



Modi Sarkar ki Guarantee

Hamara Sankalp
Viksit Bharat**Prosperous Farmers,
Prosperous Country**

For the first time since independence,
at least **50% return** on cost price guaranteed by
increasing MSP of 22 crops



Scan for more information



DTC 22/01/2024

'Khalistani' slur: IPS officer hits back at Bengal BJP leaders, says keep faith out

Police blame Leader of Opp; he says prove BJP said it or face legal action

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, FEBRUARY 20

A video grab of 2016-batch IPS officer Jaspreet Singh during the BJP protest

UPSET OVER A "Khalistani" slur hurled at him, a Sikh IPS officer hit back at a group of protesting West Bengal BJP leaders and workers, who were being led by Leader of Opposition Suvidhu Adhikari, asking them not to typecast people and leave his faith alone.

The incident, which snowballed into a new confrontation between the BJP and the ruling Trinamool Congress in West Bengal, took place Monday when a police contingent stopped BJP leaders and workers from visiting Sandeshkhali, at the centre of a political storm, at Dhamakhali in North 24 Parganas district.

As the row escalated Tuesday, with Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee targeting the BJP, the West Bengal Police released a statement on X, saying it was "outraged to share this video,"

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Indian team flies to London to seal FTA before poll code kicks in

RAVI DUTTA MISHRA
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 20

AN INDIAN delegation headed by Commerce Secretary Sunil Barthwal left for London Tuesday in a final effort to seal the India-UK free trade agreement (FTA) before the dates for the 2024 general elections are announced.

This comes four days after the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) reviewed the progress of the India-UK FTA before the dates for the 2024 general elections are announced.

The visit is crucial as details for the general elections are expected to be announced in less than a month, triggering the Model Code of Conduct (MCC) which will restrict the Union government's ability to announce the deal.

Efforts to close the deal this month also assumes significance because the UK is also headed to

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

EXPRESS NETWORK

CBI SEARCHES PREMISES OF FORMER DPIIT SECY
PAGE 1

Love that makes bitter gourd sweet: As kids fight cancer, 21 parents share recipes



Durgarani Ghosh (left) and Supriya Shinde were among the contributors to the book *Happy Healthy Meals*

bitter gourd currently takes care of all his sweet cravings.

Durgarani successfully transformed the universally disliked gourd into a sweet treat by combining Bangladeshi and South Indian recipes. At Chennai-based Apollo Hospital for her son's treatment, she says, "Since Shreyan enjoys sweets, I coated bitter gourd with jaggery. He eats it without complaints. The recipe takes care of both his sugar cravings and nutrition."

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

RUPSA CHAKRABORTY
MUMBAI, FEBRUARY 20

THREE-YEAR-OLD Shreyan Ghosh has a serious sweet tooth, but the Bangladeshi-based boy's sugar intake is restricted due to his ongoing battle with blood cancer in Chennai. Thanks to his ingenious mother Durgarani Ghosh, 19, bit-

epaper.indianexpress.com

JANUARY 30 CHANDIGARH MAYORAL POLLS

SC quashes Mayor poll results, rules in favour of Cong-AAP candidate

Kejriwal thanks SC, says verdict is first INDIA win

ANANTHAKRISHNAN G
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 20

THE SUPREME Court Tuesday quashed and set aside the result of the January 30 mayoral polls for the Chandigarh Municipal Corporation in which the presiding officer had named BJP's Manoj Sonkar as the winner, and instead declared Kuldeep Kumar, the AAP-Congress coalition candidate, as the validly elected candidate. It also issued a show cause notice to Anil Masih, the presiding officer, on why steps should not be initiated against him under Section 340 of the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

AAP-Cong gets post but BJP has numbers to rock

HINA ROHTAKI
CHANDIGARH, FEBRUARY 20

WHILE THE Aam Aadmi Party and Congress won a moral and legal victory Tuesday, wresting the post of Chandigarh Municipal Corporation Mayor, they face a long road ahead.

By the time the Supreme Court held the January 30 election that instated a BJP Mayor as invalid, the BJP had managed to win three AAP councillors to its side. This means that in the general house of the civic body, the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

SHOWCASE NOTICE TO ANIL MASIH, RETURNING OFFICER, ANI

BUSINESS AS USUAL

BY UNNY



CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

TOTAL QUOTA IN STATE NOW 72%

Maharashtra clears 10% Maratha quota, Shinde says it will survive the test of law

Many states have gone beyond 50% limit, won't affect quota of others: CM

ALOK DESHPANDE & VALLABH OZARKAR
MUMBAI, FEBRUARY 20

THE MAHARASHTRA Assembly Tuesday unanimously passed a Bill granting 10 per cent reservation in education and jobs to the Maratha community.

Chief Minister Eknath Shinde presented the Maharashtra State Reservation for Socially and Educationally Backward Classes Bill 2024, drafted on the basis of a Maharashtra State Backward Class Commission report that identified the Marathas as socially and educationally backward.

The principle of creamy layer will be applicable and reservation under this Act will be available only to those in the Socially and Educationally Backward Classes who are not in the creamy layer category.



Celebrations break out after Assembly passed the quota Bill for Marathas. Deepak Joshi

WHY NEW LAW IS UNLIKE 2 PREVIOUS BIDS TO GIVE QUOTA
PAGE 8

The report submitted to the government last week by commission chairman Justice (retired) Sunil Shukre said "exceptional circumstances and extraordinary situations exist"

CONTINUED ON PAGE 10

Tractors of farmers at the Punjab-Haryana border, Tuesday. PTI

Punjab farmers march today, Govt calls for peace, talks

KANCHAN VASDEV & JAGPREET SINGH
CHANDIGARH, FEBRUARY 20

HARYANA AND Delhi braced for the march Wednesday by Punjab farmers seeking a minimum support price (MSP) guarantee. As farmer tractor trolley numbers swelled at the Punjab-Haryana border points despite the High Court pointing out that tractor trolleys are not allowed on highways, the Haryana police urged their Punjab counterparts to seize heavy earthmoving machinery at the inter-state border and stop women, children and journalists at least a kilometre from the border.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

INTRODUCING
LIC's Jeevan UTSAV
Plan No.: 871 UIN: 512N363V01
with Lifetime
Guaranteed Returns

Whole Life Insurance with flexibility to choose benefits

- Limited Premium Paying term 5 to 16 years
- Guaranteed Additions during Premium Paying term
- Regular Income Benefit / Flexi Income Benefit
- Minimum Basic Sum Assured ₹ 5 lacs

A NON - LINKED, NON - PARTICIPATING, INDIVIDUAL SAVINGS, WHOLE LIFE INSURANCE PLAN

Download LIC Mobile App Visit: licindia.in Call Centre Services (022) 6827 6827 Our WhatsApp No. 8976862090 Say Hi!

For details, contact your Agent/Nearest LIC Branch or SMS YOUR CITY NAME to 56767474

Follow us : LIC India Forever | IRDAI Reg No.: 512

BEWARE OF SPURIOUS PHONE CALLS AND FICTITIOUS / FRAUDULENT OFFERS. LIC is not involved in activities like selling insurance policies, announcing bonus or investment of premiums. Public receiving such phone calls are requested to lodge a police complaint. For more details on risk factors, terms and conditions, please read sales brochure carefully before concluding a sale.

LIC
भारतीय जीवन बीमा निधान
LIFE INSURANCE CORPORATION OF INDIA

Har Pal Aapke Saath

• Hockey star

FROM PAGE ONE

FULL REPORTS ON
WWW.INDIANEXPRESS.COM

Mayor poll results: SC rules in favour of Cong-AAP

Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973.

A three-judge bench presided by Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud perused the ballot papers and said that the eight ballots on which Masih had made a marking, and were later counted as invalid, were duly cast in favour of Kuldeep Kumar. Kumar had approached the Supreme Court against the outcome of the election.

Terming the verdict as a win for the INDIA bloc, Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal said, "We thank the Supreme Court for the verdict at a time in this country which is seeing dictatorship... This is the first win for the INDIA Alliance. Thanks to the verdict, we have snatched victory from their (the BJP's) jaws. This is an answer for all those people who feel that the BJP cannot be defeated. It can be defeated using strategy, with planning and with hard work," Kejriwal said.

He also questioned BJP's confidence in the upcoming Lok Sabha polls. "Just think, if they can do all this to steal just 8 votes, which are 25% of the total votes, in such a small election, what can they do when 90 crore votes are cast? Where are they getting the confidence that they will get 370 seats? This proves there's something behind the scenes... it has been proven that these people don't win elections, they steal them," said Kejriwal, who is also the AAP convenor.

The young forward and her family were staring at an uncertain future after they were served a "notice" by the local authorities to vacate the house to make way for the widening of the road.

The house is located right outside the main gate of the Panposh Sports Hostel, where Jyoti's father Bhim Singh worked first as a watchman and later in the canteen.

It was at the same hostel – which has produced many international players – where Jyoti first picked up a hockey stick, following the footsteps of her elder brother Suraj.

AAP-Cong gets post but BJP has numbers to rock

BJP now has 17 councillors, the same as the AAP-Congress combine (whose numbers are down from 20 to 17). The BJP can additionally count on its Chandigarh MP Kirron Kher, the ex-officio member of the corporation, and the sole Akali Dal councillor.

One of the immediate challenges before new Mayor Kuldeep Kumar Tita will be surviving a non-confidence motion in the House, with numbers skewed against him.

There is also a question mark on the legality of the election of BJP councillors Kuljeet Sandhu and Rajinder Sharma as Senior

Deputy Mayor and Deputy Mayor, respectively, given that they were picked unopposed after the AAP and Congress boycotted the polls over the disputed Mayor election. But even if elections are held again for the two posts – which seems likely – the BJP is well-placed to win them.

As per legal experts, to win a no-confidence motion, Kuldeep Kumar must get a majority of the votes of the councillors in the house, plus two-third of those present and voting.

A BJP leader said the party was confident of voting out Kuldeep Kumar as the Congress-AAP alliance remains fragile and is set to come apart under seat-sharing pressures of the Lok Sabha elections. "The BJP already has simple majority in the House. If the alliance of the AAP and Congress falls apart, Congress will definitely try to bring down the Mayor, and we will have the two-third numbers, even if all the 10 AAP councillors vote for Kuldeep. So there are several permutations and combinations," the councillor said.

The BJP is also counting on Kuldeep Kumar being hamstrung due to a code of conduct for the Lok Sabha polls kicking in soon, leaving little in his powers beyond

holding house meetings. "So he will be an ineffective Mayor, and by the time of the polls, the Congress-AAP alliance will also fall apart," the BJP leader said.

As per a BJP councillor, even if this fissure does not happen now, the Congress and AAP bonhomie is bound to collapse after the Lok Sabha elections. "In case the Congress performs badly, they will never let this AAP Mayor continue," the councillor said.

Even without a no-confidence motion being brought in, Kuldeep Kumar will have a hard time controlling a House in which the BJP has majority.

'Presiding Officer guilty, show cause'

The Supreme Court said it was evident that Masih "is guilty of a serious misdemeanour in doing what he did in his role and capacity as presiding officer". The presiding officer has evidently put his own mark on the bottom half of the ballot for the purpose of creating a ground for treating the ballot to have been invalidly cast. In doing so, the presiding officer has clearly acted beyond the terms of his remit under the statutory regulations...," it said.

Masih, who was the presiding officer, had told the court on Monday he had put the mark on the ballot papers as they were already defaced, so as to avoid them being mixed up with the other ballots. Referring to this, the order said, "In this court yesterday, the presiding officer made a solemn statement that he had done so because he had found that each of the ballots was defaced. As already recorded, it is evident that none of the ballots have been defaced."

"The conduct of the presiding officer has to be deprecated at two levels. Firstly, by his conduct, he has unlawfully altered the course of the Mayoral election. Secondly, making a solemn statement before this court on February 19, 2024, the presiding officer has expressed a patent falsehood for which he must be held accountable," it said.

Appearing for BJP's Sonkar, Senior Advocate Maninder Singh said the court should order a fresh election but the bench declined to do so. It said, the relevant regulations "provides for three eventualities... in which a ballot can be treated as invalid: (1) when a member has voted for more than one candidate; or (2) where a member places any mark on the paper by which he may be identified; and (3) if the mark indicating the vote is placed on the ballot paper in such a manner as to make it doubtful for which candidate the vote has been cast", and added that none of these are met in the instant case.

Directing that a show cause notice be issued to Masih, it said,

"We are of the considered view that a fit and proper case has been

made out for invoking the jurisdiction of this court under section 340 of the code of criminal procedure, 1973, in respect of the conduct of the Shri Anil Masih, presiding officer... The Registrar Judicial is accordingly directed to issue a notice to Anil Masih, counsellor with the Chandigarh Municipal Corporation, who was the presiding officer at the election which took place on 30 January 2024 to show cause as to why steps should not be initiated against him under section 340 of CrPC, 1973. The notice shall be made returnable on... after three weeks." He would have an opportunity to respond to the notice.

Appearing for BJP's Sonkar, Senior Advocate Maninder Singh said the court should order a fresh election but the bench declined to do so. It said, the relevant regulations "provides for three eventualities... in which a ballot can be treated as invalid: (1) when a member has voted for more than one candidate; or (2) where a member places any mark on the paper by which he may be identified; and (3) if the mark indicating the vote is placed on the ballot paper in such a manner as to make it doubtful for which candidate the vote has been cast", and added that none of these are met in the instant case.

Directing that a show cause notice be issued to Masih, it said,

"We are of the considered view that a fit and proper case has been

made out for invoking the jurisdiction of this court under section 340 of the code of criminal procedure, 1973, in respect of the conduct of the Shri Anil Masih, presiding officer... The Registrar Judicial is accordingly directed to issue a notice to Anil Masih, counsellor with the Chandigarh Municipal Corporation, who was the presiding officer at the election which took place on 30 January 2024 to show cause as to why steps should not be initiated against him under section 340 of CrPC, 1973. The notice shall be made returnable on... after three weeks." He would have an opportunity to respond to the notice.

Appearing for BJP's Sonkar, Senior Advocate Maninder Singh said the court should order a fresh election but the bench declined to do so. It said, the relevant regulations "provides for three eventualities... in which a ballot can be treated as invalid: (1) when a member has voted for more than one candidate; or (2) where a member places any mark on the paper by which he may be identified; and (3) if the mark indicating the vote is placed on the ballot paper in such a manner as to make it doubtful for which candidate the vote has been cast", and added that none of these are met in the instant case.

Directing that a show cause notice be issued to Masih, it said,

"We are of the considered view that a fit and proper case has been

made out for invoking the jurisdiction of this court under section 340 of the code of criminal procedure, 1973, in respect of the conduct of the Shri Anil Masih, presiding officer... The Registrar Judicial is accordingly directed to issue a notice to Anil Masih, counsellor with the Chandigarh Municipal Corporation, who was the presiding officer at the election which took place on 30 January 2024 to show cause as to why steps should not be initiated against him under section 340 of CrPC, 1973. The notice shall be made returnable on... after three weeks." He would have an opportunity to respond to the notice.

Appearing for BJP's Sonkar, Senior Advocate Maninder Singh said the court should order a fresh election but the bench declined to do so. It said, the relevant regulations "provides for three eventualities... in which a ballot can be treated as invalid: (1) when a member has voted for more than one candidate; or (2) where a member places any mark on the paper by which he may be identified; and (3) if the mark indicating the vote is placed on the ballot paper in such a manner as to make it doubtful for which candidate the vote has been cast", and added that none of these are met in the instant case.

Directing that a show cause notice be issued to Masih, it said,

"We are of the considered view that a fit and proper case has been

made out for invoking the jurisdiction of this court under section 340 of the code of criminal procedure, 1973, in respect of the conduct of the Shri Anil Masih, presiding officer... The Registrar Judicial is accordingly directed to issue a notice to Anil Masih, counsellor with the Chandigarh Municipal Corporation, who was the presiding officer at the election which took place on 30 January 2024 to show cause as to why steps should not be initiated against him under section 340 of CrPC, 1973. The notice shall be made returnable on... after three weeks." He would have an opportunity to respond to the notice.

Appearing for BJP's Sonkar, Senior Advocate Maninder Singh said the court should order a fresh election but the bench declined to do so. It said, the relevant regulations "provides for three eventualities... in which a ballot can be treated as invalid: (1) when a member has voted for more than one candidate; or (2) where a member places any mark on the paper by which he may be identified; and (3) if the mark indicating the vote is placed on the ballot paper in such a manner as to make it doubtful for which candidate the vote has been cast", and added that none of these are met in the instant case.

Directing that a show cause notice be issued to Masih, it said,

"We are of the considered view that a fit and proper case has been

made out for invoking the jurisdiction of this court under section 340 of the code of criminal procedure, 1973, in respect of the conduct of the Shri Anil Masih, presiding officer... The Registrar Judicial is accordingly directed to issue a notice to Anil Masih, counsellor with the Chandigarh Municipal Corporation, who was the presiding officer at the election which took place on 30 January 2024 to show cause as to why steps should not be initiated against him under section 340 of CrPC, 1973. The notice shall be made returnable on... after three weeks." He would have an opportunity to respond to the notice.

Appearing for BJP's Sonkar, Senior Advocate Maninder Singh said the court should order a fresh election but the bench declined to do so. It said, the relevant regulations "provides for three eventualities... in which a ballot can be treated as invalid: (1) when a member has voted for more than one candidate; or (2) where a member places any mark on the paper by which he may be identified; and (3) if the mark indicating the vote is placed on the ballot paper in such a manner as to make it doubtful for which candidate the vote has been cast", and added that none of these are met in the instant case.

Directing that a show cause notice be issued to Masih, it said,

"We are of the considered view that a fit and proper case has been

made out for invoking the jurisdiction of this court under section 340 of the code of criminal procedure, 1973, in respect of the conduct of the Shri Anil Masih, presiding officer... The Registrar Judicial is accordingly directed to issue a notice to Anil Masih, counsellor with the Chandigarh Municipal Corporation, who was the presiding officer at the election which took place on 30 January 2024 to show cause as to why steps should not be initiated against him under section 340 of CrPC, 1973. The notice shall be made returnable on... after three weeks." He would have an opportunity to respond to the notice.

Appearing for BJP's Sonkar, Senior Advocate Maninder Singh said the court should order a fresh election but the bench declined to do so. It said, the relevant regulations "provides for three eventualities... in which a ballot can be treated as invalid: (1) when a member has voted for more than one candidate; or (2) where a member places any mark on the paper by which he may be identified; and (3) if the mark indicating the vote is placed on the ballot paper in such a manner as to make it doubtful for which candidate the vote has been cast", and added that none of these are met in the instant case.

Directing that a show cause notice be issued to Masih, it said,

"We are of the considered view that a fit and proper case has been

made out for invoking the jurisdiction of this court under section 340 of the code of criminal procedure, 1973, in respect of the conduct of the Shri Anil Masih, presiding officer... The Registrar Judicial is accordingly directed to issue a notice to Anil Masih, counsellor with the Chandigarh Municipal Corporation, who was the presiding officer at the election which took place on 30 January 2024 to show cause as to why steps should not be initiated against him under section 340 of CrPC, 1973. The notice shall be made returnable on... after three weeks." He would have an opportunity to respond to the notice.

Appearing for BJP's Sonkar, Senior Advocate Maninder Singh said the court should order a fresh election but the bench declined to do so. It said, the relevant regulations "provides for three eventualities... in which a ballot can be treated as invalid: (1) when a member has voted for more than one candidate; or (2) where a member places any mark on the paper by which he may be identified; and (3) if the mark indicating the vote is placed on the ballot paper in such a manner as to make it doubtful for which candidate the vote has been cast", and added that none of these are met in the instant case.

Directing that a show cause notice be issued to Masih, it said,

"We are of the considered view that a fit and proper case has been

made out for invoking the jurisdiction of this court under section 340 of the code of criminal procedure, 1973, in respect of the conduct of the Shri Anil Masih, presiding officer... The Registrar Judicial is accordingly directed to issue a notice to Anil Masih, counsellor with the Chandigarh Municipal Corporation, who was the presiding officer at the election which took place on 30 January 2024 to show cause as to why steps should not be initiated against him under section 340 of CrPC, 1973. The notice shall be made returnable on... after three weeks." He would have an opportunity to respond to the notice.

Appearing for BJP's Sonkar, Senior Advocate Maninder Singh said the court should order a fresh election but the bench declined to do so. It said, the relevant regulations "provides for three eventualities... in which a ballot can be treated as invalid: (1) when a member has voted for more than one candidate; or (2) where a member places any mark on the paper by which he may be identified; and (3) if the mark indicating the vote is placed on the ballot paper in such a manner as to make it doubtful for which candidate the vote has been cast", and added that none of these are met in the instant case.

Directing that a show cause notice be issued to Masih, it said,

"We are of the considered view that a fit and proper case has been

made out for invoking the jurisdiction of this court under section 340 of the code of criminal procedure, 1973, in respect of the conduct of the Shri Anil Masih, presiding officer... The Registrar Judicial is accordingly directed to issue a notice to Anil Masih, counsellor with the Chandigarh Municipal Corporation, who was the presiding officer at the election which took place on 30 January 2024 to show cause as to why steps should not be initiated against him under section 340 of CrPC, 1973. The notice shall be made returnable on... after three weeks." He would have an opportunity to respond to the notice.

Appearing for BJP's Sonkar, Senior Advocate Maninder Singh said the court should order a fresh election but the bench declined to do so. It said, the relevant regulations "provides for three eventualities... in which a ballot can be treated as invalid: (1) when a member has voted for more than one candidate; or (2) where a member places any mark on the paper by which he may be identified; and (3) if the mark indicating the vote is placed on the ballot paper in such a manner as to make it doubtful for which candidate the vote has been cast", and added that none of these are met in the instant case.

Directing that a show cause notice be issued to Masih, it said,

"We are of the considered view that a fit and proper case has been

made out for invoking the jurisdiction of this court under section 340 of the code of criminal procedure, 1973, in respect of the conduct of the Shri Anil Masih, presiding officer... The Registrar Judicial is accordingly directed to issue a notice to Anil Masih, counsellor with the Chandigarh Municipal Corporation, who was the presiding officer at the election which took place on 30 January 2024 to show cause as to why steps should not be initiated against him under section 340 of CrPC, 1973. The notice shall be made returnable on... after three weeks." He would have an opportunity to respond to the notice.

Appearing for BJP's Sonkar, Senior Advocate Maninder Singh said the court should order a fresh election but the bench declined to do so. It said, the relevant regulations "provides for three eventualities... in which a ballot can be treated as invalid: (1) when a member has voted for more than one candidate; or (2) where a member places any mark on the paper by which he may be identified; and (3) if the mark indicating the vote is placed on the ballot paper in such a manner as to make it doubtful for which candidate the vote has been cast", and added that none of these are met in the instant case.

Directing that a show cause notice be issued to Masih, it said,

"We are of the considered view that a fit and proper case has been

made out for invoking the jurisdiction of this court under section 340 of the code of criminal procedure, 1973, in respect of the conduct of the Shri Anil Masih, presiding officer... The Registrar Judicial is accordingly directed to issue a notice to Anil Masih, counsellor with the Chandigarh Municipal Corporation, who was the presiding officer at the election which took place on 30 January 2024 to show cause as to why steps should not be initiated against him under section 340 of CrPC, 1973. The notice shall be made returnable on... after three weeks." He would have an opportunity to respond to the notice.

Appearing for BJP's Sonkar, Senior Advocate Maninder Singh said the court should order a fresh election but the bench declined to do so. It said, the relevant regulations "provides for three eventualities... in which a ballot can be treated as invalid: (1) when a member has voted for more than one candidate; or (2) where a member places any mark on the paper by which he may be identified; and (3) if the mark indicating the vote is placed on the ballot paper in such a manner as to make it doubtful for which candidate the vote has been cast", and added that none of these are met in the instant case.

Directing that a show cause notice be issued to Masih, it said,

"We are of the considered view that a fit and proper case has been

made out for invoking the jurisdiction of this court under section 340 of the code of criminal procedure, 1973, in respect of the conduct of the Shri Anil Masih, presiding officer... The Registrar Judicial is accordingly directed to issue a notice to Anil Masih, counsellor with the Chandigarh Municipal Corporation, who was the presiding officer at the election which took place on 30 January 2024 to show cause as to why steps should not be initiated against him under section 340 of CrPC, 1973. The notice shall be made returnable on... after three weeks." He would have an opportunity to respond to the notice.

