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Slimhide

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Space Saving

Pained, says Dhankhar as Opp questions Jayant speech on Bharat Ratna



Rajya Sabha Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar

DEEPTIMAN TIWARY & AMRITA NAYAK DUTTA
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 10

RAJYA SABHA Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar on Saturday said he was "pained" and "ashamed", and even felt like resigning, after members of Congress and other opposition parties questioned his decision to allow RLD chief Jayant Chaudhary to speak on the Bharat Ratna conferred on his grandfather and former Prime Minister Chaudhary Charan Singh.

Dhankhar also accused Leader of Opposition Mallikarjun Kharge of insulting Charan Singh and his legacy.

As soon as Rajya Sabha proceedings began in the morning,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

RAM TEMPLE DISCUSSION IN LAST SITTING OF 17TH LOK SABHA

Modi played unparalleled role in uniting nation: House chairs

The resolution will give constitutional powers to future generations to take pride in their heritage: Modi



Prime Minister Narendra Modi in Lok Sabha on Saturday. PTI

HARIKISHAN SHARMA
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 10

THE CHAIRS of both Houses of Parliament Saturday praised Prime Minister Narendra Modi for playing an "unparalleled role" in uniting the entire nation on the "auspicious occasion" of the consecration of the Ram temple in Ayodhya.

Addressing the Lok Sabha after a discussion on Ram temple in which 26 members including Union Home Minister Amit Shah participated, Speaker Om Birla said, "January 22, 2024, has filled

every corner of the country with amazing joy and enthusiasm... It has become a national festival, about which our generations will continue to be enthralled for ages... Our Honourable Prime Minister has played an unparalleled role in uniting the entire nation on this auspicious occasion associated with Lord Ram..."

We all are very proud to pass this resolution related to the grand temple of Lord Shri Ram, which has become a symbol of the sentiment of the people in Ayodhya."

The same address was read out in Rajya Sabha by its ex-officio Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar in the presence of Prime Minister Modi.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Cong plays safe, extols Ram's values to slam govt

MANOJ CG
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 10

FORCED TO join a debate in Parliament on the opening of the Ram Temple, the Congress and a handful of other opposition parties – from the INDIA bloc did not participate in the discussions in both Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha – accused the BJP of spreading hatred and animosity in the name of Ram and using religion to secure power but skirted the issue of thinning of the line that demarcates religion and state.

Congress leaders repeatedly

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

EPFO board proposes 8.25% for 2023-24, highest in three years

AANCHAL MAGAZINE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 10

E. EXPLAINED Record income, higher surplus

THE CENTRAL Board of Trustees of the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) Saturday recommended a higher interest rate of 8.25 per cent for financial year 2023-24 for its over 29 crore total subscribers. This will be the highest rate of interest for EPF subscribers in the last three years

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

INSIDE



HALDWANI STILL ON EDGE, INTEL WARNED DEMOLITION COULD SPARK VIOLENCE

KEJRIWAL: AAP WILL CONTEST ALL SEATS IN PUNJAB AND CHANDIGARH PAGES 9, 6

In U-19 cricketers' journey to WC final, meet those who laid ground for them

PRATYUSH RAJ
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 10

THE FLIGHT from Mumbai to South Africa for India's Under-19 cricketers was long and tiring. The trek to the final, where they will meet Australia on Sunday in a repeat of the senior men's World Cup final, was also tough.



A 7-year-old Sachin Dhas with his father Sanjay

Their real journey, though, was several years in the making. Many of these young cricketers left the comforts of their hometown, and the warmth of their relatives and friends, so that they could realise their cricketing dreams.

Uday Saharan, the captain, was only 12 when he shifted

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



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12.02.2024 (Monday) Opening of Help Desk and commencement of e-Registration

11.03.2024 (Monday) (06.00 PM) Closing Time of e-Registration and online EMD submission

13.03.2024 (Wednesday) Online Bidding for Residential Plots (42) and Institutional Plots (28)

14.03.2024 (Thursday) Online Bidding for Industrial Plots (10), Built up Shops (141), Commercial Plots (12), CNG/Green Fuel Sites (02) and Group Housing Plots (03)

15.03.2024 (Friday) Online Bidding for Small Size Residential Plots (13), Function Sites (78), Mobile Towers (16), Kiosks (07) and Janak Place Shops (11)

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Mumbai: ED registers money laundering case against former NCB zonal chief Wankhede

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
MUMBAI, FEBRUARY 10

THE ENFORCEMENT Directorate (ED) registered a case of money laundering against former Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) zonal director Sameer Wankhede, who is accused of demanding a bribe of Rs 25 crore from family members of the arrested accused in the 2021 Cordelia cruise ship drug bust case, including actor Shah Rukh Khan's son Aryan Khan. Wankhede is likely to be summoned soon.

A senior police officer from the agency confirmed the development and said that an Enforcement Case Information Report (ECIR) was registered against the IRS officer on the basis of a first information report (FIR) registered by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) in May 2023.

"Three other NCB officers have been summoned for questioning," an officer said.

The ED had registered the said ECIR in 2023. It is surprising that this ECIR is based on the CBI FIR which is already under question before the Bombay HC. Since the matter is subjudice, I do not intend to comment further. I will give the appropriate reply in the court at the appropriate time. I reiterate that I have full faith in the Indian judiciary. Satyamev Jayate," Wankhede said.

A source said that Wankhede has filed a writ petition in the Bombay High Court against the ED. A 2008-batch IRS officer, Wankhede, who then headed the NCB Mumbai zone, had led a team of officers to raid the ship off the Mumbai coast on the night of October 2, 2021. The NCB had claimed to have seized 13 gm of cocaine, 5 gm of mephedrone, 21 gm of marijuana, 22 pills of

MDMA and Rs 1.33 lakh cash in the raid, and arrested 17 people, including Aryan. Aryan was released on bail by the Bombay High Court 26 days after the raid.

Eventually, another NCB team that investigated the matter dropped his name from the chargesheet, citing insufficient evidence. Wankhede was later accused of a "shoddy investigation".

The CBI spokesperson had said, "We have registered an FIR against Sameer Wankhede, the then Zonal Director of NCB (Mumbai Zone Unit); Vishwa Vijay Singh, then Superintendent (NCB); Ashish Ranjan, then Intelligence Officer of Mumbai Zonal Unit (NCB); K P Gosavi and Sanjile D'Souza (alleged witness) and other unknown persons."

"It has been alleged that the three officials of NCB Mumbai Zone, in order to obtain undue advantage from the persons/others in the case no 94/2021... earlier registered and investigated under the supervision of Wankhede, had entered into criminal conspiracy with others and allegedly obtained undue advantage in the form of bribes from the alleged accused." It has also been alleged that the accused persons entered into conspiracy in order to extort an amount of around Rs 25 crore from the family members of the alleged accused... by threatening them of the accusation of offences of possession of narcotics substances as per the alleged directions of Wankhede being the supervisory officer. A Rs 50-lakh token amount as bribe was allegedly obtained in... this conspiracy..." the spokesperson said.

The CBI had also conducted searches at 29 locations across Mumbai, Delhi, Ranchi, Lucknow, Chennai and Guwahati, which led to recovery of incriminating material, sources said.

RSS leader, adopted daughter 'murdered at Amroha house'

AMIT SHARMA
MEERUT, FEBRUARY 10

A 67-YEAR-OLD RSS leader and prominent jeweller in Uttar Pradesh's Amroha district, Yogesh Chand Agarwal, was killed along with his adopted daughter at their residence late Friday night. Police said that it was likely that jewellery and cash was stolen from the house.

Agarwal was the district chief of the Amroha Vyapar Mandal and a patron of the Sewa Bharti, a wing of the RSS. His son and daughter-in-law were sleeping in a separate portion of the house in the Katra Ghulam Ali locality.

FROM PAGE ONE | FULL REPORT ON WWW.INDIANEXPRESS.COM

Modi played 'unparalleled' role

Delivering the valedictory address in the last sitting of the 17th Lok Sabha and referring to the "resolution on Ram temple that this House has passed," Prime Minister Modi said, "It will give constitutional powers to the future generations of the country to take pride in its heritage." He said the resolution comprises samvedna (sensitivity), sankalp (resolve) and sahanubhuti (sympathy) along with the mantra of "Sabka Saath Sabka Vikas".

On the Lok Sabha elections, the Prime Minister said, "Chunav bahut door nahin hain. Kuchh longon ko ghobarahat hoti hogi. (Elections are not far away. Some people might be nervous)." Modi said the next 25 years are very important for our country. "Political activities have their place but the aspirations, expectations, dreams and resolve of the country is that these 25 years are something in which the country will achieve the desired results," he said.

Noting that the 17th Lok Sabha recorded a productivity of 97 per cent, Modi said, "I am confident that as we conclude the 17th Lok Sabha, we will transition into the 18th Lok Sabha with a resolution to achieve more than 100 per cent productivity."

Elaborating on the key business agenda transacted by the current Lok Sabha, the Prime Minister mentioned abrogation of Article 370 and the Bharatiya Nyaya Sahita. "This same House re-

moved Article 370... For 75 years after independence, our justice system was dictated by the rules made by the Britishers. But now, our future generations will proudly say that they live in a society that follows Nyaya Sahita and not 'Dand Sanhita'... We can say with satisfaction that many things for which many generations waited were completed through this 17th Lok Sabha. The wait of the generations is over," he said.

Referring to the Covid-19 period, Modi said that in these five years, mankind faced the biggest crisis of this century. "Remembering the challenging times of Covid, I want to express my gratitude to the members of Parliament who decided to relinquish their privileges in times of need without a second thought," Modi said.

Discussing the construction of the New Parliament building, Modi said, "Everyone used to discuss that there should be a new building of the Parliament. But no decision used to be taken. It was your (Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla) leadership that decided this, held meetings with the government and as a result, the country received this new Parliament building."

The Parliament will continue to inspire its members to leave behind a legacy and work to fulfil the dreams and aspirations of future generations with the collective effort of all its members. Modi said

the last five years in the country have been of "reform, perform and transform".

Earlier in the day, during the discussion on Ram temple, Home Minister Amit Shah said January 22 marked the "end of a struggle on this auspicious occasion associated with Lord Ram. He followed the difficult Yama-Niyamas with complete dedication for the ritual of consecration of the idol of Shri Ramlalla. During this, he also visited important pilgrimage places associated with Lord Shri Ram from Nashik to Lepakshi and Tripuray to Rameshwaram and gave the message of national unity. This journey has once again made the countrymen experience the power of unity in diversity, and has awakened a wonderful, spiritual consciousness in the entire public," Birla said.

Soon after the discussion, Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla addressed the House under Rule 360, and said, "The construction of a grand and divine temple of Lord Shri Ram at his birthplace in the ancient holy city of Ayodhya is a historic and glorious achievement for the country. All of us MPs, with full unity, obeisance and devotion, join the joy and enthusiasm of the countrymen on this occasion and also appreciate it through this resolution. This is an unforgettable moment in the country's development journey, which is extremely important for India socially, culturally and historically."

"January 22, 2024 has filled every corner of the country with amazing joy and enthusiasm. There was a lot of discussion about Ram temple in different cultures around the world. A sea of faith was seen rising everywhere. It has

become a national festival, about which our generations will continue to be enthralled for ages," he said.

"Our Honourable Prime Minister has played an unparalleled role in uniting the entire nation on this auspicious occasion associated with Lord Ram. He followed the difficult Yama-Niyamas with complete dedication for the ritual of consecration of the idol of Shri Ramlalla. During this, he also visited important pilgrimage places associated with Lord Shri Ram from Nashik to Lepakshi and Tripuray to Rameshwaram and gave the message of national unity. This journey has once again made the countrymen experience the power of unity in diversity, and has awakened a wonderful, spiritual consciousness in the entire public," Birla said.

"After centuries of tapasya (penance), the temple of Lord Shri Ram being built in Ayodhya has started a new era of good governance and public welfare in the country. We all are very proud to pass this resolution related to the grand temple of Lord Shri Ram, which has become a symbol of the sentiments of the people in Ayodhya. We are confident that this historic achievement will convey the values of hope, unity and collectivism to the coming generations. Along with this, it will also deepen the feeling of unity in diversity of our country," he said.

• EPFO board proposes 8.25% for 2023-24, highest in three years

and comes ahead of the Lok Sabha elections.

After maintaining the interest rate at 8.5 per cent in 2019-20 and 2020-21, the EPFO had cut it in 2021-22 to 8.1 per cent, the lowest in four decades. It hiked it marginally to 8.15 per cent in 2022-23, and further to 8.25 per cent for the current financial year.

The Ministry of Labour and Employment will now send the interest rate recommendation of 8.25 per cent for 2023-24 to the Ministry of Finance for ratification. After the ministry's consent, the EPFO would credit the rate of interest for this fiscal to the EPF subscribers.

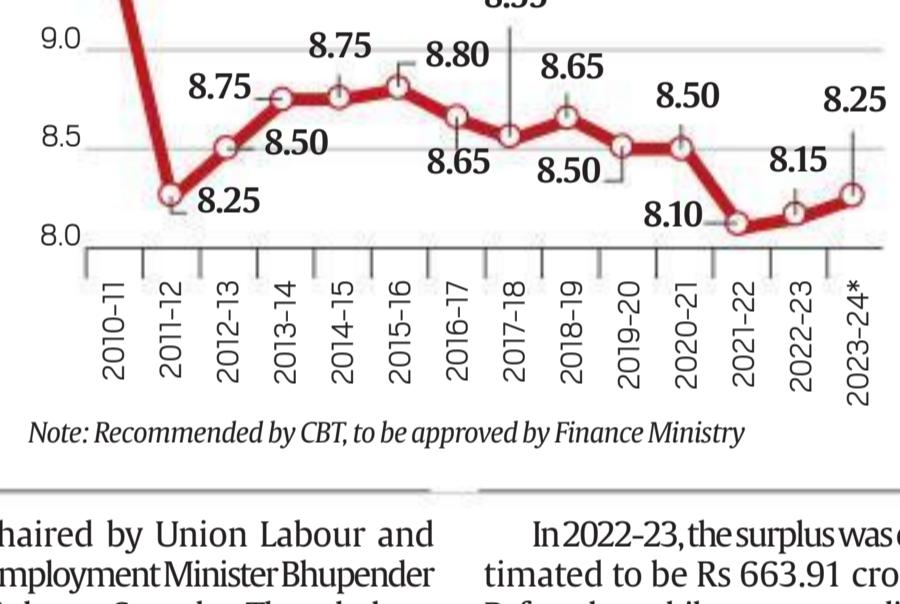
With the 8.25 per cent payout to subscribers, the EPFO is expected to retain a surplus of Rs 278 crore in FY24 (2023-24), a source said. "These are provisional estimates as the financial year is yet to end. But the surplus is seen higher than last year," EPFO's Central Provident Fund Commissioner Neelam Shami Rao said.

On Saturday, the Labour and Employment Ministry said the Board has recommended a distribution of "historic income amount of Rs 1,07,000 crore" to EPF members' accounts on a total principal amount of about Rs 13 lakh crore in 2023-24. This compares with EPF's income of Rs 91,151.66 crore and Rs 11.02 lakh crore principal amount in the financial year 2022-23.

The decision to recommend a hike in the EPF interest rate was taken in the 235th CBT meeting chaired by Union Labour and Employment Minister Bhupender Yadav on Saturday. Though there was no official announcement immediately after the meeting, Yadav posted on social media platform X, "The 235th meeting of the Central Board of Trustees, EPFO, today has recommended 8.25 per cent as rate of interest on Employees' Provident Fund deposits for 2023-24," he said.

The Labour and Employment Ministry said the recommended interest rate will be notified after approval by the Ministry of Finance. "This interest rate will be officially notified in the government gazette after approval by the Ministry of Finance. Subsequently, EPFO will credit the approved rate of interest into its subscribers' accounts," a statement by the ministry said.

EPF INTEREST RATES



In 2022-23, the surplus was estimated to be Rs 663.91 crore. Before that while recommending the rate of interest for FY 2021-22 at 8.1 per cent, EPFO had projected a surplus of Rs 449.34 crore but, in fact, had ended up with a deficit of Rs 197.72 crore, which was flagged by the Finance Ministry last year.

On July 3, 2023, when the interest rate proposal for 2022-23 was sent to the Finance Ministry for its approval through a letter written to Economic Affairs Secretary Ajay Seth by Labour and Employment Secretary Arati Ahuja, the key point of discussion was the surplus and deficit levels of the retirement fund body. Flagging the deficit for 2021-22, the Finance Ministry had suggested that the high EPF interest rates need to be

looked at along with an advice to the EPFO to make the interest rate

recommendations of CBT public only after the approval of the Finance Ministry.

The gains in EPFO's books have come mainly on account of lower revised estimates for payment towards claims in 2023-24. As per the EPFO's financial estimates viewed by The Indian Express that were shared in the CBT meeting, payment towards settlement of claims was estimated to rise 19.5 per cent to Rs 62,178.78 crore for 2023-24 from the actual amount of Rs 52,034.75 crore in 2022-23.

However, the retirement fund body has now revised the amount likely to be paid towards settlement of claims to Rs 57,238.22 crore for 2023-24, which is about 8 percent lower than the budgeted estimate and about 10 per cent higher than the actual amount seen in FY23.

Similarly, the amount likely to be paid towards advances has been revised lower to Rs 65,754.17 crore in 2023-24 from the budget estimate of Rs 70,748.65 crore. The amount for advances was at Rs 59,776.52 crore in 2022-23. It is estimated to increase to Rs 72,329.59 crore in 2024-25.

The sustainability of the high interest rates announced by the EPFO have been questioned several times by the Finance Ministry in the last few years. The Finance Ministry has nudged the EPFO to reduce the interest rate in line with the overall interest rate scenario as it continues to offer the highest interest rate among other saving instruments.

• As Under-19 cricketers reach WC final, meet those who laid ground for them

from his home in Rajasthan's Sri Gangana district to Punjab's Fazilka district, 80 km away, so that he could get better training facilities. Vice captain Saumy Pandey and his parents moved from Bharatpur in Madhya Pradesh's Sidhi district to a rented accommodation in Rewa, 40 km away, so that Saumy could stay close to his cricketing academy. Arshin Kulkarni made the 250-km journey from Solapur to Pune. Pacer Raj Limbani undertook a 550-km journey from Dayapar, a village near the Pakistan border in Rann of Kutch, to Baroda.

Behind all of them has been a

supportive family or a cricket tragic father, nursing their own shattered cricketing dreams. Saharan's father, Sanjeev, was called the Gavaskar of Sri Gangana. Unable to forge a cricketing career, he cleared BCCI's Level 1 coaching and started his academy. Even before Saharan was born, he had made up his mind that his son would become a cricketer. "My coach was Arjun Naidu, a legend for Rajasthan and Rajputana. Till his last breath, he used to tell me that if I had gone to Jaipur, I would have played the Ranji Trophy. But I made sure my son would not meet the same fate as me," he says.

Sometimes, he had to show tough love. The first time he dropped off Uday, then 12, in Mohali for a U14 camp, he got a call from his son saying he couldn't stay alone. "For the next few days, I kept making excuses that I would visit him tomorrow. I never did," he tells The Sunday Express.

Similarly, Kulkarni's father Atul, a paediatrician who has a hospital in Solapur, had no qualms in relocating to Pune so that his son could live the cricketing dream that he could not. "We all

are doctors in our family. I used to play cricket and so did Arshin's grandfather. When I saw the spark

in him, I decided straight away that I would give him the best facilities," says Atul Kulkarni, who is in South Africa.

Limbani's father was not a cricket nut, but Vasanthai Patel was sick of seeing his son battling the harsh climate. The passion in his son's eyes forced him to pack Limbani off to Baroda, where the children of their family used to go for studies. "I have seen him battling heat strokes in summers. Then I decided to send him to Baroda, where my elder brother was posted," says Patel, a farmer.

Behind the rise of each of these cricketers has been their family.

• Painted, says Dhankhar as Opp questions Jayant speech on Bharat Ratna

Chaudhary was allowed to speak by the Chair. In his short speech, he praised the BJP government for its decision to honour Charan Singh, and rued that it is being seen through a political prism and is being linked to elections and political alliances.

"I admit I was with the Opposition for 10 years. I started sitting here (treasury benches) just a while ago. I have seen glimpses of Charan Singh's ideals in the working of this government in the last 10 years," he said. "Only a government which is rooted in ground realities, understands the voices from the ground and strengthens them can honour 'Dhartuputra' Charan Singh with Bharat Ratna."

The Opposition MPs raised objections, asking under which rule had Chaudhary been allowed to speak on the Bharat Ratna. "There

is no debate on honouring leaders with Bharat Ratna. I salute everyone (those honoured). But if a member wants to raise an issue, you ask under which rule... under which rule he is being allowed to speak. Give us permission too," Kharb told Dhankhar.

He said that while Dhankhar talks about rules and he has the discretion, the discretion should be used judiciously and not when he wants. Kharb also accused the Chairman of not following the rules, leading to an uproar in the House.

Leader of the House and Union Minister Piyush Goyal asked Kharb to apologise to the Chair as well as the nation for his remarks. Union minister Parshottam Rupala said he was surprised that the Congress was "opposing" conferring of Bharat Ratna to Charan Singh. "The Leader of Opposition

is challenging the Chair and on such an occasion," he said. "Congress has been exposed."

Accusing Kharb of insulting Charan Singh, Dhankhar said such an environment in the House is an insult to every farmer in the country and everyone's head should bow in shame because of this.

He also warned Congress MP Jairam Ramesh for his remarks against Chaudhary. "You are a person who can feast on the cremation ground... you do not deserve to be part of the House by this misconduct," Dhankhar said.

Making an emotional speech later in the day, Dhankhar said, "The hurt to the dignity of the House while I was sitting in this Chair was a matter of pain for me today. I believe that every member of this House is proud that this award has been conferred on this great son of the nation. It was ob-

noxious that his grandson, on his written request, would be given an opportunity to speak in the House."

Charan Singh did not belong to a family but the whole country. The conduct that I saw, and you saw too, was unprecedented, offensive and painful. The conduct of some members was so petty that I was ashamed. Many thoughts came to my mind, one was of resignation too," Dhankhar said, seeking the House's attention with folded hands.

"I can tell you, I have had many tough moments in my life. I have lost my grown-up son. But today's pain... When Jayant Chaudhary was speaking, what was Jairam Ramesh saying? I heard it. 'Jao ja han ja na hai. (Go wherever you want). Celebrations are not made over cremation grounds. This behaviour cannot be ignored. I have

• Cong extols Ram's values

said in both Houses that the path for construction of



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'CANCEL HIRING, REINSTATE OLD CRITERIA'

Home guards protest new recruitment drive

SAMAN HUSAIN
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 10

RAISING SLOGANS of "home guard *ekta zindabad*" and "*ladenge jeetenge*", hundreds of home guards protested at Jantar Mantar on Saturday against a recent announcement calling for fresh recruits. Last month, the Directorate General of Home Guards announced 10,285 vacancies; the last date to apply is February 13.

Among the 8,624-strong force — whose tenure ends on March 31 — many who are middle-aged and have been serving for the past 5–15 years raised concerns about job security as the age criteria for tenure of service has now been reduced from 60 to 45 years. They demanded that the recruitment be cancelled and the previous criteria be reinstated.

Addressing protesters, Rohit Gautam, a home guard from Jauhripur who heads their union, said, "The Delhi Home Guard is such an entity that gives jobs only to snatch them away later, I appeal to the public to not fill the application form."

First raised in India in December 1946, the Home Guard is a voluntary force that assists police. Typically, their tenure spans three years, with a yearly extension of up to five years. The last recruitment was in 2019; some home guards were deployed as marshals on city buses then. The



During the protest at Jantar Mantar, Saturday. Cagendra Yadav

drive has since been delayed due to various reasons, including protests, Covid pandemic, and election-related activities.

Anil Sharma, a home guard at the DCP office in Hauz Khas, said, "Most of us are 45 and 50 plus, will we find new work at this age? We have families to care for, our kids are still in school... with the current unemployment situation in the country, finding a job as a security guard will also be difficult at this age."

Another home guard, Devender Sharma, expressed frustration over unfulfilled promises of promotion to the commando force, and said, "Today, we are only asking for our right to employment for which we have proved ourselves by giving multiple written and physical exams before every extension."

They have also written a letter

to L-G VK Saxena and the Union Home Minister to amend the Delhi Home Guard Rules to ensure that the service of the 8,624 home guards currently serving continues till the age of 60.

When contacted, Delhi government sources claimed the matter needs to be dealt with by the L-G House. Sources from the L-G house said, "This is not a reserved subject, home guards come under the home department and their recruitment is done by the Delhi government. The proposal was made by them, we have just approved it. Age criteria was reduced from 60 to 45 to ensure home guards are physically fit during their tenure — also a Delhi government proposal."

To this, government sources said, "Recruitment is with the Delhi government but services are with L-G, so the L-G office should be dealing with the matter."

Revenge plot or dispute over social media post? Cops probe motive in salon murders

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 10

A DAY after two men were shot dead inside a salon in Southwest Delhi's Najafgarh, senior police officers believe the assailants wanted to exact revenge on the deceased for allegedly leaking information about their associates to police.

Officers also said that they are also probing if a dispute over a social media post led to the murders. Police are yet to nab the shooters.

A senior police officer said, "The accused persons, Sanjeev Dahiya alias Sanju and Harsh alias Chintu... came on a two-wheeler to the salon where the victims, Ashish and Sonu, were getting a haircut and shot them in front of the employees."

Purported CCTV footage of the incident, which surfaced on social media, shows one of the



The armed assailants at the Najafgarh salon. Screengrab from video

victims, Ashish, pleading with the attacker, Harsh, before he was shot in the head at point-blank range. An employee opens a door, comes out, sees the man, and runs back inside.

According to officers, Harsh was recently released on bail from Tihar jail. Police sources said Dahiya is a lawyer with the Delhi High Court and his father is an ASI of Delhi Police in Dwarka.

The officer added that Harsh felt Ashish had leaked information regarding his associates to police, which in turn led to their arrest. "He (Harsh) then hatched a plan and held a meeting with few of his associates, including Dahiya, two days before the murder, where they planned the killing," he said. Officers said they are probing whether the murder was over a social media post that Ashish put up, which might have triggered Harsh.

On Friday, the accused got a tip-off from an informer that Ashish and Sonu were at a salon in Indra Park, and rushed to the

spot. "We are also ascertaining if the deceased persons have links to any rival gang members," said another officer. Ashish has two previous criminal cases against him, added police.

Currently, teams of the Crime Branch and Special Cell, along with district police, are on the lookout for the accused and have increased deployment around Delhi-NCR borders.

New Delhi: Police have booked two unidentified persons for allegedly robbing a cash collection agent of Rs 50 lakh near the Monastery Market flyover on Friday night, said officers.

Deputy Commissioner of Police (North) Manoj Kumar Meena said that the victim, Rajesh (36), said in the police complaint that the incident took place when he was heading to his house in Northeast Delhi's Khajuri Khas on his bike with a money consignment (Rs 50 lakh) by his employer, who is a plastic pellet businessman, on Friday.

The two accused, also on a bike, allegedly chased and intercepted Rajesh on the flyover. "The duo snatched the bag containing Rs 50 lakh, kept near Rakesh's feet, and fled..." said Meena.

A robbery case has been registered at Civil Lines police station and a probe is on, said officers. ENS

ABVP, Left clash during meet on holding JNUSU polls

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 10

A SCUFFLE broke out late Friday night at Delhi's Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) between students belonging to the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) and Left-associated groups, including the All India Students' Association (AISA) and Democratic Students Federation (DSF) among others, with both sides claiming several were injured in the melee.

The student groups clashed during the University General Body Meeting (UGBM) held at the Sabarmati Dhaba on campus to elect members of the election commission for the 2024 JNU Students' Union (JNUSU) polls.

DCP (Southeast) Rohit Meena said, "There was a scuffle in the GBM. We are in contact with the JNU administration and are examining the matter." Police said they have got complaints from the ABVP and Left student bodies.

Said an officer, "Harsh is the brother of jailed gangster Yogesh alias Tunda... the latter is among those accused of killing gangster Tillu Tajpuriya. Ashish had sheltered a few of Harsh's associates, who were also members of Tunda's gang, a few months ago. However, they were arrested by police within a few days."

The officer added that Harsh felt Ashish had leaked information regarding his associates to police, which in turn led to their arrest. "He (Harsh) then hatched a plan and held a meeting with few of his associates, including Dahiya, two days before the murder, where they planned the killing," he said. Officers said they are probing whether the murder was over a social media post that Ashish put up, which might have triggered Harsh.

On Friday, the accused got a tip-off from an informer that Ashish and Sonu were at a salon in Indra Park, and rushed to the

spot. "We are also ascertaining if the deceased persons have links to any rival gang members," said another officer. Ashish has two previous criminal cases against him, added police.

Currently, teams of the Crime Branch and Special Cell, along with district police, are on the lookout for the accused and have increased deployment around Delhi-NCR borders.

ministration's announcement of the start of the JNUSU elections for 2023–2024, the ABVP has teamed up with the administration to obstruct the UGBM called by the students, and halt the democratic process initiated for the conduct of the JNUSU election 2024."

Earlier on Friday, the JNUSU had collected a quorum — signatures from students, which is 1/10th of the university's strength — to start the UGBM process.

FULL REPORT
www.indianexpress.com

New Delhi World Book Fair
विश्व के सबसे बड़े पुस्तक मेले में आएं!
10-18 February 2024
11 AM-8 PM | Hall No. 1-5, Pragati Maidan
1000 से अधिक प्रकाशक
600+ साहित्यिक एवं सांस्कृतिक कार्यक्रम
Children's Pavilion | Festival of Festivals | Authors' Corner

CEO Speak
a forum for publishing

11 February 2024

In Focus

Artificial Intelligence and Multilingual Publishing
Challenges and Opportunities

Theme
बहुभाषी LINGUAL
भारत INDIA
एक जीवन का। A Living Tradition

INDIA भारत

GUEST OF HONOUR COUNTRY
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Books for All

Entry Free for :
Children in school uniform, Senior Citizens & Differently-abled

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JAYPEE PROJECTS

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Flats not delivered on time, years of litigation, mounting expenses — for buyers who purchased flats in Jaypee's housing projects, their dreams of a home have turned into a nightmare. While another firm was brought on board to take over construction, the finish line is far from close. What went wrong? **DHEERAJ MISHRA** finds out



NOIDA, FEBRUARY 10

IN 2010, when Rashmi Singh booked a 4-BHK flat in Crescent Homes, part of Jaypee's Wish Town project in Noida Sector 129, she had already begun to visualise what it would look like — from the colour scheme to the design of the false ceiling, glass windows to make it warm and cozy with the changing weather and even paintings she would hang up. For her nine-year-old daughter, she planned a special bedroom.

Fast forward to 2024, and the flat is nowhere in sight — all one can see on the plot is the basement of the 30-floor tower. A dejected Rashmi, now 52, said: "My flat is on the 7th floor... I can only guess where it may be by pointing towards the empty sky."

