

COMMANDER
Swachata Badhao, Tandrusti Badhe

WARRANTY 5 YEARS

Slimhide

Slim Hide Flush Tank Rahan ...?

Badi Todfod + Deewaar Ko Leakage Se Bachayen

Space Saving

THE WORLD



HEAVY TANK FIRE IN KHAN YOUNIS AS DOWNPOUR HITS DISPLACED GAZANS

ROVER DATA CONFIRMS LAKE SEDIMENTS ON MARS

PAGE 10

INSIDE

55 SCULPTURES FOUND INSIDE GYANVAPI MOSQUE COMPLEX: ASI

KHARGE WRITES TO MAMATA OVER YATRA SAFETY

PAGES 6, 8

AMENDMENT TO CASTE CERTIFICATION RULES SOON

Shinde govt relents on Maratha quota, decides to expand Kunbi OBC status

BJP-Sena hopes to placate Maratha community in election year

ALOK DESHPANDE
MUMBAI, JANUARY 27

IN WHAT has defused the tension for now over reservation for the Maratha community in Maharashtra, the state government late Friday night decided to issue a gazette notification with a draft of rules that aims to

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



Maharashtra CM Eknath Shinde offers juice to activist Manoj Jarange Patil to break his fast in Navi Mumbai. Narendra Vaskar

OBCs fear shrinking of quota pie, ready to take battle to street, court

ALOK DESHPANDE,
SHUBHANGI KHAPRE &
OMKAR GOKHALE
MUMBAI, JANUARY 27

EVEN AS the Maratha community awaits finalisation of rules on Maratha reservation, the communities under Other Backward Class (OBC) fear a shrinking of

their 27 per cent reservation pie, and are ready to take the battle to the street and the courts. While the proposed formulation does not tinker with the 50 per cent limit set by the Supreme Court, it allows Marathas to claim reservation under the 27 per cent set aside for OBCs. So there will be more

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



Bihar CM Nitish Kumar with BJP leader and Union MoS Ashwini Kumar Choubey at a temple in Buxar, Saturday. PTI

All eyes on Patna today with Nitish set to break up, stake claim with BJP

RJD keeps arm's length, Cong sends Chhattisgarh ex-CM Baghel as observer

tion." And the new government, with the BJP's support, was expected by the evening.

"Offices, including the Governor's secretariat, have been ordered to remain open Sunday," said the source.

A rattled RJD had a meeting of its MLAs Sunday and leader Tejashwi Prasad Yadav, sources said, urged them to "go to people with their achievements," and delink the party from

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

LAND-FOR-JOBS:
RABRI, DAUGHTERS SUMMONED PAGE 8

India working with us closely to resolve this: Outgoing Canada NSA on Nijjar killing

SHUBHAJIT ROY
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 27

FOUR MONTHS after a diplomatic firestorm erupted over Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's allegation of a potential Indian link to the killing of Canada-based Khalistan separatist Hardeep Singh Nijjar, a top Canadian official has, for the first time, said that India is "cooperating" with Canada and Delhi is working closely with Ottawa to resolve the issue.

Canada's National Security Advisor Jody Thomas, who retired Friday after more than 35

years in public service, told Canadian news channel CTV: "I wouldn't describe them (the Indians) as not cooperating. I think we've made advancements in that relationship."

"My discussions with my counterpart in India have been fruitful, and I think they've moved things forward," she said.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



GRAND SLAM AT 43

Rohan Bopanna, 43, became the oldest man to win a Grand Slam in the Open Era after he and Matthew Ebden clinched the Australian Open men's doubles title, Saturday. He is also set to be doubles world No. 1 when rankings are out. Reuters PAGE 16

Kerala Governor holds sit-in over SFI 'bid to hit car', gets CRPF cover

SHAJU PHILIP
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, JANUARY 27

THE STANDOFF between Raj Bhavan and the CPI(M) government in Kerala escalated on Saturday after Governor Arif Mohammed Khan held a sit-in in front of a roadside shop in Kollam district after Students' Federation of India (SFI) activists allegedly tried to hit his vehicle. Following the faceoff, the Union Home Ministry informed the Raj

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



Governor Arif Mohammed Khan in Kollam, Saturday. PTI

Judge vs judge: Top court stays all proceedings before Calcutta HC

ANANTHAKRISHNAN G
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 27

THE SUPREME Court Saturday stayed all further proceedings before the Calcutta High Court in connection with a matter related to a probe into alleged irregularities in MBBS admissions in West Bengal, and two sets of orders that led to a judge accusing a fellow judge of "acting clearly for some political party in this State".

On Thursday, a single-judge bench of Justice Abhijit

Gangopadhyay of the Calcutta High Court had directed that a Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) probe ordered into the alleged irregularities will continue, despite an order of a division bench to the contrary.

In the written order, he had also levelled accusations against a fellow judge, Justice Soumen Sen.

On Saturday, issuing notice to the CBI, the petitioner on whose plea Justice Gangopadhyay directed the CBI probe, and the state of West Bengal, a five-judge Supreme Court bench, in a spe-

cial sitting, stayed all further proceedings before the single judge bench and the division bench, and directed an interim stay of the single-judge order.

"Issue notice to the original petitioner before the High Court in repetition and the state of West Bengal... Pending further orders there shall be a stay of all proceedings before the High Court of Calcutta in writ petitions... The implementation of the direction issued by the single judge on January 24 and 25 shall in consequence remain

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

The Congress, sources said, was hoping to get 15-16 seats in UP and Yadav's announcement is seen as a bid to force the Congress's hand and make it give one seat to the SP in Madhya Pradesh. A senior SP functionary told *The Indian Express*: "If the Congress presents the names of winnable candidates on some more seats, we will certainly

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

INDIA BLOC NOT IMPLDING: CONG PAGE 6

EXPRESS NETWORK

OIL TANKER WITH 22 INDIANS ONBOARD HIT BY MISSILE, NAVY SENDS HELP PAGE 8

For India's dream to host 2036 Olympics, Ahmedabad's Rs 6,000-cr plan

PAGE 1
ANCHOR

RITU SHARMA
AHMEDABAD, JANUARY 27

■ A sports enclave with an aquatics centre, basketball and tennis courts, and a football arena.
■ A "vibrant" public space along the Sabarmati for hosting cultural events and temporary stalls, and an amphitheatre.
■ A proposed master plan made by the international consultant

that led the consortium to build venues for the 2012 Olympics in London.

Gujarat is leaving no stone unturned before India throws its hat into the ring in the hopes of winning the bid to host the 2036 Olympics.

The Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV), set up in July 2023 to oversee the planning and execution of Olympic-standard infrastructure in Ahmedabad and Gandhinagar, has readied a Rs 6,000-crore master plan proposal to build a 300-acre Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel Sports Enclave

in Ahmedabad's Motera locality. The proposal has been prepared by Populous, an Australian design and architecture consultant.

Besides six new stadiums with a total capacity of over 1 lakh, the sports enclave will include the existing 1.10-lakh-seater Narendra Modi Cricket Stadium. According to a Gujarat Olympic Planning and Infrastructure Corporation Limited (GOlympic) official, the "Olympic-standard" infrastructure is expected to come up along the 2-km Phase-II stretch of the Sabarmati riverfront, which is currently under construction.

7 STADIUMS IN PROPOSED SPORTS ENCLAVE



* seating capacity Source: Ahmedabad Urban Development Authority

1	Narendra Modi stadium 1.10 lakh*
2	Aquatics centre 12,000
3	Football stadium 53,000
4	Tennis centre 15,000
5	Ring of Unity 5,000
6	Arenas 1 18,000
7	Arenas 2 and 3 6,000+10,000

M Thennarasu, the Ahmedabad Municipal Commissioner and CEO and MD of GOlympic, said, "The master plan is more or less ready. Further inputs from various stakeholders will be taken."

D P Desai, the CEO of Ahmedabad Urban Development Authority (AUDA), which is one of the executing bodies, said the design and implementation of the sports enclave is currently underway. The tender for the sports enclave, including six stadiums, is out. National and international consultants have already expressed interest.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

• All eyes on Patna today

Nitish's decision to break if and when that happens.

Tejashwi is learnt to have told his MLAs that it was up to Nitish to explain why he did what he did. And they should make it clear to their constituents that it was Nitish who was "deserting" the alliance – and the RJD had nothing to do with this.

Although many RJD legislators have been in favour of withdrawing support to the government, Tejashwi has been insistent they should not do anything that sends a message to the people that it was the RJD that forced Nitish's hand. "We will go to the people and tell them how we were moving in the direction of keeping our promises of giving 10 lakh jobs", Tejashwi is said to have told his MLAs.

PTI reported that RJD national spokesman Manoj Jha told reporters that "all leaders unanimously authorised the party supremo (Lalu Prasad) to take any decision regarding the developments that may take place today or tomorrow".

The RJD (79), Congress (19), and three Left parties together (16) have 114 MLAs, eight short of a majority in House of 243. The JD(U)'s 45 MLAs and the BJP's 78, along with the support of one Independent, together make up 124 MLAs.

A senior RJD leader told *The Indian Express*: "We will not give Nitish Kumar any excuse. He is deserting us. We are not to blame for anything. Nor are we going to

stake claim to form government".

The JD (U), meanwhile, launched a frontal attack on RJD. JD(U)'s chief spokesperson Neeraj Kumar said: "RJD leadership is restless. It has been in the habit of taking land for jobs but it could not gain anything in recent appointments of our 2 lakh teachers".

BJP also held a huddle with its top leaders. Party leaders called it "pre-scheduled" as part of preparation for Lok Sabha polls but sources said it was held to discuss the "situation after the changed political conditions." It is learnt the BJP has reportedly accepted the condition of Nitish continuing as CM and two deputy CMs from BJP.

A BJP leader was reported to have said all attendees were asked "to place signatures on a piece of paper", a pre-requisite if BJP seeks to inform Governor Rajendra Arlekar it's ready to back JD(U).

HAM (Secular) leader Santosh Kumar Suman said they would support Nitish with their four MLAs.

Meanwhile, Congress leader Jairam Ramesh said party chief Mallikarjun Kharge tried to call Nitish without success. Amid reports a section of Congress MLAs in Bihar could not be contacted, the party rushed former Chhattisgarh CM Bhupesh Baghel to Patna as a special observer. Said Shakil Ahmed Khan, the legislature party leader of the Congress: "All such rumours are false. All 19 MLAs were present at a meeting we held in Purnea..." WITH PTI

FROM PAGE ONE ■ FULL REPORTS ON WWW.INDIANEXPRESS.COM

Shinde govt relents on Maratha quota

ease and expand the scope for offering Kunbi OBC (Other Backward Class) certification to Marathas. This will entitle them to apply for government jobs and educational institutions as OBCs, who are entitled 27 per cent reservation in the state.

Activist Manoj Jarange Patil, who started his march in Jalna on January 20 and reached Navi Mumbai on Friday, called off the protest Saturday after discussions with senior state government officials and ministers. He requested those who marched with him from Jalna and joined him en route to leave and reach their villages peacefully and celebrate.

The state has proposed to amend the Maharashtra Scheduled Castes, Denotified Tribes (Vimukta Jatis), Nomadic Tribes, Other Backward Classes and Special Backward Category (Regulation of Issuance and Verification of) Caste Certificate Rules, 2012, by adding the term "sage-soyare" (i.e., relatives from the family tree) as demanded by Jarange-Patil.

The term "sage-soyare" includes relatives of the applicant's father, grandfather, great-grandfather and earlier generations, forming out of marriages within the same caste. This will also include relations forming out of

marriages, again within the same caste.

Accepting the government's formulation, Jarange-Patil said he is "happy over the manner in which Chief Minister Eknath Shinde handled the matter". Shinde drove to Navi Mumbai and offered juice so that he could break his fast in the morning.

Jarange-Patil, who has been at the forefront of the agitation for Maratha reservation, had planned to march to Mumbai on Saturday and stage a hunger strike at Azad Maidan. But state ministers Mangal Prabhat Lodha and Deepak Kesarwani along with a delegation of senior officials from the social justice department held talks with him Friday night and reached an agreement.

After breaking his fast, Jarange-Patil said, "We had gathered here to ensure certificates and Kunbi recognition to all 54 lakh people. We also demanded that 'sage-soyare' of those 54 lakh should also get Kunbi certificate... You have issued notification for this and we thank you for that. The 'sage-soyare' notification means that the entire family tree of everyone who has a Kunbi certificate will get the Kunbi certificate. I request you not to insult this arrangement. This should be permanent."

Shinde said the decision was

for the benefit of people and not for votes. "This is a historic moment. I also belong to a farmer family and I know the pain of poor Marathas. I had publicly taken oath in front of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj and I am fulfilling it... Maratha community will be given all the benefits given to OBCs till the whole issue is sorted... No community will face any injustice while doing this," he said.

The amended rules suggest that Kunbi certification will be provided to blood relatives and sage-soyare of Kunbi caste certificate holders. "Provided further that, upon submitting an affidavit by the applicant establishing the relations with his blood relatives i.e., uncle, nephew and other members of his family, as well as patriarchal relatives who have found Kunbi records being the applicant's sage-soyare and after verifying such Kunbi certificates of blood relatives and sage-soyare by conducting field enquiry and verification, Kunbi caste certificate shall be issued immediately under the Maharashtra Scheduled Castes, Denotified Tribes (Vimukta Jatis), Nomadic Tribes, Other Backward Classes and Special Backward Category (Regulation of Issuance and Verification of) Caste Certificate

Rules, 2012," the proposed amendment states.

"All the sage-soyare in relation of the persons belonging to Maratha community whose record of being Kunbi has been found shall be given the Kunbi caste certificates on the basis of the Kunbi records of such persons belonging to Maratha community," it states.

Further, it states, "The sage-soyare of the person belonging to the Maratha community whose Kunbi record has been found shall be the one amongst the relations within whom the marriages are held traditionally. But the sage-soyare shall be considered among the relations/relatives from the patriarchal relatives as well as the relations forming out of marriages and proof being given to prove that the marriage is within the same caste, the Kunbi caste certificate shall be issued after field enquiry."

"The relatives being sage-soyare forming out of marriages within the same caste in the State, of a person who has the record of being Kunbi, may apply for Kunbi caste certificate. Provided that, proof of such marriage within the same caste, is submitted, as well as established in the field enquiry, and upon verification of the documents related to such Kunbi records," it states.

While Chief Minister Eknath Shinde already claimed Saturday that he has fulfilled his oath taken before Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj – giving reservation to Marathas, his deputy was more nuanced, and still some others have called a meeting of OBCs Sunday to decide their future course of action.

After the morning truce with activist Manoj Jarange-Patil, Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis clarified that only the process of giving Kunbi certificates to those with records and evidences has been eased, and there is no question of bringing those without certificates under the OBC category.

NCP Minister in Maharashtra and senior OBC leader Chhagan Bhujbal has, meanwhile, called a meeting of OBC leaders, intellectuals and activists on Sunday to finalise the strategy ahead. The aggrieved OBC outfits and their leaders are likely to challenge the government's decision in the High Court or Supreme Court going forward.

Sources in the SP, however, said Yadav's announcement will be beneficial for SP, Congress and the INDIA bloc."

This was echoed by Congress's UP unit chief Ajay Rai. He said the Mukul Wasnik-led national alliance committee of Congress will decide. "The dialogue is going on in a very positive atmosphere and this is going to give a strong result very soon," he said.

In 2019 Lok Sabha elections, the Congress contested 67 of the 80 seats but could win only one (Sonia Gandhi in Rae Bareli) and registered a meagre 6.36 per cent vote share across the state.

The SP and the BSP had fought together and brought the BJP's figure down from 71 to 62. Under their arrangement, the BSP contested in 38 seats and the SP 37. While the BSP won 10 seats with a vote share of 19.43 per cent, the SP could win only five with a vote share of 18.11 per cent.

Sources in the SP said the party has demanded one Lok Sabha seat from the Congress in Madhya Pradesh to contest in alliance. "We have asked the Congress to give either Khajuraho or Tikamgarh. The Congress lost these seats by a margin of more than 3 lakh votes in 2019 and the SP had finished third securing over 40,000 votes..." an SP leader said.

"Our cordial alliance with Congress is making a good start with 11 strong seats... This trend will move forward with the winning equation. 'India' team and 'PDA' (Pichada (backwards), Dalits and Alpaskanhyas (minorities))' strategy will change history," Yadav said in a post on X. He did not reveal the names of the seats.

Significantly, Yadav's announcement came a day after he said the responsibility of holding together the Opposition alliance rested squarely on the shoulders of the Congress.

Responding to Yadav, Congress communication head Jairam Ramesh talks are still on between the SP and the Congress and that senior Congress Ashok Gehlot was in touch with Yadav.

"...discussions are proceeding in a positive manner. We will announce when the seat-sharing formula is finalised. Since Yadav himself has given the news today... that the discussions are on and he was happy with the discussions... I want to say on behalf of my party that Gehlot and Yadav are in touch... they will meet

last month, when SFI men had shown him black flags in Thiruvananthapuram, Khan had ventured out of his car and walked towards the protesters, saying, "Bloody criminals, come." Then, turning towards the police, Khan said, "How did they come near me? Who is the police officer here? They (protesters) are criminals hitting my car." He had also alleged that VJayan had sent goons to physically hurt him.

Last week, the governor's stand-off with the government saw him cutting short his policy address to the state Legislative Assembly to a mere 80 seconds. After the address, he had left the House in a huff. During his press conference, the CM referred to this, saying: "He (Khan) had no time to read the policy address in the state Assembly, but he had enough time to conduct a sit-in on a road for one-and-a-half hours. This is a challenge to the people of the state and an insult to the Constitution."

Before ending the protest, Khan told the media, "When I reached here, some people tried to hit my car. I have already said I have no problem if black flags are shown from a distance. But if somebody comes near my car, I will get down. Police say there were 17 people and you can count the number of policemen present here at the moment. My only question is, if the chief minister was passing by this road, would the police allow the protesters to hit the car?"

"I am not blaming the police. Police are taking orders from superiors. The chief minister of the state is promoting lawlessness in the state. It is the chief minister and the Union Home Minister. Law is supreme. There are democratic practices and precedents. He is yet to acquire the prudence, which he should have shown," said VJayan.

The drama had unfolded when Khan was on his way to attend a function at an ashram in Kollam district, when a group of SFI men protested against him, raising slogans and showing black flags. A few of them who were waiting for the governor's convoy allegedly jumped in front of his car with flags. Khan immediately stopped the vehicle and pulled up the local police, who were on duty.

Senior police officials tried to pacify Khan, but he insisted on initiating action against the protesters, who had disappeared

• OBCs fear shrinking of quota pie, ready to take battle to street, court

claimants not just for government jobs and educational institutions reserved for OBCs, but also for OBC-reserved seats in local civic bodies.

A key concern for the OBCs is about the curtailment of political representation in local civic bodies. In a political system, where Marathas already dominate the space, their inclusion as Kunbis will lead to them staking claim on OBC reserved seats in local civic bodies. OBCs have been saying that the Marathas should be given separate reservation instead of reducing theirs. The political ramifications of the OBC unrest are likely to play out during the upcoming general elections.

In 2018, the then Fadnavis-led government enacted the Maharashtra State Reservation for Socially and Educationally Backward Classes (SEBC) Act which granted 16 per cent reservation to Marathas in government jobs and education. In June 2019, the Bombay High Court upheld the SEBC Act but ruled that the 16 per cent quota was not "justifiable". It reduced the quota to 12 per cent in education and 13 per cent in government jobs, as recommended by the Maharashtra State Backward Class Commission (MSBCC). The High Court also said that total reservations should not exceed 50%, except in "exceptional circumstances and extraordinary situations".

However, in 2021, a five-judge Constitution Bench of the Supreme Court struck down the SEBC Act, noting that "no extraordinary circumstances and extraordinary situations".

After the morning truce with activist Manoj Jarange-Patil, Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis clarified that only the process of giving Kunbi certificates to those with records and evidences has been eased, and there is no question of bringing those without certificates under the OBC category.

NCP Minister in Maharashtra and senior OBC leader Chhagan Bhujbal has, meanwhile, called a meeting of OBC leaders, intellectuals and activists on Sunday to finalise the strategy ahead. The aggrieved OBC outfits and their leaders are likely to challenge the government's decision in the High Court or Supreme Court going forward.

With SC striking down SEBC Act, as on date, the existing total reservation at present is 52 per cent.

While the Shinde-led Sena was quick to claim credit and organise celebrations, the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) led by deputy Ajit Pawar issued a statement on social media website X, where it congratulated the Maratha community. Both Fadnavis and Pawar were absent when Shinde handed over the draft notification to Manoj Jarange-Patil. It resulted in Shinde claiming the credit of solving the issue of Maratha heavyweight like Ajit Pawar in the cabinet.

The Opposition in Maharashtra said the government has deceived both Marathas and OBCs. Maharashtra Congress chief Nana Patole pointed out that the government has not fulfilled the promise of giving Kunbi certificates to the entire Maratha community. "And if reservation is given from the OBC quota, that means the promise of not violating the OBC quota is not being fulfilled. In a way this government has cheated both," he said. While Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS) chief Raj Thackeray congratulated the community, it taunted by asking the community to now ask the Chief Minister as to when will he give the reservation despite the Maratha heavyweight like Ajit Pawar in the cabinet.

The Opposition in Maharashtra said the government has deceived both Marathas and OBCs. Maharashtra Congress chief Nana Patole pointed out that the government's decision is not against OBCs. The notification states all the sage-soyare (blood relatives) of the individual who has verified Kunbi records belonging to the Maratha community will be entitled to Kunbi certificate. This means those with Kunbi records along with their relations will be entitled to Kunbi certificates. Using these Kunbi certificates they will claim rights to OBC reservation," OBC Jan Morcha President and MLA Prakash Shende told The Indian Express.

Yadav's announcement comes a week after the SP and the Rashtriya Lok Dal (RLD), also an INDIA bloc member, announced that the latter was going to contest in seven seats as part of seat-sharing arrangements.

The SP and Congress last fought an election together in Uttar Pradesh way back in the 2017 when Akhilesh and Rahul Gandhi waged a high-voltage joint campaign in the Assembly elections. According to the then seat-sharing formula, the SP was to contest in 298 seats and the Congress 105.

But in many seats there were friendly fights. Finally, the SP fought in 311 seats, winning merely 47 securing a vote share of 21.82 per cent. The Congress ended up contesting in 114 seats but won just 7 with a vote share of 6.25 per cent.

Sources within the opposition pointed out that the community will now have to wait till February 16 for the implementation of the notification and that is going to be challenged in the court. "The model code of conduct for the general elections will be applied by then and the entire issue will take a backseat. But with support that Jarange-Patil has gathered in Marathwada and his emotional connect, it is better that none of us point out to these lacunae," an senior opposition leader said.

Sensing the unrest within the OBC community, Fadnavis was quick to react and said OBCs would not face injustice. "I want to clarify that the government's decision is not against OBCs. The issue was about solving problems in getting certificates for those with records and evidence. It was not about giving certificates to those without records and evi-

a deck facing the riverfront.

Besides food and beverage facilities located near the Ring, there is a provision for basement parking along the riverfront. The Ring will also be located at "walking distance" from metro stations.

The proposed master plan has clustered over 20 Olympic sporting venues into four distinct precincts across the twin cities of Ahmedabad and Gandhinagar. With a focus on "legacy and growth", an official said, a "state-of-the-art" Olympic Village and supporting facilities for athletes, officials and the media will be located within a 30-minute distance.

A senior official added, "We are making attempts to bring down the cost and make changes in the International Broadcast Centre (IBC), a temporary hub for broadcasters during major sports events."

The Gujarat government has suggested using the Mahatma Mandir Convention and

• Judge vs judge: Top court stays all proceedings before Calcutta HC

stayed," the bench presided by Chief Justice of India D Y Chandrachud and comprising Justices Sanjiv Khanna, B R Gavai, Surya Kant and Aniruddha Bose said in its order. The Supreme Court had taken suo motu cognoscience of the issue after the controversy became public.

On January 24, the single-judge bench of Justice Gangopadhyay had ordered a CBI probe in the matter shall continue. He also said in the order that he "was told" by another judge, Justice Amriti Sinha, "some days back... that Justice Sen called her in his chamber on the last day before vacation, and like a political leader, he dictated Justice Sinha three things: i) Mr. Avishhek Banerjee has a political future, he should not be disturbed; ii) Livestreaming shall be stopped in Justice Sinha's court; iii) The two writ petitions before Justice Sinha, where the name of Mr. Avishhek Banerjee is involved, are to be dismissed".

Justice Sinha intimated this to me over telephone in vacation. Subsequently, Justice Sinha reported it to the Hon'ble Chief Justice of this High Court and I was told that the Hon'ble Chief Justice of this court has communicated this to the Hon'ble the Chief Justice of India," he added in the order.

A day later, Justice Gangopadhyay directed that the

Intelligence Advisor to Prime Minister Trudeau in January 2022.

Over the last six months or so, Thomas has had multiple conversations on the issue with NSA Ajit Doval since August last year, including on the sidelines of the G20 Summit in Delhi in September.

There was no official response from the Indian government on Thomas's statements.

Diplomatic ties suffered a huge setback after Trudeau said last September that Canada was "actively pursuing credible allegations" that Indian agents were potentially linked to the June 2023 killing of Nijjar, a Canadian citizen.

India denied any government role in Nijjar's killing, and the Ministry of External Affairs rejected Trudeau's allegations as "absurd and motivated".

India's position towards Canada has been different to as National Security and

• India working very closely with us: Outgoing Canada NSA on Nijjar case

Asked whether Canada's improved relationship with India was a result of the US indictment (of Indian citizen Nikhil Gupta in an alleged plot to kill Khalistan separatist Gurpatwant Singh Pannu), Thomas said, "The two are connected for sure."

The information that they revealed supported our position and our assertions with India. India is working with us, and my counterpart, in particular, far more closely to resolve this," she said, in comments published by CTV on its website Friday.

"Our ability to function in the Indo-Pacific does rely on having a healthy relationship with India



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Hamara Sankalp Viksit Bharat

Below normal temp, fog: Jan set to end as city's coldest in at least 12 yrs

ABHINAYA HARIGOVIND
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 27

WITH BELOW normal day-time temperatures for most part of the month, Delhi has seen a January colder than in previous years. The average maximum temperature so far this month was 17.3 degrees Celsius, which is the lowest for the month till January 27 from at least 2012 onwards, according to data from the India Meteorological Department.

Delhi saw five 'cold days' this January, when the maximum temperature was 4.5 degrees or more below the normal. Except for two days this month, January 15 and 16, when the maximum temperature was a little above normal, it has remained below normal on all other days.

IMD officials attributed below-normal maximum temperatures to fog spells that have persisted in the absence of a western disturbance. Earlier this month, strong jet stream winds, which are westerly winds in the

AVG MAXIMUM TEMPERATURE (TILL JAN 27)



Delhi saw five 'cold days' this January. Amit Mehra

2024	17.3°C	2018	21.99°C
2023	19.65°C	2017	21.06°C
2022	17.52°C	2016	21.07°C
2021	18.93°C	2015	17.84°C
2020	19.21°C	2014	18.63°C
2019	21.36°C	2013	18.45°C

upper level of the atmosphere, over north India had also contributed to keeping day-time

temperatures below normal. IMD scientist Kuldeep Srivastava, said, "The uplifted fog

that we saw this month resulted in below-normal maximum temperatures. The fog layer has persisted because of the absence of a western disturbance. Usually, we see two to three western disturbances in January, but this time, we have not seen any western disturbances affecting the plains of northwest India so far."

Delhi's weather in the non-monsoon months is largely regulated by western disturbances — storms that originate in the Caspian or Mediterranean Sea.

The city also recorded five cold wave days so far this month, when the minimum temperature re-

mained significantly below normal. Last year, Delhi recorded eight cold wave days in January.

The average minimum temperature so far this month — 6.3 degrees Celsius — is close to the average of 6.42 degrees recorded in January, till January 27, last year.

Over the next six days, the maximum temperature is likely to range from 23 to 26 degrees Celsius, going by the IMD forecast.

The minimum temperature, which was 4.3 degrees on Saturday, could see an increase over the next six days, and is likely to be around 9 degrees Celsius on February 1, the forecast indicates.

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e-tender for and on behalf of West Central Railway is invited for the Two Stage Bid system from bidders meeting	
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length of crushed stone ballast conforming to latest specification issued by RDSO	
Lucknow, along/near the Railway line, Khatra, Katni, Madhya Pradesh".	
Tender No. : DR-Elect-77-23-24	
Estimated Cost	
Rs. 5,32,19,350/-	
Last Date and Time of e-Bid Submission	
08.02.2024 at 15:00 Hrs.	
For further details, visit website : https://etenders.gov.in/eprocure/app . Confidential, if any, would be hosted	
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DWARKA-SECTOR 8

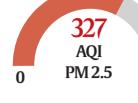
Very Poor



384 AQI PM2.5

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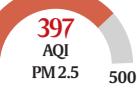
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327 AQI PM2.5

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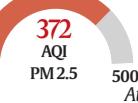
Very Poor



397 AQI PM2.5

WAZIRPUR

Very Poor



372 AQI PM2.5

S K Y W A T C H

FORECAST: January 28

Partly cloudy sky.
Mist/shallow fog in the morning.

AQI: Very poor

MAX: 24 1.9°C below normal

MIN: 5 3.4°C below normal

ALLEGATIONS ABSURD: BJP**BJP offered 7 AAP MLAs Rs 25 cr: Kejriwal**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 27

CM Kejriwal once again accused the BJP of trying to poach AAP MLAs. PTI

DELHI CHIEF Minister Arvind Kejriwal Saturday alleged he was on the brink of being arrested in the liquor policy case as part of a BJP conspiracy to topple the AAP government in Delhi.

The BJP, Kejriwal further alleged, was also attempting to contact AAP MLAs, urging them to switch sides. The CM's allegations triggered messages of support from AAP MLAs expressing solidarity on social media.

Countering the CM's allegations, the BJP demanded proof and said these stemmed from political frustration at Prime Minister Narendra Modi's popularity and threatened legal action.

In a post on X, Kejriwal alleged: "Recently they have contacted our 7 MLAs in Delhi and said — 'We will arrest Kejriwal after a few days. After that, we will break the MLAs. Talks have been held with 21 MLAs. Talking to others also. After that, we will topple the Aam Aadmi Party government in Delhi. You can also come. Will give Rs 25 crore and contest the elections on BJP ticket..."

"This means that I am not being arrested to investigate any liquor scam but they are conspiring to topple the Aam Aadmi Party government in Delhi...." Kejriwal further alleged, adding that though the claim was that 21 MLAs had been contacted, the number seemed to be around seven MLAs so far and all of them had refused.

Kejriwal said in the last nine years, the BJP had hatched many conspiracies to topple the AAP government in Delhi since it could not defeat it in the elections. "... All our MLAs are together... it is not in their (BJP's)

BLAZE AT BUILDING IN SHAHDARA: LANDLORD, SON ARRESTED FOR NEGLIGENCE**'Escaped to balcony... kept shouting out to my family': Teenager recalls fire that left four dead**ARNABJITSUR
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 27AROUND 5 PM on Friday, 16-year-old Radhika had just got back from tuition when someone rang the bell of her third-floor flat in Shahdara's Mansarovar Park. When the Class XI student opened the door, she found Rachna, her neighbour from the second floor, screaming about a fire and saw the staircase filled with thick black smoke. "I panicked and told my brother Pratham and mother to rush downstairs but I couldn't see anything... it became difficult to breathe," she told *The Indian Express*.

Radhika managed to get to the balcony and wrapped a cloth hanging on the clothesline around her mouth. "I stayed there, calling out desperately to my family but I could neither hear nor see them... firefighters then came and rescued me..." she added.

Her 40-year-old mother Gauri and 17-year-old brother died in the blaze of asphyxiation,



along with two others -- Rachna (28) and her nine-month-old daughter Ruhi.

Radhika too sustained burn injuries on her arms and legs and was discharged from GTB

Hospital on Saturday.