Appearing for BJP's Sonkar, Senior Advocate Maninder Singh said the court should order a fresh election but the bench declined to do so. It said, the relevant regulations "provides for three eventualities... in which a ballot can be treated as invalid: (1) when a member has voted for more than one candidate; or (2) where a member places any mark on the paper by which he may be identified; and (3) if the mark indicating the vote is placed on the ballot paper in such a manner as to make it doubtful for which candidate the vote has been cast", and added that none of these are met in the instant case.

Directing that a show cause notice be issued to Masih, it said,

"We are of the considered view that a fit and proper case has been



Scan QR CODE to
get UPSC Preparation
Insights from VisionIAS
Toppers' Talk



make your
IAS
Dream
come true



39 in top 50 Selections in CSE 2022

From various programs of VISIONIAS



General Studies Foundation Course 2025

Prelims cum Mains

INNOVATIVE CLASSROOM PROGRAMME

Scan to know more
& REGISTER



For FREE COUNSELING
connect with our
Experts

8468022022

ENGLISH MEDIUM

DELHI: 23 FEB, 9 AM | 28 FEB, 5 PM

AHMEDABAD
8 JAN

BHOPAL
5 APR

CHANDIGARH
5 APR

HYDERABAD
6 MAR

JAIPUR
21 FEB

JODHPUR
7 MAR

LUCKNOW
12 MAR

PUNE
15 MAR

भोपाल
11 जून

जयपुर
21 फरवरी

लखनऊ
5 जून

जोधपुर
7 मार्च

हिन्दी माध्यम

दिल्ली: 20 फरवरी, 1 PM | 17 जनवरी, 9 AM

FEATURES OF OUR CLASSROOM PROGRAMME



Coverage of GS Prelims, GS Mains, CSAT and Essay syllabus

Comprehensive syllabus coverage in classes through live interactions with highly experienced and senior faculties.



Daily Assignments, Weekly Mini-Tests and Monthly Revision Tests

Enhance answer writing with continuous practice, expert evaluation, and personalized & concrete feedback.



Holistic Current Affairs Coverage

Comprehensive coverage of Current Affairs through Monthly Current Affairs Revision Classes (MCAR), PT-365, and Mains-365 Classes.



All India Test Series for GS Prelims, GS Mains, CSAT and Essay

Mock tests with innovative Assessment system consisting of Post-Test Analysis, Test-Discussions, and All India Ranking.



Comprehensive Study Material

Access to updated Classroom material with enriching value addition material, reference material, and Quick Revision Material (QRMs) for effective study.



Continuous Mentoring and Support System

Personalized guidance with tailored mentoring featuring regular one-on-one and group interactions with a dedicated Classroom Mentor.



Classes with Real-time Query Resolution

Personalized Student Portal having access to Live & recorded classes with query resolution and academic resources beyond course duration.



Tech-Enabled Classrooms

Enhanced learning with interactive animations & videos and a personal portal for tracking progress, feedback, support and administrative updates.

OTHER VISIONIAS PROGRAMS FOR ACHIEVING SUCCESS IN UPSC CIVIL SERVICES EXAMINATION



**PERSONALITY
DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME**
CIVIL SERVICES EXAMINATION - 2023

ADMISSION OPEN

English & हिन्दी Medium

For queries regarding DAF analysis and Mock interview contact at
7042413505, 9354559299 | interview@visionias.in

Karol Bagh

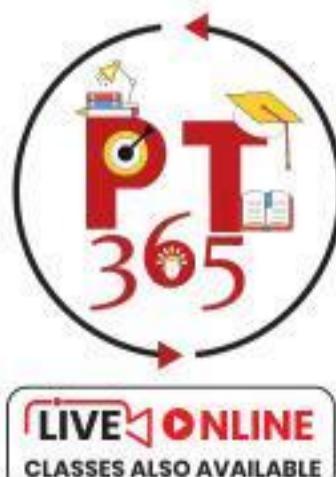
1st floor, Apsara Arcade, Near Gate-7 Karol Bagh Metro Station, 1/8 b, Pusa Road, Karol Bagh, Delhi – 110005

Mukherjee Nagar

Vision IAS Classroom, Test centre & Enquiry office, metro gate no 2, above GTB Nagar Metro Station, Delhi – 110009

+91 8468022022, +91 9019066066

www.visionias.in



PT 365

1 YEAR CURRENT AFFAIRS FOR
GS PRELIMS 2024 IN 60 HOURS

- Focus on Prelims-specific Current Affairs and Smart Revision
- Access to Updated PT-365 Material.
- One-to-One Mentoring Support for Doubt-clearing.
- Access to Recorded Classes on Student Personal Portal.

ENGLISH | 15 FEB, 5 PM

हिन्दी | 23 फरवरी, 5 PM

ALL INDIA TEST SERIES

PRELIMS



- General Studies
- Civil Services Aptitude Test (CSAT)

MAINS

- General Studies
- Sociology
- Anthropology
- Philosophy
- Essay
- Geography
- PS & IR



Scan to know more

ENGLISH MEDIUM 2024: 25 FEBRUARY
हिन्दी माध्यम 2024: 25 फरवरी

ENGLISH MEDIUM 2025: 18 FEBRUARY
हिन्दी माध्यम 2025: 18 फरवरी

IIT-D postpones exams after MTech student suicide

New Delhi: The Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Delhi has postponed the mid-semester examinations, which was scheduled from February 21 to 24, in view of the recent suicide case of MTech student Varad Sanjay Nerkar. The exams will now be conducted from February 26 to 29.

An email from the college authority to students on Tuesday read: "Dear fellow IITians, Varad Sanjay Nerkar's suicide has left all of us in deep anguish. This trauma has particularly affected students preparing for their mid-semester exams... So, after discussions with all the student representatives

and with their consensus today, the mid-semester exams scheduled from Wednesday (February 21) to Saturday have been rescheduled to Monday (February 26) to Thursday. No classes or labs should be planned for the rest of this week."

ENS

ज्ञारखण्ड सरकार कार्यपालक अधिसंता का कार्यालय ग्रामीण कार्य विभाग, कार्य प्रमण्डल, लोहरदगा

ई— अतिअल्पकालीन निविदा संख्या :- 12/2023-24 / RWD / LOHARDAGA
दिनांक 19.02.2024

कार्यपालक अभियंता, ग्रामीण कार्य विभाग, कार्य प्रमण्डल, लोहरदगा द्वारा निम्न विवरण के अनुसार e-procurement पद्धति से पेकेज के रूप में निविदा आमंत्रित की जाती है।

क्रम संख्या	आईडॉन्टी प्रिक्षेप संख्या / पेकेज संख्या	कार्य का नाम	प्रावक्षिलित राशि		कार्य समाप्ति की तिथि	टेंडर कोड
			अंक में	अंक में		
1	EE RWD/ LOHARDAGA GA/ 03/ STPKG - 03/ 2023-24	मकान से सेमरटौल तक पथ की सुदृढ़ीकरण कार्य (लैं- 7.200 किमि मी)				
		होन्दानगा से कुजाहा तक पथ की सुदृढ़ीकरण कार्य (लैं- 1.150 किमि मी)				
		किस्मता रिस्पॉट में लोड से कटाया गया तक पथ की सुदृढ़ीकरण कार्य (लैं- 1.600 किमि मी)				
		सेमरटौल से कोचा तक पथ की सुदृढ़ीकरण कार्य (लैं- 0.700 किमि मी)				
		आर इं और रोड सिजों माड़ से बारोड आर सी० सी० पुल तक पथ की सुदृढ़ीकरण कार्य (लैं- 2.125 किमि मी)				
		आर इं और रोड टारोरी से तोरा गांव तक पथ की सुदृढ़ीकरण कार्य (लैं- 1.730 किमि मी)				
		आर इं और रोड से रोंगी सीमाना तापा हुरहद गांव तक पथ की सुदृढ़ीकरण कार्य (लैं- 2.800 किमि मी)				
		एन० एच० हॉली से खालीपुरी सीमाना तक पथ की सुदृढ़ीकरण कार्य (लैं- 2.200 किमि मी)				
		कंवमधी से खालीपुरी सीमाना तक पथ की सुदृढ़ीकरण कार्य (लैं- 6.670 किमि मी)				
		2. वेबसाईट में निविदा प्रकाशन की तिथि :- 21.02.2024 3. ई—निविदा प्राप्ति की अंतिम तिथि एवं समय :- 28.02.2024 अपराह्न 5.00 बजे 4. निविदा खालीने की तिथि एवं समय 01.03.2024 अपराह्न 3.30 बजे 5. निविदा आमंत्रित करने वाले प्रतिविधि का नाम एवं पता :- कार्यपालक अभियंता, ग्रामीण कार्य विभाग, कार्य प्रमण्डल, लोहरदगा पुराणा ढो० आर० ३०० ए० भवन, लोहरदगा, रिन कोड :- 835302 6. ई—निविदा प्राप्ति की दूरमाली :- 06526316381 7. निविदा शुरू एवं अंग्रेजी की राशि विभागीय पत्रांक 3130 (अनु०) दिनांक 09.10.2023 के निवेशानुसार केवल Online Mode द्वारा स्वीकृत होगी। 8. निविदा शुरू एवं अंग्रेजी की राशि का ई—भूगतान जिस खाता से किया जायेगा, उसी खाते में अंग्रेजन की राशि वापस होगी। । अगर खाता को बंद कर दिया जाता है तो उसकी सारी जबाबदेही निविदादाता की होगी। विस्तृत जानकारी के लिए वेबसाईट Jharkhandtenders.gov.in में देखा जा सकता है।				
		कार्यपालक अभियंता ग्रा० का वि०, कार्य प्रमण्डल, लोहरदगा				

PR.NO.319700 Lohardaga(23-24):D



PRADHAN MANTRI GRAM SADAK YOJNA Himachal Pradesh Public Works Department

Address:-Mail id- hp-shi4@nic.in, hp-nah@nic.in

Phone No. 01702-222826

NOTICE INVITING TENDER (NIT)

On the basis of e-procurement notice issued by Chief Engineer , Shimla Zone HPPWD Shimla vide his letter number the Chief Engineer , Shimla Zone HPPWD Shimla on behalf of Governor of Himachal Pradesh invites the percentage rate bids, in electronic tendering system, for construction of roads under New Technology "Full Depth Reclamation / In-situ Stabilization with Cement and Additive" under Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana-III for each of the following three Packages of works including their maintenance for five years from the eligible and approved Contractors registered with HP PWD, in the appropriate class (A) or equivalent category in CPWD/ MES/ Railways and other State Govt. and Central Govt. Departments. Non-registered bidders may submit bids; however, the successful bidders must get registered in appropriate class with appropriate authorities before signing the contract.

S. No	District	Package No	Name of Road	Period of completion including rainy season	Estimated Cost Excluding GST(Rs in Lakh)	Total Cost excluding GST (Rs. Lakh)	Bid Security in lakh		
								Constn- uction Cost	Mainte- nance Cost
1	Sirmour	HP10290	1) Up gradation of Jamta Biria road km. 0/0 to 2/1330 including five-year maintenance under PMGSY-III Package No. HP10290 FDR Technology	18 Months	1503.94	128.19	1632.13	32.64	10
2	Sirmour	HP10295	1) Up gradation of Kafota koti road Kando Cheog to Ton Bridge Km. 0/0 to 2/8575 including five-year maintenance under PMGSY-III Package No. HP10295 2) Up gradation of Rampur ghat Nawada to Khoran Wala road Km. 0/0 to 5/400 including five-year maintenance under PMGSY-III Package No. HP10285 FDR Technology	18 Months	2750.53	204.19	2954.72	59.10	

2. Date of release of Invitation for Bids through e-procurement: 21* Feb, 2024 at 10.30 AM
3. Cost of Bid Document/Form: Rs. 5000.00 (non-refundable). To be deposited in the account of PMGSY e-tender online Account through PMGSY e-tender portal through Internet Banking only. All concerned please note that the bidding process will not move onward if the Bid Document's Cost (Tender Fee) is not paid through PMGSY e-tender portal by Internet Banking.

4. Bid Security (EMD): Bids must be accompanied with security of the amount specified for the work in the table as per column 10. Bid security will be deposited in the account of PMGSY e-tender online Account through PMGSY e-tender portal through Internet Banking only. All concerned please note that the bidding process will not move onward if the Bid Security (EMD) is not paid through PMGSY e-tender portal by Internet Banking. No other form of bid security will be accepted.

5. Availability of Bid Document and mode of submission: The bid document is available online and bid should be submitted online on website www.pmgstenders.gov.in. The bidder would be required to register in the website which is free of cost. For submission of bids, the bidder is required to have valid Digital Signature Certificate (DSC) from one of the authorized Certifying Authorities (CA). "Aspiring bidders who have not obtained the user ID and password for participating in e-tendering in PMGSY may obtain the same from the website: <https://pmgstenders.gov.in>

Digital signature is mandatory to participate in the e-tendering. Bidders already possessing the valid digital signature issued from authorized CAs can use the same in this tender.

6. Submission of Original Documents: The bidders are required to submit the following document at the time of signing of contract Bond in the office of the Superintending Engineer 12* Circle HPPWD Nahan.

(a) Affidavit regarding correctness of information furnished with bid document as per provisions of Clause 4.4(B) (a) (ii) of ITB with the office specified in the Bid Data Sheet.

(b) Self-attested bid id sheet generated when the bid successfully submitted by the bidder

Original documents must match the scanned copies submitted along with the bids on line. In case, of any discrepancy in this respect, it will be treated as miss-representation by the Bidder. Such Bidder shall be liable to be debarred for participating in bids for five years.

7. Last Date/ Time for receipt of bids through e-tendering: 5* March 2024 at 11.00 Hours

8. The site for the work is available.

9. Only online submission of bids is permitted, therefore, bids must be submitted online on website <https://pmgstenders.gov.in>. The technical qualification part of the bids will be opened online at 11.30 Hours on 5* March 2024 by the authorized officers. If the office happens to be closed on the date of opening of the bids as specified, the bids will be opened online on the next working day at the same time.

10. The bidder is not required to quote his rate for routine maintenance. The rates to be paid for routine maintenance (excluding GST) are indicated in the Bill of Quantities. GST will be paid extra as applicable. Further, the payment for routine maintenance to the contractor shall be regulated based on his performance of maintenance activities.

11. The bids for the work shall remain valid for acceptance for a period not less than ninety days after the deadline date for bid submission.

12. Bidders may bid for any one or more of the groups mentioned in the tables above.

13. Other details can be seen in the bidding documents. The Employer shall not be held liable for any delays due to system failure beyond its control. Even though the system will attempt to notify the bidders of any bid updates, the Employer shall not be liable for any information not received by the bidder. It is the bidders' responsibility to verify the website for the latest information related to the tender.

14. Any bidder who is punished by any Honourable court for criminal activity is not allowed to participate in the bidding process or involved in the organised crime or gangster activities or Mafia or Gunda or Anti-Social activities are strictly prohibited to participate in the bidding process. If it is established at any time that any bidder has criminal record, his bid/Contract shall be automatically cancelled.

15. Any Bidder who is an Advocate and Registered with any Bar Council shall not be allowed to participate in the bidding. If it is established that the Contractor is registered with any bar council, his bid/Contract shall be automatically cancelled.

16. Each Bidder is required to quote his rate on-line in the attached BOQ.

17. The authority can seek clarification on any issue pertaining to the bid at any stage of the bidding process and the bidder shall furnish the required clarification within 7 days in writing.

18. All the required materials like Cement/Steel/Bitumen/Explosive etc shall be arranged by contractor at his own level.

(Arvind Kumar Sharma)
Superintendent Engineer,
12th Circle HPPWD Nahan
Tel 01702-222826, Fax 01702-222581
E-mail hp-nah@nic.in
For Chief Engineer HPPWD Shimla
Nirman Bhawan, Nigam Vihar Shimla - 171002

6137/HP

Row over morning assembly at St Stephen's

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 20

HOURS AFTER an uproar over St Stephen's College allegedly suspending about 100 first-year students "for not attending the morning assembly", and debarring them from sitting in the upcoming examinations, the college principal Tuesday apologised to the students for a "miscommunication" on the issue.

The controversy was sparked by an email sent by the principal's office to the students and parents, which read: "It was a miscommunication...incorrectly worded. My sincere apologies for that. Even I was not cc'd on that email, a practice which is usually followed when I instruct my office to communicate, in written mode, on my behalf. Let me, therefore, set the matter right through this email..."

"Every college has its unique

set of practices and traditions, and St Stephen's College is no different. The morning assembly is an old tradition of the college. It is NOT a religious event, even



After controversy over students being allegedly suspended, the college principal issued a clarification on Tuesday.

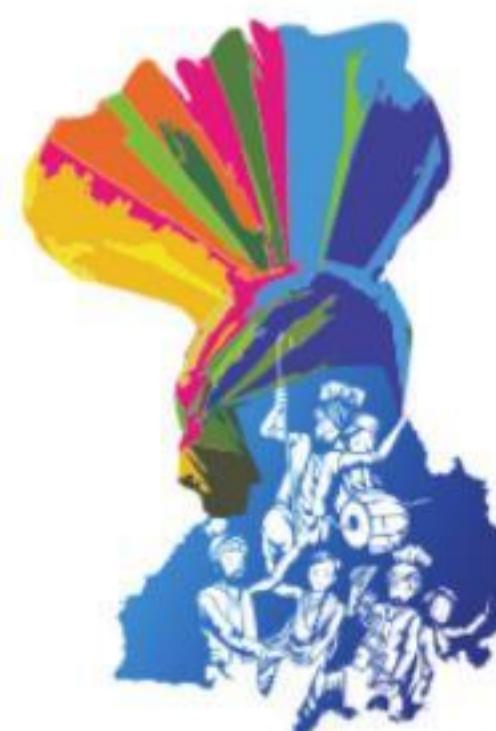
though small portions from several religious and philosophical texts are read out...It is more of an occasion when the college's junior members are encouraged to listen to men and women of character, and experienced people who share their wisdom and knowledge..." said Varghese.

"In the light of the misworded email that was sent from my office, without my clearance, please now note that there will be no suspension with regard to attendance for the morning assembly. Parents are important stakeholders in the broad-based, wholesome education that the college provides, and it is in this spirit that parents were addressed in the incorrectly worded email, with inadvertent and serious errors... My apologies for that," he added.

The principal did not reply to request for comment.

Earlier in the day, a first-year

BA Programme student, requesting anonymity, told *The Indian Express*: "We were told earlier that we would face repercussions for not



Rangla Punjab FESTIVAL

Welcome You

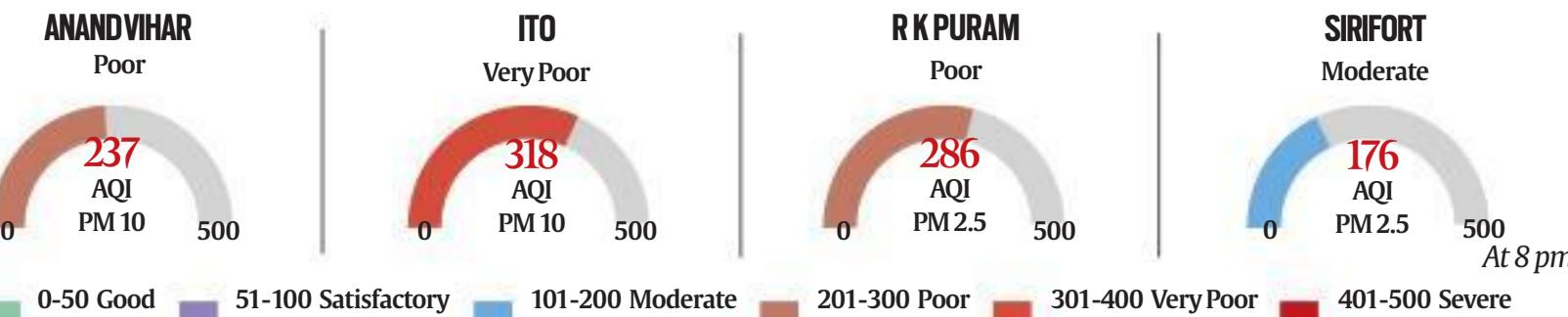
23rd to 29th February 2024, Amritsar



BHAGWANT SINGH MANN
Chief Minister, Punjab



DATE	TIME	EVENT	VENUE
23 February	6:30 PM onwards	Opening Ceremony	Khalsa College
24-25 February	10:30AM -12:30PM	Literature Festival	Partition Museum
24 -25 February	4:00PM - 6:00PM	Carnival Parade	Day 1: Red Cross - Ranjeet Avenue Ground Day 2: Trillium Mall - Ranjeet Avenue Ground
24-29 February	11:00AM - 5:00PM	Seva Street	Townhall Heritage Street
24-29 February	11:00AM - 10:00PM	Foodistan & Shopping Festival	Ranjeet Avenue Ground
24-29 February	7:00PM - 8:30PM	Digital Fest	Summer Palace
24-25 & 27-29 February	7:00PM onwards	Taal Chowk	Ranjeet Avenue Ground
25 February	7:00AM - 9:00AM	Greenathon	Anand Amrit Park - Sadda Pind
26 February	7:00PM onwards	Punjabi Folk Night	Gobindgarh Fort
29 February	6:30PM onwards	Closing Ceremony	Ranjeet Avenue Ground

**BRIEFLY**

NDMC: Hike in parking fees revoked

New Delhi: The New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC), which had increased parking fee by two-fold in a bid to discourage private transport amid the increase in pollution levels in the national capital, has now withdrawn the order on the issue. According to an order released on November 13, 2023, the new parking fee – due to implementation of GRAP measures – was scheduled to begin from January 31 this year. On January 31, the NDMC, however, postponed the deadline to April 30. With the GRAP guidelines in place, the parking charges were increased to Rs 40 for four-wheelers and Rs 20 for two-wheelers. However, now the usual fees of Rs 20 for four-wheelers and Rs 10 for two-wheelers will be charged by all NDMC parking areas again. **ENS**

Police burn Rs 1,600-cr contraband

New Delhi: The Delhi Police on Tuesday destroyed contraband worth Rs 1,600 crore in a drive under its 'Nasha Mukt Bharat Abhiyan' in the presence of L-G VK Saxena, said officials. "Today, in the presence of the Delhi L-G, 10,631.745 kg of illegal drugs worth about Rs 1,600 crore (sic) in the international market were destroyed as per procedure at the incinerator located at SSI industrial area, GT Karnal Road, near Jahanpur in Delhi," said ACP Sanjay Bhatia. A Union Finance Ministry notification and the Supreme Court order said that various panels were formed by the Delhi Police to destroy illegal drugs seized from drug smugglers. The destroyed contraband came from seizures in drug cases from 2009 to 2023. **PTI**

16-year-old boy dies by suicide: Cops

New Delhi: A 16-year-old boy died by suicide in his house in Shankar Vihar area of Southwest Delhi, said police, adding that the Class 10 student hanged himself from ceiling with a 'chunni' allegedly over being refused the admit card for an examination. Police, however, said they are verifying the claim. Sources from his school refuted the allegation. "The victim was a Class X student at Army Public School, Shankar Vihar. He committed suicide by hanging himself... No suicide note was found... No complaint has been submitted by the parents," said DCP (southwest) Rohit Meena. **PTI**

LABRADOR LED POLICE TO SPOT WHERE ACCUSED WORKED

How squad dog led cops to murder accused through traces of dust

to-door searches were fruitless, and with the area from where the boy went missing being a black spot, there was no scope to scan CCTV footage either.

But after around three weeks, on September 1, one of the Labrador dogs of the Delhi Police's K9 squad, 10-year-old Vinesh, was deployed along with the crime team of the Northeast district. The canine was taken to the spot of the crime, and later, coaxed to sniff the clothes the

deceased boy was wearing at the time of the incident.

Said an officer, "After sniffing the dust off the victim's clothes, Vinesh immediately took the police team to an under-construction site in the area where he started sniffing the security guard's enclosure..."

The police team then questioned the site's supervisor who told them that the guard, Ram Niwas, 40, had been missing since August 11 – the day of the incident.

Police personnel were sent



A Labrador dog taken to the crime spot sniffed the clothes the deceased was wearing at the time of the incident and took police to an under-construction site where he started sniffing the security guard's enclosure. **Archive**



Security personnel at the Ghazipur border on Tuesday. **Gajendra Yadav**

DISCUSSIONS PROGRESSING WELL, SAYS KEJRIWAL

AAP, Cong alliance talks at final stage, announcement soon: CM

MALLICA JOSHI & JATIN ANAND
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 20



CM Arvind Kejriwal at a press conference on Tuesday. **Express**

welcome in the INDIA Alliance..."

