



ED searches premises of Baghel, son; bid to shift focus from House: Cong

JAYPRAKASH SNAIDU
RAIPUR, MARCH 10

THE ENFORCEMENT Directorate (ED) on Monday conducted searches at 14 locations in Chhattisgarh's Durg district, including the residence of former chief minister Bhupesh Baghel and his son Chaitanya, in connection with an alleged liquor scam. The Congress alleged that the ED action was a "conspiracy to change the headlines" on a day when Parliament's Budget Session reconvened, saying the



Ex-Chhattisgarh CM Bhupesh Baghel on Monday. ANI

government sought to "divert attention" from pressing issues. In a post on X, Baghel's office alleged a "conspiracy to stop the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Cancelling Lalit Modi passport, he's out to avoid extradition, says PM of Vanuatu

SHUBHAJIT ROY
NEW DELHI, MARCH 10

PRIME MINISTER Jotham Napat of Vanuatu, a country of islands in the southern Pacific Ocean, Monday directed cancellation of its passport issued to Lalit Modi, saying the former Indian Premier League chairman was "attempting to avoid extradition".

Prime Minister Napat, in a media release issued by his office, said, "I have instructed the Citizenship Commission to cancel the Vanuatu passport issued to Lalit Modi following recent revelations in international media." "While all standard background checks, including Interpol screenings, conducted during his application showed

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THE WORLD

CARNEY TO BE NEXT CANADA PM; FACES TRUMP, TARIFFS & POLLS [PAGE 16](#)

A paan masala problem: What it takes to keep UP House premises spotless

MAULSHREE SETH
LUCKNOW, MARCH 10

UTTAR PRADESH Assembly Speaker Satish Mahana is holding a floor test, for both the Government and the Opposition.

A fine has been announced, the security control room alerted and extra CCTV cameras are being contemplated to ensure that MLAs and the staff put money where their mouth filled with paan masala or gutkha is. And

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY ROW DISRUPTS PROCEEDINGS Fireworks as Pradhan attacks TN govt, Stalin says watch your words

DMK MPs protest in House; Minister withdraws a word from his remarks, Speaker expunges

LIZ MATHEW & LALMANI VERMA
NEW DELHI, MARCH 10

THE ONGOING war of words between the ruling BJP and DMK led to disruptions in the Lok Sabha Monday, with Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan forced to withdraw a word from his remarks following protests by Tamil Nadu MPs.



Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan, DMK's Kanimozhi Karunanidhi and others outside Parliament, Monday. PTI

During the face-off in Question Hour, Pradhan accused the DMK government in Tamil

Nadu of being "dishonest" and playing "politics" with the future of the state's students. While

criticising the DMK government's opposition to the National Education Policy (NEP), he also accused it of doing a "U-turn" over PM-SHRI schools, bringing DMK MPs to their feet.

Soon after the exchange in Parliament, Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Stalin put out a post on social media accusing Pradhan of "arrogance". "Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan, who speaks with arrogance as if he were a king, needs to watch his words!" Stalin wrote. "You are withholding Tamil Nadu's rightful funds and

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

IN PARLIAMENT [PAGE 8](#)

Maya and Murphy, last hope to find Telangana tunnel workers' bodies

NIKHILA HENRY
HYDERABAD, MARCH 10

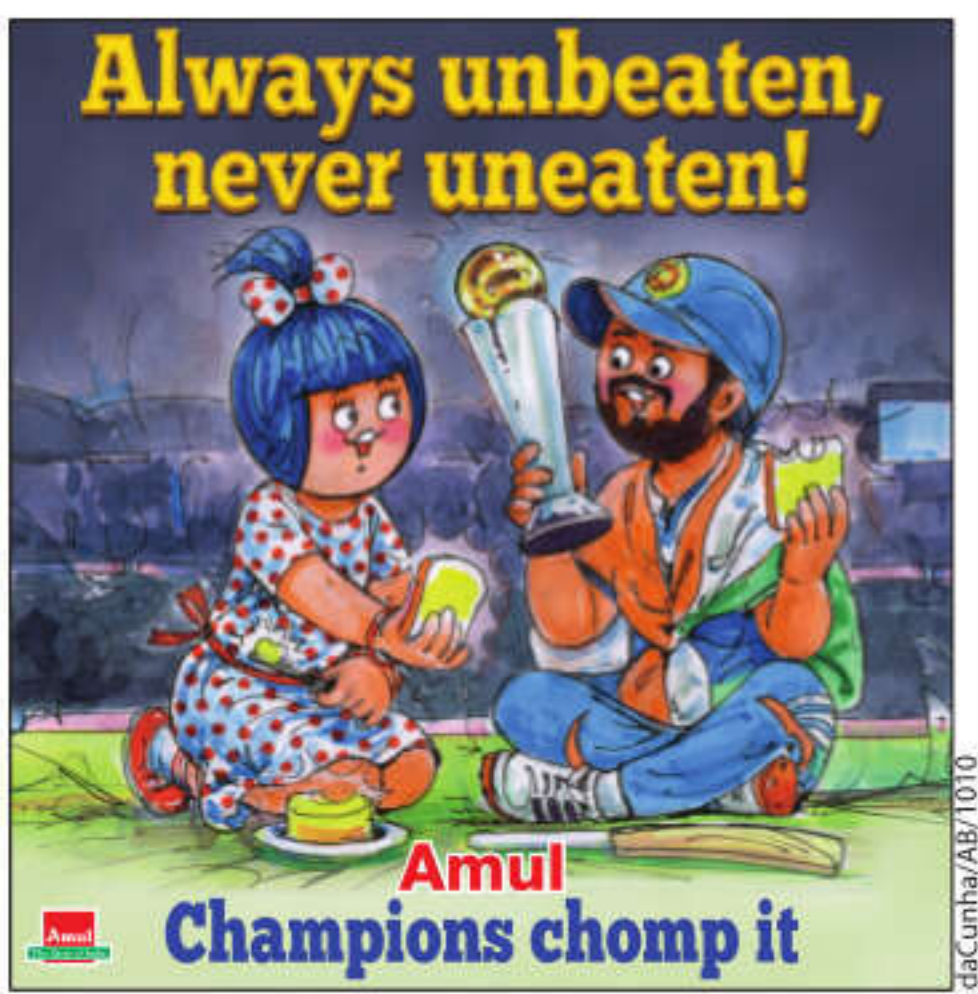
ON MARCH 6, Maya and Murphy, two Belgian Malinois dogs that belong to Kerala Police's cadaver dog squad, briskly alighted from an Indian Air Force chopper and went straight to the Srisailem Left Bank Canal (SLBC) tunnel near Domalapeda of Telangana's Nagarkurnool district. Here, they were handed the grim task of finding the bodies of eight men who were trapped in the



The two dogs with their handlers in the tunnel

Telangana tunnel collapse that occurred on February 22.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



Presence of water-ice likely outside Moon's polar regions as well: Chandrayaan-3 data

AMITABH SINHA
NEW DELHI, MARCH 10

WATER-ICE ON the Moon could be more prevalent than understood earlier. A new analysis of data from one of the instruments aboard Chandrayaan-3 suggests that there was a good probability that water-ice was present in locations outside of the polar regions of the Moon.

Using data from Chandra's Surface Thermophysical Experiment (ChaSTE), scientists at the Ahmedabad-based Physical Research Laboratory have shown that surface and sub-surface temperatures in the higher latitudes of the Moon's surface varied greatly with even very small changes in altitudes



Chandrayaan-3 lander Vikram on Moon. ISRO

over a short distance. Inclined areas in these latitudes that were not directly facing the Sun could have environments very similar to the polar regions, and could host water-ice below the surface. The findings have been published in the *Communications Earth and Environment* journal, a Nature publication.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

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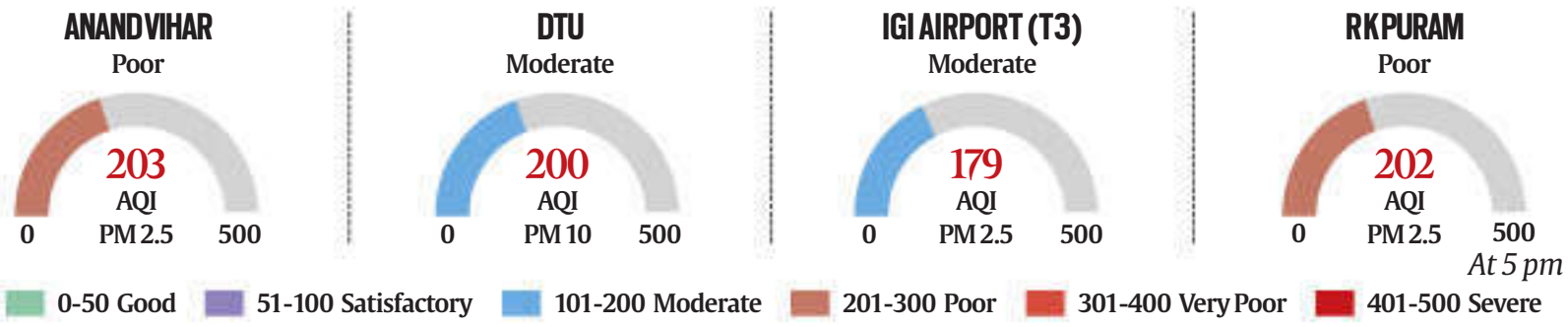
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SKY WATCH
FORECAST: March 11
Mist likely in the morning. Partly cloudy sky. Strong surface winds (speed 20-30 kmph)
MAX: 33-35 | **MIN: 16-18**
4.6° C above normal | 2° C above normal

COMMON SYMPTOMS: COUGH, FATIGUE LASTING A COUPLE OF WEEKS

City sees surge in Influenza B, H1N1 cases across age groups, say doctors

ANKITA UPADHYAY
NEW DELHI, MARCH 10

EVEN AS Delhi has bid adieu to winter, the Capital has been seeing a surge in flu cases in the last few weeks.

Hospitals across the city have reported a spike in patients affected by Influenza B and H1N1 (swine flu) viruses. Upper respiratory tract infections, high-grade fever across age groups, and cough and fatigue lasting a couple of weeks are common symptoms that patients have been complaining about, experts underlined.

Dr Rommel Tickoo, Director, Internal Medicine, Max Super Speciality Hospital, Delhi, said a rise in influenza-like illness cases was registered over the last month. "It's a bad strain of flu. I have seen a mixed bag — Influenza A, B, H1N1, H3N2, and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) that causes infection of the lungs and respiratory tract. In certain cases, even tests are not able to confirm... but it is an influenza-like virus," he said.

Dr Tickoo pointed out that the virus has affected all age groups. "Children, adolescents, adults, elderly... A lot of children are catching it, and they are bringing it back home," he said.

CAPITAL INFECTION

- Flu cases affecting all age groups
- Surge in viral cases has led to hospitalisation of patients with pneumonia, bronchitis, and sinusitis
- Common complaints: Upper respiratory tract infections, high-grade fever across age groups, and cough and fatigue



■ Symptoms last a couple of weeks, some patients require hospitalisation too

The surge in viral cases has also led to an increase in hospitalisation of patients with pneumonia, bronchitis, and sinusitis.

"This strain is causing a lot of bronchitis with excessive cough, just like it was happening after contracting Covid (during the pandemic). A majority of patients need nebulisers or inhalers, and some of them also need oral steroids... This could be due to strain mutation, but it needs to be checked with a virologist," he said.

According to Dr Suranjit Chatterjee, Senior Consultant, Internal Medicine, Indraprastha Apollo Hospital, Delhi, "the

symptoms are not only prolonged but (patients) require hospitalisation as well".

"The caseload too has increased over the last two weeks," he highlighted, adding that even younger people, those between 35 and 40 years of age, have complained of severe body ache, persistent cough, and no improvement in conditions.

"They are developing chest pain, secondary cough, and acute restlessness, compelling them to seek hospital admission for better management even when they don't require it," he added.

Dr Tickoo said that not everybody visiting his OPD is being

asked to undergo testing but is being prescribed anti-flu medicines. "By the time people come to the OPD, they have had a course of antibiotics or they insist on antibiotics... This is flu-like illness and it does not have any specific treatment... except for H1N1 and H3N2, which is prevalent right now," he said.

Fever, associated with loss of appetite, sense of taste, and smell, leading to fatigue, headache, and weakness, is among the common symptoms.

At Holy Family Hospital in Okhla, there have been patients admitted on ventilators after catching mostly Influenza B.

According to Dr Sumit Ray, Medical Superintendent, a majority of them are patients with co-morbid conditions like bronchial asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, and interstitial lung disease.

"Some also have underlying heart disease as well," he said.

Dr Tushar Tayal, Lead Consultant, Department of Internal Medicine, C K Birla Hospital, said influenza is caused by two kinds of viruses: A and B.

"H1N1 comes in the category of influenza A; I haven't seen too many cases of it this year but I have seen cases of Influenza B, which is causing similar flu-like

symptoms. This is much stronger than the normal flu kind of infection that we see, and people are getting both chest symptoms as well as abdominal symptoms, including vomiting, loose motions along with cough and runny nose and people are also ending up pneumonia also," he said.

Influenza B, the virus that mostly infects humans, is less common than influenza A and mutates slowly. H1N1 (swine flu) is a subtype of the influenza A virus, which tends to have severe symptoms.

Dr Tayal recommended that flu shots should be taken every year.

"People do not take flu vaccine routinely. Ideally, it should be taken in September and October. But in India, the coverage for flu vaccine is not that high, and people tend to skip it, because of which they catch the infection more severely. Everyone above the age of six months should get the vaccine," he said.

"Every year, some or the other virus grows in particular and causes infections. What we have learned from Covid is to wear a mask, keep sanitising your hands and take the flu vaccine every year on time," he added.

Eight toilets clogged, Air India flight from Chicago to Delhi makes U-turn

Poly bags, rags & clothes flushed down, finds probe

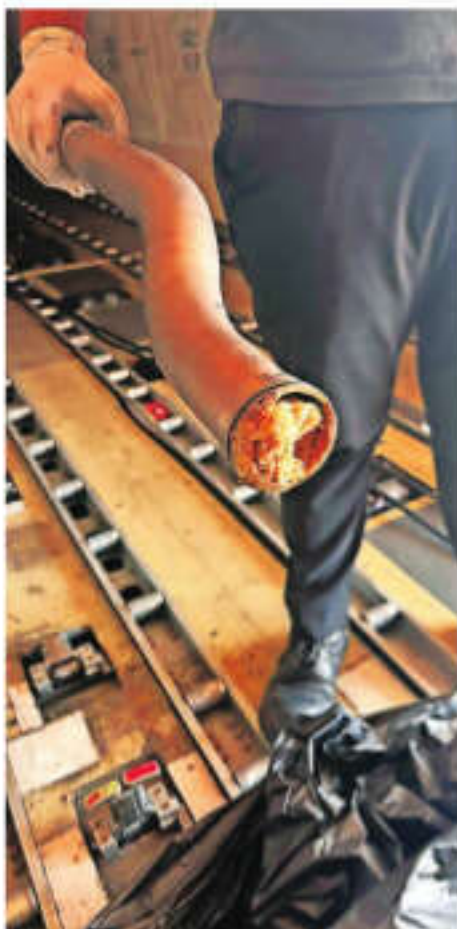
EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, MARCH 10

AN AIR India flight from Chicago to Delhi returned to its origin airport on March 5, an hour and forty-five minutes into the flight, due to clogged toilets.

A statement from the airlines said eight out of 12 of its toilets became "unserviceable" and the flight had to return to Chicago.

Videos of passengers of Flight AI216 were shared on social media on Monday.

"As part of our investigation into the incident, our teams found polythene bags, rags, and



The items were found stuck in the plumbing. Express

clothes that had been flushed down and (were) stuck in the plumbing. This led the lavatories to become unserviceable," an Air India spokesperson said.

The flight left Chicago O'Hare International Airport at 4.48 pm (US time).

"About an hour and forty-five minutes into the flight, the crew reported some of the lavatories in Business and Economy Class to be unserviceable. Subsequently, eight of the 12 lavatories in the aircraft became unserviceable, causing discomfort to all on board," the statement said.

"By this time, the aircraft was flying over the Atlantic, leaving points in Europe as potential cities to divert to. However, due to restrictions on night operations at most of the European airports, it was decided to divert back to Chicago," the spokesperson added.

Fire breaks out on 18th floor of Noida high-rise; no injuries, say officials

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NOIDA, MARCH 10

A FIRE broke out on the 18th floor of a high-rise in Noida's Sector 93 on Monday evening. According to fire officials, no injuries were reported.

Officials said they received information of the blaze at 8.41 pm. "We were alerted that a small closed room on the 18th floor of Forest Spa, in Noida Sector 93, has caught fire," read a statement issued by the Noida Police.

According to Chief Fire Officer (CFO), Noida, Pradeep Kumar, the fire service unit was rushed to the spot and the blaze was completely extinguished. "There was no loss of life as the fire was in a small room and no one was trapped," the CFO told



The fire broke out at Forest Spa society. Abhinav Saha

The Indian Express.

Officials said the cause of the fire is being investigated.

Security officials of the Forest Spa society said the fire probably occurred in the kitchen area of the penthouse located on the

18th floor. "The fire broke out at 8.20 pm. We used a fire extinguisher in the society to try to douse the fire. By the time the fire fighting vehicle reached, things were in control," said a security official.

Man shot dead at Ghazipur flower market, 2 arrested

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, MARCH 10

A MAN was shot dead at the Ghazipur flower market in the early hours of Monday over an alleged rivalry between two sparring groups in the area, said police. Two people have been arrested in the case.

Following the murder, friends and family of the deceased, Rohit, 32, sat in protest at the Delhi-Ghaziabad highway, disrupting traffic for hours.

DCP (East) Abhishek Dhaniasaid, "During questioning, eyewitness Akash Chaudhary stated that he and the deceased were on a scooter. Near Phool Mandi cut, three-four persons in a car shot at Rohit. He succumbed to injuries during treatment."

"It's a monetary dispute between two groups resulting in firing by the accused. Two people have been arrested, and teams are working to arrest the rest," the DCP said.

The arrested accused have been identified as Nazim, 40, and Talib, 24. Nazim had six cases registered against him earlier.

Rohit, his family claimed, maintained a record of dumpers that came into Ghazipur and worked with a contractor.

Sumitra, a relative of Rohit, claimed he was trying to stop an alleged petrol 'mafia' in the area. "A man and his aides used to steal petrol and diesel from vehicles. Rohit opposed them," she said.

Rohit, Sumitra alleged, was then called by the accused at 1.30 am near the Ghazipur flower market to 'resolve' the dispute.

2019 ANTI-CAA PROTESTS CASE

Delhi court frames charges against Sharjeel Imam, says 'among kingpins of a larger conspiracy to incite violence'

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, MARCH 10

A DELHI court framed charges against former Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) student Sharjeel Imam and former Jamia Millia Islamia student Asif Iqbal Tanha over a protest in 2019 in the city against the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA).

"Accused Sharjeel Imam was not only an instigator, he was also one of the kingpins of a larger conspiracy to incite violence," said Additional Sessions Judge Vishal Singh of

Saket court in his order dated March 7.

Both Imam and Tanha were charged under sections related to abetment, criminal conspiracy, being part of an unlawful assembly, and rioting with a deadly weapon of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) and sections of the Prevention of Damage to Public Property Act, among others.

According to the chargesheet filed in this case, a total of 41 vehicles, including government vehicles, were damaged and set ablaze by a mob of hundreds in New Friends Colony. It also stated that 10 police officials



Former JNU student Sharjeel Imam. Archive

were injured. Among them was one station house officer (SHO) who sustained grievous injuries.

"Why, otherwise, accused Sharjeel Imam incited only the members of Muslim religion to disrupt the normal functioning of the society," the court noted.

"It needs to be observed here

that there could be nothing peaceful about a chakka jaam. In a populous city like Delhi, at any given time, scores of critically ill medical patients requiring urgent treatment are in a rush to reach hospitals. Chakka jaam can potentially lead to deterioration of their condition or even death if they do not receive medical care in time, which would be nothing short of culpable homicide. Vehicles supplying essential and emergency services are on the roads," it said. Chakka jaam refers to a protest where people block roads.

"Even if the mob does not in-

dulge in violence and arson while enforcing chakka jaam, it would still be a violent act by one section of society against the other," the court added.

Imam had argued in the court that he was not a part of the "unlawful assembly" that allegedly committed rioting on December 15, 2019. He also argued that his speech did not promote enmity, hatred, or disharmony.

Fourteen persons were discharged in the case, while charges against 9 others, including Tanha and Imam, were framed.

JATIN ANAND
NEW DELHI, MARCH 10

THE BJP Delhi government will table its first Budget on March 25, the Legislative Assembly Secretariat announced Monday. The Budget is estimated to be "around Rs 80,000 crore". Meetings chaired by Chief Minister Rekha Gupta and her cabinet colleagues are scheduled to begin on Tuesday.

For the 2024-25 financial year, the AAP government had tabled a budget of Rs. 76,000 crore.

Sources aware of developments in this regard said the Budget, which would be presented during the five-day Budget Session of the Delhi Legislative Assembly between March 24 and 28, was likely to be themed along the BJP's poll slogan of 'Viksit Dilli' (developed Delhi).

"Delhi's budget for the 2025-26 fiscal is likely to be around Rs 80,000 crore and have a major emphasis on affecting visible change in the Capital's existing public infrastructure; the priority is, more or less, a complete and tangible overhaul of the city's current condition within three years of the new government," a source said.

Urban development, Flood

and Irrigation, Delhi Jal Board, and Public Works Department, the source said, are expected to be priority departments as far as the entire budgetary exercise was concerned apart from "zero interruption" to the power and water subsidies inherited by the new BJP government.

"But that is not to say that focus on other significant services such as health and education, for instance, will go down. In these sectors too, the emphasis is expected to be on the creation of better infrastructure — more hospitals, schools and better roads — apart from rejuvenation of the Yamuna," the source also said.

Apart from the budget, as per sources, other key developments expected during the session were the tabling of around 10 CAG reports on various aspects of the functioning of the AAP Delhi government and the constitution of a nine-member Public Accounts Committee (PAC), among others.

"While a few of the Assembly's committees have been constituted, the rest will be created during the upcoming session; this includes the PAC, which has the mandate to preside over the assessment of loss caused to the state exchequer by the previous government," a source said.

GST Deputy Commissioner jumps to death from 15th floor

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NOIDA, MARCH 10

A DEPUTY commissioner in the Goods and Service Tax (GST) department died allegedly by suicide, after he jumped from the 15th floor of a housing society in Noida's Sector 75, said police.

According to the Noida Police, the deputy commissioner, aged 57, suffered from cancer. He lived with his family. "The incident took place at 10.45 am on Monday," said an officer.

"The family members of the deceased have not yet lodged a complaint. We will take action after receiving the complaint," officials said.

According to Noida's Additional Deputy Commissioner of Police, Sumit Shukla, "Around 10.45 am, he fell from the 15th floor of the society."

"Following this, the residents informed the security guard and his family members. He was rushed to a hospital, where doctors declared him dead on arrival. He had injuries on his head and other parts of the body," Shukla said.

'NO WORD SINCE JAN 27'

Indian chef working in Maldives missing: Family says got no help, HC steps in

SOHINI GHOSH
NEW DELHI, MARCH 10

MUJEEB KHAN (25) last spoke to his 27-year-old brother, Aftab Khan, who was working at a hotel in Maldives as a chef, on January 27 at 3.05 pm (IST). Nearly two hours later, Aftab's employers would inform the family that he was "missing" after he went snorkelling, along with two other employees of the resort, and that the management of the hotel was "searching" for him.

With no knowledge of Aftab's whereabouts since then, the Delhi High Court has

stepped in following a plea filed by his family on March 4. The HC, in an order on March 7, directed the union government to depute a nodal officer to liaise with law-enforcement agencies in Maldives "to ensure that a proper investigation is carried out into the circumstances" in which Aftab went missing, "and to trace his current whereabouts".

Justice Sachin Datta has also sought status reports from the Union Ministries of Home Affairs and External Affairs, as well as the Indian High Commission in Maldives. The court also issued a specific direction to the Indian High

Commission in Maldives to provide Consular Access to the petitioner, Mujeeb, and his legal counsel, Advocate Zeeshan Khan.

The HC also directed that "in case it is found that Mr Aftab Khan has expired, the respondents are directed to ensure that adequate arrangements are made to perform the last rites of the deceased in the presence of his family members."

Aftab was the breadwinner of his family, comprising his elderly parents, two brothers aged 25 and 20, and an 18-year-old sister.

Resident of Aligarh, he graduated with a diploma in food



craft from Aligarh Muslim University and had since worked at various hotels across Aligarh, Indore, Noida, and Ahmedabad.

"His senior at Ahmedabad suggested he consider applying to Maldives as prospects are better. He applied and got through and had planned to work there for two years to gain experience," said Mujeeb.

Aftab went to Maldives in March 2024 on a work visa, which was to be valid until March 13, 2026. He was to start

Aftab Khan went "missing" after he went snorkelling on Jan 27, the family was told

his employment as 'Chef de Partie' at a resort located at Ifuru Island in Maldives.

He was to be married in November, said the family.

His family had been asking him to come to India in February to attend his cousin's wedding. "But he said he won't be able to make it because the hotel management wasn't letting him take long leaves," said Mujeeb. "We last saw him on March 13, 2024."

After the call on January 27, Mujeeb and the family's lawyer, Zeeshan Khan, arrived in Maldives on January 31. In their plea, the family claimed they received no assistance from the office of the Indian High

Commission.

They continued to send repeated email requests to the Indian High Commission in Maldives and received an email response on the MADAD portal of MEA on February 12. "As per recommendation received from Mission/Post the case is closed. But it can be reopened in future if needed," it read, as per the plea.

The family told the HC that till date, despite all efforts, they have "not received a single document from the respondents pertaining to the investigation related to the matter or any evidence in that regard".

Arguing before the judge on Friday, advocate Zeeshan Khan

orally suggested to the court that an SOP to be followed in such cases be framed by the Indian government to ensure fair and impartial investigation, in accordance with relevant treaties.

Meanwhile, the family claimed the hotel, too, has not handed over documentary evidence regarding the snorkelling incident or Aftab's phone. Justice Datta has now directed Indian authorities "to pursue the matter with authorities concerned in Maldives to retrieve the mobile phone" of Aftab.

"All we can do is hope. We can only hope that he is safe wherever he is," said Mujeeb.

FIRST MAJOR EVENT SINCE DELHI POLL DEFEAT

AAP chalks out campaign focused on Dalit community to regain lost support

SAMANHUSAIN
NEW DELHI, MARCH 10

AFTER LOSING ground in four SC-reserved constituencies in the recent Delhi Assembly elections, along with several other constituencies where Dalits form a sizeable population, the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) has now come up with a strategy to regain its lost support and to consolidate the voter base that has proved to be crucial for the party in its past electoral wins — a grand event dedicated to Dr BR Ambedkar on his birth anniversary, which will cover all Assembly constituencies.

With the party winning eight SC-reserved seats, compared to sweeping all 12 in 2020, the results have shown a shift in voting patterns that the AAP is now keen

to counter.

The party plans to launch an ideological outreach campaign that will focus on the legacy of national icons like Dr BR Ambedkar and Shaheed Bhagat Singh. While announcing the campaign on Monday, AAP Delhi state convener Gopal Rai said, “AAP workers and office bearers must strengthen themselves ideologically, and these programmes will help achieve that.” This will be the party’s first major event after the Delhi elections, aimed at bringing together office bearers and workers from its Delhi unit.

The decision was taken on Monday at a key meeting that was chaired by Rai and attended by office bearers from the main wing, frontal organisations, district presidents, district secretaries, and state social media unit members.

With the BJP now in power in Delhi, the party said that it is preparing to take on the ruling party both inside the Assembly and on the streets.

The campaign will begin with an event, ‘Ek Shaam Shaheedon Ke Naam,’ on March 23, which will mark the martyrdom of Bhagat Singh, Rajguru, and Sukhdev. This will be followed by another event on April 14, commemorating BR Ambedkar’s birth anniversary. The party has plans to take this campaign to all Assembly constituencies.

Over the past years, Dalit voters played a crucial role in shaping Delhi’s electoral landscape, first supporting the Congress and later shifting towards AAP as the party emerged as an alternative to the BJP. However, with the BJP’s win in constituencies like Mangol

Puri, Trilokpuri, Madipur, and Bawana, the recent elections saw the party making inroads into AAP’s Dalit support base.

Of the 36 seats in Delhi where Dalits form a significant presence (over 15% of the electorate), the BJP won 21.

AAP secured 10 seats where Dalits make up over 20% and seven where they constitute over 25%. The BJP’s gains in these constituencies signal a new political dynamic that the AAP is seeking to address. At present, the AAP is also working on restructuring its organisational setup to strengthen its cadre at the grassroots level. “Through various programmes, we will ensure that the thoughts of our freedom fighters and social reformers reach both our workers and the people,” Rai said on Monday.

Police drive to check for illegal immigrants continues

UPASIKA SINGHAL
NEW DELHI, MARCH 10

AROUND FIVE days ago, Ramavati (50) put her grandson to bed and was getting ready to eat dinner when she saw her son approaching the house. She then noticed policemen walking behind him. “I thought my son had done something,” said Ramavati. To her surprise, the policemen simply asked to see her Aadhaar and voter ID cards. “They asked where I was born, for how many years I’d lived in Delhi,” she said.

The policemen were there as part of a verification drive — which started in December — to check whether any illegal Bangladeshi immigrants live in the area.

On Monday, police held one such drive in West Delhi’s Raghubir Nagar. As per officers at the spot, the force has been ramping up checks in the police district after a transgender person was arrested for robbery in Vikaspuri in January. “After questioning, the person said he was a Bangladeshi and had been in India for the past 10 years,” an officer said.

After the arrest, DCP (West) Vichitra Veer had told the media in a statement that police are conducting a campaign in all “vulnerable” areas that have the possibility of illegal Bangladeshis.

Jai Nath (60), who is the pradhan of 1,200 jhuggis in the area, said: “Mostly people from Bihar, Punjab and UP live here. They come to Delhi looking for jobs and end up working as scrap dealers or workers in nearby factories in Naraina, Mayapuri and Khyala.”

Some people lining up for the drive seemed clueless about why their documents were being inspected. “I think they’re linking our Aadhaar and PAN cards,” said Raj Mohammad (63).

When a police officer was asked how many illegal immigrants they expect to catch, he said, “We’re just following orders.”

Another police officer later explained the exercise aimed to send a message: “When you carry out these drives, people who are here illegally will move out in fear. That’s when we ask local pradhans who these people are, when they moved in, and where they went. We track them after that.”

EXPRESS Careers

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ADVERTORIAL

SBI Cards and Payment Services Ltd. Leads Tree Plantation Drive at Kasan Lake, Manesar, on International Women’s Day

Manesar, March 8, 2025— To mark International Women's Day, SBI Cards and Payment Services Ltd., in association with Gramin Vikas Trust, Noida, and the Municipal Corporation Manesar, organized a tree plantation campaign at Kasan Lake, Manesar. This Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiative emphasized environmental conservation while celebrating women's achievements.

The event was graced by Mr. Hitesh Meena, IAS, Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC), Gurugram, as the Chief guest and Chief People Officer, SBI Cards and Payment Services Ltd. as the guest of honor. The program concluded with participation from R.K. Kansal (CEO, GVT), Ajay Nirala, Executive Engineer, Municipal Corporation Manesar, and Sr. Vice President, CSR & ESG, SBI Cards and Payment Services Ltd., along with over 100 attendees.

The plantation took place in an area of 4.5-acres surrounding the lake. Reinforcing the day's significance, two young girls from Kasan village were felicitated for their achievements in sports.

Additionally, the event highlighted the CSR contributions and achievements of SBI Cards and Payment Services. Mr Hitesh Meena, IAS, ADC, Gurugram, addressed the gathering with the importance of conservation of water bodies for balancing nature and offering insights on environmental preservation and conservation and the impact of sustainable initiatives.

With this initiative, SBI Cards and Payment Services continues to demonstrate its commitment to sustainability and community development, reinforcing the role of corporate social responsibility in fostering a greener and more inclusive future.

2 engineers held for killing auto driver

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
GURUGRAM, MARCH 10

TWO ENGINEERS have been arrested for allegedly beating to death a 21-year-old auto rickshaw driver in DLF Phase 3 area after an argument, police said on Monday.

The accused have been identified as Jaideep and Mani Shankar, they said.

On Saturday, the two men were going to Jaideep's apartment after having dinner. When they reached their destination, they came across an auto rickshaw driver, Sonu, standing on the street with his vehicle in a drunk state. When Jaideep asked Sonu to park his auto on the side, the auto driver allegedly started hurling abuses at the engineer, police said.

After this, they got into a scuffle, and both the accused badly beat up Sonu. Due to serious head injuries, the auto driver died during treatment, added police.

Fake dating profiles created to trap high-paying customers, club roped in fraudsters, 4 held: Cops

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI MARCH 10

CREATING FAKE profiles on a slew of dating apps, posing as women; initiating conversations with strangers; and then inviting them for dates to an expensive club: these three steps were a part of the modus operandi linked to an alleged fraud that was being perpetrated to trap people into paying hefty bills at clubs in Delhi, police said on Monday.

The fraud was uncovered with the arrest of four men who were allegedly roped in by a club to draw and dupe high-paying customers.

The accused have been identified as Rajender, 30; Kuldeep, 39; Ashish, 21; and Deepak, 24. The accused received a commission of Rs 3,000 per night to get

the victims to agree to come to these clubs, police said.

The fake profiles on dating apps such as Tinder and Bumble used pictures of women hired by the club to pose as the date of the person targeted.

Once at the club, the woman would ask the unsuspecting targeted person to order expensive drinks and food. "The accused then collaborated with club management to generate inflated bills, forcing the victims to pay the huge amount," DCP (Shahdara) Prashant Gautam said.

Police had been tracking a group setting up such fake dates for months. "Officially, the victims never came forward with a complaint, but there were reports of people being duped on dating apps," a police official said.

The breakthrough in the case came when an informer tipped off SI Ajay Tomar of the Special Task Force team of Shahdara

about the accused getting hired by a club in Karkardooma.

At around 3 pm on Sunday, a police team, dressed in plain clothes to blend in with the crowd, reached the club with the informer.

The informer pointed towards the four men standing outside the entry gate of the club, on the ground floor of a mall.

The accused were arrested on the spot, and their mobile phones were seized.

"An FIR under Sections 318(4)/3(5) of the BNS was registered at P.S. Anand Vihar for further legal proceedings," DCP Gautam said.

According to the FIR, their mobile phones had multiple dating apps, with fake profiles being used by the four accused. "Their involvement with other clubs is being looked into. Search for the women who have been involved is going on," a police official said.

WRITES TO DELHI TRANSPORT DEPT

Cancel licences of habitual violators: Delhi Traffic Police

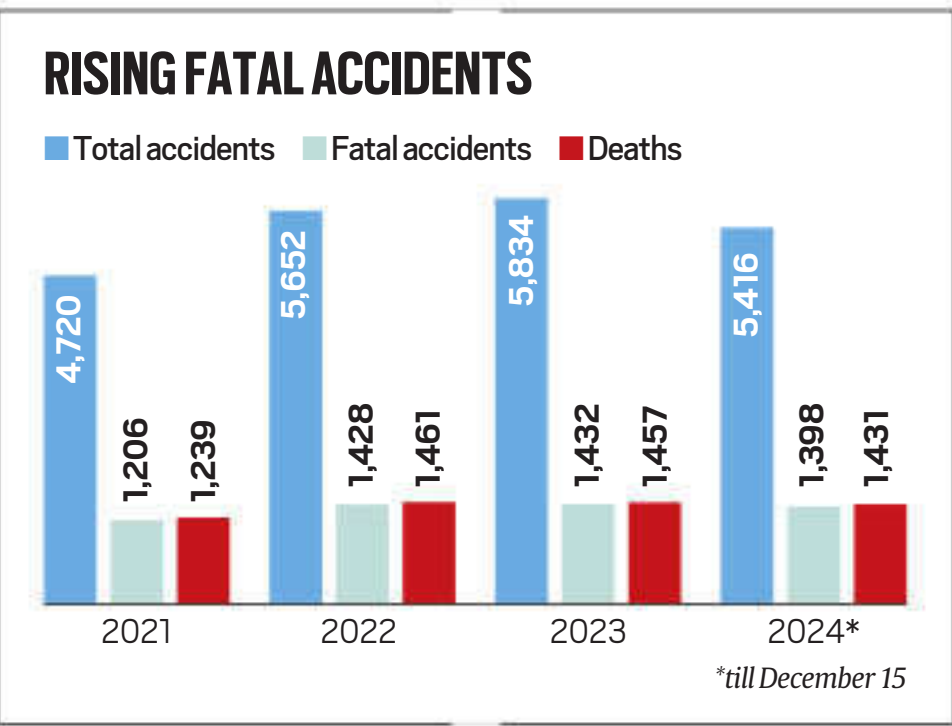
ALOK SINGH
NEW DELHI, MARCH 10

IF YOU'VE been caught driving dangerously or under the influence of alcohol or drugs more than thrice, you may well be on your way to losing your licence. The Delhi Traffic Police wants "habitual violators" to be off the Capital's streets due to the increasing number of fatal accidents.