Radhika, who studied in a government school nearby, said her brother wanted to pursue CA after Class XII. 'My father, Ashutosh, was out of town for a



Gauri and her son Pratham were among the victims; (left) the building in Shahdara's Mansarovar Park

wedding... I wish my mother and brother could have been saved," cried Radhika.

Rachna's husband too was not home; the fourth-floor occupants were not present at their

house at the time of the incident.

Meanwhile, the Delhi Police arrested the building landlord, Bharat Singh Chauhan (75), and his son, Mohit Chauhan (25), for running a godown in the stilt parking area; they used to dump fiber sheets and wipers there, which blocked the lone staircase.

DCP (Shahdara) Surendra Choudhary said, "They have been arrested for causing the death of the four persons due to their negligence and have been booked under IPC section 304A (causing death by negligence)... they used to dump their factory material near the stairs and turned the whole ground floor into a godown..."

prima facie, a short circuit occurred and the fire spread rapidly through the plastic material."

Delhi Fire Services Chief Atul Gangal had said Friday that the fire broke out among the wipers, rubber and cutting machine.

The landlord's wife Prabhawati, 70, also sustained burn injuries on her leg and was discharged on Saturday.

Man held for making hoax bomb call to delay flight

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 27

A 25-YEAR-OLD man has been arrested by the Delhi Police for allegedly making a hoax bomb call after he missed a Darbhanga to Delhi flight. The accused, Jay Krishna Kumar, is a resident of Supaul district in Bihar. He was to board the SpiceJet flight on January 24. He made the call to intentionally try to delay the flight as he couldn't board it on time, said police.

DGP (IGI) Usha Rangnani said on January 24, they received a PCR call at IGI police station at 6.12 pm from the CISF control room. It said the security manager of SpiceJet airlines claimed their call centre in Gurgaon received a call from a person who said he overheard a conversation between two boys talking about a bomb on a SpiceJet flight from Darbhanga to Delhi.

As per security protocol, as soon as the flight landed in the Capital, it was moved to an isolated location and searched but nothing was found. A team was formed and the accused was arrested, police said.

BJP running autocratic govt for past 10 yrs: DPCC chiefEXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 27

ASSERTING THE resilience of the party, Delhi Pradesh Congress Committee (DPCC) president Arvinder Singh Lovely Saturday said that no force can crush it and the spirit of its workers.

Ahead of the Workers' Convention to be held at the Geeta Colony Ramila ground on February 3, which will be addressed by Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge, Lovely spoke to workers of the Northwest Delhi Parliamentary constituency.

He acknowledged workers'

participation in addressing issues of the common man and accused BJP MPs of vanishing from their constituencies after winning polls.

Taking a dig at the BJP, Lovely accused them of running an autocratic government for the past decade. "BJP has been running an autocratic government for the past 10 years, amassing a foreign debt of Rs 200 lakh crore till December 2023, which was in addition to the internal debt burden rising three-fold, imposing a heavy financial burden on every Indian," he alleged.

Key leaders who participated in the meeting included former MPs Krishna Tirath, Ramesh Kumar, and Dr Udit Raj.

ON THE BEAT

Rehearsals for the upcoming Beating Retreat ceremony in New Delhi, Saturday. Amit Mehra

A tale of two murders, 8 years apart

THE DIVYA PAHUJA CASE

A tale of two murders, 8 years apart

AISWARYA RAJ & SADAF MODAK
GURGAON/MUMBAI,
JANUARY 27

TWO MURDERS, one in Mumbai, the other in Gurgaon. Both in hotels — one in Room No. 111, the other in Room No. 107.

The first killing was on February 7, 2016, when Gurgaon-based gangster Sandeep Gadoli was shot dead in an alleged encounter with a team of the Haryana Police at a hotel near Mumbai international airport. In the room with Gadoli that day was Divya Pahuja, an 18-year-old aspiring model and his alleged girlfriend. As the case changed, with the Mumbai Police arresting five Haryana policemen for allegedly carrying out a fake encounter and killing Gadoli, Divya went from being the prime witness in the case to Accused No. 4.

She and her mother Sonia were arrested in the case. Both got out on bail in 2023. On January 2 this year, Divya was shot dead, with her family alleging her murder was linked to Gadoli's death.

The two murders, nearly eight years apart, shone a spotlight on the seamy world of gangsters and law enforcement, glamour, and sordid relationships. For Divya, the eldest of two children growing up in Gurgaon's Baldev Nagar, it was a world no less alluring than the Instagram reels she immersed herself in.

A teenager and a gangster with a degree

Divya was barely 18 when she was arrested in the Gadoli case. By then, she had already been living dangerously. Police claimed Divya and the gangster were living together at the time of his encounter.

It was around 2015 that she met Gadoli through her friends.

The son of a Haryana Police sub-inspector, Gadoli, who had a bachelor's degree from Rohtak University, had a bounty of Rs 1.25 lakh on his head at the time of his death. "Though he was wanted in



(Clockwise from top) Divya Pahuja; Sandeep Gadoli; her mother Sonia. Express

41 cases, including 10 cases of murder, across Haryana and Delhi when he died, Gadoli started with petty assaults. Later, he formed a gang that was involved in the business of extortion and illegal liquor," police said.

As Gadoli gained a foothold in the world of crime, around this time, police said, he became enemies with politician-gangster Binder Gujjar over dominance in the illegal liquor and extortion business in the city.

According to the Mumbai Police, the Gurgaon Police team "conspired" with Binder's brother Manoj to track down Gadoli, who was then on the run in a case of murder of Binder's driver, to Mumbai. And Divya would prove to be a handy double-cross agent.

The Mumbai Police's charge-sheet stated that throughout her trip from Jaipur to Mumbai with Gadoli, Divya kept updating her location on Facebook and shared information on his whereabouts. Divya, the Mumbai Police said, would also pass on vital, coded clues to her mother, who in turn passed it on to Manoj.

An odd request

Divya remained lodged in Mumbai's Byculla women's jail from July 2016 to June 2023. She had been denied bail five times.

In interactions that *The Indian Express* had with Divya, while she was produced in court during the trial and after she got out on bail, she came across as a teenager like any other. With no access to her phone, Divya would often complain to her sister during her visits that she missed being on social media.In 2017, she was admitted to JJ Hospital in Mumbai as her health deteriorated and she rapidly lost weight. Later, speaking to *The Indian Express*, she had said about her hospital stay, "I couldn't bear to be in a hospital where everyone was using their phones and I didn't have mine. I felt as if they were getting on with their lives... I requested hospital authorities to send me back to jail. At least there, everybody was the same, nobody had a phone." It was an odd request since prisoners liked the time they got away from jail.Speaking to *The Indian Express* about her time in jail, Divya had said for the initial few months, she did not eat in the hope that she would be out soon. "I was told once the chargesheet is filed, I might get bail. I did not eat because I didn't want to get used to life in jail... All those months, I only ate some snacks available in the canteen," she said.

It was when her first bail plea was rejected, five months after her arrest, that she began settling in.

In January 2023, Divya moved a two-page handwritten application before the Mumbai sessions court seeking a plea bargain. She reportedly claimed she passed on information about Gadoli to the Gurgaon Police "to save her family, as he had threatened to kidnap her father and sister". On her next court visit, she withdrew the application claiming "duress" and that incarceration had "affected" her mental health.

Throughout her time as an undertrial, Divya had maintained

her innocence; she broke down in court saying "she was stuck between police and a gangster".

After being granted bail in June 2023, Divya, who was a first-year BCom student at the time of her arrest, told *The Indian Express* she intended to study law.**'Blackmail' and murder**

On January 2, she was killed at the Gurgaon hotel by its owner, Abhijeet Singh, 56. The Gurgaon Police said Divya was introduced to Abhijeet, who hailed from Haryana's Hisar and is a 1989 NIT Kurukshetra graduate, by Binder. Her family claimed Abhijeet, a former engineer who owns a house in Delhi's South Extension, had told her he would leave his wife for her.

Abhijeet told police Divya was allegedly blackmailing him by threatening to post his "objectionable" photos and videos online.

Police have arrested seven people so far for her murder.

Besides Abhijeet, hotel staff Omprakash and Hemraj, who allegedly helped him move the body; Megha, who allegedly helped dispose of the weapon and Divya's belongings; Punjab and Haryana High Court lawyer Balraj Gill and Ravi Banga, who helped dispose of the body; and Parvesh, who supplied arms to Abhijeet.

Gill and Banga had dumped her body in a canal at Punjab's Pasiana and abandoned their car at a Patiala bus stand on January 3.

Her body was found on January 13 in Bhakra canal in Haryana's Tohana, 150 km away.

Though police recovered the alleged gun, a senior officer said her phone is yet to be located.

Divya's lawyer Sana Raees Khan claimed she expressed frequent apprehensions about her safety. Even after she got out on bail, the shadow of the case never left Divya completely — she still had a trial to go through and faced serious charges, including murder. "Maybe she would have been alive if she was still in jail," he said.

NSD's annual theatre fest to begin on Feb 1UDBHAV SETH
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 27

ACTOR AND NSD chairperson Paresh Rawal emphasised the need for more National School of Drama (NSD) centres in India and greater literacy around the discipline at the curtain-raiser of the institute's annual theatre festival, Bharat Rang Mahotsav. In its 25th edition, the festival will be held from February 1 to 21 across 15 cities.

"Every major city of India should have an NSD. So many entries came from Kolkata, but there is no NSD there. It should be more decentralised. Theatre's influence should be spread everywhere and more awards should be instituted. The prosperity of theatre is the prosperity of society," said Rawal.

He was accompanied by actor and NSD alumnus Pankaj Tripathi during the announcement, as well as lyricist Swapan Kirkire, institute director Chittaranjan Tripathi, faculty

members Vani Tripathi and Santanu Bose, and registrar Pradeep Mohanty. This year's theme is 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam, Vande Bharatam', a "salute to the unity of artists and theatre-folk world-over". Over 150 productions will be performed in Delhi, Mumbai, Pune, Bengaluru, Gangtok, Agartala, Bhubaneswar, Jodhpur, Dibrugarh, Bhubaneswar, Patna, Rangnagar and Srinagar, with ticketed entry only in Delhi and Mumbai. The full schedule is expected soon.

Artistes from around the country and world will perform folk and traditional plays, modern dramas, street plays, and participate in masterclasses and workshops.

Tripathi said, "We are dedicated to fostering the magic of theatre, providing a platform for diverse voices and narratives to thrive. This year's festivities will not only mark a milestone but also reaffirm our steadfast belief in the transformative power of the performing arts."

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members Vani Tripathi and Santanu Bose, and registrar Pradeep Mohanty. This year's theme is 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam, Vande Bharatam', a "salute to the unity of artists and theatre-folk world-over". Over 150 productions will be performed in Delhi, Mumbai, Pune, Bengaluru, Gangtok, Agartala, Bhubaneswar, Jodhpur, Dibrugarh, Bhubaneswar, Patna, Rangnagar and Srinagar, with ticketed entry only in Delhi and Mumbai. The full schedule is expected soon.

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TRAFFIC ADVISORY



Traffic Arrangements – Beating Retreat Ceremony on 29.01.2024

Beating Retreat Ceremony will be held on 29.01.2024 at Vijay Chowk, as part of the Republic Day Celebration, 2024. Delhi Traffic Police has made elaborate arrangement for **Beating Retreat Ceremony and Illumination** of Rashtrapati Bhawan, North Block, South Block and Parliament House



TRAFFIC CIRCULATION PLAN

ILLUMINATION CEREMONIES

ROAD CLOSED
PEDESTRIANISED AREA (NO VEHICLE)
METRO STATION

INSTRUCTIONS TO GENERAL PUBLIC

In case of any unidentified object or suspicious persons being seen, information must be conveyed to the nearest policeman on duty. General public and motorists are advised to keep patience, observe traffic rules and road discipline and follow directions of traffic personnel deployed at all intersections. People are requested to plan their journey in advance and keep sufficient time in hand to avoid inconvenience.

General public and motorists may remain updated through Delhi Traffic Police Website <https://traffic.delhipolice.gov.in>, Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/dtptraffic>, Twitter handle <https://twitter.com/dtptraffic>, Instagram page <https://www.instagram.com/dtptraffic>, WhatsApp Number 8750871493 and Helpline Numbers 1095/011-25844444.

<https://traffic.delhipolice.gov.in>

<https://www.facebook.com/dtptraffic>

<https://twitter.com/dtptraffic>

<https://www.instagram.com/dtptraffic>

TRAFFIC RESTRICTIONS

The following traffic restrictions will be put in place on 29.01.2024 from 1400 hours to 2130 hours.

1. Vijay Chowk will remain closed for general traffic.
2. Traffic will not be allowed on the following stretches:-
 - (a) Rafi Marg between R/A Sunehri Masjid and R/A Krishi Bhawan.
 - (b) Raisina Road from R/A Krishi Bhawan towards Vijay Chowk.
 - (c) Beyond R/A Dara Shikoh Road, R/A Krishna Menon Marg and R/A Sunehri Masjid towards Vijay Chowk.
 - (d) Kartavyapath between Vijay Chowk and "C" Hexagon.

General public/motorists are advised to take alternate routes i.e. Ring Road, Ridge Road, Aurobindo Marg, Madarsa T-Point, Safdarjung Road-Kamal Ataturk Marg, Rani Jhansi Road, Minto Road etc.



DIVERSIONS FOR BUSES

D.T.C and other city buses shall be diverted from their normal routes from 1400 hours to 2130 hours on 29.01.2024 to facilitate the vehicles of invitees and spectators and to avoid traffic congestion on roads around the venue of the ceremony and India Gate.

- 1 Buses bound for Central Secretariat and Connaught Place coming from Shanti Path- Vinay Marg- Sardar Patel Marg will take Panchsheel Marg- Simon Bolivar Marg-Vande Matram Marg-R/A Shankar Road-Sheikh Mujibur Rehman Road.
- 2 Buses bound for Central Secretariat will terminate at Udyan Marg and return via Kali Bari Marg-Mandir Marg-Shankar Road.
- 3 Connaught Place bound buses will take Mandir Marg- Kali Bari Marg - G.P.O.- Baba Kharak Singh Marg and reach Connaught Place & return via Bhagat Singh Marg-Peshwa Road- Mandir Marg-Shankar Road and Vande Matram Marg.
- 4 Buses coming from South Delhi on Tughlak Road and bound for Connaught Place/ Central Secretariat will be diverted from Aurobindo Chowk to Safdarjung Road-Kamal Ataturk Marg-Panchsheel Marg- Simon Bolivar Marg and follow the route as mentioned at Serial No. 1.
- 5 Buses coming to Mandi House and Feroz Shah Road and proceeding to Connaught Place via Barakhamba Road will terminate at Shivaji Stadium and return via Kasturba Gandhi Marg/Barakhamba Road.
- 6 Connaught Place bound buses coming on Shahjahan Road will proceed to Shivaji Stadium via Aurobindo Chowk- Safdarjung Road-Kamal Ataturk Marg-Panchsheel Marg and beyond.
- 7 Buses bound for Old Delhi Railway Station, Red Fort and ISBT Kashmire Gate coming from South side will take Ring Road from AIIMS towards Daula Kuan and then Ridge Road, Rani Jhansi Road.
- 8 Buses bound from Old Delhi Railway Station, Red Fort and ISBT Kashmire Gate coming from Ashram side will take Ashram Chowk- Ring Road towards Sarai Kale Khan and proceed further via Raj Ghat.
- 9 Buses coming from Old Delhi Railway Station, Red Fort, Kashmire Gate and bound for South and South East will take Delhi Gate- Jawaharlal Nehru Marg-Rajghat- Ring Road-Sarai Kale Khan-Ashram Chowk.
- 10 Buses coming from Vikas Marg and bound for South will take Ring Road-Sarai Kale Khan-Ashram Chowk.
- 11 Buses coming from Connaught Place via Kasturba Gandhi Marg towards India Gate will take Minto Road-DDU Marg-I.P.Flyover-Ring Road- Sarai Kale Khan.



PARKING

Parking will be available for those coming to see illumination at Vijay Chowk behind the water channels between Rafi Marg and "C" Hexagon (After 7.00 PM)



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Manipur situation has turned from bad to worse: Kharge to Shah

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
GUWAHATI, JANUARY 27

EXPRESSING CONCERN over the situation in Manipur, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge on Saturday wrote to Union Home Minister Amit Shah, questioning the "continuing silence and inaction" of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

In his letter, Kharge said: "Governments come and go, but it is the responsibility of Constitutional functionaries to ensure that democratic structures, institutions and processes are protected and preserved."

He urged action to address "a complete collapse of the administration in Manipur" after the alleged assault of Congress's Manipur chief K Meghachandra by members of Meitei group Arambai Tenggol in Imphal's Kangla Fort. Meghachandra is one of the three MLAs who had allegedly been assaulted during a meeting on January 24, which was the result of "summons" issued to all Meitei MLAs and MPs.

Kharge writes to Mamata for smooth passage to Rahul yatra

New Delhi: With Congress MP Rahul Gandhi scheduled to resume his 'Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra' from Jalpaiguri district of West Bengal on Sunday, party president Mallikarjun Kharge wrote to Chief Minister and TMC chief Mamata Banerjee urging her to ensure its smooth passage in the state.

In his letter, Kharge Saturday expressed fear that some miscreants may try to show the state administration in bad light or disrupt the yatra, as had happened in some neighbouring states.

The development comes a day after Congress' state unit chief

by Arambai Tenggol.

Kharge cited this incident to state that the situation in Manipur "has only turned from bad to worse". Many members present in the meeting were compelled to attend this meeting by an armed group. Not only that, Meghachandra was brutally assaulted and tortured during this meeting. This shocking incident has happened despite heavy presence of Central and Security forces and intelligence personnel. To date, there has been no action from the Manipur CM and the Home Ministry on this disturbing subversion of democratic processes by a non-state actor," he wrote.

One more dead

Meanwhile, one more person was killed during a gunfight "between armed miscreants" at Satang Hill Range in Kangpokpi district on Saturday morning.

According to sources, the firing had begun around 6 am. Kuki groups identified the deceased as 26-year-old Tilmunlun Khongsa, a resident of Ng Phainom village in Kangpokpi.

Amid rumblings in INDIA bloc, Cong admits optics took a hit: 'But alliance not imploding'

MANOJ CG
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 27

AS THE Opposition INDIA bloc lurches from one crisis to another, the Congress on Saturday admitted that the optics regarding the alliance had taken a hit because of the rumblings in the alliance even as it expressed confidence about placating West Bengal Chief Minister and Trinamool Congress (TMC) chairperson Mamata Banerjee and sealing seat-sharing arrangements with other allies in a couple of days.

Pointing out that the Gandhis an Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge respect Mamata, the party once again appealed to her to join Rahul Gandhi's Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra that is resuming its journey from Jalpaiguri in

north Bengal on Sunday after a two-day break. Kharge has also written to Banerjee, flagging the possibility of "some miscreants" fomenting trouble for the yatra and seeking appropriate directions from her side "to ensure smooth passage of the yatra through Bengal and ensure safety of the yatri, including Gandhi".

Interestingly, Kharge wrote, "I am aware that the Gandhi family and you share very cordial relations, and you would ensure that all security concerns would be addressed adequately."

The INDIA alliance is, however, staring at a crisis in the battle of perception. While Bihar CM Nitish Kumar is all set to walk out of the bloc and return to the NDA fold, Banerjee and Aam Aadmi Party's Bhagwant Mann have ruled out seat-sharing with the

Congress in their states. The Congress also admitted that Kharge had tried to contact Nitish twice or thrice but the two were unable to connect. Amid reports that a section of the Congress MLAs in Bihar could not be contacted, the party decided to rush former Chhattisgarh CM Bhupesh Baghel to Patna as a special observer.

"The situation could be better. I won't say it is tense. The optics, people are watching the news that is coming in about one party that is leaving, that it will form a government with the BJP, that one party is unhappy with us... diktata acha nahin hai, INDIA ki chhavai ke liye acha nahin hai (this does not look good, it is not good for the perception about the INDIA alliance)," Congress communications head Jairam Ramesh told reporters.

Ramesh, however, said the alliance was not imploding. This even as senior JD(U) national spokesperson KCTyagi said the INDIA alliance was on the verge of a collapse. "There is almost no alliance in Punjab, Bihar and West Bengal... the effort and intention with which Nitish Kumar had formed the INDIA Alliance is on the verge of breaking due to the irresponsible and obstinate attitude of the Congress. Just one-and-a-half months are left for the elections, but there is no leader, no convener, no joint meetings, no common manifesto..." Tyagi said.

But Ramesh said, "It is not imploding. We are showing our democratic credentials. People are expressing their views. They may have their own compulsions. But I believe that as far as the West

Bengal Chief Minister is concerned, she has expressed certain concerns, she did say she wants to go alone. She has expressed some reservations about some comments made by some of my colleagues. But she ended up by saying she would fight the BJP uncompromisingly. So that is what gives us hope that ultimately we will find a middle path."

Asked about the arrangements that he said have been arrived at, Ramesh said, "I can't give you an exact number. In Maharashtra, for example, we have a very good fix on how many seats the NCP, Shiv Sena (UBT), and the Congress will contest. We have a fairly good fix in Tamil Nadu and Jharkhand, we are getting there in UP. We don't have a final fix. It is wrong to say that the Congress, it is wrong to say that seat sharing is not happening because of the Congress."

Cong wants all allies to get along well: Tharoor on INDIA

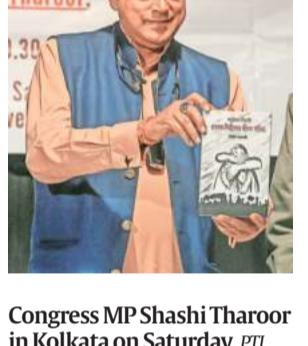
SANTANU CHOWDHURY
KOLKATA, JANUARY 27

AMID THE INDIA bloc's troubles in Bihar, Congress MP Shashi Tharoor on Saturday said no one is going to have a "one-size-fits-all" solution and added that the Congress wants to see all its alliance partners getting along well.

Tharoor was speaking to mediapersons in Kolkata while on a one-day visit to the city on behalf of the Congress party's manifesto committee to listen to the opinion of the public in general.

The remark from the senior Congress leader came against the backdrop of a widening gap between the alliance partners of the INDIA bloc, with the Trinamool Congress, Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) and Janata Dal (United) threatening to leave the alliance.

Tharoor said, "Let me stress that this whole alliance is being discussed and that all the seat-sharing is being discussed on a state-by-state basis. No one is going to have a one-size-fits-all solution." Elaborating further, the Congress MP said the alliance equation will be different in each state. "I come from Kerala where



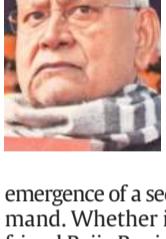
Congress MP Shashi Tharoor in Kolkata on Saturday. PTI

the CPI(M) and the Congress are not going to agree and there's not been a beginning of a discussion on it. But next door, in Tamil Nadu, we have a CPI(M), CPI, Congress and DMK alliance which is in very good shape. So, in each state, the story will be different," Tharoor said. Reacting to political turmoil in several parties, Tharoor said, "Please understand that we are not going to get one simple answer every time. We are all focused on the imperative need to change the Union government. That's the ultimate objective of all of us."

Here are four reasons why the JD(U) has not split despite their leader's frequent U-turns.

As Nitish continues to shake up Bihar politics, 4 reasons why he remains JD(U)'s Pied Piper

SANTOSH SINGH
PATNA, JANUARY 27



Bihar CM Nitish Kumar. PTI

THERE ARE indications that Bihar CM Nitish Kumar will quit the alliance with the RJD on Sunday and stake claim to form the government with the BJP, marking the fourth time in over a decade of him switching sides in just over a decade.

Amid the turbulence in state politics, Nitish, whether with the Mahagathbandhan or BJP-led NDA, has managed to retain the CM's chair and ensured that his party has not split over his repeated flip-flops. His bargaining power has not diminished even though the JD(U)'s electoral footprint has shrunk (it is currently the third-largest party in the Bihar Assembly behind RJD and BJP).

Here are four reasons why the JD(U) has not split despite their leader's frequent U-turns.

Total control, no second-in-command

A cursory glance at the JD(U)'s history reveals that like most regional parties, except ones that promote dynastic succession, Nitish has never allowed the

emergence of a second-in-command. Whether it was his old friend Rajiv Ranjan Singh, also known as Lalan Singh, or bureaucrat-turned-politician RCP Singh. For a brief period, Nitish looked at promoting Upendra Kushwaha, when he was made the Leader of the Opposition in the mid-1990s. But Kushwaha's growing ambition led to a falling out with Nitish.

Senior Congress leader Digvijaya Singh once said Nitish would not like "even a distant second to him".

But it is Nitish's supremacy as the leader of the party that has allowed the JD(U) to remain a strong and cohesive unit. This is why not even a small group of JD(U) MLAs has ever been loyal to any leader other than him. The BJP's alleged plan to groom RCP Singh to effect a split in the JD(U) did not work because he only enjoyed the support of two to three MLAs.

Governance credentials and pragmatism

Nitish's credentials as an administrator remain unquestionable. The JD(U) has pivoted around his image since the 2005 Assembly elections. It was BJP leader Arun Jaitley who first floated the idea of projecting Nitish as CM before the 2005 polls and it worked. Then on, Nitish went from strength to strength by scripting a turnaround for Bihar between 2005 and 2010. The "Sushashan Babu" tag stuck with him and JD(U) and Nitish became synonymous.

With the Lok Sabha elections around the corner, there are rumours that Nitish sensed unease in the party for the first time as most of his subordinates saw a better prospect in being with BJP.

Rainbow alliance of BJP and JD(U)

The BJP and the JD(U) have a complimentary voter base, more or less. While the BJP focuses on the upper caste and non-Yadav OBCs and Extremely Backward Classes (EBCs), Nitish works around his OBC constituency of Luv-Kush (Kurmi-Koeri) along with EBCs, non-Yadav OBCs, and SCs. While Nitish's prime focus, besides his core Luv-Kush voters, is a broad-based party alive.

has been on EBCs and Mahadalits (SCs), he also accommodates upper castes while BJP also reaches out to SCs and EBCs. Together, the JD(U) and the BJP get well.

Nitish's development face adds to the BJP's projection of Narendra Modi's personality as a pro-development leader and his government's welfare schemes. JD(U) MLAs feel more assured in the NDA than in the RJD. Modi at the Centre and Nitish in Bihar is still a winning proposition in Bihar and another reason why JD(U) MLAs have stuck on with the CM.

RJD's 'M-Y' constraints

By promising 10 lakh jobs during the 2020 Assembly polls, Tejashwi succeeded to some extent in breaking the shackles of RJD's tag as a Muslim-Yadav (M-Y) party. He labelled it "economic justice" and promised to make the RJD a broad-based "A to Z" party. But Tejashwi's bid for inclusive politics lost steam when he joined hands with Nitish who has been staking claim to Tejashwi's job promise theme. RJD's return to focusing on its core voters, and not opening up to other groups, has limited it to being an M-Y party, where upper castes, EBCs and SCs do not see bright prospects. That keeps JD(U)'s prospects as a broad-based party alive.

BJP appoints LS poll in-charges: Panda gets UP, Tawde Bihar



Jaishankar: Impressed by Texas Gov commitment for stronger ties

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 27

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS minister S Jaishankar met the visiting Governor of Texas, Greg Abbott, and said he was "impressed by his commitment and energy for stronger India-US ties" and appreciated the "contribution of Texas to the growth of the relationship".

Abbott's visit to India comes at a time when his government is at odds with the Joe Biden administration over illegal immigration along the US-Mexico border. The disagreement between Texas and the US federal government over the control of the US-Mexico border has further intensified after Abbott announced he will defy the Biden administration and US Supreme Court by ordering the installation of even more razor wire to deter migration.

On Monday, the Supreme Court had voted 5-4 in favour of the federal government's power to remove the controversial concertina wire installed along the

stretches of the border in Texas at Abbott's direction. Despite this, Abbott, a hard-right Republican, is intensifying his plans to try and fence off parts of the US border with Mexico.

After his meeting with the Texas Governor, Jaishankar tweeted, "Delighted to meet Governor @GregAbbott_TX of Texas. Impressed by his commitment and energy for stronger India-US ties. Appreciate the contribution of Texas to the growth of the relationship.

Confident that his mission to India will be successful."

Abbott is leading an economic development mission to India organised by the Governor's Economic Development & Tourism Office and the Texas Economic Development Corporation. He is visiting to promote Texas's economy; encourage continued trade, job creation, and capital investment by Indian companies in Texas; and deepen the strong partnership between India and Texas.

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE, NEW DELHI, JANUARY 27

THE BJP on Saturday appointed its election in-charges and co-in-charges for states and Union Territories for the upcoming Lok Sabha elections.

Babajant Panda has been given the charge of the crucial state of Uttar Pradesh while Vinod Tawde has been appointed as election in-charge of political affairs in Bihar, where JD(U) president and Chief Minister Nitish Kumar is likely to return to the NDA.

Some of the other names include Bihar ex-minister Mangal Pandey in West Bengal, Tripura ex-CM Biplab Kumar Deb in Haryana and BJP general secretary Tarun Chugh in J&K and Ladakh.

Sources in the party say the announcement may mean that those who have become in-charges and co-in-charges are unlikely to contest the Lok Sabha polls. "However, nothing is cast in stone in politics," said a source.

Govt. of Bihar

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Request for proposals are invited for hiring of Desktop Computer with licensed MS Office & Auto Cad, 3DS MAX, SKETCH-UP software, Plotter & Manpower under two bid system i.e. technical bid and financial bid. Details descriptions of the item and instructions for submitting the offer can be procured from the office of Chief Architect, Second Floor, Vishweshwarai Bhawan, Bailey Road, Patna 800015' during working hours or can be downloaded from <https://state.bihar.gov.in/bcd>.

Interested bidders may submit their sealed offers to 'O/o Chief Architect, Second Floor, Vishweshwarai Bhawan, Bailey Road, Patna 800015' up to 16:00 hrs on 20.02.2024 and the technical bid will be opened before the representatives of the bidders at 16:30 hrs on the same date.

A pre-bid meeting has been organized to clarify terms and conditions, if any, in the office of the undersigned at 16:00 hrs on 05.02.2024.

The undersigned reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals without incurring any obligation to inform the affected bidders of the grounds.

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This information is available on website www.state.bihar.gov.in/prbbihar also

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Not confined to cultural programmes, women proving mettle in all sectors: PM

AMRITA NAYAK DUTTA
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 27

PRIME MINISTER Narendra Modi on Saturday said the world is watching how India's daughters are proving their mettle in the arena of water, land, sky and space and that this has been made possible due to constant efforts in the last 10 years.

Speaking at the annual NCC-PM rally here, the Prime Minister said 'women were earlier confined to cultural programmes', but the Central government has opened various sectors to them, including all the three defence services, and they are making a mark in every field.

Said women officers are being given permanent commission in the three defence services and are being placed in command roles and combat positions in the forces.

"Today you see, from Agniveer to fighter pilot, the participation of daughters is increasing a lot. Earlier, even in Sainik schools, daughters were



Prime Minister Narendra Modi with NCC Director General Lt. General Gurbirpal Singh during the NCC-PM rally at Cariappa Ground in New Delhi on Saturday. *Praveen Khanna*

not allowed to study. Now, our daughters are studying in many Sainik schools across the country," the PM said.

He said the number of women personnel in the central security forces has more than doubled in 10 years and states are also being encouraged to have more women in their police force.

"When daughters go into such professions, it also impacts the mentality of society. This

helps in reducing crimes against women," he said.

He said the participation of daughters in other sectors of society is also increasing. "Be it banking, insurance or service delivery in every village, a large number of our daughters are involved in these. Today, be it start-ups or self-help groups, daughters are leaving their mark in every field," said PM Modi.

He said in the next 25 years,

he will not be the beneficiary of the developed India that will be created. "Its biggest beneficiaries are the youth of my country like you," he said.