Delhi has seven Lok Sabha seats. In 2014 and 2019, all these seats were won by Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) candidates.

According to Congress sources, both parties were expected to finally zero in on a 4-3 seat-sharing formula in the Capital based on the winnability of the candidate on each of the seven Lok Sabha seats in Delhi.

"While the Congress has already constituted a panel of potential candidates on each seat, the AAP has also made a list of potential candidates. Both these panels will be assessed on the

basis of winnability and the candidates decided will be given tickets," a senior Congress leader said, requesting anonymity.

One of the names that was suggested from the New Delhi seat, which is held by BJP's Meenakshi Lekhi at present, was that of Saurabh Bharadwaj, who is an MLA from Greater Kailash and the health minister in the AAP government in Delhi.

"His name was suggested and he was asked for his opinion, but he has refused to contest," AAP sources said.

Alliance talks were derailed for a couple of days after AAP na-

tional general secretary (organisation) Sandeep Pathak announced at a press conference last week that AAP was "willing to give Congress one seat" if the alliance materialises.

He had also said that based on "merit", the grand old party did not deserve "even a single seat" in the Capital. Sources said AAP leaders told the Congress that the inordinate delay in finalising the contours of the alliance was behind the "outburst".

Asked about the thaw in the association between both parties following a lunch at Congress MP Abhishek Manu Singhvi's residence on Sunday, another senior Congress leader said, "There was no issue at all; it is a fact that talks (regarding the alliance) are at an advanced stage. The issue is not regarding seat-sharing in Delhi or even the number of seats – we may get four or they may (get them) depending on the winnability of the candidate proposed – but the seats the AAP is claiming in Gujarat."

AAP has announced candidates from two seats in Gujarat. Both parties have decided to contest separately in Punjab.

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 20

MULTIPLE LAYERS of barricading at borders with Haryana, provisions to block the road at Ghazipur border with Uttar Pradesh if the need arises – these are some of the measures the Delhi Police is keeping in place ahead of the scheduled march of farmers towards Delhi from Punjab on Wednesday morning following their rejection of the Centre's five-year minimum support price (MSP) proposal.

On Tuesday, the Gurgaon Police arrested under section Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC) Section(s) 107/151, and later released 38 farmers for violating orders under CrPC Section 144 in the state, after Manesar farmers called for a march towards Delhi.

Farmers, who gathered to take out a march to Delhi at around 10 am on Tuesday, were stopped by around 300 police officers. The farmers had called for the protest after extending solidarity with Punjab farmers demanding an or-

dinance guaranteeing MSP.

On the march scheduled for Wednesday, Mayank Gupta, deputy commissioner of police (East), said that four law and order companies are ready with riot gear to restrict any movement and control disturbance. "But we are not expecting any disruption here. We are coordinating with the DCPs of South and Southwest Delhi along with those in the districts of Gurgaon," Gupta said, adding that there were no curbs on traffic or any route diversion.

At the Panipat-Sonipat border, at least 400 officers along with two companies of Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) and one of Border Security Force (BSF) have been deployed, along with the installation of water cannons, barricades, and concrete barriers to prevent the protesters from marching towards the national capital.

The Gurgaon Police, meanwhile, has deployed officers at all its key borders including the Rajokri border on the Delhi-Jaipur Highway, Rewari, Pataudi-Jhajjar, Farrukhnagar-Jhajjar and Nuh borders. "Adequate force is on

standby round the clock, and Gurgaon has not been affected by the protests so far, but we have enough officers deployed to prevent any untoward incident along the borders," said an officer.

In Gautam Buddha Nagar, officials said that farmers would be given space from the Yamuna Expressway's zero point to Surajpur collectorate, where farmers will line up on one side with their tractors. According to officials, no major traffic congestion at the Noida-Border border is expected on Wednesday.

In Ghaziabad, officials said, the existing traffic advisory will apply and traffic will be affected on the Delhi-Meerut Expressway if the Delhi Police installs additional barricades at the Ghazipur border. "Under such circumstances, traffic will be diverted towards Anand Vihar. We are prepared to deal with any situation. However, as per information, farmers will only go to the DM office and not march towards Delhi," said another official. Over 2,000 Delhi Police personnel will be deployed at the Ghazipur border.

The Gurgaon Police, meanwhile, has deployed officers at all its key borders including the Rajokri border on the Delhi-Jaipur Highway, Rewari, Pataudi-Jhajjar, Farrukhnagar-Jhajjar and Nuh borders. "Adequate force is on

PM to lay foundation for upgrading Gurgaon railway station on Feb 26

GURGAON: Rao Inderjit Singh, Union minister of state and Gurgaon MP, on Tuesday said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi will lay the foundation for upgrading the Gurgaon railway station on February 26. In the first phase, the project cost has been estimated at Rs 295 crore.

The railway station will be turned into a world-class facility, said Singh. It will have two entry

points along with other unique features, said Singh, adding plans to ensure that vehicles taking the Daulatabad Flyover get direct access to the station are underway.

Officials have been directed to relocate the cement yard following difficulties, said Singh. The station will also comprise 12 lifts, a foot-over bridge, multi-level parking area, two-storey food court, solar panels among others. **ENS**

2-month prep work, 40m tunnel: How accused in Indian Oil case carried out theft for weeks

ARNABJIT SUR
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 20

PREP WORK that lasted over two months, a 40-metre-long tunnel, and a daily theft of nearly 7,000 to 8,000 litres of oil for weeks: Police chargesheet into the oil theft from Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL) pipelines, passing through the Pochampur village and supplying oil to the Bijwasan Oil Depot, has revealed how meticulously the network of seven accused carried out the crime before the cover was blown off their deeds.

In October last year, Delhi Police received a complaint from the officials of the oil giant regarding possible theft from their pipelines.

Their investigation led police to a plot in Dwarka's Pochampur village where they found an underground tunnel hidden under a pile of fodder.

According to the chargesheet, the accused used a valve machine connected to two plastic pipes to extract oil by drilling a hole inside the pipeline.

The accused would then load the oil on tractors, inside con-

tainers used to store wheat flour and gravel, to avoid suspicion.

The chargesheet says, "...A machine was installed to extract oil by making a hole in the government oil pipeline in which two plastic pipes were connected which were kept at the plot of Rakesh (the landlord) at a distance of around 40 meters by making a tunnel..."

It is learnt that on June 15, Rakesh had given the land to a

person who identified himself as Naresh at a rent of Rs 30,000 per month. Rakesh did not take the trouble to get the tenant verified.

How the oil theft was detected

It is learnt that complaints of pressure drop began being received in the pipeline. On October 4, Indian Oil officials detected a pilferage at the IOCL Delhi-Panipat section.



(Clockwise, above) The spot was concealed by fodder; the tunnel; the owner of the land after arrest. **Express**

The planning for the theft began in December 2022, when the main accused, Sudesh Gupta, who told Rakesh that his name was Naresh, zeroed in on a plot near the pipeline and opened a mechanic shop nearby.

"Sudesh met Rakesh under the name of Naresh Verma and asked about taking the plot on rent to do scrap and bottle work... two men, namely Muradi and Bobby, were called as they were

experts in digging tunnels and making holes in pipelines and installing valves," stated the chargesheet.

"The work was completed in 2.5 months after which they drilled the pipeline and installed the valve and started extracting oil," stated the chargesheet.

One of the accused, Imran alias Mistri, the chargesheet stated, had welded an iron plate under the pipeline with a small welding machine while co-accused Ravi and Kale welded the pipeline with a special type of drill machine.

"...drilling is done in such a way that as soon as that special drill machine is taken out after drilling the pipeline, there is a special type of rubber inside the spindle of that drill machine which is used to protect the pipeline and does not allow the oil to come out," added the chargesheet.

They used to take the oil and diesel to a warehouse in Palwal, from where three of the accused, Sudesh, Rashid and Ram, used to sell it to customers.

The chargesheet was filed in the Dwarka court earlier this month.

No completion certificate if project violates anti-dust norms

New Delhi: The Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM) in NCR has directed government agencies to not issue completion and occupancy certificates for projects that violate dust pollution control norms.

The body, which is responsible for managing air pollution in the region, said Tuesday that inspections of construction and demolition sites indicate a "significant need to improve levels of compliance and implementation of dust mitigation directions and guidelines". It added that in some cases, project proponents have completely disregarded the "closure" directions and continued operations at their sites without the CAQM's resumption orders and without taking due corrective or preventive measures to abate dust pollution. **ENS**

LABRADOR LED POLICE TO SPOT WHERE ACCUSED WORKED

How squad dog led cops to murder accused through traces of dust

ARNABJIT SUR
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 20

IN AUGUST 2017, a six-year-old boy went missing from his way home in Northeast Delhi. His father, a tea-shop owner, lodged a missing persons' report with the Delhi Police, following which several teams were formed to trace the whereabouts of the accused.

The next afternoon, the minor's body was found with strangulation marks inside a nursery situated a distance away. Medical examination revealed the boy was sodomised before being killed.

For almost a month, police had no clue about the possible perpetrator of the crime. Door



to-door searches were fruitless, and with the area from where the boy went missing being a black spot, there was no scope to scan CCTV footage either. But after around three weeks, on September 1, one of the Labrador dogs of the Delhi Police's K9 squad, 10-year-old Vinesh, was deployed along with the crime team of the Northeast district. The canine was taken to the spot of the crime, and later, coaxed to sniff the clothes the



A Labrador dog taken to the crime spot sniffed the clothes the deceased was wearing at the time of the incident and took police to an under-construction site where he started sniffing the security guard's enclosure. **Archive**

to his hometown in Bareilly, Uttar Pradesh, to carry out raids at his possible hideouts.

However, they later received a tip-off that he was in Delhi itself. Niwas was arrested near the cremation ground in Mandoli here.

During interrogation, Niwas told the police that he was friends with a relative of the victim and used to consume liquor with him at the construction site after their respective shifts. On August 11, when the construction work was shut throughout the day, Niwas again consumed liquor with his friend who left the spot around 8 pm.

"Around 8.15pm, the accused, who was in an inebriated state, saw the boy heading towards his house and called him

over. He sodomised the minor boy and when the latter threatened to complain to his father, he strangled him and dumped him at a nursery around two kilometers away from the spot before fleeing," AK Singla, then DCP (Nor



मोदी की गारंटी विष्णु का सुशासन



हमने बनाया है
हम ही संवारेंगे

श्री नरेंद्र मोदी
माननीय प्रधानमंत्री

त्वरित निर्णय के 2 माह

अन्नदाताओंके लिए

- 13 लाख किसानों को धान के बकाया बोनस की राशि 3716 करोड़ रुपए तत्काल जारी करने का निर्णय
- किसानों से प्रति एकड़ 21 किंचिट धान खरीदी का निर्णय
- 'कृषक उन्नति योजना' के तहत 10,000 करोड़ रुपये का प्रावधान

ग्रामीणोंके लिए

- 50 लाख ग्रामीण परिवारों को निःशुल्क नल कनेक्शन 4,500 करोड़ रुपये का प्रावधान

गरीबोंके लिए

- 69.92 लाख गरीब परिवारों को पांच वर्षों तक निःशुल्क राशन प्रदाय का निर्णय
- प्रधानमंत्री आवास योजना के तहत 18 लाख घरों के निर्माण के लिए 8,369 करोड़ रुपये का प्रावधान
- 'दीनदयाल उपाध्याय भूमिहीन कृषि मजदूर योजना' में भूमिहीन कृषि मजदूरों को 10,000 रुपये वार्षिक सहायता का निर्णय

महिलाओंके लिए

- 'महतारी वंदन योजना' के तहत महिलाओं को प्रतिमाह 1000 रुपए की दर से वार्षिक 12,000 रुपए आर्थिक सहायता का निर्णय

युवाओंके लिए

- पीएससी परीक्षा घोटाले की सीबीआई जांच का निर्णय
- युवा स्वरोजगार को बढ़ावा देने के लिए छत्तीसगढ़ उद्यम क्रांति योजना लागू करने का निर्णय
- पुलिस विभाग सहित विभिन्न शासकीय भर्तियों में युवाओं को निर्धारित आयु सीमा में 5 वर्षों की छूट का निर्णय

सभी छत्तीसगढ़वासियोंके लिए

- अयोध्या यात्रा के लिए निःशुल्क 'रामलला दर्शन योजना' लागू करने का निर्णय

आदिवासियोंके लिए

- तेंदूपत्ता संग्राहकों को 4,000 रुपये प्रति मानक बोरा से बढ़ाकर 5,500 रुपये प्रति मानक बोरा भुगतान का निर्णय
- छत्तीसगढ़ के त्वरित विकास के लिए
- कटघोरा से डोंगरगढ़ रेल लाइन निर्माण के लिए 300 करोड़ रुपए का प्रावधान

सामान्य परिवारोंके लिए

- प्रति माह 400 यूनिट तक आधे दाम पर बिजली प्रदाय का निर्णय

प्रदाचार निवारण के लिए

- शासकीय योजनाओं के क्रियान्वयन की निगरानी के लिए 'अटल मॉनिटरिंग पोर्टल' की स्थापना का निर्णय
- कोल परिवहन की पारदर्शी प्रक्रिया के लिए ऑनलाइन परमिट व्यवस्था लागू करने का निर्णय

छत्तीसगढ़ी संस्कृति के संरक्षण व संवर्धन के लिए

- छत्तीसगढ़ के ऐतिहासिक और सांस्कृतिक महत्व के शहर राजिम के वैभव को फिर से स्थापित करने के लिए राजिम कुंभ (कल्प) का निर्णय

**सरल, निर्भीक
निर्णयिक नेतृत्व**



श्री विष्णु देव साय

माननीय मुख्यमंत्री, छत्तीसगढ़

सबका साथ-सबका विकास, सबका विश्वास और सबका प्रयास

Third time lucky? Why the new law is unlike two previous bids to provide reservation to Marathas

OMKAR GOKHALE
MUMBAI, FEBRUARY 20

NOW THAT the Maharashtra Assembly has passed a Bill to set aside 10% reservation for Marathas under socially and educationally backward categories in jobs and education, the question everyone's minds is, will it clear judicial scrutiny.

The Bill was formulated based on a report of Justice (retired) Sunil B Shukre-led Maharashtra State Backward Class Commission. However, at least two previous legislation extending quota to Marathas failed the legal challenge, a point on which the Opposition tried to pin the Eknath Shinde-led government Tuesday.

Narayan Rane panel
In a first bid for a special law for Marathas, the then Prithviraj Chavan-led Congress government

brought in an ordinance giving 16% reservation in government jobs and education to the community, ahead of the 2014 elections. It was based on the recommendations of a Narayan Rane-led committee, which was not a statutory backward class commission.

The ordinance was challenged before the Bombay High Court (HC), and it stayed the move in its interim order of November 2014. In the same year, the Supreme Court refused to vacate the stay.

In 2015, the BJP-Shiv Sena government led by Devendra Fadnavis turned the ordinance into an Act, which was passed in the Assembly. A year later, the Bombay HC stayed the Act for its resemblance to the ordinance.

In 2017, the Fadnavis government set up the Maharashtra State Backward Class commission under Justice (retd) MG Gaikwad of the Bombay High Court.

Gaikwad Commission

The Gaikwad panel gave its report in November 2018, after a survey of 43,629 families, with at least two villages picked from each of the state's 355 talukas where Marathas were over 50% of population.

The report said 76.86% of the Maratha families were engaged in agriculture and agriculture labour (combined), 6% in government and semi-government services, 3% in private services, 4% in trade and industry, and 9% in non-agricultural physical labour. It also found that 13.42% of the Marathas were illiterate, 35.31% only had primary education, 43.79% had finished high school, and that the numbers dropped to just 6.71% for those who had finished graduation or post-grad-

uation, while only 0.77% were technically and professionally qualified.

On the basis of this, then CM Fadnavis brought in Maharashtra's Socially and Educationally Backward Class Act, 2018, providing Marathas 16% quota in education and government jobs.

The legislation was first challenged in Bombay HC, which ruled that the quota granted under the Act was not "justifiable", and reduced it to 12% in education and 13% in government jobs.

In May 2021, a Constitution Bench of Supreme Court (SC) struck down the quota altogether, noting that Maharashtra government failed to provide sufficient data to justify exceeding the 50% quota ceiling. The SC also referred to the findings of Gaikwad

Commission that over 30% Marathas were in public service, and said the panel and HC had failed to consider that "Marathas are the dominant forward class".

The Court said the Gaikwad commission ought to have focused on what had happened since 2008 that Marathas became a backward class. At the same time, it "left it to the State to collect data to find out whether a particular case or community is to be included in backward class". It was based on this that the Justice Shukre panel was formed, with the Shinde government's brief for it being to go in for a large-scale survey, to ensure there was sufficient empirical data.

Shukre Commission

The committee was set up in December 2023 with Justice (retd) Sunil B Shukre of the Bombay HC as chairperson. Over the past two months, it claims to

have surveyed 1,58,20,264 families across the state.

It notes that the population of Marathas in the state is 28%, while 84% of them are not advanced, adding such a large backward community cannot be added into the OBC bracket.

It describes extreme poverty, decline in agricultural income, and partitions in land holdings as reasons for the current status of the Marathas. It also notes that 94% of farmers who have died by suicide in the state belonged to the Maratha community.

The panel finds inadequate representation of the community in all sectors of public services, and says the Marathas have remained "completely out of the mainstream" due to their backwardness. It calls for separate reservation to Marathas to increase their representation in government jobs and developed sectors.



Union Home Minister Amit Shah being felicitated during a BJP meeting in Bikaner, Tuesday. PTI

Shah: Modi govt ensured politics of performance

'Cong, Opp bloc have no leader, principles'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

JAIPUR, FEBRUARY 20

UNION HOME Minister Amit Shah on Tuesday targeted the Congress saying that the party cannot develop India or work for the welfare of the poor.

Addressing BJP workers in Udaipur, he called the Congress a dynastic and directionless party. "Congress party cannot develop India. It cannot provide welfare to the poor," Shah said, adding that the Modi government did several public welfare works in the last 10 years.

He also said the Congress is unable to enhance India's pride. "The Congress is a dynastic party. It is also a directionless party."

Shah also alleged that the Congress "kept the issue of Ram Temple hanging" and always questioned the BJP about when the temple would be built.

"The party never had the intention that the Ram Temple be built in Ayodhya," he said.

"We had vowed that we would build Ram temple. Lord Ram, who is worshipped by crores of people, got humiliated while being in a tent. The Congress had kept the issue of Ram temple pending," he added.

Highlighting the achievements of the Centre, Shah said that the Modi government in the

last 10 years brought 25 crore people out of poverty, provided houses to the poor, worked to strengthen the nation, abrogated Article 370 in J&K, and made India the fifth largest economy of the world.

He said that during the Congress rule, terrorists from Pakistan used to enter India and carry out blasts but the Modi government conducted surgical and air strikes against terrorists in Pakistan.

Shah said the government has worked to deliver good governance and even the opponents of PM Modi cannot make any allegation of corruption.

Targeting the previous Congress government in Rajasthan, he said that women and Dalits were not safe and riots were frequent but now a "double-engine" government has been formed and safe environment for women and Dalits will be there and the state will be free from riots.

He also said that the Modi government has worked to give honour to the tribal community and made Droupadi Murmu the President of India.

Shah also appealed to people to vote for the BJP in the upcoming Lok Sabha elections for further development of the nation under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Sonia, Nadda, Chavan and Deora among 41 elected unopposed as Rajya Sabha MPs

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 20



Sonia Gandhi, J P Nadda, Ashok Chavan, Milind Deora. File

will complete their term on April 2, six will retire on April 3.

Nadda and three other BJP nominees – Javantsinh Parmar, Mayank Nayak and diamond baron Govindbhai Dholakia – were declared winners from Gujarat. The Congress, which has only 15 MLAs, and other opposition parties had preferred not to put up candidates against the BJP, which has 156 legislators in the 182-member Assembly.

From Rajasthan, Sonia Gandhi was elected unopposed, as were BJP's Chunnilal Garasiya and Madan Rathore.

All the six candidates from Maharashtra – BJP's Chavan, who

joined the party last Tuesday after quitting the Congress, Medha Kulkarni and Ajit Gopchade; Shiv Sena's Milind Deora, who

also quit the Congress last month, Praful Patel (NCP) and Chandrakant Handore (Cong) – were elected unopposed.

In Bihar, JD(U)'s Sanjay Kumar Jha, BJP's Dharmshila Gupta and Bhim Singh, RJD's Manoj Kumar Jha and Sanjay Yadav and Congress' Akhilesh Prasad Singh won.

From West Bengal, TMC's Sushmita Dev, Sugarka Ghose, Mamata Thakur and Md Nadiul Haque and Samik Bhattacharya of the BJP were de-

clared winners.

Union minister Murugan, Valmiki Dham Ashram head Umesh Nath Maharaj, Kisan Morcha's national vice president Banshilal Gurjar and Madhya Pradesh BJP's women wing president Maya Naroliya bagged four seats for the BJP in Madhya Pradesh, while Ashok Singh of Congress also won unopposed.

From Odisha, Union minister Ashwini Vaishnaw (BJP) and BJD's Debadash Samantray and Subhashish Khuntia won.

YSR Congress candidates – G Babu Rao, Y V Subba Reddy and M Raghunath Reddy – won all the three seats in Andhra Pradesh, while in neighbouring

Telangana, the ruling Congress bagged two seats – Renuka Chowdhury and Anil Kumar Yadav – and the BRS won one seat – R Vachchandra.

BJP nominees in Uttarakhand (Mahendra Bhatt), Subhash Barala (Haryana), Devendra Pratap Singh (Chhattisgarh) were elected unopposed.

SP names its Lok Sabha candidate from Varanasi

New Delhi: The Samajwadi Party on Tuesday declared its Lok Sabha candidate for Varanasi and appointed two leaders as in-charge for Amroha. Both Varanasi and Amroha featured in the list of 17 seats offered to the Congress.

In Varanasi, from where PM Narendra Modi won twice, the SP has fielded former minister Surendra Singh Patel, an OBC leader. The party has appointed Mehboob Ali and Ram Avatar Saini as in-charge of Amroha, indicating that either of two will contest from the seat if the Congress decides not to fight from there.

In Tuesday's list, SP chief Akhilesh Yadav has replaced his cousin Dharmendra Yadav with uncle Shival Singh Yadav in Badaun. In the first list of candidates released on January 30, the SP had announced Dharmendra's candidature from Badaun. On Tuesday, the SP appointed him as in-charge of both Kannauj and Azamgarh, dropping hints that he may contest the LS election from either of the two seats that are considered SP strongholds. ENS

DISPROPORTIONATE ASSETS CASE

Delhi HC refuses Shibu Soren's plea to quash Lokpal proceedings

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 20

THE DELHI High Court on Tuesday rejected former Jharkhand Chief Minister Shibu Soren's plea to quash Lokpal proceedings against him in a disproportionate assets case.

A division bench of Justices Rekha Palli and Rajnish Bhatnagar rejected Soren's plea that challenged Delhi High Court's single-judge order passed last month.

"...allegations levelled by the respondent no. 2 (BJP MP Nishikant Dubey) it is evident to us that the complaint pertains not only to purchase of properties, which the appellant claims were purchased more than 7 years ago, but also pertains to ongoing incidents of amassing wealth by misuse of power by the appellant (Soren)," noted the court.

The court also added that the Lokpal was yet to decide



JMM chief and Jharkhand former CM Shibu Soren. File

whether a prima facie case against Soren existed or not.

"...the respondent no. 1 (Lokpal) is yet to take a decision as to whether or not a prima facie case exists for directing investigation against the appellant (Soren) by any agency, including the Delhi Special Police Establishment [CBI]," the bench observed.

The two-judge bench also noted that the complainant had levelled allegations against Soren and his family members of misusing the funds of the exchequer

for their personal and political gains with the assistance of one Amit Aggarwal, who was constructing a 22-storey building in Salt Lake, Kolkata.

The Delhi High Court had on January 22 refused to interfere in the Lokpal proceedings against Soren after Dubey filed a complaint alleging that Soren, his family members, associates, etc., had acquired several immovable properties in various districts of Jharkhand.

