. The forward received the ball inside the area and was surrounded by defenders. He shifted his feet before finding a gap through which he struck a precise right-footed effort past Oblak and into the bottom corner of the goal it was 2-1 to Madrid. Atletico countered, and five minutes later they almost equalised with a cross-shot from Griezmann that Courtois

did well to keep out. The quarterfinal berth will be decided on 12 March at the Metropolitano. Meanwhile, in The Hague, Arsenal registered biggest away win in our European Cup and Champions League history, surpassing the famous 5-1 win against Inter Milan at the San Siro in 2003 as well as the drubbing of Sporting Lisbon back in November, which were our previous best efforts on the road in Europe's

premier club competition. When it comes to all European competitions, Arsenal's win in the Netherlands sits third on their all-time biggest away wins, with the 7-0 rout of Standard Liege in the 1993/94 UEFA Cup Winner's Cup still top of the tree, and is indeed the largest win on our travels in any competition. The defeat marked PSV's biggest European loss and matched the heaviest defeat in the club's professional his-

tory, equaling a 7-1 loss to GVVAV in the Eredivisie in 1958. Arsenal had an early goal from Declan Rice disallowed for offside, while PSV's Ismael Saibari struck the crossbar before the visitors broke the deadlock. Dutch international Jurrien Timber opened the scoring in the 18th minute, heading in a cross from Rice at the far post. Seventeen-year-old Ethan Nwaneri doubled Arsenal's

lead with a powerful finish following an assist from Myles Lewis-Skelly. Spanish international Mikel Merino capitalized on defensive chaos to make it 3-0 after just 30 minutes. PSV was handed a lifeline three minutes before halftime when referee Jesus Gil Manzano awarded a penalty after Thomas Partey fouled Luuk de Jong. Noa Lang converted the spot-kick, offering PSV a glimmer of hope.

LeBron becomes first to score 50k career points in NBA history

AGENCIES
LOS ANGELES, 5 MARCH

The three-time Olympic gold medalist LeBron James has become the first NBA player in history to score 50,000 career points.

The 40-year-old Los Angeles Lakers star reached the milestone after scoring a three-pointer during the NBA regular season game at home against the New Orleans Pelicans on Tuesday.

LeBron James is well on his way to rewriting every previous definition of basketball longevity, and the 40-year-old star is now tracking up numbers the NBA has never seen before. James finished with 34 points against the Pelicans after toppling another milestone in his unprecedented career. James needed just one point heading into the Lakers' matchup against the New Orleans Pelicans at Crypto.com Arena. He drilled a three-pointer from the left wing off a Luka Doncic feed with 8:34 remaining in the first quarter. He went on to put up 34 points, eight rebounds, and six assists, leading the Lakers to a convincing 136-115 victory over the Pelicans. The American's combined scoring total now includes 41,871 regular-season points and 8,162 post-season points. He is also a first player in NBA history to play both as a teenager and past the age of 40.

Last month, James became the first player in the history of the NBA to have multiple 40 plus points in a game at age 40 or higher. The legendary Michael Jordan is the only other 40-year-old to have produced a 40 plus point performance.

In December last year, James, a man whose longevity will be talked about for years to come, surpassed six-time NBA MVP Kareem Abdul-Jabbar for the most minutes



played in league history during Los Angeles Lakers' win over Sacramento Kings. He was already the league's top scorer after surpassing Abdul-Jabbar's regular-season scoring record on 7 February, 2023, and broke Michael Jordan's playoff scoring record on 25 May, 2017.

James also holds the NBA records for career field-goal attempts and turnovers while ranking fourth in assists, sixth in steals. "I mean, that's a lot of points," James said afterward, rubbing his beard in wonder. "Obviously, the first thing that comes to mind is where I'm from. Picking up the game when I was a little kid and having a love for the sport, and hoping that someday I'd be able to play at the highest level. I've been able to do that and really enjoy my career. So it's definitely an honor. It's pretty cool to see that."