He said the previous government referred to border villages as the last villages of the country, but for his government, they are the "first villages" of the country, adding that the government has launched a 'vibrant village' programme for their development.

'Backing convicted leaders disrespect to Constitution'

New Delhi: PM Narendra Modi on Saturday took on the Opposition members who stood by the over 140 MPs suspended in the last Parliament session and said that "those eulogising politicians convicted of corruption are disrespecting the Constitution."

"There was a time when if a member violated the decorum of the House, and there was action taken against him/her, senior members would advise him/her not to repeat such a mistake... But now we have seen that some political parties start defending the mistakes of such members by standing up for them. This situation is not good... How the decorum of the House can be maintained is an essential discussion," he said while virtually addressing the All India Presiding Officers' Conference.

"Earlier, if a member was accused of corruption, all public representatives would begin keeping a distance from that member. But today we see even members convicted and sentenced by the courts being glorified publicly. This is disrespect to the executive, the legislature and also the Constitution," Modi said. *ENS*

BJP launches 'padayatra' in Kerala

Thiruvananthapuram: To put the NDA in Kerala on election mode, the BJP on Saturday launched a state-wide padayatra (rally), that will cover all 20 Lok Sabha constituencies in the state in the next one month.

The yatra, which started in Kasaragod with the slogan, "Modi's Guarantee, New Kerala", comes close on the heels of two road shows and rallies by Prime Minister Narendra Modi earlier this month. Goa CM Pramod

Sawant inaugurated the yatra. BJP state president and NDA state chairman K Surendran, who would lead the yatra, said the journey is meant to take "Modi's guarantee" to voters across the state. *ENS*

Modi, Macron call for humanitarian ceasefire for flow of aid to Gaza

SHUBHAJIT ROY
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 27

PRIME MINISTER Narendra Modi and visiting French President Emmanuel Macron have spoken about a "humanitarian ceasefire, for aid to flow to the affected population in the Gaza region".

After the two-day talks between India and France, the two leaders expressed grave concern at the expansion of the conflict in the region, including the Red Sea.

On the civilian nuclear cooperation in the context of the proposed nuclear power plant at Jaitapur, they have agreed to convene a special task force on nuclear energy within three months in the framework of the Indo-French Strategic Dialogue.

The two sides have also formalised cooperation between National Security Guard (NSG) troops and their French counterpart, Groupe d'intervention de la Gendarmerie nationale (GIGN). Though there was no announcement on Rafale jets for the Indian Navy, talks have made progress on the maintenance, repair, and operation of Rafale engines.

These are some of the key takeaways from the joint statement that was issued late Friday night, as Macron wrapped up his trip with a visit to Nizamuddin Dargah in Delhi. He was the Chief Guest at the 75th Republic Day celebrations.

On the ongoing Israel-Hamas war, the joint statement read, "Both leaders strongly condemned the terrorist attack on Israel on 7 October and expressed solidarity with the people of Israel. Condemning the huge loss of civilian lives in the ongoing conflict, they

emphasised the need to respect international humanitarian law and to create conditions, including through a humanitarian ceasefire, for aid to flow to the affected population in the Gaza region. Both leaders also called for an immediate and unconditional release of all hostages. The two leaders reaffirmed that a political process leading to a two-state solution for the Israeli and Palestinian people is required for lasting peace and stability in the region."

"They also expressed grave concern at the possibility of further expansion of the conflict in the region, including in the Red Sea, which already has a significant economic impact in the world. They recalled the utmost importance of upholding freedom of navigation in the Red Sea and of respecting the international law of the sea," the joint statement said.

On the Russia-Ukraine war, it said, "They

expressed deep concern over the war in Ukraine and its tragic humanitarian consequences. They underscored the need for a comprehensive, just, and lasting peace in Ukraine in accordance with international law, and consistent with the principles of the UN Charter. They underscored the growing impact of this war on the global economic system and food security..."

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2.	Sports Strength & Conditioning Coach	04 (Four)	
3.	Yoga Instructor	02 (Two)	
4.	Performance Data Analyzer	02 (Two)	
5.	Sports Nutritionist	02 (Two)	
6.	Account / GeM Clerks	04 (Four)	

2 Interested eligible candidates may submit their CV through email latest by 29 Feb 2024.

3. Shortlisted candidates will be called for walk-in/on line interview on a subsequent date.

Commandant
ASI Ghorpadi, Pune

KAY KAY TOWERS LLP

Registered Office: L-1/1100, First Floor, Street No. 25, Sangam Vihar, South Delhi, New Delhi-110062 LLPIN: AAO-5650

FORM NO. URC-2

Advertisement giving notice about registration under Part I of Chapter XXI of the Act [Pursuant to section 374(b) of the Companies Act, 2013 and rule 4(1) of the Companies (Authorised to Register) Rules, 2014]

Notice is hereby given that in pursuance of sub-section (2) of section 366 of the Companies Act, 2013, an application is proposed to be made after fifteen days hereof but before the expiry of thirty days hereinafter to the Registrar at Central Registration Centre (CRC), Indian Institute of Corporate Affairs (IICA), Plot No. 6, 7, 8, Sector 5, IMT Manesar, District Gurgaon (Haryana), Pin Code-122050 that "KAY KAY TOWERS LLP (LLPIN: AAO-5650)" a Limited Liability Partnership may be registered under Part I of Chapter XXI of the Companies Act 2013, as a company limited by shares.

The principal objects of the company are as follows:-

To carry on the business of builders, colonizers, Estate Developers, Town Planners and Contractors.

A copy of the draft memorandum and articles of association of the proposed Company may be inspected at the office at L-1/100, First Floor, Street No 25 Sangam Vihar, Khamphur South Delhi, New Delhi, 110062.

Notice is hereby given that any person objecting to this application may communicate their objection in writing to the Registrar at Central Registration Centre (CRC), Indian Institute of Corporate Affairs (IICA), Plot No. 6, 7, 8, Sector 5, IMT Manesar, District Gurgaon (Haryana), Pin Code-122050, within twenty one days from the date of publication of this notice, with a copy to the company at its registered office.

Dated this 27th day of January 2024

Name(s) of Applicants for and on behalf of
Kay Kay Towers LLP

Sd/-

(1) Ravish Kapoor (Designated Partner)

(2) Akash Kapoor (Designated Partner)

DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF SUPPLIES AND TRANSPORT, QMG'S BRANCH, INTEGRATED HEADQUARTERS OF MOD (ARMY) DHQ PO, NEW DELHI-110011

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2. Applications are invited for registration as approved ASC Contractors for supply of Whole Wheat Flour (Atta), Suji, Refined Wheat Flour (Maida), Dalia and Bran to Indian Army. Interested firms/vendors may forward request for further details on email poorti.idst@gov.in

CBC-10602/11/0013/2324

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CIVIL SECRETARIAT: BLOCK NO.4, 4th & 5th FLOOR ITANAGAR - 791111

Official web site <https://arungovard.nic.in>

Dated Itanagar the, 25th January, 2024

CORRIGENDUM

The advertisement published in the local dailies and National daily on 17/1/2024 inviting applications from the citizens of India to fill up 4 (four) posts of Information Commissioner, Arunachal Pradesh Information Commission (APIC) likely to be vacated by 5th February, 2024 in terms of Right to Information Act, 2005 as amended in terms of the Right to Information (Amendment) Act, 2019 read with the Right to Information (Term of Office, Salaries, Allowances and Other Terms and Conditions of Service of Chief Information Commissioner, Information Commissioners in the Central Information Commission, State Chief Information Commissioner and State Information Commissioners in the State Information Commission) Rules, 2019, contains a typographical error in the website address.

The correct website for detailed information regarding the terms and conditions of appointment and application format are available on the official website (<https://arungovard.nic.in>) of Department of Administrative Reforms Government of Arunachal Pradesh. The interested candidates are advised to visit the above website and submit application in the prescribe format (*Annexure- 'A'*) and email at secy-part-arn@nic.in along with enclosures in electronic format only on or before 15th February, 2024, 5 PM (Thursday).

Any inconvenience caused is highly regretted. All the interested applicants may refer to the correct official website (<https://arungovard.nic.in>) for the relevant information.

Sd/-

Deputy Secretary to the

Government of Arunachal Pradesh

GOVT & POLITICS 7

Thiruvananthapuram: To put the NDA in Kerala on election mode, the BJP on Saturday launched a state-wide padayatra (rally), that will cover all 20 Lok Sabha constituencies in the state in the next one month.

The yatra, which started in Kasaragod with the slogan, "Modi's Guarantee, New Kerala", comes close on the heels of two road shows and rallies by Prime Minister Narendra Modi earlier this month. Goa CM Pramod Sawant inaugurated the yatra. BJP state president and NDA state chairman K Surendran, who would lead the yatra, said the journey is meant to take "Modi's guarantee" to voters across the state. *ENS*

Delhi Tourism
Presents

Sufiyana NIGHTS

on
27th & 28th January, 2024
5.30 pm onwards

at
NDMC Convention Centre,
15, Sansad Marg,
Hanuman Road Area,
Connaught Place, New Delhi

Highlights



27th Jan., 2024
Qawwali by
Haji Aslam Sabri



28th Jan., 2024
Sufi Band by
Salman Zaman

Arvind Kejriwal
Chief Minister, Delhi

GOVERNMENT OF NATIONAL CAPITAL TERRITORY OF DELHI TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT: OPERATIONS BRANCH 5/9, UNDER HILL ROAD: DELHI-110054 PUBLIC NOTICE

HIGH SECURITY REGISTRATION PLATE (HSRP) & COLOUR CODED STICKER ON OLD VEHICLES REGISTERED IN NCT OF DELHI

1. General Public is hereby informed that the installation of High Security Registration Plate (HSRP) including the third registration mark (Colour coded sticker) on new and old vehicles registered in NCT of Delhi is a mandatory requirement.
2. The Transport Department has authorized the dealers of the Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEMs) to affix Colour coded sticker and HSRP on all old vehicles.
3. The on-line booking facility and the facility of home fitment is available at the website of Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers www.siam.in. A link is available at <http://transport.delhi.gov.in> also.
4. The vehicle owners who fail to get the Colour coded sticker (third registration mark) and HSRP affixed on their vehicles are liable for prosecution under Motor Vehicle Act, 1988 and CMV Rules, 1989.

Sd/-

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER (OPS)

DIP/Shabdarth/Classified/0322/23-24

BRIEFLY

JHARKHAND

ED issues 10th summons to CM, sparks row

Ranchi: Enforcement Directorate has shot another letter to Chief Minister Hemant Soren to appear for questioning on January 29 or January 31, sources said. This is ED's 10th summons to the CM in which he has paid heed to only one. On January 20, Soren was questioned for the first time in a money laundering probe emanating from an ED case in which IAS officer Chavi Ranjan is an accused. Although the CM had not responded on the issue, the JMM workers protested against the summons in Dumka. **ENS**

GOA

Missing Odisha fisherman was killed, say police

Panaji: Days after a 20-year-old fisherman from Odisha went missing during deep-sea fishing in Goa, police on Saturday said he was allegedly murdered, possibly by one of the crew members aboard the fishing vessel. Police identified the deceased as Padamalochan Salima, a native of Sambalpur district, Odisha. Police said he was part of a crew of 32 members aboard a fishing trawler 'Estela-II', who went deep-sea fishing on January 8 night. **ENS**

KERALA

R-Day skit with remarks on PM: HC suspends 2

Thiruvananthapuram: The Kerala High Court has suspended its two officials, including an assistant registrar, and ordered an investigation for staging a skit that allegedly had "derogatory" content against the Prime Minister and criticising the BJP-led government at the Centre during a Republic Day event Friday. HC Registrar-General P Kirshna Kumar suspended Assistant Registrar Sudhish TA and court keeper Sudheesh P M on Friday, following a direction from the court's Chief Justice Ashish Jitendra Desai. **ENS**

Govt plans accreditation system overhaul

R RADHIKA
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 27

THE GOVERNMENT plans to overhaul the accreditation system for higher educational institutes by the end of the year, replacing the current practice of assigning a score and corresponding grade with a binary system, where institutions will be declared either accredited or unaccredited without specific scores or grades.

The National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC), the Union government's primary body for assessing and accrediting higher education institutions, announced on Saturday that the proposed reforms in the current accreditation system, put forth by the committee headed by former

ISRO chairman Dr. K Radhakrishnan, have been accepted by the Education Ministry on January 16.

In light of this development, the NAAC's Executive Committee has decided to introduce "binary accreditation" and "maturity-based graded levels" by the end of 2024. Under the proposed binary accreditation system, higher educational institutions will be given either an "Accredited" tag or a "Not Accredited" one.

The Not Accredited will be divided into two categories — "Awaiting Accreditation" for those institutes that nearly meet the requirements but need improvement, and "Not Accredited" for the ones that are far below the standards for accreditation.

In other words, accredited institutions will be the ones that

have met certain standards.

At present, the NAAC assesses institutions and awards grades based on scores. If a higher education institution gets a score between 3.51 and 4, it gets an A++ grade. A score between 3.26 and 3.50 gets an A+ grade, and a score between 3.01 and 3.25 gets an A grade. There are eight grades in total, including C for scores between 1.51 and 2, which means basic accreditation, and D for scores below 1.51, indicating unaccredited status.

Another reform that NAAC announced on Saturday was the implementation of the "Maturity-Based Graded Accreditation", in addition to the binary system. The former is for higher education institutions that have secured the "accredited" tag under the binary system and is for them to graduate

"level one" to "level five".

From level-one – an accredited institute – the plan is to incentivise improvement up to level-4 where an institution will become an "Institution of National Excellence", and then further move to level-5 to get the tag of "Institution of Global Excellence for Multi-Disciplinary Research and Education".

"The leveled accreditation shall enable Indian institutions to significantly improve their quality and position themselves among global top institutions," a NAAC statement said.

There are two phases to the intended implementation of the Radhakrishnan Committee's recommendations. First, the binary accreditation will be put in place over the course of the next four months, after which no more applications will be ac-

cepted using the current process.

Institutions that have applied already or plan to apply within the next four months will be able to choose between using the current approach and the new binary accreditation system. The maturity-based graded levels and other reforms will be implemented by December 2024, the official statement said.

To ensure integrity and transparency of handling the data collected from institutes, the ministry has planned to collect and display data on a public platform – One Nation, One Data platform.

This new platform will collect a "superset of data" from universities for a variety of purposes such as permission, accreditation, rating over time, and grade institutions based on this information.

SURVEY REPORT ON MOSQUE

55 Hindu deity sculptures found inside Gyanvapi complex: ASI

ASAD REHMAN
LUCKNOW, JANUARY 27

A TOTAL of 55 stone sculptures were found in the Gyanvapi mosque complex during the survey conducted by the Archaeological Survey of India, including 15 "Shiva linga", three sculptures of "Vishnu", three of "Ganesha", two of "Nandi", two of "Krishna", and five of "Hanuman", the ASI reports.

The ASI, tasked by the Varanasi district court to ascertain whether the mosque was "constructed over a pre-existing structure of a Hindu temple", has concluded that a temple "appears to have been destroyed in the 17th century, during the reign of Aurangzeb and part of it... modified and reused in the existing structure". The ASI report – it's in four volumes – was made public Thursday after copies of it were handed over to Hindu and Muslim litigants by the court.

As per Volume 3, one "makara" stone sculpture, one "Dwarpala", one "Apasmara Purusha", one "Votive shrine", 14 "fragments", and seven "miscellaneous" stone sculptures were also found during the ASI survey.

A total of 259 "stone objects" were found, including the 55 stone sculptures, 21 household materials, five "inscribed slabs" and 176 "architectural members". A total of 27 terracotta objects, 23 terracotta figurines (two of gods and goddesses, 18 human figurines and three animal figurines) were also found and studied during the survey, states the report.

The attack comes in less than 10 days after a drone strike on another Marshall Islands-flagged vessel, MV Genco Picardy. The vessel – carrying a 22-member crew, including nine Indians – had come under attack on January 17. Even at that time, INS Visakhapatnam, which was undertaking anti-piracy patrol in the Gulf of Aden, had responded to the distress call. Earlier this week, the Navy's explosive ordnance disposal team on board the offshore patrol vessel INS Sunayna had also examined the damaged area and rendered it safe for port.

About 10-12 warships are currently deployed at the Arabian Sea, including INS Kochi, INS Mormugao, INS Kolkata, INS Chennai and a Talwar Class frigate.

Its description reads: "The extant part depicts a headless male deity. Both the hands are broken, but the right hand appears to be raised. The left hand appears to go over the body. The right leg is extant above the knee. The left leg is broken at the hip. Based on the posture and iconographic features, it appears to be an image of Lord Krishna. He is depicted wearing necklace, yajnopavita and dhoti." It is in "good" condition.

On a sculpture of Ganesha, it states: "The extant part depicts the crowned head of Ganesha. The trunk is turned to the right. The eyes are visible. Part of the left trunk is also extant." Its condition is "good". This was found in the western side of cellar S2 and is listed as a "late medieval". Made of marble, its dimensions are:

height 12 cm, width 8 cm, and thickness 5 cm.

On a sculpture of Vishnu, it states: "The extant part depicts the crowned head of Vishnu seated in ardhyaparyankasana posture. The upper right hand holds the gada, the lower hand is broken at the palm. The upper hand has a chakra and lower left hand has shankha. Flying vishvadhar couple is seen on the top and a standing attendant figure to the extreme left. His right hand is raised above the head. Right leg is bent at the knee and upraised." The dimensions are: height 27 cm, width 17 cm, and thickness 15 cm; and its condition is "good".

On a sculpture of Hanuman, it states: "The extant part depicts the crowned head of Hanuman, made of marble. Its date/period is written as 'modern', and was located in the northwest side. Its measurements are: height 21.5 cm, width 16 cm, and thickness 5 cm. Its description reads: 'The extant part depicts the bottom half of a sculpture of Hanuman. The left leg bent at the knee is placed on a rock. The right leg is firmly planted on the ground.' Its in 'good' condition.

Another sculpture listed in the report of Hanuman, made of marble. Its date/period is written as "modern", and was located in the northwest side. Its measurements are: height 21.5 cm, width 16 cm, and thickness 5 cm. Its description reads: "The extant part depicts the bottom half of a sculpture of Hanuman. The left leg bent at the knee is placed on a rock. The right leg is firmly planted on the ground." Its in "good" condition.

Another sculpture of "Vishnu" is made of sandstone, and its date/period is written as early medieval. Its description reads:

"Broken part of a back slab (parikara) of a Brahminical image. The extant part exhibits the image of four-handed crowned and bejeweled Vishnu seated in ardhyaparyankasana posture. The upper right hand holds the gada, the lower hand is broken at the palm. The upper hand has a chakra and lower left hand has shankha. Flying vishvadhar couple is seen on the top and a standing attendant figure to the extreme left. His right hand is raised above the head. Right leg is bent at the knee and upraised." The dimensions are: height 27 cm, width 17 cm, and thickness 15 cm; and its condition is "good".

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A view of the attacked oil tanker Marlin Luanda from INS Visakhapatnam in Gulf of Aden. AP

Oil tanker with 22 Indians hit by missile, Navy sends help

AMRITA NAYAK DUTTA
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 27

IN THE latest in a series of attacks on commercial vessels in the western Arabian Sea since last month, a Marshall Islands-flagged oil tanker Marlin Luanda came under a missile attack on Friday night, prompting a quick response from the Indian Navy's guided missile destroyer INS Visakhapatnam, which was deployed in the Gulf of Aden.

As per the Navy, the MV has 22 Indian and one Bangladeshi crew members on board. While the ship was learnt to have caught fire and reported damage, no casualty or injury was reported at the time.

In a statement on Saturday, the Navy said INS Visakhapatnam had deployed the ship's Nuclear Biological Chemical Defence team, along with fire-fighting equipment, to assist the crew towards augmenting fire-fighting efforts onboard the distressed ves-

sel. Later in the evening, it added that based on a request from the master of the ship, a fire fighting team from INS Visakhapatnam comprising 10 Indian Naval personnel with specialist fire-fighting equipment had embarked MV Marlin Luanda early Saturday.

"After six hours of battling the fire along with the crew of MV Marlin Luanda, the Indian Naval fire-fighting team has successfully brought the fire under control," the Navy said.

The team is currently monitoring the situation to rule out any possibility of re-ignition, it said, adding that a US and French warship had also responded to the distress call.

"Indian Navy remains steadfast in her commitment towards the safety of merchant shipping and seafarers," the Navy said.

The US Central Command in a post on X said the missile attack on MV Marlin Luanda was perpetrated by "Iranian-backed Houthi terrorists", who fired one "anti-

ship ballistic missile from Houthi-controlled areas of Yemen" and struck the vessel at 7.45 pm on January 26. It said USS Carney (DDG 64) and other coalition ships have responded and are rendering assistance to the vessel.

The attack comes in less than 10 days after a drone strike on another Marshall Islands-flagged vessel, MV Genco Picardy. The vessel – carrying a 22-member crew, including nine Indians – had come under attack on January 17. Even at that time, INS Visakhapatnam, which was undertaking anti-piracy patrol in the Gulf of Aden, had responded to the distress call. Earlier this week, the Navy's explosive ordnance disposal team on board the offshore patrol vessel INS Sunayna had also examined the damaged area and rendered it safe for port.

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Caste survey in Telangana soon: CM

SREENIVAS JANYALA
HYDERABAD, JANUARY 27



Telangana CM A Revanth Reddy with actor Venkatesh and film producer Suresh Babu in Hyderabad, Saturday. PTI

been asked to prepare a plan to launch the survey next month.

A caste survey is currently ongoing in neighbouring Andhra Pradesh. Last November, the Andhra Cabinet approved a pro-

posal to take up a comprehensive Backward Classes caste survey. However, state Backward Classes Minister CS Venugopal Krishna had said that the survey covers all castes and not just BCs.

One nation, one election: Kovind meets ex-CJI Lalit

New Delhi: Continuing with the rounds of consultations started last week, One Nation One Election committee chairman and former President Ram Nath Kovind on Saturday held consultations with former Chief Justice of India U U Lalit, former Madras High Court Chief Justice Sanjib Banerjee, and Bar Council of India chairman Manan Kumar Mishra.

The committee also held its fourth meeting on Saturday.

The committee had reached out to eminent jurists, the Election Commission, political parties, former Chief Election Commissioners, and industry bodies for their views on simultaneous elections earlier this month as a part of the consultative process.

Science Minister hosts 200 women scientists from ISRO

New Delhi: Union Science Minister Ritu Karidhal, and the Deputy Operations Director for Mars Orbiter Mission Nandini Harinath, were among those in attendance.

One of the scientists on the ISRO tableau said, "I had never witnessed the Republic Day parade in person. Not only did we get to see it, we were also able to participate in it. There was a lot of cheer and applause from people when the tableau came to Kartavya Path. People also cheered for us all the way to the Red Fort."

AMRITA NAYAK DUTTA
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 27

CHAMPION trap shooter Preeti Rajak on Saturday became the first woman subedar in the Army, after she was promoted to the havildar rank.

This is for the first time that a woman Army soldier has been promoted to a junior commissioned officer (JCO), after the Army opened soldier ranks to women in the Corps of Military Police (CMP). Subedar Rajak had joined the Army (CMP) on 22 December,

2022, based on her proven performance in trap shooting. She is the first meritorious sports-women in shooting discipline enrolled in the Army as a havildar, said the Army in a statement.

At present, other Army arms and services do not have women appointed to other ranks. Women Agniveers keen to join the Army can enrol to join the CMP. During the 19th Asian Games 2022, held in China's Hangzhou in 2023, Sub Rajak won a silver medal in the women's trap team event.

Based on her extraordinary performance, Rajak was awarded first out-of-turn promotion. Usually, soldiers are promoted to JCOs only after clearing their promotion cadre and junior leaders' proficiency tests in 18-20 years.

In the past too, several meritorious sportspersons were awarded out-of-turn promotions, with national-level champion sports persons directly given the Havildar rank.

Subedar Rajak, currently ranked sixth in India (Trap Women Event), trains at the Army Marksman Unit (AMU) in preparation for the Paris Olympic Games 2024.

"Her achievements will mo-

tivate generations of young women to come forward to join the Indian Army as well as carve a niche for themselves in professional shooting," said the Army in a statement, adding that Lieutenant General Gajendra Joshi, Commandant Infantry School, chaired the piping ceremony.

In another event, Padmashri and Arjuna awardee Subedar Major and Honorary Lieutenant Jitu Rai were promoted to the rank of Subedar Major and Honorary Captain for meritorious services, said the Army.

The agency on Saturday also announced that its meteorological satellite INSAT-3DS has been sent off to Sriharikota from U R Rao Satellite Centre, Bengaluru, where it was developed. The mission is likely to be launched mid-February onboard GSAT-16. To cut down on space debris, ISRO has been taking steps such as lowering the orbit of defunct satellites and last stages of the rockets, and removing excess fuel since last year. The orbit of POEM-3 (PSLV Orbital Experimental Module-3) was lowered from 650 km to 350 km after the space observatory XPOSat was placed in orbit to reduce the time the platform remains in orbit. The space agency said that the platform had completed 400 orbits by the 25th day. During this period, each of the nine experiments were put to operation and their performance determined. India has targeted setting up a space station in low Earth orbit by 2035. So far, on three POEM platforms, ISRO has flown a total of 21 experiments.

Across
THE AISLE

P CHIDAMBARAM

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The worst example is the three criminal law Bills passed recently. While 'criminal law' and 'criminal procedure' are in the Concurrent List, the central government has rode roughshod over the state governments. There was not even a pretence of consultation after the three Bills were drafted by an ad hoc group of nominated persons. Besides, several provisions of the Bills encroach upon the subjects of 'Public order' and 'Police' that are State List subjects.

I BEGIN this column on the unassailable premise that India is a Union of States. The States (minus Jammu & Kashmir) are listed in the First Schedule to the Constitution of India. The essence of federalism lies in the fact that the British-ruled provinces and the princely states voluntarily agreed to become a part of the Union. States were re-organised on linguistic lines because a state is not a mere administrative unit; it has a linguistic, cultural, historic and political identity.

WITHOUT DOUBT,
FEDERAL

We can quibble about *'how federal are we'*. India is indeed federal with some provisions of the Constitution enlarging the federal character and some provisions restricting it, but there is no gainsaying that, at its inception, the Constitution of India envisaged a federal country. To reinforce my argument, refer to Article 368(2) that requires that certain amendments to the Constitution made by Parliament are required to be ratified by one-half of the state legislatures before the Bill can become a law.

The amending power of Parliament has been the subject matter of controversy. Eventually, the Supreme Court held in *Keshavananda Bharti* (1973), and re-affirmed in *Minerva Mills* (1980), that the basic structure or features of the Constitution cannot be changed. In *Keshavananda Bharti*, S. R. Bommai and other cases the Supreme Court declared

that 'federalism' is a basic feature of the Constitution. It was a victory for federalism.

Notwithstanding the Court's declaration of the law, the central government has found ways to whittle away at federalism. A State's powers are executive, legislative and financial.

Let's see how the BJP government has eroded these powers.

EXECUTIVE:

Under Articles 154 and 162, the State has the executive power and it extends to all matters with respect to which the state legislature has power to make laws. Police is a state subject. The DGP (Law & Order) is appointed by the state government. However, the central government has, effectively, usurped the power by requiring the state to submit the names of eligible IPS officers to the UPSC and restricting the choice of the state to three officers short-listed by the UPSC. By introducing NEET, the Centre has obliged the states to admit students to medical colleges (including colleges established and wholly funded by the state government) only on the basis of marks/ranks obtained by the students in the All-India examination. State governments have been denied funds to schemes partly funded by the central government on flimsy grounds such as the state's branding of the scheme had added a prefix or a suffix or that the audit certificate of expenditure had not been submitted in time. Kerala has been denied funds because the state had not opened new

schools rejecting the state's argument that it is constrained to shut some schools because of fewer children due to the low birth rate. Such extraneous grounds are not applied to BJP-ruled states.

LEGISLATIVE:

The 47+4 entries in the Concurrent List of the Constitution are fields of legislation on which both Parliament and the state Legislature may make laws. The central government has, without deferring to the state governments, passed laws on a number of subjects including civil procedure; forests; drugs; monopolies; trade unions; social security and social insurance; welfare of labour; education; legal, medical and other professions; ports; trade and commerce; price control; factories; electricity; archaeological sites; acquisition of property; stamp duties; etc. Article 254(2) enables making a state law on a concurrent list subject that will prevail over an earlier central law in that state if the state law received the assent of the President but, I doubt, if in its zeal to impose *oneness* in all matters, the BJP government will oblige a state government in any case. The Concurrent List has virtually become a Union List. The practice of Parliament passing laws on many concurrent list subjects, without even a nod to the states, must be deplored.

The worst example is the three criminal law Bills passed recently. While 'criminal law' and 'criminal procedure' are in the Concurrent List, the central government has rode roughshod over

the state governments. There was not even a pretence of consultation after the three Bills were drafted by an *ad hoc* group of nominated persons. Besides, several provisions of the Bills encroach upon the subjects of 'Public order' and 'Police' that are State List subjects.

FINANCIAL:

Nowhere is the erosion of federalism more evident than in the BJP government's ruthless use of financial powers. It has been revealed that the Prime Minister attempted to 'instruct' the 14th Finance Commission to cut the proposed states' share of tax revenues. Subsequently, the states' share of 41 per cent of net tax revenues has been devolvedly reduced to approximately 31 per cent. Non-shareable cesses and surcharges have been imposed indiscriminately. States' borrowings have been severely limited through questionable means. Terribly designed and badly implemented GST laws have crippled states' finances. There is discrimination between state and state in disbursing grants-in-aid and disaster relief. Ask any non-BJP state finance minister: he/she will tell the story of being forced to beg the central government for funds (BJP state finance ministers will mutter under their breath).

What was once a whisper in the corridors of power has become a project. If the project succeeds, states will be reduced to mere administrative units and India will become a Union of Municipalities or worse.

Fifth
COLUMN

TAVLEEN SINGH

Twitter@tavleen_singh

A long
road to
Ram Rajya

WHEN YOU have been writing a column as long as I have, you learn to take criticism in your stride. You learn very quickly that there will always be as many people who hate what you write as those who appreciate your views. So, it is not usual for me to throw bricks back at those who throw them my way. If I do this week, it is because I have been charged, lampooned and mocked for saying something I did not say. Some of the lampooners are nameless, two-bit hacks trying to gain some traction. But one of them is a famous website that survives on portraying itself as the arbiter of good journalism.

Anonymity is pointless, so I shall name NewsLaundry. In its Hindi edition, it reviled me for declaring that the new temple in Ayodhya is the beginning of an Indian renaissance. This I did not say. What I did say in this column last week was that I hoped that the temple would become a symbol of a much-needed Indian renaissance. Instead of a symbol of Hindutva triumphalism. There is a difference. But a difference that the journalist censoring me in lengthy detail missed. I do not believe in journalists making themselves the story, so that is all I have to say. I needed to set the record straight.

Now to come to what I wanted to write about today. If there is one thing that shocks me every time it happens is bulldozer justice. This ugly substitution of courts of law with bulldozers and judges with municipal officials was started by Yogi Adityanath when he first became chief minister of Uttar Pradesh. When he won a second term, other BJP chief ministers emulated him. The Home Minister of Madhya Pradesh said on record that people who threw stones at (Hindu) religious processions would have their homes turned to rubble. His words are important because it is almost the only time that a BJP official has admitted that demolitions are carried out to administer rough justice. Or, to put it more bluntly, to establish the law of the jungle.

Jungle justice came to Mumbai last week, when bulldozers arrived to demolish the homes of people suspected of having stoned a procession of Hindu devotees, shouting 'Jai Shri Ram'. Municipal officials in charge of the bulldozers immediately said what is always said, that the homes demolished were illegal and had been up for demolition for a while. It was just a coincidence, they said, that the demolitions were carried out in the aftermath of the violence. Who are they trying to fool?