After Dubey filed a complaint in September 2020, the Lokpal subsequently directed the CBI to conduct a "preliminary inquiry" to ascertain whether there exists a "prima facie case for proceeding in the matter". The CBI submitted its report in June 2022, in which it said that Shibu Soren and his family did not declare several of their properties in affidavits filed with the Election Commission (EC) and thus are likely to have flouted the Representation of the People Act, 1951.

DAMINI NATH

NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 20

THE BJP Tuesday told the One Nation, One Election committee chaired by former President Ram Nath Kovind that elections to the Lok Sabha and the state assemblies should be held together to start with, and the local body elections should be synchronised later, BJP president JP Nadda said.

A BJP delegation, including Nadda and Union Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav, met Kovind and committee members NK Singh and Sanjay Kothari. The BJP leaders handed over a written memorandum to the committee, a Law Ministry statement said. "The party pledged its support to the concept of One Nation, One Election," the statement read.

After meeting the commit-

tee, Nadda told reporters that the Representation of the People Act should be amended after building a "consensus" to enable simultaneous elections. He added that the party supports the idea of a common electoral roll and Voter ID for all elections.

He said the Model Code of Conduct is always in force in some part of the country or the other, affecting administration and "good governance". He said frequent polls lead to a "financial burden"

on parties and the government and this becomes a cause of "corruption". He said security forces, teachers, health department staff and administrative services officers are deployed in large numbers for election duty, leading to their work being affected. In the memorandum, Nadda wrote the BJP wanted the state election commissions to continue holding panchayat elections.

TECH CHECK

THE WHO event to launch the Global Initiative on Digital Health, which was spearheaded by India during its G20 presidency, experienced some technical glitches, leading to minor communication disruption. Taking it in stride, the director of WHO's digital health department, Dr Alain Labrique, who was coordinating the session, said in jest that no good digital initiative goes without a technical issue. When it happened a second time, he referred to it as another gremlin crawling in the system and said it was a sobering reminder that sometimes things end up working better in rural India but not in the sophisticated rooms in Geneva.

THE WHO event to launch the Global Initiative on Digital Health, which was spearheaded by India during its G20 presidency, experienced some technical glitches, leading to minor communication disruption. Taking it in stride, the director of WHO's digital health department, Dr Alain Labrique, who was coordinating the session, said in jest that no good digital initiative goes without a technical issue. When it happened a second time, he referred to it as another gremlin crawling in the system and said it was a sobering reminder that sometimes things end up working better in rural India but not in the sophisticated rooms in Geneva.

THE WHO event to launch the Global Initiative on Digital Health, which was spearheaded by India during its G20 presidency, experienced some technical glitches, leading to minor communication disruption. Taking it in stride, the director of WHO's digital health department, Dr Alain Labrique, who was coordinating the session, said in jest that no good digital initiative goes without a technical issue. When it happened a second time, he referred to it as another gremlin crawling in the system and said it was a sobering reminder that sometimes things end up working better in rural India but not in the sophisticated rooms in Geneva.

THE WHO event to launch the Global Initiative on Digital Health, which was spearheaded by India during its G20 presidency, experienced some technical glitches, leading to minor communication disruption. Taking it in stride, the director of WHO's digital health department, Dr Alain Labrique, who was coordinating the session, said in jest that no good digital initiative goes without a technical issue. When it happened a second time, he referred to it as another gremlin crawling in the system and said it was a sobering reminder that sometimes things end up working better in rural India but not in the sophisticated rooms in Geneva.

THE WHO event to launch the Global Initiative on Digital Health, which was spearheaded by India during its G20 presidency, experienced some technical glitches, leading to minor communication disruption. Taking it in stride, the director of WHO's digital health department, Dr Alain Labrique, who was coordinating the session, said in jest that no good digital initiative goes without a technical issue. When it happened a second time, he referred to it as another gremlin crawling in the system and said it was a sobering reminder that sometimes things end up working better in rural India but not in the sophisticated rooms in Geneva.

THE WHO event to launch the Global Initiative on Digital Health, which was spearheaded by India during its G20 presidency, experienced some technical glitches, leading to minor communication disruption. Taking it in stride, the director of WHO's digital health department, Dr Alain Labrique, who was coordinating the session, said in jest that no good digital initiative goes without a technical issue. When it happened a second time, he referred to it as another gremlin crawling in the system and said it was a sobering reminder that sometimes things end up working better in rural India but not in the sophisticated rooms in Geneva.

THE WHO event to launch the Global Initiative on Digital Health, which was spearheaded by India during its G20 presidency, experienced some technical glitches, leading to minor communication disruption. Taking it in stride, the director of WHO's digital health department, Dr Alain Labrique, who was coordinating the session, said in jest that no good digital initiative goes without a technical issue. When it happened a second time, he referred to it as another gremlin crawling in the system and said it was a sobering reminder that sometimes things end up working better in rural India but not in the sophisticated rooms in Geneva.

THE WHO event to launch the Global Initiative on Digital Health, which was spearheaded by India during its G20 presidency, experienced some technical glitches, leading to minor communication disruption. Taking it in stride, the director of WHO's digital health department, Dr Alain Labrique, who was coordinating the session, said in jest that no good digital initiative goes without a technical issue. When it happened a second time, he referred to it as another gremlin crawling in the system and

Govt. of Bihar Rural Works Department											
Notice Inviting Tender (No.-RWDM/MMGSY(AWSEH)/HQ/ET/2023-24/31)											
The Government of Bihar has applied for a loan/credit through the Govt. of India (GoI), to the New Development Bank (NDB), for Bihar Rural Roads Project (Phase-II) (Mukhya Mantri Gram Sampark Yojana- AWSEH) and intends to apply the funds to cover eligible payments under the contracts for construction of works as detailed in the Table-1.											
Engineer-in-Chief, Rural Works Department, on behalf of Governor of Bihar invites, SBD based Percentage rate tender in electronic tendering system under Mukhya Mantri Gram Sampark Yojana-AWSEH for each of the following works including their maintenance for five years from the eligible and approved Contractors registered with RWD/RCD/CPWD/MES /Railways/Other State/Central Govt. departments.											
Table-1											
Sl. No.	Package	Description of the Works [CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE OF ROADS (A) / BRIDGES (B)]			Length (KM)	Construction Amount (In Lacs)	Maintenance Amount (In Lacs)	Total Amount (In Lacs)	Earnest Money Payable* (In Lacs)	Amount Payable to Works Division	
1	2	From	To	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1	MMGSY(AWSEH)-NDB-BRRP2-582-PHULPARAS	A1	Bajrang Bali Mandir	Kosi Bandh	0.870	97.800	7.280	105.080	4.146	Phulparas	
		A2	Audhes Paswan Ka Ghar	Kosi Bandh	0.850	93.690	8.540	102.230	4.146		
	Total			2	1.720	191.490	15.820	207.310	4.146		
2	MMGSY(AWSEH)-NDB-BRRP2-583-PHULPARAS	A1	Narendrapur To Neur Road	Neur Purvi Patti	1.450	156.440	13.010	169.450	3.389	Phulparas	
	Total			1	1.450	156.440	13.010	169.450	3.389		
3	MMGSY(AWSEH)-NDB-BRRP2-584-BENIPATTI	A1	Sh 52 Hussain Madir	House Of Mohar Jha	0.690	83.070	5.060	88.130			
		A2	Bechan Mandal	Reo Road	0.320	33.910	2.710	36.620	2.495	Benipatti	
	Total			2	1.010	116.980	7.770	124.750	2.495		
4	MMGSY(AWSEH)-NDB-BRRP2-585-BENIPATTI	A1	Dhobighatta Bishanpur Bazar	Bishanpur Purwari Tol House Of Mukesh Das	1.100	119.800	6.910	126.710			
		B1	Construction of RCC Box Bridge at Span 3x6.0x4.5m at Ch.-850m in Dhobighatta Bishanpur Bazar to Bishanpur Purwari Tol House of Mukesh Das Approach Road-40.00m		20.30m	205.000	1.190	206.190	6.658	Benipatti	
	Total			1/1	1.160	324.800	8.100	332.900	6.658		
5	MMGSY(AWSEH)-NDB-BRRP2-586-BENIPATTI	A1	H/O ram Chandrathakur Datak Tol	Lala Tol	1.750	201.260	12.910	214.170	4.283	Benipatti	
	Total			1	1.750	201.260	12.910	214.170	4.283		
6	MMGSY(AWSEH)-NDB-BRRP2-587-BENIPATTI	A1	Bise Thakur House	Chupal Tol	0.550	67.910	4.980	72.890			
		A2	School	Malha Tol (Kruhaugt Malah Tol)	0.150	14.990	1.513	16.503	1.788	Benipatti	
	Total			2	0.700	82.900	6.493	89.393	1.788		
7	MMGSY(AWSEH)-NDB-BRRP2-588-BENIPATTI	A1	Barham Sthan	Basko Madhwapur Road	0.570	69.500	4.980	74.480			
		B1	Construction of RCC Bridge Span 3x6.0x3.5m at Ch.-400m in Barham Sthan to Basko Madhwapur Road Approach Road-50.00m		19.70m	179.880	1.220	181.100	5.112	Benipatti	
	Total			Total	1/1	0.640	249.380	6.200	255.580	5.112	
8	MMGSY(AWSEH)-NDB-BRRP2-589-JHANJHARPUR	A1	Kothiwa Durga Asthan	Bharam	1.430	155.720	11.420	167.140			
		A2	Ratupur Mmgsy Road	Piparaulia Apshankhyak Tol	0.720	74.700	6.240	80.940	9.251	Jhanjharpur	
		A3	Khaira	Olipur Yadav Tol	0.970	135.260	7.910	143.170			
		A4	Mahinathpur West	Bhairav Asthan Road	0.650	65.800	5.510	71.310			
	Total			4	3.770	431.480	31.080	462.560	9.251		
9	MMGSY(AWSEH)-NDB-BRRP2-590-JHANJHARPUR	A1	Kujratol Mmgsy Road	Sikaria Mmgsy Road Via Dih Tol Musahari	1.170	120.250	10.130	130.380	2.608		
	Total			1	1.170	120.250	10.130	130.380	2.608		
10	MMGSY(AWSEH)-NDB-BRRP2-591-MUZAFFARPUR EAST 1	A1	NH-77 Road	Dhorhi Anandkar Tola	0.450	51.650	6.540	58.190	1.164	Muzaffarpur East-1	
	Total			1	0.450	51.650	6.540	58.190	1.164		
11	MMGSY(AWSEH)-NDB-BRRP2-592-MUZAFFARPUR EAST 1	A1	Mmgsy Road Ganaur Sah	Jurawanpatti Sahtola	0.471	74.010	4.990	79.000	1.580	Muzaffarpur East-1	
	Total			1	0.471	74.010	4.990	79.000	1.580		
12	MMGSY(AWSEH)-NDB-BRRP2-593-MUZAFFARPUR EAST 1	A1	NH-722	Lahladpur Pargati Nagar	0.205	25.838	0.934	26.772			
		A2	Pmgsy Pathi Jagarnath Path	Bramshingar Road No.2,3	0.261	40.436	1.189	41.625			
		A3	Narauli Chowk To Budhnagra Path	Paswan Tola Manika Bishnupur Chand	1.450	131.810	17.690	149.500	5.928	Muzaffarpur East-1	
		A4	Pmgsy Path Ndh28 Durga Mandir To Bagra Hasan	Sarvoday Nagar Sherpur	0.483	73.870	4.630	78.500			
	Total			4	2.399	271.954	24.443	296.397	5.928		
13	MMGSY(AWSEH)-NDB-BRRP2-594-MUZAFFARPUR EAST 1	A1	L056 - Rani Pokhar Tak Road Me Umesh Mishra Ke Ghar Se	Jori Par Tola	0.511	70.140	4.980	75.120			
		A2	Jila Yojana Se Nirmit Pcc Path Ramnagar Yadav Tola	Rajputana Tola Saraiya	1.160	160.700	14.500	175.200	5.006	Muzaffarpur East-1	
	Total			2	1.671	230.840	19.480	250.320	5.006		
14	MMGSY(AWSEH)-NDB-BRRP2-595-MUZAFFARPUR EAST 1	A1	GTSNY Road	Kuswaha tola	0.518	60.930	7.460	68.390			
		A2	Pwd Saraiya Turki Path	Gopalpur Neura Kahan Tola	0.150	20.219	0.685	20.904	3.858	Muzaffarpur East-1	
		A3	Pmgsy Ajitpur Baghnagri Path	Dhati Par Gangauliya	0.729	93.590	10.040	103.630			
	Total			3	1.397	174.739	18.185	192.924	3.858		
15	MMGSY(AWSEH)-NDB-BRRP2-596-MUZAFFARPUR EAST 2	A1	Makarandpur Khajuri Road	Khajuri Tola Motanje	1.000	101.930	10.290	112.220			
		A2	Mmgsy Road	Sakarwara Math Tola	0.570	61.680	4.930	66.610	5.853	Muzaffarpur East-2	
		A3	Mmgsy Road Bank Road	Pagadih	0.950	105.210	8.590	113.800			
	Total			3	2.520	268.820	23.810	292.630	5.853		
16	MMGSY(AWSEH)-NDB-BRRP2-597-MUZAFFARPUR EAST 2	A1	Minapur Pwd Road Near Hanuman Mandir	Mahdeiya Ram Tola Dhapahar Hanuman Mandir	0.400	50.316	2.118	52.434			
		A2	Near House Of Dakshinwar Tola (Koilifakiran)		0.560	66.580	6.290	72.870	2.506	Muzaffarpur East-2	
	Total			2	0.960	116.896	8.408	125.304	2.506		
17	MMGSY(AWSEH)-NDB-BRRP2-598-MUZAFFARPUR WEST	A1	Reo Road	House Of Satendra Mishra	0.329	39.779	1.590	41.369			
		A2	Reo Road	Ara Sahni Tola	0.131	15.012	0.596	15.608	1.715	Muzaffarpur West	
		A3	Dhar Paswan Ke Ghar	Bishar Asthan Reo Road Tak Via Ajan Badi	0.160	25.917	2.842	28.759			
	Total			3	0.620	80.708	5.028	85.736	1.715		
18	MMGSY(AWSEH)-NDB-BRRP2-599-MUZAFFARPUR WEST	A1	Bheriyahi Nhpc Road	Kuwari Devi Asthan	1.073	122.150	18.620	140.770	2.815	Muzaffarpur West	
	Total			1	1.073	122.150	18.620	140.770	2.815		
19	MMGSY(AWSEH)-NDB-BRRP2-600-DALISINGHSARAI	A1	Gangauli School	Yadav Tola	1.105	111.450	16.940	128.390			
		A2	Mustafapur Pmgsy Road	Yadav Tola	0.376	40.287	2.418	42.705	4.356	Dalsinghsarai	
		A3	Near House Of Ramswarth Roy	Koeri Tola	0.409	44.107	2.620	46.727			
	Total			3	1.890	195.844	21.978	217.822	4.356		
20	MMGSY(AWSEH)-NDB-BRRP2-601-DALISINGHSARAI	A1	To4 Rcd Path	Nikaspur Yadav Tola	0.425	47.060	2.718	49.778	0.996	Dalsinghsarai	
	Total			1	0.425	47.060	2.718	49.778	0.996		
21	MMGSY(AWSEH)-NDB-BRRP										

Corruption case:
CBI searches
premises of
ex-DPIIT Secy

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 20

THE CBI on Tuesday searched the premises of former Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) Secretary Ramesh Abhishek, days after registering an FIR against him for allegedly amassing assets disproportionate to his known sources of income. The CBI has also booked his daughter and is investigating her finances.

The 1982-batch IAS officer retired in 2019 from DPIIT, the erstwhile Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP).

The FIR was registered on February 15 following a recommendation from anti-corruption ombudsman Lokpal.

"Hon'ble Lokpal of India vide order dated December 20, 2003 in complaint made before it, has directed Delhi Special Police Establishment (CBI) to conduct investigation into doubtful transactions entered into by Ramesh Abhishek and his daughter Vanessa Agrawal by way of receiving big amounts as professional fee or consulting fee from various entities/organisations with whom Ramesh Abhishek had official dealings while he was secretary DPIIT or Chairman Forward Market Commission..." the FIR said.

"...Therefore, in compliance of the directions of Hon'ble Lokpal of India, a Regular Case is registered against Ramesh Abhishek, Vanesa and unknown others," the FIR said.

Body of missing JEE aspirant found in Kota

Kota: The body of a 16-year-old JEE aspirant, who left his hostel for a routine test on February 11 and went missing, was found on Monday night stuck between two trees on a rock in a forest area in Kota, police said.

The boy's movement was last captured in a CCTV footage near the Garadiya Mahadev temple forest on February 11, they added. Police said it was a case of suicide, which takes the number of such incidents of students of various coaching centres taking the extreme step to four this year in Kota.

The body of the JEE aspirant, identified as Rachit Sondhya (16), a resident of Rajgarh district in Madhya Pradesh, was found from the forest near the Garadiya Mahadev temple, SP (Kota City) Amrita Duhan said. PTI



BATTLE-READY

A modified excavator at Shambhu barrier, near Haryana border, in Patiala on Tuesday. Reuters

■ Armed with excavators, hydra-borers and 2,000 tractor trolleys, the farmers are ready to take on the multi-layer barricades erected by Haryana Police as they march to Delhi.

■ Haryana Police has urged Punjab to seize the equipment at the interstate borders and stop women, children and elderly at a safe distance (minimum 1 km from border).

■ Haryana-based Bharatiya Kisan Union leader Tejveer Singh Mann said, "We want to move peacefully... The hydra-borers and excavators will be used if need arises."

SANDESHKHALI UNREST

TMC strongman on the run, HC raps cops: 'State can't support it'

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, FEBRUARY 20

THE CALCUTTA High Court on Tuesday took an exception to the West Bengal Police's inability to arrest TMC strongman Shahjahan Sheikh who allegedly orchestrated an attack on an ED team during a raid on his premises in Sandeshkhali of North 24 Parganas district last month.

Hearing a plea by the state government against a single-judge bench order staying the imposition of CrPC Section 144 in Sandeshkhali and permitting BJP leader Suvidu Adhikari to visit the area, a division bench of Chief Justice TS Swagnanam and Justice Hiranyak Bhattacharya refused to interfere with the orders.

The division bench said in its order, "The court can take judicial notice of the fact that the entire problem stood precipitated after the Enforcement Directorate conducted a search operation on the premises of Shahjahan. The police are unable to apprehend him despite a case having been registered for various offences."

The bench orally remarked, "We have seen... women from the area have flagged several issues, and there has been land-grabbing

of tribal people. This person (Shahjahan) cannot be on the run. The state cannot support it. In the suo motu matter, we will ask him to surrender here. He can't be defying the law. If one person can hold the entire population to ransom, the ruling dispensation should not support him."

Stating it does not know "whether he is being protected" or not, the court said that the fact remains that he has not been secured. "It could mean that the state police machinery doesn't have the wherewithal to secure him or (he) is outside the jurisdiction of the state police," the court observed.

The bench said there is material to show that Shahjahan has done damage to the public, instead of doing good as an elected representative in the North 24 Parganas zila parishad.

Directing that the matter will be taken up for hearing next Monday, the division bench said appropriate orders will be passed after hearing all the parties.

The court said establishing redressal mechanisms over allegations of forcible taking away of land owned by villagers in Sandeshkhali by way of setting up camps by the state government, in itself prima facie shows that land grabbing was commit-

ted in the area. "The allegation that the lands owned by the tribal villagers have been forcibly taken away in violation of the legal formalities stands prima facie established," the CJ observed.

The bench further said, "It has also been widely reported that the state having come to know that the lands of certain people in the Sandeshkhali area have been taken away from them in violation of the procedure have established redressal mechanism, whereby the people, who have been affected by such violation were permitted to lodge their complaints.

The establishment of this redressal mechanism prima facie shows that there has been land-grabbing committed in the area and the allegation that the lands owned by the tribal villagers have been forcibly taken away in violation of the legal formalities stands prima facie established."

The bench directed notices be issued to advocate general representing the state and that the additional solicitor general representing the Union of India be informed so that lawyers representing ED and CBI are present before the court on the next date of hearing of the suo motu matter.

WITH PTI INPUTS

AMRITA NAYAK DUTTA
VISAKHAPATNAM, FEB 20

INDIAN NAVY is offering its submarine rescue capabilities to friendly countries, a key highlight of the ongoing multilateral naval exercise Milan-24 in Visakhapatnam that will further India's defence diplomacy.

On Tuesday, the Navy showcased its Deep Submergence Rescue Vehicle (DSRV) to the delegates of 50 countries at the mega naval exercise that began on Monday.

A submarine rescue operation is undertaken when the vessel is reported missing or has sunk. The DSRV can help in locating the disabled submarine, rescue the trapped personnel or provide them emergency supplies.

The Navy had acquired two advanced DSRVs—one each for India's west coast and east coast in Mumbai and Visakhapatnam, respectively—in 2018 and 2019 from James Fisher Defence, UK.

As on date, India is among the 12 countries, including the US, China, Russia and Singapore, to possess this niche technology.



Naval officers from various countries pose during Milan-24 in Visakhapatnam, Tuesday. PTI

Only 40 countries operate submarines.

He said while the Navy already has an Implementing Agreement with Singapore, a similar pact is expected with South Africa during MILAN-24, adding that Japan and some other countries have also shown interest in it.

Additionally, the Navy is also awaiting induction of two diving support vessels (DSVs)—also for submarine rescue operations—being indigenously made by Hindustan Shipyard Ltd, Visakhapatnam.

Talking to the media on the sidelines of the event, Rear Admiral K Venkatraman, Flag Officer Submarines, said several nations have shown a keen interest in making use of India's capability.

In 2021, the Navy mobilised one of its DSRV to assist Tentara

Nasional Indonesia-Angkatan Laut (TNI AL-Indonesian Navy) in search and rescue efforts for the Indonesian Submarine KRI Nanggala which was reported missing. Indian Navy's DSRV system can locate a submarine up to 1,000-metre depth utilising its state-of-the-art Side Scan Sonar (SSS) and Remotely Operated Vehicle (ROV).

Live undersea matings with different types of submarines along with transfer of personnel from submarine to DSRV has also been achieved. As per officials, the rescue operation can take place within 96 hours even as it, at times, depends on other factors like the logistics and infrastructure available. The indigenously-built Diving Support Vessels (DSVs) are 118.4 metres long, 22.8 metres at the broadest point and will have a displacement of 9,350 tonnes and they would be deployed for deep sea diving operations. Aside from submarine rescue operations, they will be capable of sustained patrolling, conducting search and rescue operations and carrying out helicopter operations at high seas.

FULL REPORT
www.indianexpress.com

Karnataka Cong records first win against BJP-JD(S) alliance in Legislative Council bypoll

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
BENGALURU, FEBRUARY 20

THE KARNATAKA Congress on Tuesday claimed its first victory over the newly formed JD(S)-BJP alliance in the state in a Legislative Council bypoll to the Bangalore Teachers' seat.

Congress candidate P Puttanna defeated JD(S) nominee A P Ranganath on the seat that the BJP had handed over to its new ally in Karnataka as part of the seat-sharing arrangements ahead of the 2024 Lok Sabha polls. The JD(S) fielded the president of its legal cell, A P Ranganath, who lost the last Council election from the Bangalore Teachers' seat to Puttanna.

The court of Justice Vaibhav Nanavati had on February 16 ruled in favour of Vashram Sagathiya and Komal Bharai, who were elected RMC corporators in 2021 but disqualified in October 2022 by the state urban development and urban housing department. They had defected to AAP on April 14, 2022, halving Congress's strength to just two in the 72-member RMC general board ruled by the BJP.

Sagathiya welcomed the HC order and said he had full faith in court.



Karnataka Deputy CM DK Shivakumar with P Puttanna in Bengaluru on Tuesday. @DKShivakumar/X

in 2020, Puttanna had won the Council poll thrice on JD(S) ticket.

The Congress candidate polled 8,260 votes and defeated Ranganath by a margin of 1,507.

"This is a special day for the Congress. The joint candidate of the JD(S) and BJP under a new alliance has been defeated. The seat was won by the BJP earlier, but it

allowed the JD(S) to field its candidate," Karnataka Deputy CM D K Shivakumar said Tuesday. "I would like to say some BJP-JD(S) leaders claimed the polls will be an indicator of things to come. The results have come and Puttanna of the Congress has won the polls. The voters who are educated and are teachers have rejected the BJP-JD(S) alliance and have voted for the Congress. The same mood will prevail in the state in the Lok Sabha polls," he said.