James already is the top scorer in NBA history in both the regular season and the playoffs. Maintaining a spectacular level of play midway through his record-tying 22nd season, he is pulling away from the other greats of the game: Lakers great Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, who played 20 seasons, is a now-distant second with 44,149 combined points. The Lakers recognized the milestone at the next timeout, with public address announcer Lawrence Tanter saying: "Ladies and gentlemen, we all have just witnessed history." James acknowledged the standing ovation with several waves from the bench.

AFC Challenge League: East Bengal face FC Arkadag in quarters

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, 5 MARCH

East Bengal FC are gearing up to take on FC Arkadag of Turkmenistan in the first leg of the AFC Challenge League quarter-final at the Vivekananda Yuba Bharati Krirangan in Kolkata on Wednesday.

East Bengal topped Group A with two wins and a draw when they travelled to Bhutan for the group-stage fixtures in October-November. Their strong performance in the tournament reignited hope after a shaky start to their Indian Super League (ISL) campaign, helping them reshape their season.

Currently, East Bengal FC are on a four-match unbeaten run, securing three wins and a draw. However, their latest result--a 1-1 draw against Bengaluru FC in Kolkata on Sunday--ended their push for an ISL playoff spot. Now, eager to turn disappointment into determination, the team will shift its focus to making a deep run in continental competition. With a rich his-



tory of success on the Asian stage, East Bengal FC will look to build on their legacy and take a crucial step toward the semi-finals. The last time the Red and Gold Brigade played in a continental competition, they made it to the AFC Cup semi-finals in 2013. While their group-stage performances--especially a com-

manding win over Bashundhara Kings and a decisive victory against Nejmeh SC--were impressive, the real test begins now, according to an ISL statement. "The AFC Challenge League is a competition that has a dimension that is not national, it is international, so the scope and the visibility

and whatever we can do well in this quarter-final can have a big impact on the name of all of us and especially on the name of the club," said East Bengal FC head coach Oscar Bruzon at the pre-match press conference, as quoted from the official website of ISL. Standing in their way is

FC Arkadag, a club that has been nothing short of dominant since its formation in 2023. The Turkmenistan outfit has won back-to-back Yokarya League titles with a perfect record and secured consecutive Turkmenistan Cup victories. Their only setback came in the AFC Challenge League, where they suffered a narrow defeat to Kuwait's Al-Arabi in the final group-stage match.

"It is so important for East Bengal and for the country because we will represent India in Asia and we will try to do our best and try to beat FC Arkadag," said East Bengal FC captain Saul Crespo, who accompanied Bruzon at the press conference.

East Bengal will be banking on their passionate supporters to make a difference. The fans turned up in huge numbers to back the team in Bhutan, and now, with home advantage on their side, they will look to create an electrifying atmosphere in Kolkata as East Bengal aim to advance further in the tournament.

India's table tennis veteran Sharath Kamal to retire after Chennai event

AGENCIES
CHENNAI, 5 MARCH

Five-time Olympian and India's most celebrated paddler Achanta Sharath Kamal has announced his retirement from table tennis, with the upcoming WTT Star Contender in Chennai set to be his last outing in India colours. At 42 years old, Sharath, who is a record 10-time national champion, is currently India's top-ranked men's singles player, placed 42nd in the latest WTT ranking list. "As I played my first international tournament in Chennai and I will be playing my last international match in Chennai. I have the Commonwealth Games medals, Asian Games medals, but the Olympics medal is something I don't have in my cupboard. I hope I can live that dream through the young talents," Sharath told the media.

Sharath has won 13 Commonwealth Games medals

(including seven gold) and two Asian Games bronze medals, five Olympic Games appearances and two ITTF Pro Tour titles under his two-decade-long career. He won his first national title in 2003 and his maiden international medal at the 2004 Commonwealth Table Tennis Championships. His career graph reached a new high when he qualified for the 2004 Athens Olympics. In 2004, Sharath was conferred the Arjuna Award and won five national titles in a row. A historic singles gold medal at the 2006 Commonwealth Games in Melbourne and another gold in the men's team event capped a successful year. In 2010, he became the first Indian table tennis player to win an ITTF Pro Tour title, when he won the Egypt Open. Sharath went on to win two more Commonwealth Games gold medals in 2010--in the men's team and men's doubles. He

endured a lean period for a couple of years, winning no titles or medals at the 2014 Commonwealth Games or Asian Games, and was also unable to qualify for the 2012 London Olympics.