This kind of bulldozer justice has become the norm in states run by the BJP, and it is time to say loudly and clearly that this is wrong. Very wrong. It is bulldozer justice, along with other undemocratic practices, that have done the most damage to the image of the Prime Minister in the forums of the world. Democracy cannot survive without the rule of law and using bulldozers instead of due process to punish whole families demeans everything that the word democracy means.

Narendra Modi has gone to great lengths to project himself as the Vishwaguru of our time and he has succeeded in the eyes of millions of Indians. But it is much harder to fool people who live in democratic countries in which the rule of law cannot be challenged by the politically powerful or the rich.

In India, we have had our difficulties with keeping democracy alive in the past, but not even in the 'dark days of the Emergency' was it the norm to send bulldozers to smash down the homes of suspected offenders. Personally, I feel very strongly about this because I find it hard not to think of what it must be like to lose those memories stored in homes. Old photographs, irreplaceable old books and so many other things that can never be brought back. Bulldozer justice is usually used against people who are too poor to rebuild their broken homes or their broken lives which is what makes it so evil.

To return for a moment to Ram, may I remind the Prime Minister of the fine words he used to describe the perfection that Ram is believed to embody. 'Ram is not fire, Ram is energy. Ram is not a dispute, he is the solution. Ram is not only ours, Ram is for everyone. Ram is not just the present, Ram is eternal.' These qualities are attributed to Ram because it is believed that he was the perfect king ruling the perfect kingdom. India's idea of utopia is entwined with the story of Ram, which makes it most important to never forget that Ram Rajya was an embodiment of justice for all.

If the temple in Ayodhya is to begin an Indian renaissance, and it is my fervent hope that it does, then for bulldozer justice to happen in India's commercial capital days after the consecration indicates that this is never going to happen. It also makes it brutally clear that it is not a renaissance that Hindutva triumphalists want, but revenge. Soon after bulldozer justice in Mumbai, came news of Christian prayer halls being vandalised by violent young men who planted saffron flags on their roofs. It is sad but true that we are a long way from a renaissance of any kind.

ting the cat among the pigeons.

SONS ALSO RISE

CM Eknath Shinde's son Shrikant Shinde acted as a go-between in getting Milind Deora, the late Murli Deora's suave son who rubs shoulders with the city's who's who, to join the Shinde Sena. Shinde Junior, a doctor and two-time MP, convinced his father that if Deora got a Rajya Sabha ticket from the party, it would raise the Sena's profile in Delhi, where Eknath Shinde, a former autorickshaw driver, is not taken seriously enough. The BJP for long apprehended, on the basis of surveys, that Uddhav Thackeray still had an edge over Sena voters. Shinde has, however, slowly consolidated his position, whether it is his handling of the Maratha quota crisis, winning panchayat polls or quietly wooing key organisation men from Uddhav's party.

NOT 'LEFT' OUT

Mamata Banerjee's recent outburst against the CPI(M)'controlling' INDIA bloc meetings was aimed at leftists who reportedly have far more say on important political decisions in the Congress than party office-bearers. Banerjee had two individuals, in particular in mind — Sitaram Yechury, the CPI(M) general secretary who perhaps wields more clout in the Congress than his own party, and Gurdeep Sappal, Mallikarjun Kharge's chief aide who often liaises with INDIA allies and whose leftist leanings date back to his student days.

REALITY BITES

If the Congress has made little headway so far in seat-sharing arrangements with INDIA allies, it is because it is still talking from an unrealistically high perch without doing its homework. While SP and RJD came armed for talks with a booth-by-booth vote analysis, the first meeting between SP and Congress leaders ended abruptly when SP president Akhilesh Yadav pointed out that Mahaveer Prasad, proposed by the Congress for a seat from UP's Bansgaon constituency, had passed away a decade earlier. At a later meeting, the SP estimated the Congress strength in UP was five seats at most, while the Congress wanted 20. On Saturday, Akhilesh confirmed an offer of 11 seats. AAP-Congress alliances in Punjab and Delhi are opposed by AAP's state units. Rahul Gandhi's sense of humour rubbed Arvind Kejriwal the wrong way. Gandhi remarked that Congress and AAP should decide on seat adjustments speedily as he was leaving for his Nyay Yatra and Kejriwal could soon be in jail. In Bihar, Tejaswi and Nitish estimated the Congress's real strength at three seats, leaving little room for manoeuvre.

The politics of heroism

It's dreamily intoxicating, the idea that from nowhere, a cult-like figure will swoop down, save the day and rescue us from ourselves. Since the majority are beset with grave uncertainties, gurujis, godmen and the powerful have always enjoyed extraordinary clout in India; the vulnerable desperately need something, or someone to believe in. In the social media era, it's never been easier to mesmerise the junta with clever image building. Like, for example, the failed plan to display a leader's photograph on banners in ration shops in West Bengal recently, was an excellent way of creating an aura of mythical Godliness. Subconsciously, the recipients of subsidies feel beholden to a specific individual, enhancing a false narrative.

The concept of heroism has deep roots in popular culture as well. The entire ro-

Tamil Nadu Governor R N Ravi recently said it was Subhash Chandra Bose, not Indian National Congress or Mahatma Gandhi, who should be credited for compelling the British to leave India in 1947. But circumstances that marked the period suggest a number of factors played a role in the journey towards Independence.

Saying Congress and Gandhi had minimal impact on Britain's eventual decision to grant India freedom, Ravi cited Congress's "inaction" post-1942. This period of supposed "inaction" coincided with the British move to crush the Congress following the launch of Quit India Movement on August 8, 1942.

By August 9, Congress's leadership, including Jawaharlal Nehru, Gandhi and Vallabhbhai Patel, had been arrested, effectively obliterating the party's organisation.

This led to a surge of nationalist sentiment, masses took to the streets with hartals and demonstrations. But faced with brutal repression and leaderless, the mass movement fizzled out within months.

Till World War II's (WWII) end in 1945, when senior Congress leaders were finally released, the national movement took on a far more discreet form. Young Congress leaders organised underground; but a nationwide mass movement was out of the question.

But Quit India Movement's impact in framing India's nationalist discourse was nonetheless significant. As historian Bipan Chandra wrote in *India's Struggle for Independence* (1988), "After 'Quit India', there could be no retreat. Any future negotiations with the British Government could only be on the manner of the transfer of power." Further, post-War, British excesses during Quit India Movement helped catalyse a national upsurge that would eventually culminate with 1947.

Bose, meanwhile, had a final falling out with his party leadership over how to respond to WWII. Nehru and Gandhi wanted nothing to do with the fascists, Bose was more open to allying with his enemy's enemy.

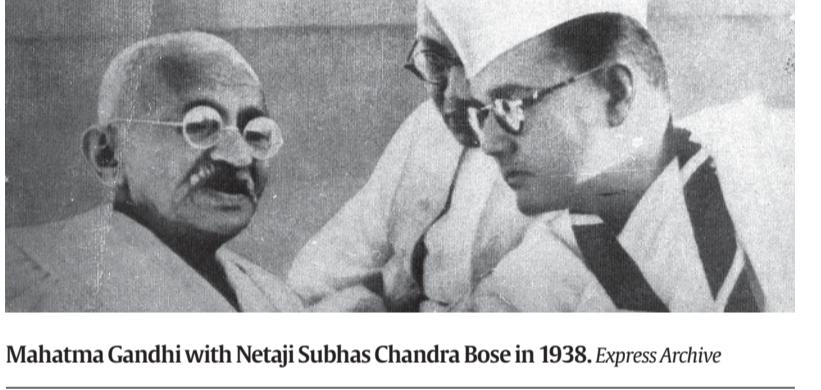
Escaping house arrest in Calcutta in January 1941, Bose met with Hitler and Goebbels in Germany to seek support for India's Independence movement, then met PM Hideki Tojo in Japan. In Singapore by July 1943, Bose took charge of the fledgling Indian National Army (INA), aiming to lead an armed liberation war with the help of the Japanese. From 12,000 men

when Bose joined, a rejuvenated INA had a nearly 50,000-strong force by year-end. But by the time INA reached Northeast India's battlefield, the War's tide had turned. Bose's army participated in 1944's unsuccessful Imphal offensive, before retreating to Burma. After Japan's defence of Burma crumbled early 1945, INA marched back to Singapore August 1945, only to find itself ally-less after Japan's August 15 surrender that effectively brought WWII to a close. Militarily, Bose's INA had a negligible impact. However, ensuing events had a pronounced impact on India's freedom struggle.

Post-War, the British decided to prosecute the most influential INA officers for high treason. The Red Fort trials, held November 1945 to May 1946, unleashed major nationalist sentiment. Even Congress gave its support — Nehru donned his barrister's robes after a long time to defend the INA veterans. "Subhas Bose might have been a renegade leader... But in death he was a martyred patriot whose memory could be an ideal tool for political mobilisation," historian Sekhar Bandyopadhyay wrote in *From Plassey to Partition and After* (2004).

The trials elicited nationalist sympathy, but of particular concern to the British was the pro-INA sentiment among Indian soldiers in the British Indian military.

Strikes in the Royal Air Force began January 22, 1946, near Karachi, spread to over 60 RAF stations in India, Ceylon, Burma upto Singapore, Egypt, north Africa and Gibraltar. The Royal Indian Navy (RIN) mutiny, February 18 to 25, 1946, spread from Bombay to Karachi and Calcutta.

On the long road to 1947:
Gandhi, Bose and others

Mahatma Gandhi with Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose in 1938. Express Archive

While some attribute these uprisings solely to the Red Fort trials, multiple factors played a part.

A major driver behind the naval mutiny, for instance, was the swift post-War demobilisation of RIN. With Britain's coffers virtually empty, thousands of non-commissioned sailors were let go with little recognition. Those retained worked in poor conditions.

According to historian Mithi Mukherjee, in the trial's aftermath, "the very idea of a British Indian Army — an imperial army — became untenable..."

Chandra and others are more circumspect: "These uprisings demonstrated that despite considerable erosion of the morale of the bureaucracy and the steadfastness of the armed forces by this time, the British wherewithal to repress was intact." They also view the uprisings as "an extension of the earlier nationalist activity with which the Congress was integrally associated."

By 1946, Independence was but a certainty — the question was when. WWII had changed the world order. Britain emerged from the War broke. Add to this the political situation in India. "India had...become less manageable... could only be kept under control at a heavy cost, both financial and military," wrote Bandyopadhyay.

There was no one reason for Britain's decision to quit India. If anything, 1947 was a culmination of decades of national struggle, mounted by numerous people, from Gandhi to Bose and Nehru, with widely varying ideologies and utilising wildly divergent methods.

revered figures' traits and unscrupulous exploits serve as a metaphor, that the path to glory is long and winding and the virtuous qualities these heroes embodied came post many stumbling blocks. We relate to these timeless stories even though our lives have different challenges because *dharma* remains the same.

God bless the people we admire and look up to, only for possessing attributes we think we lack. Given enough time though, and heroes turn out to be people no better or worse than anybody else; who then have to live with the added discomfit of a fall from grace. And it's always worth remembering that elected officials have an agenda when they cast themselves as heroic figures or do-gooders—basically, a mania for power.

The writer is director, *Hutkay Films*

On the
LOOSE

LEHER KALA

leherkala@gmail.com

Celebrated Malayalam writer, the 90-something M T Vasudevan Nair, riled up the establishment with his scathing opinion of the "ritualistic hero worship" of political leaders in India these days. Speaking at the Kerala Literature Festival in Kochi recently, Nair, without naming anyone, criticised the transformation in governance. "Today, totalitarianism is described as power," he lamented, unfazed by the buzz floating around that he was referring to the Modi government or the Pinarayi Vijayan government. "If my words have influenced anyone for self-criticism, he could not restrain himself and made a caustic comment about dynastic rule, set-





PTI chief, former Pak PM Imran Khan

PAKISTAN

SC allows Imran party leaders to fight Feb 8 polls

Islamabad: In a relief to the jailed former Pakistan prime minister Imran Khan's beleaguered party, the Supreme Court has allowed its president Parvez Elahi and some other senior leaders to contest the February 8 general elections. A three-member bench on Friday heard Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party president Elahi's appeal against the rejection of his candidature by the Lahore High Court (LHC) and the election tribunal. The court also allowed other PTI leaders, Umar Aslam, Tahir Sadiq, Sanam Javed, and Shaukat Basra to contest the upcoming general elections. **PTI**

UKRAINE

'No evidence for Russian claim on POWs death'

Kyiv: Officials in Ukraine said Russia has provided no credible evidence to back its claims that Ukrainian forces shot down a military transport plane that Moscow says was carrying Ukrainian prisoners of war who were to be swapped for Russian POWs. The Ukrainian agency that deals with prisoner exchanges said late Friday that Russian officials had "with great delay" provided it with a list of the 65 Ukrainians who Moscow said had died in the plane crash in Russia's Belgorod region on Wednesday. **AP**

NEPAL

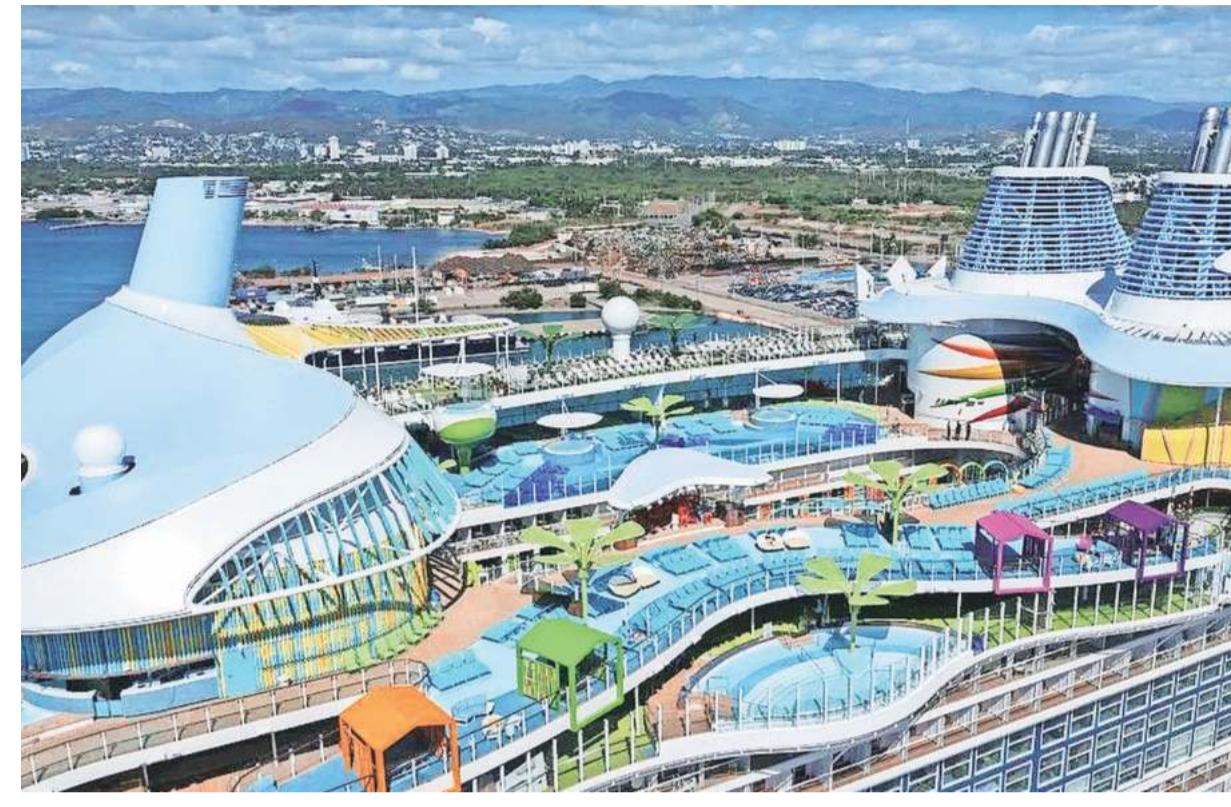
Ex-king steps up campaign to win public support

Kathmandu: Former King Gyanendra Shah today said he is under call to act and fulfill his obligation towards the country implying he is keen to get the crown snatched from him 15 years ago. Shah was responding to a mass felicitation in Birgunj bordering Bihar stepping up his campaign to directly mingle with the people and secure their support at a time when the top leaders of parties are facing corruption charges. The Rashtriya Janata Party asked other parties to accommodate monarchy or face a peaceful national movement. **ENS**

FRANCE

Farmers to protest despite govt discounts

Paris: French farmers vowed on Saturday to continue protesting, maintaining traffic barricades on some of the country's major roads a day after the government announced a series of measures that they do not fully address their demands. The farmers' movement, seeking better remuneration for their produce, less red tape and protection against cheap imports has spread in recent days across the country, with protesters using their tractors to shut down long stretches of road and slow traffic. **AP**



LARGEST CRUISE SAILS, RAISES QUESTIONS

World's largest cruise ship, *Icon of the Seas*, at its home port Miami, Florida. The 250,800-ton, 20-deck, 1,198 ft-long ship left for an island-hopping journey through the tropics. Environmental groups have raised questions on its impact on the environment, as the LNG used in the ship is mostly methane, which traps more heat in atmosphere than carbon dioxide. **AP photo with NYT inputs**

Gunmen kill 9 in Iran near Pak border

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
TEHRAN, JANUARY 27

UNKNOWN GUNMEN on Saturday shot to death nine people in the southeastern part of Iran that borders Pakistan, media reports said.

A report by the semi-official Mehr news agency said the shooting took place in a home near the town of Saravan, in Iran's Sistan and Baluchestan province. It added that the victims were not Iranian.

No official news outlet reported the shooting and no group has yet taken responsibility for the attack.

HalVash, an advocacy group for the Baluchi people, shared images online that appeared to be bodies of victims and said three more people were wounded. It said they were Pakistani nationals and identified four of them, saying all the victims were workers at an auto repair shop.

Last week, Pakistan launched strikes on the same area targeting militant hideouts, an attack that killed at least nine people.

US SECURITY ADVISER MEETS BEIJING TOP DIPLOMAT

Taiwan biggest threat to ties, tells China's Wang to Sullivan

US NSA asks Beijing to press Tehran over Houthis' strikes

ASSOCIATED PRESS
BANGKOK, JANUARY 27

U.S. NATIONAL security adviser Jake Sullivan pressed Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi during talks in Thailand to use China's influence with Iran to ease tensions in the Middle East.

The officials also agreed to work toward arranging a call between President Joe Biden and Chinese leader Xi Jinping.

The meetings Friday and Saturday in Bangkok, which followed up on the presidents' discussions in November in California, took place after a ruling-party candidate opposed by Beijing won Taiwan's recent presidential election and US and Chinese military officials resumed a once-frozen dialogue.

They played out as attacks by Iran-backed Houthi rebels in Yemen continue to threaten global shipping in the Red Sea.

A senior U.S. official said



Jake Sullivan; Wang Yi

Sullivan cited China's extensive economic leverage over Iran and emphasized that the destabilizing effect of the Houthi attacks on international commerce.

The official noted that China has publicly called for lower tensions, but said it was too soon to tell whether Beijing was using its diplomatic muscle to press Tehran on the matter.

The official was not authorized to publicly discuss the private conversations between Sullivan and Wang and spoke on condition of anonymity.

The Chinese Foreign Ministry said Wang said

PAK SEEKS \$2 BILLION LOAN FROM CHINA

Islamabad: Cash-strapped Pakistan has sought financial assistance of USD 2 billion from its close ally China for a year, according to a media report on Saturday. Caretaker PM Anwaarul Haq Kakar wrote to Chinese Premier Li Qiang to roll over debt as soon as the deposit time for the loan from China is completed. **PTI**

Washington should stand by a commitment not to support independence for Taiwan.

Wang said Taiwan's election, won by Lai Ching-te, the current vice president, did not alter the Chinese position that the island is part of China and that the biggest challenge in US-China relations is the issue of "Taiwan independence," according to a statement from the ministry.

Biden woos Black voters in bid to reverse Republicans' deep hold on southern states

REUTERS
COLUMBIA, SC, JANUARY 27

US President Joe Biden with voters in his South Carolina visit earlier in January. **Reuters**

Despite his poor poll numbers nationally, Democrats hope Biden can this year flip South Carolina, a state that has only backed a Democratic presidential candidate once since 1980, and that the party can also win back a handful of key congressional districts in the South.

Biden visits South Carolina for the second time this month on Saturday, for a primary election celebration dinner.

"Out of the ashes of the Old South, we will see, like a phoenix, the rise of a New South," predicts Democratic

National Committee Chair Jaime Harrison, a South Carolina native. "South Carolina's impact is not just relegated to the borders of South Carolina."

Reversing Republicans' deep hold on the South will not be easy.

South Carolina's Republican Party Chairman Drew McKissick says the Democratic Party's liberal stances on everything from issues pertaining to economy to culture will repulse many

of region's conservative voters.

Republicans' primary in the state is Feb. 24, after nominating contests in Iowa, New Hampshire and Nevada.

RACE FOR THE WHITE HOUSE

opens new tab to the region in recent years and a string of statewide wins in Kentucky and North Carolina, as well as Biden's nail-biting win in Georgia in 2020, have raised hopes that it can improve, starting with the general election in November.

Some of the group's leaders have publicly declared allegiance to Guy Philippe, a former police commander and coup-plotter who recently returned to Haiti after serving six years in a US prison.

Soundings from the rover's RIMFAX radar allowed scientists to peer underground to get a view of rock layers 20 meters deep, "almost like looking at a road," said UCLA planetary scientist David Paige.

A BRIGADE OF FORCES PROTECTING ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE AREAS JOINS CALLS FOR GOVT'S OUSTER

Haiti's political instability worsens with new player: An armed green group

FRANCES ROBLES
JANUARY 27

IN HAITI, as the number of murders soar and kidnappings rise, even the police are fleeing.

With no elected president in office and a prime minister widely seen as illegitimate, calls for the government's ouster are now being heard from an unlikely source: a brigade of armed officers ostensibly responsible for protecting environmentally sensitive areas.

Armed uniformed members of the brigade clashed with government forces in northern Haiti this week, heightening tensions in an already volatile nation

where gangs have seized control over large swaths of the capital, Port-au-Prince, and are wreaking havoc in rural areas.

The environmental group, the Brigade for the Security of Protected Areas (known as B-SAP), became angry after the prime minister fired its leader. On Wednesday, the group's officers attempted to invade the local customs office, and Haitian National Police units repelled them using tear gas.

Some of the group's leaders have publicly declared allegiance to Guy Philippe, a former police commander and coup-plotter who recently returned to Haiti after serving six years in a US prison.

Some of the group's leaders have publicly declared allegiance to Guy Philippe, a former police commander and coup-plotter who recently returned to Haiti after serving six years in a US prison. **NYT**

HEALTHCARE COMPROMISED: GAZA OFFICIALS

Battles rage in South Gaza as heavy rain hits displaced further north

Israeli military says it killed at least 11 gunmen in south Gaza city

REUTERS
DOHA, GAZA, JANUARY 27

ISRAEL PRESSED ahead on Saturday with its campaign against Hamas in Gaza's Khan Younis area, while bad weather hit displaced Palestinians seeking refuge further north in the battered enclave.

Residents reported heavy aerial and tank fire across Khan Younis, a part of southern Gaza that has become the focus of Israel's ground offensive against Hamas, and around two main hospitals there. The Israeli military said it killed at least 11 gunmen who were trying to plant explosives near troops and others firing rifles and grenades at soldiers in Khan Younis.

Palestinians fleeing Khan Younis towards Rafah, due to Israeli strikes, on Saturday. **Reuters**

UN agency probes staff doubted in Oct 7 assault

REUTERS
GENEVA, JAN 27

THE UNITED Nations agency for Palestinian refugees (UNRWA) said on Friday it had opened an investigation into several employees suspected of involvement in the Oct. 7 attacks in Israel by Hamas and that it had severed ties with those staff members.

The Gaza Health Ministry said Israeli strikes hit near the largest functioning medical facility in the south, Nasser Hospital, and Al-Amal Hospital, where one person was killed in the courtyard, according to the Palestinian Red Crescent Society.

Israeli bombardment was

compromising healthcare and endangering the lives of doctors, patients and displaced people, said the ministry.

The Israeli military says it is in contact with hospital directors and medical staff by phone and on the ground to make sure that they are running and accessible.

Britain, Italy and Finland on Saturday became the latest countries to pause funding for the United Nations' refugee agency for Palestinians (UNRWA), following the allegations. The US, Australia and Canada had already paused funding to the aid agency after Israel alleged 12 UNRWA employees of involving in the attack.

The Palestinian foreign ministry criticised what it described as an Israeli campaign against UNRWA.

Meloni to reset Italy's Africa ties as leaders gather in Rome

REUTERS
ROME, JANUARY 27

AFRICAN LEADERS converge on Rome this weekend for a summit where Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni will finally unveil a strategic plan aimed at redefining Italy's relations with the continent and curbing immigration.

While the details of the plan have been kept secret, Italy has said it wants to serve as a transit hub for African energy while stimulating investment in an effort to curb illegal immigration across the Mediterranean.

Italy Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni said, "What needs to be done in Africa is to build cooperation and serious strategic relationships as equals".

"What needs to be done in Africa is to defend the right not to have to emigrate ... and this is done with investments and a strategy," promising that Africa would be a priority for Italy during its current presidency of the Group of Seven.

Philippe returns home to face protests

In the less than 60 days since Philippe returned home, he has been traveling the country, shoring up support for his so-called revolution. "We're talking about a revolution, but not a revolution in blood," Philippe said. "We haven't killed anyone. It's all about peaceful demonstrations."

Philippe was a leader of the 2004 coup that toppled President Jean-Bertrand Aristide. Wanted for years by the US for drug trafficking, Philippe lived freely in southern Haiti as a fugitive.

He was arrested in 2017, just before taking office as an elected senator, sentenced in US federal court to nine years for money laundering and was deported to

"anally" with the same aim of getting the prime minister to step down. According to local media, Philippe and the brigade are coordinating efforts aimed at opposing the current government. "B-SAP is not the armed wing of the opposition," said Jeantel Joseph, who was fired this week as the head of the agency, and led the group's protests this week.

Joseph said he and Philippe belong to a larger consortium of political parties, trade unions and grass roots organizations committed to ending Henry's time in office – peacefully, he added. The environmental brigade, he said, is not a threat and simply provided security for demonstrations. **NYT**

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RO No.-129

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

Dated: 25.01.2024

Office of the Executive Engineer PCM Dhalipur, Dehradun invites sealed tenders from interested parties. Brief summary of the tender is given below:

Tender No: 31/EE/PCM/Dhalipur/2023-24

Name of work: Special Maintenance & Repair works of Type-III & Type-IV residences of Dhakrani Colony, Dhakrani, Dehradun

Estimated value of Tender: ₹ 21,33,054.89 (GST extra)

Date & Time of availability of bid document on website: 27.01.2024 at 11:00 Hrs

Last Date & Time for submission of tender: 19.02.2024 up to 13:00 Hrs.

For fuller & further details, kindly visit our website. The tender documents can be downloaded from the Nigam's website www.ujvn.com.

Executive Engineer
PCM-Dhalipur, Dehradun

"Avoid wasteful use of Electricity"

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(A joint venture of Govt. of India & Govt. of Maharashtra)
"Metro Bhavan", VIP Road, Near Dikshabhoomi, Ramdaspeth, Nagpur-440010. E-mail: md.nmrl.tenders@gmail.com

Tender Notice No. N2-020/C-08/2023 Dt. 25.01.2024

Name of work : Construction of 6 Nos Elevated Metro Stations (Cantonment, Kamptee Police Station, Kamptee Municipal Council, Dragon Palace, Golf Club and Kanhan River Metro Station) between Ch. -7576.78m m to Ch -13457.76m in Reach 2B of NMRP Phase 2.

Cost of Documents: INR 1,18,000/- (inclusive of GST).

Date Of Prebid Meeting : 15.02.2024

Interested Bidders may visit www.mahametro.org or CPP Website : <https://eprocure.gov.in> for NIT. Bid documents can be downloaded from <https://mahatenders.gov.in> from 16.00 Hrs on 31.01.2024.

Executive Director/ Procurement
Maha-Metro

Nagpur Metro : City's Transport Solution

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF A PERSON ACCUSED**See Section 82 Cr.P.C.**

Whereas complaint has been made before me that one accused **Gajender Kumar Kushwah** S/o Mohan Lal Kushwah, R/o H.No. B-405, Holambi Kalan, Metro Vihar, Phase-2, Bawana, Delhi have Committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence in case **FIR No. 506/2020 u/s 498A/406/34 IPC** has been registered at P.S. Paschim Vihar West, Delhi and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said **Gajender Kumar Kushwah** cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said **Gajender Kumar Kushwah** has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant).

Proclamation is hereby made that the said accused **Gajender Kumar Kushwah** of FIR No. 506/2020 u/s 498A/406/34 IPC has been registered at P.S. Paschim Vihar West, Delhi and it has been required to appear before this Court to answer the said complaint on or before 01.03.2024.

By Order

Ms. Akansha Gautam
Metropolitan Magistrate,
Mahila Court-04,
Room No.252, 2nd Floor,
Tis Hazari Courts, Delhi

DP/1007/OD/2024 (Court Matter)

SEARCH FOR MISSING/KIDNAPPED

General public is hereby informed that one girl Namely **Juveriya D/o Naseem** R/o T-221, Nawab Road, Sadar Bazar, Delhi, has been missing /kidnapped from her house, since: 20.01.2024. In this regard, a case **FIR/DD No.45A dated, 20.01.2024 has been registered at P.S. Sadar Bazar, Delhi. The description of the missing girl is as under.**

Age: 22 years, **Height:** 5'2", **Complexion:** Fair, **Built:** Thin, **Face:** Long, **Wearing:** Green color Jacket and black top with black jeans and Sports shoes in feet. Sincere efforts have been made by the local police to trace out her but no clue has come to light so far. If anyone has any information about the missing girl then please inform **P.S. Sadar Bazar, Delhi** at following Tel No/ e-mail: cic@cbi.gov.in and Website: <http://cbi.nic.in>, providing clue about the person.

Ph: 011-24366838, 24366841
Fax No. 011-24368639
DP/914/N/2024



Sd/-S.H.O.
Sadar Bazar, Delhi
Ph No. 011-23512411

WEST CENTRAL RAILWAY**Open E-Tender Notice, Date: 25.01.2024**

Sr. DEN/CO/WCR, Bhopal acting for and on behalf of the President of India, invites E-Tenders against following works, upto 15.30 hours on the dates mentioned against each tender. The complete tender documents and detail information regarding tender, is available on the website <http://www.reps.gov.in>.