The bypoll held on February 16 was being touted as the first test for the BJP-JD(S) alliance in Karnataka ahead of the LS polls.

Karnataka CM Siddaramaiah had said ahead of the polls that despite the BJP-JD(S) alliance the Congress will win the seat. "This constituency is the one which Puttanna had resigned from to contest the Assembly polls. He is contesting for the fifth time. In the past he has defeated the BJP and the JD(S). He has the support of the teachers and has also won their hearts...," the CM said.

Puttanna, who registered his fifth consecutive win in the constituency, was previously a BJP MLC. The bypoll was warranted after he quit the seat in March 2023 to contest the Assembly elections on a Congress ticket, but lost the poll. Before joining the BJP

in 2020, Puttanna had won the Council poll thrice on JD(S) ticket.

The Congress candidate polled 8,260 votes and defeated Ranganath by a margin of 1,507.

"This is a special day for the Congress. The joint candidate of the JD(S) and BJP under a new alliance has been defeated. The seat was won by the BJP earlier, but it

allowed the JD(S) to field its candidate," Karnataka Deputy CM D K Shivakumar said Tuesday. "I would like to say some BJP-JD(S) leaders claimed the polls will be an indicator of things to come. The results have come and Puttanna of the Congress has won the polls. The voters who are educated and are teachers have rejected the BJP-JD(S) alliance and have voted for the Congress. The same mood will prevail in the state in the Lok Sabha polls," he said.

The bypoll held on February 16 was being touted as the first test for the BJP-JD(S) alliance in Karnataka ahead of the LS polls.

Karnataka CM Siddaramaiah had said ahead of the polls that despite the BJP-JD(S) alliance the Congress will win the seat. "This constituency is the one which Puttanna had resigned from to contest the Assembly polls. He is contesting for the fifth time. In the past he has defeated the BJP and the JD(S). He has the support of the teachers and has also won their hearts...," the CM said.

in 2020, Puttanna had won the Council poll thrice on JD(S) ticket.

The Congress candidate polled 8,260 votes and defeated Ranganath by a margin of 1,507.

"This is a special day for the Congress. The joint candidate of the JD(S) and BJP under a new alliance has been defeated. The seat was won by the BJP earlier, but it

allowed the JD(S) to field its candidate," Karnataka Deputy CM D K Shivakumar said Tuesday. "I would like to say some BJP-JD(S) leaders claimed the polls will be an indicator of things to come. The results have come and Puttanna of the Congress has won the polls. The voters who are educated and are teachers have rejected the BJP-JD(S) alliance and have voted for the Congress. The same mood will prevail in the state in the Lok Sabha polls," he said.

The bypoll held on February 16 was being touted as the first test for the BJP-JD(S) alliance in Karnataka ahead of the LS polls.

Karnataka CM Siddaramaiah had said ahead of the polls that despite the BJP-JD(S) alliance the Congress will win the seat. "This constituency is the one which Puttanna had resigned from to contest the Assembly polls. He is contesting for the fifth time. In the past he has defeated the BJP and the JD(S). He has the support of the teachers and has also won their hearts...," the CM said.

in 2020, Puttanna had won the Council poll thrice on JD(S) ticket.

The Congress candidate polled 8,260 votes and defeated Ranganath by a margin of 1,507.

"This is a special day for the Congress. The joint candidate of the JD(S) and BJP under a new alliance has been defeated. The seat was won by the BJP earlier, but it

allowed the JD(S) to field its candidate," Karnataka Deputy CM D K Shivakumar said Tuesday. "I would like to say some BJP-JD(S) leaders claimed the polls will be an indicator of things to come. The results have come and Puttanna of the Congress has won the polls. The voters who are educated and are teachers have rejected the BJP-JD(S) alliance and have voted for the Congress. The same mood will prevail in the state in the Lok Sabha polls," he said.

The bypoll held on February 16 was being touted as the first test for the BJP-JD(S) alliance in Karnataka ahead of the LS polls.

Karnataka CM Siddaramaiah had said ahead of the polls that despite the BJP-JD(S) alliance the Congress will win the seat. "This constituency is the one which Puttanna had resigned from to contest the Assembly polls. He is contesting for the fifth time. In the past he has defeated the BJP and the JD(S). He has the support of the teachers and has also won their hearts...," the CM said.

in 2020, Puttanna had won the Council poll thrice on JD(S) ticket.

The Congress candidate polled 8,260 votes and defeated Ranganath by a margin of 1,507.

"This is a special day for the Congress. The joint candidate of the JD(S) and BJP under a new alliance has been defeated. The seat was won by the BJP earlier, but it

allowed the JD(S) to field its candidate," Karnataka Deputy CM D K Shivakumar said Tuesday. "I would like to say some BJP-JD(S) leaders claimed the polls will be an indicator of things to come. The results have come and Puttanna of the Congress has won the polls. The voters who are educated and are teachers have rejected the BJP-JD(S) alliance and have voted for the Congress. The same mood will prevail in the state in the Lok Sabha polls," he said.

The bypoll held on February 16 was being touted as the first test for the BJP-JD(S) alliance in Karnataka ahead of the LS polls.

Karnataka CM Siddaramaiah had said ahead of the polls that despite the BJP-JD(S) alliance the Congress will win the seat. "This constituency is the one which Puttanna had resigned from to contest the Assembly polls. He is contesting for the fifth time. In the past he has defeated the BJP and the JD(S). He has the support of the teachers and has also won their hearts...," the CM said.

in 2020, Puttanna had won the Council poll thrice on JD(S) ticket.

The Congress candidate polled 8,260 votes and defeated Ranganath by a margin of 1,507.

"This is a special day for the Congress. The joint candidate of the JD(S) and BJP under a new alliance has been defeated. The seat was won by the BJP earlier, but it

allowed the JD(S) to field its candidate," Karnataka Deputy CM D K Shivakumar said Tuesday. "I would like to say some BJP-JD(S) leaders claimed the polls will be an indicator of things to come. The results have come and Puttanna of the Congress has won the polls. The voters who are educated and are teachers have rejected the BJP-JD(S) alliance and have voted for the Congress. The same mood will prevail in the state in the Lok Sabha polls," he said.

The bypoll held on February 16 was being touted as the first test for the BJP-JD(S) alliance in Karnataka ahead of the LS polls.

Karnataka CM Siddaramaiah had said ahead of the polls that despite the BJP-JD(S) alliance the Congress will win the seat. "This constituency is the one which Puttanna had resigned from to contest the Assembly polls. He is contesting for the fifth time. In the past he has defeated the BJP and the JD(S). He has the support of the teachers and has also won their hearts...," the CM said.

in 2020, Puttanna had won the Council poll thrice on JD(S) ticket.

The Congress candidate polled 8,260 votes and defeated Ranganath by a margin of 1,507.

"



The Indian EXPRESS

FOUNDED BY

RAMNATH GOENKA

BECAUSE THE TRUTH INVOLVES US ALL

GREENING GROWTH

Weakening processes of environmental clearances for projects hurt both environment and development

GOVERNMENTS IN DEVELOPING countries face a dilemma, a political-economy conundrum that requires a fine balancing act. On the one hand, in light of climate change and the degradation of fragile and vulnerable ecologies, there is a need for regulation of projects that have a potentially adverse environmental impact. On the other hand, investment and infrastructure development are crucial for employment generation and poverty alleviation. The provision of Environmental Clearance (EC) under the Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) rules – notified in 2006 under the Environmental (Protection) Act – was meant to strike the right balance between the imperatives of growth and development and the environment. The EC is meant to be mandatory for various projects, including mining, thermal plants, those in river valleys, and infrastructure and industrial programmes. Unfortunately, as a report in this newspaper has shown, the balance between environment and industry seems to be tilting far too much towards the latter.

In 2017, the government brought in a loophole to the EIA and gave a six-month moratorium to all the companies that had not complied with the requirements to receive an EC. This one-time window was made indefinite under the revised Standard Operating Procedures in 2021. The notification was challenged before the Madras High Court, which granted a stay order. The Centre, however, interpreted the order as applying only to Tamil Nadu. Then, in January 2024, the Supreme Court stayed the notification, and the Court's final decision is pending. In essence, between 2017 and 2024, over 100 projects – they include coal, iron and bauxite mines, steel and iron factories, cement plants and limestone quarries – have been granted ex post facto environmental clearance under the diluted EIA, their original lack of EC notwithstanding.

Environmental clearances for business and infrastructure projects have been a fraught issue for decades. Under multiple governments and environment ministers of varying ideological leanings, the pendulum has swung both ways: At different points, the Environment Ministry has been dubbed either "anti-business" or "anti-environment". However, by any standard, the weakening of the EIA, and the National Green Tribunal, is a matter of deep concern that needs to be addressed urgently – in 2020, an Environmental Performance Index of Yale University ranked India 168 amongst 220 countries. Perhaps the only sustainable way to do this is to not see "environment" and "development" locked in an inevitably zero-sum game. It's time to move to environmentalism as development and development as environmentalism. As climate change and sustainability increasingly become a part of the global business conversation, India has the opportunity to be a leader in this regard. This will, however, require a robust policy and regulatory framework, which while facilitating business, allows for a careful assessment of the adverse impacts of projects, and does not constantly search for and seize the loopholes.

EL NINO, LA NINA

But air pollution in Indian cities is because of factors that lie much closer home

ANEW STUDY has linked air pollution over cities like Delhi and Mumbai to external factors like El Nino and La Nina, and climate change. This is the first time that such external phenomena have been noticed to have an impact over air quality in Indian cities. To be sure, these external factors do not generate any new sources of pollution. But they have the potential to influence the distribution of pollutants over different regions by altering meteorological conditions like wind patterns and temperatures. The study found that the fact that Delhi air was cleaner than usual, and Mumbai air dirtier than usual in the winter of 2022 could, in part, be explained by the record-breaking La Nina event in the Pacific Ocean, which was persisting for the third consecutive year at that time. The study also suggested that under climate change scenarios, expected to exacerbate the strengths and frequencies of El Nino and La Nina kind of events, such external influences might have a bigger role to play in the distribution of air pollutants over Indian cities.

These influences are pretty weak as of now. As the study suggests, only very strong El Nino or La Nina events are likely to have any significant impact on the local meteorological conditions. But this could still have implications for India's efforts to clean up its air. The influences could potentially grow stronger under climate change scenarios as the study suggests, and that would mean that clean-up measures would face another hurdle that is completely beyond human control. This could result in entirely unexpected scenarios, as was seen in Mumbai in the 2022 winter, something the cities are not prepared for.

Tackling the emissions of pollutants at source still remains the most effective way of addressing air pollution. Air in Indian cities is dirty because the baseload emissions are very high. Once in a while, favourable meteorological conditions might help in reducing the impacts, but there is no short-cut to cutting down on baseload emissions. Fancy, or quick fix, solutions like artificial rain or odd-even schemes are nothing more than window-dressing, and quite ineffective at that. The study also recommends that the focus of the government must remain on long-term strategies to reduce emissions from the sources themselves and not rely on quick fix solutions. That would be a win-win solution for both air quality and climate change, it says.

MAGICIAN FROM CHENNAI

No one has plotted the batsman's downfall as effectively in recent times as off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin

ATOP-CLASS SPINNER has to be like a chess grandmaster, plotting a batsman's downfall over a number of deliveries or overs. There has been no one better at it in recent times than off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin. There are 501 pieces of evidence to support this argument. Ashwin is not like Muttiah Muralitharan – who was more like a wrist-spinner in the garb of a finger-spinner. The Sri Lankan often made batsmen look clueless with the amount of spin he generated, and its direction. Ashwin's calling card is of a more cerebral nature. He plays with angles, pace and degrees of spin, as also field placement. The batsman knows he is in a battle, and can never afford to take his eye off the ball even if he temporarily enjoys the upper hand.

Conditions and playing surface play a big role in cricket, and they are usually an ally for a spinner in India. But many of Ashwin's most memorable dismissals have come in England and Australia, where his guile comes to the fore with the track offering him precious little. Among his list of victims are the finest batsmen. He has got the England skipper Ben Stokes 12 times. Other top stars he has repeatedly scalped are David Warner (11), Steve Smith (8), Joe Root (6), Kane Williamson (5) and Kumar Sangakkara (4). Left-arm spinner Ravindra Jadeja may be a more tempting all-round option, but Ashwin's skill with the ball is more prosaic in nature when compared to his spin-twirler.

India have been invincible at home since 2012, when Ashwin was taking his initial steps in Test cricket. While Anil Kumble, with 619 Test wickets, tops the list among Indians, the Magician from Chennai is a worthy second. There is a risk of taking Ashwin's dominance for granted. He is 37, and is largely a Test specialist these days. India is considered to have a never-ending assembly line of quality spinners, but whether the next generation will have the all-weather love for the contest, once Ashwin hangs up his boots, remains to be seen.



PUSHPENDRA SINGH

IN THE LAST two years, nothing concrete was done by the central government on the agreement it had reached with agitating farmers' unions, who had protested near the national capital. The government should have had the wisdom to act and take a decision on a legal guarantee for Minimum Support Price (MSP) and other demands with alacrity, lest they become the basis for a renewed agitation. This lack of action is the reason and justification for farmer unions launching the current agitation. The purpose is to press the government to fulfil its promises. This time too, the debate is around the feasibility of their primary demand – the legal guarantee for MSP.

Let's frame what the demand actually is. It has two parts. First, MSP should be based on the comprehensive cost of production (C2), as determined by the Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP), plus 50 per cent, as recommended by the Swaminathan Commission. This was also promised by the BJP and articulated several times by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The second part of the demand is that the 23 crops for which MSP is thus announced should be legally purchased at or above the MSP price by anyone who "willingly enters" the market.

The total value of the output of the 23 crops at MSP prices for the year 2023-24 is about Rs 15 lakh crore. But all of the produce is not marketed or sold. The farmers retain a big part of their produce for their consumption, animal feed and seeds. A portion is also exchanged/bartered within the village and some is used to pay for labour in kind. A part of the crop is also eaten by rodents or perishes during harvesting, transportation and storage. These heads account for about one-

MSP is what farmers need to remain in business. Giving it legal backing will benefit all stakeholders

third of the 23 MSP crops – produce worth Rs 5 lakh crore. So, only about Rs 10 lakh crore worth of the MSP crops actually goes to the markets.

Government purchase, including sugar-cane purchase at government-prescribed prices, is at about Rs 4-5 lakh crore. Only Rs 5-6 lakh crore worth of MSP crops is bought by the private sector. If we take the long-term aggregate for all 23 MSP crops, what is paid by the private sector is on average 25 per cent below the MSP value. If there was legal status for MSP, then the private sector would have paid a maximum of Rs 1.5 lakh crore more to the farmers for the same quantities in 2023-24. So, even if the whole of this bill is picked up by the government, it won't be more than Rs 1.5 lakh crore annually – not the exorbitant figures being quoted by the so-called economists. We

should remember that the reduction of corporate tax rates in 2019 alone led to the foregoing of about Rs 1.5 lakh crore annually by the central government, a figure that keeps rising every year.

If this money flows to the farmers, they will spend it and thus create more demand in the market. Due to the multiplier effect, this will lead to an increase in employment, investment and eventually government taxes. All 23 crops being legally sold at MSP will also lead to crop diversification, which is the focus of the recent offer from the government. Since there would be no incentive to grow only those crops where MSP is now available – mostly paddy, wheat and sugarcane – it will lead to various economic and ecological benefits. Legal MSP would be a great instrument to control the production quantities of various crops to match demand.

The country would also become self-sufficient in edible oils and pulses if we ensure remunerative MSP for these crops. If the government and private prices for the crops are the same, farmers won't seek out the government to purchase their crops. So, the Centre will not be financially burdened by having to purchase more quantities than it requires. This will lead to a reduction in government purchase, storage and redistribution costs for these crops. That is a huge financial saving. It will help lower the fiscal deficit and improve government finances. Hence, a legal guarantee for MSP is a win-win for all stakeholders.

Some economists argue that if the MSP is legally enforced, the private sector won't purchase the crops and all the produce will have to be bought by the government. Farmers are seeking an enforcement of the price only for those entities that "willingly enter" the market. In the case of sugarcane, for example, the price is prescribed by the government but that hasn't meant that private mills have stopped purchasing sugarcane. Have industries closed due to the Minimum Wages Act? Is nobody purchasing petrol and diesel because the government is charging exorbitant taxes?

By definition, MSP is a minimum price that the farmer must get to remain in business. Without such a price, farmers will become bankrupt and leave farming, which will have serious consequences for our food security, adversely affecting consumers. Legal MSP is a viable proposal and the rights of our farmers can't be denied any longer.

The writer is president, Kisan Shakti Sangh and an alumnus of the Institute of Rural Management, Anand (IRMA)



SADAFA HUSSAIN

INTIMES PAST, royal cooks from Awadh and Rampur were celebrated for the art of gastronomic subterfuge – crafting dishes that masqueraded as one thing, while being something else altogether. Chef Imtiaz Qureshi, who died last week at the age of 93, was no less ingenious. At 31, against the backdrop of the India-China war of 1962, he was commissioned to concoct exclusively vegetarian dishes by then chief minister of Uttar Pradesh and fan of Awadhi cuisine, Chandra Bhanu Gupta, for an official dinner. As a committed meat eater and the son of a butcher who had once supplied meat to the British army in Lucknow, Qureshi eagerly took on the challenge. He spent a week using all the skills at his disposal to make dishes like lotus stem shami kebab with onion, green chilli, lemon, and orange; murgh musallam with jackfruit and brinjal; fish musallam with bottle gourd; and paneer pasanda. The distinguished guests, including then Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, thought they were eating meat, but they were actually enjoying completely vegetarian dishes.

As I write this tribute to the nation's first celebrity chef, I am at Khan Market in Delhi, enjoying the exquisite flavours of kakori kebab – a preparation whose resurgence owes much to the maestro himself. In an interview from 2018, Chef Qureshi recalled that for over a century, the recipe for this dish was known only to a few families in Lucknow. Qureshi's forebears prepared them for affluent households during special events. So loved was this delicacy that the earnings from making it was enough to sustain their family for weeks, Qureshi recalled. Their introduction into Indian

USTAD IMTIAZ QUROSHI

He was more than a chef, going beyond food to offer life lessons

The relentless dedication to his craft led to him becoming the first chef to be honoured with a Padma Shri award in 2016, marking a significant milestone in his illustrious career. I have always regarded him more as an 'ustad' than a chef. An 'ustad' transcends the confines of cookbook instructions, offering life lessons, encouraging the embrace of mistakes as stepping stones to learning.

The second encounter I had with him

restaurant cuisine, he said, happened thanks to encouragement from the late Ajit Narain Haksar, the first Indian chairman of ITC, who brought him into the company.

Qureshi was the fifth child of Murad Ali and Sakina Qureshi. At the age of nine, he began working at his brother-in-law Haji Ishaq's catering service in Lucknow. By the age of 15, he was already skilled in preparing sheermal, korma, galouti kebabs and pulao, and even catered to 10,000 members of the NCC at one time. This experience ignited a passion for cooking, leading him to start his own catering business. But destiny had other plans for him and his journey took a significant turn when he started working at Krishna Caterers, which fed Indian soldiers during the 1962 war. It was this position that brought him into close contact with the chief minister, and through him, to other political notables, including Nehru.

I met Qureshi for the first time at the grand finale of MasterChef India in 2019. At first overwhelmed with nervous excitement, I managed to introduce myself to him and initiated a conversation about the art of cooking – discussing food, spices, techniques, and everything culinary that crossed my mind. Qureshi imparted wisdom that I still hold dear: "Sadaf, the most important aspect of cooking is to truly understand the food and the spices you're incorporating. Whether you're using a single spice or 50, the essence lies in comprehending the purpose behind each addition and mastering the quantity. Once you grasp this, you're on your way to creating the finest dishes."

The second encounter I had with him

was at another event in Delhi, and this time, to my delight, he recognised me. I expressed my gratitude for all that he has done for young aspiring chefs and culinary historians like myself. His response was both encouraging and inspirational. He told me to continue my work, saying, "We need more people like you who can document food and carry on the tradition. Do not hesitate to put in extra effort, and keep at it until you are completely satisfied". This relentless dedication to his craft led to him becoming the first chef to be honoured with a Padma Shri award in 2016, marking a significant milestone in his illustrious career.

I have always regarded him more as an 'ustad' than a chef. An 'ustad' transcends the confines of cookbook instructions, offering life lessons, encouraging the embrace of mistakes as stepping stones to learning. Manisha Bhasin, the corporate executive chef at ITC Hotels, who apprenticed under Qureshi, told me, "For many of us burgeoning chefs, working alongside him was nothing short of a dream. His critiques could make us tremble, yet when he imparted his knowledge, it was with an unparalleled depth of care and affection".

The passing of Imtiaz Qureshi – who was also known as Pehelwan Qureshi, due to his early training in wrestling – marks the end of an era. He was known for his encouragement towards all, his humility, and eagerness to learn from others. His legacy endures not only through his legendary culinary creations but also through the extraordinary journey that defined his life and touched so many.

The writer is a chef and food historian



FEBRUARY 21, 1984, FORTY YEARS AGO

PM VISITS NELLIE

WHILE ARRANGEMENTS WERE being made for Mrs Gandhi's visit to Nellie, and possibly Mangaldai, 45 more bodies were discovered in the Valley and the toll around Nellie was authoritatively put around 600 as the penultimate round of what has now become a four-phase polling ended with thin voting. The AASU and AAGSP gave a call for a 13-hour Gauhati bandh coinciding with the PM's visit.

AKALI TALKS FAIL

THE TRIPARTITE TALKS between the Centre, the Akali Dal and leaders of Opposition

ended without any settlement. Even an attempt to involve Rajiv Gandhi, MP, in the final settlement did not prove fruitful. The river waters issue, which has been discussed for two days, was near solution but a hitch on one clause of the agreement stalled it. Even the territorial claims which appeared almost settled could not make headway.

CRISIS IN BIHAR CONG

WITH THE CONGRESS-I high command unable to decide on the change in leadership in Bihar, lobbying continued with the central leaders. The dissidents stepped up their campaign for the removal of Jagannath Mishra as the chief minister. Two dissident

groups met the Prime Minister, Mrs Indira Gandhi, and submitted to her their grievances against Mishra, demanding his immediate replacement.

N-FUEL REPROCESSED

INDIA HAS BEEN reprocessing spent nuclear fuel at the Tarapur reprocessing plant for the last two months, according to sources in the Department of Atomic Energy in Bombay. The spent fuel is from the Rajasthan atomic power plant. The quantity of fuel being reprocessed is not known. This is the first time that India has carried out commercial-scale reprocessing of spent fuel from power reactors.

Why are we falling ill so often?

Greater incidence of influenza could be linked to evolving strains of the virus, antimicrobial resistance



KAMINI WALIA

THERE IS a growing concern over the escalation of respiratory diseases, particularly Influenza A (H1N1), in India. The most recent data from the National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) suggests a resurgence of Influenza A (H1N1) cases in Kerala, Maharashtra, Punjab, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Chhattisgarh, Sikkim, Uttarakhand and West Bengal, with a few states also reporting deaths related to influenza. An NCDC report highlighted the presence of A(H1N1) pdm09, A(H3N2), and Type B Victoria lineage strains in India. These flu viruses in India are similar to the ones found worldwide and are of the same type that the World Health Organization (WHO) recommends vaccines for, specifically the Southern Hemisphere 2024. Clinicians have advised people with cough and cold symptoms to get tested for both flu and Covid-19, as there has been an increase in chest infections and hospital admissions. In response to a rise in influenza infections in the country, the NCDC has recommended the prudent use of the Southern Hemisphere's 2024 quadrivalent influenza vaccine.

Seasonal influenza (the flu) is an acute respiratory infection caused by influenza viruses. It is highly contagious, affects the respiratory system, including the nose, throat and lungs, and is common in all parts of the world. Seasonal influenza is characterised by a sudden onset of fever, cough (usually dry), headache, muscle and joint pain, severe malaise (feeling unwell), sore throat and a runny nose. The cough can be severe and can last two or more weeks. Most people recover from fever and other symptoms within a week without requiring medical attention. But influenza can cause severe illness or deaths, especially in people at high risk. In industrialised countries, most deaths associated with influenza occur among people aged 65 years or older. The effects of seasonal influenza epidemics in developing countries are not fully known, but research estimates that 99 per cent of deaths in children under five years of age with influenza-related lower respiratory tract infections are found in developing countries. Epidemics can result in high levels of worker/school absenteeism and productivity losses. Clinics and hospitals can be overwhelmed during peak illness periods.