But he won medals in every event he competed at the 2018 Commonwealth Games (gold, silver and two bronze medals). He also went on to win two bronze medals at the 2018 Asian Games.

In 2019, the veteran rose to a career-best ranking of world No. 30 and in the same year, won a record ninth national title. The following year, at the age of 37, Sharath won his second international title at the Oman Open, a decade after his first.

At Tokyo 2020 Summer Games, it was his fourth Olympic appearance, but the Indian veteran, who got a bye in the first round, lost 4-1 to Chinese legend and eventual gold-medallist Ma Long in the round of 32.

ISL: Punjab FC, Hyderabad FC hope to end listless season on high note



STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD, 5 MARCH

Hyderabad FC will hope to stretch their undefeated home streak to six games when they host Punjab FC for an Indian Super League (ISL) at the GMC Balayogi Athletic Stadium on Thursday.

Both these sides are not in contention for the vacant sixth spot for the playoffs. However, they will want to wrap up their campaign on a strong note, to cap off the work done so far and lay the foundation for the forthcoming campaign.

Punjab FC have a promising record against Hyderabad FC in the ISL, remaining unbeaten in three encounters, including consecutive 2-0 victories. A win in this game will mark their inaugural league double over any team in the competition's history. However, Hyderabad FC have been unbeaten in their last five home games, winning twice.

Punjab FC have given away goals in each of their last 13 ISL games, which is the longest active streak among all teams. Their last shutout was against Mohammedan SC in December, and their previous away clean sheet came against Mumbai City FC in November.

Punjab FC have won just 44.9% of their contested duels in 2025, the lowest percentage among all teams. Is it a lack of adequate personnel or some missing tactical blueprint that is seeing them fall short of physical prowess on the field?

Hyderabad FC have gone scoreless in their last two ISL matches after netting in six consecutive games before this slump. Rest assured, the team will want to sign off from the campaign with their frontline firing from all ends.

Hyderabad FC have allowed their opponents to string together 170 sequences of 10+ open-play passes this season, the most in the ISL.

They need to be pressing with greater intensity to not let the other team as much time in building up their plays.

In their three ISL encounters thus far, Punjab FC have won twice, while a solitary game has resulted in a draw. Hyderabad FC interim head coach Shameel Chembakath said that his team needs to close out games with better discipline.

"If you see the second phase of the competition, there were a few matches where we did well but conceded late goals. We need to work on that," he said.

Punjab FC head coach Panagiotis Dilmperis said that his side needs to improve their composure upfront.

"A lot of times, because we are using a lot of young players, they approach the final third with pressure, but when you work under pressure, the execution of the action is not really accurate," he said.





SREESANTH CONGRATULATES TEAM INDIA

Former cricketers Sreesanth and Lalchand Rajput congratulated the Indian team for their splendid performance in the Champions Trophy semi-final against Australia and lavished praise on 'Chase Master' Virat Kohli for delivering another memorable performance. Sreesanth, a member of the 2007 T20 World Cup-winning team, was proud of the way India orchestrated a victory against a resilient Australian side

For more updates

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Champions Trophy 2025: New Zealand thrash South Africa to storm into final

Kiwis ride tons by Rachin Ravindra and Kane Williamson as Proteas live up to 'chokers' tag

AJEYO BASU
NEW DELHI, 5 MARCH

New Zealand overpowered South Africa by 50 runs to storm into the final of the ICC Champions Trophy 2025 on Wednesday.

The Proteas lived up to their tag of 'chokers' as they were on the backfoot right from the start with the Kiwis outshining them in both batting and bowling at the Gaddafi Stadium in Lahore.

The New Zealand victory was built on a power-packed batting display. Rachin Ravindra smashed his fifth ODI hundred and second of this tourney, while Kane Williamson notched up his third century in a row against South Africa as the duo propelled New Zealand to a massive 362/6. In reply, South Africa ran into trouble right from the start as their batters seemed to succumb to the pressure of the intimidating target. David Miller attempted to stage a fightback with an unbeaten 100 runs off 67 balls along with Rassie van der Dussen (69) and Temba Bavuma (56) but their teammates never seemed to be up for the challenge.