. NIT can also be seen on the notice board of DRM (W)/WCR/Bhopal office. Manual offers are not allowed against these tenders. For any correction, in these tenders, if necessary, corrigendum will be uploaded on website prior to tender opening date and copy of corrigendum will be placed on Notice Board of this office, which may be seen upto the date of tender opening. Tenderers are requested to offer their rates and submit tenders according to the provisions o

'GST ACT 2017. NIT No. 23-24-N-30-131, Date - 19.01.2024. **Name of work including Location - ADEN/M/Guna section - Replacement of stone Top bridges with precast RCC boxes for Bridge No. 1050/2., 1051/1. 1054/1, 1080/I and 1082/2 total 5 Nos. on Bina-Ruthiyai section., Published cost of tender**

Rs. -2306431, Earnest Money - 265300, Completion period - 15 Months, Last date for submitting tender - 12.02.24, NIT No. 23-24-W-30-132, Date-19.01.2024, **Name of work including Location - ADEN/Shajapur section - Repairs to water supply, sewerage system, drainage improvement in staff quarters and service buildings at Shajapur, Pachor road, Baloora, Raigarh, Chachura Binaganj, Raghograh and other miscellaneous locations., Published cost of tender Rs. -7920484, Earnest Money- 158400. Completions on period - 06 Months, Last date for submitting tender - 12.02.24, NIT No. 23-24-W-26-133, Date- 19.01.2024, **Name of work including Location - ADEN/M/Shajapur section- White wash, colour wash, distempering, plastic emulsion paint etc. in staff quarters, service buildings and level crossings etc from Maksi (Excluding) to Ruthiyai (Excluding) stations., Published cost of tender Rs. - 3595330, Earnest Money- 79100, Completion period - 06 Months, Last date for submitting tender - 12.02.24, NIT No. 23-24-W-27-134, Date- 19.01.2024, **Name of work including Location - ADEN/M/Shajapur section- White wash, colour wash, distempering, plastic emulsion paint etc. in staff quarters, service buildings and level crossings etc from Miyania to Panigarh stations., Published cost of tender Rs. - 2496149, Earnest Money- 49900, Completion period - 06 Months, Last date for submitting tender - 12.02.24, NIT No. 23-24-W-28-135, Date- 19.01.2024, **Name of work including Location - Guna-Gwalior section- Easing out of cutting Kurni 130 to 1291.10 SL (Balance work), Published cost of tender Rs. - 33012190, Earnest Money- 315100, Completion period - 10 Months, Last date for submitting tender - 12.02.24, NIT No. 23-24-S-23-137, Date- 24.01.2024, Name of work including Location - A) Khanwan-Iltas Section: Through Turnout Renewal (FS+TWS+WCMS)-63 sets (1:12-49 Nos & 1.85-5 months 14 Nos) under Sr.DEN/S/BPL Section, B) Replacement of CMS crossing by Weldable CMS Crossing under Sr.DEN/S/BPL Section, Published cost of tender Rs. - 21845455, Earnest Money- 259200, Completion period - 12 Months, Last date for submitting tender - 16.02.24********

DRM(W)C/R, Bhopal

Location - Proposed construction of LHS/RUB as RCC Box size 1/5.00 x 3.60 m at Km. 1156.900 between Lukwasa-Kolaras station in Guna-Gwalior section under DEN/WEST/BPL, Published cost of tender Rs. - 32425843, Earnest Money- 312100, Completion period - 12 Months, Last date for submitting tender - 12.02.24, NIT No. 23-24-W-29-136, Date- 19.01.2024, **Name of work including Location - Guna-Gwalior section- Easing out of cutting Kurni 130 to 1291.10 SL (Balance work), Published cost of tender Rs. - 21845455, Earnest Money- 259200, Completion period - 12 Months, Last date for submitting tender - 16.02.24**

DRM(W)C/R, Bhopal

उत्तर स्वच्छ भारत अभियान एक कदम स्वच्छता की ओर

NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY G2C**Open E-Tender Notice**

Sr. DEE/TRD/Jaipur, acting for and on behalf of The President of India invites E-Tenders for following works. Manual offers are not allowed against this tender, and any such manual offer received shall be ignored. **S.N.o. 1 NIT No. : EL-TRD-JP-2023-24-09 Name of work : TRD work in connection with proposed raising & extension of Platform at Gandhinagar, Chakru & Sureli Station of Jaipur Division. NIT cost (Rs.) : 35,71,204.00 Work tender opening date : 15.02.2024. Note & time of closing e-tenders : On tender opening date upto 15.00 hrs Date & time of opening e-tenders : On tender opening date after 15.00 hrs Complete details of tender can be seen on website : <http://www.reps.gov.in> 104-DG/24**

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**UJVN LIMITED**

H.O.: 'UJJWAL', Maharan Bagh, G.M.S. Road, Dehradun-248006
Telephone: 0135-2763808, Fax: 0135-2763508

CIN No. U40101UR2001SGC025866, Website: www.ujvn.com

RO. No. 133 Dt. : 27.01.2024

TENDER NOTICE

The office of Executive Engineer (Maintenance), Maneri Bhali Stage-II, Chiniyalasur (Uttarkashi) invites sealed tenders from interested parties. Brief summary of tenders is given below:

Tender No: NIT-59/EE (M)/MB-II/2023-24

Name of work / Supply/Services: Repair and Rewinding of 90kW Flygt Make Cooling Water Pumps of Dharasu Power House.

Estimated cost: Rs. 19,88,885/- Only (Taxes extra)

Date of availability of bid document on website: - 29.01.2024

Last date for submission of tender: - 19.02.2024 upto 11:00 Hrs

For fuller & further details, kindly visit our website. The tender documents can be downloaded from the Nigam's website "www.ujvn.com"

Executive Engineer (Maintenance)

"Avoid wasteful use of electricity"

www.reps.gov.in

104-DG/24

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NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY G2C**(Survey & Construction)**

Open E-Tender Notice (Single Packet System)

Dy. Chief Engineer (Construction)-IV, North Western Railway, Nirman Bhawan, Near Railway Samudayik Bhawan, Jagatpura, Jaipur - 302017 for and on behalf of the President of India invites Open E-Tender. Tenderer shall on-line submit their original/revised offer before the date and time of closing of E-tender. 1.

E-Tender Notice No. : NVR/SC/Civil-102140537 2. Name of work with location: Loading and unloading of P.Way material (Switches, SEJ, P.Way fittings, etc.) and shifting of P.Way materials from Old store to newly constructed store at Nindhar Benar in connection with JP-RGS-SIKR GC Project.

3. Approximate cost of work : Rs. 76,44,910.64 4. Earnest Money to be deposited : Rs. 1,52,900.00 5. Completion Period : 48 (Forty Eight) months 6. Closing Date & Time of submission of On line E-tender : Up to 15.00 Hrs. on 16.02.2024 7. Work particulars where complete details of E-Tender can be seen : Tender can be seen at Web site www.reps.gov.in under the unit of DY. CEC/CIV-JP 8. Official E-mail Address : Dycecp4@gmail.com Note : 1 No manual tender will be accepted. 2 Bid security should be in proper form. Bid security should be submitted by the tenderer only through net banking or payment GATEWAY/ or in form of BG in favour of F&ACAO/ Construction, North Western Railway, Jaipur

99-DG/24

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**King George's Medical University, UP, Lucknow**

e-mail: eecoekgmu@gmail.com

Notice: 2571/Exam/Gen/2024 Dated: 27.01.2024

This is being notified that SR Recruitment Examination vide previous newspaper notice dated 24th Jan, 2024 is amended to the following extent:

ONLINE APPLICATIONS ARE INVITED FOR THE POSTS OF SENIOR RESIDENTS, (UN-REGISTERED) IN THE BROAD & SUPER-SPECIALITY DEPARTMENTS OF FACULTY OF MEDICINE & DENTAL SCIENCES FOR THE SESSION 2023-2024.

FOR FURTHER DETAILS KINDLY VISIT THE UNIVERSITY WEBSITE www.kgmu.org

Controller of Examinations

**NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY G2C****E-TENDER NOTICE**

CSTE/Project/Co-ord./North Central Railway/Prayagraj for and on behalf of President of India invites "Open Tender" through on Line (E-Tendering) for the following work.

Mode of Tender: EPC-Mode (Single Stage - Two Packet System)

Tender Notice No.: Bid No. NCR-Sn-ET-EPCKavach-MTJ-AGC, DT. 19.01.2024

Name of work **Approx. Cost**

"Provision of KAVACH (Train Collision Avoidance System), alongwith 4X48 fibre OFC as a backbone on MATHURA (INCL) - AGRA (INCL) Section on North Central Railway".

Completion Period: 300 Days, **Earnest Money amount:** Rs. 13

Classifieds

PERSONAL

It is for general information that I, NARESH CHAND KANOJIA S/O/PYARE LAL/R/O-A/10/TYP-E3/TOWER-21, INA MARKET, KIDWAI NAGAR EAST, SOUTH WEST DELHI-110023, declare that name of mine has been wrongly written as NARESH CHAND in my service record. The actual name of mine is NARESH CHAND KANOJIA which may be amended accordingly. It is certified that I have complied with other legal requirements in this connection. 0040710500-1

I, hitherto known as Sarfaraz Khan, S/O Asgar Ali, R/O D-11/A, Street No-1, Noor Ilahi North Ghonda, Garhi Mendo, North East Delhi-110053, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as Sarfaraz Ahmed. 0040710497-5

I, hitherto known as ANUP SAHU, son of LATE AMRIT LAL SAHU, residing at 742, Nareshwar Nagar, Jhansi, Uttar Pradesh-284003, have changed my name and shall hereinafter be known as ANUP AMRIT SAHU. 0040710485-7

I, VINOD GOEL S/O RAJ KUMAR GOEL, residing at G-161, PREET VIHAR, DELHI-110092, HAVE changed my name to VINOD KUMAR GOEL, for all future purpose. 0040710478-9

I, Tarun, S/o-Rajeshwar, Address-B-280, 2nd floor pitampura saraswati vihar Delhi 110034, changed my name to Tarun Sharma. 0040710500-8

I, TANJIT SINGH S/O- INDERPAL SINGH R/O- 6/82 G.F, MALVIYA NAGAR, DELHI-110017, HAVE CHANGE MY NAME TO TANJEET SINGH, FOR ALL PURPOSES. 0040710485-4

I, Sunil Kumar S/o Ramesh Chander Resi.127, MGF Flats, Sec-14, Pocket-B, Dwarka, New Delhi-110075, have changed my Name to SUNIL MIGLANI for all future purpose. 0040710500-9

I, Sujay S/o-Priya Ranjan Kumar Mishra, R/o Durga-Colony, Badal Malak Jatheri, Tehsil Rai, Sonipat, Haryana-131029, have changed my name to Sujay Kumar Mishra, for all future purposes. 0040710497-6

I, Sandeep Saraf, S/o,Dwarka Nath Verma, R/O,Sri Agrasen- Appt Flat-No.1-21, Plot-No.10, Sector-7, Dwarka, New Delhi-110075,that Sandeep Saraf" and "Sandeep Saraf both are one and same person. 0040710503-3

I, SRAMANAMMA, MOTHER OF, SUDHAKAR SADAGANA, R/O,H.NO-1-38 SUNDARAPURAM -VILL, PARASELLI POST SRIKAKULAM DISTT-ANDHRA, PRADESH-532425, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME FROM S RAMANAMMA TO SADAGANA RAMANAMMA, VIDE-AFFIDAVIT IN-DL33972697028527W, DATED 27/01/2024, BEFORE NCT-DELHI. 0040710503-9

I, SRAMANA MURTHY, FATHER OF, SUDHAKAR SADAGANA, R/O,H.NO-1-38, SUNDARAPURAM VILL PARASELLI POST SRIKAKULAM DISTT-ANDHRA, PRADESH-532425, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME, FROM SRAMANA MURTHY TO SADAGANA RAMANAMURTHY, VIDE-AFFIDAVIT IN-DL33972127050495W, DATED- 27/01/2024, BEFORE NCT-DELHI. 0040710503-10

I, Km Reshma Saifi W/o Shakir Ali R/H.O.No. C-5/4, Khasra-No.899, Kharkar Rewara, Satbari, Delhi-110074, have changed my name to Reshma Parveen. 0040710503-1

I, Lalit Rai, Son of Munshi Rai, R/O,House.no -15, Sarai Sohal Mangla Puri Palam, New Delhi-110045, Have Changed my name to Laljeet Rai, Permanently 0040710500-4

I, Mayur, S/o Arun Kumar, R/O A-3/140, Sector-16, Rohini, Delhi-110089, have changed my name to Mayur Tanwar permanently. 0040710497-7

I, Mohd Subhan, S/o Mohammad Suleman,Address-A-11/82, DDA-Flats,Four-Story Building, Inderlok,Delhi-110035, Changed my name to Mohammad Subhan Hashmi. 0040710485-8

I, Muskaan Alias Shama Suri, D/o Rajesh Kumar, W/o Deepak Verma, R/o A-32, Himgiri Encircle, Nilothi Extension, Nangloi, Delhi-110041, have changed my name to Muskan Verma. 0040710485-2

I, Namrata, W/o SUMIT CHATURVEDI, R/O J-402- EXOTICA, FRESCO, SECTOR-137 NOIDA, GAUTAMBUDHA-NAGAR U.P.201301, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO NAMRATA PANT, FOR ALL, FUTURE PURPOSES 0040710500-3

I, ASHOK JAGDISH RAM THAPAR, S/O- JAGDISH RAM THAPAR, R/O-C-7,ANSAL VILLA SATBARI-FATEH PUR, BERI, DELHI-110074, HAVE CHANGE MY NAME TO ASHOK THAPAR, FOR ALL PURPOSES 0040710485-6

I, ANNURANI D/O VINOD KUMAR, R/O-14TH AVENUE TOWER-C,FLAT-NO-23023, GAUR CITY-2,GREATER-NOIDA WEST,GAUTAM BUDHA-NAGAR, U.P.201301, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO ANNURANI SHARMA, FOR ALL, FUTURE PURPOSES. 0040710500-1

I, Namita W/o Gurpaul Singh R/O-B-5/46, Paschim Vihar, Delhi-110063, have changed my name to Namita Singh, Permanently. 0040710489-2

I, Neha asri W/o Lovnish mehra R/o 250 A, block Sudarshan park Ramesh Nagar N.D-15 have changed my Name to Neha mehra. 0040710472-5

I, Orshiya D/o Naveen Kumar R/o-Ho-No.59, Hastsal-Village, Uttam Nagar Delhi-110059, have changed my name to Orshiya Phore, Permanently. 0040710489-1

I, PINKI MEHTA, W/O RAHUL SHARMA, R/O AM-818, RAJ EMPIRE SOCIETY, RAJ-NAGAR EXTENSION, GHAZIABAD, U.P.-201307, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO DALIP KUMAR GUPTA. 0040710500-6

I, DEVENDER S/O-CHAND SHRI, R/O-H.NO-447/2 SARAI KALE KHAN DELHI-110013, HAVE CHANGE MY NAME TO DEVENDRA SHARMA, FOR ALL PURPOSES. 0040710497-3

I, Priyanka W/o Amit Kumar R/O-G-316 AVJ Height Zeta-1 Greater Noida UP, Have

Changed My Name To Priyanka Singh. 0040710472-3

I, RATAN LAL BIDAWAT S/O- DUJA RAM, R/O- PLOT. NO. 56, BLOCK-R-3A-2, MOHAN GARDEN, UTTAM-NAGAR DELHI-110059 HAVE CHANGE MY NAME TO RATAN LAL, FOR ALL PURPOSES. 0040710472-7

I, REKHA DEVI W/O ASHOK R/O-B-3/394, SECTOR-6, ROHINI, DELHI-110085, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO REKHA VERMA. 0040710478-6

I, RINKU KUMAREE W/O-SURESH KUMAR JHA, R/O-006D/BLOCK-76,SECTOR-122, NOIDA AUTHORITY-FLATS,GAUTAM-BUDH NAGAR,UTTAR PRADESH-201301, HAVE CHANGE MY NAME TO RINKU KUMARI, FOR ALL PURPOSES. 0040710485-5

I, RISHI CHOUDHURY, S/O Dilip Kumar Choudhury, Flat No-FF-2, Plot No-48, Sector 05, Vaishali, Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh-201010, have changed my name to RISHI KUMAR CHOUDHURY, for all future purpose. 0040710478-2

I, RUCHIKA SIKRI W/O-ARJUN HORA, R/O- FLAT.NO-39,3RD-FLOOR BLOCK-1 EROS GARDEN CHARMWOOD-VILLAGE FARIDABAD HARYANA-121009, HAVE CHANGE MY NAME TO RUCHIKA HORA, FOR ALL PURPOSES. 0040710497-4

I, We, Faiyaz Alam and Ifat Jahan, R/O-H.No. 283, Abulfazal enclave-I, Nai-Basti, Jamia Nagar, Okhla, South-east, Delhi-110025, inform that we have changed our child's name, from Naushleen to Naushleen Faiyaz, for all future purpose. 0040710478-2

I, Parvati Devi W/o Hari Ram Sharma R/o 2929A, Sushant Lok-C1, Gurgaon-122001, have changed my name to Parwati Sharma 0070885531-1

I, Prem Lal S/o Late Kishori Lal, R/o-A/5A/10D, Janakpuri, New Delhi-110058 Have Changed My Name to Prem Lal for all Purposes. 0070885558-1

I, Deen Mohammad Maik S/o, Jafar Ali R/o-274 Gali-No.5, New-Kardampuri, Delhi-110094 Have changed my name to Deen Mohammad. 0070885543-1

I, I/WE, KAUSHAL GUPTA & MEENU GUPTA both,R/o-H.18 HIG-Flats Sanjay-Nagar Sec-23,Ghaziabad,UP-201002,have lost the original Page.No.6,in the year of December 2022 of registered Sale-Deed vide serial no- 6191,date of Regn.12/10/1998, regd.in the office of Sub-Registrar, Gaziaab,UP,any where which is not traceable. 0040710472-9

I, Umesh Kumar,S/o Rajendra Prasad and Nageena Devi, R/o Village-Salempur, Shahganj,Janakpur,UP,have lost my 10th UP Board Allahabad Certificate Roll No.2300377 Year-2014,also lost 12th Roll No.1712147 Year-2016, Finder Contact- 9555251869 0040710520-2

I, Sanjay, S/o- Krishan Lal Nagi, R/o- B/ 285, Ground Floor, Janakpuri, New Delhi-110058 Have Changed My Name to Sanjay Kumar for all Purposes. 0070885562-1

I, Jaguram Bidawat S/O-RATAN LAL, R/O- PLOT. NO. 56, BLOCK R-3A-2, MOHAN GARDEN, UTTAM-NAGAR DELHI-110059, HAVE CHANGE MY NAME TO JAGGU RAM FOR ALL PURPOSES. 0040710472-6

I, Ishwar Singh Chauhan, S/O DALBIR SINGH,R/o H.NO.57, VILLAGE-BASS HARIYA, GURGAON HARYANA-122505, have changed name to ISHWAR SINGH, for all future purposes. 0040710472-4

I, HEENA D/O MOHD MOOSA, residing at H.NO.1-8A, DDA-FLAT, RAVI DAS MANDIR, BEHIND HAMDARD,DELHI-110006, have changed my name to HINA MOOSA, for all, future purposes. 0040710472-8

I, Aarti Devi W/o Rohan Bhati R/o-T-4/502, Unitech Horizon, Greater Noida(U.P) have changed my name to Aeraa Singh Bhati for all purposes. 0040710438-1

I, Anurag,S/o:Pawan Kumar, Address:Ward-05,Chubkiyagarh, Churu, Rajasthan-331023, changed my name to Anurag Sihag. 0040710500-7

I, Aniketa D/O Mukesh Kumar Tiwari R/O-A/291, Panchsheel Vihar, Malviya Nagar Delhi-110017, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO GURDEEP KAUR, FOR ALL PURPOSES. 0040710485-3

I, Dilshad Begum,W/o Subhanul Haq,R/o-H.No.D-234/A, Gali.no. 10, Mohanpur,Maujpur Delhi-110053,have changed my name to Dilshad,for all, future purposes. 0040710497-9

I, Diksha Handa Sarao W/o Manbeer Singh Sarao R/o A-3/121, Janakpuri, New Delhi-110058, have changed my name to Diksha Handa. 0040710503-2

I, Deepa,W/O Lokesh Thadhani, I,ASHOK VERMA/ASHOK KUMAR, S/O OM PRAKASH R/O-B-3/394,SECTOR-6,ROHINI, DELHI-110085.HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO ASHOK. 0040710478-7

I, Deepa,W/O Lokesh Thadhani, R/O C-2/D-54,Indl Floor,Vijay Vihar,Phase-1,Rohini, North West,Delhi-110085,changed my name to Deepa Thadhani. 0040710478-1

I, AS YADAV/W/O GENDA LAL YADAV,R/O FLAT.NO.1401, TOWER K,ACE CITY, PLOT.NO. 1,NOIDA-EXTENSION, GAUTAM BUDH NAGAR,UTTAR PRADESH-201306, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO ANGOORI DEVI,FOR ALL PURPOSES 0040710502-5

I, ASHOK JAGDISH RAM THAPAR, S/O- JAGDISH RAM THAPAR, R/O-C-7,ANSAL VILLA SATBARI-FATEH PUR, BERI, DELHI-110074, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO ASHOK THAPAR, FOR ALL PURPOSES 0040710485-6

I, ANNU RANI D/O VINOD KUMAR,R/O-14TH AVENUE TOWER-C,FLAT-NO-23023, GAUR CITY-2,GREATER-NOIDA WEST,GAUTAM BUDHA-NAGAR, U.P.201301, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO ANNU RANI SHARMA, FOR ALL, FUTURE PURPOSES. 0040710500-1

I, Daniksha D/o Deepak Verma, R/o A-32, Himgiri Enclave, Nilothi Extension, Nanglo, Delhi-110041, have changed my name to Daniksha Verma. 0040710485-1

I, Daljit Singh,S/o Tehal Singh, R/o,RZU-30, Nihal Vihar, Nanglo, New Delhi-110041, have changed my name,from Daljeet Singh to Daljit Singh,all legal purpose. 0040710485-10

I, DILIP GUPTA,S/O RAM RAJ GUPTA,R/O E2/209,STREET, NO.4, SHASTRI NAGAR, DELHI-110052, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO DALIP KUMAR GUPTA. 0040710500-6

I, DEVENDER S/O-CHAND SHRI, R/O-H.NO-447/2 SARAI KALE KHAN DELHI-110013, HAVE CHANGE MY NAME TO DEVENDRA SHARMA, FOR ALL PURPOSES. 0040710497-3

I, BHAWANA D/O RAJESH PUNJWANI R/O-A/3/1103RD FLOOR, SEC-17, ROHINI, DELHI-110089, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO BHAWNA PUNJWANI. 0040710472-1

I, PRIYANKA W/O Amit Kumar R/O-G-316 AVJ Height Zeta-1 Greater Noida UP, Have

Changed My Name To Priyanka Singh. 0040710472-3

I, RATAN LAL BIDAWAT S/O- DUJA RAM, R/O- PLOT. NO. 56, BLOCK R-3A-2, MOHAN GARDEN, UTTAM-NAGAR DELHI-110059 HAVE CHANGE MY NAME TO RATAN LAL, FOR ALL PURPOSES. 0040710472-7

I, REKHA DEVI W/O ASHOK R/O-B-3/394, SECTOR-6, ROHINI, DELHI-110085, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO REKHA VERMA. 0040710478-6

I, RINKU KUMAREE W/O-SURESH KUMAR JHA, R/O-006D/BLOCK-76,SECTOR-122, NOIDA AUTHORITY-FLATS,GAUTAM-BUDH NAGAR,UTTAR PRADESH-201301, HAVE CHANGE MY NAME TO RINKU KUMARI, FOR ALL PURPOSES. 0040710485-5

I, BHARTI KATARIA/SHAILI PUNJWANI,W/O RAJESH PUNJWANI R/O-A/3/1103RD FLOOR, SEC-17, ROHINI, DELHI-110089, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO SHELLY PUNJWANI. 0040710472-1

I, Asma Hashmi,W/o Mohammad Subhan Hashmi, Address-A/11-82, DDA-Flats, Four Story Building, Inderlok, Delhi-110035, changed my name to Asma Hashmi. 0040710485-9

I, Akram Mohammad Khan S/o Iqbal Mohammad R/o-59, Hauz Rani, Malviya Nagar, Delhi-110017 have changed my name to Akram Khan. 0070885540-1

I, Anita Lali W/o Prem Lal, R/o-A/5A/10, Janakpuri, New Delhi-110058 Have Changed My Name to Anita Lal for all Purposes. 0070885559-1

I, Deen Mohammad Maik S/o, Jafar Ali R/o-274 Gali-No.5, New-Kardampuri, Delhi-110094 Have changed my name to Deen Mohammad. 0070885543-1

I, Parvati Devi W/o Hari Ram Sharma R/o 2929A, Sushant Lok-C1, Gurgaon-122001, have changed my name to Parwati Sharma 0070885531-1

I, Prem Lal S/o Late Kishori Lal, R/o-A/5A/10D, Janakpuri, New Delhi-110058 Have Changed My Name to Prem Lal for all Purposes. 0070885558-1

I, R

PROPOSAL WAS BACKED BY 130 WTO MEMBERS

US blocks fresh proposal to restart dispute settlement mechanism

RAVI DUTTA MISHRA
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 27

A PROPOSAL backed by 130 World Trade Organization (WTO) members to restart the selection processes for filling vacancies on WTO's Appellate Body was shot down by the United States (US) yet again in a sign that disputes may keep piling up at the top trade body, fueling further protectionism in global trade.

The Appellate Body is the apex institution for adjudicating trade disputes.

This is the 73rd occasion when a proposal moved by Guatemala, a Central American country, on behalf of 130 members was not able to launch the selection processes. The US has been blocking the appointment of new judges to the WTO's seven-member appellate court since 2017 on grounds of judicial activism at the WTO and concerns over US sovereignty.

The lack of a functional Appellate Body is concerning as



This comes ahead of the 13th ministerial conference (MC) of the WTO in Abu Dhabi on February 26-29. AP

global trade is already slowing with growing geo-political tensions. Moreover, developed countries are turning inward with the introduction of several environment related trade measures such as carbon tax which could hurt India's trade prospects. India's goods exports have seen a decline during the better part of 2023 largely due to weakening demand globally.

"Guatemala said that on behalf of the 130 members it re-

gretted that for the 73rd occasion members have not been able to launch the selection processes. Ongoing conversations about reform of the dispute settlement system should not prevent the Appellate Body from continuing to operate fully," Guatemala said for the group, an official WTO statement released late on Friday read.

"While members may prefer the status quo, the old system was not working for the US and it was not working for many other members. As members engage in reform, they must bear in mind that re-launching the Appellate Body selection process will not address these concerns, and calls for the restoration of the Appellate Body undermine collective efforts for reform, the US said," the statement read.

"One member said the US comment that the appeal mechanism was not working for many members was surprising given the 130 members that are co-sponsoring the proposal for appointing new Appellate Body members," the statement further said.

Seven members made refer-

ence to the multi-party interim appeal arrangement (MPIA) as a means of maintaining appeal rights in the absence of a functioning Appellate Body, WTO said.

The United States Trade Representative (USTR) had earlier stated that the proper functioning of the WTO Appellate Body has a disproportionate impact on the United States because more than one-quarter of all disputes at the WTO have been challenges to US laws or other measures and 155 disputes have been filed against the United States and no other member has faced even a hundred disputes.

The US said that up to approximately 90 percent of the disputes pursued against the US have led to a report finding that the US law or other measure was inconsistent with WTO agreements. "This means that, on average, over the past 25 years, the WTO has found a US law or measure WTO-inconsistent between five and six times per year, every year," the USTR had said.

ANIL SASI
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 27

JAPAN'S TOYOTA Motor Corp, a late entrant into the battery electric vehicle race, is aiming to roll out next-generation solid-state batteries over the next three years, marking a milestone in the global race to commercialise this breakthrough technology that promises to double vehicle range and drastically lower charging time.

In the due course, the Japanese carmaker could potentially have two sets of battery electric vehicles or BEVs on offer across markets, including India—one range with existing lithium-ion (li-ion) batteries and a second range with its new and pricier solid state batteries, a senior company executive at Toyota's joint venture in India indicated.

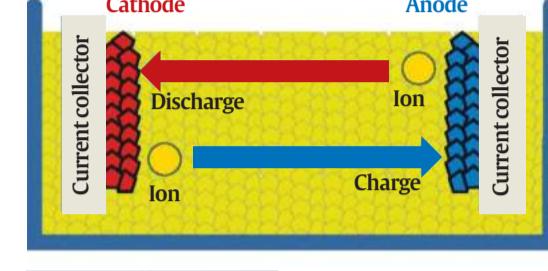
Toyota, the world's largest carmaker by vehicles sold, had announced a "breakthrough" in solid state battery materials late last year and had said it plans to mass-produce solid-state batteries by 2027 or 2028. Solid-state batteries are seen as a major improvement in battery tech, countering concerns such as extended charging time and the risk of catching fire associated with traditional Li-ion batteries that have a liquid electrolyte.

With its new solid-state batteries, Toyota expects its electric cars powered by them to have a range of 1,200km—well over twice that of the current range of electric vehicles (EVs)—and a charging time of 10 minutes or less, far lower than that two-four hours that it takes to fast charge an EV with Li-ion batteries.

Other companies too are making progress on alternatives to Li-ion batteries. Chinese bat-

ALL-SOLID-STATE BATTERIES

(Yellow section shows solid electrolytes)



SOLID ELECTROLYTES

Based on the results of Phase 2, both companies will study of future full-scale mass production and commercialization.

suitable for battery mass production.

The collaboration is focussed on mass-production of new materials and establishing a supply chain for solid electrolytes, which hold the key to the commercialisation of solid-state batteries and developing them as an option beyond liquid batteries, according to Koji Sato, President and Chief Executive Officer, Toyota Motor Corporation.

An advantage of solid-state batteries is that the electrolyte is solid. This allows ions, which convey electricity, to move faster, thus enabling shorter charging times, increased cruising ranges, and produce higher power output. Solid-state batteries are also characterised by being highly stable because they are resistant to changes in temperature and can robustly endure high temperatures and high voltages.

FULL REPORT ON
www.indianexpress.com

Foreign investors sell equities worth ₹24,734 cr in January

HITESH VYAS
MUMBAI, JANUARY 27

AFTER TWO months of consecutive buying, foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) have become net sellers in January as they offloaded Rs 24,734 crore worth of Indian equities so far in the month amid concerns over delay in interest rate cuts by the United States (US) Federal Reserve and high valuation of domestic shares.

The selling of stocks by foreign investors in the current month (till January 25) comes after heavy buying witnessed in November last year at Rs 9,001 crore and in December at Rs 66,135 crore. In October 2023, FPI outflow stood at Rs 24,548, according to the data from the National Securities Depository Ltd (NSDL).

The FPI sell-off in January was also one of the reasons for the fall in benchmark indices, Sensex and Nifty, which had tanked around 2 per cent in a highly volatile month.

According to VK Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist, Geojit Financial Services, FPIs continued to be sellers in the cash market holding said equity worth Rs 27,664 crore through January 25.

"FPIs were sellers in autos and auto ancillary, media and entertainment and marginally in IT. They bought oil and gas, power and selectively in financial services," he said.

Comments from Federal Reserve System's Governor Christopher J Waller, on January 16, that interest rate cuts need to be calibrated and not rushed weighed on the investors' sentiments as it dampened hopes of early rate cuts by the US central bank, resulting in heavy selling by FPIs in the domestic shares. There was a hope earlier that the US Federal Reserve may start cutting interest rates as early as March this year. The negative sentiments

Domestically, the sell-off by FPIs was driven by concerns over higher valuation of shares despite the economy doing well

about interest rates in the US likely to remain higher-for-longer-than-expectation led to a rise in the yield on the US 10-year bond to over 4.18 per cent, compared to 3.18 per

"The rising bond yields in the US is a matter of concern and this has triggered the recent bout of selling in the cash market," Vijayakumar said. Markets will closely watch the US Federal Reserve's monetary policy announcement on January 31, analysts said.

"Another critical event to watch is the outcome of the US Federal Reserve's policy meeting scheduled for January 31st, which could provide insights into the potential timing of interest rate cuts," said Santosh Meena, Head of Research, Swastika Investment Mart Ltd.

Domestically, the sell-off by FPIs was driven by concerns over higher valuation of shares despite the economy doing well and improvement in the corporate earnings.

Selling by overseas investors in the current month comes ahead of the January-end deadline set by the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) for certain FPIs to disclose additional details, including their ownership and economic interest.

However, FPIs, who have been mandated to liquidate their holdings as per the Sebi's January-end deadline, will have seven months more to provide additional disclosures, which will give some respite to the overseas investors.

'APAC firms to nearly triple spends on GenAI in 2024'

Asia Pacific (APAC) businesses are sprucing up investments



\$2.1bn

BRIDGE

Dealer: East Vulnerable: None

NORTH		SOUTH	
♠ A9	♦ 62	♥ KQ874	♦ 42
♥ 952	♦ 41	♦ AK1083	♣ Q109
♦ AK1083	♣ Q109	♠ KJ7	
WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
3S	pass		
pass	3NT	pass	4H
pass	pass	pass	

East opens 3S and your side wands into 4H. It would be nice if North had played the hand but it was not possible with the bidding methods used by North-South. West leads the jack of spades. Do you finesse or do you win the trick?