Influenza viruses are constantly evolving. In India, the most prevalent subtypes are influenza A (H1N1), (H3N2), and influenza B viruses. Every year, there are outbreaks of influenza in India, particularly during winter. Factors like high population density, poor hygiene practices, weather conducive to the survival and spread of the virus and low vaccination rates increase the risk of flu transmission. Extensive epidemiological studies have explored the relationship between seasonal epidemics of respiratory viruses and meteorological factors. Climate change has direct or indirect effects



CR Sasikumar

on the occurrence and transmission of viral respiratory infections, including influenza. Due to climate change, seasonal epidemics of influenza may shift spatially and temporally, with rising temperatures and abnormal rainfall patterns being contributing factors. Extreme weather events have the potential to exacerbate risks of influenza and transmission of other respiratory viruses.

Most cases of human influenza are clinically diagnosed. However, during periods of low influenza activity or outside of epidemic situations, the infection of other respiratory viruses (e.g. SARS-CoV-2, rhinovirus, respiratory syncytial virus, parainfluenza and adenovirus) can also present as influenza-like illness (ILI), which makes the clinical differentiation of influenza from other pathogens difficult. In absence of definitive diagnosis and symptoms coinciding with acute respiratory infections, indiscriminate antimicrobial use happens. Acute respiratory infections are the leading cause of outpatient antibiotic prescription, with over 80 per cent receiving antibiotics unnecessarily in Low- or Middle-Income Countries (LMIC), including influenza patients who may not particularly benefit from such treatment. India is already seeing increasing levels of antimicrobial resistance (AMR), according to data published by ICMR and NCDC annually.

The latest report by NCDC also provides substantial evidence of excessive prescription of antimicrobials from the "Watch" category of WHO's AWaRe classification. It is, therefore, necessary to implement interventions that can lead to reduction in opportunities for antimicrobial prescriptions. Flu vaccine shots for the elderly is part of influenza control measures implemented in more than 100 countries, including some LMICs like Mexico, Tajikistan, Vietnam, Malaysia, Thailand, Oman, Philippines and Sri Lanka. This has led to decreased risk of hospitalisation and deaths in elderly population as well as reduction in antimicrobial usage. About a dozen flu vaccines have been

Extensive epidemiological studies have explored the relationship between seasonal epidemics of respiratory viruses and meteorological factors. Climate change has direct or indirect effects on the occurrence and transmission of viral respiratory infections, including influenza. Due to climate change, seasonal epidemics of influenza may shift spatially and temporally, with rising temperatures and abnormal rainfall patterns being contributing factors. Extreme weather events have the potential to exacerbate risks of influenza and transmission of other respiratory viruses.

approved for use in India, too. The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) recommends annual influenza vaccination for high risk groups, specifically healthcare workers, pregnant women, and people with chronic health conditions. For children below five years and adults over 65 years, the seasonal influenza vaccine has been categorised as "desirable" or lower priority. While MoHFW recommends these vaccines, they do not routinely purchase or provide them for these age groups.

The immunisation programmes in all LMICs are maturing at a rapid speed. Implementation of Covid-19 vaccine programme was the beginning of an adult immunisation programme in India which must be leveraged for making other adult vaccines available in the country. The discussion on the introduction of influenza vaccine into the government's Universal Immunisation Programme is limited by the lack of data on morbidity and mortality caused by influenza in India. For the same reason, strategies for influenza prevention and control have not been prioritised by health societies such as the Indian Medical Association or Indian Academy of Pediatrics. As the country embarks towards universal health coverage and in the wake of recent influenza outbreaks, it is an opportune time for the government to adopt a more preventive approach. The expansion of the immunisation programme to include influenza vaccines needs to be considered as this will not only benefit those vaccinated, it will also reduce community transmission, unnecessary antimicrobial prescriptions and superimposed bacterial infections that can complicate influenza and require antibiotics. This will help augment AMR containment efforts in the country and be both pragmatic and in line with the ongoing pandemic-preparedness efforts.

The writer is senior scientist and programme officer, AMR, Indian Council of Medical Research

A home too far

To make housing affordable, land markets must be reformed

SHISHIR GUPTA, NANDINI AGNIHOTRI, ANNIE GEORGE

IN HER BUDGET speech on February 1, the Finance Minister mentioned two housing schemes. First, under PMAY-Gramin, "two crore more houses will be taken up in the next five years". Second, the government will launch a scheme to help "sections of the middle class living in rented houses, or slums, or chawls and unauthorised colonies to buy or build their own houses". State intervention in terms of housing subsidies can be justified for economically poor households if the objective is to give them house ownership, since the market can't deliver housing at a price point that they can afford. However, for middle-income groups, the proposed scheme should focus on increasing the affordability of housing, rather than providing subsidies to them since housing is expensive in India.

The government's intent in announcing this housing scheme for the middle class is laudable since access to housing is a prerequisite for a dignified life. According to the latest available Census data of 2011, 17 per cent of all urban households in India live in slums. The situation is especially grave in India's bigger cities – 41 per cent of households in Greater Mumbai, 30 per cent in Kolkata, and 29 per cent in Chennai live in slums. Housing affordability remains elusive, despite attempts by successive governments to address the problem. This begs a fundamental question: How expensive is housing really in India, and why? Answering this will provide clarity on how to tackle this challenge, especially in light of the proposed housing scheme for the middle-class.

Housing in India is indeed expensive rel-

ative to its yardstick of affordability. At an average price-to-income ratio (PTI) of 11 – that is, years of income required for an average household to buy a 90 square metre apartment – it is more than twice as expensive as its affordability benchmark of 5. While housing in countries like the US, Australia, and Germany is more affordable, several other countries, especially in the developing world, such as Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and China have PTIs that are worse than India's.

There could be two reasons for high house prices – a runaway increase in prices over time, and/or higher base prices due to structural reasons. We argue in our working paper "House Prices in India: How High, and for How Long?" that the latter is the primary cause of this high house price phenomenon, and hence the resolution will require reforming the land markets. This will improve transparency in the real estate sector, making it more competitive and improving affordability. House prices have appreciated by 9.3 per cent on an annual basis between 1991–2021, which is similar to gold at 9.2 per cent, but lower than the Sensex and nominal income growth at 13.5 per cent and 12.5 per cent respectively. This profile of returns across assets is consistent with that in other countries. Thus, housing in India is not expensive due to a supernormal price increase over the past few decades, and hence it must be due to structural reasons.

Housing affordability moves in tandem with the degree of "transparency" in the real estate industry; one helpful measure of this

is the transparency index computed by the real estate consulting firm Jones Lang LaSalle (JLL). The average PTI for countries with a "highly transparent" real estate industry is 8, and 14 for countries with "low transparency". Despite being one of the best improvers in the Asia-Pacific region over the last few years as a result of reforms like RERA and digitisation of land records, India is still ranked within the "semi-transparent" cohort. A key reason for this is the lack of credible and rigorous land use planning and implementation, which leads to constrained and unpredictable supply of land. Only 28 per cent of Indian cities have approved master plans, almost none of which are detailed enough or contain the requisite financing and sequencing for key plan proposals. This absence of granularity and concomitant financing makes it uncertain if the city will actually develop according to the plan and by what timeline. In contrast, Singapore's 40–50 years concept plan is broken down into 20-year, plot-by-plot development plans with identified sequencing of projects and broad financing strategies.

This semi-transparent milieu makes the entry of new real estate developers difficult, giving rise to a less-than-competitive industry structure. Compared to other industries, real estate in India has a significant number of firms making supernormal profits (of more than 20 per cent) in the long run. Since profitability in real estate is driven largely by prices, the ability of some developers to make significantly higher profits must be due to their ability to command a "premium", which could be due to

a host of factors like their credibility, reputation, and access to parcels of land with infrastructure connectivity. The advantages from access to good parcels of land become even more critical when land supply is constrained. A less-than-competitive real estate industry operating in a semi-transparent environment also incentivises people, especially those with unaccounted income, to invest in real estate, reinforcing this high price structure. It is not a coincidence that 77 per cent of India's household wealth is stored in real estate compared to 62 per cent for China, 44 per cent for the US, and 37 per cent for Germany.

The first step in improving affordability, thus, is to release land supply in a planned and transparent manner. This will increase competition and put pressure on prices, in turn improving affordability. Not only will this provide a large segment of Indians with access to decent housing, but in the process will also boost GDP growth and create much-needed non-farm employment. Government schemes have usually aimed to make housing affordable by focusing on increasing housing stock through subsidies, rather than addressing the root cause by credibly unlocking land supply. As we embark on a new housing scheme, we would be well-advised to take a holistic view of the issue so the resolution is targeted and efficient.

Gupta is Senior Fellow, Agnihotri is Research Analyst and George is Research Assistant at Centre for Social and Economic Progress, Delhi

WHAT THE OTHERS SAY

"It is essential to foster a discriminating attitude towards online material, just as towards spoken gossip and rumour. That means not only educating children to critically analyse what they see online, but also encouraging adults to do so."

— THE GUARDIAN

Loss of a guiding light

Sant Shiromani Acharya Vidhyasagar Maharaj believed that a strong nation is built on foundation of citizens' commitment to their duties



NARENDRA MODI

the downtrodden.

In the domain of healthcare too, Pujya Acharya Ji's contributions were transformative. He was associated with several efforts, especially in underserved areas. His approach to healthcare was holistic, integrating physical well-being with spiritual wellness, thereby addressing the needs of the person as a whole.

I would especially urge the coming generations to study extensively about Sant Shiromani Acharya Shri 108 Vidhyasagar Ji Maharaj Ji's commitment to nation building. He would always urge people to rise above any partisan considerations and instead focus on national interest. He was one of the strongest votaries of voting because he saw it as an expression of participation in democratic processes. He advocated healthy as well as clean politics, even saying that policy-making has to be about people's welfare, not self-interest (*Lokneeti* is about *Loksangrah* not *Lobhsangrah*).

He believed that a strong nation is built on the foundation of its citizens' commitment to their duties – towards themselves, their families, society, and the country. He encouraged individuals to cultivate virtues such as honesty, integrity and self-reliance, which he saw as essential for the creation of a just, compassionate and thriving society. This emphasis on duties is of great importance as we work towards building a *Vikas Bharat*.

In an era where environmental degradation is rampant world over, Pujya Acharya Ji called for a way of life which would minimise the harm being inflicted on nature. Likewise, he saw a paramount role for agriculture in our economy, stressing on making agriculture modern as well as sustainable. His work towards reforming jail inmates was also noteworthy.

The beauty of our land is that for thousands of years, our soil has produced greats who have shown light to others and made our society better. Pujya Acharya Ji stands as a towering figure in this illustrious lineage of saints and social reformers. Whatever he did, he did not just for the present but also the future.

In November last year, I had the opportunity to visit the Chandragiri Jain Mandir in Dongargarh in Chhattisgarh. Little did I know that this visit would be my last meeting with Pujya Acharya Ji. Those moments were very special. He spoke to me for a long time, blessing me for my efforts in serving the nation. He expressed joy on the direction our nation is taking and the respect India is getting on the world stage. He was filled with enthusiasm while talking about the work he was doing. Then and always, his gentle gaze and serene smile were enough to instill a sense of peace and purpose. His blessings felt like a soothing balm on the soul, a reminder of the divine presence within and around us.

Sant Shiromani Acharya Shri 108 Vidhyasagar Ji Maharaj Ji's void is deeply missed by all who knew him and were touched by his teachings and his life. However, he lives on in the hearts and minds of those he inspired. In honouring his memory, we commit to embodying the values he espoused. In this way, we not only pay tribute to a great soul but also take forward his mission for our country and people.

The writer is the Prime Minister of India

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

MEET IN THE MIDDLE

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'Keep the door open' (IE, February 20). The dead-

lock between farmers' unions and the government is concerning. The govern-

ment's proposal for open-ended MSP

procurement of pulses, maize, and cot-

ton is a notable opportunity. While the

demand for a "legal guarantee" for MSP

in all crops may face practical chal-

lenges, maintaining open communica-

tion is crucial. Addressing farmers' con-

cerns and highlighting the positive

impact of open-ended MSP on crop di-

versification can pave the way for col-

laboration. As we approach the elec-

tions, framing negotiations to prioritise

farmers' welfare is imperative.

Shambhavi Thakur, Bengaluru

SAY NO TO WAR

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'Cease fire'

(IE, February 20). Israel has launched

massive attacks in Gaza since October

7, 2023. Over 29,000 Palestinians have

reportedly lost their lives. A humanitar-

ian ceasefire must be put in place as

stressed by Australia, Canada and India.

Hamas supported by Hezbollah and

Houthi should also release all hostages

immediately. The US, UK and EU must

stop supplying war materials to Israel.

Subhash Vaid, New Delhi

A LICENCE TO POLICE

THIS REFERS TO the article, 'Neither uniform nor civil' (IE, February 20). The Uniform Civil Code adopted by the Uttarakhand Assembly is flawed on many counts, and in some respects, it is regressive – eliminating existing rights. Many of the provisions are a direct assault on women's sexual autonomy and provide licence for moral policing and vigilantism. It also gives the state the power to interfere in consensual relationships between adults, including on issues of marriage and divorce. The tool at the centre of the Code is criminalisation.

SP Paul, Chakdaha, Nadia

IDEAS LIVE ON

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'A Russian tragedy' (IE, February 20). Alexei Navalny's death in a remote penal colony shows the tragic price of dissent in Vladimir Putin's Russia. It highlights the urgent need for global condemnation of Putin's authoritarianism, and solidarity with the Russian opposition. While the fractured state of the opposition and ongoing conflicts pose challenges, Alexei Navalny's legacy reminds us to continue the good fight for democracy.

Sampada Sriram, via email

15

THE INDIAN EXPRESS, WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 2024

ECONOMY

SENSEX: 73,057.40 ▲ 349.24 (0.48%) NIFTY: 22,196.95 ▲ 74.70 (0.34%) NIKKEI: 38,363.61 ▼ 106.77 HANG SENG: 16,247.51 ▲ 91.90 FTSE: 7,726.33 ▼ 2.17 DAX: 17,043.38 ▼ 48.88



GOLD

₹62,700

Note: Gold, Silver rates at Delhi spot market, gold per 10g, silver per 1 kg; Crude oil (Indian basket) as of February 19



USD RATE

₹82.95



OIL

\$83.32



SILVER

₹75,600

International market data till 1900 IST

Air India Exp
launches
cabin-bag
only fare

SUKALP SHARMA
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 20

TATA GROUP airline Air India Express on Tuesday announced the introduction of cabin baggage-only fare category "Xpress Lite", marking a fresh attempt after years by an Indian carrier to unbundle the check-in baggage service for lower fare categories, a prevalent practice among low-cost carriers (LCCs) in various aviation markets, including Europe and Southeast Asia.

"Xpress Lite fares enable guests who prefer travelling without check-in baggage to make the most of fares which are lower than regular fares. Xpress Check-In enables flyers to avoid queues at counters and baggage belts and comes with a complimentary +3 kg cabin baggage allowance in addition to significantly discounted pre-booked prices for +15 kg and +20 kg check-in baggage allowances to ensure the maximum flexibility and convenience for guests booking on Xpress Lite fares," Air India Express said in a statement, adding that this fare category will only be available on the airline's website and mobile application. **FULL REPORT ON**

www.indianexpress.com

Outward remittances surge 28% in December

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU
MUMBAI, FEBRUARY 20

OUTWARD REMITTANCES under the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) Liberalised Remittance Scheme (LRS) registered a month-on-month growth of 28 per cent to \$2.4 billion in December, mainly on higher spending by Indians during overseas travel.

In the first nine months of financial year 2023-24 (FY24), the total outward remittance was around \$25 billion.

On a year-on-year basis, outward remittances rose 16 per cent in December 2023. Indians remitted \$1,878 billion in November and \$2,176 billion during October under LRS, the RBI's recent data showed.

FULL REPORT ONwww.indianexpress.com

From October 1, banks implemented the government's decision to levy higher Tax Collection at Source (TCS) rates on payments under LRS. The higher TCS rates of up to 20 per cent are applicable on various international spends such as overseas tour packages which include travel related to medical treatment, business, education, pilgrimage, personal gifts and donations, family maintenance and investments. In December, the amount spent by Indians on traveling abroad stood at \$1.54 billion. The data showed that travel constituted around 64 percent of the total outward remittances allowed under LRS for resident individuals in the month. The amount spent by Indians on traveling to overseas destinations stood at \$13.4 billion in the first nine months of FY24, the RBI data showed.

FULL REPORT ON

www.indianexpress.com

BRIEFLY

Indiabulls HF rights issue

Mumbai: Indiabulls Housing Finance's (IHF) rights issue, which closed on February 13, received 2,04 times subscription, with shareholders and other applicants bidding for a total of over Rs 7,515 crore against the Rs 3,693 crore that was on offer. **ENS**

Draft AI regulation norm in July: MoSIT

New Delhi: The government will come out with a draft regulatory framework for artificial intelligence (AI) by June-July, Minister of State for Electronics and IT Rajeev Chandrasekhar said on Tuesday. **PTI**

'STATE OF THE ECONOMY' ARTICLE PUBLISHED IN THE RBI'S FEB BULLETIN Corporate sector must relieve govt of capex heavy lifting: RBI article

HITESH VYAS
MUMBAI, FEBRUARY 20

THE GROWTH momentum seen in the Indian economy during the first half of financial year 2023-2024 (FY24) continues and the next leg of growth is likely to be fuelled by the capital expenditure from the corporate sector, an article published in the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) monthly bulletin said. Expectations for a fresh round of capex by the corporate sector to take the baton from the government and fuel the next leg of growth are mounting, it added.

"The corporate sector must get its act together to relieve the government of capex heavy lifting and take advantage of the space ceded in financial markets by a lower budgeted borrowing programme and the easing of borrowing costs that has already begun in response to the Interim Budget for 2024-25, driven as it is by capex and consolidation," the "State of the Economy" article published in the RBI's February bulletin said.

In the Interim Budget for



The RBI's survey suggests that investment intentions of private corporates remain upbeat.

said in her Interim Budget 2024-25 speech.

During the February monetary policy announcement, RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das said that the investment cycle is gaining steam, aided by sustained thrust on government capex; increasing capacity utilisation; rising flow of resources to the commercial sector; and policy support from schemes, such as production linked incentive (PLI). Revival in private corporate investment is also underway, he said. The RBI's survey suggests that investment intentions of pri-

vate corporates remain upbeat and both services and infrastructure firms are optimistic about overall business conditions, Das added. The State of the Economy article has been prepared by RBI Deputy Governor Michael Patra and other central bank officials. The RBI said the views published in the article are of the authors and not of the institution.

The article said that the balance sheets of corporate are healthy on the back of high profits, with leverage remaining constant or improving and the return ratio at a multi-year high.

"Overall inflation developments are also turning favourable, providing a stable environment for corporates to plan expansion strategies in anticipation of a pick-up in demand," it said. With consumer price inflation (CPI) coming off its November-December spikes in its January 2024 reading, inflation expectations may stabilise and edge down, although renewed pressures from cereals and proteins cannot be ruled out.

Retail inflation, or CPI, eased to a three-month low of 5.1 per cent in January from 5.7 per cent

Implicitly, real GDP would have to expand by 7 per cent in the fourth quarter for the annual estimate of 7.3 per cent to be revised, the article said.

Retail inflation, or CPI, eased to a three-month low of 5.1 per cent in January from 5.7 per cent

Implicitly, real GDP would have to expand by 7 per cent in the fourth quarter for the annual estimate of 7.3 per cent to be revised, the article said.



File

in December. However, it continues to remain above the 4 per cent target of the RBI. Core inflation is at its lowest since October 2019 and non-food wholesale price inflation remains in deflation. This should augur well for the input cost outlook and selling prices of manufacturing firms, the article said. It added the country's economy continues to sustain the momentum achieved in the first half of FY24, going by high frequency indicators.

The National Statistical Office (NSO) in its first advance estimate, released in January, projected the country's real gross domestic product (GDP) growth at 7.3 per cent in fiscal 2023-24. The NSO will provide its second advance estimates of national income for 2023-24 and for the third quarter for the first time by the end of this month. Last month's State of the Economy article had projected real GDP growth at 7 per cent for the third quarter of FY2024.

Three successive years of high growth show the resilience of the Indian economy and the bedrock of high growth is strong private consumption. Investment is consolidating in the economy as high public capex crowds in private investment, which is beginning to set up additional plants and acquiring new machinery to address rising capacity utilisation, the report said.

During the current financial year, the Indian economy is estimated to grow at 7.3 per cent. This would be the third year in the row when the GDP would grow in excess of 7 per cent. The Reserve Bank of India has forecast India's GDP growth for FY25 to be 7 per cent. Many global agencies have revised India's growth projection upwards, the

report said.

This reflects the resilience of the Indian economy to sustain its growth path amidst ongoing geopolitical headwinds, it said, adding, the measures announced in the Interim Union Budget FY25 are expected to play a pivotal role in supporting India's growth journey ahead.

Listing the tailwinds for the next financial year, the ministry said prospects of healthy Rabi harvesting, sustained manufacturing profitability and underlying service resilience are expected to support economic activity in FY25. On the demand side, household consumption is expected to improve, while prospects of fixed investment remain bright owing to an upturn in the private capex cycle, improved business sentiments, healthy balance sheets of banks and corporates, and the government's continued thrust on capital expenditure, it said.

However, headwinds from geopolitical tensions, volatility in international financial markets, and geoeconomic fragmentation need watching, the ministry said in its monthly economic review for January.

Three successive years of high growth show the resilience of the Indian economy and the bedrock of high growth is strong private consumption. Investment is consolidating in the economy as high public capex crowds in private investment, which is beginning to set up additional plants and acquiring new machinery to address rising capacity utilisation, the report said.

During the current financial year, the Indian economy is estimated to grow at 7.3 per cent. This would be the third year in the row when the GDP would grow in excess of 7 per cent. The Reserve Bank of India has forecast India's GDP growth for FY25 to be 7 per cent. Many global agencies have revised India's growth projection upwards, the

FULL REPORT ONwww.indianexpress.com

'Small scale fishing should be exempted from WTO talks'

RAVINDUTTA MISHRA
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 20

India will push against any form of curbs on subsidies to poor fishermen.

other factors like industrial pollution, global warming and coastal degradation which has affected the fishers." Olencio Simoes, General-Secretary - National Fishworkers' Forum (NFF) said at a press briefing.

NFF further told the government that there is a need for a robust domestic fisheries policy that aligns with international negotiations and without a cohesive national policy to define small-scale, artisanal and indigenous fish worker rights, their unique characteristics and fishing methods, India's position at the WTO may lack the necessary foundation for effective representation.

"We advocate for a policy like the 'Coastal Rights Bill' that not only protects the interests of the government's goals in sustainability of fish stocks but percolates down to the specific needs of

The Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies was signed in 2022 at the 12th Ministerial Conference of the WTO, but covered only illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing and overfished stocks – consisting two of the three pillars under consideration.

India objects China-led IDF proposal

New Delhi: India has opposed efforts by China-led 130 countries to push a proposal on investment facilitation at the WTO on grounds that the agenda falls outside the mandate of the global trade body, a commerce ministry official said on Tuesday.

The official said that the group is pushing for the Investment Facilitation for Development proposal that would be binding on only the signatory members. **ENS**

1. Name of the work : Road works.

2. Total No. of Projects : 05 (Five) Nos of projects

3. Class of contractor :

a) Estimated cost above Rs. 20.00 Lakhs & up to Rs.3.00 Crore

b) Estimated cost up to Rs. 40.00 Lakhs

c) Estimated cost up to Rs. 20.00 Lakhs

d) Estimated cost put to tender : Rs.5.88 Lakh to Rs.26.30 Lakh

5. Time for completion : 01 (One) calendar month.

6. Other details :

Procurement Officer Bid Identification No. Availability of Tender on-line for bidding Date & Time of opening of tender

1 2 3 4 5

Superintending Engineer, Rural Works Division, Navi Mumbai Navi-Tender-Online - Divn. NAYAGARH-14/2023-24 20.02.2024 at 11.00 A.M. 01.03.2024 upto 5.30 P.M. 02.03.2024 at 11.00 A.M.