Earlier, Ravindra was all class in his knock of 108 off 101 balls, while adding 164 off 154 balls for the second wicket with Williamson, who made 102 off 94 deliveries.



Daryl Mitchell and Glenn Phillips both smashed quick knocks of 49 at the back end to help New Zealand post the highest total in the history of the Champions Trophy.

For South Africa, it was a hard day of relentless toil under bright sunshine, with Marco Jansen and Keshav Maharaj being taken for big runs. Lungi Ngidi, Kagiso Rabada and Wiaan Mulder were amongst the wickets, but gave away runs aplenty.

Ravindra and Will Young were largely untroubled at the start of New Zealand's

innings. Ravindra, in particular, was in sparkling touch - hitting Jansen for three boundaries in the seventh over - and two of them were well-timed boundaries through cover, while the other one was hit through mid-wicket.

Ngidi provided the first breakthrough for South Africa by having Young miscue a slower ball to mid-on in the eighth over. Williamson, fresh off a valiant 81 against India, began nicely by steering Ngidi and Rabada for a boundary each. Ravindra reached his half-century off 47 balls by

pulling Mulder for four, before pulling him again for the same result and getting forward to drive through the on-side for picking his third boundary of the 18th over. He and Williamson were adept at rotating the strike, leading to South Africa not being able to exert much pressure.

Ravindra took a liking to Maharaj's left-arm spin bowling - after lofting him for four, he danced down the pitch to hit another boundary. He then lofted cleanly to smash a six over long-on, before getting an outside edge past

keeper for four.

Williamson joined the boundary-hitting spree by flicking Maharaj for six and then getting his fifty in 61 balls off Aiden Markram, before taking a four off him via a reverse-sweep. He had luck on his side when Heinrich Klaasen dropped a tough catch behind stumps off Ngidi's bowling. The New Zealand camp was full of cheers in the 32nd over when Ravindra flicked Rabada for two runs and reached to his fifth ODI century, before he and Williamson took three fours collectively off him in the 32nd over yielding 17 runs. The 164-run stand for the fourth wicket ended in the 34th over when Ravindra went for a drive against an off-cutter from Rabada, but it produced a thin edge and was caught behind by Klaasen, ending his knock at 108 off 101 balls. Williamson, though, marched forward with his sweep, steer and scoop to fetch boundaries and get his 15th ODI ton. But four balls later, Williamson again went for a scoop, but was caught by short fine leg off a wide yorker from Wiaan Mulder. After Tom Latham attempted a scoop resulted in his stumps being left in a mess by Rabada, Mitchell provided a late impetus by hitting Jansen for two fours, before swatting Ngidi for a six and two fours on successive balls.

Gambhir praises 'phenomenal' Virat Kohli as India reach CT final



STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, 5 MARCH

India head coach Gautam Gambhir was effusive in his praises for his side's achievements at the ICC Champions Trophy 2025, thus far, after beating Australia to reach the summit clash of the tournament.

He felt that the side had played 'flawlessly' but hinted that there was more to come in the remaining game.

"The most important thing is the way we have played throughout this competition - the hunger, the commitment, and the eagerness to try and do something special for the country is always there in the dressing room," he said in the post-match press conference.

Gambhir added, "There is always something to improve, be it in batting, fielding or bowling, and we still have one more game, and hopefully we can play a perfect game, that is the kind of person I am. I will never be satisfied with the performances! We want to keep improving. "We want to stay humble, we want to be ruthless on the cricket field, but absolutely humble off the field as well. That's the team environment and culture we want to create in that dressing room."

He then shifted his focus to the all-important final on March 9, all set to be played in Dubai against the winner between New Zealand and South Africa. "Hopefully we can play one more game and play our best game."

After they bowled Australia out for 264, India openers were positive in the chase. However, two quick wickets

put the side on the backfoot, before star batter Virat Kohli resurrected the chase along with the rest of the middle order to get India closer to the line. The game was eventually sealed by the Men in Blue in the 49th over.