This hand offers a lot of dangers. There is one that sticks out a little more than most. If you take the ace of spades and lead hearts, it is reasonable to worry that West has three hearts to the A10x. If so, he will win your heart lead and will lead his second spade to East's king. A third round of spades will give West a second heart winner, which will mean you are down one. Is this avoidable?

It goes against the grain to do this but you should finesse the queen of spades. If East has eight spades he will give West a ruff but if he has seven of them, you will keep West from getting his overcall.

The West hand: S-J4H-A103 D-Q975C-A682

The East hand: S-K1098753 H-6 J6 C-543

It works out nicely. East did have seven spades and West did have the A10x of hearts. There were, of course, other dangers such as East having a single-ton club or diamond and being able to get a ruff of his own. But the big danger of the spade suit was the most obvious and it was one that you could cater to.

NORTH		SOUTH	
♠ 642	♦ AQ8	♥ 43	♦ AJQ1043
♥ AK8	♦ 43	♦ K9762	♣ A8
♦ K9762	♣ A8	♠ K2	
West	North	East	South
	1D	pass	
pass	2C ♠	pass	2D ♦
pass	3H ♥	pass	3NT
pass	4D ♦	pass	4S ♠
pass	5C ♠	pass	6S ♠
pass	6D ♦		

West led the ten of hearts, won by the king. What line should you try? If it doesn't work, what should you do instead?

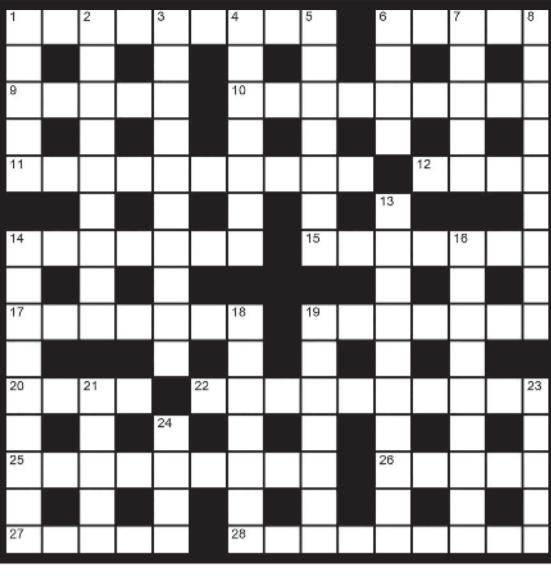
SUNDAY CROSSWORD 2462

QUICK CLUES ACROSS
 1. Al(9)
 6. Fit out(5)
 9. To fuse(5)
 10. Half-way point of a round of golf (5,4)
 11. Current of air behind a moving vehicle (10)
 12. Ex-Delhi paceman Wasan (4)
 14. One way to pitch (7)
 15. Tranquilized or calmed down (7)
 17. Highway hazard (7)
 19. Trevelling bags (7)
 20. A long story of a family (4)
 22. Forty Thieves password (4,6)
 25. Italian restaurant (9)
 26. Lend ____: please hear what I have to say? (2,3)
 27. Satisfied (5)
 28. Believed to be guilty (9)

DOWN
 1. Cesspools (5)
 2. Relevant (9)
 3. Exceed in importance (10)
 4. A fit of rage (7)
 5. Landing strips (7)
 6. Resound (4)
 7. German submarine (1-4)
 8. Staves off, forestalls or inhibits (9)
 13. Make impure (10)
 14. Antonyms (9)
 16. Will (9)
 18. Specialists (7)
 19. Willful destroyers of property (7)
 21. Concede (5)
 23. Made a mistake (5)
 24. Collar fastener (4)

CRYPTIC CLUES ACROSS

1. Rose drove disastrously as one excessive with medication (9)
 6. Was about providing for homeless children (5)
 9. Love to spend a short time at the old place (5)
 10. For the nonce, about to feed if you haven't a leg to stand on (2,7)
 11. Takes spicy ingredients mixed to try them at tea (5,5)
 12. Depart hurriedly when cast out (4)
 14. Regulations flouted by Wales (3-4)
 15. Close a north-east passage (3-4)
 17. Used a weapon on a ringleader in Keanu Reeves' movie (7)
 19. Knock sailor returning at last (3-6)



repeatedly (3-1-3)
 20. Goes out after coming in (4)
 22. Wrestling hold over fifty per cent of Sir Horatio (4,6)
 25. Ass-single, weird, bespectacled (2,7)
 26. Bulb lit, current not off (5)
 27. Complaint made by your head who is very particular (5)
 28. Moved from kerb, then withdrew (6,3)

DOWN

16. How to score extremely high (9)
 18. Stops to take a pull on drink (5,2)
 19. One doesn't get it from a yes man (7)
 21. Go up in public transport intended to take in others (5)
 23. Musical combo ill-equipped for trawling (5)
 24. Change for Victor first coming in contact with mad Ray (4)

Solutions to 2461

QUICK CLUES Across: 1. Trafalgar, 6 Abets, 9 Delight, 10 Daffier, 11 Regales, 12 Existing, 13 Inscribes, 15 Total, 16 Proud, 19 Red-handed, 22 Otagia, 23 Scourge, 25 Proviso, 26 Italics, 27 Ursay, 28 Schonkel Down 1 Tudor, 2 Alleges, 3 Angular, 4 Gates, 5 Redressed, 6 Afflict, 7 Edition, 8 Strangled, 13 Impromptu, 14 Barbarous, 17 Orator, 18 Dignify, 20 Avocado, 21 Derick, 23 Whiff, 24 Easel **CRYPTIC CLUES Across:** 1. Late-corner, 6 Whiff, 9 Dapples, 10 Maxwell, 11 Erosive, 12 Suicide, 13 Post-haste, 15 Gonzo, 16 Angus, 19 Make a note, 22 Nebular, 23 Pigment, 25 Ali Baba, 26 Plays up, 27 East's, 28 Duplicate Down: 1 Lodge, 2 Tiptoe, 3 Goldish, 4 Masse, 5 Rump-steak, 6 Waxwing, 7 Iberian, 8 False note, 13 Plain Jane, 14 Samarkand, 17 Goblets, 18 Sultans, 20 Afghani, 21 Overseas, 23 Pop-up, 24 Tepee

If it's your Birthday

Sunday January 28

A number of influential planets are conspiring to raise your energy level. That's good, but the message is that you should work hard, but relax harder.

Monday January 29

The Moon is on your side, encouraging happy and helpful feelings. There can only be one result, that both today and the coming year suit relationships.

Tuesday January 30

Life is in a perpetual state of positive change, but you may be right to play it safe. At all costs don't take more than your fair share of responsibility.

Wednesday January 31

It's an auspicious moment and the truth will come out soon, much to everyone's delight. You'll do best to keep a close eye on long-term goals.

Thursday February 1

You'll be happiest when you're active and engaged with the big wide world. Even if you are taking a break, you'll be pursuing worthwhile activities.

Friday February 2

Your chart divides easily into bite-sized chunks. You'll be discreet about your ideas, nostalgic in your feelings and ambitious with money.

Saturday February 3

Venus, lady of love, is forming a shimmering relationship with serious parts of your chart. What good is this to you, you may ask? Well, for a start you can expect happy emotional news over the coming month.

YOUR WEEK AHEAD

ARIES (Mar 21 - Apr 20)

The general tone of the planets this week is optimistic, if sometimes argumentative, and there's absolutely no point in being down in the dumps. One piece of useful advice is to start getting fit now, if you're not already, that is.

TAURUS (Apr 21 - May 21)



Venus is now sparkling away in a distant but vital part of your chart, emphasising the role that close personal relationships have to play in all aspects of your life. Love and appreciation are vital to your well-being. How pleasant it must be to realise that the stars are smiling on you.

GEMINI (May 22 - June 21)

There are strong indications that you'll be hearing from loved ones overseas before long. Those of you who are unattached and planning an unscheduled break could be in for a surprise romance. The Sun's tough alignments will stiffen your resolve.

CANCER (June 22 - July 23)

The planets continue to pry and probe into your innermost secrets. However, the general tenor of life is now more relaxed and assured and you'll soon be ready for anything. Foreign climes beckon, and a distant possibility could become a firm path to personal or professional happiness.

LEO (July 24 - Aug 23)

Leo is a sign with a reputation for being self-interested. There's nothing wrong in having a healthy ego, but over the next few weeks you may have to put your own feelings and interests in second place. Optimism is one of your strong points this week. It's also a fine time for determination and confidence.

VIRGO (Aug 24 - Sep 23)

Mercury is rapidly approaching a new alignment with the Sun, but their meeting will not happen this week. This means that you have a little time left to consider your options before committing yourself to a special partnership. This is a perfect time to raise your sights to higher things.

CAPRICORN (Dec 23 - Jan 20)

This is a profitable period, one when the way forward financially is to team up with other people. You may have an idea that you can make some money which requires expert advice or, perhaps, an extra pair of hands. On the whole, this is a satisfactory week, one in which to make the most of yourself.

AQUARIUS (Jan 21 - Feb 19)

Venus is a magical influence, bringing self-confidence and social assurance. You are right to expect your fair share of love and affection but should remember that it is often nobler to give than to receive. Your best single day could be Thursday, when your bright ideas are taken.

PISCES (Feb 20 - Mar 20)

It's because you were born with the Sun in Pisces that you tend to follow your intuitions and feelings. However, you must now try to be a little more clear-headed about your personal arrangements. As this is a special time of year, you may now look ahead to a fortunate period.

SOLUTION SUDOKU 5454

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

JUMBLE WORDS

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

Make it your habit not to be critical about _____. - Edward Everett Hale (5,6)

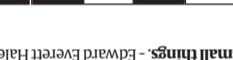
MSAIS



AEILMNR



HOLTS



ACOUGH



SUDOKU 5455

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

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

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

Honestly, it's an absolute masterclass on how to bat in these conditions. As an overseas player, someone who's not exposed to these surfaces, and to come back off a serious injury like he had in summer and have that amount of time out of the game and then put together that... outstanding."

JOE ROOT, ON OLLIE POPE'S KNOCK

Ollie's well

Returning from a shoulder injury, Pope chisels out a batting masterpiece and uses reverse sweep to full effect to lead England's fightback in the first Test

VENKATA KRISHNA B
HYDERABAD, JANUARY 27

AS STUMPS were called on Day 3 at Hyderabad, the groundstaff headed to the pitch with broomsticks to whip off the dust gathered on the rough patches. On the other side, India's head coach Rahul Dravid, accompanied by batting coach Vikram Rathour, made a hurried walk, to get their eyes before the groundstaff did their part. For a few minutes the duo micro-observed the track, especially the rough patches and inspected the good length area before taking a slow walk back.

It is where it has come down for India. Having undergone enough wear and tear and rough marks all around, either side of the stumps, and a few balls keeping low, how quickly it crumbles could determine India's fate in Hyderabad. Courtesy an unbeaten 148 from Ollie Pope, England, after conceding a lead of 190 midway through the first session on Saturday, have not only whipped off the deficit, but also have ended Day 3 with a 126-run lead with four wickets in hand. Their total of 316/6 is the first time any visiting team has touched 300 in the second innings since they did at Nagpur in 2012 on the way to a series win.

Of course, the pitch has slowed down considerably, with batsmen able to negate the turn on offer, by coming forward or going back. But fourth innings chases can be tricky, especially with the odd low bounce to go with the natural bounce on offer.

What gives India hope is on a pitch where even their spinners couldn't assert themselves, England's inexperienced attack would find it even more challenging. Sunday has all the making for a gripping climax, unless England continue their rear-guard way into Day 4.

After the Bazball approach could only fetch 246 in the first essay, with Pope managing to prolong his innings, England are beginning to get grip for the first time on this Test. The man wholly responsible for it is Pope, whose highest score in the previous nine Test innings in India was 35. Coming into the Test, he hadn't played a first-class match for six months as he had been recovering from a dislocated shoulder – the third he suffered in four years – during the Ashes.

Having looked clueless on Day 1, it was Pope that did the team talk in the morning, according to Root, who though did not delve into the details. "Honestly it's an absolute masterclass on how to bat in these conditions as an overseas player. For someone not exposed to these surfaces day in and day out and to come back off a serious injury like he had in summer and have that amount of time out of the game and then put together that knock... I'm speechless," said Root, who picked four wickets.

Reverse-sweeping wonder

If it was Alastair Cook's doggedness at Eden Gardens and counter-attacking route that Kevin Pietersen took in 2012, Root's was a textbook manual in 2021. But here Pope resorted to the reverse-sweep as his go-to shot against the spinners. Ben Duckett liberal use of this stroke in the first session would have given him more conviction. But he did so in his own style, living though with an element of risk at all time. Sometimes, he would connect the ball right

NUMBER PLATE

79

Number of runs England scored from variations of sweep in the second innings on Saturday. Ollie Pope scored 41 of those. England did not lose a single wicket while playing the shot.

12 Number of years after which a visiting side scored 300 in the second innings in India. Incidentally, the last team to do so was England in the Nagpur Test back in 2012.

off his toes. Other times, he would expose all three stumps and reverse-sweep against the turn. He even managed to reverse-scoop it over KS Bharat. According to CricViz, the reverse-sweep alone has fetched England 57 runs so far in the Test.

Root would dwell on the finer aspects of the stroke. "When it is consistent spin you can work out when to take it on, and which balls from which line you can take a risk on. The most important thing is you don't think you are going to miss at all," he detailed.

"He did it exceptionally well. It took until 110 to make a small error when he got dropped. There were a couple of balls that ripped past his outside edge but you expect that, it's part and parcel, almost like in England when it's swinging and seaming around. You almost give yourself a pat on the back because you've not chased it," Root added.

It wasn't an innings where Pope just took his chances. Immediately after lunch, he had to survive that testing spell from Jasprit Bumrah, wherein he saw Duckett and Root perish. Then he watched Ravindra Jadeja and R Ashwin clean up Jonny Bairstow and Ben Stokes. The ones that didn't turn were beginning to get as dangerous as the ones that turned. So to live through all of it, and still use the reverse-sweep to great conviction, it needed someone to be special.

Over the course of Saturday, Pope, highly rated by the Bazballers, repaid the faith while sticking to their identity by building a 112-run stand with Ben Foakes for the sixth wicket. More than the reverse-sweeps, what stood out was how rarely he drove any of the spinners in front of the V, instead being content in defending with full bat.

Root kept praising Pope. "To manipulate the field as it did against that attack, on that surface, to show the powers of concentration and determination and fitness and skill, all combined was immense," he said.

"One of the hardest things about batting here is being able to just park things that have happened before and just trust your instincts. Sometimes that's using pre-meditation, sometimes that's being able to read it off the wicket, sometimes it's being able to soak up pressure. I think one of the best parts of his innings was being able to get through that Bumrah reverse-swing spell. It was a really special knock," Root added.

RANJI ROUND-UP



Narayan Jagadeesan scored 321 runs for Tamil Nadu vs Chandigarh. File

with a spectacular, counterattacking 109 and, in the company of Lakshay Thareja (36 batting), lifted the team to 145/5 after they had lost five wickets with just 11 runs on the board in their second dig.

BRIEF SCORES: Delhi 147 and 145/5 in 33 overs (Himmat Singh 109 batting; Deepak Dhopola 4/43) vs Uttarakhand 239 all out in 69.1 overs (Aditya Tare 83; Navdeep Saini 4/57)

Mumbai conceded 126 run lead against Uttar Pradesh

IT WAS not a happy homecoming for Mumbai at the Wankhede Stadium with



Ollie Pope plays a shot above the wicket-keeper's head during his unbeaten innings of 148 on Day 3 of the first Test. PTI

Bumrah's reverse swing stops free-swingers

VENKATA KRISHNA B
HYDERABAD, JANUARY 27

THE NEW ball was taken off Jasprit Bumrah's hand after a two-over spell. With Ashwin immediately finding turn, Rohit Sharma brought Axar Patel from the other end. Switching between mid-on or short fine-leg, Bumrah would use every opportunity, sometimes just five-ten seconds, to urgently shine the ball. When the ball was not in his hands, standing at fine-leg, he would point out the BCCI emblem on his t-shirt to whoever had the ball, signalling which side of the ball to shine.

For the next 13 overs, as England's top-order employed the reverse-sweep to good effect and thwarted the plans of India's spin trio, Bumrah would watch the proceedings quietly from his perch. He would often walk for a short conversation with Ashwin and Rohit, using those moments to attend the red-cherry.

With lush green outfields being the norm in Indian grounds, like the one in Hyderabad, and since the ICC stopped players from using saliva to shine the ball, bowlers have struggled to find reverse swing. The ball doesn't scuff up easily. But the most celebrated and revered spells of reverse-swing have all come on the green baizes of Australia. Like Imran Khan at the MCG in 1977 and Sarfaraz Nawaz at the same venue in 1979. But unless the ball is taken care of properly, there is little room for reverse-swing. Which is why India took utmost care of the ball. England's batsmen aided their cause a bit, as every time they employed the reverse-sweep, the new-ball bounced off the bold square patches adjacent to the pitch.

With due care, where players identify a slightly rough side and polish it with diligent care, the other side becomes totally rough. With all the cameras and the ban on using saliva to shine the ball, reverse swing has been hard to purchase, especially in India. James Anderson found some in the first Chennai Test during the last England tour. But in conditions where the spinners have



Jasprit Bumrah took two wickets. PTI

dominated, it has become a forgotten art, until Bumrah reminded everyone of it.

Unpredictable art

So before Bumrah got the ball back in his hand to send another spell, India had taken care of the ball, but how it would behave is unpredictable. The art of reverse-swing remains more mysterious than the mystery spinners. It caught England off-guard. They seemed prepared to counter the Indian spinners, who came out all attacking, but didn't have answers to Bumrah's reverse-swing.

"It's what you'd expect from a Test match, and it was a big moment in the game," Root, who faced that spell, would tell later. "I was disappointed not to get through it. You know that for four or five overs he will charge in and throw everything at us. You get through that and it puts a big dint in it mentally. You recognise that as a big moment in the game. One of my frustrations was to not still be there at the backend of it, but he's a quality bowler with a huge amount of skill and pace."

As Waqar Younis, a master exponent of reverse-swing claimed, players with a slinging action tend to be good at it. There is no bigger one than Bumrah, when it comes to an unorthodox fast bowler. So with Ben Duckett being at his adventurous best, and spinners being least threatening, Rohit called

SCORECARD

INDIA vs ENGLAND

RG STADIUM, HYDERABAD

Toss: England, chose to bat

ENGLAND 1st INNINGS 246

INDIA 1st INNINGS (O/N): 421/7

R Jadeja lbw b Root	87 (180b, 7x4, 2x6)
A Patel b Ahmed	44 (100b, 7x4, 1x6)
J Bumrah b Root	0 (1b)
M Siraj not out	0 (2b)
■ Extras (b 5, lb 6, nb 2, w 2)	15
■ Total (all out: 121 overs)	436
■ FoW: 8-436 (Ravindra Jadeja, 119.3 ov), 9-436 (Jasprit Bumrah, 119.4 ov), 10-436 (Axar Patel, 120.6 ov)	
■ Bowling: M Wood 17-1-47-0, T Hartley 25-0-131-2, J Leach 26-6-63-1, R Ahmed 24-4-105-2, J Root 29-5-79-4	

ENGLAND 2nd INNINGS

Z Crawley c Sharma b Ashwin 31 (33b, 4x4, 1x6)

A Duckett b Bumrah 47 (52b, 7x4)

O Pope batting 148 (208b, 17x4)

J Root lbw b Bumrah 2 (6b)

J Bumrah b Jadeja 10 (24b, 1x4)

B Stokes b Ashwin 6 (33b)

B Foakes b Patel 34 (81b, 2x4)

R Ahmed batting 16 (31b, 2x4)

■ Extras (b 10, lb 6, nb 6) 22

■ Total (6 wickets; 77 overs) 316

■ FoW: 1-45 (Zak Crawley, 9.2 ov), 2-113 (Ben Duckett, 18.0 ov), 3-117 (Joe Root, 20.6 ov), 4-140 (Jonny Bairstow, 27.4 ov), 5-163 (Ben Stokes, 36.5 ov), 6-275 (Ben Foakes, 66.6 ov)

■ Bowling: J Bumrah 12-3-29-2, R Ashwin 21-3-93-2, A Patel 15-2-69-1, R Jadeja 26-1-101-1, M Siraj 3-0-8-0

up Bumrah for second over after lunch. And in a five-over spell, Bumrah would open up the game for India. He got Duckett twice (India didn't review a turned down LBW appeal), nearly had Ollie Pope, Joe Root and Jonny Bairstow once before dismissing the former England captain. In those five over

the twin openings that Bumrah provided would then be used by Ravindra Jadeja and Ashwin to come up with two deliveries that took out Bairstow and Ben Stokes. From thereon, Pope had other plans as he answered England's prayers.

In his next over, Root survived an incoming one with a faint edge. Pope somehow kept out a devilish yorker. Bumrah then slipped in a slower one, which just lobbed over the vacant cover region. But to the next, which again cut in sharply – the shiner part was pointing inwards again – Root had no answers as it sneaked past his inside edge and hit him flush on the knee. The DRS confirmed it was hitting the leg-stump.

Even though Root and Pope knew what Bumrah's intentions were, they needed a bit of luck to survive. For, with the reverse-swing he was getting, Bumrah's out-swingers were dipping on the right-handers. With Bumrah running with the ball covered in his hands, the batsmen were getting only a fraction of second to figure out the shinier side of the ball and adjust accordingly. The real mastery of Bumrah was how cleverly he harnessed reverse swing. Having tested Root and Pope with ones that curved back in, he moved the ball away from Bairstow, who successfully kept out two Yorkers, including the last of Bumrah's spell that hit the inside-edge and stuck the pads before becoming a dead ball. 5-17-2 looked a lot better and hostile than the figures showed.

The twin openings that Bumrah provided would then be used by Ravindra Jadeja and Ashwin to come up with two deliveries that took out Bairstow and Ben Stokes. From thereon, Pope had other plans as he answered England's prayers.

Australians. The tourists were progressing well at 148-4, ahead by 170 runs, when first innings half-century-maker Kavem Hodge was sharply run-out by Travis Head.

Hodge had frustrated Australia for 74 balls in scoring a patient 29 before he took few steps outside his crease. Head showed brilliant reflexes at forward short leg and flicked the ball back onto the stumps with Hodge failing to ground his bat back in time.

Kirk McKenzie (41) and Alick Athanaze (35) both looked to have challenge Australian bowlers but both fell to Lyon on either side of the first two sessions as the offspinner found appreciable turn and bounce off the third day's wicket.

Earlier, Green made the first breakthrough of the day having captain Kraigg Brathwaite playing a loose drive which was caught by Labuschagne at cover for 16.

Lyon struck almost immediately when introduced into the attack with the veteran spinner teasing out McKenzie leg before wicket. Green should have had another wicket in the penultimate over before the dinner break but Smith spilt the one-handed chance at slip to give Athanaze a reprieve.

It was Smith's second error of the innings after dropping a low chance from Brathwaite on Starc late on Day 2.

BRIEF SCORES: West Indies 311 & 193 (Kirk McKenzie 41, Alick Athanaze 35; Josh Hazelwood 3/23) vs Australia 289-9 d/60/2 (Steven Smith 33*, Cameron Green 9*, Alzarri Joseph 1/19)

After a wobble, Aus take control

ASSOCIATED PRESS

JANUARY 27, BRISBANE

WEST INDIES made early inroads through its pace and made Australia work hard for the first time in its dominant test summer during the day-night test match at the Gabba on Saturday.

Australia lost its recently named test player of the year Usman Khawaja (10) and Marnus Labuschagne (5) to end Day 3 at 60-2, still needing 156 runs to make a clean sweep of its test summer that saw them rout Pakistan 3-0 and beat the West Indies by 10 wickets inside three days in the first test at Adelaide.

West Indies wasted numerous opportunities to swell its lead beyond 215 runs as it got bowled out for 193 in the last session after No. 11 batter Shamar Joseph had to retire hurt when he injured his right toe off a searing Mitchell Starc yorker. He was adjudged leg before wicket while negotiating Starc's toe-crushing yorker only to see the bowler had over-stepped.

Josh Hazlewood picked up 3-23 with his impeccable bowling and Nathan Lyon grabbed 3-42 with Starc and Cameron Green picking up one wicket apiece.

Shamar Joseph walked off in lot of pain and might not be able to bowl in the remainder of the test match, but Alzarri Joseph provided West Indies an early breakthrough when Khawaja edged the pacer down the legside.

On an oppressively hot and humid day, West Indies lost the initiative through careless batting and some smart catching by the

Bopanna, 43, becomes oldest man to win a Grand Slam title in Open Era

NAMIT KUMAR
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 27

FOUR YEARS ago, Rohan Bopanna was on the edge about his future in professional tennis. A Davis Cup veteran, mixed doubles Grand Slam champion, and former doubles World No.3, Bopanna's career was on the downside as a string of physical issues had wiped out the cartilage in both his knees as he entered his forties.

The emotions behind his four-year journey — from being on the cusp of retirement to his late-career upswing thanks to a revitalising fitness regimen and unlikely perfect partnership — were encapsulated in his reaction to becoming a history-maker at the Australian Open on Saturday.

The 43-year-old from Coorg won his maiden men's doubles Grand Slam title alongside Australian partner Matthew Ebden, with a 7-6(0), 7-5 win over the Italian pair of Simone Bolelli and Andrea Vavassori. As he clinched the title with a simple put-away overhead volley, Bopanna fell to the ground before indulging in a roaring chest bump, now the duo's signature, a reaction

out of place with the Indian's usually calm and mild-mannered persona.

At 43, he is now the oldest men's player to win a Grand Slam title in the Open Era. Earlier this week, he had also ensured that he will become the oldest World No.1 in tennis history. Ebden will be behind him — the same number of points but having played more tournaments.

Bopanna summed up his emotions while speaking on court after winning the title. "A couple of years ago, I remember sending (my wife) a video message saying I am going to call it a day. I went five months without winning a match," he said. "But that perseverance inside me kept me going. I'm glad I could do that, and change so many things and find a wonderful partner."

Unlikely partnership

Ebden and Bopanna formed an unlikely partnership at the back end of 2022, with both eyeing change at the end of a tough year and having very few other options within the locker room. But they became instantly successful.

Last year, they reached four Masters 1000 finals, winning the title at Indian Wells and



Rohan Bopanna and Matthew Ebden chest bump after beating the Italian pair of Simone Bolelli and Andrea Vavassori in the final of the Australian Open. AP

"A couple of years ago, I remember sending (my wife) a video message saying I am going to call it a day. I went five months without winning a match."

ROHAN BOPANNA

reaching the US Open final. The two surged up the rankings and qualified for the year-end ATP finals. Bopanna also reached last year's Australian Open mixed doubles final alongside Sania Mirza in her final Major.

Despite the remarkable consistency shown by Bopanna and Ebden, the duo's poor record in finals last year and their inability to get over the line when put under pressure deep into big tournaments had become a challenge to overcome.

They were in a similar situation on Saturday, coming into the match as heavy favourites against unseeded opponents. The first half of the encounter was tense. While the Indo-Australian pair were never behind, they had failed to convert two break point chances early, and were forced to save one at the back end of the set before taking it into a

tiebreaker.

It was in the seven point shootout that the pair appeared to be totally locked in, failing to make a single error and winning it 7-0, piling all the pressure on their Italian counterparts.

Bopanna boasts of a big serve and solid forehand, but in the latter stages of his career, it has been his quick reflexes and composure at the net that have provided the X factor. Coupled with Ebden's baseline endurance and solid defensive play, the duo have formed a formidable partnership. And it was that exact pattern of play, accentuating both strengths, that eventually led the Italian pair to blink under pressure and lose a service game to love.

As Ebden served out the match, they would not blink under pressure. After many near losses, he had lost four of the five Major finals — men's and mixed — Bopanna would have his moment. World No.1 and Grand Slam champion.

"Of course, by now, I'm sure a lot of you already know my age, you know how old I am," he said on court after the final. "But I've changed it now. I like to say I'm at level 43, not age 43."

Dutch thrash India in Hockey5s World Cup final

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 27

NETHERLANDS' DOMINATION of women's hockey is the stuff of legends. They are 9-time champions of the senior World Cup and five-time winners of the junior event, currently holding both titles along with the Pro League. They are also the reigning Olympic champions. So it should come as no surprise that a new international hockey world event would see the Dutch emerge as the first-time gold medallists.

India were at the receiving end of the relentless Orange machine on Saturday as the powerhouses clinched the inaugural FIH Hockey5s Women's World Cup 2024 in Muscat, Oman. The World No.1 of the traditional 11-a-side format steamrolled India in a brutal first-half display before taking the foot off the pedal in the second half to eventually win the title clash 7-2.

Hockey5s, played 5-a-side on a shorter playing area, features near non-stop action as the ball is in play constantly due to rebound boards replacing the sidelines and bylines in traditional field hockey.

The Dutch, who are known for their pace of play and passing accuracy, made the most of this to stun the Indians in a ruthless first half where they scored 6 unanswered goals. Goalkeeper and captain Rajani Etimarpur actually started the match well with a sharp save and India nearly took the lead at the other end. But after that brief period of hope, India's chances were snuffed out quickly.

Tournament of comebacks

India's path to the final was one of comebacks and second half scoring sprees. Against USA in the group stage, they came back from 0-2 to win 7-3. In the quarterfinal against New Zealand, they conceded the first goal and then scored 11 without a response. The semifinal saw South Africa lead twice in the first half, but India hit back on both occasions and then went on to win 7-3.

But a 0-6 deficit was too much to overcome. To their credit, India once again had a good second half.

By a combination of the Dutch taking the foot off the pedal and India improving their passing accuracy, the women in blue shaded the second period 2-1 with Rutaja Pisal and Jyoti Chhatri on the scoresheet but the damage was done early. It was, however, a good outing overall for Rajani's side who clinched the first silver.

The men's Hockey 5s World Cup follows in Muscat, starting from Sunday. India, to be led by Tokyo Olympic bronze medallist Simranjeet Singh, are grouped in Pool B alongside Egypt, Jamaica, and Switzerland.

Belarusian thrashes China's Zheng Qinwen to defend her Australian Open title, the first woman to do so at a Major since 2013

NAMIT KUMAR
JANUARY 27

PRECIOUS FEW tennis players in the world hit a ball as hard as Aryna Sabalenka. Even fewer, perhaps nobody, commit to the level of all-out aggression that the Belarusian World No.2 produces on every point, in every match, every week.

As all power players have had to do to excel on the big stage, Sabalenka's consistency at the biggest tournaments are a product of her building a more well-rounded game with the mental resilience to deal with setbacks and emotional composure during big moments. But when she's on song, it is the sheer ferocity of her groundstrokes, the power that comes from her racquet that make so many of her shots unreturnable, that makes her the toughest prospect to deal with on tour.

And just as each of her previous six opponents had done in what had been a flawless campaign, Zheng Qinwen, the 12th seeded 21-year-old from China, was forced to contend with, and bleakly succumbed, to that ferocity as Sabalenka raced to a 6-3, 6-2 win to defend her Australian Open title on Saturday. The Belarusian became the first women's player to defend a Grand Slam singles title since her compatriot Victoria Azarenka did so in Melbourne Park itself back in 2013. Sabalenka won the second Major, and 14th tour-level title, of her career.

Unlike her maiden triumph in Melbourne last year — where she had to deal with some tricky opponents and had to overturn a one-set deficit in an epic final full of twists and turns and top-tier shotmaking against Elena Rybakina — Sabalenka was simply unmatched this year. She did not drop a single set, and only lost 31 games (second-lowest in tournament history).