"My daughter was young then, and I thought I would make a beautiful room for her... *EK Maan hoon, ishiye Maa kejaisa hi sochti hoon...* Now, she is studying engineering... *Beti chhoti se badi ho gayi, lekin ghar ka koi nishan nahi,*" she added.

Over these past few years, Rashmi and 17,500 other homebuyers across 19 projects of Jaypee Infratech Limited (JIL), abutting the Yamuna Expressway, have been caught in a vicious cycle of litigation after insolvency proceedings were initiated against the firm in 2017 when it failed to deliver flats and defaulted on loans. The sheer number of aggrieved people makes it among the biggest cases undergoing resolution under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC), 2016.

While these projects are spread across two districts of Uttar Pradesh, over 90% of the buyers are in Noida alone. At Jaypee Greens Wish Town in Noida, being developed on approximately 1,063 acres, all its 16 projects, with around 250 towers, are in limbo.

For Rashmi, who hails from Meerut, the burden of the loan forced her to take up part-time work to meet expenses. "I've paid around Rs 50 lakh (for the house) in different installments. Along with the EMI, I'm also paying Rs 34,000 rent every month to live in Greater Noida," she said.

On March 7 last year, buyers were hopeful after the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) approved a resolution plan that involved a Mumbai-based real estate company, Suraksha Realty Limited, replacing JIL and completing the flats in a time-bound manner. But almost a year since the order, construction is yet to begin.

Waiting game

'A new and exciting place to live, work, play... developed on the concept of translating wishes into reality': On the Jaypee Greens website, these catchy lines, with photos of swanky condos with a lake and a golf course to boot flashing in the background, conjure up visions of a dream home.

For Indu Mehrotra (77), who retired from IIT-Roorkee as a professor, skeletons of buildings are all she can see. Around 11 years ago, she had booked a 4-bedroom flat in Garden Isles, a Y-shaped high-rise tower, in Noida's Sector 133 in Wish Town.

Her inspiration was none other than Jaiprakash Gaur, founder of the Jaypee group. An alumnus of IIT-Roorkee, Gaur was Chairman of the Board of Governors of IIT-Roorkee from May 2005 to February 2009.

"It was impressed by his lectures and working style. Jaypee was everywhere, be it roads, expressways, hotels, or high-rises. It was not just me, my colleagues in IIT too had bought flats. There was not an iota of doubt back then that something like this could happen. *Lekin ye Wish Town Hindi ka Vish ban gaya hai,*" said Mehrotra, whose housing society sold the flats with a rather ironic motto, 'Life surely can't get better than this!'

"I worked for around 40 years... and bought the flat when I retired. The idea was to finally live together with my family in one



Jaypee's Wish Town project along the Noida Expressway. Photos: Abhinav Saha



7 YEARS OF LITIGATION

JUNE 28, 2017: IDBI Bank files application in National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) to initiate Corporate Insolvency Resolution Process (CIRP) of Jaypee Infratech Limited (JIL)

AUG 9, 2017: NCLT orders CIRP of firm

NOV 6, 2019: Supreme Court orders completion of CIRP in 90 days

DEC 17, 2019: NBCC's resolution plan approved by Committee of Creditors (CoC), Suraksha Realty's plan rejected

MARCH 3, 2020: NCLT Principal Bench approves resolution plan with modifications

MARCH 20, 2020: NBCC files appeal in National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT) against modifications

AUG 6, 2020: Supreme Court transfers matter to itself

MARCH 24, 2021: Apex court orders fresh CIRP between both resolution applicants

JUNE 23, 2021: CoC approves Suraksha Realty's plan with 98.66% votes

MARCH 7, 2023: After almost 110 hearings/listings, NCLT approves Suraksha's plan; Income Tax dept., Jaypee Group and YEIDA file appeals in NCLAT.

No relief to IT dept from NCLAT, judgment reserved on Jaypee's appeal

JULY 12, 2023: Suraksha Realty submits proposal to UP govt through YEIDA for an out-of-court settlement

FEB 23, 2024: Next hearing of the matter in NCLAT

Anuj Jain, erstwhile IRP; and Kuldeep Verma, a representative of the homebuyers in the CoC.

As per the latest progress submitted by the IMC to the NCLT in January, construction is ongoing in 62 towers in four projects of Wish Town — Kosmos, Klassic, Kensington Boulevard, and Kensington Park Apartments and Heights — involving 6,067 home buyers.

It further said a notice inviting tenders for four other projects was uploaded on Jaypee Infratech's website; while two were scrapped, the other two are under evaluation.

As per the approved resolution plan, Suraksha Group will refund Rs 178 crore to 1,807 homebuyers of six projects that have not taken off. The company said the balance construction cost of the pending projects is Rs 6,404 crore (approx). Once it takes over the company, Suraksha will deliver homes in four years to 17,542 homebuyers.

Dave and Jain did not respond to queries from *The Indian Express*.

For Gupta, however, the fact that no one was prosecuted rankles him: "What hurts is the sheer lawlessness and mockery of the system in the hands of a few powerful people... while we are stumbling from door to door."

PROJECTS ABUTTING YAMUNA EXPRESSWAY



33,181

Total homebuyers



17,452

units pending delivery



30,906

Total units sold



PROJECTS IN NOIDA*

31,495

Homebuyers

29,848

Units sold

16,964

Pending

250 TOWERS

2 RESIDENTIAL PLOTS

1 VILLA

1 COMMERCIAL PLOT

15 PROJECTS (INCLUDING 11 HIGH-RISES)

*Aman; Kosmos; Klassic; Kensington Park Apartments and Heights; Garden Isles; Kasa Isles; Kensington Boulevard Apartment; Krescent Homes; Kube; Orchards; Pebble Court; Kensington Park Plots; Kingswood Oriental; Yamuna Enclave; Wishpoint (data accessed by The Indian Express)

MIRzapur

- 2 residential plots
- 1 commercial plot
- 1,270 homebuyers
- 707 units sold
- 137 pending

AGRA

- 1 residential plot
- 416 homebuyers
- 351 units sold
- 351 pending

ects — the expressway and multiple high-rises — on its plate. So, it took loans from banks and financing institutions to complete them.

Ashish Mohan Gupta, president of the JIL Real Estate Allottees Welfare Society, an organisation fighting for Jaypee home buyers,

described the popularity of the group in its initial days: "At one time, the situation was such that if a person called Jaypee's office or a broker and said they wanted a flat on the fifth floor, the broker would say there is one on the 10th floor and if you do not say yes to it within 10 minutes, it will be sold. Such was the faith in the company at that time."

"JIL also offered flats at cheaper rates. At that time, bookings in Aman society were be-

ing done at the rate of Rs 2,000 per sqft. The result was that around 6,000 people made bookings for just 3,000 flats. To accommodate all buyers, Jaypee quickly started more projects," he added.

"The problem began when they started diverting homebuyers' money to build the expressway — around Rs 3,500 crore was diverted... It should have been used in developing housing infrastructure... there was a cash crunch and the company went bankrupt," he claimed.

A resolution

When JIL defaulted on loans, IDBI Bank filed a petition in the NCLT to initiate the



Punjab out, AAP-Cong say alliance on track in Delhi

JATIN ANAND
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 10

HOURS AFTER Aam Aadmi Party convenor Arvind Kejriwal announced that his party would go it alone in Punjab, both the AAP and Congress maintained that talks regarding their alliance for the Lok Sabha polls in Delhi were on track.

Congress sources told *The Indian Express* that the party had prepared a panel of several potential leaders to be fielded from each of the city's seven Lok Sabha seats; AAP sources said talks around the alliance were "positive" and it was waiting for the

Congress to get back to it regarding its seat-sharing proposal for Delhi and other states.

After Kejriwal's announcement, the All India Congress Committee (AICC) Saturday evening convened a meeting with senior leaders from its Delhi unit over poll preparations in the city. The meeting comes on the heels of a workers' convention that Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge is scheduled to address in Ludhiana's Samraha.

Sources said while Punjab may now be more or less out of the alliance equation, both parties were likely to settle on a 4-3 seat-sharing arrangement in Delhi.



Cong president Kharge is set to address a workers' convention in Ludhiana

"Screening, selection of potential candidates is almost complete. The potential choice for a seat will remain the same irrespective of an alliance; if a particular seat is given to AAP, potential candidates chosen for it won't be allowed to

contest from another seat," said a senior Congress leader.

According to sources, the Congress was considering leaders including Hari Shankar Gupta, Alka Lamba, Mangat Ram Singh, Jai Prakash Agarwal from Chandni Chowk and Sandeep Dikshit, Naseeb Singh, Anil Chaudhary from East Delhi.

From Northeast Delhi, leaders under consideration are Mateen Ahmed, Bhisham Sharma, Vipin Sharma, Ramesh Kumar, Chatter Singh and Vijay Singh Lochav were among the probables from South Delhi.

Mukesh Sharma and Devennder Yadav were being considered

from West Delhi, and Ajay Maken and Abhishek Dutt from New Delhi. The reserved North-west Delhi constituency had the highest number of potential candidates under consideration including Krishna Tirath, Rajesh Liloitha, Udit Raj, Raj Kumar Chauhan, Jai Kishan, and Surender Kumar.

In a formal response on the future of the INDIA alliance following Kejriwal's announcement, AAP said, "...On other states, talks are ongoing. Overall, we should move fast on seat sharing as we hardly have time for preparation... We must conclude all talks and start campaigning."

RELATED REPORT ON P6

Fake doc, staffer held from 2 'unauthorised' clinics in Gurgaon

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
GURGAON, FEBRUARY 10

POLICE arrested two persons – a man for allegedly running an "unauthorised" clinic, and a staffer of another such facility – from Gurgaon's Chakkarpur, said officers Saturday. A doctor who allegedly runs the second clinic in question has also been booked; he is absconding and a search is underway to nab him, said police.

The Chief Minister's flying squad, police, and a medical officer, in a joint operation on Friday, raided the two clinics – SD Hospital in Amdavad Colony, and Mukhtar Health Centre – following a visit to both clinics by a decoy, said officers.

In the first case, officers found that SD Hospital (operating for three months now) had no registration or licence. They arrested Manoj Kumar, a UP resident, for pretending to be a doctor and running the "unauthorised" clinic.

In his complaint, medical officer Dr Gaurav Gupta said, "We were informed that they (clinic staff) are providing treatment to people by creating fake stamps, administering allopathic medicines and injections... A team conducted a joint raid at SD Hospital, where they asked Manoj Kumar to produce docu-

ments required for hospital registration and their degrees. However, they failed to provide any document..."

Kumar, who has been working at the clinic for three months, was paid Rs 12,000, said police.

It was further revealed during investigation that another person, Dr Arvind Sharma, also worked at the clinic. "During a telephonic conversation, Sharma said he was in Shirdi at present. According to Sharma, he holds an ayurvedic degree... On questioning, he could not give a clear answer regarding the storage of allopathic medicines and injections in the hospital, or about the registration of the clinic and its bio-waste agreement," read the FIR, adding that police are yet to take any action against Sharma.

An FIR has been registered against the accused under Section 34 of the National Medical Commission Act, 2019, and IPC Section 336 (endangering life or personal safety of others), said officers.

In the second case, police have booked the absconding doctor for running Mukhtar Health Centre without registration, said officers, adding that they are yet to verify his medical qualifications. A staffer, Mohammad Masoom, was arrested during the raid.

Kebab from Lucknow delivered in 30 mins, man moves court

NIRBHAY THAKUR
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 10

A DISH prepared in another state 500 km away being delivered fresh and hot in half an hour – this was hard to digest for a Zomato customer in Gurgaon. Sourav Mall (24) had used the food delivery app's rapid service promise under the 'Legends' category and got a kebab dish delivered from Lucknow in 30 minutes.

Mall recently filed a suit against Zomato's 'Legends' policy. After going through the petition, a local court in Saket last month issued a summons to Zomato.

He had ordered four dishes from Zomato Legends – three from Delhi, one from Lucknow. The items ordered were 'Chicken Kabab Roll' from Jama Masjid, 'Triple Chocolate Cheesecake' from Kailash Colony, 'Veg Sandwich' from Jangpura and 'Galouti Kebab' from Lucknow.

Mall, who was represented by advocates Tishampati Sen, Anurag Anand and Biyanka Bhatia, argued before the court that the manner in which food is

being delivered shows it is not actually being transported from the particular city, but stored at different places or warehouses of Zomato. All the restaurants in Delhi from where he placed the orders were around 30 km from his house. He urged the court to restrain Zomato from continuing the services.

The Zomato's 'Legends' sub-service delivers food from across a section of cities such as Kolkata, Hyderabad, Lucknow, Jaipur, Bengaluru, Mathura, Chennai and Agra at a very short period irrespective of the distance.

The *Indian Express* also tried using the service and found that food ordered from Jaipur would be delivered to Gurgaon in merely 29 minutes.

Zomato's blog in 2022, however, claims the 'Legends' order will reach you the next day. "By leveraging Zomato's vast network of restaurant partners and delivery partners, deep understanding of food technology, and insights into what our customers love, legendary dishes will be delivered from across India to you, the very next day," it says.

Most escalators in CP found non-functional: NDMC vice-chairman

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 10

NDMC Vice-Chairman Satish Upadhyay Saturday said most of the escalators in Connaught Place were found non-functional during an inspection. He has issued strict instructions to the electricity, civil, security and all departments concerned, demanding prompt action and enhancing security measures.

Upadhyay conducted an inspection of the escalators installed in various subways at Connaught Place and its surroundings in the area of the New Delhi Municipal Council, a statement said.

Acknowledging public complaints, he personally assessed the situation, revealing that out of the 22 escalators in the Connaught Place area, connecting to places such as Super Bazar, Statesman House, KG Marg, and Janpath, most of them were found non-functional. He stressed the need for ensuring that visitors, residents, and market traders association members are not inconvenienced by non-functional escalators.

ASSET RECOVERY MANAGEMENT BRANCH (D.P.- 17415) GROUND FLOOR, LUV KUSH TOWER, EXHIBITION ROAD, PATNA-800001 Mobile No-8102916048, Email-cb17415@canarabank.com					
SALE NOTICE					
E-AUCTION Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Properties under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8 (6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002					
Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged/ charged to the Secured Creditor, the constructive possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of Patna ARM Branch of Canara Bank will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is" and "Whatever there is" on 28.02.2024 for recovery of Rs. 1,98,80,533.23/- (Rupees One Crore Ninety Eight Lakh Eighty Thousand Five Hundred Thirty Three and Twenty Three Paise Only) together with future interest and charges from 01.02.2024					
Details of Property					
Sl. No./ Contact No. of the Branch	Name of A/c Guarantor/Mortgagor	Outstanding in Rs.	Reserve Price / EMD / Bid Multiplier Amount / AC No / IFSC	Date & Time of Auction/EMD	Boundaries :-
1. ARM Branch, Patna Mob- 8102916048	I. M/s. Shree Kailash Bajaj (Borrower), Address 1- Rajdhani Road, Baheri Bala, Uttar Pradesh-277001, Address 2- Sarimpur Golamber, Buxar-802101, Bihar. ii. Sri. Amit Kumar (Partner/ Guarantor) S/o. Srila Satendra Singh, iii. Sri. Satendra Singh (Partner/ Guarantor) S/o. Kailash Bihari Singh iv. Smt. Renu Singh (Partner/ Guarantor) W/o. Late Aji Kumar v. Sri. Sujet Kumar, (Partner/ Guarantor) S/o. Satyendra Singh vi. Smt. Maya Devi (Mortgagor/ Guarantor) W/o. Satendra Singh St. No. (ii) to (vi) are all resident of Address- Behind Kalash Auto, Sarimpur Golamber, Buxar-802101, Bihar	Rs. 1,98,80,533.23/- (Rupees One Crore Ninety Eight Lakh Eighty Thousand Five Hundred Thirty Three and Twenty Three Paise Only)	Rs. 2,27,79,00/- EMD-Rs. 22,77,900/- Rs.10,000/- IFSC-Code-CNRB0017415	20.03.2024 Date & Time of Auction- 11:30 am to 1:30 pm, EMD Date & Time- 18.03.2024 & 10:30 AM to 4:00 PM	North : Old plot no 150 and 148, New Plot No.1029 and 1037, Area : 4 Bigha and 10 Dhar situated at Village-Sohani Patti, P.S-Buxar, Anchal and District-Buxar. South : Raasta, East : Bajnai Prasad Kesari and Others, West : Bajliha
For Detailed Terms and Conditions of the Sale. Please refer to the link provided in www.canarabank.com					
Authorised officer Canara Bank					

19-yr-old found dead in park with stab wounds

New Delhi: Police recovered a 19-year-old student's body with stab injuries from West Delhi's Rajouri Garden, said officers Saturday, adding that a case of murder has been registered.

The victim, Alok Mathur, was

a senior secondary student at a government school, said police.

DCP (West) Vichitra Veer said they were informed about "a young man lying unconscious in a park" at 8.45 am on Saturday. "On checking, we realised the person had died. Based on preliminary examination, it appeared the injuries on the body were inflicted by a sharp/ pointed object... We

are in contact with the student's family and friends to collect more details," he said. **ENS**



REGIONAL OFFICE PATNA:

Nasheman Bhawan, 1st Floor, Mazharool Haque Path, Frazer Road, Patna

Contact: 8887829751, 9102403814, 7349052850

Email: cmcrldropatna@unionbankofindia.bank

SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTY (APPENDIX IV A)

E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and proviso to the Rule 8 (6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rule, 2002.

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged/ charged to the Secured Creditor, the symbolic possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of Union Bank of India, the secured creditor, will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is" and "Whatever there is" on 28.02.2024 for recovery of Rs. 17,24,847.50 (Rupees Seventeen Lakhs Twenty Four Thousand Eight Hundred Forty Seven and Fifty Paise Only) as on 04.04.2019 with further interest and cost due to **Union Bank of India, Patliputra Branch**, Ground Floor, Ramayan Plaza, Rajapur Opp. Gate no. 32, Digha Main Road, Patna-800001, the Secured Creditor from M/s Devi Vaishno Mata Electricals Pvt. Ltd., Tapovan Colony, Rampur Road, Mahendru, Patna-800001, Guarantor: 1. Mrs. Munni Devi Vill+Post Marar, Dist. Saran Chhapra-841219, 2. Mr. Dinesh Singh Vill+Post Marar, Dist. Saran Chhapra-841219 and 3. Mr. Jagdish Singh Mauza Mad P.S. Parsa, District Saran Chhapra-841219. Reserve Price: Rs. 49,50,000/- (Rupees Forty Nine Lakh Fifty Thousand Only) and Earnest Money Deposit will be Rs. 4,95,000/- (Rupees Four Lakh Ninety Five Thousand Only) with bid increment of Rs. 49,500.00 (Rupees Forty Nine Thousand Five Hundred Only).

Brief Description of Property

Residential Land & Building belonging to Mr. Jagdish Singh situated at Thana No. 463, Tauzi No. 3308, Khata No. 316, Survey Plot No. 1993, situated at Mauza: Marar, P.S.- Parsa, District- Saran within the jurisdiction of the Chapra (Saran) Municipal Corporation, Saran admeasuring 10 Kathas 4 Dhurs and No. 139, Anchal- Sasaram and Bounded By: East- Sri Shiv Shankar Singh & Sri Dhanukhdi Singh, West- Sri Sunil Singh, Sri Pukar Singh, Road, North- Sri Awadh Singh, South- Road.

For detailed terms and condition of the sale, please refer to the link provided in Union Bank of India's website i.e. <https://www.unionbankofindia.co.in/english/TenderViewAllAuction.aspx> and <https://www.mstcommerce.com/auctionhome/ibapi/index.jsp>

Place : Patna

(Sd/-)
Authorised Officer



REGIONAL OFFICE PATNA:

Nasheman Bhawan, 1st Floor, Mazharool Haque Path, Frazer Road, Patna

Contact: 8887829751, 9102403814, 7349052850

Email: cmcrldropatna@unionbankofindia.bank

SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTY (APPENDIX IV A)

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Brief Description of Property

All that Piece and Parcel of 2720 sq ft of Land with Shed Structure thereon at Khata No: 231, Plot No: 3083, Mouza: Belaganj, Thana: Belaganj, Thana No:433 at Rauna Belaganj Gaya in the name of Mrs Maya Devi, W/o: Mr. Sintu Kumar. Bounded by: North: Nij Bikreta then Shiv Paswan, South: Satyendra Kumar, East: Naresh Yadav, West: 10' Wide Road

For detailed terms and condition of the sale, please refer to the link provided in Union Bank of India's website i.e. <https://www.unionbankofindia.co.in/english/TenderViewAllAuction.aspx> and <https://www.mstcommerce.com/auctionhome/ibapi/index.jsp>

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GOVT & POLITICS

As trust vote
heat builds up in
Bihar, parties set
to issue whips

SANTOSH SINGH
PATNA, FEBRUARY 10

AMID ALLEGATIONS that both political alliances in Bihar – the ruling NDA with the JD(U), BJP and HAM(S), and the Opposition Mahagathbandhan (grand alliance) with the RJD, Congress, and three Left parties – are trying to poach MLAs from each other's camp, all political parties are set to issue whips for their legislators to vote in the February 12 trial of strength in the state Assembly along party lines or face disqualification.

As of now, the NDA government led by Chief Minister Nitish Kumar looks confident of winning the trust vote.

While 16 of the Congress's 19 MLAs are in Hyderabad, all 78 BJP MLAs attended a two-day training session in Gaya that concluded on Saturday.

The RJD called a meeting of its 79 MLAs in Patna Saturday, even as JD(U) minister Shravani Kumar hosted a lunch for his party's 45 MLAs in Patna.

Saturday also saw both CPI(ML-Liberation) MLAs – Mehboob Alam and Satydeo Ram – meeting Hindustani Awam Morcha (Secular) patron Jitan Ram Manjhi, in what was described as a courtesy call.

Former CM Manjhi later reiterated his party's position in favour of the NDA.

With the support of four HAM(S) MLAs and an independent legislator, the NDA has 128 MLAs in the 243-member House.

The numbers in the Bihar House are currently stacked in a fine balance in favour of the NDA, and can only get disturbed if the HAM(S) MLAs cross over to the grand alliance.

Congress expels Krishnam for 'indiscipline'

New Delhi: The Congress on Saturday expelled Acharya Pramod Krishnam from the party for "indiscipline" and making repeated statements against the party.

Krishnam, who contested the 2019 Lok Sabha polls from Lucknow on a Congress ticket but lost, had recently praised PM Narendra Modi for the Ram temple consecration in Ayodhya and criticised the Congress' stance of its leadership skipping the event.

"In view of complaints about indiscipline and repeatedly making statement against the party, Congress president has approved the Uttar Pradesh Congress Committee's proposal to expel Shri Pramod Krishnam for six years with immediate effect," a statement issued by Congress general secretary (organisation) KV Venugopal said.

PTI

Manipur: New Bill proposes jail term for renaming places

SUKRITA BARUAH
GUWAHATI, FEBRUARY 10

AS EVEN the names of places become contested in strife-torn Manipur, the upcoming Manipur assembly session is likely to see a Bill that proposes using names not authorised by the government a punishable offence.

The Manipur government had Friday announced that the state's next assembly session will begin on February 28 – the second since the start of the ethnic conflict on May 3 last year. The previous one was just a day-long, on August 29, and lasted all of 11 minutes. It wrapped up without a mention of the violence which has engulfed the state.

Among the Bills that the government is looking to table this time is the Manipur Names of Places Bill '2024'. A proposal for the bill, prepared by the Land Resources Department and approved by the state cabinet, states that the objective is a law to "establish an institutional mechanism to enforce correct use of names of places" as well as to "lay down procedures for giving names to places, and also for altering names of places".

The draft bill proposes to

doorstep of the beneficiaries.

"Two years ago, you gave us (AAP) a huge blessing of 92 seats out of 117 (in the Punjab Assembly polls). You created history," Kejriwal said. "I have come to you with folded hands today to seek another blessing. In two months, there will be Lok Sabha elections. In these elections, there are 13 seats. There is another seat in Chandigarh. In the coming 10-15 days, AAP will announce its candidates. Now, I request you all to bless AAP the same way to win 14 seats."

The seat-sharing troubles between the Congress and the AAP for the Punjab seats have been persistent, with senior leaders from both parties openly making statements against the tie-up. However, their coming together for the recent Chandigarh mayoral polls had signalled that the differences were being resolved.

On January 24, CM Mann had



Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann in Ludhiana on Saturday. Express

said the AAP would not ally with the Congress in Punjab. However, even after the CM's announcement, the AAP's general secretary (organisation) Sandeep Pathak had said the final call would be taken by the party leadership.

A few weeks earlier, Mann had sought to nuance his hard-

line position over the possibility of the AAP's tie-up with the Congress, saying the INDIA bloc's main aim was to defeat the BJP and "save the country".

However, with Kejriwal's announcement now, the INDIA alliance seems to have unravelled in Punjab.

The development is a major

setback for the alliance which has already been reeling from the exit of the Nitish Kumar-led JD(U) in Bihar and is now staring at likely switch of the Jayant Chaudhary-led RLD to the NDA in Uttar Pradesh. It also comes amid reports that the estranged NDA allies BJP and the Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) have started talks to explore the possibility of restoration of their alliance.

The Congress is the principal Opposition in Punjab. A senior state Congress functionary had told *The Indian Express* earlier that leaders across the party ranks, including former ministers, had been voicing their "issues" with a pre-poll partnership with the AAP.

In the 2019 Lok Sabha polls in Punjab, the Congress had won eight seats as against the SAD's two seats and the BJP's two. The AAP had then won just one seat. The Chandigarh seat was won by the BJP's Kirron Kher.



RLD chief and MP Jayant Singh at Parliament, Saturday. PTI

Poised to tie up with RLD, BJP eyes Jat base consolidation, West UP booster

RLD likely to get Baghpat, Bijnor LS seats besides RS berth and MLC seat

LIZ MATHEW
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 10

THE ALLIANCE with the Rashtriya Lok Dal (RLD) is "almost final", sources in the BJP said, with the Jayant Chaudhary-led party agreeing on two Lok Sabha constituencies and a Rajya Sabha seat as part of the arrangement with the NDA.

This partnership will help the BJP consolidate its base among the Jats, which are the RLD's core base, and place it ahead in at least seven seats in West UP, where its prospects were considered grim as per ground surveys done by the party ahead of the Lok Sabha polls.

BJP sources said that either Chaudhary – who is a Rajya Sabha MP and the grandson of former Prime Minister Chaudhary Charan Singh – or his wife Charu Singh is likely to contest from Baghpat. The seat was once considered a Chaudhary family bastion, but the BJP has been winning it since 2014. It is currently represented by the BJP's Satya Pal Singh. Sources also indicated that the RLD might also be fielding a candidate from Bijnor.

Alongside these seats as part of the alliance pact with the BJP,

The RLD could also get one Rajya Sabha seat, sources said, adding that former Union agri-

EXPLAINED
E Eye on benefits

DESPITE THE boost the BJP got in the wake of the consecration of the Ram Temple in Ayodhya, the ground survey conducted by the party placed it behind in seats like Bijnor, Amroha, Kairana, Muzaffarnagar, Meerut, Fatehpur Sikri and Hathras.

culture minister Sompal Shastri is likely to be considered for it.

The BJP is also looking to support the RLD with an MLC seat in the UP Assembly, sources said.

A senior BJP leader said the alliance will be announced soon.

"There were indications that the party would face a tough battle in these constituencies. The Jat leaders in the BJP organisation and government who were expected to win over the community appeared to have failed or have not succeeded to ensure the seats for the party," said a BJP leader from UP.

The Jat community has significant influence in a dozen Lok Sabha and around 40 Assembly seats in West UP.

FULL REPORT
www.indianexpress.com



SNOWY RIDE

Tourists pose with a horse cart made of snow at Sonamarg, 80 km northeast of Srinagar, on Saturday even as the mercury remained below the freezing point in the Valley. Shuaib Masoodi

CAA rules before LS polls: Shah 'Muslim brothers being misled, Act won't snatch citizenship'

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 10

UNION HOME MINISTER Amit Shah Saturday said rules for the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA) will be issued before the Lok Sabha polls and the process to grant nationality to the beneficiaries will start soon after.

The Bill, which sought to fast-track the process of granting Indian citizenship to Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Parsis and Christians – but not Muslims – who migrated to India owing to religious persecution in Pakistan, Afghanistan and Bangladesh, was passed by the Lok Sabha on

December 9, 2019, and the Rajya Sabha two days later.

It received the President's assent on December 12, 2019. Soon after the passage of the law, widespread protests broke out across the country. The rules for implementation of the Act were never notified and the government sought repeated extensions for framing the rules.

"The CAA is a law of the country and its notification will definitely be issued. It will be issued before the polls. The CAA will be implemented before the elections. No one should have any confusion about it," Shah said at the ET NOW Global Business Summit 2024.

Shah said granting Indian citizenship to persecuted minorities of the neighbouring countries was a promise of the Congress, too.

"After Partition, Hindus, Buddhists, Christians, all wanted to come to India after facing religious persecution. They (Congress leaders) had promised to give citizenship to these people. But the leaders went back on their word," he said.

"Our Muslim brothers are being misled and instigated (against the CAA). The CAA is only meant to give citizenship to those who came to India after facing religious persecution in Pakistan, Afghanistan and Bangladesh. It is not for snatching anyone's Indian citizenship," he said.

BJP leader booked over 'shoot down anti-nationals' remark

Bengaluru: A case of criminal intimidation and mischief has been lodged against senior Karnataka BJP leader K S Eshwarappa over his alleged provocative statement against Congress MP D K Suresh at a BJP event in the Davangere city on February 8.

According to the police complaint, lodged by Hanumatha M, a resident of Davangere, the BJP MP, while referring to Suresh and Congress MLA Vinay

Kulkarni, said "a law is needed to shoot down people making anti-national remarks". The comment was made at a party event

The complainant alleged that he heard Eshwarappa making the "provocative remark" while referring to Suresh and Kulkarni's recent statements that "South India may seek to be separated from India if there is injustice in the allocation of Central funds".

ENS

Uttarakhand UCC live-in provision is surveillance by registration... violative of many SC judgments'

THREE-TIME Rajya Sabha MP and Congress's national spokesperson ABHISHEK SINGHVI speaks to MANOJ CG on various burning issues, ranging from the Uniform Civil Code (UCC) to the Gyanvapi and Mathura disputes. Singhvi is also an eminent lawyer and the Chairman of the Parliamentary Standing Committees on Home Affairs, Law, and Commerce.

Uttarakhand has just become the first state to pass a UCC Bill. How do you view it as a Congress leader and as senior lawyer?

It is clearly a political and symbolic gesture, unleashed just before (Lok Sabha) elections, with the usual great event management and fanfare for which the BJP is famous. If the UCC is to have any meaning, it has to be the product of all-India consensus in a single national law. The BJP is far away from that, so it has gone ahead and done this usual tokenism, very similar to the Women's Reservation Bill we saw a short while ago.