Citing the number of rising fatal accidents on the city's roads – which have gone up from over 1.38 lakh to more than 1.68 lakh over the last three years according to Ministry of Road Transport and Highways data – the Traffic Police has written to the Transport Department requesting it to take deterrent action including the cancellation of drivers' licences of habitual violators of traffic rules and regulations.

In 2021, as many as 1,239 people were killed in 1,206 accidents in the city. In 2024, up to December 15, this number went up to 1,431 people in 1,398 accidents.

This means that in 2021, an average of three people died in vehicular accidents per day, and



this went up to four people per day in 2024.

The letter, written recently to the Delhi Transport Department by Special Commissioner of Police (Traffic) Ajay Chaudhary, has recommended the cancellation of drivers' licences of those who have committed three or more violations of sections 184 and/or 185 of the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988, sources who have seen the letter, said.

These sections pertain to dangerous driving – including red-light jumping, overtaking wrongly and using a phone

while driving among other offences – in addition to driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

According to sources, Chaudhary also stated that driving licences of those individuals who have been prosecuted for other violations of traffic rules on five or more occasions should also be cancelled.

Chaudhary further stated, "As you are aware, the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988, was enacted with the objective to streamline traffic rules and to reduce accidents. To bring down traffic vi-

olations and road accidents, the principal Act was amended through The Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Act, 2019, prescribing a heavy amount of penalty against violators of traffic rules. However, the data analysis reveals that a number of drivers are habitually violating traffic rules. Such violators are a serious threat to other road users, causing a large number of road accidents."

This situation calls for stringent action against drivers habitual of violating the rules, he said.

"Therefore, to save precious lives, it is recommended to cancel the driving licences of drivers who have committed three or more violations of sections 184 and/or 185 of the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988. Similarly, the driving licence of those individuals who have been prosecuted for other violations of traffic rules on five or more occasions should also be cancelled. The proposed action would prove to be an effective deterrent for drivers who frequently violate traffic rules," he wrote.

A response from the Delhi Transport Department is awaited.

Yamuna Task Force set to be deployed to protect floodplains

New Delhi: As it chases the goal to clean Yamuna in three years to deliver one of its top poll promises, the BJP-led Delhi government has initiated the process to form a task force, in collaboration with the Territorial Army, to protect the floodplains, curb encroachments, stop illegal dumping of debris and waste, and ensure strict enforcement of environmental regulations.

Delhi Water Minister Parvesh Sahib Singh recently held a meeting with the Territorial Army chief to discuss this initiative, said officials. "The Territorial Army chief has also accorded his in-principle approval, following the meeting with the Minister...The department concerned is already ready

with the plan, and Chief Minister Rekha Gupta is also aware of the meeting and the proposal. The CM will send a proposal or a formal communication, after which the work for setting up the task force will begin," said a source.

Parvesh Sahib Singh confirmed that the initiative is being undertaken and said that the BJP government is "committed to restoring the Yamuna and protecting its floodplains."

"This initiative is a part of PM Modi's guarantee to provide a clean and sustainable environment. With the help of the Territorial Army, we will ensure that no further damage is done to this sacred river," the Water Minister said. **ENS**

25 senior PWD officials to adopt, monitor key roads

New Delhi: With the BJP government aiming to repair 100 km of road stretches in 100 days of coming to power in Delhi, the Public Works Department (PWD) has directed 25 senior officials to adopt one road for close monitoring and upkeep.

Sources said this is a first-of-its-kind initiative, where officials have been asked to adopt a road and closely monitor its maintenance and development.

"It has been observed that many PWD road stretches in Delhi are lacking... due to issues like maintenance of carriageways, footpaths, kerbs, central verges, etc. To overcome such issues, it has been decided to engage all senior officers of the

PWD, up to the rank of superintendent engineers, to adopt at least one stretch of PWD road of their choice for the purpose," said the department in an order.

The 25 officials include an engineer-in-chief, two principal chief engineers, six chief engineers, three directors, six superintendent engineers and seven project managers.

The department has further asked the officials to furnish their choice of three stretches within seven days. "Subsequently, an official will be allotted one stretch... and (give) feedback to the executing officials concerned of that stretch over the e-Monitoring App..." read the order. **ENS**

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e-Procurement Notice

e-Tender No.: IRCON/2046/NFR-SRRP/ISS etc. & Water Supply/261 Date: 11.03.2025
e-tender in two packet system is invited from bidders meeting requirements for the work "Construction of one Integrated Sub Station 132KVA, Office Building, Water Supply Arrangements includes Intake Well, Pump House, Water Rising Main, Water Treatment Plant, Clear Water Reservoir, Overhead Reservoirs at Rangpo, 2 nos. Electrical Substations (11/0.440KV) at T-14 portals P1 & P2 and Pump stations at Tunnel Portals T-9, T-11, T-13, T-14 and other ancillary works in connection with Sivok Rangpo Rail Line Project."

Estimated Cost of the Work Rs. 5458.49 Lakhs
Last Date & Time of e-Bid Submission 01.04.2025 up to 5:00 PM

For further details, visit website <https://etenders.gov.in/eprocure/app>. Corrigendum, if any, would be hosted only on the website: Project Director/SRRP, Block-C, PC Mittal Bus Terminus, Siliguri-734001

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ALL INDIA INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL SCIENCES, GUWAHATI
(A statutory body under the aegis of Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Govt. of Assam, Kamrup, Assam-781101, Website: www.aiimguwahati.ac.in)

NOTICE INVITING TENDERS

Superintending Engineer (I/c), AIIMS Guwahati invites bids from eligible bidders fulfilling the eligibility criteria as stipulated in the bid documents for following tenders:

- Annual Day to Day Civil Maintenance work at AIIMS Guwahati**
NIT No: 05/AIIMSG/MAIN/2025/NIT/02 Dated: 10.03.2025.
- Annual Day to Day Electrical Maintenance work at AIIMS Guwahati**
NIT No: 05/AIIMSG/MAIN/2025/NIT/03 Dated: 10.03.2025.
- Annual Day to Day HVAC Maintenance work at AIIMS Guwahati**
NIT No: 05/AIIMSG/MAIN/2025/NIT/01 Dated: 10.03.2025.

The Bid documents are available for download in www.tenderwizard.com/AIIMSG and aiimguwahati.ac.in till 16.03.2025. Detail instructions including cardinal dates for submission of bids are given in the respective bid documents.

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Ref No : NFL/CO/Mktg-D/Azadirachtin/2025/26/01 Date: 11.03.2025

e-PROCUREMENT NOTICE

Bids are invited from the prospective bidders for supply of Neem based pesticide (Azadirachtin 1500-oil based) for marketing in various states during 2025-26 & 2026-27. For details visit website: <https://etenders.gov.in/eprocure/app> (e-tendering) & www.nationalfertilizers.com (Homepage). E-Tender No. 2025_NFL_228845_1. Last date of Bid submission date / Opening of Technical Bid document is 15.30 Hrs on 25.03.2025 / 15.30 Hrs on 26.03.2025. Any Corrigendum (s) to this tender shall be published only on our websites. **DGM-(Mktg-Domestic)**

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N. V. Road, Kapodara Char Rasta, Surat 395 006 GUJARAT
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Tender Notice

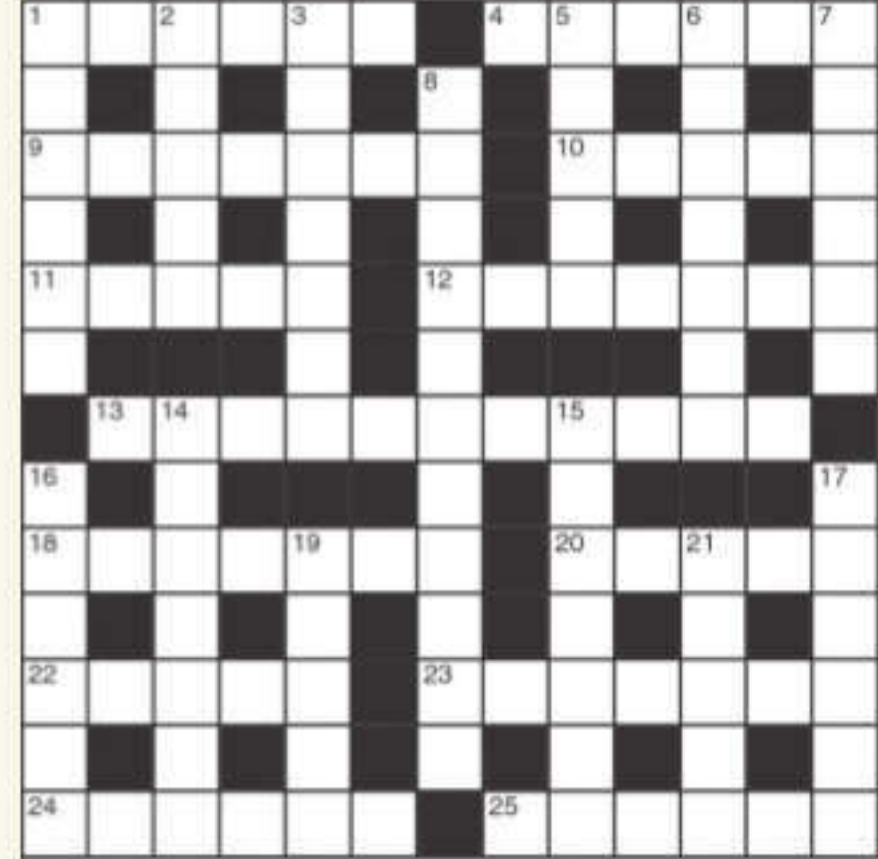
Tenders are invited for Expression of Interest from existing and new suppliers who are interested for the supply of 10 Meter/ 270 Kg working load readymade, Prestressed Concrete (PSC) Poles to be supplied under DGVCL up to 24 months period. Tender is put up on <https://tender.procure.com> (For view, download and online submission) and www.dgvcl.com (For view & download only).

Sr. No.	Tender No.
1	DGVCL/CIVIL/PSC POLE/10Mtr-270Kg/24-26/EOI/217A

Note: Bidders/ vendors may visit the above website/s for regular updates till opening of the tender.

ACE (P), DGVCL, Surat.

CROSSWORD 5621



- ACROSS**
- Scoff at journalist's return journey (6)
 - New models produced infrequently (6)
 - Second man fitting in chief officer (7)
 - A sign to know in Scotland (5)
 - Slowly advanced to the ring (5)
 - Performing with an academic continuously (2,3,2)
 - It throws light on what has been written (7,4)
 - She's had one ring and expects another (7)
 - It may turn up as one of a suit (5)
 - Open-air party is best (5)
 - Cuts in the middle of Greece produce blackout (7)
 - Brought to order it turned and passed on (6)
 - Runs out of lighters (6)
- DOWN**
- Bad cold that is yielding (6)
 - Mature or just mature over one point (5)
 - No heart of stone (7)
 - More in another edition (5)
 - A noble estate (7)
 - Industry in which men are under-employed (6)
 - Rent once due needs to be met (11)
 - A decent reform carried out (7)
 - The final round (4,3)
 - On the surface a pontoon (6)
 - People mending pipes? (6)
 - The end is nigh (5)
 - Shock for a Scandinavian climber (5)

Solutions Crossword 5620 Across: 1 Negated, 5 Other, 8 In the interval, 9 Exist, 10 Unaware, 11 Eagles, 12 Spools, 15 Renewal, 17 Indus, 19 Hobson's choice, 20 Nitre, 21 Dresden **Down:** 1 Noise, 2 Getting on a bit, 3 Theatre, 4 Dinkum, 5 Opera, 6 Have a good mind, 7 Rollers, 11 Earthen, 13 Prithae, 14 Closed, 16 Whose, 18 Skein

JUMBLED WORDS

Given below are four jumbled words. Solve the jumbles to make proper words and move them to the respective squares below. Select the letters in the shaded squares and jumble them to get the answer for the given quip.

Never do things others can do and will do if there are things others ____ do or ____ do. - Amelia Earhart (6,...,4,3)

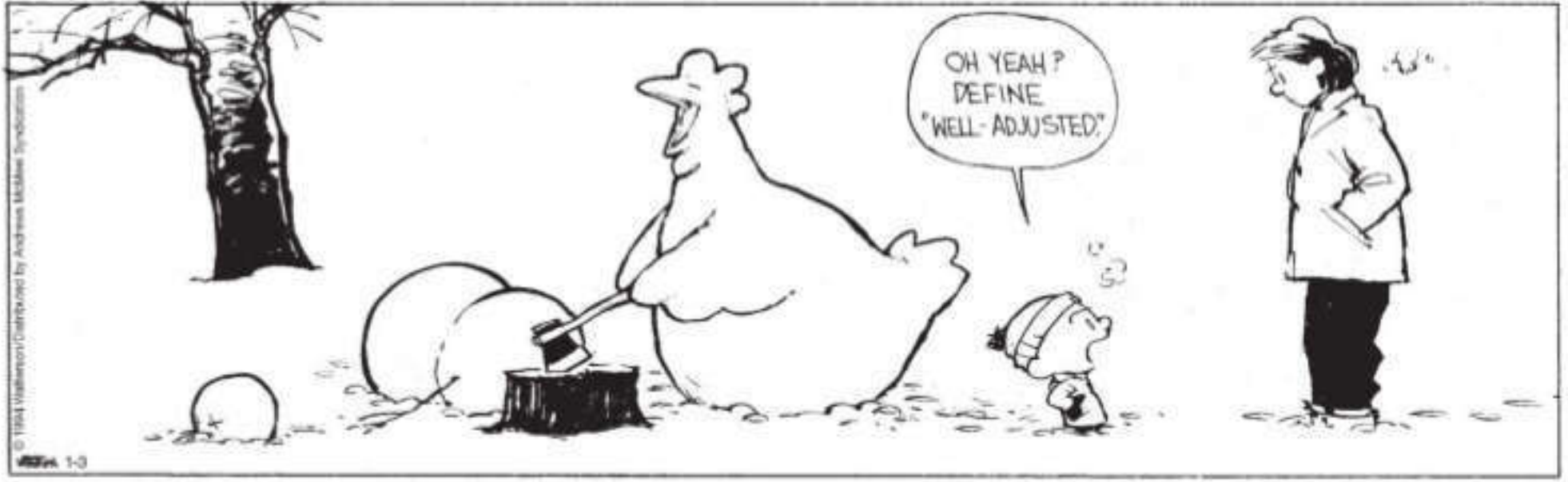
HYA OO
[Shaded squares: H, Y, A, O, O]
OSYL NN
[Shaded squares: O, S, Y, L, N, N]
AIL TT
[Shaded squares: A, I, L, T, T]
EHRC NW
[Shaded squares: E, H, R, C, N, W]

Solution: HYA OO: HAYOOH; OSYL NN: NOSHLY; AIL TT: TAILLANT; EHRC NW: NHCERW. Answer: Never do things others can do and will do if there are things others cannot do. - Amelia Earhart

OVER THE HEDGE by Michael Fry & T Lewis



CALVIN & HOBBS by Bill Watterson



MARVIN by Tom Armstrong



SUDOKU 5891

Difficulty Level 2s
Instructions
To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from 1 to 9 must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Difficulty Level
1s = Very easy; 2s = Easy; 3s = Medium; 4s = Hard; 5s = Very Hard; 6s = Genius

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

SOLUTION SUDOKU 5890

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

DAY TODAY

BY PETER VIDAL

ARIES (Mar 21 - Apr 20)

 The advice I have to give you remains pretty constant. The main point to remember is that nothing is as it seems. The stars are creating illusions, like mirages in the desert, so don't be taken in. By the way, you could be very confident that you're right.

TAURUS (Apr 21 - May 21)

 It is said that more haste equals less speed. Never has this paradoxical statement been more relevant to your circumstances. The more you push, the faster you are likely to drive yourself into a very thick fog! Take a little extra time to figure out the facts.

GEMINI (May 22 - June 21)

 You're still walking a financial tight-rope, so take care unless you are more than one hundred percent sure of the outcome. Romantic stars, on the other hand, have seldom looked better, perhaps because you're prepared to accept whatever happens with a good grace.

CANCER (June 22 - July 23)

 Nobody can prevent you from doing what suits you best. Neither will they be able to force your hand, especially as far as professional developments are concerned. It's time to show your new-found maturity, impressing partners with your ability to take magisterial decisions.

LEO (July 24 - Aug 23)

 Just one piece of general advice for the week is to avoid battles of issue and principle. You will all too easily be sucked into some sort of fanaticism in which everyone is sure of their cause and nobody listens to anybody else: so what's new.

VIRGO (Aug 24 - Sep 23)

 You're not always known for your ability to look on the bright side, so may I remind pessimistic Virgos that the long-term cycle is deeply auspicious and that in just over twelve months you'll enter a period of truly awesome good fortune. Can you wait? The answer is, you must.

LIBRA (Sep 24 - Oct 23)

 Sometimes the pressures other people pile on you become too much. Nobody will blame you if you choose to give up. If I were in your shoes, I'd opt for a quiet week and let others get on with making whatever sort of mess or muddle suits them. I'd let them clear it up.

SCORPIO (Oct 24 - Nov 23)

 There's always one planet or another helping you along, and today the Moon is coming to your aid, but to receive help you must acknowledge that partners are right and you, horror of horrors, may be wrong. Difficult but you might have to admit to a mistake.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov 24 - Dec 22)

 Your horoscope is curiously arranged in such a way that when the stars are urging you to take a financial risk the auspices show great problems! May I therefore advise you that only the safest purchases should be considered today, necessities rather than luxuries.

CAPRICORN (Dec 23 - Jan 20)

 Looking on the bright side, there's nothing that can go wrong at home that you can't deal with. A relative may break down in floods of tears. The plumbing may seize up, you name it. Try to maintain a sense of humour.

AQUARIUS (Jan 21 - Feb 19)

 Domestic chores and family meetings may offer a respite from the seemingly bizarre events of the week. Some of these may be imaginary but others may take place in real life! As it happens, this is an ideal moment to take the lead socially, to organise a cultural outing, perhaps?

PISCES (Feb 20 - Mar 20)

 You are well-known for your sense of personal fantasy, but have you got what it takes to put a secret proposal into action? Funnily enough, you have. You can now begin to plan your next major move but, first of all, you have to make sure you have all options covered.

Police file FIR
against student
outfit in JU over
'hate' posters

SWEETY KUMARI
& TANUSREE BOSE
KOLKATA, MARCH 10

IN A suo motu action, Kolkata Police on Sunday registered an FIR against a student body, PDSF, over graffiti and posters on the Jadavpur University campus, saying they were intended to incite hatred and disrupt public peace.

The graffiti and posters featured slogans such as "Azad Kashmir," "Free Palestine," and "Fascism Must Burn", said police.

The police have registered the FIR against supporters of PDSF (Progressive Democratic Students Federation) but have not named any individuals. Police also hinted that they may summon individuals for questioning.

DCP (Jadavpur) Bidisha Kalita Dasgupta said the FIR has been filed under sections 152 and 61(2) of the BNS. "These charges relate to endangering India's sovereignty and criminal conspiracy," Dasgupta added. The move comes over a week after the incident in which two students were injured after the car of State Education Minister Bratya Basu grazed past them during a protest.

Earlier Monday, tensions ran high on the campus as Om Prakash Mishra, a professor named in the FIR along with minister Bratya Basu for the March 1 violence, returned to the campus amid a huge deployment of plain-clothed policemen. While the CPI(M)-backed SFI protested the deployment of police force on the campus, the TMC's Chhatra Parishad welcomed the move.



During the clashes in Mhow, Madhya Pradesh, Sunday. PTI

Clashes in Gujarat, MP
during celebrations
over India's cricket win

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MHOW, GANDHINAGAR,
MARCH 10

TENSIONS FLARED in Madhya Pradesh's Mhow town and Gandhinagar district of Gujarat amid celebrations of the Indian cricket team's victory in the ICC Champions Trophy, resulting in unrest and multiple arrests across the two states.

In Mhow, located in Indore district, police arrested 13 individuals after a celebratory rally descended into chaos with incidents of stone-pelting on Sunday night, injuring four persons. Authorities responded promptly to restore law and order.

Meanwhile, in Gandhinagar, police detained 11 people after a late-night motorcycle rally celebrating the Indian team's victory turned violent. The police acted quickly to manage the unrest, re-

sulting in several arrests.

Indore Collector Ashish Singh said four people sustained injuries in five separate incidents of violence across various locations in Mhow. "So far, 13 persons have been arrested on charges of arson and violence, and an FIR has been registered. We will also invoke the stringent National Security Act (NSA) against some of those involved," he added.

The violence reportedly began near a mosque when two groups, initially celebrating together, became embroiled in a dispute that escalated as crackers were set off. This led to confrontations, ultimately resulting in the stone-pelting incidents. Mhow station in-charge Rahul Sharma confirmed the clashes were concentrated in specific areas. Police are currently reviewing CCTV footage and mobile recordings to identify those responsible for the violence.

Senior advocate Anil Singh is ASG

Mumbai: Senior Advocate Anil Singh has been appointed to the post of the Additional Solicitor General of India, the top-most lawyer representing the Centre in the Bombay HC and courts in Maharashtra and Goa.

This is the fourth time he has been appointed. Previously, Singh had held the post for nine years, from 2014 to 2023. Following the end of his previous term, he did not seek an extension and had resumed his private practice. ENS

IN REMEMBRANCE

Corps of Signals salutes its Signallers who left us for their heavenly abode during the month of Feb 2025.

(a) 15726593N	Lance Naik	Himane Sagar Prabhakar Rao
(b) 15739369A	Signalman	Wankhade Gopal Ramdas
(c) 15737311K	Lance Naik	Nidheesh K
(d) 15721942H	Naik	Jayamaran S
(e) 15757844N	Signalman	Nanda Lal Pandit

On behalf of the Corps, we sincerely pray to Almighty for peace to the departed souls & strength to the bereaved families to bear this irreparable loss.

Ministry of Culture
Government of India

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cordially invites you to a Public Lecture
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NEP-2020
Visionary Formulation Versus Implementation
Challenges
by
Prof. J S Rajput
Atal Fellow, PMML
12 March 2025 at 3:00pm
Venue:
Seminar Room, Library Building
Prime Ministers Museum and Library
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Police: India-origin
drug lord, wanted by
FBI, arrested in Punjab

MAN AMAN SINGH
CHHINA
CHANDIGARH, MARCH 10

PUNJAB POLICE Monday said it has arrested Shehnaz Singh, alias Shawn Bhinder, an Indian-origin transnational drug lord, wanted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) in connection with one of the largest narcotics seizures in the US, from Tarn Taran. The breakthrough came amid an ongoing drive against drug smugglers and peddlers in state.

DGP Gaurav Yadav said Bhinder was a key player in a global narcotics syndicate, smuggling cocaine from Colombia into the US and Canada. A native of Batala, Bhinder had been residing in Brampton, Canada, and operating under the guise of a transport business since 2014 and facilitated the movement of drugs via Mexico, Yadav said.



Police arrest Shehnaz Singh, alias Shawn Bhinder in Tarn Taran, Monday. PTI

He was wanted by the FBI in one of the largest drug seizures in US on February 26 where they nabbed six of his associates and seized 391 kg methamphetamine, 109 kg cocaine, four sophisticated weapons and vehicles from them. Bhinder managed to give a slip to the FBI sleuths and landed in India, Yadav said, adding that police tracked and arrested him from Ludhiana Police's jurisdiction.

PUNJAB BOARD EXAMS

Questions in Class 12 test
about AAP founding yr,
its policies; BJP asks why

EXPRESS NEWS
SERVICE
LUDHIANA, MARCH 10

THE PUNJAB government Monday found itself in the thick of a controversy as opposition BJP accused it of influencing young minds by inserting questions about the ruling Aam Aadmi Party in the Class 12 examination paper conducted by Punjab School Education Board.

The BJP claimed that two questions — one pertaining to the year when the AAP was founded and the other on its policies and programmes — were part of the Political Science examination paper conducted on March 4.

The BJP's media head in Punjab Vineet Joshi accused

the Bhagwant Mann-led government of "misusing" the education department to "influence" young minds in their favour. "This is a blatant misuse of power by the AAP... The education department cannot act like a mouthpiece of the ruling establishment. Minds of ... potential voters cannot be influenced using the crutches of the education department," Joshi said.

While state education minister Harjot Bains could not be reached despite several attempts, multiple officials in the PSEB said similar questions were asked about other political parties in the past.

Regional parties of Punjab are part of the syllabus for Political Science in Class 12. The chapter has mention of SAD and the AAP.

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BRIEFLY

FUNDING DIPS, NATIONAL TALENT SEARCH SCHEME UNDER REVIEW

New Delhi: Funding for National Talent Search Scheme, under which the National Talent Search Examination is conducted, has dipped from ₹20 crore in 2022-23 to ₹15 crore in 2023-24, and ₹11.5 crore in 2024-25 (till March), the government said in response to a question in the Lok Sabha. The NTSE has not been conducted since 2021. The scheme is undergoing “comprehensive review” to align it with the NEP, 2020, and address its limitations, the government said. **ENS**

₹107 CRORE LOSS DUE TO DIGITAL PAYMENT FRAUDS IN APRIL-DEC

New Delhi: Individuals have lost a cumulative ₹107 crore due to cards, internet and digital payments frauds in this fiscal till December 2024, the government said Monday. “With increasing digital payment transactions in the country, incidences of fraudulent practices, including digital payment frauds, have also gone up in the last few years,” Minister of State for Finance Pankaj Chaudhary said in a written reply to the Lok Sabha. In 2022-23, 6,699 such frauds were reported with a loss of ₹69.68 crore. **PTI**

NO MOVE TO BRING BACK QUOTA FOR MPs IN KENDRIYA VIDYALAYAS

New Delhi: Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan on Monday ruled out any proposal to reintroduce quota for Members of Parliament (MPs) for admissions in Kendriya Vidyalayas. “These quotas were over and above the sanctioned class strength... At present, there is no proposal under consideration of the government to re-introduce the MP quota for admission in KV,” Pradhan said, responding to a written question in Lok Sabha. **PTI**

GANGA WATER FIT FOR BATHING DURING MAHA KUMBH: GOVT

New Delhi: The Centre on Monday cited a new report from the Central Pollution Control Board in Parliament and said the water in the Ganga at Triveni Sangam in Prayagraj was fit for bathing during the recently-concluded Maha Kumbh. Responding to a question, the government said it had provided a total of ₹7,421 crore to the National Mission for Clean Ganga. **PTI**

AMID OPP WALKOUT, RS PASSES RAILWAYS AMENDMENT BILL, 2024

CCTVs were on, Rly safety top priority: Vaishnaw rejects Opp stampede charge

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, MARCH 10

THE RAJYA Sabha on Monday passed the Railways (Amendment) Bill, 2024 through voice vote amid a walkout by a section of Opposition members alleging attempts to hide details of the stampede at the New Delhi railway station on February 15, which left 18 people dead.

With the passage of the Bill — cleared by the Lok Sabha on December 11 last year — provisions of Indian Railway Board Act, 1905 will be repealed and incorporated into the Railways Act, 1989. The Bill will empower the Centre to make provisions pertaining to qualification, experience, tenure of appointments of the chairman and other members of the railway board and also the manner of filling up the posts.

During the debate, Opposition MPs questioned the overall functioning of the railways and attacked the government over increased fares, quality of service and safety issues, citing the examples of the Delhi stampede and the 2023 Balasore accident that



Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw in RS on Monday. **ANI**

killed 291 people. They alleged centralisation of railway board appointments through the Bill and lack of parliamentary oversight.

The Opposition members walked out of the House when Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw categorically denied the allegation of RJD MP Manoj Kumar Jha that CCTV cameras were switched off at the New Delhi railway station when the stampede happened. Jha also raised questions on the accountability for railway accidents.

Replying to Jha’s claim, Vaishnaw said, “A probe is under-

way regarding the New Delhi station stampede. I categorically deny that CCTVs were switched off. I have the CCTV footage. It is tragic even if one life is lost. We do not have to politicise the issue.”

Vaishnaw said the government is giving top-most priority to safety in railways, having committed an outlay of over ₹1 lakh crore per year for upgrading various mechanisms. It is taking several steps to enhance safety measures such as creating holding areas, with a pilot being run at New Delhi, Anand Vihar, Varanasi, Ghaziabad and Ayodhya railway

stations. He said all these stations will soon be equipped with access control and only those with confirmed tickets would be able to go to the platforms.

“... Joints vulnerability has been reduced through longer railway panels... We had only 90 fog safety devices in 2014, today, we have 26,000 devices. We are replacing old railway lines; 50,000 km have been replaced,” he said.

Responding to questions on “centralisation of powers”, Vaishnaw said the Bill’s intent is to simplify the existing legislation by merging two Acts and added that it would empower the field offices. He cited the example of the powers of zonal general managers to accept contracts worth ₹1,000 crore at their level and sanction projects up to ₹50 crore.

“Empowerment and decentralisation have given pace to work. There is no question of reducing powers of states, (PM) Narendra Modi inherently believes in cooperative federalism,” he said.

In the last 11 years, 34,000 km of new railway tracks have been laid and 35,000 km of elec-

trification of railway lines has been done, said the minister. “This will reduce pollution by 95% when compared to diesel locomotives. Whether it is road or rail, we should electrify transportation,” he said.

Earlier in the debate, Congress MP Vivek Tankha opposed the Bill saying it has shrunk parliamentary scrutiny, reduced the railway board’s autonomy and made it minister-driven. Slamming Vaishnaw for his “bureaucratic mindset”, he questioned whether accountability for accidents lay only with officials.

TMC’s Sushmita Dev said the 1989 Railways Act had 200 sections that dealt with every issue and subject. She said it was the “apt time to review the Act, make amendments to it and send that Bill to an appropriate committee for scrutiny”.

NCP’s Praful Patel, BJP’s Ghanshyam Tiwari, former PMHD Deve Gowda and AAP’s Sandeep Kumar Pathak supported the amendments to the Bill during the debate. Deve Gowda appreciated Vaishnaw’s work as the Railway Minister, lavishing praise on the railway expansion work.

TMC joins Congress for discussion on voters’ list: ‘Serious flaws... EC has failed’

LALMANI VERMA
NEW DELHI, MARCH 10

THE CONGRESS in both Houses of Parliament demanded a discussion on the issue of the alleged discrepancies in voters’ lists with the TMC alleging “serious flaws” in the lists.

Raising the issue during Zero Hour in Lok Sabha, TMC member Saugata Roy said that the issue of “false voter lists” was recently pointed out by his party supremo and West Bengal CM Mamata Banerjee who showed papers with “same EPIC numbers in Murshidabad and Bardhaman constituencies and in Haryana”.

“There are some serious flaws. This has been pointed out earlier with regard to Maharashtra voters list. This was pointed out in the list of Haryana. Now they are preparing to jump on Bengal and Assam also, which have elections next year,” Roy said, and demanded a “thorough revision” of the voters’ lists.

He said that the poll panel should answer to the people why “such mistakes” have occurred in the voter list.

When Speaker Om Birla asked Roy if the voter lists were prepared by the government, Leader of Opposition in LS Rahul Gandhi said, “Entire Opposition collectively demands a discussion on the issue here.” He said that in every state, including Maharashtra, the voters’ lists have come under question.

Also raising the issue of voters’ list in Lok Sabha, TMC member Kalyan Banerjee said that the poll panel has “failed” to conduct fair and transparent elections over the past few years, and demanded action against the Election Commission.

He said that on the issue of



TMC members Saugata Roy and Kalyan Banerjee in Lok Sabha on Monday. **PTI**

“duplicate” voter IDs, first flagged by CM Banerjee, the explanation provided by the Election Commission was a “clear breach” of the Rule 20 of the Conduct of election rules itself.

“These things have come (out) over the last few years. Earlier, it was not there,” he said, adding that though the EC says that elections have been conducted in a free and transparent manner, “it is clear there were no transparent elections over the last few years. There was no fair election over the past few years, not at all.”

Leader of Opposition in RS Mallikarjun Kharge reiterated what Gandhi said in LS regarding allowing a discussion, and said, “Given the serious threat these large-scale irregularities pose to the free and fair conduct of elections in our country, it is imperative for the Modi government to allow a comprehensive discussion on the matter in Parliament.”

Underlining that the Parliament must protect the faith of the people in democracy and the Constitution, Kharge said, “The abrupt and unwarranted deletion of voters, the presence of duplicate EPIC numbers, and other such crucial issues affecting the integrity of our electoral process require urgent attention and discussion in Parliament.”

As Opp walks out of RS, Nadda suggests refresher course on rules for them

DIVYA A
NEW DELHI, MARCH 10

OPPOSITION PARTIES, led by the Congress, walked out of Rajya Sabha Monday morning after their notices for discussions on issues such as delimitation, alleged duplicate voter ID cards, and US President Donald Trump’s statement on funding for voter turnout in India were rejected by Deputy Chairman Hariwansh.

When the Budget session resumed Monday morning, Opposition MPs, including DMK’s P Wilson, TMC’s Saket Gokhale and Sagarika Ghose, and Congress’s Ajay Maken and Pramod Tiwari, raised 12 adjournment motions under Rule 267, as the chair noted, on issues including stock market losses.

When the notices were rejected, chaos ensued and Leader of Opposition Mallikarjun Kharge rose to address some of the issues. However, Union Minister J P Nadda reiterated that the government was open to discussing any issue as long as they complied with the rules.

“There are some rules, some



laws under which debates take place in Parliament, but the Opposition should first read the law and learn to discuss it. I suggest that a refresher course be conducted for Opposition MPs, including the Leader of the Opposition,” he said.

DMK MP Tiruchi Siva raised a suspension-of-business notice in RS to discuss the concerns over delimitation, particularly its impact on India’s federal structure and its effects on the southern states’ fair representation.

Both Houses were adjourned until March 10 after the Joint Parliamentary Committee report on the Waqf (Amendment) Bill was tabled in Parliament.

As per the listed business in RS, MoS for Home Nityanand Rai submitted documents, including a proclamation issued by the President on February 13, 2025, under Article 356 of the Constitution concerning Manipur, as per Clause (3) of the Article.



TEAM MEET

Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi with party MPs Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, KC Venugopal, K Suresh and others during the Budget Session in Parliament on Monday. **PTI**

LS to have 1-hour discussion on President’s Rule in Manipur

New Delhi: The Lok Sabha will have an hour-long discussion on the statutory resolution seeking approval of the proclamation of President’s Rule in Manipur.

The decision was taken at a meeting of Lok Sabha’s Business Advisory Committee (BAC), chaired by Speaker Om Birla, Monday. The Lok Sabha will take up a discussion on Manipur budget, presented by Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, from Tuesday.

The BAC has allotted 10 hours for a discussion on the Railways and one day each for debates on the Demands for Grants of the ministries of Jal Shakti, and agriculture and farmers’ welfare.