Sd/- Deputy General Manager (Networking & Communication Dept.)

SBI

Networking & Communication Department, State Bank of India, Global IT-Centre, Sec-11, CBD Belapur, Navi Mumbai-400 614

CORRIGENDUM-6

Please refer to RFP No.SBI/GITC/NW/C/2023-24/1065 dated 21.11.2023 for Procurement of Software defined WAN (SDWAN) solution for 7000 Branches and 4 Data Centers of State Bank of India. Corrigendum -6 dated 20.02.2024 can be accessed under Procurement News at Bank's website <https://www.sbi.co.in> or <https://bank.sbi> or e-Procurement agency portal <https://etender.sbi/SBI/>

Place: Navi Mumbai Date: 21.02.2024

Sd/- Deputy General Manager (Networking & Communication Dept.)

GOVT OF ODISHA

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER, RURAL WORKS DIVISION, NAYAGARH

O- At/Po-Nabaghampur, Dist-Nayagarh

Ph-06753-252049 E-mail-nayagarhDivn-14/2023-24 Dated. 13.02.2024

e-Procurement Notice

- Name of the work : Road works.
- Total No. of Projects : 05 (Five) Nos of projects
- Class of contractor :
- a) Estimated cost above Rs. 20.00 Lakhs & up to Rs.3.00 Crore
- b) Estimated cost up to Rs. 40.00 Lakhs
- c) Estimated cost up to Rs. 20.00 Lakhs
- Estimated cost put to tender : Rs.5.88 Lakh to Rs.26.30 Lakh
- Time for completion : 01 (One) calendar month.
- Other details :

Procurement Officer Bid Identification No. Availability of Tender on-line for bidding Date & Time of opening of tender

1 2 3 4 5

Superintending Engineer, Rural Works Division, Navi Mumbai Navi-Tender-Online - Divn. NAYAGARH-14/2023-24 20.02.2024 at 11.00 A.M. 01.03.2024 upto 5.30 P.M. 02.03.2024 at 11.00 A.M.

Sd/- Superintending Engineer Rural Works Division, Nayagarh OIPR-25106/1/0026/2324

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

पावरग्रिड
POWERGRID

Invitation for Bids (IFB) for Substation Package SS98 for (i) Construction of New 220/33 KV GIS (New) Substation at Nilgir including 2 nos. of 220/33KV, 3-ph ICT and 33KV Switchgears, (ii) LILo of one ckt of Alusteng-M-V-Leh 220KV SiC line on D/c towers to mine from Curve No. 6 to 7 (iii) Laying of 33 KV lines (consists of Overhead line (OH) and 33 KV Underground cable (UG)) under Western Zojila Consultancy Work to Ms. NHIDCL.

Single Stage Two Envelope (SSTE) Bidding Procedure

Funding: Domestic

Date: 21/02/2024

DOMESTIC COMPETITIVE BIDDING POWERGRID invites online bids through e-portal <https://etender.powergrid.in> for the following Package:

RFX. No. Package Reference Downloading of Bidding Documents: Cost of Bidding Documents:



TOP OF THE WORLD



Kim Jong Un

NORTH KOREA

Putin gave Kim Jong Un a car made in Russia

Soul: Russian President Vladimir Putin has gifted North Korean leader Kim Jong Un a Russian-made car for his personal use in a demonstration of their special relationship, North Korea's state media reported Tuesday. The report didn't say what kind of vehicle it was or how it was shipped. But observers said it could violate a UN resolution that bans supplying luxury items to North Korea in an attempt to pressure the country to abandon its nuclear weapons. Kim's sister, Kim Yo Jong, and another official accepted the gift Sunday and she conveyed her brother's thanks to Putin. AP

UNITED KINGDOM

University

apologises for

post on Sikhs

London: The University of Birmingham has apologised after it removed a social media post that seemed to confuse Sikh students with Muslims. According to a report in 'The Birmingham Mail', the university post implied that a 20-year-old "Langar on Campus" event organised by the university's Sikh Society this month was part of an Islamic Awareness Week. An Instagram account of the university-tagged event inspired by the Sikh concept of langar in a post with the text "Discover Islam Week". AP

UNITED STATES

Trump mentions Navalny in post, no word on Putin

Washington: Donald Trump on Monday made his first public comment on the death of Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny in a social media post. "The sudden death of Alexei Navalny has made me more and more aware of what is happening in our Country," he wrote on his Truth Social platform. "It is a slow, steady progression, with CROOKED, Radical Left Politicians, Prosecutors, and Judges leading us down a path to destruction. Open Borders, Rigged Elections, and Grossly Unfair Courtroom Decisions are DESTROYING AMERICA. WE ARE A NATION IN DECLINE, A FAILING NATION! MAGA2024." REUTERS

BRUTAL PRISON CONDITIONS TOOK A TOLL ON HIS BODY, BUT NAVALNY DIDN'T LOSE HIS CLARITY OF MIND, HIS WRITINGS SHOW

44 books, refining agenda: Alexei Navalny's final months, in his own words

ANTON TROIANSKI

BERLIN, FEBRUARY 20

CONFINED TO cold, concrete cells and often alone with his books, Alexei Navalny sought solace in letters. To one acquaintance, he wrote in July that no one could understand Russian prison life "without having been here," adding in his deadpan humor: "But there's no need to be here."

"If they're told to feed you caviar tomorrow, they'll feed you caviar," Navalny, the Russian opposition leader, wrote to the same acquaintance, Ilya Krasilshchik, in August. "If they're told to strangle you in cell, they'll strangle you."



FARMERS PROTEST IN GREECE

Farmers protest in front of the Greek Parliament in Athens Tuesday over rising energy costs and competition from imports. The government took back a threat to block the protest and police assisted with efforts to avoid traffic disruptions. Reuters

13 OF 15 MEMBERS VOTE IN FAVOUR, U.K. ABSENT

US vetoes UN resolution demanding Gaza ceasefire

YOSHITA SINGH
UNITED NATIONS, FEB 20

THE UN Security Council Tuesday failed to adopt a resolution calling for a humanitarian ceasefire in the Israel-Hamas conflict that was put forward by Algeria on behalf of Arab States.

The resolution demanded "an immediate humanitarian ceasefire that must be respected by all parties". The resolution got 13 votes in favour and an abstention by the UK but could not be adopted since the US voted against the draft by casting its veto.

Commenting on the Algerian-proposed draft resolution on the situation in the Middle East ahead of the vote, US Ambassador to the UN Linda Thomas-Greenfield said that Washington is "working on a hostage deal between Israel and Hamas, which would bring an immediate and sustained period of calm to Gaza for at least six



A displaced Palestinian woman, who fled due to Israeli strikes, in Rafah in south Gaza Strip on Tuesday. Reuters

weeks, and from which we could then take the time and the steps to build a more enduring peace."

She had said that the deal represented the "best opportunity" to reunite all hostages with their families and enable a prolonged pause in fighting, that would allow for more lifesaving food, water, fuel, medicine, and other essentials to get into the hands of Palestinian civilians.

"The resolution put forward in the Security Council, in contrast, would not achieve these

outcomes, and indeed, may run counter to them. We have communicated this concern repeatedly to our colleagues on the Council. For that reason, the United States does not support action on this draft resolution. Should it come up for a vote as drafted, it will not be adopted," Thomas-Greenfield said.

This is the third time since the October 7 Hamas attacks that the US has vetoed a resolution on Gaza in the Security Council.

PTI

Taiwan drives away Chinese coast guard boat as tensions rise

REUTERS
TAIPEI, FEBRUARY 20

TAIWAN TUESDAY drove away a Chinese coast guard boat that entered waters near its sensitive frontline islands, in a rise in tensions a day after China's coast guard boarded a Taiwanese tourist boat that a Taiwanese tourist said has triggered "panic".

A Chinese coast guard boat, numbered 8029, entered Taiwan's waters near Kinmen on Tuesday morning. Taiwan's coast guard said in a statement, adding it dispatched a boat and used radio and broadcast to drive away its Chinese counterpart, which left the area an hour later.

Taiwan's coast guard said it will continue to use radar, surveillance and patrols to ensure the "harmony and safety" near the waters of Taiwan-controlled Kinmen islands, which are close to China's shores.

Taiwan, which China claims as its own territory, has been wary of efforts by Beijing to ramp up pressure on Taipei following the election last month of Lai Ching-te as president, a man Beijing views as a dangerous separatist.

ACCORDING TO sources, the powerful military, which has backed a unity government after the fractured verdict, would have to put down its foot and the PPP would have to join the coalition government with a share in the cabinet.

Otherwise, the process of forming a coalition government would be difficult.

Bilawal Zardari-Bhutto

hit a snag prompting a temporary halt, with both PML-N and PPP agreeing to reconvene at 10 pm on Monday. However, the meeting did not take place.

Eventually, at 11 pm, the PML-N concluded their meeting, announcing that discussions with PPP would resume on Wednesday. In an informal conversation with reporters after

the first round of the meeting, PML-N leader Azam Nazir Tarar conveyed a positive trajectory in the ongoing discussions.

"Some things have already been decided on the matter of PPP's inclusion in the cabinet," Tarar was quoted as saying by Geo News. The PPP is reportedly asking for key constitutional positions of President, Chairman Senate, and Speaker of the National Assembly for its support to former prime minister Nawaz Sharif's PML-N.

Sources said PPP Chairman Bilawal Zardari-Bhutto was playing smartly and trying to bring PML-N to a point where it withdrew from making a coalition government and then launching himself as prime minister and form a government with the support of independents of PTI who have now joined the Sunni Ittehad Council. But it will not be easy for the 35-year-old former foreign minister as PTI party has already rejected the possibility of supporting the PPP.

Bilawal on Tuesday said he foresees a "stalemate" in the formation of a coalition government "if someone is not ready to change their stance."

"If I want to give the PML-N a vote, I will have to give it on my terms and not theirs," he told reporters. The Parliament should meet for its maiden session by February 29.

PTI

Russian pilot who defected to Ukraine shot dead in Spain; Kremlin calls him moral corpse

REUTERS
MOSCOW, FEBRUARY 20

RUSSIAN EMIGRES in Spain critical of the Kremlin called on the Spanish authorities on Tuesday to better protect them, after a Russian pilot who had defected to Ukraine was found shot dead in a garage in a town on Spain's Mediterranean coast.

Ukraine's GUR military spy

service has confirmed that pilot Maxim Kuzminov, who flew to Ukraine with his Mi-8 helicopter last August, has died in Spain.

The head of Russia's Foreign Intelligence Service, Sergei Naryshkin, said: "This traitor and criminal became a moral corpse at the very moment he planned his dirty and terrible crime."

Spanish government spokesperson said Civil police was conducting a murder investigation in Villajoyosa.

Kuzminov's defection to Ukraine was presented last year as a major coup for Kyiv. In Kyiv, he said he could not understand why his "beloved motherland" would enter into a war with Ukraine. Other members of the air crew died during his defection. Moscow said Kuzminov killed them; he said they panicked and fled, and may have been killed subsequently.

A Traveler's Needs: Sang-soo's woman of mystery



Hong Sang-soo (right) and Isabelle Huppert at the 74th Berlinale International Film Festival on Tuesday. Reuters

for the past two months, asks the tough questions. Who is Iris? Where has she come from? Huppert disappears from view, and appears in a park, smiling. There's no way that we can stop ourselves from responding, not at the lovely Huppert, but the smile is wiped off pretty soon, left as we are with slender leavings.

'Matt and Mara'

Building lives out of conversations which seems to have been picked up mid-flow is done beautifully in *Matt and Mara*, by Canadian director Kazik Radwanski, which played at Berlinale's Encounters section.

Mara (Deragh Campbell) is in a rocky place in her marriage with experimental musician Samir (Mounir Al Shami), the intimacy having clearly worn off in the middle of trying to keep her job as teacher going, with the husband being a stay-at-home dad to their baby.

At work, she spends her time hand-holding potential writers as

they spill their callow dreams. At home, it's the daily drudgery of domesticity. Old acquaintance-and-more Matt (Matt Johnson) shows up just at the right time. She is ripe for some excitement, and he brings the carefree air of someone who has only himself to take care of, back into her life again. They meet in a cafe, laugh at nothing and everything, and talk, talk, talk. The giddiness of being able to talk to another human deeply is infectious: you want to instantly hit the call button, and do the same thing.

A literary meet — an event where people go only to hook-up, her friend tells Mara — becomes the site where these two circle around each other, to see if they can go further. But then something happens, and the film comes to a standstill in a place fortunate people find themselves if they've had a chance to do some growing up. Feckless charmers are all very well for a bit of dalliance, but permanence, whatever that might be, is not made of these.

EXPRESS AT BERLINALE

SHUBHRA GUPTA
FEBRUARY 20

HONG SANG-SOO is such a Berlinale favourite that if there isn't a film by him in the programme, you feel something essential is missing. 'A Traveler's Needs' is his seventh entry in the 74th Berlin International Film Festival competition, his fifth film in the last five years, and his third outing with Isabelle Huppert.

Huppert plays a French woman in Seoul, looking for a means to make a living. She seems to appear out of thin air, perfectly formed, sitting on a park bench, looking around her as if she's al-

ways been there. Backstories do not usually disturb Sang-soo's ability to create slices of lives, which pulsate with meaning, and Huppert's elusive quicksilver quality fits in with the director's refusal to say first this happened, and then that, and so on.

But with this one, the law of diminishing returns seems to have set in. Wanting to teach French to well-to-do Korean families is fine, but not knowing quite how she will go about it — of course Huppert's Iris isn't a trained teacher, that would be far too prosaic for a Sang-soo movie — feels like a stretch.

Is she a flirty type, giggling in a high-pitch at the husband, when the wife is out of the frame? Or is it a tic to overcome nervousness in a woman who seems to be making up things as she goes along, throwing back glassfloss of makgeolli, a potent Korean rice wine drink of makgeolli, like a proper little lush?

In a nice by-play of spousal shorthand, the wife signals to the husband that she isn't very im-

pressed with the teaching methods on display. Earlier, we've seen Iris trying to draw out a pretty, poised piano player about how she feels about playing the instrument, and giving her the French equivalent of those sentiments to repeat as a way of learning.

Only one woman, the concerned mother of the young man whose flat Iris has been sharing

pers. At one point, Navalny reported in 2022, prison officials covered the window in foil.

A Public Life

Navalny was able to send hundreds of handwritten letters, thanks to the curious digitalisation of the Russian prison system. Through a website, people could write to him for 40 cents a page and receive scans of his responses, typically a week or two after he sent them and after they passed through a censor. Navalny also communicated with the outside world through his lawyers, who held up documents against the window separating them after they were barred from passing pa-

and officers in the courtroom they were "crazy." "You have one, God-given life, and this is what you choose to spend it on?" he said, according to text of the speech published by his team.

In one of his last hearings, by video link in January, Navalny argued for the right to longer meal breaks to consume the "two mugs of boiling water and two pieces of disgusting bread" to which he was entitled.

Books appeared to be at the center of Navalny's prison life, all the way until his death.

In a letter in April 2023 to Krasilshchik, Navalny explained that he preferred to be reading 10 books simultaneously. NYT



At a memorial event for Alexei Navalny in Paris, Monday. reuters

books in English in a year and was methodically preparing for the future: refining his agenda, study-

ing political memoirs, arguing with journalists, dispensing career advice to friends and opining on

EXPLAINED LAW & POLITICS

Art 142, why SC quashed Chandigarh mayor election, why it matters

HINA ROHTAKI &
ANANTHAKRISHNANG
CHANDIGARH, NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 20

THE SUPREME Court has quashed the result of the January 30 election for the Mayor of Chandigarh after finding that presiding officer Anil Masih had deliberately invalidated eight ballots cast in favour of the AAP-Congress candidate Kuldeep Kumar 'Tita'.

The Bench said it was evident that "while the petitioner is reflected to have polled 12 votes, the eight votes which are treated as invalid were wrongly treated to be so", and "each of those...invalid votes were in fact validly cast...in favour of the petitioner".

It follows that Kuldeep Kumar had in fact got 20 votes, while Manoj Sonkar, the BJP candidate, had won 16. "We accordingly order and direct that the result of the election as declared by the presiding officer shall stand quashed and set aside," the court said.

Sonkar had resigned from his post on Sunday, ahead of the court's verdict passed on Tuesday.

On what grounds did the Supreme Court strike down the result?

The court used its power under Article

142 of the Constitution to do "complete justice" and protect the sanctity of electoral democracy. "Allowing such a state of affairs...would be destructive of the most valued principles on which the entire edifice of democracy in our country depends," it said.

The Bench said it was evident that "while the petitioner is reflected to have polled 12 votes, the eight votes which are treated as invalid were wrongly treated to be so", and "each of those...invalid votes were in fact validly cast...in favour of the petitioner".

It follows that Kuldeep Kumar had in fact got 20 votes, while Manoj Sonkar, the BJP candidate, had won 16. "We accordingly order and direct that the result of the election as declared by the presiding officer shall stand quashed and set aside," the court said.

Sonkar had resigned from his post on Sunday, ahead of the court's verdict passed on Tuesday.

What was the situation before the polls?

Why was this election important?

The powers of the Mayor of Chandigarh Municipal Corporation are limited to calling meetings and deciding the agenda. Although the corporation has a five-year term, the Mayor is elected for only one year. The post is reserved for a woman candidate in the first and fourth year of each corporation. The last election to the corporation was held in 2021.

This year's election was politically significant because it saw an alliance, for the first time, between the AAP and Congress against the BJP, setting the stage for potential alliances for the Lok Sabha elections. The parties have been in talks for a seat-sharing deal in Delhi, even though they have decided to contest separately in Punjab.

What was the situation before the polls?

The elections were initially scheduled for January 18, but when AAP and Congress coun-

cillors reached the venue, they were told voting had been postponed as presiding officer Masih had taken ill. The Union Territory Administration wanted to hold the election on February 6, but Kuldeep Kumar approached the Punjab and Haryana High Court, which ordered the election to be held on January 30.

Ahead of the election, AAP had 13 councillors and the Congress 7, which gave the alliance a clear advantage in the 36-member House. The BJP had 15 votes – 14 of its councillors, plus the vote of its Chandigarh Lok Sabha MP (who has a vote under the rules) Kirron Kher. One councillor belongs to the Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD). The BJP said it had this councillor's support and, therefore, 16 votes in all.

On election day, after presiding officer Masih rejected eight votes of the AAP-Congress as invalid, the BJP's Sonkar was declared elected.

What happened after the election?

After videos showed Masih marking ballot papers so they could be declared invalid, Kuldeep Kumar moved the High Court and then the Supreme Court.

On February 5, CJ Chandrachud observed that it was obvious that Masih had defaced the ballots, and that "this man has to be prosecuted". The court said it was "appalled" at the "mockery" and "murder" of democracy, and summoned Masih on January 19.

On Tuesday, the court said that "the presiding officer has evidently put his own mark on the bottom half of the ballot for the purpose of creating a ground for treating the ballot to have been invalidly cast...so as to secure a result...by which the eighth respondent (Sonkar) would be declared elected".

It said that Masih's conduct has to be deplored because, "firstly...he has unlawfully altered the course of the Mayoral election"

and, "secondly, [by] making a solemn statement before this court on February 19, [he] has expressed a patent falsehood for which he must be held accountable".

Masih had told the court on Monday that he had marked the ballot papers that were already defaced, in order to avoid mixing them up with other ballots. On Tuesday, the court directed that a show cause notice be served on him.

Meanwhile, three AAP councillors joined the BJP on Sunday. Had the court ordered a fresh election instead of merely quashing the result, the AAP-Congress tally would have fallen to 17 from 20, while the BJP's votes would have risen to 19 (including the SAD councillor's vote), giving the party the majority (along with MP Kher's vote) of the 36 ballots that would be cast. Unlike in elections for Parliament or state Assemblies, there is no anti-defection law in municipal elections.

EXPLAINED ECONOMICS

FINALLY A CHIP FABRICATION PLANT IN INDIA? THE PROGRESS SO FAR

SOUMYARENDRA BARIK
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 20

UNION MINISTER OF State for Electronics and IT Rajeev Chandrasekhar recently confirmed that the Tata Group and Israeli chip company Tower Semiconductor have applied to set up foundries in the country.

If the proposals are cleared by the government's India Semiconductor Mission (ISM), it could pave the way for the country to finally have a fabrication plant after decades of failed attempts. Aside from boosting domestic job prospects, it will also offer India leverage in the international chip wars, so far shaped by China and the United States.

India is competing with some of its key allies – the US and Europe – to attract chipmakers, and is offering a 50 per cent capital expenditure subsidy to successful applicants at the central level under its \$10 billion incentive scheme. State governments can sweeten the deal further at their end.

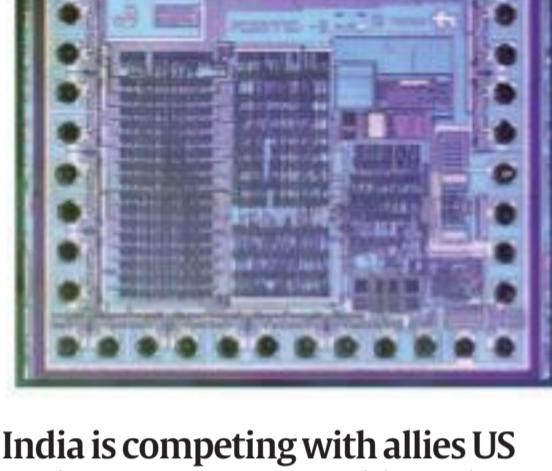
Proposals on the table

India's chip incentive scheme broadly covers three aspects of the ecosystem – full-blown foundries that can manufacture chips; packaging plants called ATMP facilities; and assembly and testing projects called OSAT plants. So far, US-based Micron Technology has clearance for its proposal to set up a \$2.75-billion ATMP plant in Gujarat.

In the foundry space, Chandrasekhar said the Tata Group and Tower Semiconductor have sent separate proposals.

The Indian Express had earlier reported about Tower's proposal to set up a plant worth \$8 billion, where it aims to produce 65 nm, 40 nm and 28 nm chips. The Tata Group is understood to be partnering with Taiwan-based United Microelectronics Corporation (UMC) or the Powerchip Semiconductor Manufacturing Corporation (PSMC). Chandrasekhar said that the collective value of the proposals is \$22 billion.

In the OSAT space, CG Power and Industrial Solutions has said it has entered



India is competing with allies US and Europe to attract chipmakers.
Wikimedia Commons

into a joint venture (JV) agreement with Renesas Electronics America and Thailand-based Stars Microelectronics to set up a semiconductor assembly and testing plant in India. Kaynes Technology has also sent a proposal to set up an OSAT plant.

The Tata Group is understood to have also applied for an ATMP plant. Apart from that, HCL is learnt to have partnered with Foxconn in its application for setting up a similar plant.

Earlier plans

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

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

There was a third proposal by Singapore-based IGSS Venture, but it was not found up to the mark by the advisory committee of the government.

YOUR GO-TO INSTITUTE FOR GENERAL STUDIES PREPARATION

VAJIRAM & RAVI
Institute for IAS Examination

Prelims cum Mains

General Studies Comprehensive Programme

10 Months

FEBRUARY 2024

Prelims

CSAT Course

2 Months

FEBRUARY 2024

Optionals

Optional Subjects Course

5 Months

JUNE 2024

080-6220-6330 www.vajiramandravi.com

The Supreme Court has said that 'forests' should be defined in accordance with a judgment it passed in 1996. This assertion questions the government's argument for amending the Forest Conservation Act



JAY MAZOOMDAAR

THE SUPREME Court has directed governments to follow the "broad and all-encompassing" definition of forest as laid down in its 1996 judgment in the T N Godavarm case until a consolidated record of all kinds of forests across the country is prepared.

A three-judge Bench led by Chief Justice of India (CJI) D Y Chandrachud passed the order on Monday (February 19) on petitions that challenged the 2023 amendments to the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 (FCA) on the ground that the modifications had "substantially diluted" the definition of forest, and had reduced the ambit of the Act.

Why was the FCA amended in 2023?

In the Statement of Objects and Reasons for the The Forest (Conservation) Amendment Bill, 2023, passed by both Houses in July-August last year, the government said that the applicability of the FCA had been widened by the judgment of the Supreme Court in *T N Godavarm Thirumalpad v. Union of India* (December 12, 1996).