Are there any objectionable provisions in it?

The most objectionable part of the UCC is this huge moral policing and intrusion regarding live-

in relationships. It is astonishing that a civil code has not brought in this topic because it does not belong to the core issues of the UCC. I call it surveillance by registration. It is directly violative of innumerable Supreme Court judgments upholding the rights to privacy, autonomy and Article 21 generally. The harassment arising will be unending and serious. You are allowing even third parties to complain and parental, governmental and third party intrusion and harassment is inevitable. The reason given for it is laughable. Crimes against women are not prevented by registration.

Secondly, this UCC is actually over 80 per cent imposition from the Hindu laws of divorce, succession and guardianship. This is largely a unilateral imposition of the rules governing the majority community with minimal effort at consensus and being done at a time when India has the most divisive ambience in living memory. The constitutional reference to UCC was put in Article 44 as the approximation of an ideal like abolition of liquor in Article 47 and provision of adequate means of livelihood in Article 39 (a) – not as a sudden, piecemeal, state imposition before elections.

Thirdly, it is not anomalous



THE EXPRESS
INTERVIEW
WITH
ABHISHEK
SINGHVI
CONGRESS NATIONAL
SPOKESPERSON

state enactments which will be identified by the oxymoron "uniform". How can multiple family law regimes of differing diversity in different states be called a Uniform Code. It is linked to what I call limping family laws. The Uttarakhand UCC applies to any resident of Uttarakhand even though he may be working elsewhere or travelling elsewhere. It applies even if one partner is resident in Uttarakhand. So we will now have artificial changes of residence by persons who will want to escape the rigours of the draconian registration requirements.

Will we have people creating domiciles and residences in other parts of India to evade this law?

Linked to this is the fact that there are several Central laws already in existence – be it for Hindus or Parsis or Christians or Muslims...

The clear violation of all norms of privacy and liberty and the draconian policing of relationships which are not marriage but in the nature of marriage will clearly violate so many judgments of the Supreme Court – from Khusbhoo to Navtej Johar to the more recent same-sex marriage case Supriyo – apart from being completely inconsistent with Article 21. Good or bad I don't know, but HUF and co-

parcenary rights, especially qua succession, seem to have also been abolished after the Uttarakhand UCC because no provision preserves them. I don't know the reaction of Hindu community to this.

Are there any positive aspects in the UCC passed by the Uttarakhand Assembly?

Absolutely. For example, all children, whether the product of live-in relationships or marriage, are treated as legitimate and, more importantly, are given all other rights which are available to legitimate children. I also have no problem with the 18 and 21 years of uniform ages for females and males to marry. Some other anachronisms have been ironed out...

The courts are entertaining petitions on Gyanvapi and Mathura disputes...

The core question is not whether there was a temple below the mosque or not. The core question is whether the Places of Worship Act allows the removal of any place of worship on the assumed or proved ground of a prior structure underneath. That question had not been answered by court...

FULL INTERVIEW
www.indianexpress.com



GURUGRAM
MARATHON



GURUGRAM MARATHON

February 25, 2024

Leisure Valley, Sector 29, Gurugram

FARIDABAD MARATHON

March 3, 2024

Surajkund, Faridabad

FULL MARATHON / HALF MARATHON / 10 KMS



MASTERS CATEGORY

Full Marathon	Half Marathon
₹50,000	₹50,000



OPEN CATEGORY

	Full Marathon	Half Marathon	10 Kms
1st	₹1.5 Lakh	₹1 Lakh	₹50,000
2nd	₹1 Lakh	₹75,000	₹30,000
3rd	₹75,000	₹50,000	₹20,000

For other Attractive Prizes
in Different Categories
Please Scan QR Code

Gurugram
Marathon

Please scan
QR code
for Registration
and
Detail of Prizes



Faridabad
Marathon

Please scan
QR code
for Registration
and
Detail of Prizes



Last Date for online Registration

Gurugram Marathon

20th February 2024

Faridabad Marathon

29th February 2024



IN PARLIAMENT

BUDGET SESSION

Younger, more educated and better gender ratio in 17th LS

New Delhi: As the 17th Lok Sabha held its last sitting Saturday, data showed it was a younger House with better education profile and an improved gender ratio, though it still remains lower than many other countries.

Also, number of first-time MPs was below the half-way mark at 260 and the number of re-elected members was higher than the previous Lok Sabha.

The 17th Lok Sabha saw fewer MPs over 70 years and more under 40 years, while average age was around 54. The proportion of MPs below 40 years was steadily declining from 26 per cent in the first Lok Sabha to eight per cent in the 16th. But the 17th Lok Sabha bucked this longer-term trend with an increase to nearly 12 per cent when it was constituted.

The attacks continued even as Lok Sabha members across parties showered praise on Lord Ram.

Congress leader Gaurav Gogoi, who was the first Opposition speaker, said that Mahatma Gandhi's Ram Rajya was one where none, including minorities, was discriminated against, and sought to know why BJP leaders' "Jai Shri Ram" slogan was made not in a tone of compassion but in a tone of "bitterness and violence".

BJP MP Satyapal Singh, who comes from Baghpat – a hub of the farmers' agitation – and was the first speaker, and Union minister Sadhviji Niranjan Jyoti, who was herself a kar sevak, reminded the House that kar sevaks were fired upon and killed in 1990 in Ayodhya when Mul-



Congress leader Gaurav Gogoi in Lok Sabha, Saturday. PTI

ayam Singh Yadav was the CM.

"Bhagwan Ram is not a com-

munal issue. Shri Ram belongs

to all. He is both our ancestor

and inspiration. In his time, there was

nothing like Hindu, Muslim, Sikh

and Christian. He was Maryada

Purushottam. Today we are

earning merit (Punya) by dis-

cussing Ram. Lord Ram is a con-

crete inspiration for good govern-

ance, Ram is the symbol of our

civilisation. From Ram Singh and

Ram Chandra to Rama and

Ramaiyya, the name Ram is

found all over. From Rampur to

Rameshwaram, there is Ram. His

influence is also there till

Indonesia, etc," Singh said.

Attacking the Congress, Singh said the UPA government had in 2007 filed an affidavit in

Gogoi attacked the BJP, even as he extolled Lord Ram. "This

country is a country of Bhakti, of

faith, and of harmony. With seva

bhaav (spirit of service), we serve society. Humanity is our biggest identification. People of the country are dharmic and dharma means *dhaarana karna* (that which is adopted and experienced). The dharma of humans is to walk on the path of truth. The *darshan* (sight) of God or Devi Maa (mother goddess) shows us the path of truth and justice. Bhagwan Ram belongs to all. He is always with us. He is in our *kan kan* (each particle)... 'Hey Ram' is always on people's lips, like it was always on Mahatma Gandhi's lips," he said.

He added, "Mahatma Gandhi talked about Ram Rajya. He defined it as a reign where all are happy and none is sad. So, we should think whether all the backward, oppressed and minorities are happy – this was the core of Ram Rajya. But atrocities

on SCs and STs are increasing. Is this Ram Rajya? The backward are being deprived of proper representation in universities and in the central government."

"We believe in secularism,

but not in a western manner.

India is a dharmic country, and

we believe in *sarva dharma sam-*

bhava. It isn't just about one text;

this country binds diverse streaks

and people into one unit... I

call upon the treasury benches to

leave the path of Nathuram

Godse; to not celebrate

Nadda: BJP didn't try to score political points over temple

DEEPTIMAN TIWARI
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 10

THE BJP did not try to score political points over Ayodhya's Ram Temple as not a single political statement was made by the party during its consecration ceremony, BJP president J P Nadda said in Rajya Sabha on Saturday.

The statement came in response to the Opposition's attack on the party for "politicising the Ram Temple and claiming all the credit".

"We have not tried to score political points over this. When we were just two in Parliament (1984), we were struggling for Ram and when we are 300, we are still struggling for Ram. Not a single political statement was made by the BJP during the consecration ceremony. It was our conviction, our commitment, which we tried to fulfil," Nadda said while participating in a short-duration discussion on Ram Temple.

BJP leader of the House Piyush Goyal gave the credit of the building of the Ram Temple to PM Modi. "Decades ago, Modi ji had taken a pledge that Ram Temple would be built on the Ram Janmabhoomi. He turned that pledge into a reality," Goyal said.

The House later adopted a resolution hailing the consecration of Ram Temple on January 22.

According to Nadda, Under PM Modi, the government was trying to realise Mahatma Gandhi's idea of Ram Rajya.

"The poor, the oppressed, women, youth and farmers have all been empowered by the policies of PM Modi. We have tried to bring together all castes, not break them. Is Ujjwala



BJP MP J P Nadda in Rajya Sabha, Saturday. ANI

else many people wanted this issue to remain alive so that they could keep coming back to power," Congress MP Pramod Tiwari said.

"I am a proud Hindu, Sanatan and a Brahmin. But I am one who has faith in Ram, who worships him, who tries to walk on his principles. I am not a trader engaged in trading Ram... The true worshipper of Ram was Mahatma Gandhi. And who worships the killer of the greatest worshipper of Ram, everybody knows it," Tiwari said.

Congress leader Randeep Surjewala said that violence in the name of Ram was the "way to hell". "...Know that Ram is love, tolerance, compassion, justice and an ideal. Ram cannot be a matter of party politics. It is a sin to use the name of Ram for politics. To spread hate in His name is a greater sin," he said.

Keshav Rao of the BRS said by holding a short duration discussion the BJP had unnecessarily made the issue political.

"Everybody has Ram in his heart. Everybody had him in their hearts before January 22 also. How is this a matter of 'urgent public importance'? To bring controversy over Ram? Ram is not a subject of Hindus vs Muslims. It is a subject of Hindu vs Hindu. I am not allowed into your houses. None of you allow me to touch your food or water. As a child I was not allowed to touch scriptures. But I am a great devotee," he said.

Jan 22 marks the beginning of journey to great India: Shah

HARIKISHAN SHARMA
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 10



Union Ministers Amit Shah, Pralhad Joshi and Piyush Goyal outside Parliament on Saturday. PTI

CALLING THE construction of Ram temple in Ayodhya "a victory of development over destruction", Union Home Minister Amit Shah Saturday said that January 22, the day of the consecration of Ram Lalla idol, will remain a historic day for 10,000 years.

Participating in the discussion on Ram Temple in the Lok Sabha, Shah said, "Ram temple in Ayodhya is the victory of spirituality and devotion in front of fanaticism. This is the beginning of one of India's glorious era."

The consecration of the Ram Lalla idol, he said, marks the "end of a struggle and a movement that began in 1528."

"It is a day of hope, aspiration and accomplishment of crores of devotees... It is the beginning of the journey to great India," Shah said, adding that the day (January 22) will be marked "as the reawakening of the spiritual consciousness of the entire Bharat. It is the day of the beginning of the journey to make Bharat great again. This day paves the way to make Bharat Viswaguru again."

"Itne chetnaaya vaatavaran ke andar bhi vibhaajan kee baat karne wale logon se karabaddh nivedan hai — samay ko pehchano,"

Shah said that world history would mention the Ram temple movement as a "democratic value" because a country had waited so long, with patience, for fulfilling religious beliefs of its majority population, appealed in the Supreme Court, and it was fulfilled only after the SC judgment. Shah said such a "big thing" would not have been possible without PM Narendra

Modi's leadership. After the SC verdict, many feared there would be violence, he said, but Modi transformed the entire event into a devotional one. Shah underlined there is no country in the world where the majority society has fought such a long legal battle to uphold its faith.

Shah said that world history

would mention the Ram temple movement as a "democratic value" because a country had waited so long, with patience, for fulfilling religious beliefs of its majority population, appealed in the Supreme Court, and it was fulfilled only after the SC judgment. Shah said such a "big thing" would not have been possible without PM Narendra

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Haldwani: Days before demolition drive, intel warned of huge protest

Report suggested early morning drive, it was carried out at 4.30 pm

AVANEESH MISHRA
HALDWANI, FEBRUARY 10

DAYS BEFORE the Haldwani violence that claimed five lives and left over a dozen—including several police personnel—injured, the Nainital Local Intelligence Unit (LIU) is learnt to have flagged the possibility of large-scale protests if a demolition drive is carried out in the area.

Violence had erupted on Thursday after the administration conducted a drive during which a mosque and a madrasa were demolished in Banbhoolpura area. As stones were pelted, cars torched and the local police station was surrounded by a mob, Chief Minister Pushkar Dhami told officials to issue a shoot-at-sight order.

On February 2, the LIU is learnt to have sent a letter to the District



Security personnel at Banbhoolpura in Haldwani, Saturday. PTI

Magistrate and the Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) warning about the possibility of protests by locals. It is learnt to have suggested conducting the demolition drive early in the morning and proper surveillance of nearby rooftops. The drive was carried out around 4.30 pm.

Asked about the report, Uttarakhand DGP Abhinav Kumar refused to comment and said that at a time when a magisterial inquiry has been ordered, for him to comment on this would not be right. "The magisterial inquiry is on. We will not spare those who

started the mob violence, and if someone else is at fault, we will examine that too," he said.

The Uttarakhand Chief Secretary has asked the Divisional Commissioner (Kumaon) to conduct a magisterial inquiry into the incident and submit a report within 15 days. Talking to *The Indian Express*, a district official said that "whenever there is any anti-encroachment action in such a sensitive area, the same suggestions would be given".

The report is learnt to have stated that one Abdul Malik was found to have encroached on the

Malik ka Bageecha and the administration took the area in its custody on January 30. It added that nearby, there is mosque and madrasa, and notice has been served to demolish these if the encroachment is not removed by February 1.

"...keeping in mind the action of removing encroachment... other than a sufficient police system, the following actions are suggested... It would be better to remove the encroachment in the morning so that a minimum number of people are present. It would be important to do the videography of nearby areas using drones so that things kept on roofs and gathered people could be seen beforehand. Barricading all connecting roads to the said place and nearby areas, and deploying police and PAC, would be important. Before the encroachment is removed, search teams should remove religious books and symbols (from the mosque and madrasa) to hand them over to the maulvi concerned, and this should be videographed."

The LIU report states, it is learnt.

FULL REPORTON
www.indianexpress.com

'Took my father to clinic with bullet wound... found my brother admitted': Two of family among dead

AVANEESH MISHRA
HALDWANI, FEBRUARY 10

INTHE aftermath of the recent violence in Banbhoolpura and surrounding areas, the locality remains on edge, with people confined to their homes, internet snuffed and—at the slightest hint of police activity—doors and windows swiftly secured shut.

According to information provided by the district administration, the deceased have been identified as Haldwani residents Faheem Qureshi (30), Zahid (45), his son Mohammad Anas (16), Mohammad Shaban (22), and Bihar resident Prakash Kumar Singh (24).

Talking to *The Indian Express*, Anas's brother Mohammad

Aman recounted what happened that day. He said both he and his father, Zahid Hussain, were working at a construction site before the chaos erupted. While Aman returned home, his father stayed back to complete some tasks.

"When I came to know about the violence, I called Anas to come back home as he too was outside. I came to know that one of my friends was stuck in the market, and I left to find her. When Anas found out, he followed me. Meanwhile, my father reached home, only to be informed that Anas hadn't returned. He went to find him," said Aman.

"My father fell victim to a stray bullet in the chest while standing near a dairy. Alerted by a neighbour, I found him lying injured on the street. I tried to lift him with

the help of two others... and we carried him to a local clinic. When I reached, I found Anas already there with a bullet injury below his waist," he said. "Doctors asked me to take both of them to a hospital. But we could not arrange the means to do so, and they both died soon after. We finally carried them back to our house. After the post-mortem, on Friday night we buried them. Only five people from our family were allowed to attend the final rites," he said.

Javed, a cousin of Faheem Qureshi, claimed he was shot dead by his neighbours. "He was home when, around 7.30 pm, he noticed someone setting his vehicle on fire. When he objected, he was shot in the chest. While the attackers escaped, my family rushed Faheem to the hospital, where he was declared dead," Javed said. Faheem is survived by his mother, wife, and two young children. Gauhar, who works as a hawker, claimed that his son Aris (18) too died during the violence, but his name was not in the administration list as the family had taken him to a hospital in Bareilly.

"My son was working as a salesman at a garment shop. I called him at 6.30 but there was no response. While searching, someone told me my son was lying at a chauraha. With the help of two others, I carried him home," said Gauhar. "We have decided to take him to Bareilly, but he died on the way. We laid him to rest in Badarpur," said Gauhar. District officials said they are looking into the circumstances around the deaths.

'DELHI CHALO' MARCH

Centre reaches out to farmers, calls meeting on Feb 12

RAAKHI JAGGA
LUDHIANA, FEBRUARY 10

THE CENTRE on Saturday opened a direct line of communication with the farmers who have announced a protest march to the national capital, inviting them for a second round of discussions on February 12, a day before their proposed 'Delhi Chalo' programme.

The Union Ministry of Agriculture and Farmer Welfare, late in the night, issued a letter to Samyukta Kisan Morcha (non-political) coordinator Jagit Singh Dalawala and Kisan Mazdoor Morcha (KMM) coordinator Sarwan Singh Pandher inviting them for a meeting at Mahatma Gandhi State Institute of Public Administration (MAGSIPA) in Chandigarh at 5 pm on February 12. A three-member central team, including Agriculture Minister Arjun Munda, Food and Civil Supplies Minister Piyush Goyal, and Minister of State for Home Affairs Nitayanand Rai, will attend the meeting. Discussions on farmers' demands will take place in the meeting, states the letter. The SKM (non-political) and the KMM have announced the 'Delhi Chalo' march by over 200 farmers' unions to press the Centre for accepting several demands, including enactment of a law to guarantee a MSP for crops.

Borders sealed

On Saturday, the Haryana government sealed the state's border with Punjab in Ambala and ordered suspension of mobile Internet and bulk SMS services in seven districts beginning 6 am on February 11. According to an official order, the mobile Internet services will remain suspended in Ambala, Kurukshetra, Kaithal, Jind, Hisar, Fatehabad and Sirsa districts till 23.59 pm on February 13.

Mithun Chakraborty in hospital after chest pain

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, FEBRUARY 10

VETERAN ACTOR and BJP leader Mithun Chakraborty was admitted to a private hospital in Kolkata after complaining of chest pain on Saturday, officials said. The actor-turned-politician was brought to the hospital on Saturday morning.

Talking to reporters later in the day, Mithun's son Mimoh said, "He (Mithun Chakraborty) is 100 per cent fine and it was a routine checkup." In the evening, Apollo Multispeciality Hospital in its bulletin stated, "Shri Mithun Chakraborty (73), National Award-winning actor, was brought to the Emergency Department of Apollo Multispeciality Hospitals, Kolkata, around 9.40 am with complaints of weakness in the right upper and lower limbs. Necessary laboratory and radiology investigations were carried out... Presently, he is fully conscious."

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Office of Superintending Engineer, Rampur Circle, P.W.D. Rampur

E-Procurement Short Notice Inviting Tenders

Ref.No. 642 /E-Niveda-Rampur/23-24

Dated : -06-02-2024

1. The Superintending Engineer Rampur Circle, U.P.P.W.D. Rampur on behalf of Governor of Uttar Pradesh invites the Percentage rate bids online from the eligible and approved Contractors registered in Road category with UP PWD. The Bidder may submit bids for any or all of the works. Bidders are advised to note the minimum qualification criteria specified in the Instructions to Bidders to qualify for the award of the contract.

2.

Sl No	DISTRICT	Name of Work	Estimated cost (Rs.in Lac) (Ex. GST)	Bid Security (Rs.in Lac)	Time of completion of the work (Duration of rainy season)	Cost of Under documents including GST (Rs.)	Category of road contractor eligible	7	8
1	Rampur	Special repair work of NH-22 road from Bilaspur Swar Road Matkeda via T-09 Km-4	68.00	5.40	03 month	2354.00	Category 'A'/'B'/'C'		
2	Rampur	NH-87 Km-32 to Hamdabada via Sihore Chanden Marg	59.00	4.95	03 month	2354.00	Category 'A'/'B'/'C'		
3	Rampur	Special repair work of Muklakheda Matkeda road.	47.00	4.35	03 month	2354.00	Category 'A'/'B'/'C'		
4	Rampur	Under special repair work of CC and drain in the populated part of Matnagar (Uttar Pradesh) road from Matkeda to Bhangar, Mankar.	112.00	7.60	03 month	2354.00	Category 'A'/'B'		
5	Rampur	Special repair work of Lalpur Sadnagar Nagli Marg to Bainjana Road	33.00	3.30	03 month	2354.00	Category 'A'/'B'/'C'		
6	Rampur	Special repair work of the road from Lalpur Singanji road to Mazar Ki Madhaiya Ahmedabad.	36.00	3.60	03 month	2354.00	Category 'A'/'B'/'C'		
7	Rampur	Special repair work of Milakundi road from NH-87.	33.00	3.30	03 month	2354.00	Category 'A'/'B'/'C'		

➢ Bids must be download online form 10:00 AM on date 12.02.2024 to 12:00 PM on dated 19.02.2024 and the technical bids will be opened online date 19.02.2024 at 12:30 PM in Office of Superintending Engineer Rampur Circle PWD Rampur and Financial bids of the qualified bidders will be opened on date & time as notified. According to the provisions of Government Order no. 1/2018/3070/78-2-2018/4 IT/2017 (22) Date 03-01-2018 after opening of the technical and financial bids, the qualified bidder has to submit original documents personally in department/ office. In the event of non submission of original documents by the bidder, the appropriate action will be taken in accordance with provisions of G.O.

➢ All terms & conditions can be seen on website <http://etender.up.nic.in>. The bidders have to login on Prahar U.R.L. <http://wms.uppwd.gov.in/Prahar/> to upload required documents as per Goverment Order No. 879(1)/23-7-2020 dt. 25-08-2020 & E.N.C./HOD's uppwd Order No. 4859/4-M/LC/2020 dt. 27.08.2020.

Rules/conditions & details of the tender are available at website <http://etender.up.nic.in>.

(R. A. Dohare)

(Krishan Vir)
Executive Engineer
Pro.Div.PWD, Rampur
Ph. 059-2351163
Email- pwdrampur@gmail.com

UPID-202832 Date-09.02.2024
www.upgov.nic.in

Artist who revaluated tradition in our contemporary times

VANDANA KALRA
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 10

IN THE landscape of Indian art, A Ramachandran was a voice that was undaunted—whether it was his determination to discover a vocabulary rooted in India at a time when most artists were looking at the West for guidance in the 1960s, or turning to more lyrical renditions inspired by nature in the '80s, after he had already gained repute for his radically socio-political works.

"Every work of art has an existence of its own. It has to live that life—it may commit suicide, live long or go places," he told *The Indian Express* in 2018. The 2005 Padma Bhushan awardee said, "Everyone may not agree with me on everything, but I am following the path I believe I should."

On February 10, that journey saw its end with the passing away of Ramachandran in Delhi. Aged 88, he was suffering from kidney ailments. "He was truly an artist of the nation and his demise is a loss to the nation..." said artist Paramjit Singh. Also colleagues for almost 30 years at Jamia Millia Islamia, the two played a pivotal role in working towards the establishment of the Faculty of Fine Arts at the institution. "He revaluated tradition in our contemporary times and was able to assimilate his larger understanding of the

Manisha Gera Baswani
A RAMACHANDRAN
1935-2024



A painting by the artist.
Courtesy: Vadehra Art Gallery

mythological, literary, aesthetical as well as the musical in his art practice, with a universal appeal and resonance," said artist Rajeev Lochan, former director of National Gallery of Modern Art, who worked with Ramachandran at Jamia from 1980 to 1991.

Born in Attingal, Kerala, Ramachandran often recalled being captivated by the temple murals that he saw as a child in Kerala. Little did he know that the scribbles he drew on the walls of his home were the beginning of his portraiture as an artist. Well-versed with the writings of authors like Vaikom Muhammad Basheer, Saadat Hasan Manto and Fyodor Dostoevsky, the postgraduates in Malayalam literature decided to pursue a scholarship on Kerala mural art at Santiniketan after a chance encounter with Ramkiran Baij's iconic sculpture 'Santhal Family' in a book.

"That was the first time I saw a work that had the qualities of an Indian sculpture, and I was awed by how a great work can touch

you even as an image. It was then I decided to go to Santiniketan," recalled Ramachandran in an interview to *The Indian Express* a few months ago. The subsequent experiences and learnings were life-long lessons. While the emphasis on free expression by teachers such as Benode Behari Mukherjee and Baij was to become a principle he imbibed, the "miseries of life" he was exposed to through the hundreds of refugees at the Sealdah station (Kolkata) reflected in his early paintings. If in 'Kali Puja' (1972) the terrorising figures responded to the Naxal movement, 'End of Yadavas' (1973) warned of an apocalyptic future.

The incentive of receiving a regular stipend by Delhi's Kumar Gallery in the '60s brought him to the 2023 interview. Art historian and critic R Siva Kumar, who has curated several exhibitions of Ramachandran's works—and gave a special talk on the artist during his last exhibition, which was a retrospective of his sculptures organised by Vadehra Art Gallery in Delhi in October 2023—said, "...His work always had traditional elements, and when in the later period he is painting the Bhils and the lotus ponds he encountered in Udaipur, he is also addressing their world view and much more..."

FULL REPORT ON
www.indianexpress.com

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SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES [See proviso to Rule – 8(6)]

E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8(6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) that the below described immovable property(ies) mortgaged/charged to UCO Bank Secured Creditor, the possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of UCO Bank Secured Creditor, will be sold on "As is Where is", "As is What is" and "Whatever there is" basis on 28.02.2024, for recovery of Bank's Due from Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) to UCO Bank Secured Creditor. The details are described as below:

Sr. No.	Name & Address of Borrower(s)/ Guarantor(s)	Demand Notice Date Possession Notice Date	Description of Immovable Property(ies) with known encumbrances, if any	Bank's Dues	Reserve Price Earnest Money Deposit
Branch:- Firozabad, District -Firozabad; Contact Number(s): +91-98709					

Massive protests after jumbo kills man in Wayanad, govt announces Rs 10 lakh aid

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, FEB 10

A RADIO-COLLARED wild elephant, which strayed into a residential area, trampled a man in Kerala's Wayanad district Saturday, sparking protests.

When the elephant chased Panachiyil Ajeesh, 47, a farmer and a native of Padamala village, he rushed into a house, CCTV footage showed. Ajeesh fell down as he jumped over the closed gate of the house. The elephant stormed into the courtyard and trampled Ajeesh to death before moving to a hill slope behind the house. Ajeesh was rushed to a hospital where he died.

The rogue elephant was captured in Karnataka's Hassan in November last year and radio-collared before being released in the wild bordering Wayanad.

Thousands of people poured into the

streets of Mananthavady, alleging inaction against forest and revenue officials. Demanding that the victim's family be given a compensation of Rs 50 lakh, they held a protest march in the city with the body for six hours and demanded that the elephant be shot.

District Collector Renu Raj announced that an interim relief of Rs 10 lakh would be given to Ajeesh's family and his widow would be given a government job, following which the body was handed over for post-mortem. Raj also said steps would be taken to write off his debts and the government would bear the cost of the children's education.

Locals said the elephant was spotted in the region Friday itself, but the forest officials did not alert them.

Admitting there was delay in tracking the elephant due to signal disruption from radio-collar, Forest Minister A K Saseendran told media persons direc-

tions to tranquillise the elephant have been issued.

Opposition leader VD Sathesesan demanded Saseendran's resignation and blamed the forest department. "A situation has reached in Wayanad where elephants storm into houses to kill people. When the issue of tiger threat was raised in the Assembly by Congress, the Minister resorted to insulting the legislator," he said.

Expressing shock, Wayanad MP Rahul Gandhi said, "We have repeatedly demanded for intervention to mitigate such attacks in Wayanad, particularly to protect our farmers. However, the lack of a comprehensive action plan to tackle this issue has only aggravated the conflict. I urge the central and state governments to take decisive steps and put in place a response mechanism that can protect both our communities and the wildlife of the region." -WITHPTINPUTS

Elephant found dead in Tripura, search underway for missing tusk

DEBRAJ DEB
AGARTALA, FEBRUARY 10

THE CARCASS of an elephant was found near railway tracks at Teliamura in Tripura's Khowai district on Saturday with one of its tusks missing.

It is suspected that the elephant died after suffering injuries from a possible collision with a train the previous night.

Speaking to reporters, Teliamura Forest Beat Officer Tapan Saha said they received a call about an animal lying dead near the railway tracks. A forest department team reached the spot and confirmed the news.

One of the tusks of the elephant was also found missing and a search operation has been initiated to find it.

FIR against cops after detained man 'attempts suicide' in police station

MANISH SAHU
LUCKNOW, FEBRUARY 10

POLICE IN Uttar Pradesh's Kasganj district Saturday booked unidentified policemen among others and suspended two officers after a 24-year-old man, detained over his suspected involvement in the abduction of a minor girl, allegedly attempted suicide inside a police station.

The girl, who had gone missing near her house on February 3, had been found two days later. The man, however, was not released from detention. Police said he tried to hang himself from a ventilator in the washroom of the police station Friday. He was taken to a hospital in Aligarh where doctors said his condition was critical.

The episode sparked protests by the man's family and locals outside the police station Friday. The protesters, who also blocked the Etah-Kasganj road, pelted stones at the station, prompting police to disperse them using force.

Normalcy was restored after a senior police officer arrived on the scene, assuring strict action and updating the protesters on the man's treatment.

The man is a Dalit labourer. The girl's family members, too, are Dalit labourers.

The man's family claimed he had been held by police since February 3 on dubious grounds. An FIR has been filed against unidentified policemen and two relatives of the girl. Among the IPC Sections invoked were 343 (wrongful confinement for three or more days) and 323 (voluntarily causing hurt). The case was filed by the man's father. No arrest has been made.

Kasganj Superintendent of Police Aparna Rajat Kaushik Saturday suspended the station house officer of police station, Yatendra Pratap Singh, and the investigation officer of the abduction case, sub-inspector Gaya Prasad Singh.

Kasganj Additional Superintendent of Police, Jitendra Kumar Dubey, has

been tasked with conducting a thorough inquiry into the incident, the SP said. Kaushik said the inquiry would also look into how the girl was found and why the man was detained at the police station.

The sequence of events leading to the suicide attempt began when the girl went missing from near her home on February 2. Her father filed a police complaint alleging abduction.

"On February 3, the police caught my son from near our house. On coming to know about the matter, I went to the police station along with local residents but police refused to allow us to meet the son. They also refused to tell us why they had detained him," said the man's father. He claimed the girl had returned home on her own.

On Saturday, a police force was deployed in the village to maintain peace.

SENA UBT EX-CORPORATOR MURDER CASE

Accused blamed Ghosalkar for ending his political career with rape FIR: Police

Thursday evening.

The Crime Branch recorded Noronha's wife's statement on Saturday. She told the police that her husband harboured immense hatred towards Ghosalkar and had sworn revenge against him.