The BAC has allotted eight hours for discussion on finance bill. **PTI**

Govt seeks House nod to spend additional ₹51,463 crore in FY25

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, MARCH 10

THE GOVERNMENT Monday sought Parliament nod to spend a net additional ₹51,462.86 crore in current financial year ending March, with a large chunk going towards pension and subsidy fertiliser.

The gross additional spending sought by the government is over ₹6.78 lakh crore, of which ₹6.27 lakh crore would be matched by savings and receipts.

The net additional spending by the government would be ₹51,462.86 crore in the current fiscal, as per the second batch of Supplementary Demands for Grants tabled by Union Finance

Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in the Lok Sabha.

The additional expenditure includes ₹14,100 crore to the department of fertilisers, including subsidies for urea and P&K fertiliser.

An additional allocation of ₹13,449 crore has been provided for the pension of government employees, including ₹7,000 crore towards the UPS.

The total spending also includes a defence pension of ₹8,476 crore and ₹5,322 crore to the Department of Telecommunications. An additional ₹2,186 crore funds have been allocated to the agriculture department and ₹3,722 crore to the UT of J&K for additional expenditure to meet resource gap.

Teach a woman to fish: How this Odisha district is empowering its residents

SUJIT BISOI
BHUBANESWAR

WHEN SHANTILATA Samal from Koranda village in Odisha’s Kendrapara district retired four years ago, she decided to turn her energies into a community venture — undertaking pisciculture with her women’s self-help group (SHG) under Mission Shakti. Formerly an integrated child development services (ICDS) supervisor, Samal now spends a significant portion of her time on the local pisciculture enterprise at the panchayat tank.

Promoted by Suryawanshi Mayur Vikas, a 2018-batch Odisha-cadre IAS officer when he was the district collector and magistrate of the Kendrapara



district, the ‘Input Assistance to WSHGs for Pisciculture in Gram Panchayat Tanks’ initiative envisions facilitating women SHG

groups to collaborate with the state’s Directorate of Fisheries and undertake pisciculture in their local panchayat tanks.

On March 4, Suryawanshi, currently the collector and district magistrate of Balasore, was awarded *The Indian Express* Excellence in Governance Award under the Gender and Inclusion category for his initiative.

According to officials, women self-help groups are provided the necessary technical and input assistance by giving them access to bank loans. The initiative is a means to empower women by generating employment opportunities, one official said.

Currently, 2.6 lakh women from 1,199 women SHGs are engaged in sustainable pisciculture, which has been taken up over an



SHG members near a panchayat pond in Kendrapara district; (right) Suryawanshi Mayur Vikas, who was the District Magistrate of Kendrapara, is now posted in Balasore



area of 520 hectares.

“Considering that pisciculture is a highly profitable business, we have taken the panchayat tank on lease for a period of five years from 2022. The lease amount was Rs 12,200. The district administration helped us to get quality fingerlings of popular breeds and also helped us get subsidies. We have started earning profit from the panchayat pond,” Samal told *The Indian Express*.

Under the initiative, SHG members are in a supervisory role, overseeing the feeding of the fish, monitoring their growth and eventually selling them in the local market. But they also generate employment opportunities for others by engaging men from the local village for many of the tasks.

Around 4-5 metric tonnes of fish are produced in a tank of one hectare of land annually, which helps the SHGs to earn over Rs 3 lakh every year, one official from the fisheries department said.

The initiative also helps regenerate derelict panchayat tanks, one official said, adding that the fisheries department is now planning to expand the initiative to other districts.

According to Suryawanshi, the initiative not only helps meet rising demand for fish but also helps make families get a better income. “Fisheries is one of the important sectors in Odisha. Women have always been a very important part of this economy... We thought this would help families generate income and steer them towards upliftment,” he said.



The Indian EXPRESS

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RAMNATH GOENKA

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CHALLENGE OF PEACE

Violence sparked by free movement initiative reflects mistrust between communities that must be addressed in Manipur

THE ONGOING ETHNIC conflict in Manipur has resulted not only in mass displacement and the deaths of hundreds of people, but also a disturbing segregation of the Meiteis and the Kukis, so much so that neither community can venture outside their respective zones of dominance. Over the past 22 months, several incidents of violence have taken place when people from one community accidentally crossed into the other's territory. Manipur has been living with the looming spectre of partition, complete with buffer zones guarded by central forces. Against this backdrop, Union Home Minister Amit Shah's recent call for unrestricted movement across Manipur, effective from March 8, was a welcome attempt to reverse the segregation. The plan involved government-arranged buses running between the hills and the valley, escorted by central forces. However, the fragility of the situation was underscored when a person was killed on the very first day of the implementation — marking the first casualty in four months and breaking the uneasy calm that had prevailed in most parts of the state since the escalation in November last year in the districts of Imphal West, Bishnupur and Jiribam. The incident has underlined the challenge of peace that everybody, citizens and the state, must step up to.

The NH-2 and NH-37 highways serve as the lifelines of the state, enabling the movement of goods and personnel between the valley and the hills. Kuki groups have used economic blockades along these highways to press their demands for a separate administration. This has caused food shortages, inflation and business disruptions in the valley. Meitei groups too have attacked supply trucks headed towards the hills. The home minister's plan was aimed at resolving this particular point of friction. But on March 8, while a bus from Imphal to Churachandpur successfully completed its journey, another travelling through Kangpokpi district was met by large crowds of protesters clashing with security forces. The protesters opposed what they perceived to be the Centre's diktat without first adequately addressing the concerns of tribal communities. The incident leaves no doubt that Manipur is still far from a return to normalcy. While the resignation of Chief Minister N Biren Singh leading to President's Rule was a much-needed if belated step, it needs to be followed by other measures to prevent a backsliding.

Restoring the normal functioning of highways is imperative for Manipur's return to normalcy, but this will also need a wider consultation with all stakeholders. Twenty-two months later, Manipur remains deeply fractured, with ethnic tensions shaping daily life. The violence sparked by the free movement initiative reflects the profound mistrust that continues to exist between both communities. The government must, therefore, prioritise large-scale outreach and confidence-building efforts. Governor Ajay Kumar Bhalla took an initial step forward by urging extremist groups to surrender weapons. Even though only a fraction of the arms and ammunition were surrendered, this effort must be expanded to foster meaningful engagement between the Meiteis and Kukis, to lay a foundation for an enduring reconciliation.

THE WINNING HABIT

With Champions Trophy triumph, India ticked important boxes mandatory to be a bonafide cricketing superpower

NOT TOO LONG ago, Australia was cricket's globally expected gold standard. It was what the world aspired to reach but failed to. The Aussies had the biggest stadium, influence at the ICC, lethal pacers, cool captains and a trophy cabinet overflowing with World Cups. They had the well-oiled assembly line that kept producing cricketers who inflicted traumatic defeats on their rivals in ICC event finals — like the bubble-bursting defeat of India at Ahmedabad in the 2023 World Cup final. That tide seems to have turned. Now, India is where Australia used to be. They now have a stadium that is bigger than the MCG, a much larger talent pool and also cricket's El Dorado — the IPL. With Sunday's Champions Trophy triumph, India ticked two important boxes mandatory to be a bonafide cricketing superpower. By winning two of the last three ICC events, India flaunted their newly-cultivated winning habit. And by compelling the world to travel to Dubai for a tournament hosted by Pakistan, they showed who calls the shots.

India's problem historically has been picking those sharp shining needles in the big haystack. The BCCI ecosystem had reached every Indian town, now the IPL talent scouts were going further ahead on dusty village roads. The selection committee headed by Ajit Agarkar, captain Rohit Sharma and former and present coaches Rahul Dravid and Gautam Gambhir, got it right. The balance of the squad and the working relationships with seniors give the team a solid spine. There is also continuity. For the last couple of years, close to 10 players have been regulars. Those who lost the 2023 World Cup were seen on the podium last year at the T20 World Cup and now at Dubai for the Champions Trophy. Unlike in the past, the egos of India's cricketing greats, or the presence of big-ticket coaches, haven't impacted the cohesiveness of the team on the field.

Notwithstanding the successes, Indian cricket is a work in progress. The loss to New Zealand at home and Australia away, are red flags that need immediate tending to. Forcing the stars to play Ranji Trophy is a positive move but Test cricket needs to be incentivised more and the young have to be tutored in the nuance of the mother format. Plus to be the true leader of world cricket, India at the ICC needs to be inclusive. It would also be a travesty if Rohit Sharma, Virat Kohli and Jasprit Bumrah end their careers without a Test series win on Pakistan soil. India will need calm statesmanship to pull this off.

THE CANADIANO

Miffed with the US, Canadians have renamed theAmericano. It's bitter revenge

FORGET THE ICE hockey rink. The new arena to showcase the fighting spirit of the Canadians appears to be the local coffee shop. Retailing against the US initiation of a tariff war against its northern neighbour, cafes across Canada have renamed theAmericano, and are now referring to the popular black coffee beverage as the "Canadiano". The move recalls, ironically, the long American tradition of rechristening food that bears the name of any country it happens to be miffed with.

Remember, for instance, the rebranding of french fries as "freedom fries" following France's opposition to the invasion of Iraq proposed by the US in early 2003? Never mind that the long, slim-cut and deep-fried potato side-dish may not even be of French origin — Belgians have laid claim to it, attributing the name to French hegemony in gastronomy — the misnomer was enough for restaurants across the US to express their resentment, and patriotism, via their menus. Even further back, in 1915, the torpedoing of the ocean liner RMS Lusitania by a German U-boat and the entry of the Americans in World War I, saw a surge of anti-German sentiment in the US. The fermented cabbage pickle known as sauerkraut, which migrants from Germany had brought to North America, was renamed "liberty cabbage" (more ludicrously, German measles was renamed "liberty measles").

Canadians today, however, might do well to recall how theAmericano came to be invented. Finding the beloved local coffee drink known as espresso to be too strong for their taste, American GIs posted in Italy during World War II prompted the creation of a more watered-down version. If the intention is to wreak sweet — or bitter — revenge, Canadians should show their (undiluted) patriotism by downing cups of espresso-strength coffee.



SANDEEP DWIVEDI

MSDHONI led with a tranquil face. Virat Kohli the captain was all energy, constantly trying to get under the skin of opponents. Rohit Sharma's leadership approach is different. He wears his emotions on his sleeve and is constantly thinking for and about his players.

The second-most-successful Indian captain ever, with two ICC titles now, Rohit's legacy will be about a leader who was deeply invested in his team. He wears his authority lightly, doesn't hold grudges and is sensitive towards the less skilled. The seemingly care-free batsman — he hates that adjective — Rohit is a hyperactive captain with a constantly ticking mind. Unlike Dhoni, he never switches off or allows anyone to. Unlike Kohli, he doesn't let anger influence his strategy.

Last year at Dharamshala, before the final Test of the series against England that India had already pocketed, Rohit was in a mood for a casual conversation. In Kohli's absence, his very young team — which had Yashasvi Jaiswal, Dhruv Jurel and Sarfaraz Khan — had dismantled the much-hyped Baz-Ballers.

Rohit looked happy. He had just returned from home and said his wife had told him that he looked drained. With his famous half-smile, he explained how making the youngsters understand the nuance of Test cricket was mentally exhausting. He exuded the confidence of an old pro keen to pass on his experience to the next generation. Always protective about the young, he didn't name anyone but one could read the thought bubble above his head that said — "These know-it-all young Johnnies need schooling all the time".

History shows that handling a team that has former captains, players with egos and young impressionable rookies isn't easy. Rohit is the designated fire chief in an easily inflammable dressing room. First, there is Kohli, the game's global poster boy, who lost his captaincy to Rohit. Also in the ranks is Hardik Pandya, who replaced Rohit as Mumbai Indians captain. Neither transition was seamless. Add to the mix a gaggle of young captaincy aspirants and a strong-headed coach with firm likes and dislikes in Gautam Gambhir. This means Rohit has in front of him a mix that can

Behind India's dream run is the heft of Rohit Sharma's leadership — always engaged and poised

History shows that handling a team that has former captains, players with egos, and young impressionable rookies isn't easy. Rohit is the designated fire chief in an easily inflammable dressing room. First, there is Kohli, the game's global poster boy, who lost his captaincy to Rohit. Also in the ranks is Hardik Pandya, who replaced Rohit as Mumbai Indians captain. Neither transition was seamless. Add to the mix a gaggle of young captaincy aspirants and a strong-headed coach with firm likes and dislikes in Gautam Gambhir. This means Rohit has in front of him a mix that can get sour or toxic if not whisked wisely.

get sour or toxic if not whisked wisely.

A great man-manager, Rohit doesn't rely on one leadership style. Like a seasoned golfer, he picks the right club to hit the shot the situation demands. His words and actions depend on the stature and temperament of the player he is dealing with.

Rohit's biggest captaincy achievement is the relationship he has forged with Kohli. For this, both — mates since their junior days-turned-captaincy-contenders — deserve equal credit.

A frame from the 2024 T20 World Cup victory parade captured the Rohit-Kohli brotherhood for posterity. As the team took the victory lap, Kohli saw Rohit ambling just ahead of him. He tapped Rohit on his shoulder and said that the moment deserved to be recorded. Draped in the Tricolour, they posed as India got a collective bout of goosebumps.

At this ICC Champions Trophy in Dubai, too, there were such moments. After his hundred against Pakistan, Kohli nodded his head and tapped his chest facing the dressing room. It was that "main hu na (I am there), don't worry" gesture. The smile on Rohit's face was so broad one could barely see his cheeks.

With Hardik too, Rohit hasn't allowed the intrigue of succession to enter the playing arena. Minutes before the semi-final against Australia, the two were involved in an intense discussion. They didn't look like former and present Mumbai Indians captains, but the team's new-ball bowler and captain discussing last-minute plans to deal with Travis Head.

There are times when Rohit can get so involved in strategising that he can come across as an over-thinker. In such situations, there are voices in the team who can cut him short. All-rounder Ravindra Jadeja is one such old hand.

Against Australia, Jadeja, as usual, was in a rush to finish his over. Stopping him from doing so were Rohit and wicketkeeper KL Rahul, who were analysing the pitch between balls. "You guys keep talking, I will bowl the next three balls," Jadeja said. The talk stopped.

In contrast, the younger lot get reined in by Rohit's straight talk. So when Jaiswal de-

cided to sit and chat with the other 20-some-things in the team after he had batted at the nets, Rohit could be heard raising his voice and asking the left-hander to do some fielding drills. Or, when left-arm wrist-spinner Kuldeep Yadav starts being the "thik hai, dekhte hai, karte hain" Kanpur boy, he gets an earful from the captain.

Against England in Tests, Sarfaraz was asked by Rohit to field at silly point. The youngster didn't bother to call for an abdomen guard. Rohit barked, "Hero mat ban, guard manga le (Ask for the guard, don't try to act smart)". Before the toss, he had also pulled him up for not tucking his shirt in. Before his son's debut, Sarfaraz's father had told Rohit: "Bete ka dhyam rakha (take care of my son)".

All Rohit is doing is being the father figure. And at other times, the big brother.

Someone like Mohammed Shami doesn't need mentoring, but a tactical collaboration can help. In the semi-final, Steve Smith was playing a steady hand. Rohit and Shami got into a huddle. The field setting saw a change. The cover area was discreetly left unguarded. Smith, instead of hitting straight, was tempted to go 45 degrees to the off. He angled the bat, but was beaten by the full ball. Shami pointed to his skipper, the plan had worked. India was at peace.

Among the high praise that Rohit the batsman has received over the years, the one by Pakistan batting great Zaheer Abbas stands out. "Rohit ko dekh ke badi tasalli hoti hai, ek ruhani khushi hoti hai, jis tarah se woh ball bana ke shot marta hai... wahi uska art hai (You get a certain solace watching Rohit bat, you get divine joy. He invents shots, that is his art)," he said.

The same is true for his captaincy. His leadership exudes solace and soulfulness. And what do those who don't understand cricket see? They see weight around his waist, not the heft he adds to the team or the burden on his mind to see that the team and his mates do well. It shows their ignorance about cricket, and even politics.

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ANAMIKA AJAY AND SURAJITA TURUK

NATIONAL STATISTICS CONFIRM that India's agri-food systems, comprising agriculture, livestock rearing, agroforestry and fisheries depend heavily on women's paid and unpaid labour. Yet, women's productivity is affected by institutions that place constraints on their time, impose controls over productive resources, restrict access to inputs and scientific knowledge and undermine their decision-making capacities. Gender intersects with other structures of power like caste and class to shape ways in which labour and power are divided between men and women. Women are typically assigned tasks that are labour-intensive, low-paying, and invisible. Evidence shows most technological interventions in the sector have focused only on increasing men's work efficiency and productivity. In fact, mechanisation has led to women losing their paid work in these sectors. When technologies are designed to reduce women's workload, it leads to an increase in their productivity.

In the last decade, the MSSwaminathan Research Foundation has been working on enabling women farmers and fish workers access technologies that not only close the gender divide but also have significant impacts on women's productivity, decision-making and control over their time. For instance, it has been working closely with the indigenous communities of Koraput district in Odisha to revive small millet cultivation as a solution to the food and nutrition insecurity in the region. Small millet cultivation in this region is heavily gendered, with men dominating almost all the decisions related

A FIELD OF HER OWN

Digital technologies are enabling women to break traditional barriers in farm work

Small interventions and access to digital technologies have brought about far-reaching impacts on how small-scale fish workers relate to their work. They can navigate various structural challenges and are more resilient to the vulnerabilities induced by larger transformations in the economy as well as to serious ecological challenges.

to division of work, distribution of resources, access to technology and financial allocations. Women are assigned the most low-value work.

Tractors are seen as a symbol of masculine power, and studies show how pieces of farm machinery are appropriated by men to reaffirm their masculine dominance. Investments in technologies that ease women's work are not considered important at the household level. Tasks like manual weeding, threshing, de-hulling and pulverising, which are extremely time-consuming and physically strenuous, are traditionally assigned to women. But with small interventions like enabling women's access to information, technologies, and machinery and training them to develop skills to use them, women are breaking patriarchal stereotypes.

Women have fought similar battles in the fisheries sectors too. They faced numerous setbacks with the shift to large mechanised vessels and trawlers and the creation of new centralised harbours and landing centres that are located far away from their villages. While opportunities for men to harvest and earn more increased, women were left to struggle in strenuous activities like processing, drying and vending.

Due to the increased presence of large buyers and export traders in these harbours, small-scale women vendors have been marginalised as auctioneers and fish vendors. For a fish vendor, poor access to fish can spell disaster. Even when they manage to buy a small quantity, street vendors don't make more than Rs 800/day, a major share of which goes to

cover their commute and debts. A major constraint for the women was their poor access to information — about fish availability, potential markets for their fish and more generally about more convenient business models.

Enabling women fish workers with digital technologies has brought about impressive changes in women's work. MSSRF has provided low-income women fish workers in the coastal districts of Nagapattinam, Mayiladuthurai, Cuddalore and Ramanathapuram in Tamil Nadu with access to mobile phones, tablets, helplines and audio advisories, and trained them in internet use, digital payments, inventory management and online business.

These small interventions and access to digital technologies have brought about a far-reaching impact on how small-scale fish workers relate to their work. They can navigate various structural challenges and are more resilient to the vulnerabilities induced by larger transformations in the economy as well as to serious ecological challenges.

While it is true that gender-responsive technologies can strengthen women's ability to break down entrenched barriers and give them the freedom to make choices, let us also not underestimate the resilience of patriarchy. Investments in designing gender-responsive technologies then need to be accompanied by an enabling ecosystem that holds men, families, communities, the market and the state accountable.

Ajay is principal scientist and Turuk is development associate, gender, MSSRF

MARCH 11, 1985, FORTY YEARS AGO

INDIA CRUSH PAKISTAN

AN INSTINCTIVELY AGGRESSIVE K Srikanth and all-rounder Ravi Shastri carried India to an eight-wicket victory over Pakistan in the finals of the World Championship of Cricket tournament in Melbourne. India got off to a steady start with openers Srikanth and Shastri playing carefully but with a design and yielded a century stand, much to the dismay of the fiery Imran Khan and Azeem Hafeez.

CMS SWORN IN

THE CHIEF MINISTERS of three Congress (I)-ruled states were sworn in and party leaders

chosen in two other states. In Orissa, JB Patnaik was sworn in for the second consecutive term while Harideo Joshi and Vasantrao Patil took oath as chief ministers of Rajasthan and Maharashtra. Arjun Singh and ND Tiwari were chosen as leaders at legislature party meetings in Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh.

SIACHEN STAND-OFF

THE SITUATION ALONG the Siachen glacier at the northern frontier of Ladakh, where Pakistani troops and commandos launched three major incursions last year, remains unchanged, with both sides confronting each other without any let-up. "It is an eyeball-to-

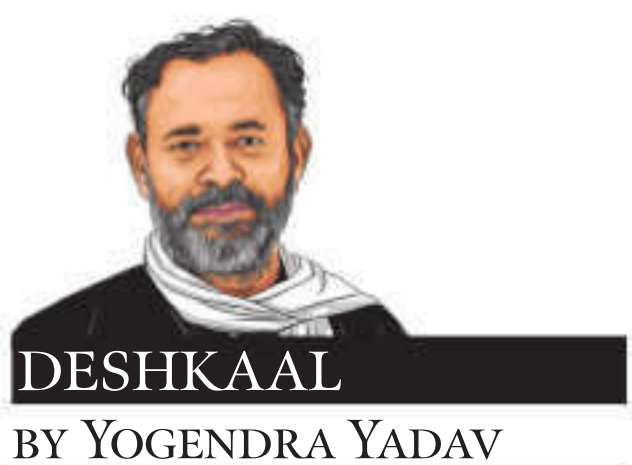
eyeball confrontation, and often bullets fly past our jaws guarding this highest point in our northern defence perimeter," a defence ministry source said.

PAK CONSTITUTION

THE PAKISTANI PRESIDENT, Gen Zia-ul-Haq, used his martial law powers on Sunday to revive the nation's constitution, except for portions dealing with fundamental rights, among other things. "Today is a historic day," said Zia. He did not detail the parts that remain dropped but said they would be revived in stages. Martial law will be abolished when the process is completed, he said.

The dangers of delimitation

Best way to honour the federal contract implicit in the foundation of the Indian Union would be to assume that the current distribution of Lok Sabha seats is cast in stone



DESHKAAL
BY YOGENDRA YADAV

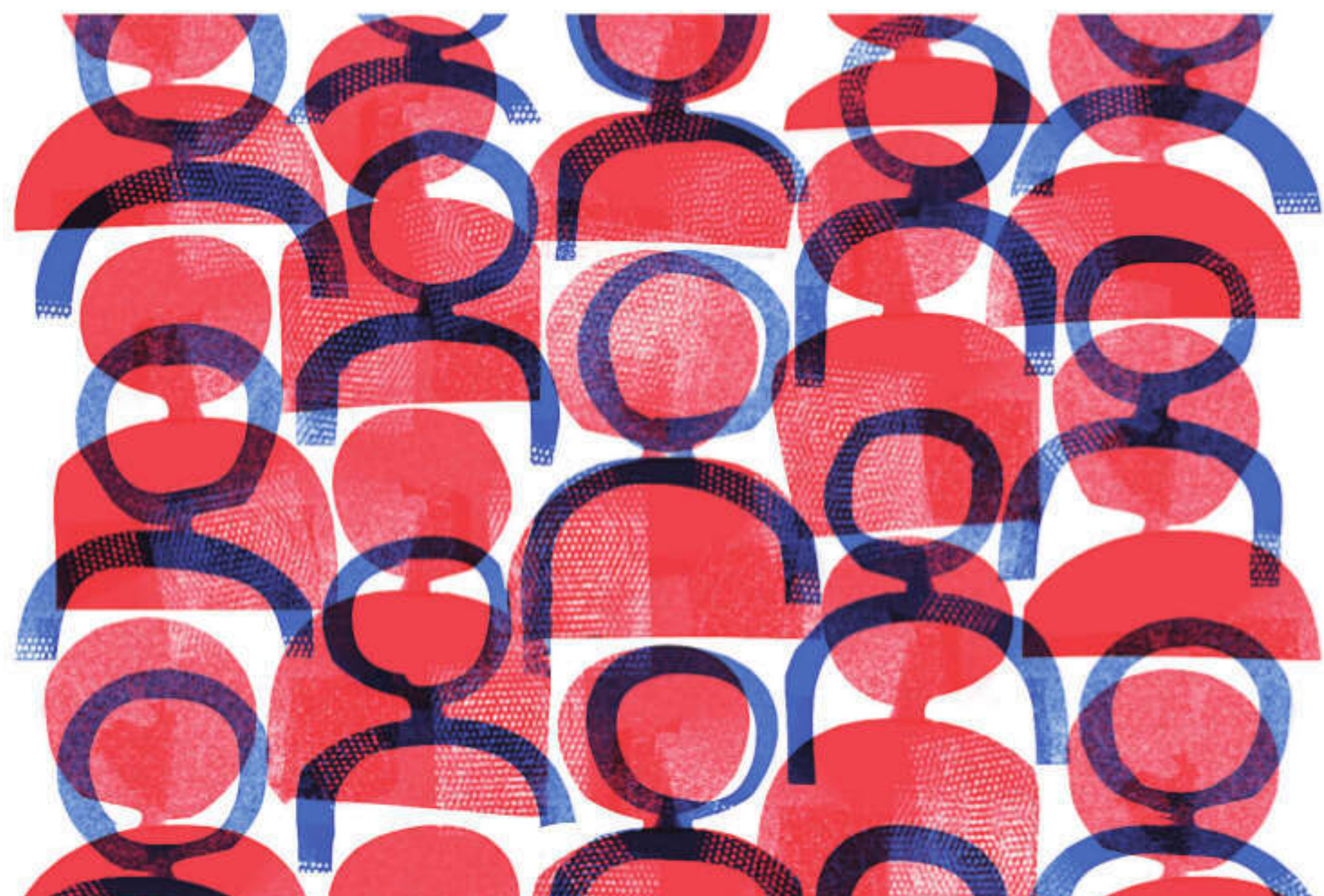
DELIMITATION IS THE last thing the Indian Union needs today. The resolution adopted by the all-party meet in Tamil Nadu asking to postpone delimitation by another 30 years is not just about protecting the interest of one state or one region. It is about strengthening the bonds of national unity. A permanent freeze on the re-allocation of parliamentary seats would help secure the Indian Union against possible challenges. The best way to honour the “federal contract” implicit in the foundation of the Indian Union would be to assume that the current distribution of Lok Sabha seats is cast in stone, as if the Constitution-makers made a sacred power-sharing compact never to be revisited.

This is a strong and somewhat unusual claim. The opponents of delimitation do not normally push for a permanent freeze. And their case usually rests on a limited and flawed argument about the success of some states in achieving “population control”. The idea of an implicit but inviolable “federal contract” does not figure in the Indian debates. Such a claim would, naturally, invite serious questions and objections. Would this not go against the letter and the spirit of the Indian Constitution? Why think of a federal contract now, 75 years after the inauguration of the republic? These are serious questions that demand honest answers.

Let us begin by clarifying the issue. The current debate and the present argument are limited to one of the two components of a fresh “delimitation” of constituencies. No one has any objections to the routine exercise of re-drawing parliamentary and assembly constituency boundaries within each state or to an increase in the number of assembly seats for any state. This does not affect the federal balance. The real issue concerns the reapportionment of seats for different states and Union Territories that was frozen 50 years ago. Should we unfreeze it? Or extend the freeze? Or go for a permanent freeze? That is what the debate is about.

It must be recognised that the original constitutional provision of a regular revision was based on a principle — of “one person, one vote, one value”. This democratic principle mandates that each member of a legislature must represent roughly the same number of persons. If there are serious deviations, the value of the vote in large constituencies is less than that of those in smaller constituencies. For example, while over 32 lakh people get one MP in Lok Sabha, the corresponding figure is less than 18 lakh in Kerala. So, the weight of a voter in Kerala is nearly double that of someone who lives in UP. This is an anomaly that should be redressed unless there are other stronger considerations. The Constitution also provided for deviations from this principle in the case of smaller states (less than 8 lakhs per seat in Goa and Arunachal) that were provided greater representation in the Lok Sabha than their share in the population. In these instances, the principle of “asymmetrical federalism”, special constitutional safeguards for different units of a federation, was allowed to trump the normal democratic principle.

My case is that this exception should now be generalised to take into account a reality that the Constitution-makers did not and could not have foreseen. This is not about the



C R Sasikumar

success or failure of the population control policy. Birth rate and death rate follow the larger patterns of demographic transition, where the better-off states and social groups witness a faster decline in population. It would not be quite correct for governments to take credit for this. Besides, this reasoning could be extended to argue against any poor and disadvantaged group. My argument is different.

Since the inauguration of the Constitution, India has witnessed a deepening and coalescing of three fault lines — cultural, economic and political — a process sharpened in the last three decades. In this context, a reallocation of parliamentary seats via a fresh delimitation threatens to open a fourth fault line that happens to coincide with, and could activate, the other three. This carries the danger of undermining the spirit of national unity. Anyone concerned with the long-term future of India must redress the existing three fault lines and, in any case, not create a fourth one that coincides with them. Hence the proposal for a freeze.

The first, cultural, fault line involved a difference between the Hindi-speaking North Indian states and the non-Hindi speaking states in the south, east and the west. This difference existed right from the beginning and was accentuated after Partition. But our political leadership did not let this turn into a division by conceding the demand for linguistic states and non-imposition of Hindi as the only official language. Over the last three decades the pattern of economic development has created a glaring inequality between south-west India and northern and eastern India. Interestingly, the regions at the receiving end of the linguistic divide have an upper hand in this economic division.

Finally, with the rise of the BJP, another political fault line has opened up between North Indian states where the BJP is a hegemonic presence and the rest where its presence is contested (Karnataka, Odisha, West Bengal, Telangana) or where it is a small player (Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Kerala). Now, these three fault lines do not fully coincide, but the Hindi belt and the South Indian states are always on opposite sides of the three fault lines.

The real danger of delimitation is that it would open a fourth fault line that might reinforce this pattern. An analysis by Milan

Since the inauguration of the Constitution, India has witnessed a deepening and coalescing of three fault lines — cultural, economic and political — a process sharpened in the last three decades. In this context, a reallocation of parliamentary seats via a fresh delimitation threatens to open a fourth fault line that happens to coincide with, and could activate, the other three. This carries the danger of undermining the spirit of national unity. Anyone concerned with the long-term future of India must redress the existing three fault lines and, in any case, not create a fourth one that coincides with them.

Vaishnav and Jamie Hinton shows the likely result if the Lok Sabha seats are reallocated in proportion to each state’s projected population in 2026. In this scenario, all the South Indian states would be losers — Kerala (down eight seats) Tamil Nadu (down eight seats), Andhra Pradesh and Telangana (combined loss of eight seats), Karnataka (down two seats). Other major losers would also be non-Hindi states: West Bengal (down four seats), Odisha (down three seats), and Punjab (down one seat). Except Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand (down one seat each), all the big gains would accrue to North Indian Hindi-speaking states: Uttar Pradesh (up 11 seats), Bihar (up 10 seats), Rajasthan (up six seats) and Madhya Pradesh (up four seats). This has the potential of seriously upsetting the already tenuous balance between Hindi and non-Hindi speaking states, especially vis-a-vis the South Indian states. The “Hindi heartland” that already controls 226 out of 543 seats would now have 259 seats, nearly a majority. The southern states (currently 132 seats) that can join hands with a major eastern or western state to veto any major constitutional amendment would lose this critical power under the new post-delimitation arrangement.

This goes against the spirit of non-dominance that underlies the Indian Union and the idea of unity in diversity that informed it. A respect for these fundamental principles is to postulate a foundational social contract, a federal contract, that is implicit in our Constitution. India is not a classic “coming together” federation where such a contract would be written down. We are a “holding together” federation where the contract is implicit but foundational. Acknowledging this contract would mean a permanent closure of two claims: Population-based political representation and tax contribution-based share in federal resources. Hindi speaking and non-Hindi states would be losers in one respect but gainers in another respect. A national consensus on this contract, bypassing the short-term calculus of electoral gains and losses, would be a step towards what Partha Chatterjee calls a “just republic”, the foundational principle of the Republic of India.

Yadav is member, Swaraj India, and national convener of Bharat Jodo Abhiyaan

WHAT THE OTHERS SAY

“Modi seems to prefer expanding India’s parliament to prevent any state from losing representation, while shrinking southern influence.” — THE GUARDIAN

Being Marathi, then and now

Maharashtra’s regional identity was once imagined as merging selflessly with the nation. Its sense of hurt today should cause concern



RAHUL SARWATE

WHEN HE SAID recently that “people coming to Mumbai don’t have to learn Marathi”, RSS leader Suresh Joshi was quite right. After all, Mumbai is a multilingual city. What is interesting to note, however, is that Joshi was speaking in Marathi to what was presumably a Marathi audience. How does one make sense of this? It isn’t easy to imagine such discussions about any other language within its own regional domain.

Region as an idea is contingent upon historical, cultural, and political factors. The relationship between regions and nations has never been fixed either. Each region came into being through specific historical processes and had a peculiar equation with the larger nation. The passion for language in the south, for example, is unparalleled in India. A statue personifying the Marathi language, along the lines of the Tamil Thai (Mother Tamil) or the Telugu Thalli (Mother Telugu) is quite unimaginable. Also, unlike how Tamil regionalism developed in confrontation with Indian nationalism, Maharashtra’s regional consciousness was squarely placed within the confines of the Indian nation. Here are a few examples that illustrate this.

In November 1924, in a heated exchange with V D Savarkar, Maulana Shaukat Ali of the Khilafat movement claimed that because of their deep-rooted regionalism, the Marathas lacked patriotism. Savarkar responded, “The war of independence that Chhatrapati Shivaji initiated was never limited to Maharashtra. Do you not know that the revolutionary flag I raised about 20 years ago was for the independence of the nation? What cause of Maharashtra were Tilak, Gokhale, and Ranade fighting for? Every political movement in Maharashtra in the last 50 years was a nationalist movement. Maharashtra spilled its blood in every national crisis, be it the division of Bengal or the massacre at Jallianwala. To call Maharashtra narrow-minded, the very place where the idea of integrated India was created and nurtured, is the height of ingratitude.” Savarkar here represents Maharashtra’s self-conception of its relationship with the Indian nation.

The two ideas of cultural nationalism, the Hindi (Indian) nationalism of the Indian National Congress and the Hindu nationalism of Savarkar and the RSS, emerged and flourished in Maharashtra from the mid-19th to mid-20th century. Both these frames were central to the making of Maharashtra’s self-consciousness. The other significant political movements in Maharashtra, such as the anti-caste politics of Jotirao Phule and the Dalit movement led by B R Ambedkar, had universal concern for equality at heart. These projects also testify to the deeply ingrained commitment to broader humanitarian causes over regional interests in the Marathi public world. Shaped by these currents rooted in the national or universal frame, a regionalist sentiment didn’t take root in Maharashtra. In

1948, for example, Ramrao Deshmukh, a Maratha leader from Vidarbha, argued for the lack of regionalism in Maharashtra. “The Maratha...is content to see his heritage, traditions, and history dissolve and become a part of the common traditions of the country...Regionalism never sat on the Marathas except very lightly,” Deshmukh said in a public speech.

It is noteworthy that both Vinoba Bhave and Savarkar, Maharashtra’s ideologues of two opposite political stand-points, were against the demand for Samyukta Maharashtra. Bhave imagined Maharashtra as one river amongst many that join the ocean of Indian culture, while for Savarkar, Maharashtra was to be the strong arm of the Indian nation. Though the metaphors differ in the degree of their masculine imagination, for both these articulations, Maharashtra’s uniqueness was to merge with the nation selflessly. We also see an echo of this sentiment in a Marxist like Lalji Pendse. In an account of the Samyukta Maharashtra movement, Pendse argued that due to the heightened political consciousness that Maharashtra achieved through being at the forefront of the anti-colonial struggle, the Samyukta Maharashtra movement never lost sight of the more significant concern about the integrity of the Indian nation.