Zheng made history on Saturday, becoming only the second Chinese player, after Li Na, to reach a singles Major final, representing a rising tennis nation. She will go into the top 10 of the rankings on Monday. The 21-year-old has a game with a high ceiling, with an impressive topspin-laden forehand and a big serve. Having found her way to the final in an inexplicably open half of the draw where the top players fell early, Zheng did not even have to face a top 50 player en route to the final.

Ultimately, the test against Sabalenka proved to be one step too high.

The scoreline did not flatter the dominant Belarusian, as Zheng failed to cope with the power from the other side of the net, make



Aryna Sabalenka of Belarus after defending her Australian Open title at Melbourne Park on Saturday. Reuters



Yeah, it takes me so much time to become who I am right now on court, to have this control over myself, and to understand myself better."

ARYNA SABALENKA

2023, 2024 AUS OPEN WINNER

SABALENKA ON SONG

Aryna Sabalenka has reached at least the semifinals of all Grand Slams last year and has now won back-to-back Australian Open titles

Grand Slam	Results	Years
Aus Open	Winner	2023, 2024
French Open	Semifinal	2023
Wimbledon	Semifinal	2021, 2023
US Open	Finalist	2023

half — 31 out of 56 return games (55.35%) — throughout the tournament.

Consistency at big events

While the rankings may not say so, with Iga Swiatek stealing the World No. 1 spot at the end of last year despite Sabalenka spending more time in it, it is hard to argue that the Belarusian is the best player in the world, not just on form but also consistency at the biggest tournaments.

Women's tennis has been known to throw up chaotic results over the past few years but Sabalenka has reached at least the semifinal at each of the last 6 Grand Slams. Even as each of her title rivals bowed out of the tournament early, Sabalenka continued her peerless march towards the title, failing to buckle under the pressure of defending her maiden Major, arriving in each match as the favourite to win.

Sabalenka had for long been considered one of the biggest tennis talents, the destructive power of her shotmaking had always been hard to look away from.

But, by the beginning of 2022, despite being an established top 10 player, she would often get lost at the business end of tournaments. She tended to give away leads, her serve would combust-leading to chart-topping double fault numbers (one time as high as 24 in a match) — and there was a lack of competitive edge.

Not only has she worked hard to make improvements on serve and return and develop a more well-rounded game, but also developed a mental resilience to return week after week to produce her best tennis despite losing some tense, heartbreaking matches deep into the biggest tournaments last year.

It would not be far-fetched, then, to harbour expectations of seeing her play, and dominate, many more of these big finals in the biggest tournaments in the near future.

WTT STAR CONTENDER

French brothers Alexis and Felix plotting to end Chinese TT dominance

ANIL DIAS
JANUARY 27

ONE SUPPORTS the suave Roger Federer, the other backs the gritty Rafael Nadal. One uses an unusual penhold grip while the other prefers the more 'normal' shakehand grip. Looks and family aside, there may not be many aspects similar between the French bespectacled brothers, 20-year-old Alexis and 17-year-old Felix Lebrun, but the one commonality they share is their fixation on ending China's dominance in table tennis. And they're depending on the competition between each other to raise their game to unbelievable heights.

From both being ranked over 750th in the world at the start of 2022, the brothers are now in the world's top 25, with Felix, the younger brother, ranked 8th. The limelight on them has magnified thanks to the Olympic Games being held in their backyard later this year. International ranking doesn't matter much to both of them as much as the head-to-head record does. As of now, Alexis,

who's ranked 22nd in the world, has won both their official meetings. But he knows Felix is close to ending that run.

"I'm very happy to win because when you are the big brother there are some expectations on you to beat the little brother. But he (Felix) is an incredible table tennis player and when I'm playing him, I appreciate his level and know I have to raise mine as well," Alexis told The Indian Express.

The stage was set for a meeting between the Lebrun brothers in the quarterfinals of the ongoing WTT Star Contender in Goa but Nigeria's Aruna Quadri played spoilsport, beating Alexis in the Round of 16. Felix though didn't let World No. 13 Aruna get the better of both brothers in the quarterfinal, beating him in straight games.

While Felix says he wanted his brother to win over Aruna, he's thankful that he didn't have to face him. "When I play Alexis, I do play with full intensity, but I never seem to win. I think he knows my game too well," he said after his win.

It was almost like the brothers had no chance of picking up another profession or



Felix Lebrun (L) and his brother Alexis are ranked in the top-25 and will be in the spotlight during the Paris Olympics later this year. WTT

ranked as high as World No. 14. Their dad started coaching after his career and opened a table tennis club in Montpellier where both brothers first started playing.

Table tennis family

"Our family is what you call a table tennis family. I joined the club when I was still little but when I was born, I think I had a bat in my hand," jokes Alexis.

The sport is so infused into them that even their dinner sessions together are largely extended analytical sessions.

"If we are having dinner, then it's just TT with my father and brother. My sister and mother will speak about other things but we aren't usually listening. I've no idea what they talk about," laughs Alexis.

Alexis, who, like his favourite sportsman, Rafael Nadal, uses his ferocious forehand to get the better of his opponents, was the first between both the brothers to take the TT world by storm. At the 2022 WTT Contender in Tunis, he beat 2016 European champion Emmanuel Lebesson, Japanese star Tomokazu Harimoto, and 2019 Worlds

silver medallist Mattias Falck. The best win of his career though was undoubtedly when he stunned World No. 1 Fan Zhendong at the WTT Champions Macau last year. It was also the first time he was seen as a real threat to the Chinese.

Felix, who started using a rare penhold grip after seeing a top Chinese player use it, has had some fascinating victories in the last year itself. He did exceedingly well to win the European Games, before beating six-time Olympic medalist Dmitrij Ovtcharov to win the WTT Contender in Antalya. His greatest morale-boosting victory though he said was taking a set of the great Ma Long at the 2022 WTT Contender Budapest.

"I was super happy to be able to play against him, as he's starting to be a bit older, I wanted to play him before he stopped," the 17-year-old had said in a previous interview.

"I saw interviews where he said that at my age, he was not playing as well as me, and it's super pleasant that he said that."

Felix, who's still in school but completing his course online, says he likes table tennis because it's almost like boxing. "The sport is

very complete. Even the number 1 in the world can improve in many ways. I like that. I like the competition between opponents. The table is quite small so we are very close to each other. I like that. It's not like boxing because we don't touch each other but we can think like that," says Felix.

One of the reasons the Chinese have dominated the world of table tennis is because of the sheer number of players that play the sport and the fact that they don't have any dearth of quality sparring partners. And having a quality sparring partner at home is how the Lebruns intend to end the Chinese dominance.

"When we train together, we help each other. And even when we play against each other we are also training each other," says Felix, adding. "We both give each other advice. When we play a match in training or competition, we are both very serious about winning because then we can have bragging rights. It's a good situation because both of us try to improve so we can beat the other but at the same time, we're making each other be the best as possible."

THE SUNDAY EXPRESS MAGAZINE



POINT OF VIEW, PAGE 2

Go Slow to Go Far

Shelja Sen on savouring the metaphorical winter sun and loitering with intent in the New Year

eye

DIFFERENT STROKES

With 108 exhibitors, including 72 galleries and international art institutions, the 15th edition of the India Art Fair that opens in Delhi on February 1 will be a confluence of diverse expressions

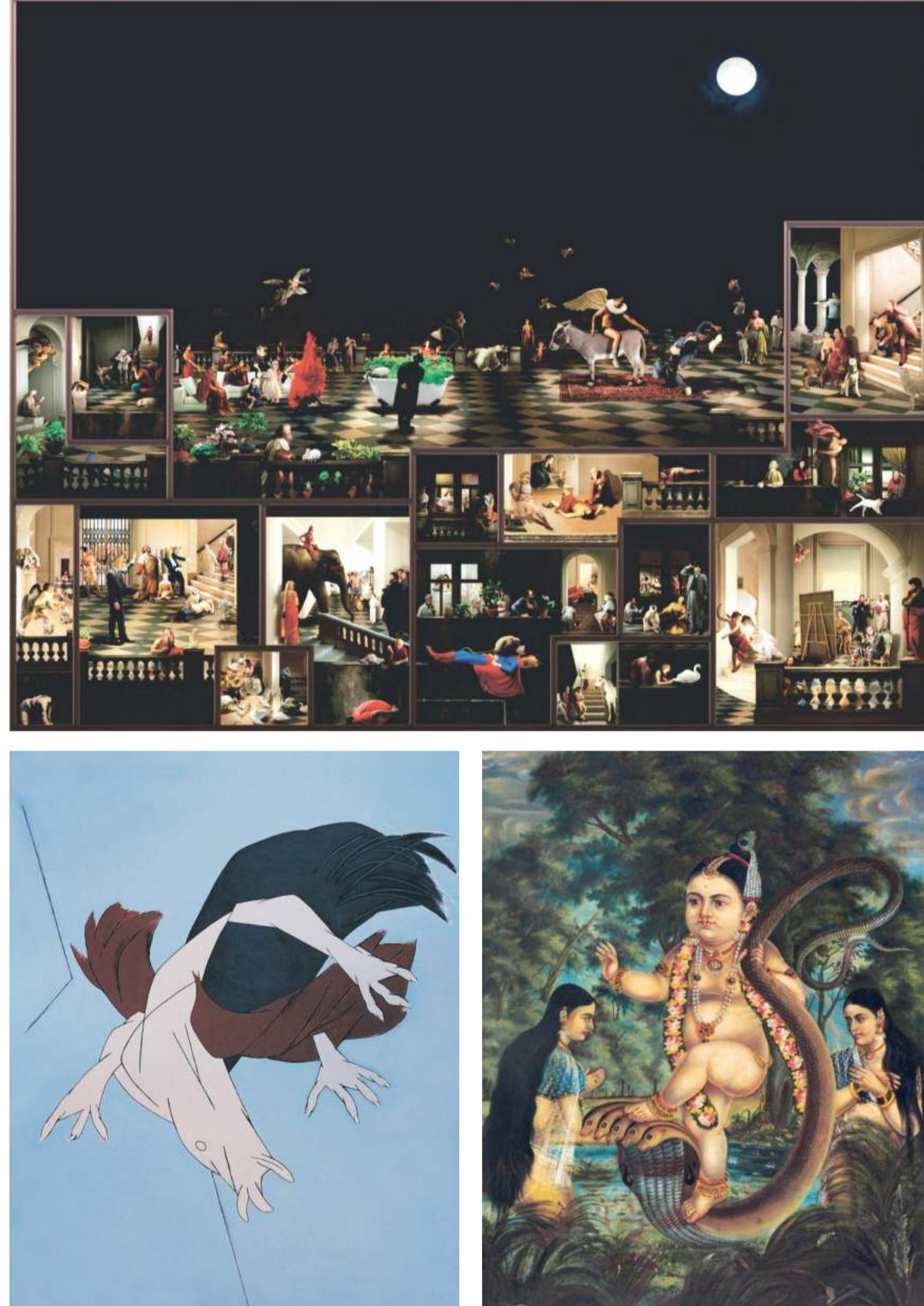
Vandana Kalra

FOUNDER OF India Art Fair (IAF) Neha Kirpal vividly recalls how she scribbled its initial blueprint on an airplane bag on a flight from Mumbai to Delhi in 2007. "I had been to a few international art fairs, including Frieze London. Indian art was at a different stage at the time but I felt it was the right moment to create an accessible platform that could democratise art and bring in a whole range of art forms for public consumption. That was the foundational belief. That it could gain mainstream validation and commercial viability of being an art fair is something that has been proven over time," says Kirpal. Then 26, the postgraduate in marketing promptly presented the plan to her then-boss — Sunil Gautam, founder of Hanmer & Partners — requesting for a loan of Rs 1 crore that she committed to return with interest.

Not everyone in the art fraternity shared her conviction, but the then art-world outsider did manage to bring on board over 30 galleries for the inaugural edition of the then India Art Summit held at Pragati Maidan in Delhi in 2008. "As the world started looking at the opportunity for an art market in India, not just the art landscape, the fair became a market catalyst and beyond that, in the Indian context, also a forum to create discourse around art, reaching out to people who may not otherwise step into galleries without feeling awkward. We encouraged public consumption of art irrespective of whether they could afford to buy it or not," recalls Kirpal. The resounding reception it received was evidenced by the fact that the 2009 edition saw an exhibitor list of over 50 galleries. By 2018, when Kirpal sold her stake in the fair, over 70 galleries and institutions from around the world were on the roster and the footfall was over a lakh. Angus Montgomery owns the entity now, led by chairman Sandy Angus, whose portfolio includes Taipei Dangdai, Art SG, Sydney Contemporary, Art Central Hong Kong, Photo London and Tokyo Gendai. "I really admire how it has shaped up and grown qualitatively with such a strong curatorial programming," says Kirpal.

On February 1, when the 15th edition of IAF opens at NSIC Exhibition Grounds in Delhi, Kirpal will be one of the attendees. Boasting 108 exhibitors, including 72 galleries and international art institutions, welcoming visitors into the fair will be artist Siddharth Gohil's (aka Khatra) 100-metre-long carpet with geometric motifs. The tent facade designed by artist duo Jiten Thukral and Sumir Tagra is meant to be repurposed into collectable bags by the Dalit-run Chamar Studio after the fair.

While the narrative will weave in diverse forms of art, taking centre stage will be gallery booths showcasing some of India's foremost names. Within its array, Akar Prakar will include Nandalal Bose, Dhoomimal Gallery will present Jamini Roy, Sanchit Art will feature Ram Kumar and Art Alive will bring in Manu Parekh. Rana Begum will be showing at Jhaveri Contemporary, Dayanita Singh at Nature Morte, Ayesha Sultan at Experimenter, Tayeba Begum Lipi at Shrine Empire, and Mithu Sen at Chemould Prescott Road. DAG will present a curated showcase, "India Past and Present", which will bring together modernists such as MF Husain, FN Souza and Krishen Khanna with Western artists who travelled to India, such as



Thomas Daniell and Marius Bauer, to explore the evolution of Indian art through the 18th to 21st centuries. Among the highlights at the Vadehra Art Gallery booth will be a 1999 Tyeb Mehta canvas titled *Falling Bird*, alongside works by artists such as A Ramachandran, Anita Dube, Atul Dodiya and architect Balkrishna Doshi. "We want to have a wide representation of most of our artists and also something for everyone who comes to the fair, which includes seasoned collectors, important

CROSS-CULTURAL CONNECT

(Clockwise from top) Manjunath Kamath's *The Last Night*; Kaliya Daman by R Regunatha Naidu; Tyeb Mehta's canvas titled *Falling Bird*

curators from abroad and new collectors and young buyers," says Roshini Vadehra, director of Vadehra Art Gallery.

The international galleries will also bring in works by the diaspora and well-known international artists into their booths, including Indian-American Rina Banerjee (1x1 Art Gallery), Pakistani artist Waqas Khan (Aicon), London-based Amba Sayal-Bennett (Indigo+Madder), Karachi-born Affan Baghpatti (Aicon Contemporary), alongside international

biggies such as Indian-origin British artist Anish Kapoor (Galleria Continua) and Nigerian ceramic artist Ozioma Onuzulike (Marc Straus). At neugerrriemschneider, the highlight will be Ai Weiwei's *Water Lilies in Woma* blocks, spanning more than 13 metres, inspired by Claude Monet's meditative paintings of his meticulously crafted gardens.

This year will see the launch of a Design section featuring limited-edition handmade collectibles designed by seven independent studios, including Atelier Ashiesh Shah (Mumbai), Gunjan Gupta (New Delhi) and Karishma Swali & Chanakya School of Craft (Mumbai) in addition to celebrated design galleries Carpenters Workshop Gallery and aequo in the main galleries section.

Traditional genres of art and South Asia's rich artistic heritage will be in the spotlight at the Platform section, where the Delhi Crafts Council will exhibit traditional woodworking technique of marquetry; Inherited Arts Forum will make a curated presentation on the artistic trope of 'Devi and her vahana' with paintings and sculptures; Serenity Arts will bring traditional Bhutanese Thangka paintings, and Gallery Ragini and Ojas Art will showcase a variety of traditions, ranging from Madhubani and Gond to Pattachitra and Bhil art.

The digitally-inclined present will be documented in The Studio that will also host digital artists in residence. Dhruv Jani, for instance, will present an adventure-quest video game experience where players will learn the collective impact of human activity on natural landscapes. Illustrator and muralist Sadhana Prasad will create two possible futures — one ruled by nature and the other by current human excesses. Visitors, too, can create their own digital garden through an interactive project designed by Thukral and Tagra, made using creative code on an iPad.

Led by artists Jyothidas KV and Sajan Mani, the fair's performance art programme will invite audiences to observe the realisation of art through the genre. Mani's performance will be inspired by the ritualistic dances of lower caste communities in Dravidian traditions in which human bodies ceremonially transform into those of gods. Through *Thaan: Searching the Self*, artist Manmeet Devgun will pose the ethereal question, "Where do you belong?", navigating the gaps between individual personality and socially-prescribed norms.

Apart from the panel discussions and thematic curated walks, additional initiatives have also been planned for more direct participation from the audience, including an art carousel by the Kiran Nadar Museum of Art that will invite audiences to paint as a collective. The Inclusion Lab will curate workshops on Mosaic art, Pop art, Mandala art and AI art. In a first, art tours have also been designed for children — from introducing them to the diverse arts within South Asia, to engaging with ecology through art or observing "topsy-turvy" sculptures, vibrant paintings and videos. "It is heartening how it has touched so many people and attracts diverse viewers, from seasoned collectors to new buyers, some of whom specially travel to Delhi from tier-2, tier-3 cities. There is an infrastructure and ecosystem built around it, with so many significant exhibitions taking place across the city," says Reni Modi, director of Gallery Espace, who has been part of the platform since its launch in 2008. "I always believed it was important for India to have an art fair to strengthen its position on the global art map," she adds.

QUICK QUESTIONS



JAYA ASOKAN
IAF Director

'More Indian collectors are now looking outward'

The art market in India

As the Indian economy continues to grow, so does the art market, which is at a great place right now. Last year saw several big sales and new records being set, including the Amrita Sher-Gil and VS Gaitonde sale. Several initiatives are coming up in different cities, which shows that people have an appetite for art. We are trying to do our bit across India through constant diversification, including representation of different artistic traditions, new trends in art or initiatives like digital artist-in-residence programmes and commissioning artists who may not be as widely recognised but who we believe in.

More international art

This year will see our highest international participation yet, but I feel the fair will always be dominated by Indian and South Asian art as that is our expertise. We are also increasingly finding that the world is looking at Indian collectors to acquire international art. There is also an increased demand from Indian collectors, who are now looking outward. It is leading to an interesting cross-cultural dialogue.

Dedicated design section

I have been wanting to launch a design section for years. Not only does it encourage greater cross-pollination among creative fields but we also truly believe that the two creative streams feed into each other. This year will see design studios from India and abroad who specialise in collectible, handmade and limited edition design, which is a differentiator. The focus will be on contemporary interventions into India's rich craft traditions.

Diverse display at booths

A lot of it has to be organic and born out of the content but representation is important to us — of diverse art forms, technique-specific, gender-specific, emerging and established artists and so on. We try to achieve a broad range when we are working with the selection committee and discussions are also held with galleries to make suggestions.

VANDANA KALRA

Out and About

Some of the outdoor projects at the fair

Placed in the enclosed premises, Jitish Kallat's installation *Antumbra*, which premieres at the fair, is a reflection on time, woven with themes of confinement, hope and resilience. It highlights echoes from Nelson Mandela's imprisonment through calculated milestones, including blood pressure records and a glimpse into Mandela's desk calendars.

Tokyo-born artist Shun Sudo's installation *Imagination* will feature some of his signature motifs, including buttons and flowers, in bright hues. Known to blend Japanese calligraphic traditions with images from global pop culture, the artist states: "Paint because that moment gives me irresistible happiness."

Borrowing its title from the Hindi idiom 'deewaron ke bhi kaan hote hain' (walls have ears too), artist Sajid Wajid Shaikh's kinetic installation is equipped with antennas and carefully crafted human ears that will follow the audience as they move, warning of constant vigilance. In a note on the work, the artist comments how it emphasises "the broader social and ethical implications of pervasive surveillance, including its impact on democracy, human rights and trust in institutions."

Inspired by Gigi Scaria's move to New Delhi from his native Kerala in the late '90s, *Elevator to the Subcontinent* allows viewers to travel through some of the varied social strata across India. The video projections



that form the sides of a fabricated elevator take them into the domestic spaces of people from different backgrounds, finally opening into a terrace overlooking the cityscape.

A participant in the Students' Biennale segment at the Kochi-Muziris Biennale 2022-2023, Pulak Sarkar's site-specific installation *Reel or Real* will address the duality of truth and fiction as he works

MAKE ROOM

(Left) Gigi Scaria's *Elevator to the Subcontinent*; Skarma Sonam Tashi and Philipp Frank's *Transformations*

simultaneously on restoring and deconstructing the world around him.

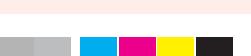
Multiple ceramic artists come together to design *Clay in Common* that celebrates the medium and the disparate artistic practices of working with it.

Not all things beautiful might last forever — that's the thought that artist duo Doyel Joshi and Neil Ghose Balser will ponder



through their bright red ice sculpture *Provenance* that will melt away over the four days of the fair.

Skarma Sonam Tashi and Philipp Frank's immersive installation *Transformations* guides the audience on new ways of engaging with our surrounding by evoking the terrain of Ladakh using sustainable materials such as upcycled plastic and reused bamboo.



DOWN IN JUNGLELAND

RANJIT LAL

Author, environmentalist and bird watcher

THOSE SMILING JAWS

A marsh crocodile

WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

Wait A While

How a crocodile safari amid the mangroves beyond Old Goa stays true to its claim

AFTER A mercifully brief ferry-crossing, in a contraption powered by a deafeningly guttural diesel engine belching fumes all over us, we get off, walk a little distance to the channel where our 25-seater boat awaits to take us on our 'crocodile safari' amid the mangroves beyond Old Goa. She has 'Jakes Snakes' painted in red right up front, and the majordomo who warmly welcomes us aboard, (presumably Jake) heartily thanks us for our money. He looks like a squatter, a shorter version of Bob Marley, complete with curly locks (but with dark glasses), so what can possibly go wrong? He's assisted by a crew of two or three thin youths, they're his spotters. There are about 20 tourists on board — and we are the only two locals.

"Welcome, welcome! We are going to see birds and crocodiles," we are assured as the boat slips into the olive-green channel. Jake and his crew station

on the mud, its scaly clay-coloured hide looking like a cracked mosaic of mud. These are muggers, aka marsh crocodiles, and this guy is big. He lies there and then slowly and lazily, opens his mouth... as everyone 'oohs' and 'aahs'. Like a work-from-home dentist, I examine his teeth through binoculars: they are sparkingly clean but sadly, many are missing and I'm immediately murmuring that line from Bob Dylan, 'Old men, with broken teeth, stranded without love...' Is this big old foggy one of them, lying there alone on the mudbank? The boat has slowed so we can get a proper eyeful of him. This broad-snouted fellow, whose ancestry goes back 400+ million years unchanged, is recharging his batteries in the sun.

A fawn-coloured dog skirts the mudbank, edging towards the croc... unaware. Breakfast? But no — it figures and warily circles the grinning reptile. Which, with enormous grace, just shimmies forward and glides into the olive waters, only his eyes and the scaly ridge of his back and tail are visible

• • •

The crocodile glides into the olive waters, only his eyes and the scaly ridge of his back and tail are visible

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themselves on the prow and excitedly begin pointing out birds: "See that white bird — little egret. And that one, small kingfisher. On the right side that big bird — Brahminy kite..." He has the local birds on his fingertips.

There are some areas which are no-go, private prawn hatcheries, where nets have been spread. We pass a small clattering boat-building yard and glide under an arched bridge carrying traffic.

The mangroves hunch over the banks on either side: their above-water roots are mud-coloured and remind me of ill-fated Wi-Fi antennae. The trees themselves are not the most prettiest, but they are so invaluable to this ecosystem. Jake and crew amidst manning the prow are walking up and down, asking everyone if all is well. All is well, except... The boat glides around a gentle bend, and then there's Jake excitedly exclaiming, "Crocodile!" He points to the mudbank on the right. And sure enough, there it is, sprawled

"Will they fight?" someone asks. Ah, Animal Fight Club, here we come!

"If they are boy and girl, they may kissy-kissy," Jake tells us grinning, and I think, it's only in Goa that your tour guide can get away with saying something like that without having killjoy protesters feed him to the crocs!

"We'll now serve refreshments," Jake tells us smilingly as his spotters courteously ask us what we'd like — beer, sprite or coke. He'd promised us crocodiles and delivered, and I thought it really must be tough on him, on those occasions when the crocs were not cooperative. The British lady sitting in front of me tells me she would have been 'gutted' if they hadn't seen any. The beer is chilled but alas, so are the samosas.

As we get up to deboard, I notice, there are virtually no young people on board — just a couple of toddlers brought by their parents. And apart from us, no Indians at all.

Go Slow to Go Far

Wishing you a year of loitering with intent

IMAGINE

SHELJA SEN

Shelja Sen is a narrative and family therapist, writer, co-founder of Children First. In this column, she curates the know-how of the children and youth she has the honour of working with. Email her at shelja.sen@childrenfirstindia.com

IMAGINE IF we could zoom out and view the Earth from a wide lens at about 30,000 feet and witness the daily lives of urban people as if on time-lapse mode. What would we see? People dashing off in the morning to school/college/work, meeting deadlines, a flurry of after-school activities, honking through traffic jams, grabbing quick meals, endless scrolling, checking and rechecking emails, surfing through TV channels, catching up with friends or family and crashing out to wake up to an alarm to start the cycle again.

Now what if we could zoom in on one such harried person and asked them what was happening? What is all this urgency about? What would they say? Maybe, they might say, "There is never enough time to do everything on our to-do lists — the only way we can manage is if we speed up." And we might ask the person, "But why?" They might look at us as if we have lost our minds and say, "This is life, you have to keep up or you are out of the game."

The game of speed has become the currency of our times. Our culture condemns anything slow. The faster, the better — be it food, shopping, internet, fashion trends, entertainment, learning, travel, work — everything instant, everything at the click of a key. But at what cost? Zoom out again and you see the Arctic ice is melting, the pandemic has killed millions and people can barely breathe in our over-polluted, overpopulated cities but we are too busy to step away from the treadmill of our frenetic lives. Zoom back in and we see the impact of it on people's health and well-being.

If I were to pick up a common theme that most people seem to be struggling with, it would be, "I am not doing enough"; "I am too slow", leading to the conclusion, "I am unworthy." We have internalised the cultural propaganda of constant racing so it should not come as a surprise that our mental health struggles are at an all-time high.

Sana's day started at 5 am when she got ready for her football practice, after that a full day of school, then back home followed by either dance, creative writing class or a planned play date, then back home to do her homework, dinner, reading time before bed. She had come to me with her mother as she had not been sleeping well at night. She told me, "I am constantly feeling guilty that I am not doing enough and that I am a loser." Sana is an eight-year-old in Grade 3. I shudder to imagine what it would be like when she hits the tuition and coaching circuit in high school. From the time they are little, children have been brought up with a constant hum of "Hurry", "Do it now and do it fast." Like clockwork toys, we keep winding them up, and when all that pressure starts taking a toll on them, we criticise them for being a "loser" and not up to speed.

Shyla is a lot older than Sana but she had lived in what she called, the "hamster wheel of dopamine high," for many years. The constant buzz of getting things done can be really seductive. There is a heady rush as we tick off things from our never-ending to-do list but this hustling comes at a cost too. We stumble forward exhausting our energy from one surge demand to another. If an eight-year-old is feeling guilty about not doing enough then

GETTY IMAGES

we really have to pause and reflect on what steps we need to take to opt out of the tyranny of the "hamster wheel" culture.

Act of refusal: I resonate so much with Jack Halberstam's quote from his wonderful book, *Queer Art of Failure* (Duke University Press, 2011), "Failing at something that society has told us to do can be a revolutionary act." These micro-acts can be as tiny as talking slowly (I had to teach myself that), doing one thing at a time, refusing to do things that drain us out like endless scrolling on Instagram, Netflix binges, meaningless socialising, taking on too many projects, keeping a perfect home, etc. These step-backs might seem trivial but you will be amazed at the ripple effect they can have in our over-committed and over-engineered lives. Why speed race the rest of our time on Earth and wonder at the end where it all went?

Put guardrails on what matters: While I was writing this column on a Sunday, our cat, Tula, tried to nudge the laptop off me so that he could nestle in. As I tried to push him away, the irony of the situation hit me. I was writing about slowing down while I was racing for the deadline myself. I put the writing away and curled up with Tula for an hour-long nap in the winter sun. It was a delightful experience I might have lost out on for the sake of speed. Our life is what we pay attention to. What

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Our life is what we pay attention to. What are you paying attention to in the 168 hours of your week?

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are you paying attention to in the 168 hours of your week? If I had been more intentional about my time in the previous week, I might have spent less time on answering endless emails (Sisyphean task!), watching useless shows on OTT, and missed a social event that did not mean much to me. I might have used that time to slowly work on my column rather than rushing through it on Sunday and depriving myself of sun-soaked catnap (pun intended).

Go slow to go far: I am a keen campaigner for a slow life though you can see I have serious lapses. In narrative practice, we have a mantra: "Go slow to go far" and there is so much wisdom in this. Our conversations in therapy can become more meaningful and the impact on people's lives stronger when we slow things down. It sounds quite counter-intuitive, doesn't it? Suppose, we take an example of writing a book. I hear this very often from people, "I want to write a book but I do not have time." Actually, they find time is less instead of just taking out one hour a day or little longer stretches during weekends and holidays. Slowly and slowly brewing that idea, diving deep to reflect, loiter and create. You will be amazed at how your mind can create magic when it is not working like a hyperactive beehive. As a parent, you can find that one thing that your child loves to do, what is important to them — dancing, sports, art, reading, music, writing, anything. Try to make sure they have fun with that activity every day, without any urgency and see them build the skills for a slow life. Shyla explained to me, "What matters is a slow, engaged, intentional and curated life."

So as 2024 rolls out, let's slow down, savour the metaphorical winter sun and loiter with intent.

The need to guard plurality

Can we protect from harm every being we share the planet with, especially those in our communities, both locally and nationally?

SLICE OF LIFE

Suvir Saran is a chef, author, educator and world traveller

THese lines from chapter 12 of the Bhagavad Gita contain precious words and sentiments I hold dear to my heart. Lord Krishna taught them to Arjuna, and I learned them from my Dadi, Kamla Bhatnagar. Every morning, after her prayers, she would feed the birds with the food that was served as a holy offering to the gods. When I was a child, she taught me that the avian menagerie collecting on the rooftop of our Delhi home would take the food to the greater beings that we associated with divinity. Dadi also made me appreciate the work that the birds did. How, despite their small frames, they fly far and wide for food and water and still seem extraordinarily comfortable going about living the life they need to. Birds, Dadi told me, exemplified a life driven by *karma* and *equipoise*, defined in the Gita as life worthy of being appreciated by our creator.

It was my good fortune to have had Dadi, my maternal grandparents, my Bua and Phupha ji, and my parents as constant reminders of the teachings of the Gita. The tutelage I got from them on Hinduism was the age-old wisdom of an ancient way of being, of a belief system that had lived so long, it was not shackled by the confines of books, temples, mosques, churches, or syn-

minister very wisely used as India's calling card for its G20 presidency — 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam', One Earth, One Family, One Future.

The India of the 1970s into the early 1990s taught me to value progressive inclusivity that viewed the world as one universal family transcending the borders of language and ideology. We were the children of parents born in India as the subcontinent saw its earth stained by the ghastly blood of the vexing tragedy of the Partition. Modern School, Vasant Vihar in New Delhi where I spent most of my schooling years, was a fertile playground for study in the Hindustani way of celebrating plurality of thought, action, and deed. I learned songs in several Indian languages, hymns celebrating the nation, its religions, seasons, festivals and syncretic make-up. I was one of a dozen students recording these for All India Radio to use as morning assembly sing-alongs, something I am still very proud of. This lesson in linguistics has blessed me with a skill in learning language and deciphering words in foreign ones. But that was then.