Ghosalkar and Noronha, a businessman who lived in Borivali, had recently "patched up" and both were at the live-streaming session in the ground-plus-one office used by Noronha. The police, however, suspect the entire talk of a "patch-up" could be part of a plan by Noronha, who was allegedly looking for an opportunity to kill Ghosalkar and take revenge for crashing his political dreams.

Ghosalkar had agreed to the Facebook Live as Noronha had clout in the Catholic community in the I.C colony area of Borivali.

Meanwhile, the police on Saturday produced Amerinder Mishra (44), Noronha's bodyguard, whose firearm was allegedly used by him to kill Ghosalkar and then himself, before court, which remanded him in police custody till February 13.

YOUR WEEK AHEAD

ARIES (Mar 21 - Apr 20)

There is still a challenge to be met at work, and the build-up to what should be, for many of you, a time of rest, will be dominated by a determined attempt to make your unique and unmistakable mark in the world.

TAURUS (Apr 21 - May 21)

Travel plans, innovative projects and spending expeditions may all be rearranged or even postponed until after next week. The fact is that if you who is most likely to do a U-turn, in spite of your legendary Taurine determination and resistance to change.

GEMINI (May 22 - June 21)

Mercury's considerate motion will cause you to doubt one or two arrangements, but, more importantly, will throw spending plans into disarray. However, you may be better off if you let others pick up the tab and save your scarce funds for the next rainy day. There's room for improvement.

CANCER (June 22 - July 23)

Many of you will be off in search of pastures new, although someone close may have something to say about a change of plan.

There seems to be an attitude of unpunctuality in the air and others may be maddening by their refusal to turn up on time. Be laid back. At work, people will be supportive.

LEO (July 24 - Aug 23)

So much still seems to depend on your ability to put your ideas across, but with Mercury now in a strange mood one or two messages may be lost. Shopping trips are favoured towards the end of the week but muddles at work are likely to get in the way.

Somebody just wants to pick up the wrong end of the stick.

VIRGO (Aug 24 - Sep 23)

Your current planetary aspects are so utterly romantic that we all can hope for is that true love touches you on the shoulder. Even if you should be far from home, there's scope to indulge all your imaginative fancies. In fact, if you're on your travels you're far more likely to experience a special encounter.

PISCES (Feb 20 - Mar 20)

A number of lively planets are sending you a welcome shot of extra energy. Mars and Mercury are both making you think again, and you may now wish that something you'd done had been left undone. However, it's too late for regrets. If at all possible, you must make social gatherings your number one priority.

Office of the Superintending Engineer 12th Circle P.W.D. Pauri

Fax & Phone No. 01368-222322, E-mail-sepwdpauricircle@gmail.com

Dated 09/02/2024

Short Term E-Tendering

Superintending Engineer, 12th Circle, Public Works Department, Pauri Garhwal, Uttarakhand on behalf of Governor of Uttarakhand" invites item rate e-tender (two bid system). For further details please log on to <http://www.uktenders.gov.in> from 12.02.2024.

SL No	Name of work	Earnest money (in Lakh Rs)	Cost of Tender (in Rs.)	Validity of tender	Time of completion in Months	Contractor's category of Registration
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Renewal work Year 2024-2025						
1	Renewal work by SDBC in km 2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,11,18 of Bijorapani motor road under Chabattakhal assembly. (CD Pauri)	4.10	5000 +18%.	G.S.T.	120	06
2	Renewal work by SDBC on Ghuggat Siligoi-Chailusain-Dwarikhali-Gumkhali-Landsdowne-Rikhalkhal-Bironkhal State Road No. 51. (Km 78 to 91 and 116 to 131) (PD Lansdowne)	11.00	5000 +18%.	G.S.T.	120	06
3	Renewal work by Laxman-Duggada-Rathuvadhaab-Haldukhal-Nainidanda Nainidanda by SDBC in Dhumakot State Road No. 9. (Km 190 to 192 and 204 to 209) (PD Lansdowne)	3.40	5000 +18%.	G.S.T.	120	06
4	Renewal work by SDBC Satpuli-Dudharkhal-Dharkot-Satpuli-Sisidi main district road (km 26,31,32,37 to 43 and 80,81 to 92) and Fatehpur-Landsdowne main district road (km 10 to 19) (PD Lansdowne)	7.00	5000 +18%.	G.S.T.	120	06
5	Renewal work by SDBC Late Shri Jagmohan Singh Negi Motor Road (Km 35 to 37, Km 39 to 41, Km 46 to 60 and Km 77 to 79) (CD Duggada)	8.20	5000 +18%.	G.S.T.	120	06
6	Renewal work by SDBC Thalisaun Bungidhar-Deghat-Jainal-Manila-Dotiyal - Marchula Motor Road State Road No. 52 Kms 1 to 8 and 38 to 40 Total Length 10,300 (CD Baijro)	3.70	5000 +18%.	G.S.T.	120	06
7A	Renewal work by SDBC Thalitaun Charikhali-Chipaighat motor road (Km 3, 13 to 16, 18,19,23, and 34 to 38) (CD Pabou)	10.40	5000 +18%.	G.S.T.	120	06
7B	Renewal Work by SDBC Satpuli-Ekeshwar Motor Road (Km 1 to 9,11,13,15,18 and 22 to 25) (CD Pabou)					

Office of Executive Engineer, Provincial Division, P.W.D. Amroha

E-Procurement Notice Inviting Tenders

No. 175/E-Tender/23-24

Dated : 21-01-2024

1. The Executive Engineer, Provincial Division, PWD, Amroha on behalf of Governor of Uttar Pradesh invites the percentage rate bids online from the eligible and approved Contractors registered with UP PWD, Class A, B, C, & D (for Road work) The Bidder may submit bids for any or all of the works. Bidders are advised to note the minimum qualification criteria specified in Clause 4 of the Instructions to Bidders to qualify for the award of the contract.

2.

No	DISTRICT	Name of Work	Estimated cost (Rs.in Lacs)	Bid Security (Rs.in Lacs)	Cost of tenders documents including GST (RS.)	Time of completion of the work (Including rainy season)	Category of road contractor eligible
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1	Amroha	Reconstruction of NH-24 to Chabura road	11.70	1.17	766.00	2 Months	"A, B, C & D" (road Category)
2	Amroha	Reconstruction of Naungrawa-Dhamuna to Tander road	31.80	3.18	854.00	2 Months	"A, B, C & D" (road Category)
3	Amroha	Patch repair work in Vidhanbasa Amroha and Naungrawa Sadat in Assistant Engineer-I Sub-Division	15.00	1.50	854.00	12 Months	"A, B, C & D" (road Category)
4	Amroha	Patch repair work in Vidhanbasa Dhamuna in Assistant Engineer-II Sub-Division	6.00	0.60	766.00	12 Months	"A, B, C & D" (road Category)
5	Amroha	Patch repair work in Vidhanbasa Dhamuna and Naungrawa Sadat in Assistant Engineer-III Sub-Division	6.00	0.60	766.00	12 Months	"A, B, C & D" (road Category)

> The Rate adopted in the BOQ all Other taxes but excluding GST.
 > Tender cost and EMD should be deposited online by Net Banking as per Column 6 in the table.
 > Bids must be download online from 10:00 AM on date 12.02.2024 to 12:00 PM on dated 20.02.2024 and the technical bids will be opened online date 20.02.2024 at 12:30 PM and Financial bids of the qualified bidders will be opened on date & time as notified. According to the provisions of Government Order no. 1/2018/3070/78-2018/42 IT/2017 (22) Date 03-01-2018 after opening of the technical and financial bids, the qualified bidder has to submit original documents personally in department/ office. In the event of non submission of original documents by the bidder, the appropriate action will be taken in accordance with the provisions of G.O. All terms & conditions can be seen on website <http://etender.up.nic.in>

Executive Engineer
Provincial Division, PWD
Amroha
For and on behalf of Governor of UP
05922-246261

UPID-202812 Date 09/02/2024
www.upgov.nic.in

BRIDGE

Dealer: West Vulnerable: None

TAMIL NADU GENERATION AND DISTRIBUTION CORPORATION LTD
Notice Inviting Tenders (E-Tendering Process)

SI.No.	Tender Inviting Authority	Specification No.	Total
1	CE/MM	M. 86	1

For details of Works / Procurement / Due date of submission / opening, viewing and downloading of e-tenders, please visit websites: www.tangedco.gov.in, www.tenders.tn.gov.in, www.tntenders.gov.in

DIPR/825/Tender/2024

RAJA MAHENDRA PRATAP SINGH
STATE UNIVERSITY, ALIGARH, UP (INDIA)

Ref No: RMPU/E-tender/127-129/2024 Date : 09 Feb. 2024

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

THE UNIVERSITY hereby invite Bids from eligible contractors/firms for following work (1) *STC of High Mast Lights, National Flag, Air Conditioner, R.O., Refrigerator, Water Coolers, Water Dispensers, Computers/ Laptops and Photocopies; (2) STC of Different Laboratories at University; (3) STC of Interior and Furnishing of Academic Block-1, Boys Hostel and Girls Hostel at University; (4) CCTV, Networking, Intercom/EPBX, Surveillance System, Inauguration, Live Streaming, etc. at the University through GEN Portal (gen.gov.in). Details Terms and Conditions of the tenders are available on GEN Portal as well as on the University Website www.rmpsu.ac.in. The last date of the Bids is 19.02.2024 at 3:00 pm

Finance Officer

No. Tender No21993RTI Dated 08/02/2024

NORTHERN RAILWAY

TENDER NOTICE

Invitation of Tender through E-Tendering (E-Procurement Systems)

N.I.T. No.	Tender No21993RTI
Name of work and its location	Tender for "Supply and application of Exterior Paint with Fleet Graphic Film for all Type of LHB Coaches as per scope of work at RCNK, SNP".
Approx. Cost of work	Rs.72,14,34/- including GST (Rs. Seven Two Lacs Fourteen Thousand Three Hundred Forty Three Only)
Earnest Money	Rs. 1,44,300/-
Completion period of Work	12 months of date of execution of work
Cost of Tender document on cash/by post	NIL
Date and Time for submission of tender and opening of tender	01.03.2024 Opening of tender at 15.00 hrs.
Website particulars notice board location complete details of tender can be seen	Above tender available on IREPS site i.e. www.reps.gov.in

No. Tender No21993RTI Dated 08/02/2024

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

431/24

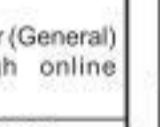
Malegaon Municipal Corporation, Malegaon
Dist Nashik, Maharashtra State
Sanitation Department

E-Tender Notice 01/2024-25

Malegaon Municipal Corporation invites the E-Tender for the Work of Daily Municipal Solid Waste Collection from Malegaon Municipal Corporation limit and Transportation to Compost Plant at Maldhe for Five years from the date of work. For details visit website <http://mahatenders.gov.in> and will be available form Date 10/02/2024

Commissioner
Malegaon Municipal Corporation
Malegaon

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY



TENDER NOTICE

For and on behalf of President of India, the Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer (General) North Central Railway, Jhansi invites open tenders through online (E-Tendering) for the following work:-

Tender No : JHS/ELG/WT/42/2023-24 Tender Value : Rs. 1977012.06

Description : Annual Maintenance Contract of AC units and water coolers of Jhansi division under jurisdiction of SSE/ELM/BDA, SSE/ELM/ORAI, SSE/ELM/ JUHI & SSE/ELM/KURJ depot for a period of three years.

Earliest money : Rs. 3960/- Cost of tender Document : NIL Completion period : Three years (36 months), Closing date of tender : 04.03.2024 (at 15:00 Hrs.), Date & time of opening of tender : 04.03.2024 (at 15:30 Hrs.) - In case the date of tender opening happens to be a holiday or technical problem in website, the tenders shall be opened on the next working day in the same manner. * The complete information along with tender document of above E-Tender is available in website on [https://www.reps.gov.in](http://www.reps.gov.in) up to 15.00 Hrs. on the due date of tender opening.

* Tenderer will submit the tender online up to 04/03/2024 (at 15.00 Hrs.) complete details & for submission of tenders can be seen in Indian Railway website <http://www.reps.gov.in>

257/24(AN)

North central railways @nctrailways @northcentralrailway @CPRONCR

UJVN Limited
HO "UJJWAL", Maharanji Bagh, GMS Road, Dehradun-248006
Telephones: 0135-2763808 Fax- 0135-2763508
CIN No. U40101UR2001SGC025866, Website: www.ujvn.com

RO No. 210 e-Tender Notice Date: 09-02-2024

Office of the Executive Engineer (E&M), MB-II, Joshiyara Barrage, invites online bids from interested parties. Brief summary of tender is given below:

Tender No: 22/EE(E&M)/MB-II/Barrage/2023-24

Name of work/Supply/Services etc: Hiring of pumps with complete Operation and Maintenance to maintain water level at Joshiyara barrage tunnel.

Estimated cost: ₹ 97,42,400.00 only + GST Extra

Date of availability of bid document on website: 09.02.2024, 16:00 hrs.

Last date for submission of bids on website: 01.03.2024, 16:00 hrs.

For fuller & further details, kindly visit e-procurement portal <http://uktenders.gov.in>

Executive Engineer

"Avoid wasteful use of Electricity"

Chhattisgarh Tourism Board

Udhay Bhawan, Rind Road -1, Telibandha, Raipur (C.G.) 492 006, Tel.: 0771-4224611/22,27 Fax: 0771-4066425,

Email: events@visitcg.in, Website: <http://chhattisgarhtourism.in>

Short Tender Notice Inviting Request for Proposal

NIT No: 4059-IMT-EVU/CTB/2024 Raipur, Date: 10/02/2024

Request for proposals are invited by Chhattisgarh Tourism Board from eligible bidder. The details are as below:-

Selection of Event Management Agency

Date and Time of Submission

Tender opening Date

"Selection of Agency for Planning, Conceptualisation, Design Execution &, Implementation and Maintenance of the event- Rajim Maghi Punni Mela 2024 in the theme of "Ramaotsav", at Rajim, Chhattisgarh"

The details of terms and terms and conditions and tender form are available on the website www.chhattisgarhtourism.in. Any amendments/ modification in the tender document, will only be uploaded on the website and shall not be published in any newspaper.

Managing Director

Chhattisgarh Tourism Board & Chairman, Rajim Maghi Punni Mela Esthanii Samiti

Executive Engineer

"Avoid wasteful use of Electricity"

Letter No: 51245062 Qty: 10 Set EMD: Rs. 82600/-

Description: Set of Brake Caliper unit with Brake cylinder consists of 02 items: (1) KBI Part No.II39261/1BZA, Qty. 01 No. per set, or FTIL Brake caliper unit Part No.: 0900020000, Qty. 01 No. per set & Brake cylinder-PBAC 254-130 Part No.: 4F-125156, Qty 01 No. per set. (2) KBI Part No.II39261/2BZA, Qty. 01 No. per set, or FTIL Brake caliper unit Part No.: 0900020000, Qty. 01 No. per set & Brake cylinder-PBAC 254-130 Part No.: 4F-125155, Qty. 01 No. per set.

Tender Opening Date: 04.03.2024 Note: 1. The complete information of above E-Procurement Tender are available on IREPS website i.e. <http://www.reps.gov.in>

2. Bids other than in the form of E bids shall not be accepted against above tenders for this purpose venders are required to get themselves registered with IREPS Website along with class III digital signature certificate issued by CCA under IT act 2000. 3. Rules entered into financial rate page and duly signed digitally signature shall only be considered rates and any other financial entry in any other form/letter had if attached by vendor shall be original straight way ignore and shall not be considered.

237/24(K)

@nctrailways @North central railways www.nctrailways.gov.in @CPRONCR

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION

General Public is hereby informed that

an unidentified dead body of a male

Namely Unknown S/o Unknown, R/o Unknown

Age: 43 years, Height: 5'5",

Complexion: Wheatish, ID: A little cut on left cheek, Wearing: Sky blue

coloured shirt and pant, was found

dead on 24.01.2024 at 4:58 PM from

Near Govindpuri Metro Station, Near Bus Stand. In this regard a DD No.81A, dated 24.01.2024 has been lodged at P.S. Govindpuri, Delhi.

If any one having any clue about deceased male may kindly inform the undersigned and contact on following numbers.

SHO

P.S. Govindpuri, Delhi

Ph.: 011-29986050, 29980049

Mob.: 8750870923

DP/1120/SE/2024

paper.indianexpress.com



GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF CONSTRUCTION ENGINEER

RURAL WORKS CIRCLE, KENDRAPARA- JAJPUR.

AT-CHANDIKHOL, PO-SUNGUDA, JAJPUR- 754024,

Tel No. 0671-2444488, Email-serv kpd@yahoo.com

No. Tender Online RCK- 03/24 Letter No. 964 Date: 05/02/24

e-Procurement NOTICE

1. Name of the work :- Building & Road Works in the district of Jajpur for the year 2023-24.

2. Class of Contractor :- As specified in the Column-6 of the Annexure.

3. Time of Completion :- As specified in the Column-7 of the Annexure.

4. Detail Projects :- As per Annexure attached

5. Other Details :-

Procurement Officer Identification No. Bid Availability of tender on-line for bidding From To Last Date & Time of seeking Tender Clarification

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Technical Bid Financial Bid

Chief Construction Engineer, Rural Works Circle, Kendrapara-Jajpur RCK - 03/24 at 13.02.2024 04.03.2024 04.03.2024 06.03.2024 11.30 A.M. 05.00 P.M. up to 02.00 P.M. at 11.30 A.M. intimates later

Further details can be seen from the website www.tendersorissa.gov.in

Sd/-

Chief Construction Engineer Rural Works Circle, Kendrapara-Jajpur

Office of Superintending Engineer

Rampur Circle, P.W.D. Rampur

Short Term E-Procurement Tender Notice

No.: 597/E-Nivida-R.Circle/23-24

Dated : 05-02-2024

1. On behalf of the Governor of UP, tenders for following work on Item Rate basis are invited by the Superintending Engineer, Rampur Circle, PWD Rampur online on website <http://etender.up.nic.in> from registered contractors Category as per column

No.8 from date 12.02.2024 at 10.00 am to 17.02.2024 at 3.00 pm. Technical bid/Prequalification of tenders shall be opened on 15.02.2024 at 3.30 pm in office of

undersigned by tender committee in presence of authorised representatives/bidders who wish to be present. Financial bid of the tenders' who qualify in technical bid shall be opened on date and time as specified by a notice in the office of undersigned.

In case of Government holiday the required process shall be carried out on next working day.

2. Details of the works are following:

Sl.

Classifieds

PERSONAL

I Debu Prasad Sarkar S/o M L Sarkar, Address: I-146 B, Sector-22, Noida, G.B.Nagar, UP-201301. I have changed my name Debu Prasad Sarkar to Devi Prasad Sarkar for all future purpose. 0040713329-1

I, Anil S/O Sh. Jai Kishan R/O H-No-702/3, Gal-3-3, Shiv Mandir, Subhash Nagar, Bahadurgarh, Haryana, Haryana-124507 declare that my name is mentioned as Anil Sharma in my class 10th marksheets. Both Anil and Anil Sharma are one and the same person name. For future I shall be known as Anil for all purposes. 0070888292-1

I, Vishu C/o Jayanti R/O-G-24 1st floor Gali, No.29, Mahendra Park, Adarsh Nagar, Azadpur, Delhi-110033, have changed my name to Vyom arora 0040713349-9

I, SHAMSHER SINGH BHOURAN, S/O SANT PAKASH, R/O ED-31B, MADHUBAN-CHOWK, PITAMPURA, DELHI-110034. HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO SHAMSHER SINGH. 0040713350-1

I, Pawan Kumar, S/O Mahender Kumar Jain, R/O-5/368, Indira colony-Sonipat Haryana, have changed my name to Pawan Kumar Jain, for all purpose. 0040713355-1

I, IRINDER SINGH, S/O MEHTAB SINGH, R/O FLAT NO.1402, T1, FRESCO, NIRVANA COUNTRY, SECTOR-50, GURGAON, HARYANA, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME, FROM IRINDER SINGH MAKKAR TO IRINDER SINGH, FOR ALL, FUTURE PURPOSES. 0040713349-6

I, Abhishek Dahiya, S/o Deenday Singh Dahiya, R/o-12/20, Indira Colony Sonipat, have changed my minor, daughter's name, from Aadarsh, to Aadarsh Dahiya, for all purposes. 0040713355-9

I, Lalchand S/o Surendra Kumar, R/o Jaitaswar, Jaistasar, Churu, Rajasthan-331411, have changed my name to Anant Birat 0070888257-1

I, Riti alias Riti Malik Girsa D/O, Rajpal Malik W/O Amit Singh, R/O WZ-3A, Nanglijalib B-1 Janakpuri, ND-58, have changed my name to Riti Malik Girsa after marriage, for all future purposes. 0040713283-7

I, Ritesh Kapoor, S/o Late Ram Swaroop Kapoor, R/o, H.NO. 1/6670, Gali No.2, East Rohtash Nagar, Shahdara, Delhi-110032, have changed the name of my Minor Son to SHYAM SUNDER KAPOOR. In future my son will be Known as SARTHAK KAPOOR. 0040713355-11

I, Ritesh Kapoor, S/o Late Ram Swaroop Kapoor, R/o, H.NO. 1/6670, Gali No.2, East Rohtash Nagar, Shahdara, Delhi-110032, have changed the name of my Minor Son to YAGYA KAPOOR, from his previous name GHANSHYAM KAPOOR. In future my son will be Known as YAGYA KAPOOR. 0040713355-10

I, RAVINDER KAUR, W/O BALWINDER SINGH, residing at, TRAN TARAN ROAD OPP-BHAI MANJ SAHIB-GURUDAWARA KOT MIT SINGH, AMRITSAR-II, PUNJAB-143022, have changed my name to RUPINDER KAUR. 0040713348-7

I, RATTAN SINGH, S/O PARMA NAND, R/O FLAT NO-19, RAKSHA SAMPADA BHAWAN, ULLAN BAATAR MARG, DELHI-CANTT-110010, have changed my minor son's name, from ARYAN to ARYAN THAKUR, for all future purposes. 0040713348-8

I, RAJESH KUMAR, S/O KESHAV JHA, R/O F-170-A, FLAT NO.12, ON SECOND FLOOR, PHASE-I, GREATER, NOIDA WEST, GAUTAM-BUDHA NAGAR, UTTAR PRADESH-201306, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO RAJESH GUPTA, FOR ALL PURPOSE. 0040713351-6

I, Priti Ranjan Saran, W/o-Rajesh Kumar Sinha, R/o-BH-103, Classic Residence, Tower-B, Rajnagar Extension, Ghaziabad-201017, have changed my name to Priti Sinha. 0040713361-1

I, Praveen Jain, W/o Pawan Kumar Jain, R/O H.No.5/368, Indira colony, Sonipat Haryana, have changed my name to Parveen Jain, for all purpose. 0040713355-2

I, Arun Pushkarna S/o Vishwa Nath Pushkarna, R/o-303, New-Modern Apartments, Sector-9, Rohini, Delhi-110085, have changed my name to Arun Kumar Pushkarna, Permanently. 0040713283-3

I, Amit Oberoi, ADD C-102 APEX ACACIA VALLEY VAISHALI, SECTOR-3 GHAZIABAD-201010, U.P, have changed my minor daughter name AASTHI TO AASTHI Oberoi, for all future purposes. 0040711703-2

I, Kalvukudi Pandian Siva Santhanam S/o Shri Kalvukudi Marudaiyah Pandian, R/o Flat C-135, Gail Vihar, Sector-23, Noida, Uttar Pradesh-201301 have changed my name to K Siva Santhanam for all future purposes. 0040712366-4

I, Maneesh, S/O CHANDER PAL, R/O FLAT, NO-1208, 12TH FLOOR, TOWER-T-6, GREENWOOD ENCLAVE, SECTOR-5 DREAM HOMES, GHAZIABAD, UTTAR PRADESH-201016, changed my name to MANEESH CHAUDHARY. 0040713348-6

I, Mohit Singh S/o NO. 2783915 RANK L/HAV ANOOP SINGH R/o 1147D, PANAMA BEGWAH, NEAR S/O BAWANA, NORTH WEST DELHI, DELHI-110039 HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO MOHIT SEHRAWAT VIDE AFFIDAVIT DATE 8.2.2024 BEFORE DELHI 0070888008-1

I, Jayant Mukherji, S/O Jagannath Mukherjee, R/O-C-184, Pushpanjali Enclave, Pitampura, Saraswati Vihar, Delhi-110034, have changed my name to Jayanta Mukherjee for all Purposes. 0040713348-1

I, Jaswant Juneja S/o HARDIT SINGH R/o GB-29, SHIVAJI Enclave, RAJOURI GARDEN, Delhi-110027, have changed my name to Jaswant Singh JUNEJA PERMANENTLY. 0040713332-1

I, Monali Gupta alias Monali Ankit Gupta W/o Ankut Gupta R/o A-94, F.F.A-Block Ashok Vihar Ph-III, Delhi-110052, have changed my name to Monali Gupta for all purposes 0040713349-10

I, Mohd Mustafa, S/O Asgar Ali R/O H.No-C-123, Gal-3-C-Block, Brijpuri Mustafabad Delhi-110094, have changed my name to Mustafa. 0040713348-3

I, Hannan, S/o Mohd Irfan Qureshi, R/o-H.No.6352, Gali Babu Bashat Wali, Quresh Nagar, Sadar Bazar, Delhi-110006, have changed my name to Mohd Hannan, for future. 0040713355-6

I, Arshiya Yadav D/o Nidhi Aggarwal R/o H.No- D-1/30 Hauz Khas, 3rd floor, New Delhi-110016, have changed my name to Arshiya Aggarwal for all future purposes. 0070888291-1

I, Anu D/o Mr. Nirmal Kumar Bakshi R/o Flat No-C-305 ATS Greens-1 Kailash Dham Road Sector-50 Noida, Gautam Buddha Nagar, U.P-201301 have changed my name to Anu Bakshi permanently. 0040713328-1

I, Sabana alias Shabana Irfan, W/o Mohd Irfan Qureshi, R/o-H.No.6352, Gali Babu Bashat Wali, Quresh Nagar, Sadar Bazar, Delhi-110006, have changed my name to Shabana, permanently. 0040713311-1

I, Mandeep Singh Rooprai, S/o Ravinder Singh, R/o.R.Z-404, street.no.5,Vishnu Garden, New Delhi-110018, have changed my name to Mandeep Singh, for all Purposes. 0040713349-3

I, Kapil Dev Diwedi, S/O RAM CHANDRA DWIVEDI, R/O-FLAT NO-101,TOWER-NO-4,UNITECH HEIGHT,CHI-3,GREATER NOIDA, GAUTAMBUDH NAGAR, UTTAR PRADESH-201310,changed my name to KAPIL DEV DWIVEDI. 0040713349-4

I, Sandeep Sharma S/o Mahinder Kumar Sharma, R/o-37-B,Taimoor Nagar,Near New Friends Colony,New Delhi-110025,inform that in my daughter's birth certificate my wife name wrongly written as Gauri Sharma,instead of correct name Sunita Sharma,for all future purposes. 0040713355-3

I, Sarita W/o Virander Singh Sheoran, R/o-152,Sharda-Niketan Saraswati Vihar,Delhi-110034,have changed my name to Sarita Sheoran, Permanently. 0040713283-1

I, Jyoti W/o AMJAD KHAN, R/O RZ-35-3 BLOCK CHANDER MOHALLA, DHARAMPURA EXTN., NAJAFGARH, NEW DELHI-110043, have changed my name from JYOTI to JYTA. 0040713349-2

I, Shahanah W/O Mustafa, R/O H-No-C-123, Gal-3-C-Block, Brijpuri Mustafabad Delhi-110094, have changed my name to Shahanah. 0040713349-2

I, Jagdish Parsad, F/O PURAN SINGH PRESENTLY,RESIDENT OF,VILLAGE BERLI KALAN,P.O MUSEPUR, DISTT-REWARI HARYANA,PIN-123401, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME, FROM JAGDISH PARSAD TO JAGDISH PRASAD, VIDE-AFFIDAVIT, DATED-09/02/2024. 0040713350-10

I, Irfan alias Mohd Irfan, S/o Chiraguddin,R/o-H.No.6352, Gali Babu Bashat Wali, Quresh Nagar, Sadar Bazar, Delhi-110006, have changed my name to Mohd Irfan Qureshi, permanently. 0040713350-4

I, Umesh Prashad Shah, S/o Thakur Dayal Shah, R/o B-143, Vasant Kunj Enclave, New Delhi-110070, have changed my name to Umesh Prasad. 0040713355-4

I, Amit Singh Girsa S/O Tarif Singh, R/O-WZ-3A, Nanglijalib B-1 Janakpuri, ND-58, have changed my name to Amit Singh, for all future purposes. 0040713358-2

I, Irfan alias Mohd Irfan, S/o Chiraguddin, R/o-H.No.6352, Gali Babu Bashat Wali, Quresh Nagar, Sadar Bazar, Delhi-110006, have changed my name to Mohd Irfan Qureshi, permanently. 0040713350-4

I, Arun Singh Girsa S/O Tarif Singh, R/O-WZ-3A, Nanglijalib B-1 Janakpuri, ND-58, have changed my name to Arun Singh, for all future purposes. 0040713351-8

I, hitherto known as Dharmendra Kumar, S/O Kale Ram, R/O Flat No-11A, Pocket-A, Mayur Vihar Phase-II, Near Tel Exchange, Patparganj-East, Delhi-110019, have changed my Name and shall hereafter be known as Dharmendra Kumar Singh. 0040713350-8

I, It is for general information that I, Mukesh Kumar, S/O Devisharan Garg, R/O A-254, Balbir Vihar, Suleiman Nagar, Kirari, North West Delhi-110086, declare that name of mine and my minor daughter has been wrongly written as Mukesh Garg and Divyanshi in her 10th-class educational documents. The actual name of mine and my minor daughter are Mukesh Kumar and Divyanshi Garg respectively which may be amended accordingly. 0040713358-3

I, Asha Goel W/o Ajay Goel, R/o BN-53, West Shalimar Bagh, Delhi-110088, declare that name of my father has been wrongly written as Rameshwar Das Mittal. 0040713350-5

I, Neetu Singh W/o Ashish Kumar Prajapati R/o Daulatabad, post mohamabdab, district Ghazipur-232237 Uttar Pradesh have changed my name to Neetu Prajapati permanently. 0040713351-1

I, Arun Pushkarna S/o Vishwa Nath Pushkarna, R/o-303, New-Modern Apartments, Sector-9, Rohini, Delhi-110085, have changed my name to Arun Kumar Pushkarna, Permanently. 0040713283-3

I, Poonam alias Poonam Rani W/o Sanjay Mittal R/o House No.133-134, Second Floor, Pocket-17, Sector-24, Rohini, Delhi-110085, have changed my name to Poonam Mittal. 0040713350-5

I, Pooja Sehgal W/o Vivek Sawhney, R/o 71/122, Prem Nagar, Janakpuri, ND-58, have changed my name to Pooja Sawhney after marriage, for all future purposes. 0040712366-4