This oneness with India can also be seen in how Marathi speakers contributed to Indian literature across languages. For example, D R Bendre, a Jnanpith awardee, was one of the greatest Kannada poets; Kaka Kalelkar wrote extensively in Gujarati; Prabhakar Machwe was a prolific Hindi writer; Gajanan Madhav Muktibodh became an iconic Hindi poet; Sakhararam Deuskar contributed to modern Bangla literature. They merged in the cultural and linguistic landscapes that surrounded them.

In a way, Marathi regionalism, or rather the lack of it, led to a worldview that could undermine its own cultural interests. So it is not surprising that a Maharashtra like Joshi devalues his own language. It is a consequence of Maharashtra’s imagination of its place within the nation. However, the winds are changing. In the decades after Independence, people began to wonder if acquiring a protective attitude towards Marathi was needed. Perhaps Maharashtra would never be able to emulate Tamil Nadu, but its sense of being wounded should be a cause of concern for all.

In the 13th century, Chakradhar Swami migrated from Gujarat to Maharashtra and founded the Mahanubhava sect. He commanded his disciples to write only in Marathi and to “remain in Maharashtra”. A hymn recorded in *Suprathatha*, a literary composition of the sect, records Chakradhar’s message for his disciples: “Stay in Maharashtra. Maharashtra is *sattvic* (pure). The living and non-living things in it are also *sattvic*. No bodily or mental harm comes from being there... Maharashtra does no wrong itself and allows no one else to do wrong. Maharashtra is [where] dharma gets accomplished.”

What of Maharashtra remains *sattvic* today is anyone’s guess, but can the state hope for migrants who would embrace its language and culture as their own, just as this 13th-century saint from Gujarat once did?

The writer teaches at the School of Arts and Sciences, Ahmedabad University

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

LIMITS TO GROWTH

THIS REFERS TO the article, ‘Economy in search of a roadmap’ (IE, March 10). The persistent economic slowdown is a pressing concern, largely stemming from the government’s inability to address core structural issues. Rising unemployment, a workforce lacking industry-ready skills, limited job creation, and weak consumer spending indicate that the root cause lies elsewhere. Superficial measures, such as small-scale income tax cuts, are distractions. The government should shift focus from headline-grabbing trade deals to genuine problem-solving — tackling the economic challenges that hold India back.

Megha Kumar, Ahmedabad

TIES IN FLUX

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, ‘India & “America First”’ (IE, March 10). India’s non-aligned stance may allow it to navigate US President Donald Trump’s transactional diplomacy with greater flexibility. New Delhi’s preference for strategic autonomy and multipolarity is in keeping with Trump’s focus on self-interest rather than ideological imperatives. Also in India’s favour is its growing economic and strategic weight, making it a valuable partner, particularly in countering China’s rise. India must remain on guard while engaging with America and avoid over-reliance on a single partner.

Vijai Pant, Hampur

FALSE PRIDE

THIS REFERS TO the article, ‘Needed: A pro-people politics’ (IE, March 10). The critique of Modi’s visit to the US fails to grasp India’s dire financial situation. We are in no position to adopt an aggressive stance merely to appease our false pride; otherwise, why would the US even dare to be cold toward Indian immigrants? It is time for India to recognise the US’s distinct corporate-driven approach and operate strategically behind the scenes to maximise its gains.

Shaswat Jena, Ghaziabad

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, ‘India & “America First”’ (IE, March 10). India is racing against time to stop or at least slow down the tariff juggernaut. Delhi is looking for an amicable solution under the framework of a mega trade deal. Can India delay the inevitable, and for how long? The US was India’s largest trading partner in 2022-23, with the bilateral trade amounting to \$190 billion; the two sides are keen to raise it to \$500 billion by 2030. The long-term picture might prompt Delhi to bite the tariff bullet.

Khokan Das, Kolkata



RINKU GHOSH

Not another Pretty Woman

‘Anora’s’ refusal to patronise sex workers shines through

THE LAST FRAME of *Pretty Woman* has a character called Happy Man, saying, “Everybody comes here; this is Hollywood, land of dreams. Some dreams come true, some don’t; but keep on dreamin’.” Except, decades later, Hollywood has woken up from selling Cinderella dreams and gotten as real as it could, accepting and honouring a film like *Anora* about a sex worker’s quest for legitimacy and job equity in society.

From Vivian Ward to Ani, the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences has traversed an arc in recognising depictions of the sex worker, from the pits of poverty, coercion and exploitation to being fatalistic survivors and now claimants of rights and service providers. From the fallen woman condemned by patriarchy, waiting to be rescued by Prince Charming because she has a heart of gold, Vivian — the escort from Beverly Wilshire — now has an non-identical twin. Enough to shake up the Academy jurors — often accused of being White conservatives — who gave five Oscars to Sean Baker’s indie film. So long confined to honouring underdog stories, biopics and the horrors of the Holocaust, *Anora* upended expectations at the Academy Awards. It

cannot be categorised as just the story of a struggler or a woman-oriented film; it is about realism at its starkest and the magic power needed to live life rather than slip into victimhood.

Ani (as the titular character of *Anora* prefers to be called) is battle-scarred, raspy, risqué, unafraid to trawl through strip clubs and refuses to be rescued or pitied. If anything, she is her own rescuer, finding every opportunity to grab a bigger slice of life, using her body as a tool. She is wilful, and demands that she be valued for her own skill sets, just like any other blue-collar worker. While Vivian gets an education scholarship and the possibility of marriage with businessman Edward Lewis, Ani believes she is herself the prize.

True, she marries a Russian oligarch’s entitled and spineless son, but she does demand a three-carat ring, indicating her self-worth, and insists that marriage should mean social sanction (“We are married, they’re gonna have to accept us”).

Even though society is yet to look at sex work as justifiable labour and continues to criminalise it, *Anora*’s big Oscar win will hopefully drive changes beyond conversa-

tions. The shift in Hollywood began with the awards season last year when another Oscar winner, *Poor Things*, depicted the protagonist using sex work to earn money and discover herself and the world around her in the process. *Anora* took this ahead by completely doing away with the condescension of assuming what a sex worker’s life is. Baker may not have chosen his lead actor from the community but he did hire sex workers during the scripting stage, production and even some scenes to ensure an authentic representation of their lives, desire, rage and their spirit to own their life. And their wants are simple. They want to be treated like employees in any other job, with work and ethics codes, legal protection and medical insurance. And although millions of sex workers are contributing to the global economy, there is no organised industry. Sex workers need to be decriminalised at the earliest by de-hyphenating them from exploitative crime cartels.

Most importantly, it is in the creative space that sex workers have been most modified, perceived from a patronising lens masquerading as empathy. So every cinematic depiction of sex workers has glam-

ourised their bodies and looks rather than acknowledge that they are just women, going back home to feed their families and sending their children to school. They have been imagined as damsels in distress only to feed the guilt syndrome of the privileged or feed their need to find another cause. But *Anora* shows how sex work can be just as boring, repetitive and draining as any other assembly-line work.

Last year, Belgium legalised sex work. India’s Supreme Court, too has recognised it as a profession, guaranteeing sex workers the right to dignity of labour and protection under the law, protecting them from harassment, arrest and brutality, guaranteeing them right of refusal and advocating their right to healthcare. However, societal stigma means that the implementation of a minimum wage, paid leave, a pension plan, or maternity leave, is far from becoming reality. That’s why *Anora*’s punchline — “When you give me health insurance, workers’ comp and a 401K, then you can tell me when I work” — shines through the glitter. One hopes it is not just a creative selling point.

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DELHI **CONFIDENTIAL**

PROTOCOL VS TRADITION

AT THE naming ceremony of a merchant vessel, *Albert Maersk*, in Mumbai recently, Union Minister for Ports, Shipping and Waterways Sarbananda Sonowal sprang a surprise. During the felicitation of ministers at the event, Sonowal insisted that MoS Raksha Khadse, who had been appointed the godmother of the vessel, be felicitated before him. Khadse was reluctant, as it was against the ministerial protocol. But Sonowal insisted that as per maritime convention, which says every ship has a 'godmother' who stays the 'godmother' till the life of the ship, Khadse should be felicitated first. On Sonowal's repeated request, Khadse agreed and the protocol was broken to uphold a maritime convention.

RAIL ON REEL

PARTICIPATING IN the debate on Railways (Amendment) Bill, 2024, RJD MP Manoj Kumar Jha invoked cinematic references to make a point about the Indian Railways. He cited the examples of *Pakeezah* (1972), which he said used trains as a metaphor at various points in the film, *Gaman* (1978), which depicted the pain of migrants, and *Coolie* (1982), whose message, he said, everyone was aware of. He went on to add that railways figured in many highs and lows of his life.

Now, Bihar BJP MLA asks Muslims to stay indoors during Holi

SANTOSH SINGH
PATNA, MARCH 10

DAYS AFTER Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath backed a Sambhal police officer's "advice" to Muslims to stay indoors during Holi, Bihar BJP MLA Haribhushan Thakur on Monday made a similar appeal.

This year's Holi falls on March 14, coinciding with Friday prayers during the month of Ramadan.

Haribhushan Thakur, the MLA from Bisfi in Madhubani district, told reporters in Patna: "Holi falls on Friday this time and coincides with one of the Jummas of Ramadan. I appeal to them to stay indoors during Holi and let us celebrate it without disruption. There are 52 Fridays, they (Muslims) can avoid coming out on Holi."

He also called on Muslims to

not "take offence" if colour is applied on them in case they venture out on Holi. "On one hand, they make money by selling abir and gulal, but they want to stay away from colour being thrown on them on Holi. It is essential to respect each other's religion and religious practices to maintain communal harmony," he said.

Leader of Opposition Tejashwi Prasad Yadav took aim at Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, demanding that he rebuke the BJP MLA. "Who is this Bachaul? (Haribhushan Thakur also uses Bachaul as a surname). How can he issue such a statement on Muslims? The CM has gone unconscious," he said.

Minority Welfare Minister Zama Khan of the JD(U), a BJP ally, said: "Police remain all the more alert during festivals." We assure the people of communal harmony during Holi."

COMPLETE CENSUS AT EARLIEST: HOUSE PANEL

New Delhi: The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Home Affairs has recommended that the Census should be completed at the earliest.

The decadal exercise has been pending since 2021.

In a report, the committee said progress had been made in the preparatory work for the

Census and NPR. It also said efforts had been made in the development of geospatial databases, the Census Mapping Portal and the revamping of the Civil Registration System (CRS) portal.

"The Committee recommends that the Census may be completed at the earliest..." the panel's report said. **ENS**

Grape expectations: Italy sniffs a wine opportunity in India

DIVYAA
NEW DELHI, MARCH 10

WINE TARIFFS are a key sticking point in the negotiations for an India-European Union (EU) Free Trade Agreement (FTA), but Italy is already betting big on the Indian market to push its premium wines.

Italy's flagship wine roadshow, Vinitaly, made a pitstop in New Delhi for the first time over the weekend, focusing on niche, luxury wines. It brought a host of exhibitors from the country's top wine-producing regions, such as Apulia, Tuscany, Veneto, Campania and Abruzzo, to seek business opportunities and collaborations.

The India leg marks a strategic initiative aimed at promoting Italian wine culture and forging connections between Italian producers and India's network of importers, distributors and consumers, said the organisers.

"As India's premium wine segment continues to rise, Vinitaly is positioning itself to

EXPLAINED
High tariffs a concern

DESPITE CONCERNS over high tariff rates that India applies on European wine, going up to 150%, Italy sees the Indian market, along with China, as a big window of opportunity for its signature wines.

tap into this potential, particularly within the country's upscale hospitality and tourism sectors," a statement said.

Trade between India and the EU has grown by around 90% in the past decade, but the FTA talks have stalled over the years due to sharp differences between India and the 27-nation bloc. The EU wants India to reduce tariffs on cars, wine, whisky and some agricultural products.

The negotiations resumed in Brussels on Monday, after Prime Minister Narendra Modi and EU President Ursula von der Leyen

PM heads to Mauritius, pacts on maritime security, tackling financial crimes on table

SHUBHAJIT ROY
NEW DELHI, MARCH 10

AHEAD OF his two-day State visit to Mauritius starting Tuesday, Prime Minister Narendra Modi Monday described Mauritius as "a close maritime neighbour" and "a key partner in the Indian Ocean".

The two countries are looking to sign pacts on maritime security, combating financial crimes and training of civil servants from the island nation.

"At the invitation of my friend, Prime Minister Dr. Navinchandra Ramgoolam, I am embarking on a two-day State Visit to Mauritius to participate

in the celebrations of the 57th National Day of Mauritius," Modi said before leaving for Port Louis late Monday night, in what will be his second visit to Mauritius. He attended the National Day celebrations of Mauritius on March 12 in 2015 as well.

"Mauritius is a close maritime neighbour, a key partner in the Indian Ocean, and a gateway to the African Continent. We are connected by history, geography and culture. Deep mutual trust, a shared belief in the values of democracy, and celebration of our diversity are our strengths. The close and historical people-to-people connect is a source of shared pride. We have made significant strides in the past ten



PM will be in Mauritius on Tuesday and Wednesday

years with people-centric initiatives," he said.

Sources said that the visit will strengthen cooperation in the areas such as development partnership, capacity building, maritime security, health, small and medium enterprises, and financial and trade connectivity.

Prime Minister Navinchandra Ramgoolam took charge in November 2024. "The visit... will therefore provide an

occasion for early engagement between the two leaders," said Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri.

The Prime Minister will reach Port Louis early Tuesday. He will visit the Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam Botanical Garden to pay homage to Seewoosagur Ramgoolam, the former Prime Minister and the founding father of Mauritius, and also Anerood Jugnauth, former President and former PM of Mauritius.

Prime Minister Modi will also call on the new President of Mauritius, Dharambeer Gokhool, which will be followed by bilateral meetings with Prime Minister Ramgoolam. It is expected that there will be meetings with other political leaders

during the visit.

Modi and Ramgoolam will inaugurate projects that have been implemented with Indian assistance and will also witness the signing of several MoUs on cooperation in capacity building, trade, tackling of cross-border financial crimes and promoting small and medium enterprises. There will also be an interaction with members of the Indian community. These engagements will be spread over March 11 and 12.

Misri said: "We expect to sign a technical agreement on sharing white-shipping information between the Indian Navy and Mauritius authorities. It will enable Indian authorities and Mauritius authorities to cooper-

ate in preventing illegal activities."

On financial crimes, he said there is an MoU that is proposed to be concluded between the Enforcement Directorate and the Financial Crimes Commission of the Republic of Mauritius. "It aims at providing intelligence and technical assistance cooperation on anti-corruption and anti-money laundering activities..." the Foreign Secretary said.

On training, he said an MoU is planned between the Ministry of Public Service and Administrative Reforms of the Government of Mauritius and the National Center for Good Governance on the Indian side, to undertake training of 500 Mauritian civil servants over five years.

Attempts to politicise Kathua deaths: Omar after MoS remark

ARUN SHARMA
JAMMU, MARCH 10

TWO DAYS after three civilians were found dead in a river in Kathua, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah has alleged that there have been attempts to "politicise" the deaths. He also voiced his surprise at the recent visit of the Leader of Opposition Sunil Kumar Sharma, wondering how he was allowed when Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Kumar Choudhary had been prevented from going there.

Speaking at the Assembly Monday, Abdullah expressed his concern over the deaths. He said: "Somewhere, attempts are definitely being made to give the incident a political colour."

The remarks come two days after the bodies of three civilians — including a minor — were found in a river flowing through Inchhu forests in Kathua district's Malhar area. The three persons — Yogesh, 32, Darshan, 40, and Varun, 14 — are believed to be cousins and were allegedly to be part of a wedding procession.



J&K CM Omar Abdullah in the Assembly. PTI

The killings have kicked up a row in the Union Territory, with Union Minister in the Prime Minister's Office, Dr Jitendra Singh, claiming that they had been killed by militants.

In the Assembly, Omar cited a police probe to say it was not appropriate to speculate about how the incident had occurred. He did refer to the alleged handling of Bani MLA Rajeshwar Singh during the latter's visit to a hospital Saturday night.

Although an independent legislator, Singh, whose assembly seat Bani falls under Kathua district, has extended support to

Omar's ruling NC.

"What happened — or didn't happen — is before you," Omar told the House. "Police will have to take action in the matter also as I don't think that the MLA Sahib was trying to go there with an intention to do politics."

He expressed his surprise that while Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Chowdhary was discouraged from visiting the incident site citing potential law and order problems, Leader of the Opposition Sunil Sharma — a senior leader of the BJP — was allowed to visit. "On Saturday night, the Deputy CM decided to go there (Billawar), and accordingly, the district officials concerned were informed about it. However, on Sunday morning, there was a little bit more force deployed outside the residence of the Deputy CM and he was told that it won't be right for him to visit there," he said.

When the LoP rose to respond, Omar said it was not for him but for the police to answer.

Meanwhile, the three civilians were cremated Monday amid protests in Billawar against the alleged killings.

‘Govt had no role in fashion show’

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, MARCH 10

A FASHION show in Kashmir's Gulmarg that has been in the eye of a storm figured in the Assembly on Monday, with Chief Minister Omar Abdullah saying his government had no role to play in the event.

On Sunday, Abdullah had sought a report after Kashmir's chief cleric Mirwaiz Umar Farooq termed the fashion show, held during Ramzan "outrageous" and "obscene".

The show was held Friday to mark the 15th anniversary of the designer label Shivan & Narresh. The duo have apologised for the event, saying: "Our sole intention was to celebrate creativity... with-



The fashion show in Gulmarg on Friday. Express

out any desire to offend anyone or any religious sentiments."

Responding to MLAs' concerns, Abdullah said a preliminary probe suggests "it was a private party organising a four-day event in Gulmarg". "Some people said that it should not have hap-

pened in the holy month of Ramzan, but I feel that what I saw there, leave Ramzan, it should not happen in any month of the year."

"The government had no role in it," he said, adding that the administration has been directed to hold an inquiry.

In last full Budget before polls, Assam's BJP govt focuses on land, 'indigenous groups'

SUKRITA BARUAH
GUWAHATI, MARCH 10

WITH ASSEMBLY elections a year away, land took centre spot in Assam's 2025-26 Budget tabled in the Assembly on Monday, with Finance Minister Ajanta Neog speaking at length on measures to "safeguard" it for "indigenous people".

Neog announced that all cases of inter-religion land transfers between individuals "will be given effect only after due approval of the state government". This had first been announced as a Cabinet decision by Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma in August last year.

Addressing the media after the Budget presentation, Sarma said, "Assam is a very sensitive state. We want to avoid all kinds of communal disturbances. So we had banned inter-religion transfer of land last year... But such bans cannot continue under the Constitution. We have now allowed inter-religious sale

and purchase of land, but only with the approval of the state government so we can scrutinise each and every proposal."

The Assam government restriction on the grant of No Objection Certificates (NOCs) for sale of land between people of different religions for a period of three months had come ahead of the Lok Sabha elections last year.

Another announcement in the Budget was the relocation of the 10th Assam Police Battalion, currently located in Guwahati, to a site where a violent eviction had been carried out last year. Two people had died and over 500 homes of Bengali-origin Muslims demolished in an eviction drive in Kachutali village in Sonapur — under the notified tribal belt of South Kamrup — in September last year.

"This will provide a safety net against encroachment of land in that tribal belt. Additionally, this will give an opportunity to the government to develop a world-class central business district with modern infrastructure,"



Assam CM Himanta Biswa Sarma with Finance Minister Ajanta Neog and others before the Budget presentation. PTI

Neog said in her speech.

She announced that the government would start a survey of *char* areas — low lying flood-prone riverbanks, where Bengali-origin Muslims are the primary residents, with other communities like Misings, Deoris, Nepalis and Kocharis also residing. Neog stated that settlement of any *char* land "will be taken up only after discussion with the stakeholders and in due course of time".

"With this, the government's land bank will increase. A lot of land, without being accounted for, is in the hands of some people," said Sarma, after the session. Apart from this, Neog dedicated a section of her speech to budgetary allocations for a section of recommendations of the Bipal Sarma committee, set up for the implementation of Clause 6 of the 1985 Assam Accord, which deals with

"Constitutional, legal and administrative safeguards" of "the Assamese people".

In addition to existing tribal belts and blocks, Neog said, "The Government shall identify the revenue circles of the state where only 'indigenous people' can own and possess land and transfer of such land in these areas is limited to them alone."

Besides the series of land-related provisions, the BJP government's last full Budget before the 2026 Assembly polls had announcements for the middle class and youth. The overall outlay of ₹2.63 lakh crore included a professional tax exemption for individuals earning up to ₹15,000 a month, a ₹2,500 per month grant to graduates of state universities, a ₹1 reduction in electricity rates for consumers using less than 120 units a month, a one-time financial assistance of ₹50,000 each to 6.8 lakh casual and permanent tea garden workers in the state, and a scheme to provide seed capital for entrepreneurs in women's self-help groups.

बिहार स्टेट बैकवर्ड क्लासेज फाइनेन्स एण्ड डेवलपमेन्ट कॉर्पोरेशन

Bihar State Backward Classes Finance & Development Corporation

चतुर्थ तल, सोन भवन, वीरचंद पटेल मार्ग, पटना-800001
4th Floor, Sone Bhawan, Birchand Patel Marg, Patna - 800 001.

(निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना संख्या – NIGAM/ LAPTOP / 2025/04)

(केवल ई-टेंडर पद्धति के अनुसार <https://eproc2.bihar.gov.in>)

मुख्यमंत्री पिछड़ा वर्ग एवं अत्यंत पिछड़ा वर्ग प्रवेशिकोत्तर छात्रवृत्ति योजना 2023 अंतर्गत पिछड़ा वर्ग एवं अति पिछड़ा वर्ग कल्याण विभाग, बिहार, पटना के लिए लैपटॉप अधिप्राप्ति हेतु निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना।

2. निविदा समय—सारणी (Tender Schedule)

SL. No.	Activity	Date & Time
1.	Start Date of Bid Submission	From 10/03/2025 on https://eproc2.bihar.gov.in
2.	Last date and time of bid uploading	Upto 31/03/2025 at 1 PM on https://eproc2.bihar.gov.in
3.	Physical document (Original Affidavit & Payment receipt) Submission End Date	01/04/2025 at 4 PM, in the office of Bihar State Backward Classes Finance & Development Corporation, 4th Floor, Sone Bhawan, Birchand Patel Marg, Patna.
4.	Bid Processing charge	As per site (https://eproc2.bihar.gov.in)
5.	Price of Bid Paper	As per site (https://eproc2.bihar.gov.in)
6.	Technical Bid Opening Date	02/04/2025 at 2PM on https://eproc2.bihar.gov.in
7.	Financial Bid Opening Date	To be announced at (https://eproc2.bihar.gov.in)
8.	Place of Bid Opening	https://eproc2.bihar.gov.in
9.	Post & Address of Advertiser	Managing Director, Bihar State Backward Classes Finance & Development Corporation, 4th Floor, Sone Bhawan, Birchand Patel Marg, Patna.
10.	Tender Bid Validity	120 days

3. निविदा की विस्तृत शर्तें वेबसाइट <https://eproc2.bihar.gov.in> पर देख जा सकती हैं। प्रबंध निदेशक, उक्त सूचना [state.bihar.gov.in/prdbihar](https://eproc2.bihar.gov.in/prdbihar) पर भी देखी जा सकती है। बिहार राज्य पिछड़ा वर्ग वित्त PR-021310 (BC & EBC) 2024-25 एवं विकास निगम, पटना

नशे से बचने का है एक ही उपाचार, दृढ़ संकल्प और परिवार से प्यार

बिहार सरकार

जल संसाधन विभाग

कार्यपालक अभियंता का कार्यालय

सिकरहना तटबंध प्रमंडल, मोतिहारी

अल्पकालीन पुनर्निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना संख्या – 04 /2024-25
(केवल ई-टेंडर पद्धति के अनुसार वेबसाइट <https://eproc2.bihar.gov.in> पर)

1. कार्य का विवरण –

क्र.सं.	कार्य का नाम	प्राक्कलित राशि (लाख रु० में)	अग्रपान की राशि (रु० में) (ऑन लाईन अथवा फिजिकल / वैनुअल मोड में भुगतान)	परिमाण-विपत्र का मूल्य (अप्रत्यक्षीय) (रुपय)	वेल्डिंग को देय बीड प्रोसेसिंग फी (अप्रत्यक्षीय) केवल ऑन लाईन मोड में भुगतान रु० में)	कार्य समाप्ति की अवधि
1	A.E Work at Baswariya Tola, km 14-15 of R.B.G.E (Agenda No- 220/10/2025).	98.71	1,97,500.00	10000.00	3540.00	15.05.2025
2	A.E Work at Belbatiya Village (Agenda No- 220/13/2025)	76.59	1,53,200	10000.00	3540.00	15.05.2025

2. निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना निर्गत करने की तिथि

3. निविदा कागजात डाउनलोड एवं अपलोड करने की तिथि एवं समय

4. प्री-बीड मीटिंग का तिथि एवं समय, स्थान

5. तकनीकी बीड खोलने की तिथि एवं समय

6. वित्तीय बीड खोलने की तिथि एवं समय

7. निविदा खोलने का स्थान

8. निविदा की वैधता अवधि (निविदा प्राप्ति की अंतिम तिथि से)

9. विज्ञापनदाता का पदनाम एवं पता

10. विशेष जानकारी प्राप्त करने हेतु वेबसाइट <https://eproc2.bihar.gov.in> एवं वेबसाइट <https://wrdbihar.gov.in> पर देखा जा सकता है ।

विस्तृत जानकारी [state.bihar.gov.in/prdbihar](https://eproc2.bihar.gov.in/prdbihar) पर भी देखी जा सकती है।

PR- 21153 (WRD) 2024-25

कार्यपालक अभियंता
नशे की मार, बर्बाद करे सुखी परिवार।
सिकरहना तटबंध प्रमंडल, मोतिहारी।

जल संसाधन विभाग

कार्यपालक अभियंता का कार्यालय,

सिंचाई प्रमंडल, बथनाहा, (अररिया)

(Email-irrigationdivisionbathnaha@gmail.com)

(केवल ई-टेंडर पद्धति के अनुसार वेबसाइट [www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in](https://eproc2.bihar.gov.in))

अल्पकालीन निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना संख्या –09 F2 / 2024–25

1. कार्य का विवरण :-

क्र.सं.	कार्य का नाम	प्राक्कलित राशि (रु० लाख में)	अग्रपान की राशि (रु० में) Online अथवा Physical/ Manual Mode में भुगतान	परिमाण विपत्र का मूल्य (अप्रत्यक्षीय) केवल ऑन लाईन मोड में भुगतान (रु० में)	वेल्डिंग को देय बीड प्रोसेसिंग फी (अप्रत्यक्षीय) केवल ऑन लाईन मोड में भुगतान (रु० में)	कार्य समाप्ति की तिथि
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	पूर्वियों शाखा नहर के कि०मी० 18.23 पर रिफा C/R Wing wall and Returning wall के क्षतिग्रस्त भाग के मरम्मत, रानीगंज उपविस्रणी के कि०मी० 2.74 एवं कि०मी० 10.38 पर सायकन एक्वाडक्ट का मरम्मत, रानीगंज उपविस्रणी के कि०मी० 3.17 से कि०मी० 11.21 तक जंगल सफाई, लक्ष्मीपुर लघुनहर के कि०मी० 3.81 पर दावे बीध का पुनर्स्थापन, सुखी लघुनहर के कि०मी० 0.00 से 4.21 कि०मी०, देही लघुनहर के कि०मी० 0.00 से कि०मी० 5.18, शंकरपुर लघुनहर के कि०मी० 0.00 से कि०मी० 4.42, मिर्जापुर लघुनहर के कि०मी० 0.00 से कि०मी० 2.59, हरिपुर लघुनहर के कि०मी० 0.00 से कि०मी० 1.15, एवं बसगाड़ा लघुनहर के कि०मी० 0.00 से कि०मी० 4.57 तक जंगल सफाई कार्य।	76.50	1,53,000.00	10,000.00	3540.00	15.06.2025

2. विज्ञापन दाता का पदनाम एवं पता

3. निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना निर्गत करने की तिथि

4. निविदा कागजात डाउनलोड एवं अपलोड करने की तिथि

5. तकनीकी बीड खोलने की तिथि एवं समय

6. वित्तीय बीड खोलने की तिथि एवं समय

7. निविदा खोलने का स्थान

8. निविदा की वैधता अवधि

9. ई-निविदा मात्र वेबसाइट [www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in](https://eproc2.bihar.gov.in) पर डाउनलोड एवं अपलोड किया जा सकता है।

विस्तृत जानकारी [state.bihar.gov.in/prdbihar](https://eproc2.bihar.gov.in/prdbihar) पर भी देखी जा सकती है।

PR- 21117 (WRD) 2024-25

कार्यपालक अभियंता,
सिंचाई प्रमंडल, बथनाहा।

नशे की मार, बर्बाद करे सुखी परिवार।

North Bihar Power Distribution Company Limited

(Regd. Office : VidyutBhawan, Baily Road, Patna)
(Department of Stores & Purchase)
CIN NO: U40109BR2012SGC018920

Contact No. : 7763815015 Email- cesnp4.nb@gmail.com

NIT No:-27/PR/NBPDCL/2025

North Bihar Power Distribution Co. Ltd. (NBPDCL), a Government of Bihar Undertaking, invites online Tender for procurement of Tools & plants and Testing equipment for TRW Purnia under NBPDCL in Two-tier (Technical and Financial) from eligible and experienced Original manufacturers/ Authorized suppliers in this regard for NBPDCL. The Details are as following:-

Sl. No.	Name of material	Qty	Estimated Cost (in Rs)	Earnest Money (inRs.)	Tender Cost (in Rs)
1.	Tools & Plants and Testing equipment for Transformer repairing workshops, Purnia under NBPDCL	27 Items	23,44,660.00/-	46,893.00/-	5,900/- inclusive of applicable GST @ 18% extra

The Time line for the above tender is as follows:

Start Date of Online Sale of Bid Document/request of Bid/Bid Documents: 24.03.2025, from 11.00 Hrs

Last Date of Online Submission of bid along with Tender Cost & processing fees: 15.04.2025, up to 18:00 Hrs

Last Date of submission of EMD and hard copy of receipt of BSEDCL processing fee & tender cost: 16.04.2025, up to 13:00 Hrs

Date of opening of Techno -Commercial bid(Part-I): 16.04.2025, after 15:00 Hrs.

Date of Pre-bid Meeting: 28.03.2025, at 11:00 Hrs. at office chamber of Chief Engineer (S&P) NBPDCL, 4th floor, Vidyut Bhawan-3 Bailey Road, Patna, Bihar

For further details please visit : www.state.bihar.gov.in/prdbihar

Electrical Superintending Engineer(S&P)
NBPDCL

PR- 021210 (B & C) 2024-25

नशे से बचने का है एक ही उपाचार, दृढ़ संकल्प और परिवार से प्यार।

जल संसाधन विभाग

कार्यपालक अभियंता का कार्यालय

सोन बराज प्रमण्डल, इन्द्रपुरी, (रोहतास)

राष्ट्रीय स्पर्दा निविदा आमंत्रण

(केवल ई-टेंडर पद्धति के अनुसार वेबसाइट www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in पर)

शुद्धि पत्र

इस कार्यालय के पत्रांक 296 दिनांक 24.02.2025 एवं पत्रांक 350 दिनांक 03.03.2025 द्वारा प्रकाशित निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना संख्या 04 /2024–25 जिसका पी० आर० नं० 20329 (WRD) 2024–25 है, से संबंधित कार्य की निविदा निम्नरूपेण संशोधित की जाती है ।

क्रम सं०	कार्य का नाम	प्राक्कलित राशि (लाख रु० में)	अग्रपान की राशि (लाख रु० में) (ऑन लाईन अथवा फिजिकल / वैनुअल मोड में भुगतान)	परिमाण-विपत्र का मूल्य (अप्रत्यक्षीय) (केवल ऑनलाईन मोड में भुगतान) रु०	वेल्डिंग को देय बीड प्रोसेसिंग फी (अप्रत्यक्षीय) (केवल ऑन लाईन मोड में भुगतान) रु०	कार्य पूर्ण करने की अवधि
01	सोन नदी के बायें किनारे अवस्थित रोहतास जिला अन्तर्गत सिलीधु प्रखंड के सरैया ग्राम में कटाव निरोधक कार्य । (एजेन्डा सं०-220 / 806 / 2025)	71.30562	1.42611	10,000.00	3,540.00	15.05.2025

2. विज्ञापन दाता का नाम

3. निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना निर्गत करने की तिथि

4. निविदा कागजात डाउनलोड एवं अपलोड करने की अवधि

5. प्री-बीड मीटिंग का समय स्थान एवं तिथि

6. तकनीकी बीड खोलने की तिथि एवं समय

7. वित्तीय बीड खोलने की तिथि एवं समय

8. निविदा खोलने का स्थान

9. निविदा की वैधता अवधि

10. विशेष जानकारी प्राप्त करने हेतु

कार्यपालक अभियंता, सोन बराज प्रमण्डल, इन्द्रपुरी, (रोहतास)

दिनांक – 24.02.2025

दिनांक 07.03.2025 के 10.00 बजे पूर्वाह्न से 13.03.2025 के 03.00 बजे अपराह्न तक (केवल वेबसाइट www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in पर)

दिनांक 10.03.2025 को 02.30 बजे अपराह्न में मुख्य अधिव्यापि सिंचाई सुजन, जल संसाधन विभाग, डिस्ट्री कार्यालय।

दिनांक 13.03.2025 के अपराह्न 03.30 बजे (केवल वेबसाइट www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in पर)।

सक्षम पदाधिकारी द्वारा बाद में घोषित की जायेगी।

केवल वेबसाइट www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in पर

120 दिन।

वेबसाइट www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in / www.wrd.bih.nic.in/ / www.state.bihar.nic.in पर देखा जा सकता है।

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

PR. No. 21266 (WRD) 2024-25

नशे की मार, बर्बाद करे सुखी परिवार।
कार्यपालक अभियंता
सोन बराज प्रमण्डल, इन्द्रपुरी,

Govt. of Bihar

Public Health Engineering Department

Public Health Engineering Division, Bhagalpur West, Bhagalpur

RE-TENDER NIT No– 30/2024-25/(O&M-PRD)

National Competitive Bidding

(Through e-procurement mode on www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in)

1	Designation and Address of Advertiser	Executive Engineer, Public Health Engineering Division, Bhagalpur West, Bhagalpur
2	Date of issue of Tender Notice	06.03.2025
3	Period of sale (downloading) of tender Bid Document	20.03.2025 to 25.03.2025 up to 17:00 Hrs. through www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in
4	Date, time & place of pre-bid meeting	24.03.2025 at 11.30 hrs in the Office of Executive Engineer of concerned P. H. Division, Bhagalpur West, Bhagalpur
5	Last date and time of receipt (uploading) of tender	25.03.2025 up to 17:00 Hrs on www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in
6	Last date and time of submission of hard copy of EMD (in original).	26.03.2025 up to 16:00 hrs in the Office of Executive Engineer of P.H. Division Bhagalpur West, Bhagalpur, A. Executive Engineer of P.H. Division Bhagalpur West, Bhagalpur B. Superintending Engineer of P.H. Circle Bhagalpur C. Zonal Chief Engineer of Zone Bhagalpur
7	Date and time of opening of technical bid	25.03.2025 at 17:00Hrs on www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in
8	Date and time of opening of financial bid	To be informed later after the approval of technical bid.
9.	Details of works:	

Details of works:

Group No	Name of Work	Estimat ed Cost BOQ (in Lakh)	Amount of Earnest Money (in Lakh)	Cost of Tender Document (non-refundable) in Rs.	BSEDCL Bid Processing Fee (in Rs.)	Completion Period (in months)
1	6	7	8	9	10	11
O&M-PRD-1	Comprehensive operation and maintenanceand Special repair of ward level Piped Water Supply Schemes constructed by the "Panchayati Raj Department" and handed over to PHED for 4 years; excluding the cost of energy charges and operator wages. Block-Goradih Scheme- 90 Nos.	194.40	3.90	10000	as per eproc2	48
O&M-PRD-2	Comprehensive operation and maintenanceand Special repair of ward level Piped Water Supply Schemes constructed by the "Panchayati Raj Department" and handed over to PHED for 4 years; excluding the cost of energy charges and operator wages. Block- Sultanganj, Nathnagar&Shahkundi Scheme- 451 Nos.	974.16	19.5	10000	as per eproc2	48

10. For support related to e-tendering process, bidders may contact at following address "E-procurement helpdesk, M Junction services limited, R J Complex, 2nd floor Khajpura, Patna-800014, Toll Free No.- 18005726571, may visit the link "Vendor info" at www.eproc2support@bihar.gov.in

For further details please visit : www.state.bihar.gov.in/prdbihar

Executive Engineer
Public Health Division, Bhagalpur West, Bhagalpur.