My arrival in New York City (NYC) in 1993 gave me a glimpse to a world very different and rather insular. As big as life was in NYC, America was living a life small in thought and deed. It didn't take long for me to realise that the US was a tale of two nations: a nation that was urban and one with the world, and another that was suburban and rural and at odds with those it othered within its borders and beyond.

In Manhattan, I found kindred spirits

AFFIRMING LIFE

The idea of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' has always transcended borders of language and ideology

who were global citizens as defined broadly in the Gita, who welcomed every wave of immigration, no matter what part of the planet they came from. In doing so, they added layers of cultural sophistication to the fabric of its living and thriving tapestry. Yet, just 200 miles away at our farm, nestled in the bucolic valley between the Green Mountains of Vermont and the Adirondack

Mountains of New York, there were people who, although full of charming quaint demeanor, were frightened by the diverse faces of people.

For life-enriching and life-affirming oxygen, it was to our apartment in Manhattan that I went running to. Here, I found people with soaring ideals and an inclusive manner who welcomed oneness

with others around them no matter their race, religion, gender or sexual preference.

Back home after 30 years in New York, I find India dancing to a new tune. Not confining as small town and rural America, but also far from that Polynesian-ish nation I came of age in. There's a new pep in India's step, there is bravado in its speech and its language is increasingly Hindi. The dominant religion that has always been Hindu now parades itself with proud careless abandon like a peacock dancing in the rain. It is a new India, and it is also 75 years richer than that moment when Partition tore its people and their lives apart across a religious divide.

America, as we knew it once, doesn't exist, and the India that I came of age in doesn't exist either. What keeps me hopeful is the deep-rooted shared history of India's many peoples, religions, languages and regions.

As we celebrate the Ram Temple in Ayodhya, a happening that soaring majorities of people from across India have welcomed and feted, I want to believe that the old Hindu way of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' keeps leading us to greater consciousness. I hope we maintain a deeply inclusive welcome given to one and all, and that we protect from harm every being we share the planet with, and especially those in our communities locally and nationally.

Lord Rama, the embodiment of virtue and chivalry, has been known to please, delight, charm and offer unconditional love to all who come into his presence. It is my hope that this moment of honouring the great Lord Rama is a renaissance, a renewal, a refreshing new wave of Mother India, Ma Bharati, showing the world through her fine and peerless example the infectious and inspiring beauty of a religion, ideology, and people who become one with the other, and in doing so, become one with self and one with the divine. *Ram Raam, Bharat!* Good morning, New India!

Together We Stand

From sharing recipes to cooking together, chefs are now collaborating and travelling just the way musicians do

Heena Khandelwal

ABOUT A decade ago, a well-known hotel refused Indian Accent's Manish Mehrotra entry into its kitchen although he had been booked for cooking at an event there. "It was not so much about malice as it was about following the tradition of protecting your kitchen secrets, one's technique or the ratio of spices, like it was among royal *khansamas* in the old days," says the chef, who has benchmarked his kind of progressive cuisine for the global palate. However, now tradition has made way for celebration of individual talent as chefs bond over pop-ups and kitchen collaborations, learning from and sharing with each other. The result of this camaraderie is the zesting up of familiar dishes as we know them.

Recently, Thai chef Thitid 'Ton' Tassanakajohn invited 10 chefs from across the world, including chef Varun Totlani from Mumbai's Masque, to cook a celebratory meal to mark a decade of his maiden restaurant, Le Du. On home soil, we saw Daniel Humm of the New York-based three-Michelin star restaurant, Eleven Madison Park, cooking a meal at Masque last September. Earlier in April, Sri Lankan chef Rishi Naleendra of the Singapore-based restaurant Kotuwa did a pop-up at The Bombay Canteen. Nagaland-based chef Salangyanger Jamir stirred a few ladles with chef Niyati Rao of Ekaa to create some authentic flavours over four days. "People are definitely more open than they were when I started out in the industry," says chef and restaurateur Rupert Blease of San Francisco's Lord Stanley, which won a Michelin star five years in a row. "Two decades ago, a collaboration with Michelin chefs was unheard of. Now it's happening every other week," he adds.

Several factors, like an increasing awareness of food as a larger global culture statement and the projection of chefs as artistes, have meant that cuisine has now entered the realm of ideas and concepts. And if restaurateurs thought that exclusivity would protect their originality, new world chefs feel openness allows them to advertise their brand much better. As Mehrotra argues, "The Japanese chef, Nobu Matsuhisa, has written so many recipe books that his dishes are being



replicated everywhere. But did that affect Nobu's business? No. That's because while the recipe book may prime your curiosities about the food, you cannot recreate the food experience that the restaurants offer." Or the stories behind them.

Agree Sameer Seth, founder and CEO at Hunger Inc Hospitality, the parent company behind The Bombay Canteen, O Pedro and other food ventures. "We never held back our

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Many stand-alone restaurants have catapulted into the big league because of collaborative food showcases

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recipes. Our late chef-cum-founder Floyd Cardoz would say that if a guest asks you for a recipe, it means that they are enthralled by the dish. And, if you are generous enough to share it, they get to take a piece of what you do back home. You are creating a memory for them, which will stay forever," he says. And memories, we all agree, have a lasting brand recall value than anything else.

Collaborations have always happened very instinctively at The Bombay Canteen, which weaves storytelling smartly into its menu. "Once, we flew down our mothers to Mumbai to cook the favourites they made on our birthdays. Because we all belong to different parts of the country, we had a diversified spread of regional cuisine. That's how we realised that the more people we invite into The Bombay Canteen, the more we learn and the more our guests get to experience," adds Seth.

Five-star hotel chains also stand to benefit from such collaborations, as they can market a closed-door, curated experiential with Michelin chefs for their guests and price them separately – sometimes as high as Rs 35,000. Both the Taj and Marriott Bonvoy have already got the first mover advantage. "We bring in the chef for about two weeks to host special dinners at high-impact cities," says Sachin Mylavarapu, senior area director of operations for South Asia at Marriott International Inc.

Gauging the response to chef exchanges,

Seth predicts that in the future, these events may acquire the status of a music festival.

"One doesn't mind travelling to attend a music concert headlined by their favourite bands. Food is the new music," he says.

Served up on demand.

WORLD ON A PLATE

(Clockwise from top left) Chef Ton of Le Du, who spends a major part of the year doing pop-ups across the world, they give him an opportunity to make Thai cuisine a global choice. His relentless pursuit paid off when Le Du ranked at number 15 on The World's 50 Best Restaurants, 2023.

Masque's head chef Varun Totlani has found new converts through such collaborative showcases. "Also, chefs have stepped out from being a key player in the food industry to being a community on their own. As a head chef, you don't get so many opportunities to step out, learn, hone your craft and pass it on to your teams. This way we can share and learn from each other. The shared experience also helps you understand how several cooking techniques and styles can come together," he says. Masque has hosted over 20 chefs since its inception. Totlani admits to learning work ethic from American chef Matt Orlando, precision from chef Humm and a Zen-like calmness from chef Gresham Fernandes.

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Collaborative cookouts, agree most chefs and restaurateurs, are a win-win for everyone. For Chef Ton of Le Du, who spends a major part of the year doing pop-ups across the world, they give him an opportunity to make Thai cuisine a global choice. His relentless pursuit paid off when Le Du ranked at number 15 on The World's 50 Best Restaurants, 2023.

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A Leaf of Faith

Alma Pöysti and Jussi Vatanen, lead actors of *Fallen Leaves*, on director Aki Kaurismäki and nailing one-take shots



LIGHT YEARS

(Top) Alma Pöysti and Jussi Vatanen in *Fallen Leaves*; Pöysti and Vatanen with Aki Kaurismäki

Alaka Sahani

WIHT HIGHLY-acclaimed *Fallen Leaves*, actors Alma Pöysti and Jussi Vatanen became Aki Kaurismäki's unique cinematic world. Ever since the movie was declared Jury Prize winner at the last edition of Cannes Film Festival, they have not stopped receiving accolades and love for this tragicomedy. Yet, for the Finnish actors – who play the lead characters, Alma (Pöysti) and Holappa (Vatanen) – it still remains a mystery why Kaurismäki chose to cast them in his 20th feature film.

"Rumour has it that Aki has watched some of our previous works and thought that we would be a good match," says Pöysti, who was nominated for the Golden Globe Award for Best Actress (Motion Picture Comedy or Musical) for *Fallen Leaves*. Pöysti recalls that they were asked to meet the Finnish master over lunch one day. "We talked about forest, politics, dogs, asparagus and what not. Towards the end, Aki said he had this idea for a film and asked us if we wanted to join the project. That was it. Our answer, of course, was yes. One year later, we got the script, and a couple of months later, we started to shoot," Pöysti says, who played the titular lead in *Jöve* (2020).

In this bittersweet love story, Pöysti and Vatanen play two lonely souls, who meet at a karaoke bar by chance one Friday evening. Though they are drawn to each other, they have to deal with multiple missed connections, lost jobs and other obstacles before they can be united.

Though both Pöysti and Vatanen are Theatre Academy Helsinki alumni, they didn't know each other earlier. "It was a wonderful opportunity to work with Alma and the grand old man of Finnish cinema. He has been around for 40 years and we have grown up watching his movies," says Vatanen. For Pöysti, the opportunity to work with the auteur was "unexpected" while working with her co-actors was like "having a big party". She says, "I have been watching Jussi's work and he is such a

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Kaurismäki's characters usually carry a deadpan expression but they often leave a mark on the audience

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brilliant actor. I realised that he has got my back and I got his. We enjoyed playing these lonely characters, who are clumsy when they fall in love and stretch these awkward moments, long gazes and silences."

Famous for his minimalist approach and crisp dialogues infused with wry humour, Kaurismäki's script was obviously short. "Aki is truly a very good writer even though he says that he is not. He is a man of few words. So, the script was a short one. But, all those punchlines are there. He writes wonderful and accurate remarks in the script. For example, just before my character and his friend leave for the karaoke bar, there was a remark in the script: 'Holappa looks into the mirror like hoping for a miracle.' He has a wonderful way of using words – it is almost like poetry," says Vatanen, known for his comedic talent as well as work in films and television shows.

One of the hallmarks of Kaurismäki's films are his characters, who usually carry a deadpan expression but leave a mark on the audience. Deconstructing the auteur's style, Pöysti says, "There is a lot of room for life even if the life portrayed is minimalistic. The feelings and thoughts are not very expressive in the wide sense of the world. It was a challenge at times especially when the wish was to do the shot in one take. Sometimes, we had to go for a second take. It was hard not to burst out laughing because some of the lines are extremely funny. You have to be both tragic and comic at the same time. As soon as you try to be funny, you will destroy it. You have to trust Aki's humour."

Apart from Vatanen, Pöysti had another key co-actor – the stray dog she takes home. Talking about the dog, who is her namesake, the actor says, "Her real name is Alma and that's like destiny. She is a street dog from Portugal that Aki took in. She knew I always had a sausage for her in my pocket. This is her debut as an actor and she has a great sense of timing and rhythm."

What were the takeaways for the actors from their first collaboration with Kaurismäki? Vatanen was awed by the fact that even though the writer-director's style is so minimalist, his characters have a lot of emotions. "As an actor, you have to open up yourself and try not to cover up your inner or true self." Experiencing the passion and craft of Kaurismäki was special for Pöysti. "The love that goes into each detail is mind-blowing," she says.

'I was a sex addict': How a men's support group is beating a destructive disease

These men from across India meet physically and online to discuss their stories of struggle, recovery and friendship

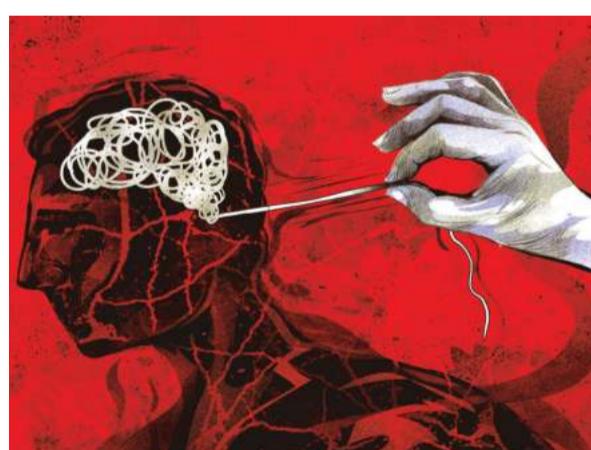
Udbhav Seth

THE MEN sit facing each other in a room on the ground floor. Stuck on the walls are diagrams and flowcharts drawn by children, depicting the components of a computer – once a computer lab run by a NGO, evidenced by the dusty machinery around the room. Today, it is a room for healing and therapy. A place for those without hope to find it.

Karan, 38,* stands to write three slogans on a whiteboard in neat marker ink: "Easy does it", "Keep coming back", "It works if you work it and you are worth it". He rejoins his seat in the circle and asks who would like to begin. Rajat, 36, volunteers and starts with the Serenity Prayer. Aman, 36, recites the 12-Steps of Recovery – the journey every newcomer begins and veteran remembers. Aditya, 28, reads aloud a quote from his phone, of a recovered man somewhere else in the world. Finally, the life stories begin, and Rajat goes first: "I was 12 years old when I got to know what masturbation is..."

These men gather multiple times a week to discuss their recovery from sex dependency. They found they have a problem during various life milestones – in adolescence, in marriage, in a career – and found it disturbing their lives enough to seek psychiatrist help. Eventually, these men found each other by stumbling across the meeting in a newspaper story or an internet search. They don't know each other's full names – hence the name of the international organisation is Sex Addicts Anonymous (SAA), which models itself after Alcoholics Anonymous – but know about a part of their lives that their families didn't.

Rajat's journey of sobriety has been going on for a decade. He remembers a time when he would masturbate up to five times a day, seek sex and fight with his wife in front of his young daughter. "I led a double life. On the outside, I was a good man who helped my family but, on the inside, I was a lonely man who was very depressed," he says, recalling how he relapsed after a year of attending SAA meetings. The fights restarted, his self-esteem dipped and suicidal thoughts emerged. After visits to psychiatrists, he found one who pre-



scribed medicines that worked. But he took them irregularly and the condition continued for another five to six years, in which he would not attend most support group meetings, but slowly, with frequent reassurances from the members, he started to get better.

"Now, every day, my daughter hugs me and I go on walks with my wife. We're no longer fighting," he says, having been sober for a year. "I've started commuting on my bike instead of the metro to avoid triggers. And if I do get triggered, I use the tools I've learnt here," he says.

What are those tools? Apart from assigning a mentor to each member for emergencies, the group shares extensive reading material produced by SAA's nodal organisation in the United States that recounts stories of recovery and techniques for de-addiction. One such technique is that of the circles – you draw three concentric circles, with the innermost one listing addictive sexual behaviour to avoid, the outermost one listing healthy behaviour that can replace sex and the middle one for activities that are okay in moderation, but can be a slippery slope to the inner circle.

Aman found security in the circles. At his worst, he would fantasise about his relatives, masturbate in his office and evade problems by watching porn. "This disease eats you up with shame and guilt. It wastes your time and energy, and you make no progress in life," he says. His inner circle consisted of porn, middle circle of social media and movies with sexual content, and outer circle of any activity that was fun and energetic. He used another attested technique – the three-second rule – of not looking at an arousing figure for more than three seconds. He has been a part of the group for seven years, has his habits under control and is now married with a baby.

For many addicts, childhood abuse is part of the problem. Aditya dates his first sexual encounter to a music class, where a teacher abused him. Growing up, he realised that what had happened was wrong and that he had similar encounters with close relatives. By then, it was too late. He had developed a difficult relationship with sex – he was caught spying on relatives bathing, had once tried to peek under his sister's skirt and was

gripped by an uncontrollable urge to see his family and friends naked, leaving him filled with "shame, guilt and anxiety". He started dating girls who only wanted physical relationships and his taste in porn changed. "By the time it came to animals, I had no sexual life left. It was just about bodies. I got into hypnotic porn, gore porn..." he says.

It continues: "Symptoms may include repetitive sexual activities becoming a central focus of the person's life to the point of neglecting health and personal care or other interests, activities and responsibilities; numerous unsuccessful efforts to significantly reduce repetitive sexual behaviour; and continued repetitive sexual behaviour despite adverse consequences or deriving little or no satisfaction from it."

He adds, "Support groups are not a treatment in isolation. They're just one piece of the jigsaw puzzle. They can help people get mentorship and share experiences."

When the group wraps up its meeting, the men stand, hug and together they recite the slogans on the whiteboard. They advocate at least six meetings for newcomers before deciding if the meetings work for them. More information for online meetings for men around India can be found at <https://saa-recovery.org/>, and newcomers can contact saa.india.helpline@gmail.com or +91 82873 78831. Women can contact the same number for information on online meetings.

*Names have been changed for anonymity

One of the tools of de-addiction is of the circles, where the innermost circle lists addictive sexual behaviour to avoid and the outermost one is of healthy behaviour

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Is your insurance enough to cover mental health?

Despite India's insurance regulator mandating mental health cover since 2018, the practical coverage lags much behind, leaving patients in a trough

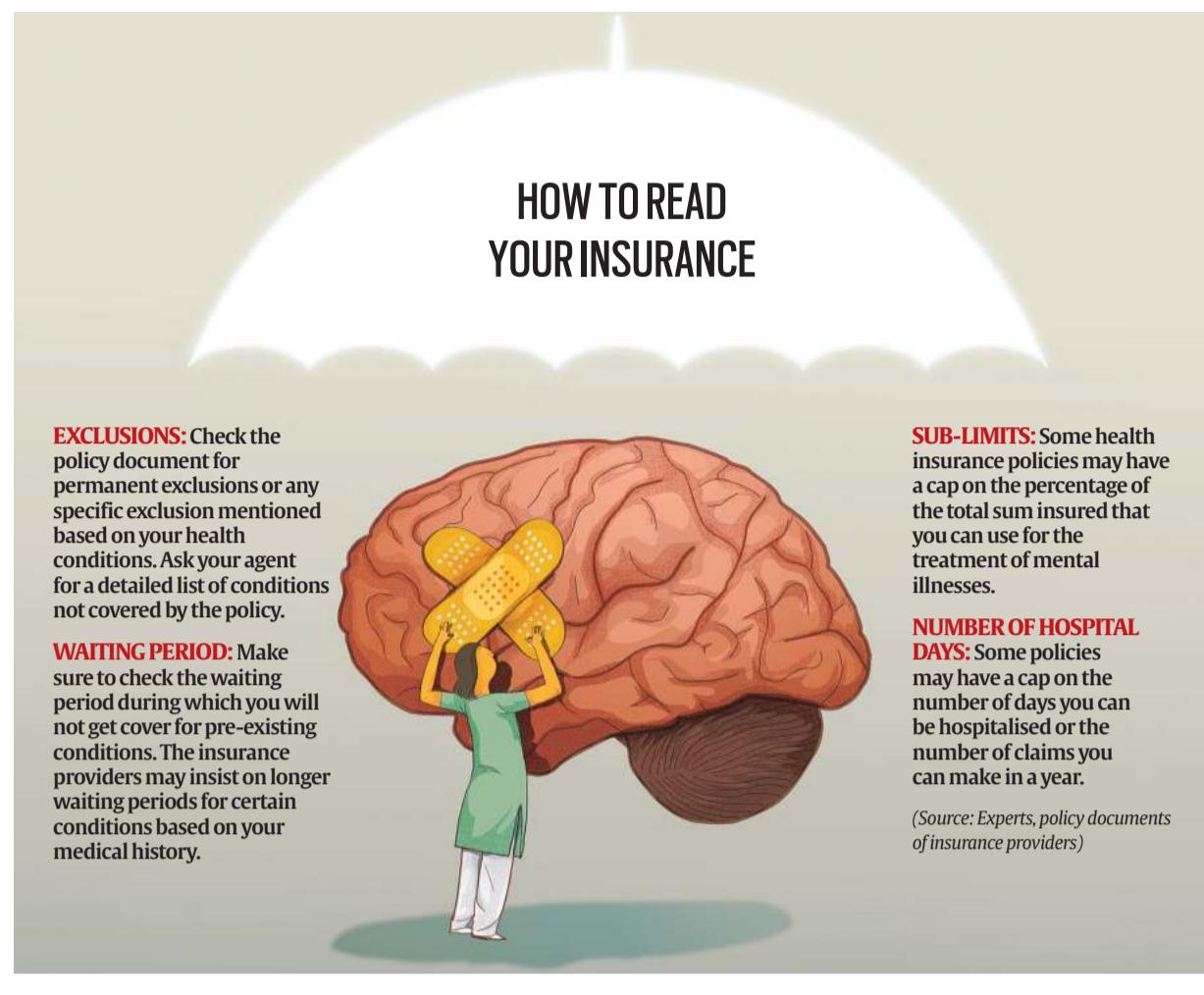
Anonna Dutt

DR SHAILESH JHA, a psychiatrist at Delhi's Indraprastha Apollo Hospital, has his hands full. Every day, he sees around 25 patients, most of whom are grappling with common mental health challenges like depression, anxiety and Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD). All of them are covered by health insurance policies but, to his surprise, each falls short in covering crucial expenses associated with treatment at a stage that can bring them back from the precipice.

Gaps in mental health insurance

Despite India's insurance regulator mandating mental health cover since 2018, the practical coverage lags much behind policy directives, leaving patients in a challenging predicament and unable to continue therapies that would get them out of the trough. Things haven't changed despite the regulator reiterating the directives in 2022. Consider the case of a 32-year-old patient whom Dr Jha found to be suicidal and recommended be kept under observation for a few days. Confident that her family's insurance coverage would easily tackle the expenses, the convoluted clauses and time-consuming system left the patient unable to leverage it. "I kept receiving calls from representatives of the insurance providers asking me to justify the reason for suggesting hospital admission," says Dr Jha, who has since started warning his patients that insurance providers may not help when needed. While self-harm, attempted suicide and suicide are listed as exclusions in almost all health insurance policies, experts say getting paid for claims relating to hospitalisation due to mental illnesses is difficult. Not only that, it is extremely difficult for people with a pre-existing mental illness to get a policy. "Although the Mental Healthcare Act, 2017, ensures that coverage cannot be denied, many patients want to keep psychiatrist consultation off the book. They are scared that their claim for other illnesses, say a heart attack, would be denied if their mental health issue is put on record," says Dr Jha.

"Most mental disorders are life-long and a person may have more than one condition.



Insurance policies in India cover acute episodes requiring hospitalisation but what is needed is support for long-term therapy sessions or rehabilitation facilities that may actually pull you off the edge," says Madhurima Ghosh, former research fellow with Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics and a cost evaluation coordinator at Sangath (an organisation that's working to make mental healthcare accessible and affordable). Her yet-to-be-published survey of 100 mental health providers across four cities shows a patient could end up shelling out anywhere between

Rs 60,000 and Rs 80,000 for outpatient treatment. Imagine the out-of-pocket expense for patients as an hour-long therapy session can cost anywhere between Rs 1,000 and Rs 5,000. "Most patients need long-term treatment, including psychological and pharmacological treatment, but get no help at this stage," adds Dr Jha.

What areas really need addressing?

All five insurance policies – from three private and two government providers – evaluated by *The Indian Express* exclude the treat-

ment of alcoholism, substance use disorders, self-harm and suicide. The policies exclude crucial rehabilitation care that's defined as: "Custodial care either at home or in a nursing facility for personal care such as help with activities of daily living such as bathing, dressing, moving around either by skilled nurses or assistant or non-skilled people." Yet rehabilitation centre-based care becomes important because of sustained individual and group therapy sessions. For the record, alcohol, substance use disorders and schizophrenia account for a significant burden of mental health

problems, with the National Mental Health Survey pegging their prevalence at about five per cent of the total population.

None of the policies provides any outpatient care, which involves hours of counselling and medication. One of the government policies specifically excludes "psychological counselling, cognitive/ family/ group/ behaviour/ palliative therapy or other kinds of psychotherapy." However, it does mention that treatment for depression and schizophrenia will be covered after a waiting period of two years, overlooking the cost of delayed access to insurance relief. The other policies do not specifically mention mental illnesses but cover all pre-existing conditions after 36 to 48 months.

"No policy covers talk therapy," says an agent from Policy Bazar on being asked to recommend a policy for a 30-year-old, physically healthy woman with anxiety and depression. A similar conversation with an agent from Ditto Insurance resulted in a non-committal response: "You might get coverage for hospitalisation due to depression and other mental health conditions after a certain number of years. But, in most cases, it is likely to be a permanent exclusion in the policy." While add-ons exist for outpatient coverage that can be purchased along with general health insurance, it is not beneficial, says portfolio manager Gaurav Shrivastav. "There is a restriction on the percentage of payments with these add-ons. If you need long-term care, the payments do not justify the extra premium," he adds.

Just a ray of light

Last year, at least 29 companies floated policies specifically for people living with disabilities, HIV and mental illnesses, according to an affidavit filed by the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI). An analysis of one such specialised policy offered by one of the government providers shows that it does not cover outpatient services such as therapy. In fact, for its daycare services, it specifically mentions it has to be "under General or Local Anaesthesia." Just like other policies, it does not offer treatment for alcoholism and other substance use disorders, suicide, hormone re-

placement therapy or gender reassignment surgery. However, it includes a co-pay of 20 per cent on all claims.

Living with bipolar disorder, mental health activist and co-founder of Mental Health Support Foundation Vijay Nallawala says that he has managed to get coverage at a substantial premium but the policy has a sub-limit of 25 per cent of the sum insured for his condition. "Equal coverage for mental health remains only on paper. The reality is that only a fourth of the people with mental health issues manage to get covered and even then we keep hearing of claims getting rejected," he says.

How to determine the contours of mental health coverage?

One of the biggest challenges with mental health disorders is that they are not quantifiable in the same way as a chronic physical ailment like diabetes or hypertension. There aren't any tests to assess the level of say anxiety or depression. Therefore, insurance companies require a certificate from a doctor on their panel to provide coverage for a pre-existing condition. "As there is no test for say anxiety or depression, the doctor certifies what is the level of the condition. If it is certified as say 20 or 30 per cent, then a person is likely to get immediate cover. If it is 40 per cent to 50 per cent, there is likely to be a waiting period of a few years," says Shrivastav.

Why we need an insurance that works

Over 13 per cent of the population has some mental disorder or illness in their lifetime, according to the last National Mental Health Survey of 2016. About 4.65 per cent of the population had alcohol use disorder, 5.25 per cent depressive disorders, 3.7 per cent had neurotic or anxiety disorders and 1.4 per cent schizophrenia and other psychotic disorders.

Ghosh says Indian insurance providers need to take hints from other countries. "In Singapore, for example, all costs for hospitalisation, outpatient therapy and medicines are covered for the five most common mental illnesses. The insurers could cover a fixed number of therapy sessions every year to bring down the out-of-pocket expenses," she says.

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rustic oranges also contribute to the stunning scenery. Some of the best places to view autumn colours in Japan include Kyoto, particularly in temples and gardens like Kiyomizudera and Tofuku-ji; Tokyo, in parks like Shinjuku Gyoen and Rikugien; the Japanese Alps; and the scenic areas of Nikko and Hakone.

Just like cherry blossoms, the changing autumn leaves have been celebrated in Japanese literature, art, and poetry for centuries. This appreciation reflects the Japanese concept of "mono no aware," the awareness of the impermanence of things, and a gentle sadness at their passing. Many areas in Japan host autumn foliage festivals (momiji matsuri), where temples and parks are often illuminated at night, providing a different perspective on the autumn colours. These festivals often include food stalls, cultural performances, and other events. The beauty of autumn in Japan lies not just in the vivid colours of the foliage, but also in the way it transforms the landscape, offering a new perspective on well-known sites and a deeper appreciation of the country's natural beauty.

So, yes along with the famous Cherry Blossom seasons, there are three other reasons, why you should visit Japan. So is 2024, the year you do the Alpine Route or the Autumn Colours or the Hokkaido belt? The choice is yours, I can only guarantee you one thing, you will definitely Celebrate Life in Japan! Arigato Gozaimasu!



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What comes to your mind when you think of Japan? I bet it's the stunning pink flowers in full bloom in the gardens and by-lanes of Tokyo and Kyoto. And I don't blame you. The Cherry Blossom in Japan is one of the more popular seasons to visit the Land of the Rising Sun (i.e., Japan). Increasingly, Indian travellers have started to pick Japan as a tourist destination over destinations like Europe and the USA. When I look at our travellers booking trips to Japan, I see 50% booking in just two of the twelve months - March and April - to coincide with Japan's Cherry Blossom season.

Cherry blossoms in Japan, or "sakura," are a beautiful sign of spring. They bloom in soft pink and are loved for their brief, stunning appearance. People in Japan have celebrated them for centuries. The appreciation of cherry blossoms in Japan can be traced back to the Nara Period (710-794 AD) and Heian Period (794-1185). Initially, plum (ume) blossoms, the flowers of the plum tree were more popular, but over time, sakura gained prominence. During the Heian era, the elite of the Imperial Court enjoyed sakura and would celebrate with picnics and poetry sessions under the blossoms. This custom was known as "hanami," which literally means "flower viewing."

Cherry blossoms have long been a symbol in Japanese culture, representing the ephemeral nature of life due to their short blooming period. This symbolism is often associated with Buddhist concepts of mortality and the transient nature of existence. In contemporary Japan, cherry blossoms continue to hold a significant place. Annual forecasts predict the timing of their bloom, influencing tourism and local festivities. Schools and public institutions often have sakura trees on their grounds, and the cherry blossom season is celebrated with festivals and gatherings across the country. These flowers are important in Japanese culture and attract many travellers not only from India, but all over the world every single year. All in all these Cherry Blossoms have become a dominant symbol of the country in the international imagination.

Now, if you have been reading my articles or listening to my podcasts (Travel Explore Celebrate Life and 5 Minute Travel Tips), you will know



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forests, calm lakes, active volcanoes, and vast national parks. For me, every trip here has been about something different: 1) Skiing 2) Sapporo Snow Festival 3) Seafood Cuisine. Hokkaido is famous for its excellent winter sports conditions, boasting some of the best ski resorts in Asia. My ski trip was to Niseko, one of Hokkaido's world-renowned ski resorts. It boasts powder snow and offers perfect conditions for learning how to ski and

snowboard with beginner to advanced level slopes on Mt. Niseko-Annupuri. When you are at Niseko, you also get to witness, Mt. Yotei, often known as the twin sibling of Japan's famous Mt. Fuji. The Sapporo Snow Festival held in Hokkaido's capital city, Sapporo, is one of Japan's largest winter events. It features spectacular snow and ice sculptures all through the city and attracts millions of visitors each year.

My third Hokkaido holiday was actually in the summer, and was all about seafood. Sapporo is famous for its fresh and high-quality seafood, especially crab, sea urchin, and salmon. So expect a lot of Seafood Bowls with Rice and Sushi parlours. If you are a fan of cheese and milk products, Hokkaido is also known for its dairy products. You will be treated to a number of cheese tarts and the famous Hokkaido Cheesecake. During the summer, especially in areas like Furano, vast and vibrant lavender fields bloom, attracting photographers and nature lovers. And if you are a beer

lover, besides the Sapporo Snow Festival, Hokkaido hosts various other festivals, including the Sapporo Beer Festival. All in all, Hokkaido's combination of natural beauty, cultural richness, and recreational opportunities makes it a unique and appealing destination that has not yet been fully explored by the Indian traveller.

Finally, the third, and I believe most under-rated time of year to visit Japan, from mid-September to early December, is to see The Autumn Colours of Japan, also known as "koyo" or "momiji" in Japanese. The autumn colours in Japan are a spectacular natural phenomenon that start in the northern island of Hokkaido before gradually moving southwards to the central and southern parts of Japan. The leaves of various trees change colours, creating a vibrant tapestry of reds, oranges, yellows, and golds. The Japanese maple tree, with its brilliant red leaves, is particularly famous, but ginkgo trees with their golden hues and Japanese beech trees with their