I, Nitin R/o Gopal Dass, R/o-418, Anand Nagar, 4 Marla Road, Shahdara, Delhi-110032, have changed my name to Nitin Chhabra, for all purposes. 0040713355-8

I, Nasreen W/O Mohd Zubair, R/o-H.No-261A, No-23, Rajiv Gandhi Nagar Mustafabad Delhi-110094, have changed my minor Son's name, from Mohammad Zuhair to Mohd Zubair. 0040713348-6

I, Mohit Singh S/o NO. 2783915 RANK L/HAV ANOOP SINGH R/o 1147D, PANAMA BEGWAH, NEAR S/O BAWANA, NORTH WEST DELHI, DELHI-110039 HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO MOHIT SEHRAWAT VIDE AFFIDAVIT DATE 8.2.2024 BEFORE DELHI 0070888008-1

I, Jayant Mukherji, S/O Jagannath Mukherjee, R/O-C-184, Pushpanjali Enclave, Pitampura, Saraswati Vihar, Delhi-110034, have changed my name to Jayanta Mukherjee for all Purposes. 0040713348-1

I, Monali Gupta alias Monali Ankit Gupta W/o Ankut Gupta R/o A-94, F.F.A-Block Ashok Vihar Ph-III, Delhi-110052, have changed my name to Monali Gupta for all purposes 0040713349-10

I, Mohd Mustafa, S/O Asgar Ali R/O H.No-C-123, Gal-3-C-Block, Brijpuri Mustafabad Delhi-110094, have changed my name to Mustafa. 0040713348-3

I, Arshiya Yadav D/o Nidhi Aggarwal R/o H.No- D-1/30 Hauz Khas, 3rd floor, New Delhi-110016, have changed my name to Arshiya Aggarwal for all future purposes. 0070888291-1

I, Monali Gupta alias Monali Ankit Gupta W/o Ankut Gupta R/o A-94, F.F.A-Block Ashok Vihar Ph-III, Delhi-110052, have changed my name to Monali Gupta for all purposes 0040713348-3

I, Mohammad Zubair, S/O Mohd Zubair, R/o-H.No-261A, No-23, Rajiv Gandhi Nagar Mustafabad, Delhi-110094, have changed my name to Mohd Zubair. 0040713348-3

I, Meenakshi Sharma w/o late Sh. Daulat ram, R/o H.No.5, first floor, Dayanand Ghat, Lodhi Road, New Delhi have changed the name of my minor daughter from Anna Sharma to Divya Sharma for all future purposes. 0040713348-5

I, Eshwari, W/O SOUNDARA PANDIAN, residing at, 5A/16 SAT-NAGAR, W.E.A KAROL BAGH, DELHI-110005, inform that my name is S/E ESHWARI and ESHWARI both names are same-person (AADHAR NO-844914344033). 0040713349-7

I, Ashish S/o Prem Prakash Bajaj, R/o 7A, Dhamram Colony, Nangli, New Delhi-110041, have changed my minor son's name, from Surya to Surya Bajaj, aged-13 years. 0040713348-5

I, Asha Rani Malik W/o Parveen, R/o H.No-298, Nangli Thakran, Delhi-110039, have changed my name to Asha Rani, for all future purpose. 0040713350-3

I, TANAM Jeet Nagpal, S/o Pervesh Kumar Nagpal, R/o H.No-298, Nangli Thakran, Delhi-110039, have changed my name to Tanam Jeet Nagpal. 0040713350-3

I, Ashish Sharma Advocate D/3713/2019 Ch. No. 225, D-Block, Karkardooma Courts

I, Om Parkash S/O Bharat Singh R/O VPO Chhattara bhadurpur, Sonipat, Haryana-131103, have changed my name to Om prakash permanently. 0040713351-2

I, YASH S/O RAJ KUMAR BHOLA R/O HOUSE NUMBER-2-D, JANVYU APARTMENT, SECTOR-14, ROHINI DELHI-110085 HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO YASH BHOLA IN FUTURE FOR ALL PURPOSES. 0070888295-1

I, Vaidehi Dinesh Sah W/o Navneet Sah R/o Flat No.214, Majestic Tower, Mahagan Mascot, Crossing Republik, Ghaziabad, UP have changed my name to Vaidehi Sah for all future purposes. 0040713355-3

I, Sarita W/o Virander Singh Sheoran, R/o-152, Sharda-Niketan Saraswati Vihar, Delhi-110034, have changed my name to Sarita Sheoran, Permanently. 0040713283-6

I, Anjali Shah, D/o Shri Ram Nath Shah, R/o-C-1/893, Phase-4, Adarsh En

Across
THE AISLE

P CHIDAMBARAM

Website: pchidambaram.in

Twitter@Pchidambaram_IN

The NDA government likes to be very loud. This year, while presenting the interim Budget for 2024-25, the Hon'ble Finance Minister (FM) chose to use a bullhorn. The media obediently amplified the noise. It must have come as a great disappointment to the FM that, by the end of the next day, the budget vanished without a trace.

GOOD ECONOMICS is quiet and good economists stand behind the results of their policies. The Economic Survey, the President's Address on the first day of the first session of Parliament in a new year, and the Budget (or the Interim Budget) speech of the Finance Minister are the most important statements of government policy. Together, they make the intentions of the government loud and clear.

The NDA government likes to be very loud. This year, while presenting the interim Budget for 2024-25, the Hon'ble Finance Minister (FM) chose to use a bullhorn. The media obediently amplified the noise. It must have come as a great disappointment to the FM that, by the end of the next day, the budget vanished without a trace.

TIRED AND BORED

I think the people are getting tired – and bored – of the repeated claims of the government over the last ten years. They remember that 2 crore jobs a year was promised; what we have is handing over a few thousand appointment letters to fill existing vacancies in the government even while Tech companies reported that they had created 26,00,000 jobs in 2023. They remember the promise that Rs 15 lakhs in the bank account of every person will be deposited after 'bringing back the unaccounted money stashed in India and abroad'. They know that the alleged

Bullhorn Economics

scamsters who were allowed to leave the country are Hale and hearty in the countries of refuge and none has been extradited to India in the last ten years. They also remember the promise to double farmers' incomes, house for every family by 2022 and achieving a USD 5 trillion economy by 2023-24. Hence, the people were amused by the FM's claims.

SOME EXAMPLES

FM: These and the provision of basic necessities have enhanced real income in the rural areas.

Fact: According to PLFS data and the State of Working India report (Azim Premji University) the real wages of the three kinds of workers (regular, casual/daily and self-employed) between 2017-18 and 2022-23 have stagnated.

FM: ... the government has assisted 25 crore people to get freedom from multi-dimensional poverty.

Fact: According to UNDP, the number of people lifted out of poverty were 27.5 crore (UPA) and 14.0 crore (NDA).

FM: Every year, under PM-KISAN SAMMAN Yojana, direct financial assistance is provided to 11.8 crore farmers, including marginal and small farmers.

Fact: The number of beneficiaries dropped to 8.12 crore farmers as on November 15, 2023. Landlords (who own the land) are rewarded while tenant farmers (who cultivate the land) are excluded.

FM: A large number of new institutions of higher learning, namely 7 IITs, 16 IIITs, 15 AIIMS and 390 universities have been set up.

Fact: The 'vacant positions' as on March 22, 2023 were: IITs (9,625), IIITs (1,212) and central universities (22,106). As on March 15, 2022, the vacancies in faculty and residents' posts in AIIMS, Delhi, were 1,256. In the other 19 AIIMS, the vacancies were 3,871.

FM: PM Mudra Yojana has sanctioned 43 crore loans aggregating Rs 22.5 lakh crore for entrepreneurial aspirations of our youth.

Fact: The average loan size is Rs 52,325. If we classify these loans into *Sishu* (83 per cent), *Kishore* (15 per cent) and *Tarun* (2 per cent), it is obvious that the bulk of the loans are *Sishu*. Simple arithmetic based on published data will reveal that 35.69 crore *Sishu* borrowers got Rs 9 lakh crore. That means an average loan size of Rs 25,217. What kind of business can be started and run with a loan of Rs 25,000?

FM: Goods and Services Tax has enabled 'One Nation, One Market, One Tax'.

Fact: If there is one tax on which all businesspersons and traders are united in their opposition, it is GST. The GST laws are deeply flawed and have become an instrument of harassment and exploitation.

FM: Proactive inflation management has helped keep inflation within the policy band.

Fact: Apparently, the government's understanding of the policy band is not the same as the RBI's. RBI is doing the heavy lifting to push inflation down to 2 to 4 per cent while the government is testing the upper tolerance limit of 4 to 6 per cent. Average CPI inflation in the five year period of 2019-2024 has been 5.6 per cent. Food inflation is 8.7 per cent; Milk 5.07 per cent; Fruits 11.4 per cent; and Vegetables 27.64 per cent.

FM: It is an important policy priority for our Government to ensure timely and adequate finances, relevant technologies and appropriate training for the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) to grow and also compete globally.

Fact: Thousands of MSMEs shut shop during the pandemic years for want of support from the government. Government twisted and drastically scaled down the guarantee of Rs 3,00,000 crore of losses in bank loans to a mere Rs 3,00,000 crore of bank loans. Based on available data, it is estimated that about Rs 2,00,000 crore were disbursed.

FM: Seafood export since 2013-14 has also doubled.

Fact: The doubling in 9 years (Rs 30,627 crore to Rs 64,902 crore) is in current rupee prices.

In USD, the increase is only 60 per cent from USD 5016 million to USD 8078 million, which yields a modest CAGR of 5.4 per cent.

Non-statutory warning: Use of bullhorns can make people deaf.

Fifth
COLUMN
TAVLEEN SINGH

Twitter@tavleen_singh



A caste census. Seriously?

IN CASE there are those of you who may not have seen it, I shall begin by describing Rahul Gandhi's latest video from his yatra. It begins with him saying aggressively that Narendra Modi was not born an OBC (other backward class) and that he is of the 'teli' caste, which was included in the OBC list only in the year 2000. He then tells his audience that they have been fooled by 'their prime minister' who has told them dangerous lies. He is from the 'general' caste category and the reason why he (Rahul) knows this is because Modi never holds the hand of a farmer or worker. He only holds Adani's hand. The final point he makes is that Modi will never allow a caste census and that is something only he, Rahul Gandhi, will do.

The reason why I have described this latest video in detail is because it reveals many things about the man that the Congress Party hopes will defeat Modi in this year's general election. What it reveals to me is an unshakable and ugly sense of entitlement. So, Modi is 'your prime minister' but not the prime minister. It reveals that the Dynasty's heir has been mistakenly led to believe that all farmers and workers are from the backward caste category. As for what 'general castes' means, it is a category only he knows. What concerns me is that caste should suddenly have become so important in Rahul Gandhi's eyes. What happened to foundational Congress ideas like secularism, liberalism and democracy?

As someone who truly believes that Indian democracy has been weakened by the absence of a challenge to Modi, I listened to Rahul's words with deep dismay. Has he learned nothing at all from sitting on the opposition benches for ten years? The first lesson that he should have learned is that he must rid himself of that sense of entitlement. His family may have ruled India for most of her years as an independent country, but this does not mean that it is his birthright to rule India. It certainly sounds as if he believes that it is.

From the first days of Modi becoming prime minister, members of India's former ruling Dynasty have treated him with disdain. Remember the short, curt, bitter press conference addressed by Sonia and son when they conceded losing the 2014 election? Remember that Sonia could not bring herself to congratulate Modi and congratulated the new government instead. She refused to mention his name.

It is unfortunate that after losing two general elections the Dynasty still seems to think of Modi as an upstart, a usurper sitting on their throne. It shows that they have not yet discovered that Indian voters have changed since those long-ago days when a famous name was enough to fool them. The Congress 'high command' appears not to have noticed yet that political heirs or 'potted plants', to use Prashant Kishor's unforgettable description, are no longer as popular with voters as they once used to be.

If the Congress Party is serious about taking on Modi, it needs a more convincing message than caste. Not many voters are stupid enough to believe that ordering a 'caste census' will create for them the new jobs and those other opportunities for bettering their lives that young Indians so badly need. Getting yourself declared an OBC is no guarantee of a job anymore. But nobody appears to have told Rahul Gandhi this, so in other videos from his Nyaya Yatra, he has promised to change the law that restricts reserved jobs for deprived castes to less than fifty percent.

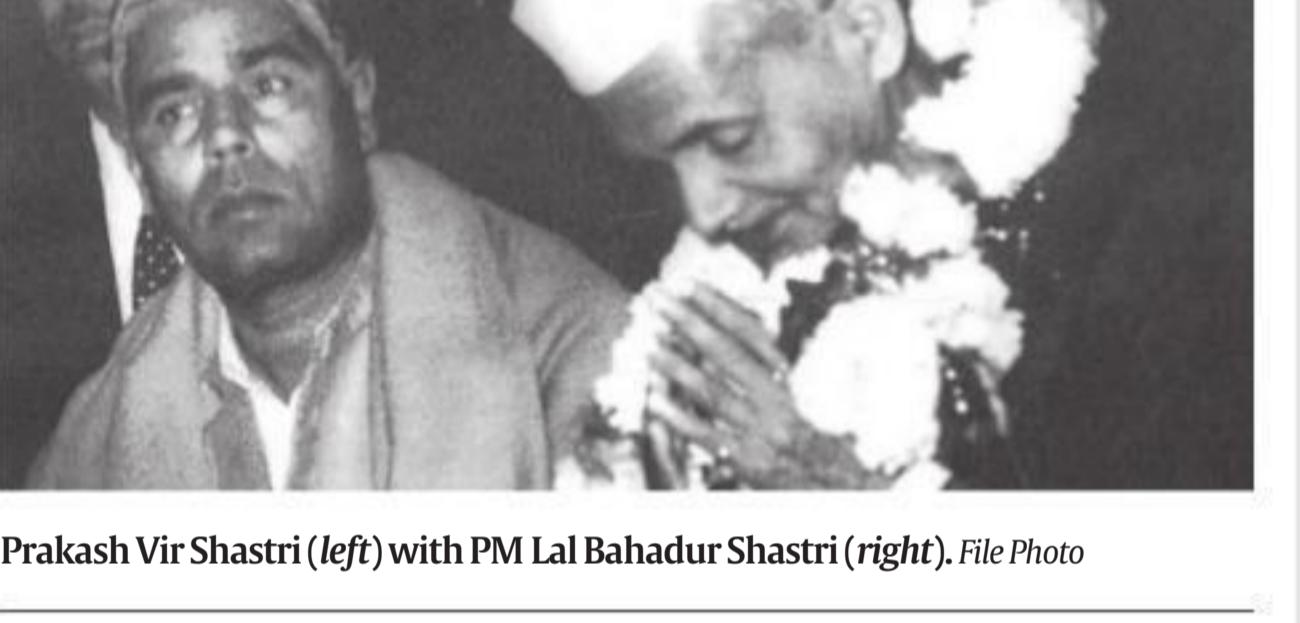
As someone who believes that democracy is seriously endangered when there is the absence of a strong opposition it worries me that all that Congress has come up with is its 'new narrative' is this very old, caste census idea. It worries me because Modi 3.0 as the Prime Minister now describes himself is likely to be more autocratic than ever before. He has weaknesses that should be easy to exploit by those who seek to defeat him. A glaring weakness is Modi's inability to take opposition or criticism of any kind. So, opposition leaders, critics in the media and civil rights organizations have had a rough deal in the past ten years.

What India needs in the coming general election is a political party, and a leader, who can promise a more liberal worldview politically and economically some ideas on how to create millions more jobs. Nothing is more important to young Indians than real jobs now. Today, Not Modi's 'guarantee' of jobs in the distant future when India becomes 'vksit'. For the Congress Party to promise a caste census instead of a new economic idea is almost suicidal. It is hard to see it as a winning narrative in the general election that is now just three months away.

Modi is so sure of victory that he made it a point to emphasise this in his speeches in Parliament last week. He talked of specific numbers. The BJP on its own will win more than 370 seats, he said, and with its allies will exceed 400 seats in the Lok Sabha. Only one Indian prime minister has done this in the past. Rahul's Daddy. Only one prime minister has managed to win three straight terms. Rahul's great-grandfather. Long, long ago in another India.

history
HEADLINE
CHAKSHURGY

66 years ago, an idea for a House session in South



Prakash Vir Shastri (left) with PM Lal Bahadur Shastri (right). File Photo

NORTH-SOUTH politics hogged the lime-light towards the end of the 17th Lok Sabha. First, Congress MP from Karnataka, D K Suresh, said that the people of South India might have to demand a separate country if "the injustice of not providing the rightful share of taxes (to the southern states) continued". Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah led a protest in Delhi on the same subject. There was also a protest meeting in Delhi by Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan on the issue of federalism.

Sixty-six years earlier, an Independent Member of Parliament had an idea to bring both parts of the country together – hold a session of Parliament in the southern part of the country.

In 1958, the voters of Gurgaon, then part of Punjab, elected an Independent candidate, Prakash Vir Shastri, to represent them in Lok Sabha. The election had become necessary to fill the vacancy caused by the death of independent India's first education minister, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad. One scholar pointed out that Shastri's electoral success was due to the support he received from the Jana Sangh, the BJP's predecessor.

Parliamentary records indicate that

Shastri, who served four terms in Parliament, was an active legislator. A year after being elected to Lok Sabha, Shri Shastri gave a notice for discussion in Lok Sabha that stated, "This House is of the opinion that one session of Lok Sabha is held in South India at Hyderabad or Bangalore every year." Other MPs had also given similar notices in the past, but Shastri's notice was successful in a ballot and picked for discussion on the floor of the House.

A MIDDLE PATH

Opening the debate, Shastri marshalled data about the proposal's feasibility. But the core of his argument was that such a move would help strengthen national integration. While some MPs supported the idea, others opposed it. Atal Bihari Vajpayee, also in his first term in Lok Sabha, proposed a middle path. He suggested that the government keep an open mind on the issue and form a committee to examine the idea. The government, however, opposed Shastri's proposal on practicality, leading to its rejection by Lok Sabha.

But Shastri was persistent in getting Parliament to meet in a southern city. He

would raise the issue again in 1963 and then introduce a private member Bill on the same subject in 1968. This time, the government agreed to constitute a committee of 18 MPs, with the mandate to "examine the feasibility and financial implications of the proposal to hold the session of Parliament in the South". The committee had Shastri and other distinguished MPs like G S Dhillon, Rabi Ray (both became Speakers later) and K Hanumanthaiya (former Karnataka CM) as its members.

The committee wrote to different state governments, inviting their suggestions. It also visited Bangalore and Trivandrum, where the two state governments were enthusiastic about hosting a Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha session in their city. The governments of Mysore and Kerala put together detailed proposals for the infrastructure required (two legislative chambers, housing for presiding officers, MPs, ministers, government and secretariat staff, etc.) and the money needed to construct it. Kerala offered free land, and Mysore offered to create space in its newly built Vidhan Soudha building to accommodate a parliamentary session. The central government had to bear the cost (one-time Rs 16 crore and recurring Rs 1.25 crore annually) of developing and maintaining the infrastructure.

There was also a suggestion that to ease staffing requirements, a purely legislative session (without Question Hour) could be held outside of Delhi. However, the central government was opposed to this idea. It thought, "A Parliament session doing only legislative business would be considered a pale reflection of itself, lacking in teeth and leaving the opposition dissatisfied."

The writer is director, *Hutkay Films*

Some states like Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa, Gujarat, Manipur, and Punjab opposed holding a Parliament session outside Delhi. Other than the logistical and procedural constraints, a more fundamental criticism came from Jammu and Kashmir. In its response to the committee, the state government stated that such a move would create pressure from other distant parts of the country to hold a session there. It said, "The financial implications of the proposal are, perhaps, the least important of the considerations; the most important is whether the holding of the session in the South today and maybe in the East and West a few years later will conduce to the efficient working of Parliament."

NOT FEASIBLE'

Considering all factors, the committee concluded that holding the session in Bangalore or Trivandrum was not feasible.

The committee suggested that parliamentary committees could hold their meetings during the intercession period in the southern part of the country. Shri Prakash Vir Shastri agreed with the recommendations.

But the idea of holding a parliament session in the South is rising again. Last month, Punjab Governor Banwari Lal Purohit suggested that Tamil Nadu could be the venue for a winter session of Parliament. Purohit had served as Governor of Tamil Nadu from 2017 to 2021. Addressing a Pongal event in Chandigarh, he said, "The weather here is much colder... Delhi is the capital... turn the key a little bit in Tamil Nadu so that a second capital is in Tamil Nadu... One session should be there also."

As someone who believes that democracy is seriously endangered when there is the absence of a strong opposition it worries me that all that Congress has come up with is its 'new narrative' is this very old, caste census idea. It worries me because Modi 3.0 as the Prime Minister now describes himself is likely to be more autocratic than ever before. He has weaknesses that should be easy to exploit by those who seek to defeat him. A glaring weakness is Modi's inability to take opposition or criticism of any kind. So, opposition leaders, critics in the media and civil rights organizations have had a rough deal in the past ten years.

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Queen bees versus the wannabes

Chinese whispers is acceptable (even enjoyable), but crossing boundaries and exposing peoples' unsavoury truths in the guise of literature is not.

For anyone at the receiving end of malice from a close friend, it can be a gut punch worse than heartbreak to discover a former confidant saw you as a shallow social climber and then proceeded to make money off the embarrassing details of your superficiality. The betrayal was crushing because Capote's article revealed exactly what these doyes were at great pains to hide; that beneath their carefully cultivated imperious airs and consummate chic, like everyone else, they wanted reality to be other than what it was. Actually, Capote was lucky the bevy of stylish beauties he endearingly named his Swans didn't bludgeon him to death and, instead,

adopted the cunning strategy of the freeze treatment, by denying him entry into his favourite haunts. Point to note, the UN lists solitary confinement as a form of torture and studies coming out on the negative effects of loneliness on lifespans are alarming. Being cast aside and ignored can be a living hell, especially knowing it's an entirely justified response to one's own dreadful behaviour.

But it's also worth remembering that it's a writer's instinct to record observations. Rare are those readily willing to pop a vein, risk their friendships to critique human nature and shed a malicious light on a particular time. The greatest artists have always been those who choose to stay fiercely uninhibited. They couldn't give two hoots about winning popularity contests and would rather be free to gleefully pen

down acerbic anecdotes about the world around them. Masterpieces like *Vanity Fair* and *The Picture of Dorian Gray* skillfully turned gossip into cultural insight. Is that ruthless? Maybe. W M Thackeray himself declared, "All is vanity, nothing is fair". There's no denying that this kind of biting satire in *Feud* is a fascinating mirror in which we all see something of ourselves (and it serves as a sobering reminder to always be wary of the Capote in our midst).

The fact is, everyone talks about everybody they know. People have been stylly making fun of people behind their backs, since time immemorial. There are Biblical proverbs on the dangers of mindless gossip: like, *where there is no talebearer, the strife ceases or the prudent hold their tongues*. Put three friends out of four together, they'll animatedly discuss the one missing. So, it's

impossible to go through life without being gossiped about yet, it's always a shock to discover that somebody doesn't view us as positively as we view ourselves. Most of the petty issues between adults stem from idle chatter; some random misconstrued comment that's gotten back from some third party, with extra spice thrown in (The situation is aptly remedied with a sarcastic barb right back, cleverly shared with someone you know will shoot their mouth off).

Frustratingly, we're expected to coolly laugh off the nonsense we hear about ourselves as capricious rubbish, and display calm wisdom though every instinct makes you want to punch the perpetrator in the face. Most of us aren't stoic Gandhians, so we seethe, shrug and eventually forget, but only once the slander shifts elsewhere.

The writer is director, *Hutkay Films*

On the
LOOSE

TOP OF THE WORLD



Firefighters in Kharkiv, Saturday. AP

UKRAINE

Russian drone strike on Kharkiv kills at least 7

Kyiv: A Russian drone strike on Kharkiv, Ukraine's second largest city, killed at least seven people overnight, including three children, Kharkiv region governor Oleh Syniehubov reported on Saturday. He said the Iranian-made Shahed drone hit civilian infrastructure in the Nemyshlyan district on the city, causing a massive fire that burned down 15 houses. Interior Minister Ihor Klymenko said more than 50 people had been evacuated. The Ukrainian air force said air defense systems destroyed 23 out of 31 Iranian Shahed drones launched by Russia overnight. AP

CANADA

Indian truck driver charged with drug trafficking

Ottawa: An Indian truck driver from Canada has been charged with "intent to distribute controlled substances" after he was caught attempting to bring an estimated Canadian dollars 8.7 million worth of cocaine into the US, according to a media report. Gagandeep Singh was caught by Customs and Border Protection (CBP) officers after a border canine found the suspected cocaine at a Windsor-Detroit border crossing. The discovery was made on February 5 at an outbound customs inspection at the Ambassador Bridge in Detroit, according to documents obtained by CTV News. AP

UNITED STATES
Indian-origin techie dies after being assaulted

Washington: A 41-year-old Indian-origin IT executive has died after suffering life-threatening injuries during an assault outside a restaurant in the American capital here, the seventh death of an Indian or Indian-American in the country in recent months. The victim, identified as Vivek Taneja, a resident of Alexandria, was attacked on February 2 in the 1100 block of 15th Street NW, which is seven blocks away from the White House. "On Wednesday, February 7, 2024, the victim succumbed to his injuries," said police. AP

UNITED STATES
Ex-Catholic priest gets 22 years in jail

Columbia: A former Catholic priest in South Carolina has been sentenced to nearly 22 years in prison for trying to sexually assault a boy and showing him pornography. Jamie Adolfo Gonzalez-Farias, 69, could have faced a life sentence. Federal Judge Mary Geiger Lewis on Thursday granted part of a defense motion for a lighter prison term and sentenced the priest to 21 years and 10 months in jail, along with lifetime monitoring if he is ever released. AP

IMRAN CLAIMS VICTORY; U.S., E.U. SEEK PROBE INTO 'IRREGULARITIES'

Pak Army chief backs Nawaz call to form unity govt as PTI threatens stir



Supporters of former PM Imran Khan's party protest in Peshawar on Saturday. Reuters

SAJJAD HUSSAIN & M ZULQERNAIN
RAWALPINDI, FEBRUARY 10

PAKISTAN'S POWERFUL army chief Gen Asim Munir Saturday urged the country's polarised political leadership to form a "unified government of all democratic forces", as he backed ex-premier Nawaz Sharif's plea to his rivals to help form a coalition government after the general elections appear to have produced a hung Parliament.

Efforts to form a unity government gained momentum after the three-time former PM Sharif, who seems to enjoy the backing of the Army, Friday appealed to other political parties to join hands to pull cash-strapped Pakistan out of its current difficulties. Springing a surprise, independents backed by jailed former prime minister Imran Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party won the lion's share of 100 seats in the National

Assembly. Khan's party has already claimed victory. The group was followed by Sharif's Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) with 73 seats, Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) with 54, Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM) with 17 and 11 other seats going to smaller parties, as the result of 255 seats out of 265 was announced by the Election Commission.

To form a government, a party must win 133 seats out of 265 in the National Assembly.

On Saturday, a statement attributed to Gen Munir said, "The nation needs stable hands and a healing touch to move on from the politics of anarchy. Elections are not a zero-sum competition of winning and losing but an exercise to determine the mandate of the people," it said.

Meanwhile, Khan, 71, in an AI-generated audio-video message on Saturday claimed victory in the elections. He thanked the people for voting for PTI and also asked them to ensure the sanctity of

their votes was not hijacked by the establishment.

PTI Central Information Secretary Raof Hasan said the party had already started the consultation process on its future course of action. He warned that any attempt to derail the people's decision would have "deadly consequences". He said PTI had emerged as a leading political force in the Centre, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab provinces, but efforts were underway to manipulate the results in the Centre and Punjab to establish governments of their choice.

"Asif Ali Zardari and Nawaz Sharif had a one-on-one meeting at Jati Umra in which both discussed forming a coalition government in Islamabad," a PMLN leader said.

He said both PML-N and PPP are in a comfortable position to form the government with the help of small parties while the PTI will be pushed to sit on opposition benches. PTI

protests complete with sloganizing and waving of party flags.

PTI chief Gohar Ali Khan demanded the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) to announce complete results by midnight or face protests by his supporters in areas where results were still awaited and said, otherwise "PTI supporters will stage peaceful protests outside offices of returning officers (ROs)." He also claimed that the PTI had the proof of Form 45 of polling stations that showed its supported candidates had won but the ROs declared them unsuccessful.

Imran's party aims to form govt, asks poll panel to declare full results

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
ISLAMABAD, FEB 10

DECLARING THAT it would form the government both at the centre as well as in Punjab and Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa provinces, Imran Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf party on Saturday asked the election commission to announce complete results by midnight or face protests in areas where results were still awaited.

However, within hours of issuing this statement, party workers at Peshawar and Karachi embarked on loud

133 tonnes of chicken stolen amid shortage of food in Cuba

REUTERS
HAVANA, FEBRUARY 10

CUBA HAS charged 30 people for stealing 133 tonnes of chicken and selling them on the street in a rare major heist at a time of food shortages in the communist-run nation. Thieves took the meat, in 1,660 white boxes, from a state facility in the capital Havana, and used the sale proceeds to buy refrigerators, laptops, televisions and air conditioners, according to a Cuban state TV broadcast late on Friday.

The chicken had been earmarked for Cuba's "rationbook" system introduced after the late Fidel Castro's 1959 revolution to provide subsidised staples for all.

Rigoberto Mustelier, director of government food distributor COPARM, said the quantity stolen was the equivalent of a month's ration of chicken for a medium-sized province at current distribution rates. The amount of chicken available via the rationbook has fallen sharply in recent years as economic crisis has brought scarcities of food, fuel and medicines. Many subsidised products reach the populace days, weeks or even months later than scheduled, leaving people who make an average wage of 4,209 pesos a month to seek other ways to make ends meet.

REUTERS
DOHA/JERUSALEM, FEBRUARY 10

ISRAELI AIR strikes killed 17 people in Gaza's Rafah overnight, medics said on Saturday, as over a million Palestinians cramming into the border city await a full-blown offensive with the rest of their enclave in ruins and nowhere left to run.

Four months into the war in Gaza, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office said it has ordered the military to develop a plan to evacuate the population of Rafah and destroy four Hamas battalions it says are deployed there.

"Any Israeli incursion in Rafah means massacres, means destruction. People are filling every inch of the city and we have nowhere to go," said Rezik Salah, 35, who fled his Gaza City home with his wife and two children for Rafah early in the war.

Most of the displaced have sought shelter in Rafah, in the far south on the border with Egypt, but after ceasefire talks failed, Netanyahu this week said Israeli forces would fight on until "total victory", including in Rafah.

On Friday night an air strike on one Rafah house killed 11 people. Israel's military said that its forces were continuing "intensive" activities in Gaza.