PR.No.21178 (PHED) 2024-25

नशामुक्त हो जाए बिहार, सुरक्षित रहे घर परिवार।

TAMILNADU WATER SUPPLY AND DRAINAGE BOARD

Notice Inviting for Expression of Interest for Engaging Project Management Consultant for Hogenakkal Water Supply and Fluorosis Mitigation Project (Phase III) in Dharmapuri and Krishnagiri Districts in Tamil Nadu, India-e-submission.

Eol. No.13/F.HWS&FMP-Phase-III/Do-2/CE/VLR/2025/dt.06.03.2025

Tamil Nadu Water Supply & Drainage Board (TWAD Board) intends to engage Project Management Consultant for Hogenakkal Water Supply and Fluorosis Mitigation Project (Phase III) in Dharmapuri and Krishnagiri Districts in Tamil Nadu, India

Interested consulting companies may upload their Expression of Interest in the prescribed format along with the necessary certificates and documents through the Tamil Nadu Government e-procurement system <https://tntenders.gov.in>.

1) Availability of Eol : 13.03.2025 to 15.04.2025 upto 3:00 p.m

2) Last date and Time for Eol Submission : 15.04.2025 upto 3:00 p.m

3) Date and time for Eol opening : 16.04.2025 at 3:30 p.m

DIPR/ 944 /TENDER/2025

Chief Engineer (I/c), TWAD Board, Vellore.

SAVE WATER, CONSERVE WATER, EVERY DROP COUNTS

उत्तर प्रदेश पावर ट्रान्समिशन कारपोरेशन लि० ई-निविदा सूचना संख्या-01/वि०जा० पा०ख०/आगरा /2024-25 के अन्तर्गत कोरिजेण्डम E-Tender Notice No. 01/ECTD/Agra/2024-25 पर अंकित मुख्य अभियन्ता (पारेषण दक्षिण पश्चिम) उ०प्र०पा०ट्रा०का०लि०, आगरा के कार्यालय परिसर में स्थित पार्क एवं प्लान्टेशन के अनुरक्षण एवं परिसर की साफ सफाई के कार्य की ई-निविदा जो कि दिनांक 05.03.2025 को समय 12:00 बजे प्राप्त कर उसी दिनांक 05.03.2025 समय 16:00 बजे खोली जानी निर्धारित की गयी थी। अपरिहार्य कारणों से उक्त निविदा को एन०आई०सी० एवं विभागीय वेबसाइट पर अपलोड होने में बिलम्ब हुआ। अतएव पुनः उक्त निविदा को अपलोड करने की अन्तिम तिथि एवं समय 25.03.2025 समय 12:00 बजे एवं निविदा खोले जाने का समय 26.03.2025 समय 16:00 बजे निर्धारित किया जाता है। अन्य सभी शर्तें यथावत रहेगी। निविदा सम्बन्धित विवरण विभागीय वेबसाइट <http://etender.up.nic.in> & <http://upptcl.org> से भी प्राप्त किया जा सकता है। "राष्ट्र हित में बिजली बचाए" हस्ता./-अधिशासी अभियन्ता, विद्युत जानपद पारेषण खण्ड-आगरा उ०प्र० पावर ट्रान्समिशन कारपोरेशन लि.) निकट अमर उजाला प्रेस, पारेषण भवन ककरेटा रोड, 220 के०वी० उपकेन्द्र सिकन्दरा, आगरा पत्रांक: 195 वि०जा०पा०ख०/आगरा /दिनांक:10/3/25

बिहार सरकार

बिहार तकनीकी सेवा आयोग

19, हार्डिंग रोड, पटना-800001

आवश्यक सूचना

विज्ञापन सं०-21/2025, परिधापक

स्वास्थ्य विभाग, बिहार, पटना के अन्तर्गत परिधापक के कुल-3326 रिक्त पदों पर नियुक्ति हेतु दिनांक-11.03.2025 से 08.04.2025 तक Online आवेदन करने की तिथि निर्धारित की गयी है।

उक्त से संबंधित विस्तृत विज्ञापन आयोग के Website- www.btsb.bihar.gov.in पर दिनांक-11.03.2025 से देखा जा सकता है।

प्रभारी सचिव,
PR. No. 021522 (B&C) 2024-25
बिहार तकनीकी सेवा आयोग, पटना

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

सुरक्षित जीवन अपनाओ, अपनी नियमित एच.आई.वी. जाँच कराओ।

बिहार सरकार

परियोजना निदेशक का कार्यालय

बिहार शहरी आधारभूत संरचना विकास निगम लिमिटेड, सीतामढ़ी-शिवहर (बिहार सरकार का उपक्रम)

समाहरणालय परिसर, कैम्पस, डुमरा, सीतामढ़ी, पिन नं.- 843301

Email Id- pdsitamarihuidco@gmail.com

निविदा आमंत्रण संख्या-04 /2024-25 ई-टेंडरिंग द्वारा www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in)

1	विज्ञापन दाता का नाम एवं पता	परियोजना निदेशक ,बुडको, सीतामढ़ी-शिवहर
2	निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना निर्गत की तिथि	दिनांक- 05.03.2025
3	निविदा कागजात डाउनलोड करने की अवधि	दिनांक 20.03.2025 से 27.03.2025 अपराह्न 15:00 बजे तक (on website www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in)
4	प्री बीड मीटिंग का समय / तिथि	समय पूर्वाह्न 11:00 बजे स्थान- परियोजना निदेशक, बुडको, सीतामढ़ी-शिवहर, सीतामढ़ी के कार्यालय कक्ष में दिनांक- 19.03.2025
5	संशेदक द्वारा निविदा अपलोड करने की अंतिम तिथि / समय	दिनांक- 27.03.2025 के अपराह्न 15:00 बजे तक (on website www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in)
6	तकनीकी बीड खोलने की तिथि / समय	दिनांक- 29.03.2025 के अपराह्न 15:30 बजे के बाद (on website www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in)
7	वित्तीय बीड खोलने की तिथि / समय	तकनीकी बीड के निष्पादन के पश्चात। (on website www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in)
8	अग्रपान, सभी शायद-पत्र, Existing Commitment (मूल में), परिमाण विपत्र के मूल का बैंक ड्राफ्ट जमा करने की अंतिम तिथि / समय एवं स्थान	दिनांक-29.03.2025 को अपराह्न 15:00 बजे तक 1. मुख्य महाप्रबंधक, बिहार शहरी आधारभूत संरचना विकास निगम लि० (बुडको) वेस्ट कोरिंग केनाल रोड, राजापुर पुल, पटना-800001, बिहार, पटना का कार्यालय। 2. परियोजना निदेशक, बुडको, सीतामढ़ी-शिवहर, सीतामढ़ी का कार्यालय, समाहरणालय परिसर, कैम्पस, डुमरा, सीतामढ़ी, पिन नं.- 843301
9	कार्य का विवरण:-	

क्र.सं.	कार्य का नाम	प्राक्कलित राशि (रुपये में)	अग्रपान की राशि (रु० में)	परिमाण विपत्र का मूल्य (अप्रत्यक्षीय) (रु० में)	Bid Processing Fee (Through online payment) (अप्रत्यक्षीय) (रु० में)	कार्य समाप्ति की अवधि (इन्कुबिडिंग मोनसुन अवधि माह में)
क	नगर परिषद, बेरगनियाँ अन्तर्गत वार्ड नं०-17,19,20 एवं 22 में रामईश्वर साह के घर से शिवजी चौक, खान चौक, कबिस्तान चौक एवं मोलाना चौक होते हुए भारी पुल तक आराखीसी० कोवर नाला निर्माण कार्य।	1,09,94,600.00	2,19,900.00	17,700.00	As per Eproc2	6 माह
ख	नगर परिषद, बेरगनियाँ अन्तर्गत वार्ड नं०-19 एवं 20 में कब्रिस्तान चौक से माली टोला होते हुए चिकना टोला नाली पुल तक आराखीसी० कोवर नाला निर्माण कार्य।	1,50,91,500.00	3,02,000.00	17,700.00	As per Eproc2	6 माह
ग	नगर परिषद, बेरगनियाँ अन्तर्गत वार्ड नं०-01,10 एवं 18 में मुख्य पथ दक्षिण स्कूल से इंडो नेपाल बॉर्डर तक चौड़ीकरण कर पी०सीसी० सड़क निर्माण कार्य।	1,21,20,425.00	2,42,500.00	17,700.00	As per Eproc2	6 माह
घ	नगर पंचायत, सुरसराज अन्तर्गत वार्ड नं०-16 उमाशंकर कापर के घर के आगे से अस्सम मास्टर साइड के घर तक का नाला निर्माण कार्य।	1,38,87,800.00	2,77,800.00	17,700.00	As per Eproc2	6 माह
ङ	नगर परिषद, जनकपुरी० अन्तर्गत वार्ड नं०-09 में राजिस्ट्री ऑफिस चौक से गावा ब्रह्मस्थान तक पी०सीसी० सड़क एवं आराखीसी० कोवर नाला निर्माण कार्य।	1,42,18,300.00	2,84,500.00	17,700.00	As per Eproc2	6 माह
च	एन०एच०-52 तरयुग नाली होते हुए मुलान चौक रेलवे गमुनी 38 तक एवं मुलान चौक शम्भु प्रसाद साह जी के घर तक पी०सीसी० सड़क आराखीसी० कोवर नाला निर्माण कार्य।	1,33,35,537.00	2,67,000.00	17,700.00	As per Eproc2	6 माह
छ	नगर निगम, सीतामढ़ी क्षेत्र अन्तर्गत वार्ड संख्या-5 में कमल महली के घर से रामाशंकर सिंह के घर तक में एक तरफ नाला सर्वे सहित (पी०सीसी०) सड़क निर्माण।	1,41,60,371.00	2,83,500.00	17,700.00	As per Eproc2	6 माह

9.विस्तृत निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना विभागीय वेबसाइट www.buidco.in, www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in एवं state.bihar.gov.in/prdbihar पर देखा जा सकता है।

PR- 21154 (B & C) 2024-25

परियोजना निदेशक,
बुडको, सीतामढ़ी-शिवहर, सीतामढ़ी।

नशे की मार, बर्बाद करे सुखी परिवार।



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What Chinese state media is saying about Trump foreign policy

RISHIKA SINGH
NEW DELHI, MARCH 10

AS DONALD Trump takes a wrecking ball to America's relationships with several countries, his words and actions in the Oval Office have twice triggered the strongest reactions.

One, the extraordinary humiliation of Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and, two, the announcement, with Israel's leader Benjamin Netanyahu by his side, of a plan for the United States to "own" Gaza and build a "riviera" there.

The first incident, on February 28, marked a remarkable break in US policy towards Ukraine that European countries saw as fundamentally undermining the transatlantic alliance, and the democratic principle. The second, on February 4, amounted to a virtual abandonment of the two-state solution by the US, and was immediately rejected by the Arab world.

While Russia expressed delight after

Zelenskyy was rebuked, China, the most significant ally of the Kremlin, issued no official reaction. The Chinese, who have been increasingly active diplomatically in West Asia of late, did say they rejected the displacement of the people of Gaza, but did not mention Trump or the US in a statement.

What is China, the world's second most powerful country, thinking at this extraordinary moment? Reporting and commentary in the *Global Times* and *China Daily*, two prominent English-language outlets of China's state-run media, and the English version of *People's Daily*, the mouthpiece of the Chinese Communist Party, provide some insights.

On Trump-Zelenskyy, Ukraine

Following the Oval Office meeting, Chinese media commentary has focused on the weakening of the US-led Western political order, and the perils of relying on the US. On March 1, *People's Daily* published an opinion article titled, 'How not to conduct diplo-

macy: Lessons from a White House dispute', stressing the need for dialogue among international actors. "It is a fallacy to assume that peace in Ukraine hinges solely on a bilateral agreement between the American and Russian presidents," it said, possibly suggesting that Beijing must have a role. "Any such agreement, even if it existed before the Trump-Zelenskyy meeting at the White House, would have been detached from the broader geopolitical realities."

A day later, an editorial ("Great television" underscores changes underway) noted the meeting was "a stark reminder of the shifting dynamics of global diplomacy and the challenges faced by nations navigating an increasingly unpredictable international landscape". The planned deal on Ukraine's minerals, which "had drawn criticism for its seemingly exploitative nature", had been "originally mooted by Kyiv, for whom it represents a painful but necessary compromise

in the face of current realities", it noted.

The Oval Office blow-up appeared to be "a carefully orchestrated setup", which "offered a gripping and revealing glimpse into the realpolitik of the Trump administration", the editorial said. It cautioned the European Union that "this episode should serve as a wake-up call: the era of relying on US security guarantees may be coming to an end" – and contrasted the American approach with that of China.

"As the US under the Trump administration increasingly retreats from international responsibilities, the concept of a "US-led West" is receding into history," it said. "China, for its part, has consistently advocated for dialogue and consensus-building to achieve a peaceful resolution to the conflict in Ukraine. Beijing's vision of a community with a shared future for mankind is rooted in the principles of multipolarity and mutual respect."

Global Times, in an article on March 1

("White House shouting match between Trump, Zelenskyy 'rare, dramatic' in history of modern intl relations: expert"), said the events "demonstrated to the Trump administration that ending the crisis might be more challenging than it had initially planned".

On March 2, *Global Times* said Western countries "are reeling not only because of the battlefield and Europe's security future, but also the painful realization that under US' "America First" approach, the transatlantic alliance is under risk of changing from one of shared values to a transactional relationship." ("European leaders gather in haste following Trump-Zelenskyy row").

On Trump's plan for Gaza

Since the Hamas attack of October 7, 2023, and the Israeli military offensive that has all but flattened Gaza, China has officially called for peace and talked about a long-term solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. State media has frequently published criticisms of the US and Israel, and

pointed to Chinese aid for Gaza.

While China has maintained trade and diplomatic ties with Israel, Foreign Minister Wang Yi emphasised on March 7 that "Gaza belongs to the Palestinian people, and is an inseparable part of the Palestinian territory". He said China supported the plan for Gaza proposed by Egypt and other Arab countries on March 4.

There was comparatively less commentary in Chinese media following Trump's initial announcement, but it underlined China's basic position.

The *Global Times* reported comments by a spokesperson that "Palestinians governing Palestine" should be the fundamental principle of post-conflict governance of Gaza. The article quoted a Chinese professor as saying, "Gaza is Palestinian territory, belonging to its people – not the US or any other country. Its future should not be dictated by the US." ("China opposes forced displacement of the people in Gaza: Chinese FM", February 5).

EXPLAINED SCIENCE

HOW A GENE-EDITED BANANA MAY HELP REDUCE FOOD WASTE

BROWN, OVER-RIPE bananas often end up in dustbins, even when they are perfectly edible. This has led to scientists developing a new genetically-engineered banana which has a longer shelf-life, and does not brown as much.

Tropic, the UK-based biotech company which has developed these bananas, claims that their fruit remains fresh and yellow for 12 hours after being peeled, and is also less likely to turn brown when bumped during harvesting and transportation.



Why do bananas turn brown?

Bananas boast a colourful life cycle – they start at a deep green, change to a delicious yellow, and end (if not consumed beforehand) at an unappetising brown. These changes are a product of their ripening process, which is caused by a hormone called ethylene.

Although many fruits produce ethylene, bananas produce a lot of it. And unlike melons and citrus fruits, they keep producing ethylene even after being harvested. Contact with ethylene triggers the activity of a number of genes, including one which linked to the production of the enzyme polyphenol oxidase (PPO).

It is this enzyme that makes bananas turn brown. PPO coming in contact with oxygen breaks down the yellow pigment in bananas to a brown hue. Bruising of the fruit – as is common during its handling – leads to the production of higher quantities of ethylene, and thus speeds up the ripening and browning process.

How was a non-browning banana produced?

The company made precise changes to existing banana genes such that the production of PPO is disabled. This does not stop a banana from ripening, but helps keep up appearances so that the fruit continues to look appetising for longer.

The same gene was silenced in Arctic apples developed by Okanagan Specialty Fruits Inc. These became the first geneti-

It is natural for bananas to turn brown.

Wikimedia Commons

cally engineered fruits to be approved for commercial sale in the US, and have been sold in the country (and elsewhere) since 2017. The browning of apples is also caused by PPO.

"Blocking the production of polyphenol oxidase has also been shown to work in tomatoes, melon, kiwifruits and mushrooms," an article in *The Guardian* said.

Why does this matter?

Bananas are extremely perishable, with some estimates saying that as much as 50% of the crop goes to waste each year. A UK government survey from 2017 suggests that British people bin roughly 1.4 million edible bananas every day, *The Guardian* reported.

This is financially wasteful and harmful for the environment. Food waste is a major contributor of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, which are causing global warming. Preventing bananas from browning may reduce food waste by encouraging people to eat older but edible fruit.

According to the company's press-release, "Tropic's non-browning bananas... can support a reduction in CO2 emissions equivalent to removing 2 million passenger vehicles from the road each year".

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE



SHUBHAJIT ROY

PRIME MINISTER Narendra Modi will be in Mauritius Tuesday for a two-day State visit, his second since 2015. He will be the Chief Guest at Mauritius' National Day Celebrations on March 12.

Mauritius, a strategically located island nation in the western Indian Ocean, is an important neighbour for India. A key reason for the special ties is that people of Indian-origin comprise nearly 70% of the island's population of 1.2 million.

Mauritius was once a French colony, before being taken over by the British. Under the nearly century-long French rule (in the 1700s), Indians were first brought to Mauritius from the Pudukcherry region to work as artisans and masons. Under British rule, about half a million Indian indentured workers came to Mauritius between 1834 and the early 1900s. About two-thirds of these workers settled in Mauritius.

Even the National Day has an interesting Indian connection. Mahatma Gandhi had briefly stopped in Mauritius on his way to India from South Africa in 1901. He gave the Indian workers three transformative messages: the importance of education, political empowerment, and staying connected with India. Thus, as tribute to Gandhi, the National Day of Mauritius is celebrated on March 12, the date of the Mahatma's Dandi march.

History of ties

Mauritius was among the first few countries with which independent India established diplomatic relations in 1948. Since its independence from the British in 1968, Mauritius has mainly been ruled by two major political families, the Ramgoolams (Seewoosagur Ramgoolam and his son, Navin) and the Jugnauths (Anerood Jugnauth and son, Pravind). Navin Ramgoolam, who won the elections last year, has been the PM of Mauritius twice before (from 1995 to 2000, and from 2005 to 2014).

His father led the country's freedom struggle and was the first PM of independent Mauritius. He worked closely with many Indian freedom fighters, including Gandhi,



Prime Minister Narendra Modi with his Mauritian counterpart Navinchandra Ramgoolam before their bilateral meeting in New Delhi in 2014. Reuters

Jawaharlal Nehru, and Sarojini Naidu. He had strong links with Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose and even proofread one of Bose's books, *The Indian Struggle* (1934).

Ties today: Infra, China factor

In March 2015, when PM Modi visited Mauritius, India signed a Memorandum of Understanding to improve transport facilities at Agaléga island.

This agreement said that infrastructure "for improving sea and air connectivity at the Outer Island of Mauritius will go a long way in ameliorating the condition of the inhabitants of this remote Island. These facilities will enhance the capabilities of the Mauritian Defence Forces in safeguarding their interests in the Outer Island."

Agaléga island is located 1,100 km north of Mauritius and is closer to the Indian southern coast. It is spread over an area of 70 sq km. In February 2024, India and Mauritius jointly inaugurated the air strip and the jetty projects.

When concerns were raised that India intended to build a military base at the island, then PM Pravind Jugnauth dismissed them, saying, "there has never been any agenda for Mauritius to relinquish its sovereignty over the Agaléga islands, as some ill-minded persons in and outside Mauritius attempted to make believe. Likewise, there has never been

any agenda to transform Agaléga to a military base... here, I wish to forcefully deplore, condemn India-bashing campaign..."

For India, China's increasing footprint in the Indian Ocean region has been a cause of concern. It thus wants to work closely with island countries like Mauritius.

Notably, Mauritius faced the devastating Cyclone Chido last year, particularly affecting Agaléga. India managed to mobilise its naval assets and utilise the facilities created in Agaléga to deliver assistance and relief material.

These facilities have additionally assisted Mauritius in its maritime surveillance, patrolling of its vast Exclusive Economic Zone and safeguarding the assets of its blue economy ecosystem from challenges such as piracy, as well as drug and human trafficking.

Areas of focus

New Delhi will seek to build on some broad thrust areas in the ties during the visit:

■ **DEFENCE:** The two sides are looking at moving on defence and maritime security, and are likely to sign a technical agreement on sharing white-shipping information between the Indian Navy and the Mauritius authorities. This will further enhance the maritime security of Mauritius and the safety of its trading corridors, and improve regional

cooperation in real-time data-sharing.

■ **INDIAN PROJECTS:** Numerous India-assisted development projects dot the Mauritian landscape. The development assistance to Mauritius just in the last decade is nearly \$1.1 billion. Of this, about \$729 million is through lines of credit, and \$427 million is through grant assistance. The bouquet of executed projects contains three phases of the Metro Express. An MoU was also signed in January 2022 to undertake 96 small, people-oriented projects across Mauritius, of which 51 have been inaugurated so far.

■ **FIRST RESPONDER:** India has traditionally been the first responder for Mauritius in times of crisis, including during the Covid-19 pandemic, the Wakashio oil-spill crisis of 2020, and the cyclone last year.

■ **TRADE:** India is amongst the largest trading partners of Mauritius. Mauritius is the second largest source of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) into India for FY 2023-24, after Singapore. Mauritius and India signed the Comprehensive Economic Cooperation and Partnership Agreement on February 22, 2021, after nearly 15 years of negotiations. It is the first trade agreement signed by India with an African country.

At present, 11 Indian PSUs are in Mauritius, including Bank of Baroda, Life Insurance Corporation, and the National Building and Construction Company Ltd (NBCC).

■ **SPACE COOPERATION:** An Agreement between India and Mauritius for the establishment of Telemetry, Tracking and Telecommand (TTC) Station for Satellites and Launch Vehicles and cooperation in the field of space research, science and applications was signed on December 26, 1986. In November 2023, the Mauritius Research and Innovation Council (MRIC) and ISRO signed a Memorandum of Understanding to establish a framework for cooperation on developing a joint satellite.

■ **CAPACITY BUILDING:** Mauritius is one of the largest beneficiaries of the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) programme. Since 2002-03, India has trained around 4,940 Mauritians under civilian & defence slots of ITEC. About 2,300 Indian students are currently pursuing higher education in Mauritius in streams such as medicine, hotel management, business studies, etc.

The visit will also touch upon the contribution of Seewoosagur Ramgoolam and his ancestry from Bihar, and celebrate the common cultural connections – the celebration of Maha Shivratri in Mauritius, the Ganga Talao holy pilgrimage site, and more.

When our ancestors started using tools: the theories and the evidence

ARJUN SENGUPTA
NEW DELHI, MARCH 10

OUR ANCIENT ancestors were using bone tools at least 1.5 million years ago, roughly a million years earlier than was previously thought, a study published last week in the journal *Nature* reported.

The earliest known stone tools are even older, dating to 3.3 million years ago. And our ancestors were likely using wooden tools just as long ago, even though there is no surviving evidence of this fact.

For a long time, it was held that tool technology was a uniquely human trait, linked to the emergence of our genus *Homo*. However, today there is consensus about tools predating *Homo* – and possibly by a lot.

'Man, the tool-maker'

British palaeoanthropologist Kenneth Oakley in the late 1940s identified tool-use and toolmaking as uniquely human traits

which implied "a marked capacity for conceptual thought".

In his book, *Man the Tool-Maker* (1949), Oakley wrote: "The real difference between what we choose to call an ape and what we call man is one of mental capacity... to conceive the idea of shaping a stone or stick for use in an imagined future eventuality is beyond the mental capacity of any known apes".

Oakley's theory that tool technology was a uniquely human trait held ground for several decades.

In 1964, British-Kenyan palaeoanthropologist Louis Leakey and his colleagues proposed that a collection of roughly 1.7 million-year-old fossils discovered at the Olduvai Gorge (present-day Tanzania) belonged to a new species within our own genus. He named this species *Homo habilis*, or the "handy/able man", due to its presumed ability to make tools.

This assessment was based on the discovery of certain hand bones that indicated dexterity needed for toolmaking, and an assort-

ment of stone tools that were found at the site. Leakey insisted that the fossils discovered belonged to the genus *Homo* because toolmaking was a uniquely human trait.

Other primates & tools

But evidence from the natural world suggests otherwise.

Charles Darwin wrote in *The Descent of Man* (1871) that "the chimpanzee in a state of nature cracks a native fruit, somewhat like a walnut, with a stone."

Darwin's idea was expanded upon by primatologist Jane Goodall in the 1960s. She found that chimps were not only adept at using objects in nature as tools – sticks to fish for termites, leaves to drink water – but also occasionally modified them for a certain purpose.

Now, if chimps could use, and (to an extent) make tools, tool-use and toolmaking were not uniquely human traits, as was be-

lieved at the time. Primate studies carried out in the following decades have supported Goodall's findings. Researchers have documented chimps coming up with rudimentary wooden spears, and capuchin monkeys of South America (unintentionally) producing stone flakes that were identical to those produced by our ancestors while crafting tools.

Lucy's grippy hands

Even after Goodall's findings, scientists for decades held on to an anthropocentric view of tool technology.

This is why, when palaeoanthropologist Donald Johanson in 1974 discovered Lucy, the partial skeleton of a 3.2-million-year-old human ancestor of the small-brained species *Australopithecus afarensis*, he did not give much thought to whether or not she was a tool-user. Lucy predated the earliest available stone tools at the time by more than 1.5 million years.

EXPLAINED ANTHROPOLOGY

16 THE WORLD

TOP OF THE WORLD



Mahmoud Khalil

UNITED STATES Palestinian student protester held at Columbia

New York: U.S. immigration agents arrested a Palestinian graduate student who has played a prominent role in pro-Palestinian protests at New York's Columbia University as part of U.S. President Donald Trump's promised crackdown on some anti-Israel activists. Mahmoud Khalil, a student at the university's School of International and Public Affairs, was arrested by Homeland Security agents at his university residence Saturday, the Student Workers of Columbia labor union said. Secretary of State Marco Rubio shared a news report of Khalil's arrest on social media Sunday, adding the comment: "We will be revoking the visas and/or green cards of Hamas supporters in US so they can be deported." **REUTERS**

Two men face trial over plot to kill Iran dissident

New York: Two men accused of being members of a Russian organized crime group will face trial in the United States on Monday over what prosecutors call an unsuccessful Tehran-backed attempt to kill an Iranian dissident living in New York. Federal prosecutors say Iran's elite Revolutionary Guard Corps in 2021 hired Rafat Amirov and Polad Omarov, members of a "Russian mob" subgroup, to kill an Iranian American journalist and activist who has spoken out against Iran's treatment of women. **REUTERS**

SOUTH KOREA Prosecutors to pursue Yoon's conviction

Seoul: South Korean prosecutors will pursue President Yoon Suk Yeol's conviction for insurrection despite a court decision ordering the release of the impeached leader from prison, the head of the prosecutors' office said on Monday. Prosecutor General Shim Woo-jung said he respected the ruling but did not agree with its assessment that the indictment filing was past the legally allowed expiry time, which the court said made Yoon's detention illegal. "I've directed that the prosecution makes arguments on various disputes during trial, and we'll do everything we can to pursue this indictment," he said. **REUTERS**

TO BECOME FIRST CANADIAN PM WITH NO EXPERIENCE IN POLITICS

Former central banker Carney to lead Canada; faces Trump, tariffs & polls

ANNA MEHLER PAPERNY
TORONTO, MARCH 10

FORMER CENTRAL banker Mark Carney claimed a landslide victory on Sunday to lead Canada's Liberal Party and to become the country's next prime minister.

Now comes the hard part: taking on US President Donald Trump who has threatened annexation, tackling a trade war and punishing tariffs, and leading the party through what promises to be a bruising general election that is likely imminent.

Carney won with 86% of the votes cast by party members. In the coming days Canada's Governor-General, the representative of Britain's King Charles in Canada, will invite him to form a government and will position Carney to replace Justin Trudeau as prime minister.

But this reconstituted Liberal government is likely to be short-lived. Two Liberal Party officials said Carney will call an election in coming weeks, banking on new momentum for the party in polls. If Carney does not call an election, his political opponents have said they would defeat the government at their first opportunity when Parliament reconvenes.

Carney will be the first person to become Canada's Prime Minister with no prior experience in electoral politics. The former governor of the Bank of Canada and Bank of England shot to the front of the Liberal leadership race, ahead of two women who held seats in Trudeau's Cabinet.

Carney promised on Sunday evening to scrap the consumer price on carbon and stop a planned increase in the capital gains tax. He says he supports dollar-for-dollar retaliatory tariffs in response to Trump's tariffs.

Prohibitory orders in Kathmandu day after ex-King rally

YUBARAJ GHIMIRE
KATHMANDU, MARCH 10

A DAY after Former King Gyanendra received a rousing welcome in the country's capital, the K P Sharma Oli government on Monday imposed prohibitory orders in large parts of central Kathmandu.

A government order said the prohibitory orders will be in place for two months. The Pro monarchy Rastriya Prajatantra Party, meanwhile, is considering to launch a "decisive" movement across the country to restore Monarchy as a "constitutional guardian" of the country.

The ruling coalition led by the Communist Party of Nepal-United Marxist Leninist and the Nepali Congress, as well as the Opposition CPN-Maoist Centre oppose restoring monarchy, but clash on whom to be held responsible for the situation. "The government created a situation conducive for such a campaign and K P Sharma Oli must resign" Maoist leader Pushpa Kamal Dahal said.

High placed sources said the two leaders of the government-Oli and NC Chief Sher Bahadur Deuba, were in favour of restraining the movement of the former king, but have been warned against such measures.



Mark Carney, Leader of the Liberal Party of Canada, embraces Prime Minister Justin Trudeau after being announced the winner in the party leadership contest, in Ottawa on Sunday. *Reuters*

May open window to rebuild India ties

SHUBHAJIT ROY
NEW DELHI, MARCH 10

THE CHOICE of former Central Banker Mark Carney as the new leader of Canada's Liberal party and interim Prime Minister till elections are held opens a new window of opportunity for New Delhi-Ottawa ties.

Carney, 59, replaces Prime Minister Justin Trudeau as head of the Liberal Party, under whose stint Canada's ties with India had hit a low point in the last year and a half. Carney has said he would rebuild his country's relationship with India if he takes charge.

"What Canada will be looking

to do is to diversify our trade relationship with like-minded countries," Carney said last Tuesday in Calgary. "And there are opportunities to rebuild the relationship with India. There needs to be a shared sense of values around that commercial relationship. If I'm Prime Minister, I look forward to the opportunity to build that."

Trudeau was seen in New Delhi as someone who had taken a "scorched earth policy" in terms of ties with India, especially after his allegation in September 2023 that Indian government agents were involved in the killing of Khalistan separatist Hardeep

Singh Nijjar in Canada. New Delhi has rejected Trudeau's allegations as "absurd" and "politically motivated," and accused his government of sheltering terrorists.

This has led to a downslide in ties to unprecedented levels.

Dozens of diplomats, including High Commissioners, have been expelled, visas have been impacted, no new project is being implemented, and trade has been crippled. With Trudeau's departure, some view it as an opportunity to repair the damage done.

Fresh elections are expected to be announced by the end of

March and might take place in the summer — late May and early April. Polls show that the gap between the two parties has narrowed: US President Donald Trump's actions have made Carney a strong candidate.

Whether Carney or Conservative leader Pierre Poilievre wins the polls, a change in the leadership is expected to give a chance to "stabilise" ties.

Efforts will be on to manage the current state of ties, although the Canadian judicial process and the investigations by law enforcement agencies will continue — and their outcomes and findings will shape some of the discourse in the months and years to come.

Iran says open to talks with US over concerns about nuclear programme

ASSOCIATED PRESS
TEHRAN, MARCH 10

IRAN SAID Sunday it would consider negotiations with the United States if the talks were confined to concerns about the militarisation of its nuclear programme.

In a statement posted on X, the country's UN mission said: "If the objective of negotiations is to address concerns vis-à-vis any potential militarisation of Iran's nuclear programme, such discussions may be subject to consideration." A day earlier, Iran's Supreme Leader Ali



Ayatollah Ali Khamenei in Tehran, AP

Khamenei had rejected talks with the US, because he said they would be aimed at imposing restrictions on Iran's missile pro-

gramme and its influence in the region.

Khamenei's remarks came a day after President Donald Trump acknowledged sending a letter to him seeking a new deal with Tehran to restrain its advancing nuclear programme and replace the nuclear deal he withdrew US from in 2018.

The Iranian statement Sunday stressed: "However, should the aim be the dismantlement of Iran's peaceful nuclear programme to claim that what Obama failed to achieve has now been accomplished, such negotiations will never take place."

ALL CREW SAFE AND ACCOUNTED FOR: UK OFFICIALS

Ships collide in North Sea, cause oil spill, fire

ASSOCIATED PRESS
LONDON, MARCH 10

A CARGO ship hit a tanker carrying jet fuel off the coast of eastern England Monday, setting both vessels on fire and triggering a major rescue operation, emergency services said.

Local lawmaker, Graham Stuart, said he had been told by the transport secretary that 37 crew members were aboard the

two ships, and one was hospitalised. "The other 36 mariners across both crews are safe and accounted for," he said.

The US-flagged chemical and oil products tanker MV Stena Immaculate was at anchor near Grimsby Monday morning after sailing from Greece, according to ship-tracking site VesselFinder. The cargo vessel, Portugal-flagged container Solong, was sailing from Grangemouth in Scotland to Rotterdam in the Netherlands.

US-based maritime management firm Crowley, which operates the Stena Immaculate, said the tanker "sustained a ruptured cargo tank containing Jet-A1 fuel," when the container ship struck it, triggering a fire and "multiple explosions onboard," with fuel released into the sea. It said all 23 of the mariners on the tanker were safe and accounted for.

The Stena Immaculate is part of the US government's Tanker Security Program, a group of

commercial vessels that can be contracted to carry fuel for the military when needed.

The Solong vessel, which was involved in a collision off the coast of Britain on Monday, is carrying 15 containers of sodium cyanide among other cargo, according to a report from maritime data provider Lloyd's List Intelligence. The container vessel was also transporting an unknown quantity of alcohol, the casualty report said. **WITH REUTERS INPUT**

STRIKE AT 13 GERMAN AIRPORTS OVER TWO SEPARATE PAY DISPUTES

AIRPORT STRIKES DISRUPT GERMANY'S BUSIEST ROUTES

A one-day strike by workers at 13 German airports, including the Frankfurt and Munich hubs and all the country's other main destinations, caused the cancellation of most flights on Monday. The 24-hour walkout relates to two separate pay disputes: one for airport security workers and a wider dispute over pay for employees of federal and municipal governments. **AP**



Prince Saud bin Mishal bin Abdulaziz meets Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy in Jeddah on Monday. *Reuters*

Zelenskyy lands in Saudi Arabia ahead of crucial talks with US

OLENA HARMASH
KYIV, MARCH 10

PRESIDENT VOLODYMYR Zelenskyy travels to Saudi Arabia to meet Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman Monday, ahead of talks between Ukrainian and U.S. officials on ending the war with Russia at an increasingly precarious moment for Kyiv.