Gambhir had some special words on Virat Kohli's run in the game. "He is a phenomenal one-day cricketer. He knows how to plan his runs, he knows how to plan whether we are batting first or chasing, he adapts to the conditions really quickly, and that is why experienced and high-quality players are very important," he said.

Winning the ICC Champions Trophy will be the top priority for coach Gambhir from a personal front of view, as his tenure that started mid-2024, has been far from impressive, more so after the recent debacle in the Border-Gavaskar Trophy Down Under.

Meanwhile, Following Kohli's stellar performance, his childhood coach, Rajkumar Sharma, heaped praise on the star batter, highlighting his ability to step up in high-pressure games.

"He is called King Kohli because I have always said that he is 'bade match ka bada player.' He showed that yesterday (against Australia in ICC Champions Trophy Semi-final 1), too. He showed that the tougher the competition, the better he bats. Mentally, he is very strong... Class is permanent, form is temporary. Everyone knows his contribution towards Indian Cricket, they know how many matches he has made the country win," Sharma told a news agency.

'I was not feeling desperate': Kohli on gritty knock against Australia

TRIDIB BAPARNASH
NEW DELHI, 5 MARCH

Star batter Virat Kohli once again displayed why he's rated so highly in white-ball cricket, more so in big-ticket tournaments, and as the master of run-chases, with his gritty half century helping India beat Australia by four wickets in the high-pressure semifinal of the ICC Champions Trophy in Dubai on Tuesday.

The hallmark of his innings was the amount of singles and twos that he accumulated during the 98-ball knock with only 20 of those 84 runs coming in the form of five boundaries. The other highlight of that innings was the way Kohli maturely anchored the chase, by forging partnerships with the rest of the middle order to set the tone for the likes of Hardik Pandya and KL Rahul to finish off in style for India. The 36-year-old walked into the middle by the fifth over of India's innings with the scoreboard ticking 30/1 and went on to set the platform with a 91-run partnership for the third wicket with Shreyas Iyer, followed by a 44-run fourth wicket stand with Axar Patel, and another 47-run stand for the fifth wicket with KL Rahul, to further dent Australia's hopes. In the lead-up to the ICC Champions Trophy, Kohli copped criticism from all quarters for lack of runs, even



as his much-awaited return to domestic cricket, made mandatory by the BCCI in the aftermath of the dismal tour Down Under, also did not yield the desired results.

However, after touching down Dubai for the Champions Trophy, Kohli once again displayed his worth with a match-winning century

against Pakistan, before silencing Australia with his gritty half century in the crunch semifinal. After Australia set India a target of 265 for victory on a tricky Dubai deck, Kohli stepped up to anchor their batting innings. There have been question marks over his strike rate but Kohli went on with the set template to

build the innings, and focussed on building partnerships rather than going for the glory shots. "I was not feeling desperate, and I was pretty happy knocking ones around," he said after India sealed the win. And when, as a batter, you start taking pride in hitting those singles into the gaps, that is when you know you are playing good cricket and know you are in for a big partnership. It settles down the nerves. That was the most pleasing factor for me today."

The Dubai wicket has proved difficult for batters right throughout the Champions Trophy, prompting teams to deploy spin-heavy lineups and name only a couple of recognised quicks.

India's spinners answered the call yet again, allowing them to maintain the lion's share of control in the match and sustain pressure on Australia's hitters in the first innings. Restricting the Aussies to 264 all out in the final over worked perfectly into India's hands, as Kohli stepped up to play the foundational role

his team needed.

"For me it is about understanding the conditions, preparing my game accordingly, rotating strike," he continued. "Big partnerships on this pitch are the most important thing and my effort today was to string enough partnerships [together]. The pitch tells me how the cricket needs to be played and then I just switch on and play accordingly. This game is all about pressure, especially the semis and finals. When you go deep into the innings with enough wickets in hand, the opposition usually gives in, and the game becomes easier."

While Kohli was unable to reach a record-extending 52nd ODI century, he was quick to dismiss that as something that had fuelled him out in the middle. "I am never focused on those things [milestones]," he said. "When you do not think of those milestones, they happen along the way towards victory. For me, it is all about taking pride and doing the job for the team and if I get to the three-figure mark then great."