A Palestinian salvages his belongings after an Israeli strike in Rafah on Saturday. AP

'Reflecting our concerns': White House downplays Biden's blunt Israel remark

ASSOCIATED PRESS
WASHINGTON, FEBRUARY 10

THE WHITE HOUSE Friday sought to downplay sharp criticism levied against Israel by President Joe Biden and a senior national security official over how Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's government has conducted Israel's four-month-old war aimed at rooting out Hamas militants from Gaza.

Biden, speaking to reporters Thursday evening, called Israel's military operations in Gaza "over the top" and said the suffering of innocent people has "got to stop."

Then on Friday, the New York Times reported it had obtained a recording in which the president's deputy principal national security adviser, Jon Finer, expressed a "lack of confidence" in Netanyahu's right-wing government during a meeting with Arab American and Muslim commu-

nity leaders this week. The White House National Security Council confirmed that Finer's comments were accurate.

"The President and Finer were reflecting on concerns we have had for some time and will continue to have as the Israeli operation proceeds, about the loss of Palestinian lives in this conflict and the need to reduce civilian harm," National Security Council spokesperson Adrienne Watson said in a statement.

IN IVORY COAST, LÈKÈ ARE THE PREFERRED FOOTWEAR FOR AMATEUR GAMES — AND ALMOST EVERYTHING ELSE

'Fit better': Playing football in \$1.5 sandals that even Gucci wants to copy

ELIAN PELTIER
ABIDJAN (IVORY COAST)

THE WEALTHY pros of Ivory Coast's national soccer team were resting in their luxury hotel last week, preparing for a match in Africa's biggest tournament, when Yaya Camara sprinted onto a dusty lot and began fizzing one pass after another to his friends.

Over and over, he corralled the game's underinflated ball and then sent it away again with his favorite soccer shoes: worn plastic sandals long derided as the sneaker of the poor, but which he

and his friends wear as a badge of honor.

Shiny soccer cleats like his idols? No thanks, said Camara, a lean 18-year-old midfielder, as he wiped sweat from his brow.

"How did the pros start playing when they were kids like us? With lèkè," he added, referring to the sandals that are ubiquitous not only in his pickup game but almost any place an Ivorian puts their feet.

While the best African teams run out in expensive branded cleats at this year's continental soccer championship, the Africa Cup of Nations, it is lèkè (pron-



Players wearing lèkè in Abidjan, where worn soles and scars from the sandals' metallic clasps are a point of pride. NYT

nounced leh-kéh) that amateur players craft the best street soccer.

They praise the cheaper sandals for their practicality — "They're lighter, they fit better and they're more comfortable where we play," as Camara put it — in games that take place not on manicured grass fields in shiny new stadiums but on countless sandy pitches, dusty courtyards and narrow alleyways.

"Lèkè are the national shoes of Ivory Coast," said Seydou Traoré, his feet resting inside an orange pair (the national color) as he watched a nerve-racking match on a television pulled into the

street alongside dozens of neighbors and friends. Many of them wore lèkè, too.

Most players said they had been wearing them since they were toddlers. School children wear them to school. And they blossom on countless feet when the streets of Abidjan fill with winter during the rainy season.

And while the jelly shoe has become trendy in the fashion world in recent years, with luxury brands like Gucci making their own version, they're chic in Ivory Coast for reasons of both style and pragmatism. "Apart from in the office, you can wear them every-

where, even at a party," said Traoré, an amateur player.

Heels, dress shoes or leather sandals remain the favored shoes for the office in Ivory Coast, one of West Africa's largest economies and home to a dynamic middle class. The French company that now owns the patent, Humeau-Beaupreau, sells 800,000 pairs a year, according to a representative of the company. But the bulk of the lèkè seen across West Africa are manufactured locally; in Ivory Coast, one can buy a pair on almost every street corner for about \$1.50. NYT



Donald Trump in Harrisburg on Friday. AP

Trump, Haley take battle to S Carolina as Biden keeps up damage control

TRUMP VOWS TO UNDO BIDEN'S GUN CURBS

FORMER PRESIDENT Donald Trump said Friday that if re-elected he would reverse all the gun restrictions enacted by President Joe Biden. Speaking to thousands of supporters at an event organised by the National Rifle Association (NRA), Trump said if he is re-elected "no one will lay a finger on your firearms".

in Harrisburg, Pa. "This is nothing more than selective persecution of Biden's political opponent: me." After the special counsel's report, Haley released a statement calling Biden "enfeebled" and saying that Trump was "prone to temper tantrums and wild rants," with "his own mental deficiencies."

For its part, the White House continued to try to control the damage from the report's release. On Friday, Vice President Kamala Harris suggested the report was not impartial. "The way the president's demeanor in that report was characterised could not be more wrong on the facts and clearly politically motivated," she said.

Indo-Pacific strategy has made US, region more prosperous, secure: White House

LALIT K JHA
WASHINGTON, FEBRUARY 10

THE US has said the execution of its Indo-Pacific Strategy in 2022 amidst the strategic competition with China, has made the country and the dynamic region more secure and more prosperous, and expanded the bilateral partnership with India in unprecedented ways.

Addressing the media on the second anniversary of the launch of the landmark foreign policy strategy of the Biden administration, Adrienne Watson, a spokesperson for the National Security Council of the White House, said "the United States has never been in a stronger position in the Indo-Pacific," Watson said.

"We have deepened and elevated alliances with Japan, the Republic of Korea (ROK), Australia, the Philippines, and Thailand. We upgraded our bilateral relationships with Vietnam and Indonesia, and our partnership with ASEAN."

"We have expanded our partnership with India in unprecedented ways. We have surged our efforts in the Pacific, including with two historic summits for Pacific Island leaders at the White House and the establishment of the Partners of the Blue Pacific," she said.

"Over the past two years, we have made historic progress in advancing an Indo-Pacific that is free and open, connected, prosperous, secure, and resilient.

Thanks to President Biden's leadership, the United States has never been in a stronger position in the Indo-Pacific," she said.

In the two years since the launch of the Indo-Pacific Strategy, the United States has reinvested and revitalised its alliances and partnerships and taken them to new heights, Watson said.

"We have deepened and elevated alliances with Japan, the Republic of Korea (ROK), Australia, the Philippines, and Thailand. We upgraded our bilateral relationships with Vietnam and Indonesia, and our partnership with ASEAN."

"We have expanded our partnership with India in unprecedented ways. We have surged our efforts in the Pacific, including with two historic summits for Pacific Island leaders at the White House and the establishment of the Partners of the Blue Pacific," she said.

MINERALS SECURITY PARTNERSHIP WITH CENTRAL PUBLIC SECTOR UNITS

India to leverage US-led partnership to get critical mineral assets from abroad

AGGAM WALIA
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 10

THE UNION Mines Ministry has proposed to circulate critical mineral block proposals received by partner countries in the US-led Minerals Security Partnership (MSP) with central public sector undertakings or PSUs to allow them to acquire critical mineral assets abroad.

The ministry has also recommended that PSUs give a clear financial mandate to relevant subsidiaries to expedite the acquisition process in a meeting held on October 30, 2023.

PSUs such as Coal India Limited, NLC India, and NTPC have expressed interest in securing lithium, cobalt, and graphite assets overseas.



PSUs such as Coal India Limited, NLC India, and NTPC have expressed interest in securing lithium, cobalt, and graphite assets overseas.

the mines ministry, which on January 15 signed an agreement with a state-owned company in Argentina to explore and develop five lithium blocks in the South American country.

Asheesh Kumar, General Manager at CIL, added that the PSU is interested in securing lithium and cobalt blocks in Australia.

In March 2023, two lithium and three cobalt blocks had been identified by the Union Minister of Coal and Mines and the Australian Minister for Resources for investment by KABIL, according to a report available on the mines ministry's website. Both CIL and KABIL did not respond to a query seeking clarification on the scope of their engagement with each other in exploring critical mineral projects in Australia.

Kumar also added that CIL will focus on Chile, Bolivia, and Argentina as well for securing critical mineral assets.

NTPC is looking at acquiring lithium, cobalt, graphite, and high-purity limestone assets abroad through its subsidiary NTPC Mining Limited.

During the meeting, Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL) representatives expressed interest in acquiring coking coal, limestone, and iron ore assets overseas for captive use. Since these minerals are not included in the list of thirty critical minerals identified by the mines ministry, Kantha Rao

recommended SAIL to also explore the potential of investments in critical minerals abroad within the Steel Ministry, which owns the PSU. NTPC and SAIL did not respond to a query seeking comments on their critical mineral plans.

On January 18, CIL announced plans to enter the mining of critical minerals in India beginning with the exploration of a lithium block it expects to get from the central government.

In 2023, CIL had also amended its Memorandum of Association (MoA) to include non-ferrous and critical minerals, in line with the PSU's growing commitment towards critical minerals. Previously, NLC India had also expressed interest in participating in the ongoing auction of twenty critical mineral blocks launched by the mines ministry in November, 2023.

During the meeting in October, Kantha Rao also recommended ministries and PSUs interested in critical mineral assets overseas to engage international consultants to "conduct in-depth studies, compile comprehensive reports, and oversee due diligence procedures for prospective projects".

He also added that PSUs should maintain a communication channel with Indian missions abroad as embassies can ensure the smooth acquisition of overseas projects.

CRUDE WATCH
OIL SETTLES UP

Oil prices settled higher on Friday, up about 6% on a week-on-week basis, as worries about supply from the Middle East mounted and as reining outages tightened refined products markets. **REUTERS**

Israeli chipmaker Tower closes in on \$8 billion fabrication plant in India

SOUMYARENDRABARIK
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 10

ISRAEL-BASED chip manufacturing company Tower Semiconductor has submitted its proposal to set up a chip fabrication plant in India worth around \$8 billion, *The Indian Express* has learnt. The government is assessing its pitch and is hoping to clear it before the model code of conduct kicks in ahead of this year's general elections.

If Tower's proposal is accepted by the government, it would be the first semiconductor company with real fabrication pedigree to join India's \$10 billion chip manufacturing scheme, and will be a big boost to New Delhi's chipmaking ambitions.

The scheme promises a 50 per cent capital expenditure subsidy to successful applicants – meaning that if Tower's plant costs \$8 billion, the Centre will shell out \$4 billion from its kitty.

Any state where the chip foundry could be located may give additional benefits to the company.

Tower is looking to manufacture 65 nanometre and 40 nanometre chips in India which may be used in a number of sectors, including automotive and wearable electronics.

Minister of State for Electronics and IT Rajeev Chandrasekhar had last October met Tower's CEO Russel C Ellwanger to discuss its partnership with India in the chip space.

Tower Semiconductor did not respond to a request for comment. Tower had earlier applied to the



Tower is looking to manufacture 65 nanometre and 40 nanometre chips in India.

Reuters

scheme to set up a \$3 billion plant in Karnataka in partnership with international consortium ISMC. However, the plan got stuck due to the company's then impending merger with Intel. Last August, Intel cancelled its plan to acquire Tower Semiconductor for \$5.4 billion due to regulatory issues.

The planned merger between Intel and Tower, announced in February 2022, passed an antitrust review in the United States and several other geographies. But it ran into a lengthy delay in China, where regulators review mergers of companies that earn a certain amount of revenue in the country.

On Friday, CG Power and Industrial Solutions said it has entered into a joint venture (JV) agreement with Renesas Electronics America and Thailand-based Stars Microelectronics to set up a semiconductor assembly and testing plant in India.

While India has managed to

attract big names such as Micron Technology to set up a chip packaging plant in the country, it is yet to clear a proposal to set up a full fledged fabrication plant.

While securing Micron's \$825 million investment commitment for its packaging plant was a big win for India's chip ambitions, having a chip foundry would be a big milestone and help draw further investments in the chip space.

A joint venture between Foxconn, best known as the manufacturer of iPhones, and Vedanta to set up a \$19.5 billion chip plant came to an abrupt halt last year. Foxconn announced it was pulling out of the joint venture with Vedanta. While government sources maintain the two could apply separately, there has been no movement so far.

There was a third fab proposal by Singapore-based ICSSV, but it was not found up to the mark by the advisory committee of the government and is on the back burner, it is learnt.

ESIC extends medical benefits for retired members

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 10

THE EMPLOYEES' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC) on Saturday decided to extend medical benefits to superannuated insured persons with relaxed norms.

The decision was taken at the 193rd meeting of ESIC under the chairmanship of Union Minister Bhupender Yadav, a labour ministry statement said.

The ESIC approved a proposal to provide medical benefits to the insured superannuating workers who went out of the ESI Scheme coverage due to exceeding the wage ceiling, if the worker was under insurable employment for at least 5 years before superannuation/voluntary retirement, it stated.

The persons who were in the insurable employment for at least 5 years after April 1, 2012 and superannuated/voluntarily retired on or after April 1, 2017 with wages up to Rs 30,000 per month will be benefitted under the new scheme.

To augment the service delivery mechanism in North-Eastern states to fulfil the vision of Act East Policy of the government, the ESIC relaxed the existing norms for establishment of dispensaries, medical infrastructure/regional/sub-regional offices in NE states including Sikkim.

To promote holistic well-being of ESI beneficiaries, a new policy on AYUSH 2023 in ESIC institutions was adopted during the meeting. The policy details the establishment of Panchkarma, Kshara Sutra and AYUSH units in ESIC hospitals.

During the meeting, to strengthen the infrastructure of medical care, approval for acquisition of lands for construction of 100-bed hospitals each at Udupi, Karnataka and 150-bed hospital at Malerkotla, Punjab was also accorded.

Concessions/facilities for non-IPs (insured persons) to avail ESI healthcare services at "nil" user charges at ESIC medical colleges and hospitals at Alwar, Rajasthan and Bihta, Bihar have been extended till March 31, 2025.

'To accelerate energy transition, commercial EVs need to deliver value'



**THE EXPRESS
INTERVIEW**

WITH
SAURAV KUMAR
FOUNDER & CHIEF EXECUTIVE
OFFICER, EULER MOTORS

IN 2018, SAURAV KUMAR founded Euler Motors to manufacture cargo carrying electric three-wheelers and entered a market dominated by legacy players. In 2021, Euler launched its first product, HiLoad EV, which it claims has a payload capacity of 688 kilograms and a range of 170 kilometres. With over \$100 million raised in funding from leading institutional investors including British International Investment, Singapore-based GIC, and Blume Ventures, Euler has made significant inroads in the past three years. In an interview with AGGAM WALIA, Kumar, who is also CEO at Euler, talked about the company's journey thus far, the scope for alternative fuels for cargo carrying vehicles, technologies to improve electric vehicle (EV) battery longevity, and expectations from the government's FAME subsidy. Edited excerpts:

How has Euler fared as a new entrant in a market led by legacy players like Mahindra and Piaggio?

The more the better. It is good to have multiple players thinking very actively about the EV ecosystem and about sustainability because this is not a problem statement that a company like Euler alone can solve. But when you think about how Euler has been able to create value in terms of payload carrying capacity, range, and fast charging, it has been a phenomenal journey. Everybody had mentioned that Rs 3 lakh is the segment for our category and that Rs 4.5 lakh onwards is for four-wheelers. But price is not the only determining factor – it's value as well. If I build for that price, I'll always build an inferior vehicle because EVs are inherently a bit more expensive. If I'm going to make an inferior vehicle, I'm going to slow down the clean energy transition. To accelerate the transition, we need to have vehicles that are equally performing in value. I would say Euler stands for that.

We launched our product in October, 2021. In the first year, we sold around 300 vehicles. In the second year, we sold 950 vehicles.

This year, we are on target to sell between 3600-3800 vehicles, a full-fledged 4x growth from last year. We are looking to

close somewhere around Rs 200 crore of revenue this year, from Rs 50 crore last year. The growth is evident. In terms of our market share in the L5 category, I think we've gone up to 14-15 per cent pan-India this year compared to 3 per cent last year.

Since heavy EV batteries reduce carrying payload capacity, will alternative fuels like green hydrogen be seen as a more viable option for cargo vehicles?

There is some truth to the statement that heaviness starts to impact performance once you start crossing the light commercial vehicle (LCV) segment. That's where that truth starts to become much more prevalent. Once you cross that LCV boundary and you start to enter medium and heavy commercial vehicles, that's the category for which I feel hydrogen will make sense.

The only question mark that I see in that statement is – as we are seeing newer technological advancements to increase energy density, like solid-state and lithium-air chemistries, batteries are going to become lighter and smaller. You will be able to package more energy in smaller batteries and your fast charging capabilities will also increase. As

that continues to get pushed, your transition point between lithium-ion based technology versus hydrogen will get further pushed. For hydrogen, you also have to set up a lot of infrastructure like liquefied hydrogen compressors and refuelling stations. Maybe early variants of medium commercial vehicles can use hydrogen. But for LCVs, at least what Euler has been focusing on, we feel through and through that electric is going to be a good solution.

Can you describe the technologies Euler uses to improve battery longevity?

Battery health is impacted by both temperature and the depth of discharge on a daily basis. To avoid the problem of early battery loss, we have developed and patented a liquid-cooling technology for battery packs. During summers, we know that batteries tend to heat up and because of that we have some liquid going in at a lower temperature to absorb the heat of the battery to cool it. When the liquid comes out, we have a device that lowers the temperature and again that cool liquid circulates back to take away the heat. The circulation keeps on happening. By cooling the battery, you basically slow down lithium-plating which is a process of lithium accumulation on the anode material. Because of this, the ability of the battery cell to carry the charge degrades. Because of degradation, your battery ends up losing capacity over a period of time. The effect of lithium-plating gets aggravated if the temperature is higher.

Unlike passenger vehicles, where people do a full charge typically on weekends and use it through the week, commercial vehicles are charged and discharged on a daily basis. If you charge the battery frequently, don't do cooling, and don't have a higher battery capacity, then you end up losing battery life much faster. Euler has a higher battery capacity. We also keep higher reserves in the battery itself – between 10-15 per cent that you can't use even if your battery is fully discharged. You need to keep some energy left in the battery so that the depth of discharge does not create problems in future. **FULL INTERVIEW**

ON www.indianexpress.com

SWARAJBAGGONKAR
MUMBAI, FEBRUARY 10

THE JSW Group signed a memorandum of understanding with the Odisha government on Saturday for setting up an integrated electric vehicle (EV) and EV battery manufacturing project at Cuttack and Paradip.

The project, which envisages an investment of Rs 40,000 crore over a three-year time period, aims to have manufacturing capacities for electric commercial (10,000 units per annum) and electric passenger vehicles (30,000 units per annum).

A 50 Gwh battery plant with cell production for both mobility and energy storage system, auto components like e-powertrain, a research and development centre, lithium refinery and a copper smelter are part of the investment plan. After getting the required approvals, construction of the facilities is expected to begin by the end of this year. Actual production is expected to begin in FY27, JSW group sources said. The state government and JSW expect to create 11,000 jobs from the project.

This is not just the largest-ever automotive investment in Odisha but the largest in the east of the country, which has so far failed to have a presence on India's automotive landscape, as Haryana, Gujarat, Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra have dominated investments in this sector.

Commenting on the development, Odisha chief minister Naveen Patnaik said, "Through our collaboration with the JSW Group, we are setting the stage for a future where innovation drives our industrial growth, ensuring

that the youth of Odisha have access to the skills and jobs that will define the next generation of economic development."

Sajjan Jindal, chairman, JSW Group, said, "Our long-standing relationship with Odisha and its people forms the foundation of our new venture."

"By integrating our operations within Odisha's ecosystem, we aim to create a symbiotic relationship that benefits all stakeholders, fostering growth and innovation, and generating numerous high-skilled job opportunities," Jindal



The project, with an investment of Rs 40,000 crore, will help create over 11,000 jobs.

@TheJSWGroup



The Swift hit the 500,000-sales mark in 2010. **File**

VIKRAM CHAUDHARY
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 10

MARUTI SUZUKI expects its premium hatchback, Swift, to cross the 3-million unit mark in sales by the middle of this year. Around the same time, the company is likely to give the model a facelift by launching a new variant, a model of which was displayed at the Japan Mobility Show 2023 in Tokyo. Swift was the largest selling car in the calendar year 2023. It sold 203,469 units, more than models such as the Wagon R (201,301 units), Baleno (193,989 units), Brezza (170,588 units), Tata Nexon (170,311 units) or even Hyundai Creta (157,311 units).

"Sales trend has proved the timelessness of this hatchback," an industry analyst told FE. "It stood up not only against new-age SUVs, but also against modern hatchbacks such as the all-new Baleno," he added.

The Swift was first launched on May 25, 2005, and hit the 500,000-sales mark in 2010. It then hit the 1-million-sales mark

in 2013, 1.5 million in 2016, 2 million in 2018, 2.5 million in 2021. Gaurav Vangaal, associate director, light vehicle forecasting, S&P Global Mobility, said the Swift – despite being an old nameplate – has been regularly updated. "It has seen regular design changes, a generation change every six-seven years, has a very strong brand value, is an aspirational vehicle in rural and semi-urban markets, and is now even available in CNG," he said.

Shashank Srivastava, senior executive officer, marketing & sales, Maruti Suzuki India, told FE that the success of the Swift lies in its ageless design, low maintenance, high fuel efficiency, and the ability to cater to the right customer. "As far as engineering and design changes are concerned, af-

ter its launch in 2005, the Swift got the diesel engine almost immediately on January 23, 2007 (thus catering to the high diesel demand back in those days), the second-generation on February 8, 2018. On August 12, 2022, it got factory-fitted CNG kit in VXI and ZXI trims, with a claimed fuel efficiency of 30.9 km/kg," Srivastava said.

"When customers wanted diesel, it was there, when they wanted petrol, it was there, when they wanted CNG, it was there. During its almost two-decade journey, the Swift has created tremendous brand value amongst Indians. That's a major reason why it remains one of the highest selling cars in India, and topped the charts in 2023," he added.

The Swift has also been impacted by the SUV wave sweeping the market. Srivastava said despite being a hatchback, it's got a very SUVish kind of bold design. "Some hatchbacks may look puny in front of SUVs, not the Swift," he said. **FE**

Avengers Assemble

With Australia's nemesis Laxman shepherding India and November 19 still hurting, colts eye 6th U-19 World Cup title

PRATYUSH RAJ
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 10

When the WhatsApp group of the current India U-19 group was created, most of the talks were regarding India's ODI World Cup final loss to Australia. The group was formed on November 24, five days after the Ahmedabad heartbreak.

"Most of the talks where Australia have always dominated India in the big tournaments. We lost the World Test Championship (WTC) final and then the ODI World Cup final. I have watched the highlights of the 2003 World Cup final so many times with my son. He knows how important it is to beat Australia. I have told him there is no bigger pride than beating Australia in the final. Australians are tough and you guys will have to beat them in their own game," Sanjay Dhas shares the chat he has had with his son Sachin.

"Each one of them are ready for this match. They want to beat Australia in the final. While going to the hotel after the Pakistan vs Australia tie, captain Uday Saharan has told everyone 'We can't lose to them again,'" says Sanjay.

Sanjeev Saharan, father of Uday Saharan, is upbeat that his son will join the list of Mohammad Kaif, Virat Kohli, Unmukt Chand, Prithvi Shaw and Yash Dhull and will return home with a trophy.

"Post the semi-final triumph, there is a confidence in the team that they can win from anywhere. In the morning, we video-called him and the coach in me was trying to give him few advice, but he kept on repeating one line 'Papa hum jeeteen ab fikr mat karo' (We will win, don't you worry about it). From being down and out against South Africa, they went on to win the match, the confidence is sky high," says Saharan Sr.

Considering their form and the brand of cricket they have played, if not for Australia being their opponents, India would have been unquestionable favourites for the final. But the Indian fans will never forget how Pat Cummins and his men silenced over 1 lakh-capacity crowd at the Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad.

Indian captain Uday Saharan, who had shed tears on his father's shoulder on November 19, knows the importance of this contest. "We carry the dreams of a billion hearts on our shoulders," he said in the pre-match press conference.

"In this final battle, we aim to create a legacy that inspires the next generation. It's not just a game; it's a chance to etch our names in history. Right from our first game, we have played with passion, determination, and a belief that we will get the coveted title home. In the final, against Australia, it is going to be no different as we go one step closer to defending the title successfully. As a captain, I couldn't have asked for anything more from my team as we stand at the cusp of creating history," he adds.

Bitter memories

Last time when an Indian team has faced Australia in South Africa, it proved to be a forgettable day for the gung-ho Indian fans. The Sourav Ganguly-led team was on the receiving end as they lost the final by 125 runs. The onslaught of Ricky Ponting is embedded in all the Indian fans' memories.

Arijit Anthony, the coach of Saumy Pandey, India's leading wicket-taker in the World Cup, believes the 2003 final won't get repeated as this time around India has



India captain Uday Saharan with his Australian counterpart Hugh Weibgen at the pre-final shoot on Saturday. ICC media zone

Australia's biggest nemesis VVS Laxman in their dressing room. "2003 mey Laxman sir nahi they is baar hai, wo Australia se nahi haar sakte (In 2003 final, we didn't have VVS Laxman in the final but this time around we had in our corner and he can't lose to Australia)," laughs Anthony.

Rising to the occasion

Anthony had also set a challenge for his ward and that was to perform in the big matches. "Yes, he has taken 17 wickets. But those wickets are against Bangladesh, Ireland and Nepal, and I have told him if you want to catch everyone's attention do well in the final and it can't get better than doing against the Australians," he says.

Left-arm quick Naman Tiwari might have gone somewhat unnoticed but before the start of the tournament, he told this newspaper about how confident the team was ahead of the tournament following the Asia Cup setback. "We have won the trophy five times and to be honest there is a pressure to win the cup. Following the loss in the Asia Cup, in the team meeting, VVS sir told us that we are a much better team than we have performed. We just need fine-tuning and we can win the World Cup in South Africa," Naman had said.

In the last two occasions, when these two teams have collided in the U-19 final, India got the better of Australia. In 2012, it was Unmukt Chand's century that guided India to a six-wicket win at Townsville. Six years later across the Trans Tasman at Mount Maunganui, it was Manjot Kalra's ton which helped India thrash Australia by eight wickets.

Australia has lost both their finals against India. But Australia will come hard. They know how to win big moments – and that elusive art can be priceless in this World Cup final. Australia booked their place in the tournament decider with a thrilling one-wicket triumph over a gallant Pakistan in Benoni on Thursday.

"This is an opportunity to make our coaches as well as family and friends extremely proud. They have helped and supported us along the journey," says Australia captain, Hugh Weibgen.

"India have obviously also had an outstanding tournament so far and are a class team. We're expecting they will provide a challenge for us, and we are looking forward to it."

TV: Star Sports Network and Disney+ Hotstar, Toss at 1pm

CAN INDIA OPENERS WEATHER AUSSIE PACE STORM?

As India take on Australia in the final of the World Cup in Benoni, South Africa, there are plenty of mouth watering clashes lined up.

PACE TEST FOR INDIA'S TOP-ORDER

Australia's fast bowling has been their trump card in this U19 World Cup campaign, with the trio Tom Straker, Mahli Beardman, Callum Vidler sharing 31 wickets between them. They will pose a great threat to the Indian top-order, who has struggled against the quality pace attack of South Africa in the semi-final. Indian openers Adarsh Singh and Arshin Kulkarni have not had a fifty-plus opening stand in the tournament so far.

A quick pitch at Benoni will only add to the spectacle and the Australian quicks are ready to expose the chinks in India's batting. "We have a pretty good bowling attack. We've scared a few teams during this tournament and hopefully we do the same to India in the final," Tom Straker was quoted as saying by cricket.com.au

India's top-order looked all at sea against Kwena Maphaka and Tristan Luus and in the final. Australian pacers Vidler and Straker too are known for their pace. Arshin Kulkarni has struggled with seam movement early on in his innings. Three of his dismissals have come with edges behind to the keeper or slip cordon. Musheer Khan has been India's most talked-about batsman but he has shortcomings against pace.

The pitch here is a bit bouncy too. As you've seen throughout the tournament, we use our bouncers a lot so that will be part of our game plan. All the boys here, especially Mahli and Vidler, love a bumper ..."

TOM STRAKER, AUSTRALIA PACER

SAUMY VS LEFT-HANDERS

Saumy Pandey has troubled right-handers with his tight bowling through the middle overs in this tournament. However, in the semi-final against Luan-dre Pretorius, the slow left arm looked in a hurry to complete his over. In Harry Dixon, Harjas Singh, and Oliver Peake, Australia have three left-handed batsmen in their top six. Saumy has been the best left-arm spinner in the tournament, and the prospect of facing him in the final will be a daunting one but it would be interesting to see whether he will be an attacking force when he will bowl against the southpaws.

CLASH OF THE CAPTAINS

Just like Uday Saharan, Hugh Weibgen, too, has marshalled his troops brilliantly throughout the tournament. Both the captains have led by example when the chips were down. Both have been their team's pillars in the middle order. Saharan has rescued his team multiple times, the most recent is the feisty 81 he scored against South Africa. He has scored a fantastic century against Nepal and the fifties against Bangladesh and Ireland are equally praiseworthy. Weibgen too has scored a crafty 120 against arch-rivals England at the group stage.

INTERVIEW

Upton unlocks what it takes mentally to bat long in Test cricket

TANISHQ VADDI
FEBRUARY 10

ONE OF the trends so far in the ongoing Test series between India and England is a lot of batsmen have gotten off to starts but haven't been able to build that into a long innings. In Hyderabad, Ollie Pope's 196 was a class knock but only other player apart from him spent more than 100 minutes in the middle. In Vizag, while young Yashasvi Jaiswal batted for more than a day on course to a double century, not a single other Indian batter spent more than 90 minutes in the middle.

Paddy Upton, former Indian men's cricket team mental conditioning coach, spoke to *The Indian Express* about what it takes to bat long in Test cricket and the importance of recharging the batteries.

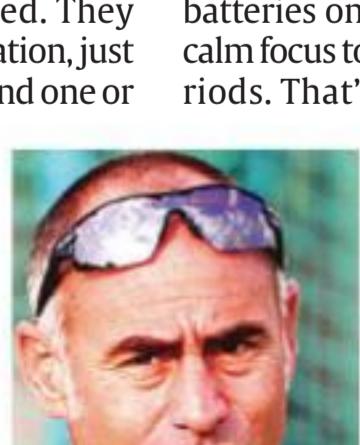
What does it take mentally to play long innings in Test matches?

There is a difference between attention focus in T20 Cricket and Test cricket. In T20 cricket the intensity of focus is high and it is a broad focus, they are taking in a lot of information from every fielder where the

gaps are, and what the scoreboard pressure is. Trying to predict what the bowler is going to bowl according to the field set. In Test cricket, the intensity of focus is not as high and it needs to be a bit regulated. They need to attend to a lot less information, just to take key two or three fielders and one or two shots, looking to play beyond leaving the ball or defending. In T20 cricket, even between the balls, it is a high-intensity affair and a lot of information is passed.

During the recent England vs India Test series, we have seen a lot of players getting starts and whenever there is an interruption on either side of it wickets have fallen. What tends to go wrong in these situations?