The United States, once Ukraine's main ally, has upended its wartime policies in its stated pursuit of a rapid end to the fighting, engaging directly with Moscow while cutting off military assistance and intelligence sharing for Kyiv. Zelenskyy is expected to meet the Saudi crown prince, whose country has played various mediating roles since Russia's 2022 invasion, including brokering prisoner exchanges and hosting talks between Russia and the United States last month.

Tuesday's talks between U.S. and Ukrainian officials — the first official meeting since a disastrous Oval Office encounter between Zelenskyy and U.S. President Donald Trump — are expected to focus on a bilateral minerals deal and how to end the war.

Under huge pressure from

Trump, who wants the war ended, Zelenskyy has been at pains to show they are on the same page, despite failing to win US security guarantees that Kyiv sees as vital for any peace deal.

Zelenskyy has said he will not attend Tuesday's talks with U.S. officials and that the Ukrainian delegation will include his chief of staff, his foreign and defence ministers and a top military official in the presidential administration.

"On our side, we are fully committed to constructive dialogue, and we hope to discuss and agree on the necessary decisions and steps," Zelenskyy said in a post on X. "Realistic proposals are on the table. The key is to move quickly and effectively."

U.S. officials said they were planning to use the meeting with the Ukrainians in part to determine whether Kyiv is willing to make material concessions to Russia to end the war. "You can't say 'I want peace,' and, 'I refuse to compromise'" one of the officials said of the upcoming talks.

Trump said on Sunday that he expected good results out of the upcoming talks, adding that the United States had "just about" ended a suspension of intelligence sharing with Kyiv. **REUTERS**

Two British diplomats expelled from Russia over spying allegations

ANDREW OSBORN & KSENIA ORLOVA
MOSCOW, MARCH 10

RUSSIA ACCUSED two British diplomats on Monday of spying and gave them two weeks to leave the country, reinforcing the downward trajectory of Moscow's diplomatic relations with Europe even as it negotiates to restore ties with the United States. Britain's Foreign Office rejected the allegations as "baseless".

Moscow has been angered by Britain's continued military support for Ukraine and by Prime Minister Keir Starmer's recent statements about putting British boots on the ground and planes in the air in Ukraine as part of a potential peacekeeping force.

The expulsions also come days after three Bulgarians were found guilty in London of being part of a Russian spy unit run by Wirecard fugitive Jan Marsalek for surveillance on a US military base and individuals targeted by Moscow.

The two Britons appear to be



A British representative at Russia's Foreign Office in Moscow on Monday. *Reuters*

the first Western diplomats to be expelled from Russia since Moscow and Washington opened talks on restoring staff at their respective embassies that have been depleted by tit-for-tat expulsions, part of Donald Trump's rapprochement with the Kremlin.

Russia's Federal Security Service said the two diplomats had provided false information when getting permission to enter the country, and it had "identified signs of intelligence and subversive work" they carried out, harming Russian security. **REUTERS**

HACKERS EXPLOITED A SIMPLE FLAW IN BYBIT'S SECURITY — ITS RELIANCE ON A FREE SOFTWARE PRODUCT

How North Korean hackers pulled off the biggest crypto heist in history — \$1.5 bn

DAVID YAFFE-BELLANY
MARCH 10

ON THE night of Feb. 21, Ben Zhou, the CEO of cryptocurrency exchange Bybit, logged on to his computer to approve what appeared to be a routine transaction. His company was moving a large amount of ether, a popular digital currency, from one account to another.

Thirty minutes later, Zhou got a call from Bybit's chief financial officer. In a trembling voice, the executive told Zhou that their system had been hacked. "All of

the ethereum is gone," he said.

When Zhou approved the transaction, he had inadvertently handed control of an account to hackers backed by the North Korean government, according to the FBI. They stole \$1.5 billion in cryptocurrencies, the largest heist in the industry's history.

To pull off the astonishing breach, the hackers exploited a simple flaw in Bybit's security: its reliance on a free software product. They penetrated Bybit by manipulating a publicly available system that the exchange used to safeguard hundreds of millions of dollars in customer deposits. For

years, Bybit had relied on the storage software, developed by a technology provider called Safe, even as other security firms sold more specialized tools for businesses.

The hack sent crypto markets into a free fall and undermined confidence in the industry at a crucial time. Under the crypto-friendly Trump administration, industry executives are lobbying for new US laws that would make it easier for people to pour their savings into digital currencies.

Crypto security experts said they were troubled by what the heist revealed about Bybit's safety protocols. The losses were



Ben Zhou, the chief executive of cryptocurrency firm Bybit. *File*

"completely preventable," one security firm wrote in an analysis of the breach, arguing that it "should not have happened."

Safe's storage tool is widely used in the crypto industry. But it is better suited to crypto hobbyists than exchanges handling billions in deposits, said Charles Guillemet, an executive at Ledger, a French crypto security firm that offers a storage system designed for companies. "This really needs to change," he said. "It's not an acceptable situation in 2025."

At Bybit, the hack set off a frantic 48 hours. The company oversees as much as \$20 billion in cus-

tomers deposits but did not have enough ether on hand to cover the losses from the \$1.5 billion heist. Zhou, 38, raced to keep the business afloat by borrowing from other firms and drawing on corporate reserves to meet a surge of withdrawal requests. As the crisis unfolded, the price of bitcoin, a bellwether for the industry, fell 20%. It was the steepest drop since the 2022 failure of FTX, the exchange run by disgraced mogul Sam Bankman-Fried.

In an interview this week, Zhou acknowledged that Bybit had advance warning about possible problems with Safe. Three-

four months ago, he said, the company noticed the software was not fully compatible with one of its security services. "We should have upgraded and moved away from Safe," Zhou said. "We're definitely looking to do that now."

Rahul Rumalla, Safe's chief product officer, said in a statement that his team had created new security features to protect users and that Safe's products were "the treasury backbone for some of the largest organizations... Our job is not just to fix what happened, but to ensure the entire space learns from it, so this doesn't happen again." **NYT**

OUTSTANDING NPA AMOUNT IN THE SEGMENT SURGES TO ₹97,543 CRORE AS OF DEC 2024

Farm lending: Kisan Credit Card bad loans rise by 42% in four years

HITESH VYAS
MUMBAI, MARCH 10

IN A sign of stress in the agriculture sector, scheduled commercial banks, excluding regional rural banks (RRBs), have seen a sharp increase of 42 per cent in bad loans Kisan Credit Card (KCC) accounts, a revolving cash credit facility offered to farmers, in the last four years.

The outstanding NPA amount in the KCC segment surged to Rs 97,543 crore as at end of December 2024, compared to Rs 68,547 crore at end of March 2021, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) said in its reply to the Right to Information (RTI) request filed by *The Indian Express*.

The NPA amounts in the KCC segment stood at Rs 84,637 crore in FY2022, which rose to Rs 90,832 crore in FY2023 and to Rs 93,370 crore in FY2024. The amount of NPAs in the KCC scheme stood at Rs 95,616 crore in the first quarter of the fiscal 2025, and Rs 96,918 in July-September 2025 quarter.

The NPA classification in the KCC segment is different from other retail loans, where an account becomes an NPA if interest and instalment of principal remain overdue for more than 90 days. The repayment period for KCC loans is as per the crop season (short or long) and marketing period for the crop. The crop season for states is decided by the respective State Level Bankers Committee (SLBC). For short duration crops, the crop season is 12 months and for long duration crops it is 18 months in most states.

Bankers said if a KCC loan is not paid within three years of dis-

KCC: REVOLVING CASH CREDIT FACILITY OFFERED TO FARMERS

Year	Number of operative accounts (crore)	Amount outstanding in operative accounts (₹ crore)	Amount outstanding in NPA accounts (₹ crore)
FY2021	3.07	4,56,736	68,547
FY2022	2.69	4,76,271	84,637
FY2023	2.83	5,18,485	90,832
FY2024	2.98	5,74,974	93,370
Q1 FY2025*	2.96	5,70,982	95,616
Q2 FY2025*	2.95	5,86,833	96,918
Q3 FY2025*	2.94	5,91,533	97,543

KCC data of Scheduled Commercial Banks (excluding Regional Rural Banks); *Data are provisional Source: RBI

bursal, it will be classified as NPA.

In the period between the end of FY2021 and the end of December 2024 quarter, the outstanding loan amount in operative KCC accounts of banks has also grown by nearly 30 per cent. The outstanding amount in operative KCC accounts surged to Rs 5.91 lakh crore as of December 2024 from Rs 4.57 lakh crore as at the end March 2021. The amount outstanding in operative KCC accounts of banks stood at Rs 4.76 lakh crore in FY2022, Rs 5.18 lakh crore in FY2023 and Rs 5.75 lakh crore in FY2024.

In the first quarter of FY2025, the total amount outstanding in operative KCC accounts stood at Rs 5.71 lakh crore, which slightly rose to Rs 5.87 lakh crore in Q2 FY2025.

The figures for NPA amounts and the outstanding amount in operative KCC accounts for the first three quarters of the current fiscal (FY2025) are provisional,

YOUR RIGHT TO KNOW
AN EXPRESS RTI APPLICATION

the RBI said.

Introduced in 1998, the Kisan Credit Card (KCC) scheme provides adequate and timely access to credit to farmers for agricultural and other allied activities. KCC offers a revolving cash credit facility to farmers, without any restrictions on the number of debit or credits. KCC loans are part of the overall agriculture loan book of banks, which comes under the priority sector lending (PSL) book of banks. Of the overall PSL target of 40 per cent, banks are mandated to achieve an agriculture target of 18 per cent.

Experts attribute the rise in defaults in the KCC segment of scheduled commercial banks to

various factors including inability of farmers to repay loans due to weather-related damages to crops, lack of awareness among farmers about repayment timelines, delay in payments due to exigencies related to personal household requirement, and weak loan recovery mechanism for banks.

“NPAs (amount wise) are high (in KCC loans). Among all other agriculture loans offered by banks, such as tractor or food and agri-processing loans, the highest amount of delinquencies are seen in the KCC segment,” said a banker.

Defaults are higher in the KCC segment where the amount borrowed is much lower compared to other agricultural loans, and so, repayment becomes the last priority for a farmer.

Since agriculture is subject to the vagaries of weather, any natural calamity can affect crops. In such cases, inadequate crop insurance or no crop insurance, owing to higher premium, also impacts farmers’ loan repayment capabilities.

Besides, expectations of farm loan waiver ahead of any state election often distorts the repayment behaviour of farmers in hope of some relief from the government, bankers said.

When it comes to recovery of agricultural loans, even banks go slow as any harsh step could stir up a hornet’s nest, since it becomes a political subject. “The recovery measures which banks can adopt (in KCC loans) are also limited compared to other retail loans. In case of a housing or an SME loan, the moment it becomes an NPA, banks can recover loans by selling the property taken as collateral. This kind of

mechanism is not possible in an agricultural loan,” said a former banker.

Farmers’ suicides further deter lenders from taking aggressive recovery steps in case of defaults.

Under the KCC scheme, farmers can draw the credit limit using various delivery channels such as ATM/debit card and business correspondents. The card is valid for five years.

The Centre, under Modified Interest Subvention Scheme (MISS), provides interest subvention of 1.5 per cent to banks for providing short-term agriculture loans through KCC up to Rs 3 lakh at a concessional interest rate of 7 per cent per annum. An additional prompt repayment incentive of 3 per cent is provided to farmers on timely repayment of loans, which effectively reduces the rate of interest to 4 per cent for farmers.

In the Budget 2025-26, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman had announced to increase the loan limit under the MISS from Rs 3 lakh to Rs 5 lakh. Loans up to Rs 2 lakh are extended on a collateral-free basis, ensuring hassle-free access to credit for small and marginal farmers.

In terms of states, Uttar Pradesh had the maximum outstanding amount under the KCC scheme across all banks (SCBs, cooperative banks and regional rural banks), in 2024, at Rs 1.38 lakh crore, as per the RBI data. This was followed by Rajasthan (Rs 1.08 lakh crore), Madhya Pradesh (Rs 84,523 crore), Maharashtra (Rs 78,018 crore), Gujarat (Rs 71,132 crore) and Karnataka (Rs 62,794 crore).

FULL REPORT ON
www.indianexpress.com

DERIVATIVE PORTFOLIO DISCREPANCIES

IndusInd Bank takes 2.35% potential hit on net worth

GEORGE MATHEW
MUMBAI, MARCH 10

INDUSIND BANK on Monday disclosed that an internal review of its derivative portfolio has revealed a potential 2.35 per cent adverse impact on its net worth. This will have an approximate impact of Rs 2,100 crore on the bank, the management said in an analyst call.

The review was conducted in response to the Reserve Bank of India’s (RBI) directives issued in September 2023, pertaining to the investment portfolio of lenders and the accounting treatment of ‘Other Asset and Other Liability’ accounts of the derivative portfolio. Internal derivative trades were not in compliance with rules enforced by the Reserve Bank from April 2024.

“The bank noted some discrepancies in these account balances,” the bank said in an exchange filing. “The bank’s detailed internal review has estimated an adverse impact of approximately 2.35 per cent of bank’s net worth as of December 2024,” it said.

The bank has also appointed

APPROXIMATE IMPACT OF ₹2,100 CRORE

A REVIEW was conducted in response to the Reserve Bank of India’s (RBI) directives issued in September 2023, pertaining to the investment portfolio of lenders and the accounting

treatment of ‘Other Asset and Other Liability’ accounts of the derivative portfolio
INTERNAL DERIVATIVE trades were not in compliance with rules enforced by the Reserve Bank from April 2024

a reputed external agency to independently review and validate the internal findings. “A final report of the external agency is awaited and basis which the Bank will appropriately consider any resultant impact in its financial statements,” it said.

The bank said its profitability and capital adequacy remains healthy to absorb this one-time impact.

“We can confirm that there will be no internal trades in our book... we have not entered into any internal trades,” Deputy CEO Arun Khurana said on a conference call. The internal trades that were there prior to that period, which were existing before April

1, have been unwound and all according mark-to-markets taken, he said.

The bank’s shares fell 3.60 per cent to Rs 900.60 on the BSE on Monday.

Meanwhile, IndusInd Bank received the Reserve Bank of India’s approval on March 7 to reappoint Sumant Kathpalia as its chief executive officer and managing director. However, the central bank has only approved Kathpalia’s tenure extension for one year, from March 24, 2025, to March 23, 2026.

In September last year, IndusInd Bank’s board of directors had recommended a three-year term for its MD & CEO.

After Reserve Bank and Sebi, govt kicks off search for new IRDAI chief

GEORGE MATHEW
MUMBAI, MARCH 10

AFTER APPOINTING a new Governor at the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and Chairman of the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI), the government is searching for a new Chairman for the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI).

The government has advertised for a new Chairman for Hyderabad-based IRDAI, just four days before the end of the tenure of the current Chairman. There were expectations that the government will give current IRDAI Chairman Debashish Panda an extension on March 14, the day he will be completing his three-year term at the regulatory body. However, the government is now going ahead with its plan for a new Chairman.

As in the case of the RBI and capital market regulator Sebi, the government is likely to consider one of the serving top bureaucrats or a retired person for the IRDAI chairmanship.

The names of Giridhar Aramane, former Defence Secretary, Ajay Seth, Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance, Pankaj Jain, Secretary, Ministry of Petroleum and others are already doing rounds in the Delhi power corridor for the IRDAI top post.

However, insurance sources are doubtful whether the process to appoint a new Chairman at the IRDAI will complete by March 14.

The new IRDAI Chairman will assume charge at a time

EXPLAINED
Govt planning reforms in insurance sector

THE NEW IRDAI Chairman will assume charge at a time when health insurance premium is rising sharply in the wake of higher medical inflation and claims. Further, the government is also planning to go for major reforms in the insurance sector and IRDAI has appointed a committee to examine the reforms in the sector.

when health insurance premium is rising sharply in the wake of higher medical inflation and claims. Further, the government is also planning to go for major reforms in the insurance sector and IRDAI has appointed a committee to examine the reforms in the sector. The government has already announced a hike in FDI in insurance from 74 per cent to 100 per cent.

While all the selections for the top posts of regulatory bodies are supposed to be done by the Financial Sector Regulatory Appointment Search Committee (FSRASC), headed by the Cabinet Secretary, both the recent appointments — RBI Governor and Sebi Chairman — were done directly by the government without holding any interviews.

The applicant for IRDAI Chairman should have a minimum of two years of residual service as on the date of vacancy

— March 14, 2025. This means the applicant’s age should not exceed 63 years on the said date, according to the advertisement issued by the Department of Financial Services.

The applicants should preferably have at least 30 years of relevant work experience, should have worked as Secretary to Government of India or its equivalent level in Government of India or State Government or other institutions, and should have had a proven track record of leadership and authority in decision-making. Applicants from private sector should have worked as CEO or equivalent of a large financial institution.

The appointment will be made by the Central Government on the recommendation of the Financial Sector Regulatory Appointment Search Committee. The committee is also free to identify and recommend, based on merit, any person other than those who have applied for the office. In respect of outstanding candidates, the committee may also recommend relaxation in eligibility, qualifications and experience criteria.

The term of office of the Chairperson will be in accordance with the relevant provisions under the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority Act, 1999 and the decision of the appointing authority in this regard, provided that no person can hold office as Chairperson after attaining the age of 65 years. Consolidated pay and allowances of the Chairperson shall be Rs 562,500 per month, without the facility of house and car.

‘Trade talks still on with US’

New Delhi: Negotiations are still on and no agreement on trade tariffs has been reached so far between India and the US, Commerce Secretary Sunil Barthwal told a Parliamentary panel on Monday.

The Commerce Secretary briefed the Parliamentary Committee on External Affairs on US President Donald Trump’s recent claims that India has agreed to reduce its tariffs “way down”, while Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri briefed the committee on China and Europe.

BRIEFLY

Nasdaq plunges 4% as slowdown fears mount

Bengaluru: Nasdaq led sharp losses among major US stock indexes on Monday, plunging 4% to a near six-month low, on fears that Trump’s tariff policies would spark an economic slowdown. The Nasdaq confirmed a correction last week, having tumbled more than 10% from its December all-time high. Markets have been volatile in recent weeks as rising trade tensions. At 1:11 p.m. ET, the Dow Jones Industrial Average fell 659.20 points, or 1.54%, to 42,139.77, the S&P 500 lost 147.97 points, or 2.56%, to 5,622.23 and the Nasdaq Composite lost 740.45 points, or 4.07%, to 17,455.77. REUTERS

RBI to conduct \$10-bn forex swap on Mar 24

New Delhi: The RBI will conduct a forex swap of \$10 billion on March 24 to inject liquidity into the banking system.

Sebi notifies stricter norms for SME IPOs

New Delhi: The Sebi has notified a stricter framework for SME IPOs by bringing a profitability requirement and capping a 20% limit on offer-for-sale.

‘Prices of veg, non-veg thali decline 5% in February’

The cost of vegetarian and non-vegetarian thali declined by 5% on-month in February due to lower vegetable and broiler prices, as per Crisil Market Intelligence and Analysis’s monthly ‘Roti Rice Rate’ report

- 7% drop in onion prices on-month
- 17% drop in potato prices on-month
- 25% drop in tomato prices on-month
- 5% estimated decline in broiler prices on-month because of lower demand amid bird flu scare in Southern India



“For the vegetarian thali, the decline was driven by lower vegetable prices, particularly of onions, tomatoes and potatoes, while for a non-vegetarian thali, the cost eased with a decrease in broiler prices.”

Pushan Sharma, DIRECTOR- RESEARCH, CRISIL INTELLIGENCE

- On an annual basis, the cost of a home-cooked vegetarian thali declined 1% in February, while that of a non-vegetarian thali grew by about 6%, the report said
- The on-year decline in the cost of a vegetarian thali was because of a fall in prices of tomato and liquid petroleum gas (LPG) cylinders, the report said.
- Crisil said the average cost of preparing a thali at home is calculated based on input prices prevailing in north, south, east and west India. The monthly change reflects the impact on the common man’s expenditure.
- The data also reveals the ingredients (cereals, pulses, broilers, vegetables, spices, edible oil and cooking gas) driving the change in the cost of the thali

Source: PTI/ Crisil

Sun Pharma to acquire Checkpoint Therapeutics

New Delhi: Sun Pharmaceutical Industries on Monday said it will acquire immunotherapy and targeted oncology firm Checkpoint Therapeutics, Inc for up to \$355 million.

As per the pact inked by the companies, Sun Pharma will pay upfront \$4.10 per share of common stock, representing aggregate upfront consideration of up to \$355 million. Sun Pharma said in a statement.

Sun Pharma will pay upfront \$4.10 per share of common stock, representing aggregate upfront consideration of up to \$355 million

Checkpoint stockholders will also receive a contingent value

right for up to \$0.70 per share on achievement of a milestone.

Checkpoint is a Nasdaq-listed commercial-stage company focused on developing novel treatments for patients with solid tumor cancers. “Combining UNLOXCYT, an FDA-approved anti-PD-L1 treatment for advanced cutaneous squamous cell carcinoma, with Sun Pharma’s global presence means patients with cSCC may soon have access

to an important, new treatment option. The acquisition further bolsters our innovative portfolio in onco-derm therapy,” Sun Pharma MD Dilip Shanghvi said. The transaction is expected to be completed in the second calendar quarter of 2025.

Checkpoint has received approval from the US Food & Drug Administration (FDA) for UNLOXCYT (cosibelimab-ipdl) for the treatment of adults.

In deflation-hit China, one store holds flash sales four times a day

REUTERS
BEIJING/HONG KONG, MARCH 10

LEO LIU, manager of the sprawling Wankelai store in the Chinese capital of Beijing, spoke into a microphone, announcing progressively steeper discounts in a flash sale, until he finally sold a cotton jacket and a woman’s undershirt.

In a symptom of China’s deflationary economy, Liu eventually found a customer for the jacket at 20 yuan, or less than a tenth of its initial price of 239 yuan (\$33), but he ended up giving away the 39-yuan undershirt, for which nobody wanted to pay.

The exercise was one of four each day in the store that sells clothing, snacks and basic household products just outside Beijing’s financial district.

“We do flash sales to reduce inventory pressure,” said Liu. “We run a small-profit, quick-turnover business model.”

While his store was making “thin” profits, it sold some items at a loss, Liu said, adding, “We serve ordinary people.”

Chinese consumers grappling with uncertainty about jobs and incomes are increasingly turning to discount stores at a time of expanding industrial capacity in the face of sluggish household demand.

But analysts say the success of such businesses is stoking deflationary pressures, which can start to drag on growth as their popularity grows at the expense of other retailers, as Japan experienced in the 1990s.

“The broader shift toward more value-for-money purchases will play a role in deflationary



Staff members change price tags at a clothing section at the Wankelai store in Beijing.

pressures,” said Lynn Song, chief Greater China economist at ING.

“This sort of intense price

competition likely adds some pressure on more traditional retail models as well.”

Data on Sunday showed China’s consumer price index missed expectations in February, falling by 0.7 per cent from a year earlier, while producer prices fell by 2.2 per cent, stretching a run of negative readings dating back to September 2022.

While the growing industrial capacity has led to surging exports, it is also fuelling deflationary pressures at home.

Price wars have become ubiquitous, from restaurants that push 3-yuan breakfast menus to electric vehicle maker BYD cutting the price for one of its cars to below \$10,000.

Coffee vendor Starbucks lost its market leader crown to cheaper local rival Luckin.

“Corporate strategies often seem to prioritise market share instead of profits,” in China, said Louis Kuijs, chief Asia economist

at S&P Global Ratings.

“That can really complicate the situation for everybody in that sector driving down prices by just staying there, whether you make any profits or not.”

In a work report last week Premier Li Qiang flagged a greater focus on boosting household spending while cutting the official inflation target to about 2 per cent in 2025 from last year’s target of about 3 per cent. Inflation was 0.2 per cent in 2024.

Wary Customers

Shoppers at Wankelai were not in a mood to splash the cash. Lily Liu, 34, a financial auditor for a technology company, said she was earning less than before the COVID-19 pandemic.

“People like us, struggling a bit financially, are obviously going to shop here,” she said. “I feel like my

job could be gone at any moment. I’m working today, but I could be laid off... maybe even tomorrow.”

She said she has cut back on travelling and stays home on most weekends instead of dining out, only shopping during store sales.

Vivian Liu, a student browsing for a cheap snack, said she enjoyed going to stores with friends to window-shop, but rarely buys anything.

She failed to get a job after graduation two years ago with a diploma in biology, so she is continuing her studies while taking temporary part-time jobs to stay afloat. China’s youth unemployment, running at 15.7 per cent, is also a drag on consumption.

“I don’t have much money to spend,” said Liu. “I save a bit every month. I have no idea how the job market will be in the future. It’s kind of scary.”

Rashtriya Chemicals and Fertilizers Limited
(A Government of India Undertaking)
Room no.8, Ground Floor, Administrative Bldg, Chembur, Mumbai - 400 074.
CIN-L24110MH1978GOI020185

PUBLIC NOTICE
SUB: STOLEN CHEQUES OF RCF FROM CHEQUE LEAF SERIES NO. 625714 TO 625775 ISSUED WITH RESPECT TO CASH CREDIT ACCOUNT NO. 30038480740 OF OUR COMPANY MAINTAINED WITH THE STATE BANK OF INDIA, COMMERCIAL BRANCH FORT, MUMBAI.
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN TO THE PUBLIC AT LARGE THAT cheques from leaflet no. 625714 to 625775 belonging to Cash Credit Account No. 30038480740 of our Company maintained with the State Bank of India, Commercial Branch Fort, have been stolen and are being misused by unauthorised individuals engaging with third parties by falsely inducing reliance on such stolen instruments with fraudulent intent. The said cheques are being circulated throughout the country and may be used to show a false association with RCF in an attempt to defraud unsuspecting members of the public, businesses, and financial institutions. Such cheques may also be used by fraudulent individuals or entities to obtain loans by falsely holding out such cheques as advance received from the Company, or as security to falsely portray liquidity/creditworthiness or simply to misrepresent to a third party that the fraudulent party in possession of such cheques is an authorised vendor, supplier or agent of RCF.
MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AT LARGE ARE HEREBY CAUTIONED against dealing with any of the aforesaid cheques i.e., Cheques bearing no. 625714 to 625775 which are presented as purportedly issued by Rashtriya Chemicals and Fertilizer Limited and to remain vigilant and report any such suspicious approach to the law enforcement authorities.
We strongly advise anyone in possession of or presented with any of the aforesaid cheques to immediately report the matter to the nearest police station or contact us at Mr.Rajendra Sawant 9930906487 / 022-25522811. Whilst the Company has initiated swift mitigating measures by way of 'stop payment' instructions issued to our Bankers i.e., State Bank of India, Commercial Branch Fort, to stop payment and invalidated the aforesaid Cheque leaf from series no. 625714 to 625775; All financial institutions are urged to exercise extreme caution and deploy measures to stop such suspicious transactions and refuse to encash invalidated cheques, if presented for clearance.
Please note that any financial transactions, dealings arising out of, or reliance of any nature induced upon presentation of the invalidated cheques referred to above will not be honoured by Rashtriya Chemicals and Fertilizers Limited. The Company has already lodged criminal complaints in this regard and is pursuing the matter vigorously.
It is hereby clarified that Rashtriya Chemicals and Fertilizer Limited shall not be held liable for any claim and/or legal proceedings arising out of and/or initiated on account of the said stolen cheques leaf from series no. 625714 to 625775 and the Public and all other parties concerned are hereby cautioned and put to the notice of the same.
Issued by: Rashtriya Chemicals and Fertilizer Limited (RCF Limited)
Date : 11/03/2025

Let us grow together

Karnataka Urban Water Supply & Drainage Board
Office of the Chief Engineer
Jalamandali Compound, Sir. M. Visvesvaraya Road, Dharwad - 580001
Phone No: 0836-2447090 E-mail: kwcben@gmail.com

CORRIGENDUM
Name of work: Providing short term measures for Under Ground Drainage System to Karwar city under NGT with O and M for 5 years of the UGD System including defect liability period of one year (7th CALL). Work Indent No. KUWSD/2024-25/WS/WORK_INDENT/303. Bid Notification No. 1951, Date: 03-02-2025 News papers on 08-02-2025. Published in "Prajavani", "Hosadigantha" (Karnataka Edition) & "The New Indian Express" (All India Edition) Attention is invited to the above Bid Notification. The Calendar of events are amended as under:
1) Last Date & Time for Bid Submission: 25-03-2025 up to 17.30 Hours.
2) Date and Time for Opening of Technical Bids: 28-03-2025 after 11.00 Hours. The other information in the Notification remains unaltered.
Sd/- Chief Engineer,
KUWS & D Board, Dharwad.

DIPR/Dharwad/1067/Adverts/2024-25

Office of the Deputy Commissioner-Cum-Chairman, District Mineral Foundation Trust, Dhanbad
Notice Inviting Expression of Interest (EOI)

For
Selection of Academic Institutions/Renowned organizations/Agencies For "Conducting Baseline Study/Survey for formulating 5 year Perspective Plan in Dhanbad" under District Mineral Foundation Trust, Dhanbad, Jharkhand.
RFPNo:01/DMFT
Date:10/03/2025
Date of Issue of EOI 12.03.2025
Last Date for Submission of Bid 22.03.2025
The Deputy Commissioner-Cum-Chairman, District Mineral Foundation Trust, Dhanbad, Govt. of Jharkhand, invites Expression of Interest (EOI) for the Selection of Academic Institutions/Renowned organizations/Agencies For "Conducting Baseline Study/Survey for formulating 5 year Perspective Plan in Dhanbad" under District Mineral Foundation Trust, Dhanbad, Jharkhand.
The Bid document can be downloaded from the website (<https://dhanbad.nic.in/>) and the responses for this Expression of Interest (EOI) shall be deemed to have done after careful study and examination of this document and full understanding of its modalities, process of execution and items to be delivered. The bids are to be submitted as hard copy by hand or by post (Registered/Speed) or by courier on or before the closing date in the address mentioned in the document. Technical bids submitted by the bidder will be opened in the presence of the Tender Committee Members.
Sd/-Deputy Commissioner-Cum-Chairman, District Mineral Foundation Trust,Dhanbad
PR 348291 (District)24-25'D

Office of the Deputy Commissioner-Cum-Chairman, District Mineral Foundation Trust, Dhanbad
Pradhikaran Bhawan, Bharatpuri Administrative Zone, Dewas Road, Ujjain - 456010
email- udaujain@gmail.com, website- www.udaujain.org

NIT No.: UDA/ET/25/19
Date : 03/03/2025
Notice Inviting Tender
Online tenders are invited on Percentage rate tender on key dates from the Project Management Consultants. Tender documents can be purchased and details can be seen on website <https://www.mptenders.gov.in>. Amendments to NIT, if any, would be published on website only, and not in newspaper
Name of work: PROJECT MANAGEMENT CONSULTANCY FOR INFRASTRUCTURAL DEVELOPMENT WORKS FOR TDS-03, 04 (PHASE-II) & TDS- 05, 06 (PHASE-I) OF UDA,AT UJJAIN.
Probable amount of contract (Rs.) 33100000/-
Earnest Money (Rs.) 331000/-
Cost of tender form+ GST (Rs.) 17700/-
Time for completion 24 Months (excluding rainy season) + 3 months post completion
Sd/-
(KULDEEP RAGHUWANSHI)
Executive Engineer

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF CONSTRUCTION ENGINEER RURAL WORKS CIRCLE, BERHAMPUR
(At/Po- Ambapua, Near Income Tax office, Berhampur-760011, Ganjam, Odisha)
(E-Mail (ID):- serwbpr2004@yahoo.com, Tel No. :-0680-2404287)

NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING THROUGH e-Procurement
Bid Identification No. Online Tender/33-2024-25/BPR

Identification No	Name of work	No. of Works	Approx. Estimated Cost (In lakh)	Class of Contractor	Period of Completion
Online Tender/ 33-2024-25/ BPR	Road Works under MMSY-TRIP & MMSY- IMPROVEMENT TO EXISTING RD ROADS & MMSY-TRIP (Balance work)	05 Nos	From Rs. 110.53 Lakhs to Rs. 863.43 Lakhs	"B" Class, "A" Class and "Special" Class as applicable	Period of Completion as provided as per Col. No. 5 of Annexure of NIT

Procurement Officer	Bid Identification No	Availability of tender online for bidding	
		From	To
Chief Construction Engineer, R.W.Circle, Berhampur	Online Tender/ 33-2024-25/BPR	12.03.2025 at 10.00 A.M.	26.03.2025 upto 5.30 P.M.

(i) EMD / Bid Security, Cost of Bid document is to be transferred through Online as per the procedure mentioned in the DTCN.
(ii) Non-submission of the information/documents through online by the bidder as per the items mentioned in the eligible criteria of the DTCN will also liable for rejection of his tender.
Further details & Corrigendum If any can be seen from the website: www.tendersodisha.gov.in
Sd/-
Chief Construction Engineer
R.W. Circle, Berhampur
OIPR- 25071/11/0059/2425

MANGALORE ELECTRICITY SUPPLY COMPANY LIMITED
(A Government of Karnataka undertaking)
Corporate Office, "MESCOM BHAVANA", Bejai, Mangalore - 575 004
Ph: 0824-2885795 CIN: U40109 KA 2002 SGC 030425

No. E- 160611
Date: 24.02.2025
TENDER NOTIFICATION (THROUGH E-PROCUREMENT PORTAL ONLY)
MESCOM invites tender for Supply of following material

TenderNo	Name of the Material proposed for Procurement	Quantity
MESCOM/2024-25/IND0099/CALL-2	Rain Wears as per Technical Specification	4000 Sets

The interested eligible bidders may log on to www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in on or after 11.03.2025
Sd/-, Superintending Engineer (Ele) (Procurement)
For Power Related Complaints & Assistance Call Toll Free Number 1912

DIPR/ADM/KSCMA/1555/24-25 dt: 10.03.2025
PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON
See Section 82 Cr.P.C.
Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused **Sonu S/o Birju@Brijbhan R/o H. No. Jhuggi No. 1750, Sanjay Basti Timar pur, Delhi. Case FIR No. 0452/2017 U/s 356/379/34 IPC PS: Burari, Delhi** it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said accused **Sonu**, cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said accused **Sonu**, has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant).
Proclamation is hereby made that the said **Sonu**, accused of Case **FIR No. 0452/2017 U/s 356/379/34 IPC PS: Burari, Delhi** it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued th is required to appear before this Court to answer the said complaint on or before **14.04.2025**.
By Order
Ms. Payal Singal
DPI/2779/N/2025 JMFC-09, Central District Room No. 286 (Court Matter)
Tis Hazari Court, Delhi

B.I.T. SINDRI P.O.-SINDRI INSTITUTE DIST; DHANBAD (JHARKHAND) PIN: 828123

e-tender Notice
BIT/15/2024-25/Civil
Dated :- 08-03-2025
Reference Number: BIT/15/2024-25/Civil
Tender ID: 2025 DHTE 99351_1

1	Name & address of office Inviting tender	Director, B.I.T., Sindri, P.O. Sindri Institute, Sindri, Dhanbad, Jharkhand -828123
2	Name or work	Supply of Hexagon Remote Sensing and GIS Edu Kit software at BIT Sindri.
3	Document download start date	11.03.2025
4	Document download end date	26.03.2025
5	Bid submission end date	26.03.2025
6	Bid opening date	27.03.2025

Bidders must bid through e-tenders portal.
B.I.T. Sindri, Dhanbad wishes to purchase Hexagon Remote Sensing and GIS Edu Kit software at BIT Sindri. Further details can be seen on website:- <https://jharkhandtenders.gov.in>
Sd/-
Director, B.I.T., Sindri
PR.NO.348284 Higher Education, Technical Education and Skill Development Department(24-25):D

NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY
NOTICE OF INVITING E-TENDER
E-Tender Notice No. SNT-JP-26-2024-25, Dated: 07.03.2025. DRM (S&T) North Western Railway / Jaipur, for and on behalf of the President of India, invite E-Tenders from registered tenderer/bidders for the following work:
Name of work with it location: Signalling & Telecom work in connection with Construction of 06 Nos. LHS in lieu of existing LC's no. 205, 208, 209, 210, 1, 235 over JP division. Approx. Cost of work: ₹ 1,51,02,021.15/- Bid Security: ₹ 2,25,500/- (Online Payment Only).
Date & Time for Submission up to on www.irops.gov.in: 01.04.2025 Up to 15:00 hrs. Website Particulars & Notice board location: www.irops.gov.in and DRM office/ NWR Jaipur. 297-AR/25
Follow us on: [Facebook](#) [Twitter](#) [LinkedIn](#) [NWRRailways](#) [NWRRailways](#)

WORKS DEPARTMENT OFFICE OF THE CHIEF CONSTRUCTION ENGINEER, EASTERN CIRCLE (R&B), BALASORE, e-mail: sec_bls@rediffmail.com
Government of Odisha "e" Procurement Notice
Bid Identification No.CCEEC-12/2024-25
No: 931
Dt:07/03/2025

No: 931
Nature of work :- Building Works.
Number of works :- 01 Nos Building Work.
Amount put to Tender :- Rs.113.55 lakh
Class of Contractor :- "B" & "A" Class.
Date & Time of availability of bid document in the portal :- Dt.18.03.2025 at 10:00 AM
Last Date / Time of receipt of bid in the portal :- Dt.02.04.2025 up to 05:00 PM
Date of opening of bid :- Dt.03.04.2025 at 11:00 AM
Name & address of the Office inviting bid :- Chief Construction Engineer, Eastern Circle (R&B), Balasore
The bidders have to participate in ONLINE bidding only. Further details can be seen from the e-procurement portal "<http://tendersodisha.gov.in>." All future corrigendum will be available on ONLINE mode only.
Sd/-
Chief Construction Engineer, Eastern Circle (R&B) Balasore
OIPR-34026/11/0009/2425

THE HUTTI GOLD MINES COMPANY LIMITED
(A Government of Karnataka Undertaking)
Hutti-584115, Raichur Dist, Karnataka Slate, Tele: 08537-275463, 276339, Fax: (08537)275048, 275054
e-Mail: material276339@gmail.com Website: www.huttigold.karnataka.gov.in

TENDER NOTIFICATION No. 25/24-25 Dt: 11.03.2025
(Through KPP Portal only)
Tenders are invited by "The Senior Manager (Materials)" for the procurement of following Tenders.