Gill retains top batting spot in ODIs; Kohli, Axar, Shami gain

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, 5 MARCH

India's star batter Shubman Gill retained the top spot in the latest update of the ICC rankings for men's ODI batters. In addition, Afghanistan's rising all-rounder Azmatullah Omarzai rose to the top of the all-rounder's rankings after his phenomenal display at the ongoing ICC Champions Trophy 2025.

While Gill maintains the top spot with 791 points, India's iconic batter Virat Kohli has made the jump up to fourth with 747 points after his match-winning knock of 84 off 98 balls against Australia in the semi-final, helped the Men in Blue progress to the tournament's final in Dubai. Kohli overtook his teammate and team skipper, Rohit Sharma, in the process. Shreyas Iyer also jumped to eighth, overtaking Sri Lankan skipper

Charith Asalanka with 702 points. Afghanistan's Ibrahim Zadran jumped 13 spots to take the 10th position amongst batters. This comes after his mammoth knock of 175 against England in the group stages.

In the ODI bowlers' rankings, Sri Lanka's Maheesh Theekshana holds the top spot with 680 points, while South Africa's Keshav Maharaj and New Zealand's Matt Henry vaulted to second and third, respectively.

India's Mohammed Shami also improved his rankings with 609 points to take the 11th position. Omarzai, who is now the number one ODI all-rounder, reached his career-best rating of 296 after his stellar show for Afghanistan in the Champions Trophy. He scored 126 runs in the three games at an average of 43. He also took seven wickets, including a five-wicket haul against England.

ICC CT 2025: Oz skipper Steve Smith retires from ODIs, to continue in Tests, T20Is

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, 5 MARCH

Australian batting great Steve Smith announced his retirement from ODI cricket effective immediately following Australia's semi-final loss to India at the ICC Champions Trophy in Dubai on Tuesday. He will continue to feature in Tests and T20Is.

The 35-year-old Smith, informed his team-mates immediately after the loss to India that he had played his last ODI match, meaning he will not be part of Australia's team for the 2027 ODI World Cup despite standing in as captain for the Champions Trophy in the absence of Pat Cummins.

"It has been a great ride and I have loved every minute of it. There have been so many amazing times and wonderful memories. Winning two World Cups was a great highlight along with the many fantastic team-



mates who shared the journey," Smith said in a state-

ment. Opening up on his deci-

sion, Smith said that it was the perfect time for new faces to step up in the ODI format. "Now is a great opportunity for people to start preparing for the 2027 World Cup so it feels like the right time to make way."

"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.

Smith, who featured in 170 ODIs for Australia, scored 5800 runs at 43.28 including 12 centuries and 35 half-centuries while also registering 28 wickets to his name.

Only five players have scored more than his 12 ODI centuries and only David Warner has a better average among those five.

The batter was also an integral member of Australia's Cricket World Cup winning sides in 2015 and 2023. In

2015, he made five consecutive fifty-plus scores including 105 in the semi-final win over India and 56 not out in the final against New Zealand at the MCG, where he also hit the winning runs. Smith also led Australia in 64 ODIs from 2015 to 2025.

Smith, who has maintained he was a series-by-series proposition in every format, given that there were questions raised on his future in international cricket in recent years, but remains committed for at least another home summer.

It would be interesting to see whether he is available for the away series against India and England in 2027.

Smith's former teammate and current selection chair George Bailey said the retirement decision was fully supported by everyone within the Australian setup.

"We fully understand and support Steve's decision to retire from One Day Inter-

national cricket.

"Steve has said on many occasions he is approaching the remainder of his playing career on a series-by-series basis, a position which hasn't changed and one Cricket Australia supports," Bailey said.

"His record as a batter across 170 games is exemplary and to leave the format as a two-time World Cup winner cements his legacy as one of the great Australian ODI players.

"From an NSP (National Selection Panel) standpoint, Steve remains fully committed to Test cricket and is an integral member of and leader within that team," Bailey added.

Smith is currently out of Australia's T20I plans after being left out of the 2024 T20 World Cup squad but has expressed his desire to continue in the format, especially at the 2028 Olympic Games in T20 cricket.