So what is happening is players today are arriving at Test cricket with their mental and emotional fuel tanks on load. Meaning: It is like your cell phone battery is on 25% you cannot run a cell phone battery all day, it has to be fully charged to run it for the whole day. The same for the batters to



But we have seen Jaiswal bat long and he too tends to bat a lot in T20 cricket.

Some players can switch between the formats and they can change their high-intensity focus to low. They can manage their mental energy. They can down-regulate and adjust the focus to play long Test innings. Some players can do it. Jaiswal is at the beginning of his career and has lots to prove, he is young and fresh compared to a player who has been playing for 7-9 years, they are not able to operate on low energy. A player that has youth and hunger makes up for that.



Paddy Upton feels Yashasvi Jaiswal is able to adapt well between formats

MESSI'S ARGENTINA FACES MORE HEAT

Argentina's friendly against Ivory Coast, scheduled to be held in Beijing in March, has been cancelled, the Chinese city's football association said on Saturday, following a backlash against Lionel Messi's failure to play in a match in Hong Kong.

REUTERS

Iyer dropped, Bharat's last chance, Bumrah-Siraj likely as pieces fall into place

VENKATA KRISHNA B
CHENNAI, FEBRUARY 10

AFTER A CHAOTIC beginning, the pieces are beginning to fall in place for India. For a side that looked undercooked at Hyderabad and managed to get over England by riding on individual brilliance, as they head to Rajkot next week, there is new found optimism. For a team that will be without the services of Virat Kohli, the timely return of KL Rahul and Ravindra Jadeja (fitness permitting) means, they stand a good chance of keeping the momentum intact.

As the BCCI released the squad for the remaining three Tests on Saturday, following a late Friday evening meeting by the selectors, there wasn't any room for knee-jerk reactions. The only big call was to drop middle-order batsman Shreyas Iyer, who has been struggling for runs, and at the same time complained of back and groin pain.

It is understood that when the selectors met on Friday evening, the medical team didn't raise any red flags and he has been dropped following a string of low scores. And having made a promising start to his Test career in Vizag, Rajat Patidar gets a chance to make the No 5 spot his own.

At Vizag, short on options, India were unsure about their playing XI till the last moment. Having already lost Rahul and Jadeja, they even chose to rest Mohammed Siraj. It was a decision they took more as a precaution. But having left the coastal town unscathed, India's first objective is to seek the early initiative when the series resumes after a nine-day break on February 15.

Since the second Test, there have been deliberations on the conditions they will encounter hence forth at Rajkot, Ranchi and Dharamsala. With Dharamsala known to be seamer-friendly, India's think-tank is focussing on sealing the series before they head to the Dhauladhar ranges and is the reason why they have drafted both Rahul and Jadeja straightaway into the fold. Although they have to clear the fitness test, it is learnt that their recovery is on the right course with the batsmen being a certainty to bat at No 4.

While KS Bharat's performances with the bat have been below par, India are also aware that they are short on options on this front. In both the Tests, there were no issues with his primary skillset and with Rahul and Jadeja both back, they are likely to stick with Bharat at Rajkot. In case, Bharat continues to struggle with bat, then India are set to turn their eyes towards Dhruv Jurel for the last two matches.

With Dharamsala known to be seamer-friendly, India's think-tank is focussing on sealing the series before they head to the Dhauladhar ranges.

Call on Bumrah

With regards to Bumrah's workload management, it is understood that with the medical team not raising any concerns for now, India are likely to play him at Rajkot. In the two Tests so far, Bumrah has been the lone Indian bowler who has managed to put pressure on England. With his reverse-swing breaking England's back in both the Tests and the pacer finding his old rhythm back, India believe his presence will be all the more vital in Rajkot. The nine-day break means Bumrah has also got more recovery time and unless the pacer asks for a rest, he is certain to take the field at Rajkot.

And with Siraj also back in the squad, India believe, they have got the right arsenal to go hard at England. But there are also indications that in case both Bumrah and Siraj are not able to take the field together, then they would go in with an extra spinner. Before the second Test, there were deliberations whether India should go in with Mukesh Kumar or Washington Sundar. In the end, they went with the former who could hardly make any sort of impact, which meant India had to rely on Bumrah for the major part with the ball.

So at Rajkot, in case Siraj manages to offer the much needed control with the old ball, then it could also open the door for India to play Bumrah in all five Tests, as there is another 8-day gap between fourth and fifth Tests. It is reliably learnt that the player is keen on playing all, but the selectors and the team management are wary on this, particularly with the IPL and the T20 World Cup being played back-to-back.

Spin combo

It is in the spin department where India are set to face a selection headache, particularly if Jadeja is fit to play. In his absence, Kuldeep Yadav managed to grab the opportunity and has managed a strong case to retain his spot. In that case, it leaves Axar Patel in a spot. While he did make crucial contributions with the bat, his bowling hasn't made any sort of impact and has been taken for the cleaners by the Bazzballers. Whether India retain him and bench Kuldeep or not will be their biggest headache leading to Rajkot.



Pacer Jasprit Bumrah has been the lone Indian bowler who has managed to consistently put pressure on England.

There are players like David Warner and Virender Sehwag who have succeeded with their aggression, whereas Cheteshwar Pujara bats for a long time. Have you observed anything different that they do?

You see Pujara can bat for a longer period because he doesn't play T20 cricket. So his mind is conditioned for the type of focus required for the red-ball game. So he doesn't suffer, he doesn't have to manage the dynamic other players do. If you play T20 cricket or ODI cricket you travel every two to three days. Packing your bag and going to the new hotel room disrupt players' routines and energies.

(About Warner and Sehwag) There are always going to be people who are going to find a way and manage to do it. Sehwag is completely different from any other cricketer. He is someone who started his batting with a T20 mindset. Very aggressive, very attacking, unique to anyone and there is no other opener like that in the world. So once he is set and he is on 35 or 40 the whole pace of his innings would slow down. The pace of his mind would slow down, that's when you knew he would change gears and that's where Sehwag would hurt people.

How do players maintain that focus during breaks?

Players need to switch up to the right level of intensity when the bowler is running into bowl and they need to switch down the volume intensity between balls. If the player's focus is switching too high in red-ball cricket you will get mentally tired. There is an optimal focus required when the bowler is running into the bowl and they need to stop focusing so intently and relax, tap at the wicket, look around and have a conversation so that the intensity of the mind decreases. The same thing during breaks in play, they need to keep their minds away from the innings and not play their knocks in the head, particularly overnight. The players who cannot keep their mind off the game arrive mentally exhausted and will make a mistake. That takes a lot of time and experience really to churn down the volume of focus while batting in red-ball cricket.

BRIEFLY

Freestyle chess:
Gukesh takes down
Carlsen; joint second

Wangels (Germany): Grandmaster D Gukesh threw one salvo after another to beat world No. 1 Magnus Carlsen of Norway, Levon Aronian of Armenia and eventually reigning world champion Ding Liren of China on the first day of the Weissenhaus Chess Challenge that got underway here. After a rather sedate start that cost him a full point in the opener against Alireza Firouzja of France, Gukesh was in full swing and ended the day with three points in all out of a possible four and is in joint second place in the rapid section. AP

**Afif nets hat-trick as
Qatar win Asian Cup**

Lusail: Qatar successfully defended their Asian Cup crown after beating Jordan 3-1 on Saturday at Lusail Stadium where Akram Afif converted three penalties as the hosts won their second continental title. Jordan were playing in their first Asian Cup final and seeking their first major trophy, but it was Qatar who prevailed in front of 86,492 fans. Yazeen Al-Naimat had briefly given Jordan hope when he netted an equaliser in the second half but their dreams were shattered when they conceded two more penalties, put away by Afif who finished as the tournament's top scorer with eight goals. AP

**Nagal sets up title
clash against Nardi**

Chennai: India's top-ranked tennis player Sumit Nagal overcame the challenge of Dalibor Srdicna, the third seed from Czech Republic, in straight sets to move into the final of the Chennai Open here on Saturday. The second-seeded Nagal defeated the 21-year-old Czech player 6-3, 6-4 in a match that lasted nearly two hours to set up a title clash with top seed Luca Nardi of Italy. The 20-year-old Nardi overcame stiff challenge from unseeded Chinese Taipei player Chun-Hsin Tseng 6-4, 4-6, 7-6 (6) in a marathon three-hour encounter. PTI

Near perfect start

India scored 4 goals but it's the little tricks and flicks that shone in their win against Spain in FIH Pro League

MIHIR VASAVDA
FEBRUARY 10

THE SLY feints were the first hint that India were 'in the mood'. The cute dinks over the stick were further evidence of it. The drag-flickers nutmegging goalies, defenders making stealing an artform and players putting their bodies in the line to stop the ball from flying into the net only affirmed that India, the repeat offenders in making low-energy starts, meant business.

There were goals. Four of them, including a ridiculous no-look slap-hit by Lalit Upadhyay. But it's the little tricks and flicks; a sneaky run here, a sharp save there that made the team a delight to watch in their FIH Pro League season-opener against Spain at the Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar.

Spain may not inspire the same level of dread among the Indian players as some of the other teams. But they are no pushovers either. Which makes the 4-1 win all the more impressive.

It was very close to a perfect performance. The goalkeepers – Krishan Pathak and PR Sreejesh – were once again brilliant. The penalty corner defence was watertight. There were field goals and goals from drag-flicks.

The corner conversion rate – two out of seven on Saturday – remains a thorny issue; so do disciplinary issues – a yellow card at the end leading to a 10-minute suspension, though harmless, could have been avoided.

Bigger, tougher challenges will follow. The Netherlands on Sunday and Australia later in the week will test India on these points and how they respond against the sides they have struggled to beat on a big stage will be interesting to see.

But the team that bombed spectacularly around this time last year has rebounded in fine fashion. They've resurrected at the same place – the Kalinga Stadium – where they were buried. The shock defeat to New Zealand at the World Cup brought the high-flying Tokyo Olympics bronze medallists crashing down to earth.

It was one of those listless, no-energy performances that spelt doom. The same players are once again driving India's hopes heading into the Paris Olympics.



Jugraj Singh scored the third goal in India's 4-1 win over Spain in the FIH Pro League at the Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar. Hockey India

Harmanpreet Singh, the captain and the drag-flicker who cut a forlorn figure back then, found his range and scored from two virtually unstoppable shots, one a penalty corner in the 7th minute and a stroke in the 20th.

Indeed, Harmanpreet has consistently been among the goals at the Asian Champions Trophy and Asian Games. But scoring against world hockey's second-tier teams is one thing compared to some of the well-drilled units like Spain. Can he now keep up the same conversion rate against Australia, who are in India's group in Paris?

Craig Fulton, wanting to leave nothing to

chance, is preparing a Plan B, and C, in case his go-to set-piece specialist fires blanks. Jugraj Singh unleashed such a fierce flick that the ball went through the legs of the Spanish goalkeeper and he could do nothing about it. Jugraj had a couple of other opportunities but both flew past the post.

Fulton didn't use Sanjay and Arai Jeet Hundal much for drag flicks, perhaps they'll get their chances going forward in the mini-tournament. But Hundal was still doing a lot in the final third, where India's attackers constantly looked threatening.

Chief among them, once again, was vice-captain Hardik Singh. It was Hardik's snaking

SCORELINE

India	4	Spain	1
Harmanpreet 7', 20'		Marc Miralles 34'	
Jugraj Singh 24'			
Lalit Upadhyay 50'			

run through the centre of the field, carrying the ball and beating defenders with a 20-odd metre run, that led to India's first goal.

His command in the midfield ensured that even when India were defending – for a brief period in the third quarter where Fulton was determined not to allow Spain a chance to make a last-quarter comeback – the attacking threat remained through counters.

It was one such counterattack that led to the fourth goal, with Sukhjeet Singh breaking forward from the left flank in the 50th minute and passing the ball to Upadhyay in the Spanish 'D'. Upadhyay had his back facing the goal when the ball was played towards him. But he showed true strikers' instinct, knowing exactly where the goal was, and hit the ball first-time into the ground and beat the goalie at the near post.

India could have scored a couple more and even though they had four, it wasn't an all-out attacking show. It was more controlled and measured, erring as much on the side of caution as creative freedom. That's how, after all, Fulton wants this team to play.

Former captain Manpreet Singh was in a defensive role, forming a deadly partnership with Harmanpreet. Jugraj was there to clean up whatever mess his teammates left inside the 'D' and though Spain frequently sliced open the left of India's defence, the home team had enough bodies at the back to choke them for space.

And on the rare occasion when Spain did get past the defence, they couldn't beat Pathak and Sreejesh, who even pulled off an incredible double save in the second quarter.

The only goal India conceded came from a penalty stroke following a defensive error. But on a night when India brought on their A game, the slip-up did not dampen anyone's mood – in the stands and on the field.

Nikhat makes light work of home favourite at Strandja meet

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
FEBRUARY 10

IN BOXING, it is often tough to go up against athletes from home country, especially closer to the business end of an event. But when you are as skillful as Nikhat Zareen, it makes life easier. She conquered her Bulgarian opponent in a measured display of attacking boxing to reach the final at the 75th Strandja Memorial Tournament in Sofia on Saturday, leading the way as five other Indians followed suit.

The two-time world champion was taking her time at the start against Zlatislava Chukanova, with the home fans in good voice. But the Indian contingent, sat in a group behind the ring, made their voices heard too. The opening round was tough, going 3-2 in favour of the Indian. But she grew in confidence and timed her punches to perfection largely in the second and third rounds to emerge with a 5-0 win. Nikhat will square off against Uzbekistan's Sabina Bobokulova in the gold medal match on Sunday.

The other Indians to reach the finals in their categories were Amit Panghal, Arundhati Choudhary, Barun Singh Shagolsheh, Sachin, and Rajat. Amit had a very comfortable outing in men's 51kg as he won 5-0 against Turkey's Gunes Samet. Amit didn't have to move upward from third gear in the bout, finishing things off with plenty of fuel left in the tank. He will take on the reigning world champion Kazakhstan's Sanzhai Tashkenov.

Later, Arundhati (66kg) made light work of Jessica Triebelova of Slovakia to secure a 5-0 win. Arundhati will face a tough challenge from reigning World and Asian champion, China's Yang Liu. Barun (48kg) continued India's dominance with a 5-0 unanimous decision win over Khounoussi Kamel of Algeria. He will take on Khodzhiev Anvarzhan of Kyrgyzstan.

Sachin (57kg) defeated Ukraine's Abdurahim Aider after taking some time to find his feet in the match. He will go up against Uzbekistan's Shahzod Muzafarov in the summit clash on Sunday. Rajat (67kg) also entered the final after his opponent Gurilash Lasha of Georgia gave a walkover. Akash (71kg) started with strong but lost to Uzbekistan's Ikboljon Kholdarov. Naveen Kumar (92kg) too lost his bout to Georgia's Georgii Kushitashvili.

MARUTI SUZUKI

NEXA

ELEVATION: 17340ft POPULATION: JIMNY

Somewhere along the intimidating Himalayan range, you may find the new Jimny parked at an elevation that rivals the Everest Base Camp. Beyond treacherous mountain trails, narrow passages and dangerous ditches, few off-roaders make it this far off the grid. However, much like the ones who drive it, the Jimny never turns its back on adventure.

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THE SUNDAY EXPRESS MAGAZINE

eye



LETTERS, PAGE 2

Dear Zorbi...

The exchanges between Amrita Pritam and her partner Imroz document social history and offer glimpses into their affection for each other



ARTS etc, PAGE 3

A Wrinkle in Time

American writer Bonnie Garmus on learning to thrive in a man's world and her debut novel that became an unintended feminist manifesto

Vatsala Mamgain

**"Diyar Mama, I am lyving hose.
I lov yu."**

My daughter is four, she has just been presented with the baby brother she thought she wanted but is finding she doesn't. At first, she leaves us tiny clues to show how she really feels — weeping snottily, urging us to give him back to the hospital, placing him in a carton in the balcony, hoping he will grow wings and fly off. And asking, theoretically of course, if one can flush a baby, like potty, down the toilet. When this subtlety goes unnoticed, she leaves a note, packs her bag with her favourite doll, a carton of apple juice and a box of crayons. She is at the lift, pressing random buttons and noisily drinking her juice when her misspelt "Dear Mama, I am leaving house. I love you" note is found and she is traced. Kisses, promises and chocolate cake persuade her to reluctantly come back home. "I am lyving hose" becomes a shorthand for friends and family — the tiniest love letter from someone who is trying to find you, but is thwarted. "I am lyving hose" — a plea — please, please love me too.

■ ■ ■
**"Down in a valley, covered with
a rock
Take off your shoes and smell
your socks!"**

I am eight. I have lived with my grandparents till I was six and I'm devoted to them. I am living far away with my own family now and I miss them. Especially my gentle grandfather, with whom I would spend hours in the garden, helping him plant seeds, pushing them down with my tiny thumbs and watering them lightly from an old tin, and watching gawp-eyed as over the next few weeks, stalks miraculously appeared and then, subsequently, a riot of flowers. One summer when we visit, I present him with a "memo book" — a book in which you get signatures from people you admire, like the head girl and the tennis captain. And your friends write messages so that you can remember them. He is flummoxed by this ask. He asks many questions about what sort of message he should write. "Something I can remember you by, I think of you and I cry," I confess. "We have to fix that. You should think of me and laugh," he says. A few days later, he gives me the memo book with this inscription in his calligrapher's handwriting. The days come and go and then the years come



GETTY IMAGES

Declarations of love are not just for Valentine's Day. From WhatsApp chats to notes on the fridge, from hurried phone calls to long emails, love letters are part of our everyday lives, everywhere



and go, I don't know then that I will miss him fiercely all my life. But it always makes me smile — this little love letter he researched for my memo book — this injunction from my formal, proper, someone who would never ever dream of doing it himself grandfather — to an eight-year-old me — to take off my shoes and smell my socks.

■ ■ ■
**Dear Kalpana didi, happy
mother's day.**

My son is in preschool and has been told to make a card for Mother's Day. The kids all clip their little hands in paint and print their palms onto a card. The teacher writes the in-

scription and the kids put in their thumbprints as signatures. The teacher recounts everything mums do for kids and what they must be grateful for. They cuddle you when you are scared and they make you your favourite food when you are hungry. They are always ready to play with you and they hardly ever scold you. My son knows one person who checks every box in that list.

**I've packed lunch for you...
Anytime you call is a good time
for me... Don't worry about the
kids, I got it covered... It's
Mum's 80th, you have to come...
There's beer in the fridge**

I see you, I love you, I got you. If we look carefully, we find love letters everywhere — embedded like sparkling little jewels in the plain metal sheets of our everyday lives. In WhatsApp conversations and notes on the fridge, in hurried phone calls and in emails, in popping around for a chat, in serious heart-to-hearts, we pour out our love for each other. In words that wrap around like a hug, that speak over and over again of how loved we all are and how precious in the scheme of things.

Happy Valentine's Day.

Vatsala Mamgain loves food, cooking, dogs, running, trees, reading and telling long-winded stories

His Sky and His Nest

Poet laureate Rabindranath Tagore's letters to Argentine critic and writer Victoria Ocampo were promises of an infinite love, of holding minds than hands

Rinku Ghosh

"Dear Vijaya, often (there) comes to my mind the picture of that riverside home and the regret that in my absent-minded foolishness, I failed to fully accept the precious gift offered to me. However, the time favoured by destiny has passed and it will never return."

Vijaya was none other than the woman poet laureate Rabindranath Tagore rechristened — Argentine litterateur, critic and writer Victoria Ocampo. He wrote this letter to her a year before his death, recalling the days when he fell ill and recovered at her country home in Argentina in 1924. Tagore had become a global citizen after he wrote *Gitanjali* (1910) and his works had a profound impact on the intellectual movement in Latin America.

Ocampo was one of his most ardent fans, who went on to become his emotional equivalent and sounding board, both drawing sustenance from each other and sharing their

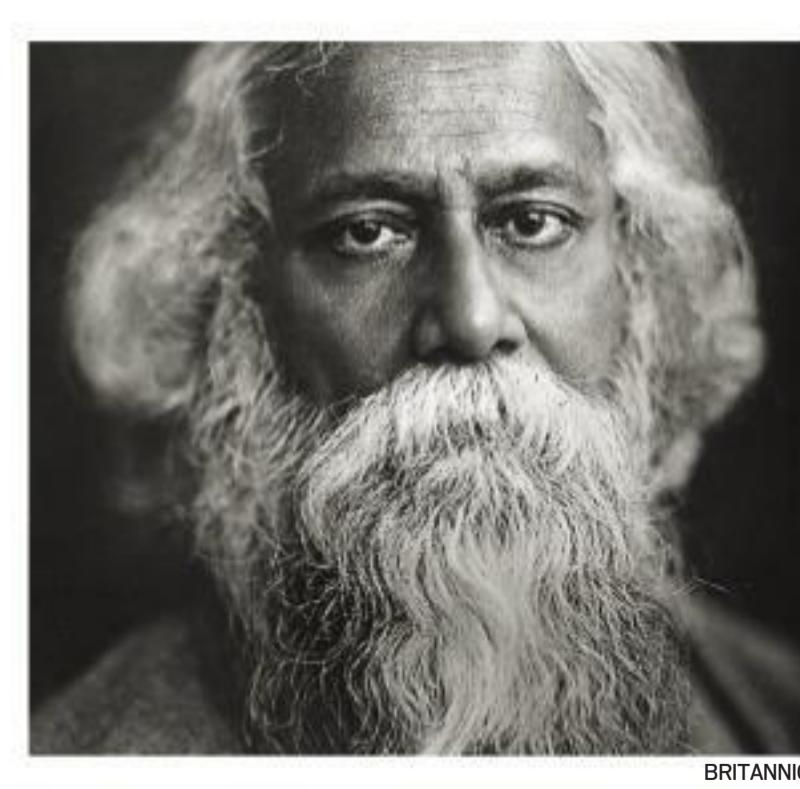
imagination in the most platonic and soulful way. Though they met each other very briefly in the 1920s, each was to nurture their cross-continental ties through a series of letters and gifts that lasted till Tagore's death in 1941. Many say that it was Tagore's fullest spiritual relationship. It was also about awakening the deepest emotions in one another.

"You can call it Tagore's most complete relationship. Ocampo worshipped him like a guru and wanted to be indoctrinated in his philosophy based on Vedanta and Upanishads, one where the self and ego merge with the higher consciousness and the universe. She was seeking God during an emotional trough in her life and found Tagore through translated works without knowing she would meet him. Another happy accident in this relationship is that she got to read superior translations of the *Gitanjali*, in French, which were closest to Tagore's mind. She would even help him with translations of some of his stanzas," says SP Ganguly,

Tagore scholar and former Jawaharlal Nehru University professor.

Theirs was perhaps a meeting ordained. When Tagore was visiting Buenos Aires with his British friend, Lord Elmhirst, he fell ill. Ocampo offered her villa at Miralrio on River Plate to help him recuperate. There, by the river and under the shadow of a tree, they talked. At the time, Ocampo was a 34-year-old emerging writer and Tagore was 63.

She not only inspired the ascetic poet to swing back to romanticism with his *Purabi* series of poems, where she is referred to as Vijaya (victory), bringing out his emotions and ardour, but also encouraged him to exhibit his paintings in Paris. They discussed world literature and Baudelaire. She sponsored his exhibition of paintings and sketches in Paris, in 1930. Tagore was taken in by her independent spirit. He had been influenced by many women in his life but he never encouraged female attention, even maintaining a distance, and acknowledging



KNOT OF THIS WORLD

Rabindranath Tagore and Victoria Ocampo shared a love that crossed continents and years

them in a rare letter of not more than three or four lines. With Ocampo, he not only wrote many letters, but revealed his inner mind and frailties. In his advancing years, he had, perhaps, come close to finding an equivalent," says Ganguly. Ocampo, on her part, always gave Tagore his space, waiting outside his door for hours to meet him.

Ocampo said that there was a lot unsaid in their relationship. In Tagore's letters, you do find that he missed that companionship: "I have often said to you that I am not free to give up my freedom... for this freedom is

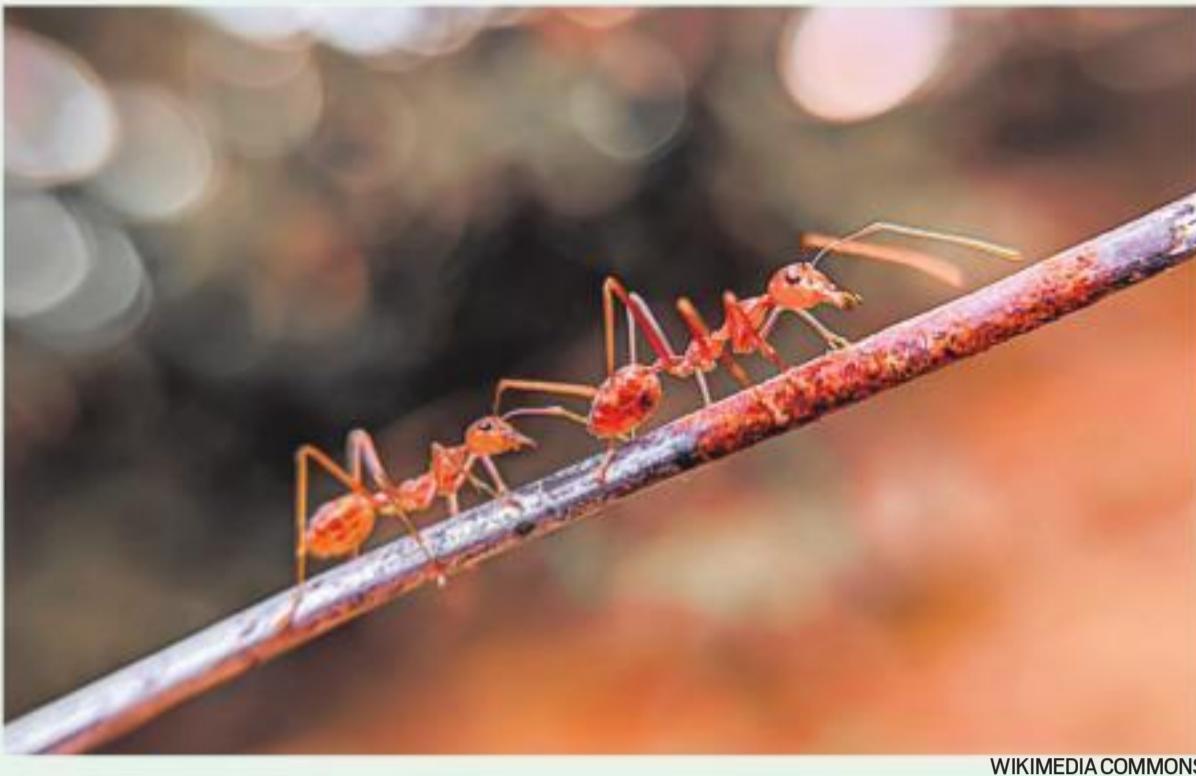


claimed by my Master for his own service... I tell you all this because I know you love me..." What he meant is that he had a higher calling, which required him to be free of earthly attachments. He did invite her to Shantiniketan, and in a letter wrote, "The heart longs to own it back, it was lost forever." She represented a kind of assertiveness that Tagore never had. She once tore down a ship's door to shove in the chair that he liked to sit in. But she never visited India. When asked to define her, Tagore simply said, 'Bhalobasha' (love).

DOWN IN JUNGLELAND

RANJITLAL

Author, environmentalist and bird watcher



CODE WORD

If ants display such intelligence, what about the millions of other insects and living things?

Ant Intel

Ants are problem solvers, figuring things out even before the problem manifests itself

BACK IN the pool in Goa, I returned to my duties as a heroic ant lifeguard — though on this particular morning the three ants that I had fished out had long drowned. Two were large, one small, hmm... so for the little scavenging ants that meant one small serving and two extra large ones. Not bad for a Saturday lunch! Sure enough, the scavengers turned up and divided themselves into three teams. Team A took hold of the small ant and enthusiastically began hauling it off towards the entrance to their colony — the same dangerous overhung entrance at one corner of the pool, where last year, a party of workers had conducted remarkable feats of maneuvering to haul in much larger and heavier offerings. So, this should be easy-peasy I thought, *deja-vu*... not quite.

Because Team A was either in too much of a hurry or too inexperienced, they dropped the small ant into the pool along with a couple of workers and seemed completely perplexed. This really was like dropping a dolly catch.

The ants knew that risk mitigation was a priority if they wanted to ensure a hearty Saturday buffet

Team B, which had been following close behind them hauling one of the large ants, came to a halt followed by Team C. Hah, I thought, now what? Were they programmed such that they would willy-nilly try to stuff the bulkier ant into the entrance, even after seeing what had happened with the smaller one? Because if that was where the front door was, that was where they had to take their prey... If they were robots that is what they would have probably done. Or would they lose interest and abandon their meals — as I had seen some do on other occasions?

But no, after barely a moment's consultation among themselves they put plan B into action. Swiftly both teams B and C (and maybe chagrined members of Team A) began hauling their cargo across the hot paving slabs to a second entrance to their colony — some distance away, but which consisted of a crack between two flat paving slabs. True, Team B first tried stuffing their cargo in, crosswise into the crack, and obviously it didn't fit, but quickly realised that they had to align it longitudinally — so they could easily push it in. Team C followed suit.

I was so gob-smacked that to reward them, I fished out the fallen small ant

and placed it near their entrance. They gratefully accepted it, and yes, they were going to eat well.

But think for a moment what all this entailed: Their priority had been to take their prey to the nearest entrance, to reduce the risk that they would be robbed en route. When that didn't work out, they made aeline for the second entrance, which meant they had previous knowledge about its existence and had probably used it. And to mitigate the chances that they would be robbed, they really hot-footed it, travelling in a straight line at breakneck speed. It does seem to imply that some thinking process was involved and I am wondering if just one of them, say, the skipper of Team B, had the bright idea or the bulb went off in all of their teeny-tiny brains at the same time, even in those of the members of the disgraced Team A. There had been no dilly-dallying and standing around wondering, duh — now what do we do, now what do we tell the Queen — she'll be mad as hell. Like it happens with us when airports get fog-bound and airlines have no clue as to how to deal with the situation or communicate with their passengers, even though this happens every year.

Alternatively, had these ants obviously thought of plan B beforehand and we all know how important it is to have backup plans these days. It was like an SOP being seamlessly put into action. It also made me wonder: If these tiny ants could display this kind of intelligence, what about the millions of other species of insects and living things? What kind of intelligence did they have? Are we grossly underestimating their brainpower?

Scientists around the world have devised all kinds of devious experiments to test the IQ of insects (and other creatures), and we've all seen how intelligent crows, elephants, chimpanzees, dolphins and even several species of fish can be. But reading about these and seeing amazing clips on YouTube (like rats taking selfies because they seem to enjoy it) is one thing; when you actually witness this happening out of the blue it really opens your eyes and makes you think. Another thing that emerged from this episode was that we all (ants included) make mistakes: Team A really ought not have dropped that little ant into the pool... But that perhaps is how they (and we) will learn. As for Teams B and C, once they saw what had happened, they obviously knew that risk mitigation was now a priority if they wanted to ensure a hearty Saturday buffet.