Sl. No.	Description	EMD in Rs.
1	Supply of Thoor Dal Fatka for 06 Month Requirement. HGML/2024-25/IND0277	86,000/-
2	Supply of Refined Sunflower Oil for 06 Month Requirement. HGML/2024-25/IND0276	48,000/-
3	Supply of Provision Items for 06 Month Requirement. HGML/2024-25/IND0282	1,35,000/-
4	Supply of Motorised ICU COT. HGML/2024-25/IND0292	34,000/-
5	Supply of High End Multi Para Monitor. HGML/2024-25/IND0294	72,000/-
6	Supply of Ortho OT Table with Attachment. HGML/2024-25/IND0296	15,000/-
7	Supply of Suction Apparatus. HGML/2024-25/IND0295	17,000/-
8	Supply of Fully Automated CBC Hematology Analyser with 6 Chambers. HGML/2024-25/IND0291	32,500/-
9	Supply of Trash Vibrating Screen for Sag Mill. HGML/2024-25/IND0243/CALL-2	1,30,000/-

Calendar of events: (1) Last date for receipt of tender: **26-03-2025 at 4.00 PM.** (2) Opening of Technical Bid on: **29-03-2025 at 10.00 AM.** For further details interested bidders are advised to log on to website <https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in> or contact the office of undersigned during working hours. For participating in the above tender bidder needs to be registered in KPP Portal.
Sd/- Senior Manager (Materials)

"LEADING GOLD PRODUCER IN INDIA"

SALUTE THE SOLDIER

CENTRAL RESERVE POLICE FORCE
11 March 1987

HC Ramanand of 52 Battalion of CRPF, deployed in Ludhiana, Punjab, was on patrol in Shri Angad Colony, Shimlapuri, when a militant fired at him from close range on 11 March 1987. He succumbed to his injuries, making the supreme sacrifice in the line of duty. His bravery and dedication remain an enduring inspiration.

CENTRAL RESERVE POLICE FORCE
11 March 1991

98 Battalion of CRPF was deployed in J&K for anti-terrorist operations amid rising militancy. On 11 March 1991, Dy. Comdt. Diwan Singh was ambushed by terrorists at Jakura, Srinagar, while checking his unit's deployment. Displaying exceptional courage, he moved to an exposed position for better retaliation, saving his men in the fierce encounter. He sustained bullet injuries and made the supreme sacrifice, exemplifying true leadership and valor.

CENTRAL RESERVE POLICE FORCE
11 March 1995

127 Battalion of CRPF, deployed in Manipur for anti-insurgency operations, faced a brutal attack on 11 March 1995, when insurgents hurled a bomb at a post of 127 Battalion at Tulihal Airport, during a power outage, followed by heavy gunfire. The troops swiftly retaliated, and in the fierce encounter, Constable Kartikeshwar Mahapatra launched a daring assault, inflicting heavy losses on the insurgents. He sustained severe injuries and made the supreme sacrifice. His selfless bravery and unwavering dedication to duty remain an enduring inspiration.

CENTRAL RESERVE POLICE FORCE
11 March 2014

On 11 March 2014, troops of 80 Battalion of CRPF were conducting a roadopening patrol under PS Tongpal, Sukma, when Maoists ambushed them with heavy gunfire. As the troops advanced, they faced intense crossfire and a series of IED blasts, strategically planted under cover points like trees and boulders. Despite being surrounded and under relentless attack, the CRPF troopers fought valiantly, holding their ground until reinforcements arrived, forcing the Maoists to retreat. In this fierce battle, eleven brave troopers made the supreme sacrifice, embodying courage and unwavering commitment to duty.

SALUTE THE SOLDIER

CENTRAL RESERVE POLICE FORCE
11 March 2017

On 11 March 2017, troops of 219 Battalion of CRPF launched an anti-Maoist operation along the Injiram-Bheji axis, Kuttachevru, Sukma. Maoists, exploiting the dense terrain, laid multiple IEDs and positioned themselves strategically for a deadly ambush. As the troops advanced, they came under heavy gunfire, and the IEDs were detonated simultaneously. Despite the initial shock, the troops fought back fiercely, using superior tactics and firepower to break the ambush and inflict heavy losses on the enemy. In this intense battle, 12 bravehearts made the supreme sacrifice. Honoring their valor, the Injiram-Bheji road was named after Shaheed Insp. Jagjit Singh.

CENTRAL RESERVE POLICE FORCE
11 March 2016

On 11 March 2016, troops of 217 Battalion of CRPF were sanitizing Kanta-Banda Road, Sukma, when Maoists triggered an IED blast, injuring four personnel, including Dy. Comdt. B.K. Shyam Niwas and HC Ranga Raghavan. HC Ranga Raghavan succumbed to his injuries the same day, making the supreme sacrifice. Dy. Comdt. B.K. Shyam Niwas fought bravely but succumbed during treatment at KIMS Hyderabad on 12 April 2016. Their sacrifice in the line of duty remains a testament to unwavering courage and dedication.

CENTRAL RESERVE POLICE FORCE
11 March 1993

73 Battalion of CRPF, deployed in Churachandpur, Manipur, was conducting anti-insurgency operations when a fierce encounter broke out on 11 March 1993. Displaying exceptional bravery, Nk Bani Singh charged at the holed-up insurgents, inflicting heavy losses. In the intense battle, he sustained severe injuries and made the supreme sacrifice. His unwavering courage remains an inspiration.

INDO-TIBETAN BORDER POLICE (ITBP) Constable Mangseru Lal

ITBP salutes its braveheart Constable Mangseru Lal of 24th Battalion, who made the supreme sacrifice in the line of duty on this day in Jammu & Kashmir in 1994.
Resident of : Plot No.- 110, Gali No.- 06, Vishthapit Kshetra Pashulok Bairaj, PO.- IDPL, Rishikesh (UKD)

BORDER SECURITY FORCE
HC WARYAM SINGH
01.06.1940-11.03.1994

Border men Salute and proudly remember today their brave comrade, whomade supreme sacrifice while fighting militants in Kupwara (J&K).

BORDER SECURITY FORCE
CT KALURAM ACHARYA
05.07.1969 - 11.03.1991

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

BORDER SECURITY FORCE
CT MPALANISAMY
20.01.1963 - 11.03.1991

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

BORDER SECURITY FORCE
CT DILIP KUMAR GHOSH
10.08.1968 - 11.03.1991

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

BORDER SECURITY FORCE
CT MASIDAS DANG
05.02.1968 - 11.03.1998

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

BORDER SECURITY FORCE
CT RAMESH KUMAR, PMG
20.09.1967 - 11.03.1992

Border men Salute and proudly remember today theirbravecomrade, who made supreme sacrifice whilefighting militants in Jalandhar, Punjab.

epaper.indianexpress.com

Classifieds

PERSONAL

I,ARUN KUMAR S/O PANNA LAL GUPTA R/O House. No.221B/24, Vyas Gali, Bahadurgarh,Distt-Jhajjar,Haryana-124507,have changed my name to ARUN KUMAR GUPTA. 0040778897-3

I Mohamed Sabir S/O, Abdul Rajak R/O Rz-3157, Gali No. 36, Near Jamia Hamdard University, Tughlakabad Extension, Alaknanda, South Delhi, Delhi-110019 have changed my name to Mohd Sabir. 0040778821-1

WE, SANJEEB KUMAR MISHRA & SUPRIYA MISHRA R/O 117/2, SECOND FLOOR, GAUTAM NAGAR, NEW DELHI-110049 HAVE CHANGED OUR MINOR SON'S NAME FROM SHREYASH TO SHREYASH MISHRA, aged 17yrs. 0070955654-1

It is for general information that I, MD. IMROJ KHAN SON of MD. HASIB KHAN, R/O 39, Beside Javed Kirana Store, Annapurna Colony, Road Ganeshnagar, Bilaspur, R.S Bilaspur, Chhattisgarh-495004, declare that name of my wife has been wrongly written as SMT ARJUN KHATOON KHAN in my minor son AHMAD RAZA KHAN aged 13 years in his School Record. The actual name of my wife is AJRUN KHAN, which may be amended accordingly. 0070955688-1

I,Vikrant Sharma,S/o Rajender Singh R/O H.No.405,Village-Baprola, New Delhi-110043, have changed my name to Vikrant Vats. 0040778874-1

I,VIVEK BHARDWAJ, father of, AYANSH BHARDWAJ,Presently,residing at,E854 WINDSOR PARADISE-II RAJ-NAGAR EXTENSION,GHAZIABAD,UP-201017,have changed my minor son's name from AYANSH BHARDWAJ to AAYANSH BHARDWAJ.Vide-affidavit date-10.03.2025. 0040778874-8

I,Sunita W/o-Deepak Kumar, R/O-201/59-C,Gali No.6, Adarsh Mohalla,Maujpur,Delhi-110053,have changed my name to Sunita Rani for all purposes. 0040778896-1

I,Sudershan Manocha S/o Yudhisrhan Singh Sethi,R/o F-4/B,Gali.No.16,Mangal Bazar,Laxmi-Nagar,Gandhi Nagar,Delhi-110092,have changed my name to Satinder Pal Singh. 0040778904-1

I,Sanjay Kumar Jain,S/O Jagdish Parshad Jain,R/O J1/I,West Jyoti Nagar,Delhi-110094,Have Changed my Name to Sanjay Jain. 0040778839-1

I,Samridhi Sahni,W/o Gurjap Singh,R/O H-10,Vikas Puri Delhi-110018, Changed My Name To Samridhi Kaur 0040778839-2

I,Reena W/O Shelerender Vaish R/O B-494, Sector-19,Noida,U.P. 201301, have changed my name to Reena Vaish. 0040778897-1

I,Rajesh Uttams ingh Chauhan S/o-Uttam Singh Chauhan,r/o-B-181,Karampura,Ramesh-Nagar, West,Delhi-15,Have Changed my name to Rajesh Chauhan Permanently. 0040778839-8

I,PUSHPA NANKANI,W/O- PRAKASH NANKANI,R/O-FLAT NO.418,VAOST-2 MAHAGUN MANSION VAIBHAV-KHAND INDIRAPURAM GHAZIABAD, UP-201014,HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO PUSHPA P NANKANI, FOR ALL,FUTURE PURPOSES. 0040778898-2

I,AHMAD ALI R/O RC-1035 Lok Priya Vihar Khoda colony Ghaziabad,UP-201309,have change My name to AHAMAD ALI all Future purpose. 0040778897-2

I,PUNEET GUPTA,S/O-VIJAY GUPTA R/O:-341A/16A GALI NO.5,SHALIMAR PARK,EXTENTION BHOLA-NATH NAGAR SHAHDARA,DELHI-110032,Have Changed My Name To PUNIT GUPTA 0040778839-6

I,Mandeep Kaur W/O A.Jit Singh R/O,A-141,Jail Road,Asha-Park, Tilak-Nagar,New Delhi-110018, inform that Mandeep Kaur and Mandeep Kaur Saggi are the name of same-person 0040778839-4

I,MOHAMMAD WALIULLAH LASKER,S/O-MOHAMMAD SERAJUDDIN AHMED,R/O-S-66/164 PARTAP CAMP T-HUTS NEHRU-NAGAR,DELHI-110065,HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO ALIULLAH. 0040778896-5

I,Kalpeshkumar Madhavlal Gurjar S/O-Madhavlal Rameshbhai Gurjar R/O,Flat.no.1171,Tower-1,7th Avenue,Gaur City-1,Greater Noida West, Gautam Budh Nagar,U.P.201306,have changed my name from Kalpeshkumar Madhavlal Gurjar to Kalpesh Madhavlal Gurjar,for all future purposes. 0040778839-7

I,Jaya Alias Jaya Haran W/o Surendra Kumar Haran R/O No-60/21A Parshwa Kunj, 2nd Floor, 59th A Cross, 4th N Block, Rajainjagar, Bangalore North, Bengaluru, Karnataka-560010, have changed my name to Jaya S Haran. 0070955691-1

I,KUM SONIYA ARORA,W/O-SHYAM SUNDER KOCHHAR, R/O,FLAT.NO-1003,TOWER-1,BLOCK-D GH-7 GHAZIABAD,UP-201016 HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO SONIA KOCHHAR,FOR ALL FUTURE PURPOSES 0040778898-1

I,KAPIL AGGARWAL,S/O-SHIV RATAN AGGARWAL, R/O-52/49,STREET-17,NAI-BASTI,ANAND-PARWAT,DELHI-110005,DO HEREBY DECLARE THAT NAME OF MINE AND MY WIFE HAS BEEN WRONGLY-WRITTEN AS KAPIL AND MONIKA RESPECTIVELY IN SCHOOL-RECORD OF MY 10-years MINOR SON,AMAN GOYAL,Class Vth A The CORRECT-NAME OF MINE AND MY WIFE IS KAPIL AGGARWAL AND MONIKA AGGARWAL RESPECTIVELY. 0040778874-9

I,Gaikwad Mahadev Mahesh, resident of at Village - Shirgapur,PO&PS-Itakal, District- Dharashiv,State - Maharashtra,PIN-413603,have changed my mother name from Ramabai to Ramabai Mahesh Gaikwad, in my service document,vide Affidavit dated 08/03/2025 before Notary Public,District Court Srinagar, Government of Jammu and Kashmir. 0020489845-1

I,Dhiraj Kumar Sharma S/O Parmanand Sharma, R/O,C-4/22, Vashist Park Pankha Road, Delhi-110046 My Mother's name has been wrongly written Rajeshwari Sharma instead of Rajesh Sharma in my Passport No.N4298540 0040778862-1

I,DHARAM PANI PANDEY, S/O-DIWAKAR PRASAD PANDEY R/O F-219,LIG FLATS,UTSAV APARTMENT, SECTOR-18,ROHINI,DELHI-110089,HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO DHARM PANI PANDEY. 0040778896-4

I,CHINMAY VARDHAN PANDEY,S/O-DHARM PANI PANDEY R/O F-219,LIG-FLATS,UTSAV-APARTMENT, SECTOR-18,ROHINI,DELHI-110089,HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO CHINMAY VARDHAN. 0040778896-3

I,Binit Kumar,S/o Nagendra Prasad Srivastava,R/O,D-302,Top Floor,SBIT Anil Krishna Puri, Mandawali, Fazalpur,Delhi-110092,have changed my name to Binit Srivastava. 0040778839-3

I,Ashwani Gaur,S/o Brahm Dev R/o H.No.314,Singhola,Narela, North,West Delhi,Delhi-110040,have changed the name of my minor daughter Shubhkamna aged-3-year and shall call hereafter be known as Ashwika Gaur. 0040778839-9

I,ARUN KUMAR AGGARWAL,S/O-SHRI RAM KRISHNA,R/O,CR-253,LALITA-PARK LAXMI-NAGAR,DELHI 110092,HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO ARUN AGGARWAL,FOR ALL,FUTURE PURPOSES. 0040778898-3

I,Atul S/o surinder Kumar, R/o,flat no. 1-R-404, ushay tower,sec.61, Rasoi,nathupur Soinpat, Haryana-131029,have change my name from Atul to Atul Aggarwal,permanently. 0040778839-5

I, Vinod Kumar Prasad S/o Sh. Dinesh Prasad R/O A-3-C, 2nd Floor, East Side, Vishwakarma Colony, New Delhi-110044 have declare that the both name VINOD KUMAR and VINOD KUMAR PRASAD are one and the same person. In future I will be known as VINOD KUMAR PRASAD for all purposes. 0070955758-1

I, Vijay Deep Gurjar R/O 858, romano, mahagun Mascot, Crossing Republik, Ghaziabad, Pin 201016 have changed my minor son's name from Shivansh to Shivansh Gurjar for all purposes. 0040778817-1

I, Verander Kumar Malhotra S/O P Malhotra, R/O A-1, Aman Apartment, Rohini Sector 13, North West Delhi-110085, have changed my name and shall hereafter be Known as V K Malhotra. 0070955711-1

I, Suraj Awana S/o Late Sh. K.C. Awana R/O D-02, Sector-36, Noida Distt. Gautam Budh Nagar U.P., have changed my name from Suraj Singh Awana to SURAJ AWANA for all future purposes 0070955744-1

I, Sourabh Ganesh Sharma S/O Shri Ganesh Narayan Sharma R/O B23-403 Tulip Violet, Sector 69, Gurugram, Haryana-122018, have changed my name to Sourabh Sharma. Henceforth i will be known from this name only. 0040778814-1

I, Saumya Upreti, W/O Yash Bansal R/O Hosue No-D-222, Street No-7, Bhajanpura, North East Delhi-110053, have changed my name and shall hereafter be Known as Saumya Yash Bansal 0070955715-1

I, Sapna Dayal C/O Praveen R/O I-19, Harkesh Nagar, Okhla Phase-2, Delhi-20 have changed my name to Sapna Dayal 0070955746-1

I, Sangeeta Kumari W/O Mr. Rahul Godara R/O H.No. 622/1, Gali Mohalla, Near Goda Road Chowk Mujessar Sector-24 Faridabad Haryana-121005 have declare that the both names Km Sangeeta and Sangeeta Kumari are one and the same person. In future I will be known as Sangeeta Kumari for all purposes. 0070955757-1

I,Ramanjaneya V R Alias Ramanjaneya Alias Veeraganti Ramanasjeevasetty Ramanasjeevasetty S/O V A Ramanasjeevasetty R/O #2344, 20th Cross K R Road, Namma M T R, B S K 2nd Stage, Bangalore South, B S K II Stage, Bangalore, Karnataka-560070, have changed my name to V R Ramanjaneya 0070955694-1

I, Rashmi D/o Jagannath R/o E-30, New Ashok Nagar, East Delhi, Delhi-110092, have changed my name from Rashmi to Reshma Devi for all future purposes. 0040778873-1

I, Raman Gupta R/O D-5/20, Ratiya Marg, Sangam Vihar, Delhi-62 declare that name of mine has been wrongly written as Raman Kumar Gupta in my son school record. The actual name of mine is Raman Gupta 0070955762-1

I, Rahul Ojha S/o Mahendra Ojha R/O Ebony 07098, Mahagun Mywoods, Gaur City 2, Greater Noida West, Po: Sector 16c, Gautam Buddha Nagar,Uttar Pradesh 201318 have changed my name to RAHUL MAHENDRA OJHA for all future purpose 0070955724-1

I, Prashant Kumar Parashar S/o Vasudev Parashar R/o 80-D (HIG), Pocket-B, Sector-10S, Noida Gautam Buddha Nagar, Uttar Pradesh-201301 have changed the name of my minor daughter from Parl Parashar to Prisha Parashar for all purposes. 0070955716-1

I, Prabhat W/o Rajesh Gupta, R/o H. No. E-57/3, Street No. 2, Subhash Vihar, North Ghonda, North East Delhi-110053 have changed my name to Prabha Gupta. 0070955726-1

I, Pawan S/o Panna Lal R/o 80/10, Barh Mohalla, Kheri kalan (113), Old Faridabad, Haryana-121002 have changed my name to Pawan Parashar 0070955755-1

I, Nitin Gupta S/o R.C. Gupta R/o B-3/85, Sector-17, Dwarka, -Sec-6 Delhi-110075 Have Changed the name of my minor Daughter from LAVYA to LAVYA GUPTA for all purposes in future 0070955718-1

I, Nitin Gupta S/o R.C. Gupta R/o B-3/85, Sector-17, Dwarka -Sec-6 Delhi-110075 have changed the name of my minor daughter from Lisha to Lisha Gupta for all purposes. 0070955721-1

I, Nidhi Arun Kumar Bansal W/o Gurpreet Singh R/o 901-A, Shree Radha Krishna CGHS Ltd. Plot No-23, Sector-7, Dwarka, New Delhi-110075 Have Changed My Name to Nidhi Arun Bansal. 0070955765-1

I, MANJU D/O RAJENDER KUMAR W/O RAJESH R/O H.NO. 29-C, THIRD FLOOR, GALI NO.15, EAST ARJUN NAGAR, LEHARI COLONY, HEADQWAR HOSPITAL, VISHWAS NAGAR DELHI-110032 have Changed my name to RACHNA for all purposes in future 0070955727-1

I, LUXMI DEVI w/o RAM PHOOL R/o D-003, Upkari Apartment, Plot No.-9, Sector-12, Dwarka, Delhi-110075 have changed my name to LAXMI DEVI permanently. 0040778815-1

I, KRITTIKA AGARWAL , D/o Baldev Kumar Goel, R/o 2079,Delhi Administration flats, Gulabi Bagh, New Delhi 110007 have changed my name to KRITTIKA AGGARWAL 0070955661-1

I, KM VINITA BISHT, W/O CHANDRA SHEKHAR, R/O K L J PLATINUM PLUS, FLAT NO 301 TOWER NO-1, FARJUPUR MAJRA NEEMKA, SECTOR 77, FARIDABAD, HARYANA-121001, have changed my name to VINITA SINGH for all future purposes. 0070955751-1

I, Harish Kumar R/o C-8, Amar Colony, Lajpat Nagar, Part-4, New Delhi-110024, have changed my minor daughter's name from Siya Sharma to Sia Sharma. 0070955753-1

I, DEEPAK VERMA S/o Mahendra Kumar, R/o B-4, Plot No.657, (FF), Gali No-1, Nai Basti Behal Apartment, Devli Village, Delhi-62, declare that name of mine has been wrongly written as DEEPAK in my PAN Card EGJPD7228C and Driving Licence D0320110211375 and my PSV Driver Badge P030064418 and Bank of Baroda A/C No- 7678010004973. The actual name of mine is DEEPAK VERMA, which may be amended accordingly. 0040778834-1

I Yashpal Singh Jaitwal S/O, Anand Singh Jaitwal R/O House No 593 Gali No 24c Kamalvihar Kamajpur Burari Pin 110084 have changed my name to Yashpal Singh Jaitwal. 0040778822-1

I Suresh Chand S/o Fakir Chandra R/O Sai Nimral Aawas Near Sankar Market Padampur Motadhak, Near Sankar Market, Padampur Motadhak Kotdwara, Durgapur, Pauri Garhwal, Uttarakhand-246149, have changed my name to Suresh Chandra 0070955713-1

I Sunil S/o Nanak Chand R/o H-775, Shakur Pur, J.J.Colony, Samrat Cinema Hall, PO:Saraswati Vihar, Dist:North West Delhi, Delhi-110034 have changed the name of my minor son from Jivansh alias Jivansh Jarwal to Jivansh Jarwal for all purposes. 0040778811-4

I Sunil S/o Nanak Chand R/o H-775, Shakur Pur, J.J.Colony, Samrat Cinema Hall, PO:Saraswati Vihar, Dist:North West Delhi, Delhi-110034 have changed the name of my minor son from Divyansh alias Divyansh Jarwal to Divyansh Jarwal for all purposes. 0040778811-3

I Kiranraj S/o Sungal Chand Jain R/o #41/12 Kanchana Apartment 3rd Floor, Akkamahadevi Road, Opp-Jain Temple, Chickpet, Bangalore South, Bangalore, Karnataka-560053, have changed my name to Kiran Raj Jain 0070955700-1

I Sundar S/o Ratan pal R/o H.no A-19, A block new usmanpur,Garhi Mendu, North East Delhi 110053.Have changed my name from singh to Sundar for all purposes. 0070955754-1

I, Shubham S/o Raman Gupta R/o D-5/20, Ratiya Marg, Sangam Vihar, Delhi-62 have changed my name to Shubham Gupta 0070955760-1

I Nushrat Niyazi W/o Mohd Niyazi R/O House No.-D-4, Khasra No.274/228/173, 2nd Floor, Street No.9, Near Rahmani Chowk, Village Wazirabad, Delhi-110084 have changed my name to Nusrat Niyazi for all purposes. 0040778811-6

I Himanshi Bubna W/o Sh.Ankit Bubna R/O 159, 1st Floor, Jagriti Enclave, Delhi-110092 have changed my name to Himanshi Garg for all purposes. 0040778811-1

I Bala Rani W/o L.G.Harish Vats R/O BG-3/57C, LG Flats, Paschim Vihar, Dist-West Delhi, Delhi-110063 have changed my name to Bala Vats for all purposes. 0040778811-2

I Anshul Gupta S/o Ram Kishan Gupta R/O E-2,84/1, Gali No.3, Shastri Nagar, PO:Ashok Vihar, Dist:North West Delhi, Delhi-110052 have changed the name of my minor daughter from Shivika Gupta to Shivika Aggarwal for all purposes. 0040778811-5

I,Priti W/O Rajeev Shokeen, R/O House.No. 68-B, Near Old Choupal, Kamrudeen Nagar,Nangoli,Delhi-110041, have changed my name to Preeti Shokeen. 0040778897-4

I, Soniya W/o Mr. Ramesh Chand R/o Bahloilpur, Kuralsi, Dist., Muzaffarnagar, Uttar Pradesh-251309 have changed my name from Soniya to Siyani Devi for all future purposes. 0040777696-1

LOST & FOUND

Original Allotment-Letter of property Plot No.55,Block-B, Sector-44,Noida,U.P.,has been lost.finder contact: Durgesh Sharma,W/o,Jai Parkash Sharma,R/o-D-3, Mansarovar-Apartment,Sec-61, Noida. Mobile.N.7838179988. 0040778904-5

I,ANITA CHAWLA,W/O- H.P.CHAWLA R/O-26, COMMUNITY CENTER, BASANT LOK,VASANT-VIHAR,NEW DELHI-110057,hereby declare that my original property documents vit lease deed,possession-letter, Allotment-letter and other-papers,have been misplaced of property bearing no.26 Community-center,Basant LOK,Vasant-Vihar,New-Delhi-110057 and FIR NO.is:LR2651730/2025. 0040778874-10

LOST My Original document i.e. Page-No 9 of RC- No.208224/15 dated- 15.10.1988.Finder Contact Sunita Grover W/o-Dharam Veer Grover-7/68 West-Punjabi Bagh, New-Delhi.FIR for same has been done 0040778839-10

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is to inform to the General Public that my client Sh. Rajesh Kumar and Smt. Santosh Gupta R/o H.No.1-B,Block- 674, Mangol Puri, Delhi-110083 have severed all their relations with their Son Sunny Gupta and his wife Megha Gupta and Disowned and debarrred them from all their movable and immoveable properties. Anybody dealing with them shall do so at his/her own cost, risk and consequences. My client shall not be responsible for their any act or conduct in any manner whatsoever. Sd/- Deepak Dhawan (Advocate) Chh- 328, Lawyers Chambers Biscuit, Rohini Court Delhi-110085

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is known to all the concerned that my client Sh. Krishna Lal Ahuja R/o H.No C-24 OPP. AXIS BANK KIRTI NAGAR WEST DELHI, Delhi-110015, has misplaced/Lost the original title deeds along with the previous ownership documents of his properties bearing: (a) KHARJA NO.57/12 AND EDC. VILLAGE MENDRA DELHI (B) C-24 OPP. AXIS BANK KIRTI NAGAR WEST DELHI. The client who finds the same shall return the same to the above said address of my client. Any person who shall be highly gart and shall reward the person in return. That anybody dealing with the said original documents shall be treated as null and void as my client has never mortgaged or used the said documents for any reason. That anybody doing so shall be held responsible for their own risk, cost and responsibility and my client shall not be held responsible in any manner whatsoever for any of their acts. Sd/- Rajeev Kumar Tewari Advocate Ch. No. 384-395 Civil Wing, Tri Hazari Courts Delhi-110054

PUBLIC NOTICE

IT IS HEREBY INFORMED THAT SMT. MADHURI TYAGE AND SMT. SAVITRI TYAGL, WHO HAD APPLIED FOR LEAN FRESH EDCR, AND IN RESPECT OF FREEHOLD RESIDENTIAL PLOT NO. 1, BLOCK-D, AREA MEASURING 3675 SQ. YDS, CUCKOO KNOWN AS DIVINE CITY, NCT OF DELHI, SITUATED IN GANESHA, SONPAT (HARYANA), AND SELLER SMT. SUNDARI TYAGL, ALIAS SMT. HAREE PAPER NAMELY- TRANSFER OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTY, CERTAIN DISCREPANCY RELATION DATED 21.03.2024 ENUNCIATED BY SIRS MANOJAM RANAN INDIAN REGISTER OF DEEDS, WHICH HAS BEEN DONE BY FR DATED 08.03.2025 AND NO OTHER LEGAL HEED HEREIN. THAT ANY OTHER CLAIMANT HAS ANY RIGHT IN THE ABOVE PROPERTY, HEREBY HEREBY INFORM & COVE ENTIFICATION TO THE UNDERSTANDING WITHIN 15 DAYS FROM THE DATE OF ISSUE OF THIS NOTICE. Sd/- SUBIRASHI GUPTA Enrl. No. D-4462002 125, FIRST FLOOR, ANAND NAGAR, ENDRULOK, DELHI-110054

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is known to all the concerned that my client SMT. SINGDEHA AHJUA W/O LATE SH. AMIT AHJUA R/O H.No C-24 OPP. AXIS BANK KIRTI NAGAR WEST DELHI, Delhi-110015, is the owner of 50% of Property/Lot 1-a agricultural measuring 12.12 Hrs. 3 Bwarieties, out of consigned Khata No. 44/76 issued an revenue estate of Village Mundra, New Delhi-110019 by virtue of a Release Deed dated 12.03.2024. Mrs. Smt. Ahuja is the owner of the remaining 50% of the share. That hereby information that my client Mrs. Singdeha Ahuja is in complete possession of the said plot and the Sale, Purchase and Renting of the said plot is in the total disposal of my client Mrs. Singdeha Ahuja. That any and every of their deeds of gift, mortgage, lease, or any deed shall publication may be treated as Null & Void. Anybody dealing with the said plot shall be doing so at their own risk, cost and responsibility and my client shall not be held responsible in any manner whatsoever for any of their acts. Sd/- Rajeev Kumar Tewari Advocate Ch. No. 384-395 Civil Wing, Tri Hazari Courts Delhi-110054

PUBLIC NOTICE

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PUBLIC NOTICE

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PUBLIC NOTICE

It is known to all the concerned that my client Sh. Krishna Lal Ahuja R/o H.No C-24 OPP. AXIS BANK KIRTI NAGAR WEST DELHI, Delhi-110015, has severed all his relations and disowned and dishorished his wife Smt. Veena Ahuja W/o Krishna Lal Ahuja D/O D.R.Naing R/o H.No C-24 OPP. AXIS BANK KIRTI NAGAR WEST DELHI, Delhi-110015, presently residing at house No.520, PUNJABI BAGH EXT. NEW DELHI-110026 from all his movable and immovable properties as well as all his relations and disowned & disappreciated towards any client and has not any claim or every of their deeds of Smt. Veena Ahuja prior to the said publication may be treated as Null & Void. Anybody dealing with the said Smt. Veena Ahuja shall be doing so at their own risk, cost and responsibility and my client shall not be held responsible in any manner whatsoever for any of their acts. Sd/- Rajeev Kumar Tewari Advocate Ch. No. 384-395 Civil Wing, Tri Hazari Courts Delhi-110054

PUBLIC NOTICE

"Public in general is hereby informed that my client Sh. Rajees & Rajy Aggarwal So Late Bej Lal R/o E-50, First Floor Phase-I, Ashok Vihar, Delhi-110052 alongwith various: i. Working place i.e. Shop/office situated at ground & mezzanine Floor of property No. 5240, Gutteri Sid, Mitra Ashram, Sadar Bazar, Delhi-110006; ii. Business in the name and style of Ms Bej Trading Company; iv. Business in the name and style of M/s Sarvik Enterprise; And my client being the exclusive owner of his above said all the proprietorial business declares that anyone dealwith deal with Sarvik and his wife Chaudhali, he, she, they, himself, herself and themselves will be responsible against which my client Chaudhali has above said estate shall not be responsible for their any activities like deed and misdeed. Sd/- RAJESH SHARMA Enrl. No. V-24, Opp. SBI, Tri Hazari Courts, Delhi-54

PUBLIC NOTICE

My Client Sh. Sh. Krishan Pal S/o Late Sh. Babu Ram R/o H. NO.: P-97, Street No.6, Shankar Nagar, Krishna Nagar, Delhi-110051, severed his relations from his son namely VIKAS DEEP for all their misbehavior, use abusing language, quarrel some activities and debarrred them from movable and immovable properties and their lives and now onwards shall have no connection with them. Anybody dealing or relations with them shall be doing so at his own risk without any liability on part of my client. ALOK GUPTA (ADVOCATE) ENRL NO.: D-6819/2020

PUBLIC NOTICE

My Client Sh. Sh. Krishan Pal S/o Late Sh. Babu Ram R/o H. NO.: P-97, Street No.6, Shankar Nagar, Krishna Nagar, Delhi-110051, severed his relations from his son namely VIKAS DEEP for all their misbehavior, use abusing language, quarrel some activities and debarrred them from movable and immovable properties and their lives and now onwards shall have no connection with them. Anybody dealing or relations with them shall be doing so at his own risk without any liability on part of my client. ALOK GUPTA (ADVOCATE) ENRL NO.: D-6819/2020

PUBLIC NOTICE

That my clients (1) MR. JOGINDER PAL SINGH GURJAL and (2) MRS. SIMRAN GURJAL are the joint and absolute owners of Erection Bulkup Freehold Property No. C-127, measuring 313 sq. yards, Greater Kailash-1, New Delhi-110048 which is gifted by S. Harish Singh alias Harbansh Singh Gupta through his General Attorney Smt. Rajinder Kaur, dated 06/09/2021, and Smt. Rajinder Kaur, by virtue of Gift Deed dated 06/08/2021, duly registered in the office of Sub-Registrar-VN, Hauz Khas, New Delhi. Father of my client, S. Harbansh Singh Gupta died on 16/09/2022 also leaving behind a registered Will dated 15/05/2012 in respect of his share in the said property in favour of his son Mr. Joginder Pal Singh Gaur and one of my client, Smt. Rajinder Kaur alias Rajinder Kaur Gaural also executed a registered Will dated 24/05/2012 in respect of said property in favour of her son Mr. Joginder Pal Singh Gaural. If any person has any objections on the above documents and/or has any claim, rights, interests and title info or upon the said property, he/she/they can file their objection in writing along with supporting documents, if any evidencing to the undersigned within 30 days from the date of publication of this Notice. Thereafter, the objections/ claims, if any, shall be considered null and void and shall not be binding upon my client. AMIT ANAND, Advocate Enrl. No. D-1452/2003

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is for the information of general public that my clients (1) Smt. Davinder Kaur W/o S. Sunder Singh and (2) S. Sunder Singh So S. Indar Singh both R/o K-26, Gali No.27, New Mahavir Nagar, New Delhi-110018, have severed all their relations and connections with their son S. Mandeep Singh and his wife Smt. Amandeep Kaur and has debarrred and disowned them from all their moveable and immovable properties, because they are out of control of my clients. Anybody dealing with them shall do so at his own risk and responsibility. RAJAN MAHAJAN (Advocate) 306,307,SR-IB,C,D,JANAKPURI,NO.58

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public at large is hereby informed that Mr. Satish Parkash and Mrs. Seema Ohlan the owner of Plot no. 14 situated at Sector 14, Omvase Galleria Jhajar Road, Bahadurgarh, District Jhajar Haryana purchased from Mrs. Anisha w/o Rajesh Dhu R/o House No. 1008/18 Ghum Puri, Rohini, Haryana -12400. Intends to mortgage the said immovable property for their bonafide requirements to L&T Finance Limited. whosoever is having any objection to the said mortgage or anyone has claim or right or interest in the property shall contact the undersigned with the objection within 07 days failing which it shall be presumed that there stands no objections. MR. SAMIR KUMAR/LALIT KUMAR (ADVOCATE) M.S. EXCEL LAW GROUP LLP, Office at Address: 87-D, on 3rd Floor, Pocket-2, Sector-6, Dwarka, New Delhi, Mobile no. 8130395390 /91.