Ticking Clock

A story about a boy, a girl and the bane of instant messaging

Udbhav Seth

he stammered. "Take your time. Go home, think about it. There's no rush."

"Actually, I..."

"No, no, that's fine. Don't worry about it."

And he had promptly got up and walked home.

They hadn't exactly talked since. When he got home, he found she had sent him a few memes and reels in the meantime. His heart beating loudly, he opened the chat to find they were just the usual: teddy bears holding daggers and preaching the virtues of self-care.

He sighed and waited. He had dinner. He called Lakshaya and moaned about being an awkward piece of shit. He spent the next hour scrolling Instagram and reading a book, while Lakshaya sat next to him on video call, his eyebrows furrowed in concentration playing PUBG. Lakshaya was exhausted too. All his advice — variations of "Do something else", "Go for a walk", and "She's not going to respond faster if you keep hyperventilating"

— had been soundly rejected.

"I think she's actually writing a novel," said Ronit, nervously.

"Told you," said Lakshaya, not looking up from his game.

Ronit's phone pinged. He whipped it out and read the message.

"Hey?" he said. "That's all she could say?"



had been soundly rejected.

"Sorry, bro," said Lakshaya. "Oh my god, she's typing again. She's typing again."

They waited.

"Anything?" asked Lakshaya, after a few seconds.

"Still typing..."

Lakshaya rolled his eyes and returned to the game. This went on for a while. Every now and then, a bubble would appear and disappear over her profile picture, Ronit would get excited, and no text would arrive. Eventually, Meher joined the video call.

"Why don't you call her?" she suggested.

"Are you crazy?" said Lakshaya, done with his game.

"It's better than panicking so much," she said.

"I'm not calling her," said Ronit. "Okay, I need to chill."

He got into bed and tried to sleep. He couldn't.

"Is everything okay?" he finally texted her.

"Ya ya," texted Shailja. "Sorry! Just give me a minute."

He gave her two. But no text arrived, and the bubble remained.

"This is getting weird," said Lakshaya.

"A little rude," said Meher.

"A little? I'm furious!" said Lakshaya.

"Shut up, both of you. I'm muting myself," said Ronit, and resumed pacing. He started typing a reply now. "It's okay," he wrote.

"I understand. You don't need to say all this, we can just go back to normal. If we could just forget I said anything, everything will be fine. I don't really know if I meant what I said anyway..."

Ping. A text arrived.

"SHE REPLIED!" he yelled and threw his phone on the bed.

Meher and Lakshaya didn't respond.

"She replied!" he yelled, leaning close to the laptop.

Still no response.

"Why aren't you..." he started saying, then his eyes travelled down to the mute button.

"Listen," he said much more softly, unmuting himself. "She replied."

"OMG!" said Meher. "What did she say?"

"I don't want to see."

"This man," said Lakshaya.

"Listen," said Meher. "You have to see it. Do it fast. Like a bandaid. Just rip it off."

"So you think she's said no?" said Ronit.

"No, not necessarily. I'm just saying..."

"Yaaar, fine. The worst she can say is no."

"Yes..." said Meher unconvincingly, watching as he picked up the phone, entered his password and read the message.

"I'm stupid," he said, not looking up. "I'm so damn stupid."

"What did she say?" asked Meher.

"I've sent it to you," he said. A ping went off in Meher and Lakshaya's phones. They opened the text and read it. It wasn't long:

"I'm sorry it took me so much time. I got anxious and wrote a novel, lol. Anyway, I wanted to say this before you ran off — my answer's yes!!"

DEAR ZORBI...

The letters between Amrita Pritam and her partner Imroz not only offer a glimpse into their mutual affection but also document the social history of the time

Suanshu Khurana

'Bombay says welcome to her artist'

IT WAS a one-line letter that began the story of a lifetime. Penned by Amrita Pritam, one of Punjabi literature's most significant poets, in this undated, unaddressed and unsigned letter to her beloved and artist Imroz, who had moved to Mumbai to work with Guru Dutt as a poster designer, she becomes Bombay — the city, welcoming him in her familiar arms.

While Amrita and Imroz wrote many letters to each other, it's notable how a lot of her writing, unabashed and fearless, was also in the form of letters. Her magnum opus *Sunehade (Messages)* which won her the Sahitya Akademi Award in 1956, making her the only woman writer to win the award for writing in Punjabi, is a long poem that is a letter for poet Sahr Ludhianvi. Amrita fell in love with him post a *mushaira* in Preet Nagar, near Amritsar, where both were invited. At the time Amrita was married to editor Pritam Singh and lived in Lahore. *Sunehade* begins in 1953, post a letter from Ludhianvi. *Aakhri Khat (Last Letter, 1956)*, too, was for him. It was quite extraordinary to make the present and the intimate of one's life part of one's literary endeavours, and while doing so, put out messages that could transcend geographical boundaries. These letters always made it. They weren't suspended in transit, nor were they at the mercy of the Indian postal department.

■ ■ ■

Amrita and Imroz met in 1958 and remained together for 45 years, till Amrita's death in 2005. Imroz had many names for Amrita — Barkate, Aashi, among others. When he read the novel *Zorba the Greek* by Nikos Kazantzakis, he began calling her Zorbi. Maaja came from *The Naked Maja*, a novel on Spanish artist Francisco de Goya. She'd often call Jeeti and Ima.

Yesterday, Pt Jawaharlal Nehru invited Khrushchev (Nikita) for lunch. I went there. I really like Pandit ji, he epitomises all that is beautiful in humanity. I was happy for a while but all of a sudden the fact of being away from you seized me intensely and everything became meaningless — the day, the routine, the socialising, everything.

13.2.60
Aashi

Here, Amrita casually mentions a lunch between then-PM Jawaharlal Nehru and Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev, which



EXPRESS ARCHIVE

BEYOND WORDS

Amrita Pritam and Imroz

was after the talks on the Indo-China border issue, hoping that Khrushchev, whose country was making many scientific and economic advances, would understand and offer help to resolve the matter. It's also a glimpse into Pritam's fondness for Nehru followed by a sudden yearning to be with the man she loves.

18.11.60

This simply written, unsigned letter from Imroz for Amrita, blurs the boundaries between fact and fiction gently. There is a certain affection and intimacy in the lines, of being isolated and dreaming about one's love and then writing about it all in the morning.

Gulzar had come yesterday. I heard that you aren't well, so came to check on you. What happened?

I told him, I am more or less fine but the moment the sun goes down, the pain begins. Gulzar started laughing. In the older times, someone had tied kaal to a peg. Don't let it drown. I told him, I have already tied it. When Jeeti's letter comes in the evening, that's the sun only...

Am I any less of a magician? I can also tie the sun to a peg. In every breath I wait for you.

3.1.69
Zorbi

While the first letter has Imroz compare Amrita to the sun, two years later, she does the same when she describes a conversation with poet and filmmaker Gulzar, which is not only a peek into the wonderful relationship the two writers shared, but also of a very poetic conversation, the metaphors finding different meanings for both. Even in pain, she finds solace with the idea that Imroz's letters are the sun of her life.

■ ■ ■

I am lying alone here, like a blind child's mother has left him at the masjid. The trains should break into pieces that don't bring you back home.

Anger filled Zorbi

When will you fill your eyes and look at me and when will light look at me?

The morning of 21.11.60

My Zorbi... Since last night, I have been fuelled by Khalil Gibran... While talking about himself, he talks about everyone, with such simplicity. Love is the only freedom in this world.

Imroz

An exasperated Amrita writes to Imroz, asking him to return to Delhi soon, her impatience clear in the tone where she wants the entire railways to crash and burn for not bringing Imroz home.

While the reply to this letter isn't documented, Imroz's dignified affection and love for Amrita and goading her to be with him in the following letter, comparing her to the light of his life, is a peek into the affection and complexity of their relationship. Amrita was already married to someone else and in love with another for years. That she should choose the idea of being loved as well, is what Imroz requests in many letters, including the last one. Amrita did. She chose Imroz.

enough. But for this very reason I don't want to know what you are wearing; it confuses me so much that I cannot deal with life; and that's why I don't want to know that you are fond of me. If I did, how could I, fool that I am, go on sitting in my office, or here at home, instead of leaping onto a train with my eyes shut and opening them only when I am with you?"

JULIO CORTAZAR: The opening stanzas of a poem by the famed 20th-century Latin American writer, simply titled *Love Letter*: "Everything I'd want from you / is finally so little // because finally it's everything // like a dog going by, or a hill, / those meaningless things, mundane, / wheat ear and long hair and two lumps of sugar, / the smell of your body, / whatever you say about anything / with or against me, // all that which is so little / I want from you because I love you"

UDBHAV SETH

To you, my muse

Here are excerpts of love letters — some fictional, some not — written by those who lived and died by the word

KURT VONNEGUT: With his signature wit, the American writer pens this letter to his soon-to-be wife, Jane, from the frontlines during World War II: "Someone said that there are three kinds of lies: little white lies, big lies, and statistics. Here are a few statistics, built on the miserable fact that we have been together nine hours out of a little more than a year. / At that rate we have been together one hour out of every thousand hours / One day out of every three years / One month out of a lifetime, or about half that part of your life dedicated to brushing your teeth / And were we to be together for what remains of our lives (our pre-war birthright) we would have to be born in 50,000 BC, the Early Stone Age, when man first used fire and was learning to chip crude weapons from flint, before he moved into caves! / ALL OF THIS IS VERY SAD AND WILL DOUBT-

LESS BECOME MUCH WORSE"



VIRGINIA WOOLF:</p

A Wrinkle in Time

American writer Bonnie Garmus on learning to thrive in a man's world, why experience, not age, counts, and her debut novel that became an unintended feminist manifesto

Paromita Chakrabarti

IN OUR SOCIETY," says Bonnie Garmus, "when a woman gets mad, she's 'in a rage', whereas a man is simply 'speaking his mind'." The author of *Lessons in Chemistry* (Doubleday, Rs 550) is referring to how her career as a novelist took off on a bad day at work, which was, in the end, really only just another regular day in office. A senior copywriter, she had finished a presentation for a new campaign and asked for feedback from a roomful of male colleagues. "No one said anything. I asked again; still nothing. Finally, a man claimed that he had much better ideas. He went on to present my entire presentation for a second time (he actually read from my PowerPoint slide, which was still up on display!) Then he announced that we would be moving forward with 'his' ideas. Everyone in the room called him 'brilliant and insightful'. I protested, pointing out that these were actually my ideas. No one spoke up on my behalf. After I left the meeting, I started wondering how many other women in the world were having the same day I was. As I walked back to my desk, I tried to tell myself that things for women had improved since the '50s. But had they?" says the 66-year-old, in India to attend literary festivals in Mumbai and Jaipur.

Garmus wrote the first chapter of the novel that very day in office. Set in the 1950s, these are not the advice of an embittered

it is the story of Elizabeth Zott, the only woman chemist in an elite all-male laboratory, whose brilliance, independence and inscrutability make her a target of misogyny and whose brief wondrous marriage to the Nobel Prize-nominated Calvin Evans ends prematurely in tragedy. A decade later, at 30, having lost her husband and her job, and with a child to support, Zott accepts an offer to host a cookery show. Her precise recipes and her deadpan persona make for an unusual alchemy. *Supper at Six*, her show, births a huge fan following and a quiet feminist revolution. "Cooking is chemistry... And chemistry is life. Your ability to change everything – including yourself – starts here," she tells her audience, teaching them how to occupy space wherever they go. "I used chemistry because cooking actually is chemistry," says Garmus, who turned to old textbooks to master the subject as it was then. "But I also wanted to bring out the larger themes of chemistry, especially those that involve human interaction... Chemistry is the central science. It touches everything we do," she says.

In her refusal to be stymied and her incapacity for emotional excesses or humour, Elizabeth Zott is an original, unlikely heroine. She leaves little notes in her daughter Madeline's lunchbox – "Play sports at recess but do not automatically let the boys win" reads one; "It is not your imagination, most people are awful" reads another.

These are not the advice of an embittered



IN HER ELEMENT

(Top) Bonnie Garmus: *Lessons in Chemistry* explores a culture of misogyny with a lightness of touch

woman. If anything, Zott is utterly practical, entirely idiosyncratic. Garmus says the character appeared to her fully formed. "When I was writing Elizabeth Zott, I was writing my role model. Her voice came to me very easily. She's full of conviction... a rationalist and a scientist. She doesn't accept societal constructs unless they're backed up by scientific evidence – which they rarely are. She refuses to give in to rules that make no sense. She says no without compunction. She will not accept the limits that society imposes on women because there is no scientific reason to do so. She does the same for sexism, ageism, and racism. None of these things are valid scientifically – she points this out repeatedly," she says.

When the book came out in 2022, she hadn't been prepared for its phenomenal success. "I'm accustomed to working alone and being alone and now I'm out in the public eye – which is hard for me," she says. For a novel that explores a culture of misogyny, the lightness of touch and the absence of rancour lit a spark. Besides pushing it up on best-selling lists, the novel also lent itself for adaptation into a Brie Larson-headlined eponymous mini series, which premiered on AppleTV+ last autumn.

Her book *Lessons in Chemistry* is dedicated to Garmus's mother. Mary Swallow Garmus had been a working woman – a nurse – in the 1950s, who had to give up her career with the arrival of her children. "I knew nursing was important to her; I knew

she'd felt productive and alive when she was doing it; I knew she missed it a great deal. Nevertheless, society said women stayed at home with children and the man had the career. My father was great – he was an entomologist and he and my mother were very happy together. But she was stuck at home. So, when she decided to renew her nursing licence at age 50 or so, he was supportive of that. I was very proud of my mom – she sat in a classroom filled with 20-years-olds and tried not to feel out of place. After she renewed her licence, she went back to work. Within a year, she'd won 'Nurse of the Year'. This was in the 1980s, when AIDS was raging. I'm proud to say that my mother was the only nurse who volunteered for the AIDS floor," she says.

Her mother's persistence had taught Garmus an important lesson early in life – contrary to society's veneration of the youth, there was no sell-by date for experience, enthusiasm or success. "I don't think age matters at all, minus the extremely positive part where I've been lucky to have more experiences than younger people – and I've gotten to practise my writing for a long time as a copywriter. When people read, I don't think they consider the age of the author at all! That said, there are many young writers I greatly admire and I'm in awe of their skill. But overall, writers aren't models or athletes – our talents don't expire at age 35. If anything, they keep growing," she says.

Chance Encounters

Filmmaker Dheeraj Akolkar on discovering legendary Norwegian actor Liv Ullmann and his documentary on her which will release in the US this April



LARGER THAN LIFE

Dheeraj Akolkar with Liv Ullmann

Anuradha Mascarenhas

IT WAS at the home of filmmaker, artist and activist Zul Vellani in Mumbai that Dheeraj Akolkar chanced upon legendary Norwegian actor, writer and director Liv Ullmann's autobiography, *Changing* (1977). Akolkar was transfixed by what he read. It was through her book that he took a deeper look at Swedish filmmaker Ingmar Bergman. Ullmann had a long and complicated relationship with Bergman, with whom she had a daughter. She also starred in 10 of his films and directed two of his screenplays. One line from Ullmann's book stayed with Akolkar: It was from the time Bergman lost his mother and broke down. 'I knew I could never leave him and in a way I never have,' writes Ullmann. 'She doesn't write, I thought' or 'I felt', she writes, 'I knew'. That knowledge is love,' says UK-based Akolkar, 46, during his visit to Pune, where his doctor parents stay and where he grew up.

He was so inspired by that line that he wrote a poem and sent it to Ullmann in 2007. After Bergman's death the same year, he sent a proposal to Ullmann for a film on them. He wasn't sure she would respond but was stunned when he received a call from her in early 2008. It took nearly three years and many visits to five countries and pitching the film to 86 production companies to find producers. On December 15, 2010, he finally met Ullmann. She agreed to do his film. "It was only recently that a senior producer who was present during that meeting told me that she had selected a relatively unknown filmmaker because she felt she could simply trust me," he says.

Akolkar, who studied architecture, always had films on his mind and moved to Mumbai where he worked with the production design teams of films such as *Lagaan* (2001), *Devdas* (2002) and *Black* (2005). Following his stints in Mumbai, he studied screenwriting and producing fiction at Goldsmiths College, University of London, and went on to produce and direct five shorts in England, India and Scandinavia.

His first full-length feature, *Liv & Ingmar*, a documentary that chronicled their 42-year-long relationship, released in 2012. Ullmann has spoken often about why she agreed to work with Akolkar, "Sometimes you're standing on a bridge at 73-years-old and you meet a stranger who comes from a different country and culture and sometimes you should just hold that hand and jump," she said.

That was the beginning of a warm friendship between Ullmann and Akolkar. He was among the 20 guests she invited to the Academy Awards in 2022 when she was awarded an Oscar for lifetime achievement. "I felt so humbled, touched and cherished to be at the table where some of her closest friends sat," says Akolkar, who founded Vardo Films in the UK in 2009.

Akolkar's next was on the actress too. *Liv Ullmann: A Road Less Travelled*, which explores her extraordinary international career and features some of her close collaborators such as Cate Blanchett, Jessica Chastain, John Lithgow, Jeremy Irons and Sam Waterston, premiered at Cannes last year and will release in the US this April.

"Yes, a lot of people knew Liv because of Ingmar but her work outside of him is huge and so incredibly quiet, and dignified that I wondered why a woman always has to be a muse or a footnote in reference to a man. As Cate Blanchett says in the film – 'Liv is her own force – a force of nature unto herself,'" says Akolkar.

Ullmann's work as the first woman goodwill ambassador of the United Nations Children's Fund, vice-president international of the International Rescue Committee and co-founder of Women's Refugee Commission, deeply moved Akolkar. "There were occasions where she was marching in Cambodia when Pol Pot's army was firing away but she kept protesting. And very recently this 85-year-old legend would go on the stage in New York at DOC NYC (America's largest documentary festival) and draw sharp attention to present day wars and speak about the dehumanisation and killing of children and innocent people. I just find all this so deeply moving and courageous that today I feel I could not have made the film (*A Road Less Travelled*) 10 years ago. But now it was not just listening to her words but understanding her silences and the things that she does not talk about that helped us shape this documentary," says Akolkar.

Meanwhile, Akolkar is getting ready for his next film, which is in the production stage. *The Other Side of Silence*, explores the lives of children born of war-rapes – the ones who are forgotten and face a life full of challenges.

Stories in Absentia

A Delhi exhibition questions the role of public memory as it deconstructs remnants of buildings that once stood as symbols of innovation and independence

Shiny Varghese

IT COULD very well be TS Eliot's *Unreal City* where death had undone so many and each man fixed his eyes before his feet. Over the last seven years, Delhi has seen numerous demolitions. JCBs, bulldozers and weak heritage laws have made it possible to raze structures overnight, creating a vacuum in the country's modern heritage landscape. So, when a show comes to town that tells us what we've lost, we must sit up and listen.

At the STIR Gallery in Delhi is architect-urban designer Rohit Raj Mehndiratta's exhibition "Memorial to Socialist Modernity". It looks at three public spaces that have been demolished – Sarojini Nagar's government colony, the Hall of Nations and the Hindon River Mills in Ghaziabad. Rohit uses photographs, structural drawings and rubble to present what historian Narayan Gupta calls "industrial archaeology". While the exhibition memorialises the Hall of Nations and the Hindon River Mills building, designed by Rohit's father Mahendra Raj in the early '70s – the much-acclaimed engineer who collaborated with leading architects to build these landmark structures – Sarojini Nagar colony is a memory map of how people used their most intimate place, their home. Rohit and his partner Vandini Mehta Head Studio VanRO (SVR), a design and research-based endeavour based in New Delhi. Their SVR Foundation engages with the domains of architecture, urbanism and art.

This show, which is open till March 10, can be seen as a counterpoise to the destruction and redevelopment in the city. By crosscutting across time, it dispels an urgency to see the present through the demolition of the past. In April 2017, the Hall of Nations was demolished to make way for



CITY TALES

(Top) The Hall of Nations exhibit; an image of a collapsed house in Sarojini Nagar

photos of the demolition expose the secret behind its strength – the folded plate edge gutters. "It's almost like photographing an invisible building," says Rohit.

He quotes Italian engineer and architect Pier Luigi Nervi, one of Raj's major influences: "The pattern of steel should always have an aesthetic quality and give the impression of being a nervous system capable of bringing life to a dead mass of concrete." And so, to re-

Where Moms Have a New Birth Too

Birthing centres are hand-holding new mothers with curated postpartum services

Rinku Ghosh

MEENAL NIRULA has just breast-fed her baby and wants to lean back and rest awhile but the little one won't have any of it as he twists himself up in his swaddle. The attendant nurse comes by and gives her a break, holding and rocking the three-day-old. She walks over to an adjacent private room with sink-in couches and a footrest as the nutritionist hands her a zesty juice. And then a masseuse gets working on her feet with an aroma oil she likes. "Look, the colour of my leg has changed, my blood circulation has improved and I feel lighter," she says, picking up a book she's been meaning to finish for weeks.

At Fortis Le Femme in the posh GK II area of New Delhi, this new mother is availing of postpartum (post-delivery) care services. This is the "baby blues" phase, the most physically challenging and emotionally fragile stage of a woman's life when hormonal fluctuations induce anxiety, depression and guilt about whether she can match up to new responsibilities and expectations. This is the time when she needs sensitivity and a support network around her. The 31-year-old image consultant had not thought about having a child till her biological clock started ticking. She felt inadequate, nervous, anxious, worried about whether she could handle the additional responsibility of nurturing a new life. "These first few days of guided initiation into motherhood give a modern woman the agency to transition into a new role without negating her old one. The team here has helped me catch up on my sleep, understand how I am to reorient herself and get some much-needed support. Google is confusing and your family just gives you old wives' tales. None of them could teach me at what angle I had to hold the baby for feeding, how to help him latch on to me while changing sides, the diet I need to follow and how to manage when I return to work. The baby is important to me but I realised that I had to feel happy and confident about our journey together. I think this elongated post-

partum programme is a necessity not only in the big cities but everywhere," says Nirula.

Not too far away, at Apollo Cradle Royale in GK I, 34-year-old Sana Masood, who has had her baby after battling PCOS (polycystic ovary syndrome) and hypothyroidism for seven years, walks into a yoga class after an "ask me anything" session with a mental health expert. "I had anxieties about birthing itself. I was concerned if my PCOS would affect my lactation, whether the baby would grow healthy enough. I feel safe here talking to the gynaecologist and psychologist who know more about me than my family. Along with physical stamina, I build my mental stamina here. After ten days of sessions, I do not have panic attacks anymore," she says.

HOW POSTPARTUM CENTRES HELP

Birthing centres are now hand-holding new mothers after delivery with curated programmes which involve a few days stay in hotel-like accommodation, with luxuries and pampers like a private candlelight dinner, fashion shoots and spa sessions, as well as curated medical guidance from gynaecologists and paediatricians. Nurses watch babies around the clock, attendants have an annexe to themselves, the nutritionist prepares a customised diet plan for the mother, a counsellor eases her into processes of childcare, making them look doable, a physiotherapist gets her up and moving with postural therapy and a mental health expert helps her through the lows and triggers as her hormones take time to stabilise. What's more, a counsellor also trains japas or nannies to help the mother through the much-needed 35 to 40 days of healing. This phase helps them transition from hospital to home seamlessly.

Of course, all these come at a huge price tag over and above the Rs 1 to Rs 5 lakh birth packages lasting up to three days. The longer the stay, the steeper the bill with room rents varying from Rs 14,000 to Rs 60,000 per day, depending on whether you are in a premium room or a residential suite. While high-end postpartum care centres or jorivans in Seoul offer 21-day staycations, in India, prohibitive costs mean mothers can just sign up for four



RINKU GHOSH



to six-week follow-up services.

WHY WOMEN NEED POSTPARTUM CARE

Dr Meenakshi Ahuja, senior director, Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Le Femme Fortis, has been one of the pioneers of the holistic motherhood concept. "A lot of women's postpartum problems, when they are stretched thin both emotionally and physically, could easily be solved if we began with an antenatal facility that would feel not like a hospital but a social hangout and meeting point, which would be safe for women to discuss pregnancy. We also prepare them for the post-delivery phase, stretching from 21 to 40 days. During this time, women should be confident about handling the baby on their own and prioritise self-care to be strong and healthy. With

proper nutritional, psychological, medical and lactation support during this transitional phase, a woman will actually be able to enjoy motherhood than seeing it as another role to play by the book," she says.

In her long years, Dr Ahuja has identified some triggers beyond hormones that make a woman the most fragile and vulnerable. "She feels the attention goes from her to the baby when she also wants reassurance of her self-worth, particularly from her family. She requires that extra care and sensitivity, being tired all the time. Since paternity leave is limited, who's there to help you in a single unit family? Most women need a patient listen rather than being told their blues will blow over simply because every other woman has had it. I have had patients' families asking me

why counselling is necessary considering maternal depression is a common thing and not a disease," she says. She even recalls how she has had single mothers come in and extend their stay for that initial pop-up.

DIET, BREAST MILK AND OTHER MYTHS

Divya Dhawan, a nutritionist at Apollo Cradle Royale, who customises diet plans, finds how most new mothers are overloaded with food by family to build milk reserves for breastfeeding. "The truth is you just need an additional 350 to 500 calories a day, which can be easily settled by adding an extra chapati here, a bigger bowl of dal and so on. Overeating leads to obesity even before she can shed maternal fat," says she.

Her colleague and lactation expert Vandana Sarkar works with mothers who may have their babies in NICU (neo-natal intensive care unit) because of birth complications like jaundice or edema if they are pre-term. "Anxiety and worry about the infant's condition elevate stress levels, which in turn impact milk production. Most mothers go through guilt syndrome in such situations. So our job is to help a mom understand her own triggers, relax in stressful situations



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and help her pump milk," says Sarkar who guides all her patients online for three weeks. "Some women tell us upfront how they want their breastfeeding routine to be and when they want to stop. Six months are ideal for breastfeeding and it can be done with some smart planning. Breastfeeding, even for a short time, is beneficial. This knowledge gives a woman agency to decide what's best for her baby," she adds. Dr Anita Sharma, lactation consultant at Le Femme, feels that breastfeeding fears are the biggest reason for a woman's postpartum depression. "Most women are told they are not making enough milk. Fact is a new mom has to learn to watch her baby's urine and stool output as well as the weight – an infant loses about ten per cent of body weight in the first two weeks. If the figures are within parameters, she is making just about enough milk. Many women are told not to feed till milk matures in the first two days when fact is, early milk or colostrum is nutrient-dense and forms the baby's immune system. For a pre-term baby, a mother needs to be taught how to pump adequately so that milk production doesn't go down," she says.

This guilt of not making enough milk is a negative signal to the brain that stalls milk formation. In fact, Dr Sharma calls in fathers during her postpartum session to teach them how to hold the baby after the feed to keep the continuity and the baby secure. "That's why nowadays we are calling breast-feeding chest-feeding where the father or caregiver can position the baby and feed expressed milk from a customised bottle," she says.

WHY POSTPARTUM CARE IS EXPENSIVE

Dr Ahuja, who is spreading awareness about why women need postpartum support at community camps, feels expense is a crucial factor that is tilted against this crucial aspect of women's health. "About 90 per cent of insurance policies don't cover postpartum care, provisioning for just 48 hours after delivery. No matter how big your package, there's a fixed sum for birthing, Rs 50,000 to Rs 1 lakh. All services are out of pocket expenses. Till financing options are not supportive, postpartum care will only be seen as a frill, not a necessity," says Dr Ahuja. And yet, it can transform maternal health and take away a mother's biggest fear, of not being good enough.

ADVERTORIAL

that are teeming with biodiversity. As you would expect, onboard the Golden Chariot, every detail is infused with the spirit of South India's warm hospitality and rich traditions.

Guided tours are an integral part of these rail experiences, allowing travellers to explore the soul of India's diverse regions with knowledgeable local guides. These off-train excursions are thoughtfully integrated into the journey, ensuring that each destination enriches the traveller's understanding and appreciation of India's cultural and natural heritage.

The interiors of most of these luxury trains draw inspiration from that region's historical legacy, featuring handcrafted details and luxurious accommodations. Gourmet dining experiences will offer you a taste of the local cuisine, while the spa facilities (like that on the Deccan Odyssey) provide a serene retreat after a day of exploration. With personal butler service, an exclusive bar, and a high staff-to-guest ratio, these trains offer a travel experience that is unmatched in luxury, making it not just a train journey, but a celebration of the rich cultural heritage of India. Over the years, these train journeys have become a hit with those visiting India and it's often that you have to book very much in advance.

As luxury train travel continues to evolve and modern trains takeover, these boutique experiences will turn more and more niche by the year. So why not book an experience like this to mark a benchmark celebration like a milestone birthday or anniversary? What do you think? I would love to hear your thoughts on neil@veenaworld.com. Until the next time, keep Celebrating Life!



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interiors that reflect the lavish decor of royal palaces, complete with intricate carvings, exquisite silk fabrics, and opulent furnishings.

Next up, the Maharajas' Express. Since its inception, this majestic train has been consistently recognised globally, winning accolades for its impeccable service, which mirrors the hospitality once reserved for the Indian royalty. The Maharajas' Express offers a selection of itineraries that weave

through the heart of India, covering essential cultural and historical sites, from the Mughal marvels of Agra to the royal palaces of Rajasthan, and the sacred Ghats of Varanasi to the sculptures of Khajuraho. The train itself is a sanctuary of luxury, boasting sumptuous suites that rival five-star accommodations, complete with panoramic windows for an uninterrupted view of the passing scenery. Dining on the Maharajas' Express is a culinary voyage, with two fine dining restaurants serving a blend of traditional Indian and international cuisines, ensuring every journey is as lavish as it is comfortable.

For a journey through the heart of India's Deccan Plateau, there's the famous Deccan Odyssey, an experience that my co-founder, Sunila has very recently experienced. She attended a corporate workshop onboard and they even had a networking evening with drinks followed by a royal dinner on rails. The Deccan Odyssey offers multiple itineraries to choose from, with each taking you through the diverse

landscapes of Maharashtra, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Karnataka, and Andhra Pradesh. The itineraries are thoughtfully designed to include UNESCO World Heritage Sites, majestic forts, and palaces, serene beaches along the Konkan coast, and the untamed wildlife of the Western Ghats. Aboard the Deccan Odyssey, the journey itself mirrors the opulence of the destinations it explores. The train's interiors reflect the regal aesthetics of Maratha and Deccan architecture, with each coach named after a dynasty that ruled the region, adding a touch of historical significance to the luxurious ambience.

Then, further south, we have the Golden Chariot. South India's answer for luxury train travel. This exquisite train takes you on a voyage through the magnificent architectural marvels of Karnataka, the beaches of Goa and the backwaters of Kerala. The itineraries showcase the best of South India's cultural heritage, including the ancient ruins of Hampi, the majestic palaces of Mysore, and the wildlife sanctuaries