PUBLIC NOTICE

To whomsoever it may concern that my client RANBIR SINGH S/O LISHAVYAT SINGH R/O BE-129A, street no. 3, Hari Nagar, New Delhi-110087, has disowned & disinherited his son Sh.Manneet Singh and their daughter-in-law, Harpreet Kaur W/o Sh. Manmeet (Singh) from all his movable and immovable properties and also severed all kinds of relationship with them. That my client shall not be liable for any loss, damage and consequences if anybody suffers while dealing with them and he/she/they do so at their own risks, costs and consequences. TARUN YADAV (Advocate) D/7633/2019

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given to public at large that my client MRS. SAROJ W/O LATE SH. DAYA CHAND R/O H.No.369, HASTAL VILLAGE, UTTAM NAGAR, NEW DELHI-110059, has severed all her relations from her son SH. SACHIN alongwith his wife (NANA) and his associates, disowned & debarrred all of them from all her movable and immovable properties with immediate effect because of harassment, torture, cruelty, atrocities committed by them against my client. Any person dealing with them shall be doing so at their own risk, cost and consequences. My client shall not be responsible in any manner for the same. A.K.Verma (Advocate) Off: 319, S-1, Sector-14, Janakpuri, New Delhi-110058

PUNJAB STATE POWER CORPORATION LTD

(Regd. Office PSEB Head Office, The Mall, Patiala)

Corporate Identification Number (CIN): U40109PB2010SGC038313

Web site: www.pspcl.in, (Contact Number 9646118754)

Tender Enquiry No. 333/HPs/EDII/RS-145 Dated: 07.03.2025

By: CE/ Hydel Projects, PSPCL, Shed A-43, Shakti Vihar, PSPCL, Patiala Invites E-Tender for Supply, Erection, Assembly, Testing & Commissioning of following pumps at RSD Powerhouse:-

- Two no. Drainage submersible pumps along with accessories for replacement of existing drainage VT pumps of service bay.
- One no. non-clog sewage submersible pump set having auto coupling/ decoupling with delivery pipe using guide rail for dewatering of muddy water of water pump for replacement of one no. JYOTI Make 150KW VT pump.
- One No. Submersible pump with control panel and flexible hose pipes with coupling to dewater RSD Powerhouse in case of emergencies.

For detailed NIT & tender specification please refer to <https://eproc.punjab.gov.in> from 20.03.2025 onwards.

NOTE: Corrigendum and Addendum, if any will be published online at <https://eproc.punjab.gov.in>

No. 42406/PB C-168/25

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PUBLIC NOTICE

Our Clients, Sh. Rajendra Modi S/O Late Sh. Mod Chand Modi and his wife Smt. Shushma Modi W/O Sh. Rajendra Modi both R/O 601/07 Star Court, Jaypee Greens Gautam Buddha Nagar, Uttar Pradesh have severed all relations from Mrs. Anusha Kalra (daughter of Rajendra Modi and Smt. S

21 SPORT

6 INDIANS IN ICC TEAM OF TOURNAMENT

Dubai: Virat Kohli was the biggest name among six Indian players picked in the 12-member 'Team of the Tournament' for the Champions Trophy. Shreyas Iyer, wicketkeeper-batter KL Rahul, mystery spinner Varun Chakravarthy and pacer Mohammed Shami featured in the playing XI, while all-rounder Axar Patel was named the 12th man. **PTI**

Looking to 2027: After redemption, Rohit and Virat keen to continue



EXPRESS AT CHAMPIONS TROPHY

VENKATA KRISHNAB
DUBAI, MARCH 10

MINUTES AFTER India won the Champions Trophy and they played 'dandiya' with uprooted stumps, Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli found themselves facing a gaggle of photographers. As they broke away, Rohit wise-cracked, 'bhai, hum koi retire nahi ho rahe,' and after a couple of trademark expletives, Rohit said to a laughing Kohli, "inko toh lag raha hai..." The 'we aren't going to retire' couldn't have been said in a more nonchalantly emphatic manner.

Even as Rohit and Kohli were swaggering with smiles around the ground, the coach Gautam Gambhir unfurled a hindi sher in a television chat with Navjot Singh Sidhu: "Fleeing the jungle for fear of the snake is not an option/ Learn the art of trampling the snake's hood." The moment was the perfect frame to capture India's victorious campaign in the desert city.

There has been criticism about the way the tournament was loaded towards India, and even about its importance. That Champions Trophy doesn't have the gravitas of an ODI World Cup nor can match the popularity of a T20 World Cup; in fact it was disbanded eight years ago for those very reasons. The conditions in Dubai were decidedly in favour of India; all other teams had to keep crisscrossing to Pakistan, and the competitive strengths of most other teams were markedly average. But it misses the point of this triumph.

It's not about the importance of the tournament, but its importance to this Indian team. Under a new coach, they were mauled at home in a Test series by New Zealand, and couldn't retain the Border Gavaskar Trophy in Australia despite Jasprit Bumrah's dazzling brilliance. The captain's age, fitness, and form was under fire; Kohli's hunger for runs were questioned, the coach Gautam Gambhir's acumen and his choice of personnel was trolled, selectors' visions were ridiculed, and the passion and commitment of the youngsters were mocked.

The present and the future of this team was under threat. The Indian team needed this victory not for bragging rights but for their sustenance. That mood overflowed in the dressing room as the Indian team celebrated for more than an hour inside what has been their sanc-

After winning the T20 World Cup, Rohit, Kohli and Jadeja sidestepped, passing the baton to the youngsters. In Tests, there is definitely some new direction needed. Now what this win does to the future of the ODI side, only time will tell.

tum for the last three exciting weeks.

The celebrations then moved on to the team hotel, where they were given a rousing reception before they reassembled for an official party. It wasn't as big as the one at Barbados last year when they won the T20 world cup, but the celebrations went into the wee hours of Monday morning.

In Australia, as reported by this newspaper, they had appeared a disjointed unit but as they say, nothing brings the team together like victories and these five well-earned ones against varied opponents who offered different challenges must have tasted sweetly-satisfying. They had buried the ghosts of Ahmedabad in Barbados, but this one in Dubai coming in the 50-over format would remain special for this lot of players.

Rohit encapsulated the mood after triumph: "There is a lot of hunger, even for the guys who have played a lot of cricket. It rubs down to younger players. If they see some of their other senior members showing that hunger ... it shows this is how we want to play our cricket," Rohit said.

Kohli also spoke about the necessity to leave the team in a strong place. "We wanted to bounce back after a tough Australia tour, and we wanted to win a big tournament. So much talent in the changeroom, they're taking Indian cricket forward in the right direction," Kohli said with Gill by his side. "We're happy to share our experience but these guys are stepping up in a massive way and that's why we're such a strong team."

Gill talked about how Kohli has inspired him. "Watching him (Kohli) on the TV and now seeing the intensity with which he plays is just phenomenal. It tells us what the game is all about. That's the only thing that he talks about even off the field as well," Gill said.

After winning the T20 World Cup, Rohit, Kohli and Jadeja sidestepped, passing the baton to the youngsters. In Tests, there is definitely some new direction needed. Now what this win does to the future of the ODI side, only time will tell. If anything, the desire to lift the ODI World Cup has flowered again in the desert city.



Questions were asked of Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli before the Champions Trophy victory but it was made clear in the end that retirement was not an option. **PTI**

A TRIUMPHANT RETURN

India captain Rohit Sharma returned to Mumbai with his family on Monday after winning the ICC Champions Trophy in Dubai. *Sankhadeep Banerjee*

Coach back on track

Gambhir gets his CT selections right but treading carefully in a dressing room used to warm Dravid will help

SRIRAM VEERA
MARCH 10

LATE LAST year during the Australia tour, head coach **Gautam Gambhir's** patience finally ran out that Melbourne evening when he had a strong spray at his players in the dressing room for losing the Boxing Day Test that seemed eminently draw-able with a couple of hours left to go on the final day.

"Bahut ho gaya, I have had enough" - Gambhir, as reported by this newspaper then, had told the team. He said he had allowed the team to do what it wanted for the "last six months" but now he would "decide" how they play. There was also a warning - it will be 'thank you' to those who don't abide by his pre-decided team strategy plan.

Since that Melbourne Test, the coach has been stamping his authority more and more.

The ICC Champions Trophy was his first real big event after the Australia tour. The new beginning, under the more proactive Gambhir, would start with team selection. It's learnt that it was him who pushed hard for the inclusion of mystery spinner Varun Chakravarthy; not many were as sure, but Gambhir knew what he wanted. He also pressed for pacer Harshit Rana over Mohammed Siraj. Also, like his captain, he was certain that they needed five slow bowlers in Dubai.

The Australia tour had embellished his confidence in the kind of players he wanted: A Nitish Kumar Reddy, who would talk about "taking a bullet for the country"; Rana, whose aggression was right down Gambhir's gully, Washington Sundar's allrounded-ness over Ravichandran Ashwin's specialist expertise. Certain kinds of players found themselves edging through the cracks: Ashwin went first, Rishabh Pant too began to hover there, Shubman Gill was dropped.

It's learnt that Gambhir wasn't too chuffed



by the performance of Ashwin and Jadeja in the home series against New Zealand, and it took Rohit's intervention to persuade Ashwin to stay and play in the pink-ball Test. To be reduced to being an option in a 'horses for courses' policy perhaps didn't sit too well with Ashwin, but Gambhir was slowly tightening his grip on the team. Jadeja, too, was out of favour for the first few games during the Australia tour.

Strong views

The higher-ups in the cricket board don't quite mind Gambhir's approach as they see him as a man with the strength of character who could put up his views strongly even to seniors like Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli, if needed. At least, not fret about speaking his mind. There were a couple of players at the start of that Australia tour with captaincy aspirations, but they were cut down to size by the end.

Rohit's inclusivity and penchant to do what's needed for the team have allowed Gambhir's punts and plans to go through smoothly.

Like the left-right combo through the batting line-up, even if that means KL Rahul had

to be pushed down or Axar Patel pushed up. Its success emboldened Gambhir; in fact, that move was one of the earliest of his theories he had put into action after taking over as coach.

A particular fallout of that Rahul move was also the sidelining of Pant from the ODI team. Certain murmurs did swell up about the two's past, dating to the time when both played in the Delhi Ranji Trophy team (Pant was Gambhir's captain at one point). But in the current context, it's more due to Pant's ordinary ODI record (he averages 33 but has publicly said that it was an unfair assessment of his potential in that format), and more importantly, him not fitting in as the kind of player Gambhir was looking for lower down the order.

Rahul's performances in the Champions Trophy, including in the final, have vindicated the management and selectors. Incidentally, chairman of selectors Ajit Agarkar and his panel's contributions deserve a lot of credit too. They haven't blindly gone along with all requests, stayed firm when needed but have also been open enough to let Gambhir's theories take root.

Just like the left-right combination, Gambhir was also clear on how he wanted more players who could bowl. As he said in the post-game chat with the broadcasters, he started it right from the series against Sri Lanka, making Riyan Parag bowl. The absence of batting-allrounders has been a concern in the white-ball team for a while, and he actively sought to redress that.

Road ahead

It's not all rosy of course; it remains to be seen if he creases out certain character traits. His reported 'take it or leave it' communication style has certainly jarred more than a few in the camp. This isn't surprising as his style might not go down smoothly in the team, especially used to the more overtly warm and inclusive atmosphere created by Rahul Dravid.

But while it must have been clear from the get-go that Gambhir's character is different, it still might take time to get used to. However, there's nothing like success to ensure that compatibility.

The case of Shreyas Iyer's exclusion from the ODIs against England at home did prompt some speculation. It was only an injury to Kohli that got Iyer a spot in the first game, where he dazzled and cemented his spot. By the end of that England series, Gambhir talked about how Iyer wouldn't have been dropped for the entire series and that he was a major player in this format. Maybe. But did Iyer know that, for his chat with the broadcasters at the end of the first game suggested otherwise.

Gambhir's stint as a coach is at a rather delicate stage right now. After the whitewash at home against New Zealand and the defeat in the Border-Gavaskar Trophy in Australia - though it must be said that a two-hour mad implosion in Melbourne and the absence of Jasprit Bumrah on the final day at Sydney could have made all the difference despite everything that was simmering in the camp. And now he has tasted his first success at the Champions Trophy though with the conditions and the strength of the opposition teams, it would have been a shock if India hadn't won.

But the main takeaway from that tournament was how well the tactical thinking held up - from the careful selection decisions to the style of play, to the personalities chosen as well as the ones discarded. Now that he has got some breathing space with this win, time will tell whether Gambhir adds a touch of warmth to his style within the camp.

Inculcating insecurity or apprehension in the ranks usually doesn't work for a long period in cricket teams; Gambhir will have to play his cards smartly to bring a football style iron-hand to cricket even if he feels that's the need of the hour in professionalising men with the propensity to wander in the garden.

[SPORTS BAR]



Harmanpreet, bowlers take MI to win over GG

Harmanpreet Kaur's fluent half-century was backed by an exceptional bowling performance as Mumbai Indians beat Gujarat Giants by nine runs to strengthen their chances of finishing on top in the Women's Premier League on Monday. Sent in to bat, Harmanpreet slammed nine boundaries to score 54 off 33 balls and anchor MI to a competitive total of 179/6. Shabnim Ismail (2/17) and Amelia Kerr (3/34) then helped MI bowl Gujarat Giants out for 170 in 20 overs at the Brabourne Stadium, despite a whirlwind 25-ball 61 by Bharti Fulmali.

BRIEF SCORES: Mumbai Indians 179/6 in 20 overs (Harmanpreet Kaur 54, Nat Sciver-Brunt 38) beat Gujarat Giants 170 all out in 20 overs (Bharti Fulmali 61; Amelia Kerr 3/34, Hayley Matthews 3/38) by 9 runs. **PTI**

Haryana, Jharkhand in women's hockey final

Haryana and Jharkhand will meet in the Division A final of the Hockey India Senior Women National Championship in Panchkula. Haryana defeated Mizoram 4-0 with Sonam (41st minute), Monika (42nd), Manisha (47th) and captain Rani (57th) scoring a goal each on Monday. In the other semi-final, Jharkhand prevailed over Maharashtra 3-2 in a shootout after they were locked goalless in regulation time. Rajni Kerketta, captain Albela Rani Toppo and Shammy Bara scored for Jharkhand in the shootout while Kajal Sadashiv Atpadkar and Preeti found the target for Maharashtra. The final will be held on Wednesday. **PTI**

Advani fights back to seal hat-trick of titles

Pankaj Advani pulled off a stunning comeback to complete a hat-trick of titles at the Rs 13.5 lakh CCI Snooker classic tournament with an 8-6 win over Ishpreet Chadha in the best-of-15-frame final in Mumbai. Advani, the reigning national and Asian snooker champion, triumphed 15-57, 26-101, 18-75, 100-25, 36-93, 118-0, 59-68, 45-77, 64-47, 93-72, 70-60, 75-32, 73-32, 75-47 in a hard-fought contest played over three sessions. Chadha, who is currently competing on the WST, was in complete control right from the start as he raced to a 4-1 lead, before Advani bounced back. **PTI**



Harry Brook said he wanted to prepare for England's coming series. *File*

Brook pulls out of IPL, faces two-year ban

England batter Harry Brook faces a two-year ban from the IPL after pulling out of his deal with Delhi Capitals ahead of the tournament beginning on March 22. Brook, who has made himself unavailable for the second straight season, apologised "unreservedly" to the franchise and its supporters. "It is a really important time for England cricket and I want to fully commit to preparing for the upcoming series," he wrote on social media. "In order to do this, I need time to recharge after the busiest period in my career to date. "Playing for my country remains my priority and focus." England will play India in a home Test series in June, which will be followed by the Ashes from November to January. Brook had withdrawn from the 2024 edition of IPL following the death of his grandmother. Any foreign player who misses the IPL after getting picked at the auction faces a two-year ban from the tournament unless he is injured. **PTI**

Nitin improves youth 5,000m race walk mark

Nitin Gupta of Uttar Pradesh broke the national youth record in the 5,000m race walk event on the opening day of the National Youth Athletics Championship in Patna on Monday. Gupta clocked 19:24.48 seconds to improve his own national record of 20:01.64 set last year. The girls' 3,000m race walk title went to Haryana's Yogita, whose winning time was 13:55.50. In the women's 100m final, Haryana sprinter Aarti won in 12.23 seconds, just ahead of statemate Prisha Mishra (12.24). Shourya Ambure from Maharashtra took the bronze with a timing of 12.40 seconds. **PTI**



Mbappé, Vinícius put Real Madrid joint-top

Kylian Mbappé and Vinícius Júnior scored goals in a five-minute span in the first half and Real Madrid held on to beat Rayo Vallecano 2-1 and move level on points with Barcelona at the top of the Spanish league. Mbappé scored in the 30th minute on Sunday and Vinícius doubled the lead in the 34th to give Madrid the same 57 points as Barcelona, who had their match against Osasuna on Saturday postponed after the death of first-team doctor Carles Miñarro García. There was a moment of silence at Madrid's Santiago Bernabeu Stadium in honor of the Barcelona doctor. Barcelona remain ahead of Madrid on the head-to-head tiebreaker criterion. "It's a nice feeling because the goal was to get the three points," Madrid coach Carlo Ancelotti said. **AP**

No home ISL win for Mohammedan Sporting

Mohammedan Sporting held Punjab FC to a 2-2 draw to end their debut Indian Super League (ISL) season without a home win in Kolkata on Monday. Trailing by two goals at one point, the home team produced an impressive comeback to split points. Punjab FC went ahead through goals from Ezequiel Vidal (9th minute) and Luka Majcen (53rd) but Mohammedan restored parity through Marc Schmerbock (58th) and Robi Hansda (66th). The home team collected 13 points from 24 games, being unable to secure a home win throughout the season. **PTI**



All up to All England

The last title for an Indian in Birmingham came in 2001 and the present lot needs to step up to restore some feel-good factor

SHIVANI NAIK
MARCH 10

TWO All England finals featuring Indians, and no titles, in the last 15 years - considered high-achieving for the sport - will go down as a serious inexplicable anomaly for badminton.

One can spin it whichever way one likes - cynically, by saying that the All England is nothing special anymore, though nobody else in the badminton world believes that. Or that none of the Indians could quite time their peaks or work monkishly towards it like Prakash Padukone or Pullela Gopichand, did.

But as yet another edition kicks off at Birmingham, it will remain a gaping hole in career summaries and a large unticked box for some of the biggest names in Indian badminton. It's nearing a quarter of a century since Gopichand won the last one in 2001, when almost a fourth of present-day India wasn't even born. So one can hardly blame the present-day stars for not setting too much store on it. The All England itself ceased being the most prestigious event in badminton once the sport debuted at the Olympics in 1992, before the World Championships became an annual affair.

But Indian indifference largely stemmed from the lack of results there. The absolute single-mindedness pursuing this title, like the two legends once did, has been missing. For Padukone, it was the pinnacle when the All E was as good as the World Championship. For Gopichand, an obsession with redemption, after losing at the Sydney Olympics, and a career apogee.

The Chinese still arrive at Birmingham with an extra spring in the step compared to anywhere else on the calendar. Tokyo Olympics champion Chen Yufei completely cut herself off from badminton, and went to Australia to study for three months post her Paris loss. But come the New Year, she was itching to resume playing. The chosen event for her comeback - the All England, though she did play another tune-up final at Orleans last week. Viktor Axelsen prioritises the event, as he aims for his third crown. The buzz is that if Axelsen has to be dethroned by the new generation, that coup will be timed at All England - either by Li Shifeng or Kunlavut Vitidsarn.

The hugely shuffled women's singles prevailing order too will begin to take shape this week, with clarity on who really has it in them to challenge An Se Young.

India is woefully scattered this time around. But rarely has Indian badminton needed a burst of inspiration like a deep run at All England more than now. International results have dried up, and badminton is struggling to provide happy headlines like it once did, with multiple contenders.

Hope from doubles

It's a challenging time for the bereaved Satwiksairaj Rankireddy, who lost his father last fortnight, and Chirag Shetty. Though for a few years now, it has been pretty clear that if anyone can score a strike for India at All England, it will be in doubles, not singles.

Treesa Jolly and Gayatri Gopichand always make All England interesting and have made two semifinals there. Women's doubles is on the uptick with three Indian pairings making it to the main draw for the first time. But Ashwini Ponappa best encapsulates India's All England conundrum. She maxed her potential and even won a Worlds bronze in 2011 in London. But she strangely couldn't make much headway at All England.

Kidambi Srikanth couldn't make the main draw this year, but the former World



The tournament comes at a challenging time for the bereaved Satwiksairaj Rankireddy, who lost his father last fortnight, and Chirag Shetty. *File*

Championship silver medallist and Thomas Cup champion might end up as the most baffling non-winner at All E among Indians, given his talent. It has been a long time since he became World No.1, and it is a glum thought that he got into badminton inspired by Gopichand's All England title. Some might say he surpassed his mentor as India's finest, with a Worlds medal and the China-Indonesia double. But that's where the allure of All England kicks in - it remains a notch above any other Tour title in perception.

Lakshya Sen has a final and a semi-final appearance at Birmingham - two very fine forays with reel-worthy moments of defensive magic on court. He was the only men's singles semi-finalist to leave the Paris Games heartbroken, and there's no better place than All England to roar back. His path is littered with extremely beatable names - Koki Watanabe, Jonatan Christie, Li Shifeng/HS Prannoy and Shi Yuqi in the top half. That would count as a good draw with Axelsen mired in the bottom half with very tricky Chinese and Japanese, besides compatriot Anders Antonsen.

The simple challenge for India's current generation of men's singles, four of whom have World Championship medals (though Sai Praneeth has since retired), is sealing a spot in the pantheon of legends in the absence of an Olympic medal - and nothing less than an All England title would do. One suspects HS Prannoy still sheaths a very effective and clever game, which can be unleashed just

for this occasion, even if results have been indifferent overall. But one more stab at the All England - who wouldn't want that?

Sindhu's final peak

Which leaves us with India's greatest shuttler - PV Sindhu. It is a genuine mystery how in her dizzy high-achieving years from 2016-2019, an All England crown eluded her. There are a couple of semifinals, and it's an open secret that she craves to tick the one box remaining for her, like Ratchanok Intanon.

But there's a pervading sense of the moment having passed them by. It's not merely how dominant An Se Young is, for Sindhu is, for Sindhu in her prime earned her stripes with giant kills. But just the reality of change. It might be an All England with the highest number of unseeded women's singles players who are former Olympic or world champions - Ratchanok, Nozomi Okuhara, Chen Yufei and Sindhu. Only Akane Yamaguchi has

clung on in the rankings to be seeded third. Wang Zhi Yi, the second seed and in Sindhu's half, isn't quite in the same league as Chen Yufei, He Bingjiao, let alone Li Xuerui or Wang Yihan, whom she slayed a dozen years back. Except Sindhu isn't the Sindhu of 2019 now. Her experience and sheer focus on doing well at this tournament, though, might be at greatly elevated levels at this point.

Still, did Sindhu leave the All England for way too late in her career, one wonders.

India is woefully scattered this time around. But rarely has Indian badminton needed a burst of inspiration like a deep run at All England more than now. International results have dried up, and badminton is struggling to provide happy headlines like it once did, with multiple contenders.

THE INDIAN INTEREST

LAKSHYA SEN

Though Sen will have father DK Sen and Korean Yoo Yong-Sung in his coaching corner guiding him through a relatively simple draw, the word out of Bengaluru is that women's head coach Indonesian Irwansyah is likely to offer key inputs to the Sen campaign, having been based out of the Padukone academy these past months.

SATWIK-CHIRAG

The new world order is upon India's finest doubles pair, as they start against Danish Daniel Lundgaard and Mads Vestergaard, ranked No.28. Double Olympic champions Wang Chi-Lin (with Chiu Hsiang) or Chinese Xie-Zeng, better than their ranking of 33, could be next. And their new Malaysian nemesis Goh-Izzuddin or older Korean ones Seo-Kim make it a tough draw.

TREESA-GAYATRI

Twice semifinalists in this tournament, they had a decent World Tour Finals. The pairing is capable of upsetting some big names, and face a Chinese Taipei pair - always tricky in Round 1 - Koreans Kim-Kong next and Chinese power-pairing Liu-Tan in the quarters. It's as tough a draw as they could have landed.

PV SINDHU

She starts against Kim Ga Eun, but Han Yue (1-7 vs Sindhu) makes even a



PV Sindhu will take on South Korea's GE Kim on Tuesday. *File*

second round sound ominous now. The Indian can beat Gregoria Tunjung on a very good day in the quarters, but the odds are stacked. The Sindhu of old would've chomped through this draw, right to the final, but Wang Zhi Yi isn't the Chinese she can stomp past now.

HS PRANNOY

Frenchman Toma Popov first up, and Li Shifeng / Ginting in Round 2. An all-India quarterfinal (Sen vs Prannoy) would count as decent progress, though Shi Yuqi is the man to beat in their half.

Live on JioHotstar, Star Sports 2/2HD, 3.30 pm onwards

Para-athletics classification: Test before real test

PRITISH RAJ
NEW DELHI, MARCH 10

INDIA WILL host the World Para-Athletics Grand Prix at the Capital's Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium from Tuesday. The three-day event will witness participation of 250 competitors from 20 countries.

Various event categories based on the impairments of the athletes is the basis of para sport. In Para-Athletics, the classification process is multiple-layered and takes into consideration various factors. This can often result in confusion and even disqualification of athletes, sometimes just before an event or even after they have won a medal.

The Indian Express explains the finer points of the classification process that takes place during Para-Athletics events.

What is classification in Para-Athletics?

It is a process that determines which athlete will compete against each other in an event. It is done to group together athletes with similar levels of physical ability to allow fair competition.

What are the criteria for classification?

The main criteria for any para-athlete to be eligible for a classification are: an underlying health condition which is permanent in nature and meets the minimum impairment criteria. Examples of Minimum Impairment Criteria are the maximum

height defined for athletes with short stature, or the level of amputation defined for athletes with limb deficiency.

What are the sports classes in which athletes are classified?

A sports class groups athletes with similar impairments to ensure fair competition. They are based on the type and extent of eligible impairment, such as vision impairment (T11-13), intellectual impairment (T20), coordination impairment (T35-38), short stature (T40-41), limb deficiency or impaired muscle power (T42-47, T61-64), and wheelchair racing (T32-34, T51-54). The numbers represent the level of impairment; the lower the number, the more severe the impairment.

How is classification done?

In Para-Athletics, classification is done for three types of impairment: Physical, Vision, and Intellectual. There are three stages for classification: Physical Assessment, Technical Assessment, and Observational assessment.

In the first stage (physical assessment), the athletes are assessed to decide whether they are medically fit or not. They are judged on 10 parameters by a certified physiotherapist or medical practitioner. In case of intellectual impairment, the athletes go through sport-specific tests like running and jumping.

In the second stage (technical assessment), the athlete's technique is judged as it should be in sync with the impairment the athlete has claimed. Any kind of conflict would result in an athlete getting disqualified. In case of intellectual impairment, athletes take a computer test to determine their intellect under the supervision of an expert.

The third stage (observational assess-



India's para jumper Pravin Kumar. *File*

ment) is for impairments or groups which don't have fixed classification. Injuries involving spinal cord fall under the non-fixed sports class while the likes of limb amputations and short stature are included in the fixed sports class.

What happens during observational assessment?

Usually the fixed sports class classification is done during the first two stages after which the athletes receive their classification. For the non-fixed sports class involving Hypertonia (increased muscle tension and reduced muscle stretchability caused by central nervous system damage), Ataxia (uncoordinated movement due to central nervous system damage), and Athetosis (continual slow involuntary movement), the classification panel also observes the athletes during competition.

"Classification is an ever-evolving process. During the observational assessment, we look at athletes and how they be-

have on the field. The observation is done to make sure that the athlete has been classified in the right sports class," Manish Rana, Head of classifications, Paralympic Committee of India, told *The Indian Express*.

Where is classification done?

Classification is important for athletes to participate in international events. It is usually done at events like the World GP. Bigger tournaments such as Paralympics and Asian Para Games don't offer classification slots. So, for any athlete to participate in these events, they need to get classified at events such as GP.

Who does the classification?

The classification panel consists of certified classifiers from the International Paralympic Committee and classifiers certified by the National Paralympic Committees (NPCs).

What is the validity of the classification issued to the athletes?

There are three types of classification validity: Confirmed (C), Review with Next Available Opportunity (R-NAO), and Review with Fixed Review Date (R-FRD).

Confirmed classification is for athletes who meet the criteria of classification and their impairment is unlikely to change over time. R-NAO is for the athletes who have barely met the criteria or are having a protest request from an NPC or World Para Athletics, or have a medical review request from the classifiers for re-evaluation. R-FRD is for the athletes who have an evolving impairment and require timely evaluation. The FRD period is usually two years. Athletes may need to be reclassified multiple times throughout their careers, especially if their impairments progress or change.

India's first-ever Para-Athletics Grand Prix gets underway today

PRITISH RAJ
NEW DELHI, MARCH 10

THE TRACK at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium in New Delhi was painted with fresh paint and the workers were laying down a new ramp at the entrance of the classification office for smooth operation of wheelchairs as the national capital gears up to host its first-ever World Para-Athletics Grand Prix.

The tournament will run from 11th March to 13th March and feature more than 280 para-athletes from 20 countries. India will field a contingent of 145 para-athletes across disciplines, including Paris Paralympics gold medalists Praveen (High Jump T64), Navdeep (Javelin F41), and Dharambir (Club Throw F51). However, big names such as double Paralympic champion Sumit Antil and double Paralympic medalist Yogesh Kathuniya will be missing.

The event will feature over 90 competitions and witness participation from elite para-athletes representing 20 countries. Saudi Arabia, Germany, Kazakhstan, Australia, Brazil, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Japan, and Sri Lanka will be among the participating nations.

The World Grand Prix is one of the most important events of the Para-Athletics calendar as it serves as the platform for para-athletes to get themselves classified in the right sport class. Once classification is done, the para-athlete is eligible to play in the international tournaments.

Usually, India gets 4 or 5 slots during the other events but as hosts, India has been awarded 58 slots this time.

"Usually what happens is that we have to

CL: Liverpool hope to protect slender lead vs Paris St-Germain

ASSOCIATED PRESS
MILAN, MARCH 10

DEFENDING CHAMPION Real Madrid, Liverpool and Barcelona all have one-goal leads to protect going into the second leg of the Champions League round of 16 this week.

For Madrid there is also city bragging rights at stake as it visits Atletico Madrid on Wednesday with a 2-1 advantage from the first leg, while Liverpool hosts Paris Saint Germain on Tuesday knowing it was fortunate to snatch a 1-0 win in France.

Barcelona also only has a 1-0 advantage over Benfica, while some other teams are feeling a lot more comfortable - with Bayern Munich having beaten Bayer Leverkusen 3-0 and Arsenal crushing PSV Eindhoven 7-1.

Liverpool's players don't really care how they're winning - as long as they continue to do so. Arne Slot's team had to withstand a barrage of attacks at Parc des Princes before a late goal from Harvey Elliott, who had only just come off the bench, saw it stun PSG.

That was only Liverpool's second attempt on target compared to a whopping 28 for PSG. The runaway Premier League leader had another poor performance on Saturday but still managed to come away with a victory over Southampton. "It's just about winning, not how we win. Sometimes you have to win dirty and today was one of them days," Elliott said after that match. "I think we know that's what winners do really: when times are hard, what do you do? How can you come up with something to win the game? Luckily this squad is full of them players." This week will be decisive for Liverpool's treble bid as it plays Newcastle in the English League Cup final on Sunday.

"I think the best possible way to describe it is four finals, really," Elliott said. "PSG away, really, really tough game, today was a really tough game, then again on Tuesday another tough game and then the final on the weekend. So, we just need to make sure that energy-wise we're still there. We're still fighting, we're still hungry to achieve things this season, although it's a very tough period." The loss to Liverpool was PSG's first defeat since November and halted a run of 10 straight wins for the French team.

Madrid derby

This was supposed to be the year Atletico finally got the best of Real Madrid in the Champions League after losing two finals to its city rival and being eliminated the other two times they faced off in the knockout rounds. Going into the first leg, Atletico was ahead of Madrid in the Spanish league and was also undefeated in the past four Madrid derbies. But it is now on the verge of going out yet again to its neighbor.

Atletico has also slipped behind in La Liga after two late goals saw it lose 2-1 at Getafe at the weekend, while Madrid managed to grind out a 2-1 victory over Rayo Vallecano.

Madrid coach Carlo Ancelotti was also able to rotate his squad and was further boosted by the return of Jude Bellingham. The England midfielder had missed three of his team's last four games through suspension - including the first leg against Atletico.

It's not just Liverpool which has its eye on lifting a trio of trophies this season. Atletico, Real and Barcelona are also in the semifinals of the Spanish Cup and fighting it out at the top of the league table.

Playing tonight: *Barcelona vs Benfica (11.15pm); Liverpool vs PSG, Atletico Madrid vs Real Madrid, Leverkusen vs Bayern, (all 1.30 am), Live on Sony Sports Network*

send our para-athletes to different Grand Prix events for classification as it is necessary for international participation. As we are hosts, we will get more classification slots and it will reduce the costing significantly," explained Manish Rana, Director Sports Development and Performance, Paralympic Committee of India.

The tournament will also serve as the dry run for the World Para Athletics Championships scheduled in the same stadium from 27th September to 5th October 2025. With 29 medals in the 2024 Paralympics edition, India has seen a surge in interest for Para-sports with Para-Athletics being at the center. PCI president and former Paralympic champion Devendra Jhajharia believes that this tournament will allow more para-athletes to experience the international standard.

"In 2004, I went to the Athens Paralympics paying from my own pocket but if you look now, our performance at the Paralympics 2024 has made a statement in front of the world and our athletes don't have to go anywhere outside to compete at the elite level," Devendra told *The Indian Express*. "I have been part of many World Grand Prix before, but I can assure that this is going to be one of the best Grand Prix and we will make it historic."

Paralympic champion javelin thrower Navdeep Singh will lead the Indian contingent along with Praveen in high jump, Preeti Pal in 100m and 200m, and Dharambir in Club Throw.

The Indian contingent finished last month's Dubai World Para GP with 21 medals, including nine gold, eight silver, and four bronze medals.