"Subsequent to the said Judgment, the provisions of the Act were applied in... recorded forests which had already been put to various type of non-forestry use, thereby restraining the authorities from undertaking any change in the land use and allowing any development or utility related work," the Statement of Objects and Reasons said.

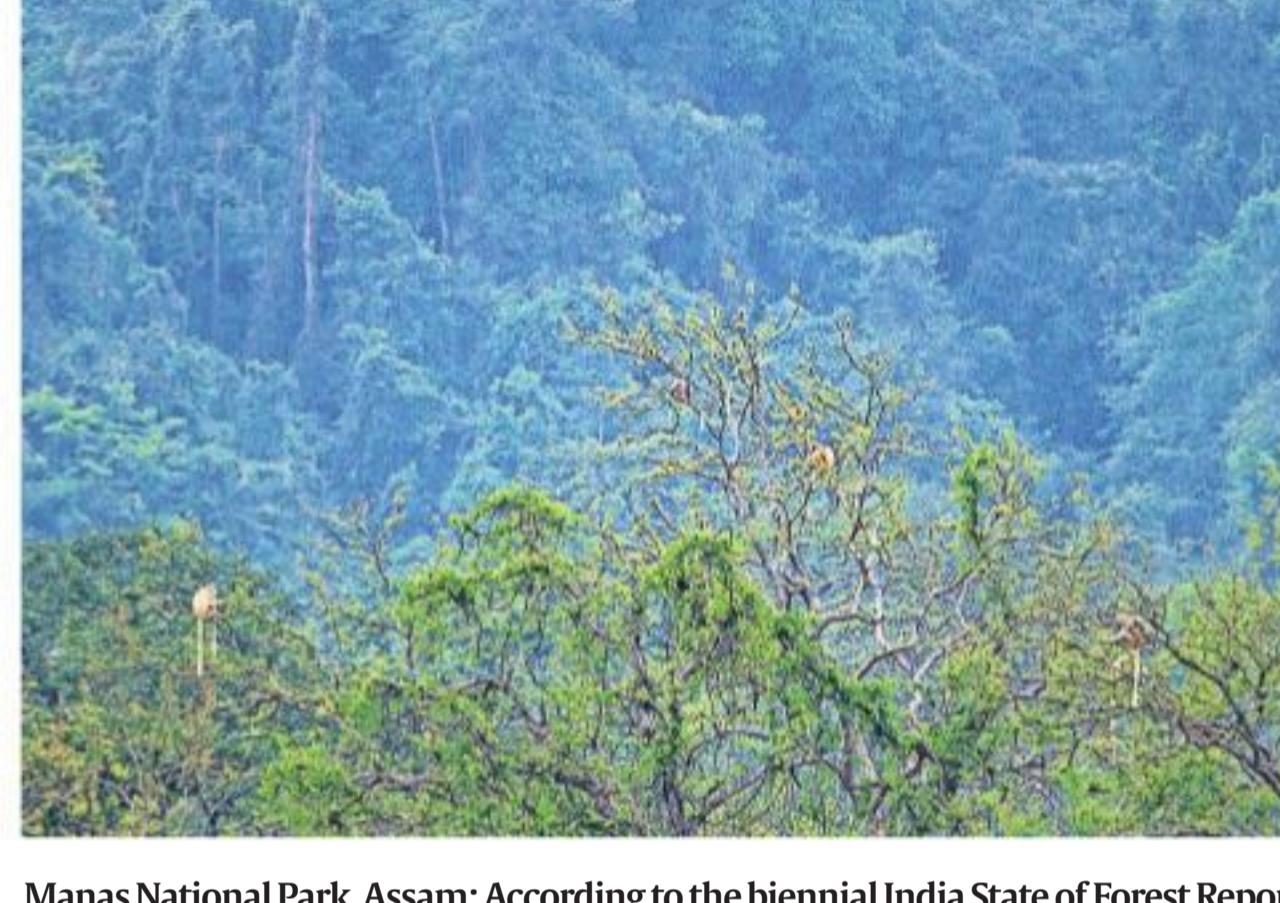
Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav told Parliament that the amendments were necessary to remove ambiguities created by the judgment, which had made the FCA applicable to all areas that resembled the dictionary meaning of 'forest'.

As a remedy, the amendment made the FCA applicable only to notified forests and lands that were identified as 'forest' in government records.

How exactly did the Supreme Court define forest for the purposes of the Act?

The court ruled that the FCA would apply to all land parcels that were either recorded as 'forest', or which resembled the dictionary meaning of forest.

The 1996 judgment by Justice J S Verma and Justice B N Kirpal said: 'The word 'forest' must be understood according to its dictio-



Manas National Park, Assam: According to the biennial India State of Forest Report, the Northeast has seen the biggest loss of forests in recent years. Ramki Sreenivasan

nary meaning. This description covers all statutorily recognised forests, whether designated as reserved, protected or otherwise... The term 'forest land' will not only include 'forests' as understood in the dictionary sense, but also any area recorded as forest in the Government record irrespective of the ownership."

The CJI-led three-judge Bench reaffirmed this principle on Monday, saying that the dictionary meaning of forests had been adopted by the court to align with Parliament's intent behind legislating the FCA in 1980.

To what extent did the SC's 1996 judgment really expand the ambit of the FCA, 1980?

The declared intent of the 2023 amendment was to correct the situation arising out of the perceived expansion of the FCA's applicability by the SC. However, under subsections (ii), (iii), and (iv) of Section 2 ("Restriction on the dereservation of forests or use of forest land for non-forest purpose") of the FCA, the ambit of the law is not limited to only "reserved forest" – it bars the unauthorised non-forest use of *any* forest land.

In the FCA, the term "reserved forest" is used only in the limited context of dereservation. Section 2(i) says that no reserve forest "shall cease to be reserved" without prior approval from the Centre. Clearly, a clause on dereservation can only apply to what is reserved.

This principle was reiterated by the Supreme Court in July 2022 in *Narinder Singh*

& Ors vs *Divesh Bhutani & Ors.* "As clause (i) specifically refers to a reserved forest...it is obvious that clauses (ii), (iii) & (iv) apply to any other forest...Therefore, forest as understood by its dictionary meaning is covered by Section 2" of the FCA itself, a three-judge Bench of Justice CTRavikumar, Justice Abhay S Oka, and Justice A M Khanwilkar ruled.

While the Ministry has repeatedly denied any attempt to dilute the FCA, it did, in fact, drop the most radical amendment it had proposed to strengthen the Act in a Consultation Paper in October 2021.

"Ministry is considering introducing an enabling provision in the Act to keep certain pristine forests showcasing rich ecological values intact for a specific period," it had said. This was because "there are no provisions in the Act for prohibiting non-forestry use of certain areas which require a higher degree of protection due to their uniqueness and high landscape integrated value."

This potentially landmark pro-conservation measure was, however, not a part of the Forest (Conservation) Amendment Bill 2023.

What about the argument that after the 1996 judgment, the FCA was impeding the government's welfare agenda?

The government had justified the 2023 amendments as a means to address the development needs of forest-dwelling tribes. "Today, this (the FCA) comes in the way of building even toilets in schools for tribal girls," Minister Yadav said in Parliament.

The matter will be heard for final disposal in July.

What happens now? States and Union Territories have until March 31 to submit comprehensive records of forests identified by the expert committees constituted as per the 1996 judgment. The Ministry will have to publish this data on its website by April 15.

The Supreme Court said that while the expert committees set up under the 2023 Rules should take into account the progress made by the previous expert panels, they are free to expand the protection umbrella to any forest land that is worth protecting.

The matter will be heard for final disposal in July.

Yale varsity apologises for slavery links: India connection of its benefactor

ARJUN SENGUPTA
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 20

THE USA'S Yale University on February 16 issued a formal apology for its historical association with slavery. "Today... we recognise our university's historical role in and associations with slavery... and we apologise for the ways that Yale's leaders, over the course of our early history, participated in slavery," it said in a statement.

This came alongside the publication of *Yale and Slavery: A History*, a comprehensive account of Yale's past, authored by David W Blight along with the Yale and Slavery Research Project.

Among other things, the book talks about the Indian connection of Elihu Yale (1649-1721), after whom the university is

EXPLAINED GLOBAL

named. Yale spent over a quarter of a century in India, mainly in Madras (now Chennai), where he made a considerable fortune from activities including slave trade.

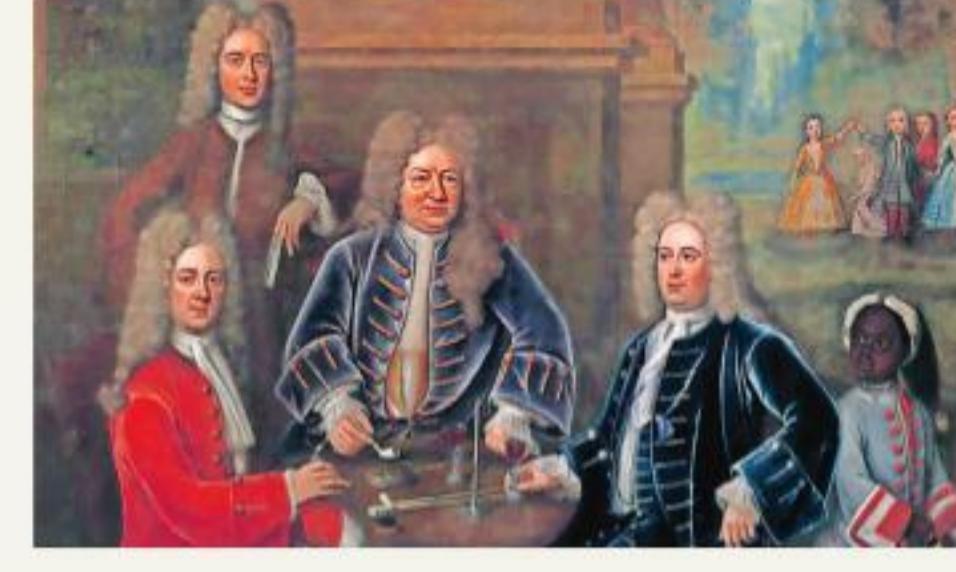
Massachusetts to Madras

Elihu Yale was born in 1649, in Boston, Massachusetts, into a wealthy merchant family. When he was three, his family moved to Britain.

In 1672, Yale arrived in Madras as a junior employee of the East India Company, and ultimately became the governor-president of Madras from 1684-85, and again from 1687-92.

Involvement in slave trade

The East India Company during Yale's time conducted an enormous amount of commerce from Madras. Apart from trade



The painting 'Elihu Yale with Members of His Family and an Enslaved Child'. Oil on canvas by John Verelst. Photo courtesy: YBCA

in spices and textiles, the Company also engaged in the sale and purchase of human beings. Yale "oversaw many sales, adjudications, and accounting of enslaved people for the

Classifieds

PERSONAL

I, Nikhil Chaudhary S/o Sant Ram Chaudhary E-702 Eldeco Green Meadows, Sector-P1, Greater Noida, U.P. have changed my name to Nikhil for all future purposes.

0070890050-1

I, Mu Naim S/o Jaijish R/o 266, Adarsh Nagar, Khora Colony, Ghaziabad have changed my name to Mohd Nayem.

0070890042-1

I, Mau Paravej S/o Mahamood R/o 1692, Kotla Mewatia, Avasikas Colony Hapur have changed my name to Mohd Parvej.

0070890095-1

I, Mannas S/o Shalendra Kumar Saxena R/o M-152, Sector-25, Noida Gautam Budh Nagar (U.P) have changed my name to Mannas Saxena.

0040715383-2

I, Jatinder Kaur Chadha, W/o Shri Gurdeep Singh Chadha, R/o Farm No. 21, Oak Drive, DLF Chattarpur, Delhi have changed my name from Jatinder Kaur to Jatinder Kaur Chadha for all future purposes.

0040715384-1

I, Jagdish Kumar Devi Ram R/o, C-17, Partap Vihar Part-2, Nangloi, Delhi-86 that JAGDEESH KUMAR AND JAGDISH KUMAR Pertain to one and the same person

0070890096-1

I, Gouri Shankar S/o Sohan Lal Sharma R/o F-281, Second-Floor, Mansarovar Garden, New Delhi-110015, have changed my name Gouri Shankar Sharma. 0040715457-7

I, Deepanshu S/o Yogesh Kumar R/o H.No.1116 Sector-2, Ballabhgarh, Faridabad, have changed my name to Deepanshu Chaudhary.

0040715436-2

I, Bhaskar S/o -Kailash Chand R/o- House No-A-75, Near SBI Bank, Gopalpuri Delhi -110094 Have Changed My Name Bhaskar Gupta, For All Purposes.

0050237352-1

I, Ashok Kumar Wadhawan S/o Arjun Lal Wadhawan R/o,FB-105, Second-Floor, Mansarovar-Garden, New Delhi-110015, have changed my name to Ashok Wadhawan.

0040715457-8

I, Anushka Saini & Anu Saini D/o Lalit Shridhar R/o U-95, Second, Solanki road,near PNB ATM, Uttam Nagar, Delhi-110059 have changed my name to Anu Shridhar for all future purposes.

0070890031-1

I, Shakuntala Thakur alias Shakuntala Singh D/o Mullu Singh Thakur and W/o Late Ninni Singh Rana R/o 527/12, Ravi Kiran Society, Ukhri Road Baldevbagh, Cherital Ward, Jalpur, Madhya Pradesh-482001, have changed my name to Shakuntala Singh Rana

0070890062-1

I, SUJEET KUMAR RAY S/O KAPIL DEV RAI R/O A-744 NEAR KRISHNA PROPERTY BEGUMPUR NORTH WEST DELHI 110086 CHANGED MY NAME TO SUJEET KUMAR RAI

0070890089-1

I, Purshottam Das S/o-Chander Bhan Mittal R/o C-22/4,Gali No.9,Sad Nagar,Palam Colony,Delhi-110045 have changed my name to Purushottam Mittal for all purposes.

0040715377-1

I, Neelam Khural W/o Hakan Singh R/o A-62, Prem Nagar, Ganganager, Dist- Ganganager, Rajasthan-335001, have changed my name to Neelam 0070890059-1

I, NEELU JHA W/o DHIRENDRA JHA R/o 421, Flat No.6, First Floor, Gali No.3, Maya Devi Bhawan, Mandawala Fazalpur, East Delhi, Delhi -110092 this is to inform that Neelu Jha, D/o Jaynath Mishra, Neelokumar and Neelu Kumar D/o Jaynath Mishra are one & same person is known as Neelu Jha D/o Jaynath Mishra only. it should be treated asonyly Neelu Jha for all purposes henceforth.

0040715382-1

I, PRANAY WATSON S/o WATSON GEORGE R/o C-3, KRIST JYOTI APARTMENT, PARWANA ROAD, PITAMPURA, DELHI-110034, THAT PRANAY WATSON AND PRANAY PERTAIN TO ONE AND THE SAME PERSON.

0070890097-1

I, Mahesh Kumar S/o Sh. Ram Kumar R/o A-437, Inder Enclave -2, Kirari Suleman Nagar, New Delhi -110086 have changed my name to Mahesh for all purposes.

0040715369-2

I, Kshitij Chhabra S/o Sh. Baldev Kumar R/o 7/28,B, Sector -2, Kali Bar Marg, Gole Post Office, NDMC, New Delhi G.P.O., Central Delhi, Delhi-110001 have changed my name to Kshitij Raj Chhabra for all purposes.

0040715369-3

I, Jyoti Rani W/o-Purushottam Mittal R/o C-22/4, Gali No.9,Sad Nagar,Palam Colony,Delhi-110045 have changed my name to Jyoti for all purposes.

0040715378-1

I, Rajender Kumar S/o Purav Ram R/o Village Kathanda, P.O. Jadoli, Nermand, Kullu, Himachal Pradesh-172023, that name of mine and my father has been wrongly written as Rajender and Puran Rai respectively in my Pan Card No. BKUPR5618C. The actual name of mine and my father is Rajender Kumar and Purav Ram respectively

0070890044-1

I, Bijay Pratap Singh Son of Sh Prem Shankar Singh permanent resident of Kumarkhand, District-Madhepura, Bihar-Pin 852112, & presently residing at Flat No D-203, POWERGRID Township, Sector-43,Gurukrupa, Haryana, Pin 122009 have changed my name from Bijay Pratap Singh to Vijay Pratap Singh and will be known as Vijay Pratap Singh for all official purposes.

0040715381-1

I, Bharti D/o Late Govind Prasad R/o 56, Patel Nagar Sahagi, Near Yadav Hotel, Gram Panchayat Sahagi, Ward 77, New Ward Adhartal, Jalpur, Madhya Pradesh-482004, have changed my name to Pooja Raj

0070890065-1

I, Mu Naim S/o Jaijish R/o 266, Adarsh Nagar, Khora Colony, Ghaziabad have changed my name to Mohd Nayem.

0070890042-1

I, Mau Paravej S/o Mahamood R/o 1692, Kotla Mewatia, Avasikas Colony Hapur have changed my name to Mohd Parvej.

0070890095-1

I, Mannas S/o Shalendra Kumar Saxena R/o M-152, Sector-25, Noida Gautam Budh Nagar (U.P) have changed my name to Mannas Saxena.

0040715383-2

I, Jatinder Kaur Chadha, W/o Shri Gurdeep Singh Chadha, R/o Farm No. 21, Oak Drive, DLF Chattarpur, Delhi have changed my name from Jatinder Kaur to Jatinder Kaur Chadha for all future purposes.

0040715384-1

I, Mohammad Farooq s/o Islamuddin R/o F-63, Sangam Vihar, Pushpa Bhawan, New Delhi-110062, have changed my name to Mohd Farooq Saifi

0040715385-1

I, Vijay Bhatia S/o Late Sh. Moti Ram Bhatia (M.R. Bhatia) R/o A-69, Prayag Apartment, Vasundhara Enclave, Delhi-110095 is also known as Vijay Kumar and Vijay Kumar Bhatia. All names are of one and the same person.

0040715369-4

My correct name is Dev Rishi S/o Dayanand Sharma R/o D-219, Karam Pura, New Delhi-110015 but due to mistake it is written as Devrishi in my employment related documents with US Embassy.

0040715205-3

I, MD Nawabuddin S/o Basiruddin R/o 202, Mahajapur, Ghaziabad have changed my name to Nawabuddin.

0070890092-1

I, hitherto known as Bhusan, S/o HOSHIYAAR SINGH, residing at House No.47,Adhyapak Vihar,Nangloi, West Delhi-110041,have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as GOVIND.

0040715457-2

I, VEENA,W/o RAJESH GHAI, R/o L-801,KDP Grand Savanna,Rajnagar-Extension, Ghaziabad(UP)have changed my name,from VEENA to VEENA GHAI,for all future purposes.

0040715438-5

I, Tilak Raj S/o Mehar Chand Kukreja R/o-H-1680-81,3rd-Floor,Multani Mohalla,Rani Bagh Delhi-110034,have changed my name to Tilak Kukreja Permanently.

0040715368-1

I, Sudesh,S/o Bhim Singh,R/o-KH No.-93/10,Gali No.-27,Swatnara Nagar,Narela, Delhi-110040,have changed my name to Sudesh Kumar,for all purposes.

0040715453-6

I, Subir Maheshwari S/o Narain Dutt Dhpur R/o,PD-12A, Malibu-Towne, Sohna-Road,Gurgaon, Haryana-122018,have changed my minor son's name Nirvana Maheshwari to Nervan Maheshwari. 0040715457-10

I, Shreyas Kamboj S/o Charan Jeet Singh R/o Q-18 Sri Niwaspr, South Delhi-110065,changed my name to Shreyas Jeet Singh

0040715438-9

I, Seeta Shree,w/o Jai Narayan,R/o,H.no 154-D-Block,Shakurpur North,West Delhi-110034,have changed my name to Seeta Shree,for all the future purposes

0040715436-1

I, Santosh,W/o Ravi Kumar, R/o C-818,Block-C, Basant Dada Patil-Nagar,Bhalwasla,Badli,-North,West Delhi-110042,declare that my name is wrongly-mentioned as Santosh Kumari Gotam in my Ration-Card(Number 07700486543).But my actual-name is Santosh,for future,all purposes.

0040715418-9

I, Sajjan Kumar,S/o Ramphal,R/o-83/5, Sonipat, Road,Near-Railway Fatak,station Headquarter wali Gali,Laxmi Nagar,Rohatk Haryana-124001,Have Changed My Name To Sajjan Kumar,Permanently.

0040715457-5

I, SUNITA BHATIA,W/o TRILOK BHATIA,R/o/HOUSE.NOB-6,NEAR PARNAMI HOSPITAL,PANCHWATI,AZADP UR,DELHI-110033,have changed my minor child's name,from AADITYA to AADITYA DIKSHIT

0040715482-1

I, Neetu Devender Kumar Gera,W/o Davendra Kumar Gera,R/o-FD-38,Second Floor,Tagore-Garden Delhi-110027,Have Changed my name,from Neetu to Seeta Shree,for all the future purposes

0040715452-4

I, Santosh,W/o Ravi Kumar, R/o C-818,Block-C, Basant Dada Patil-Nagar,Bhalwasla,Badli,-North,West Delhi-110042,declare that my name is wrongly-mentioned as Santosh Kumari Gotam in my Ration-Card(Number 07700486543).But my actual-name is Santosh,for future,all purposes.

0040715418-9

I, Sajjan Kumar,S/o Ramphal,R/o-83/5, Sonipat, Road,Near-Railway Fatak,station Headquarter wali Gali,Laxmi Nagar,Rohatk Haryana-124001,Have Changed My Name To Sajjan Kumar,Permanently.

0040715457-5

I, Kshitij Chhabra S/o Sh. Baldev Kumar R/o 7/28,B, Sector -2, Kali Bar Marg, Gole Post Office, NDMC, New Delhi G.P.O., Central Delhi, Delhi-110001 have changed my name to Kshitij Raj Chhabra for all purposes.

0040715369-3

I, Jyoti Rani W/o-Purushottam Mittal R/o C-22/4, Gali No.9,Sad Nagar,Palam Colony,Delhi-110045 have changed my name to Jyoti for all purposes.

0040715378-1

I, Rajender Kumar S/o Purav Ram R/o Village Kathanda, P.O. Jadoli, Nermand, Kullu, Himachal Pradesh-172023, that name of mine and my father has been wrongly written as Rajender and Puran Rai respectively in my Pan Card No. BKUPR5618C. The actual name of mine and my father is Rajender Kumar and Purav Ram respectively

0070890044-1

I, ISABINA DANISH,W/o,DANISH RAIS,ADD-963,GALI CHASHREEN FARASH KHAN,CENTRAL,DELHI-110006,changed my name to SABEENA KAUSER,for all,future purposes.

0040715452-2

I, SAANVI D/o SURENDER KUMAR KAMAL-ADD-PLLOT NO-85,BLOCK-C,NEAR-DAYAL BAGH POLICE CHOWKI,DAYALBAGH COLONY SURAKUNDI,FARIDABAD PIN:121009,HARYANA,INDIA changed my name to SAANVI KAMAL,for all,future purposes.

0040715452-6

I, Rukhsana,W/o T/Chand Khan,R/o Flat-No.120, Aurbindo Appt,D.D.A-Flats, Achchini,Delhi-110017,Have Changed my name to Rukhsana Khan.

0040715452-1

I, Tara Datt Mathpal,S/o O'Khima Nand,R/o H.No-2669,Gali.No-67-E,Block-Molarband Extension,Badarupur-Delhi-110044,Have Changed My Name To Tara Datt,For future.

0040715438-8

I, Mohammad Farooq s/o Islamuddin R/o F-63, Sangam Vihar, Pushpa Bhawan, New Delhi-110062, have changed my name to Mohd Farooq Saifi

0040715385-1

I, Jitender Kaur D/o Late Govind Prasad R/o 56, Patel Nagar Sahagi, Near Yadav Hotel, Gram Panchayat Sahagi, Ward 77, New Ward Adhartal, Jalpur, Madhya Pradesh-482004, have changed my name to Pooja Raj

0070890065-1

I, Bharti D/o Late Govind Prasad R/o 56, Patel Nagar Sahagi, Near Yadav Hotel, Gram Panchayat Sahagi, Ward 77, New Ward Adhartal, Jalpur, Madhya Pradesh-482004, have changed my name to Pooja Raj

0040715452-1

I, Richa,W/o Varun Sagar,R/o-D-346,Sector-47,Noida Gautam Budh Nagar,UP-201301,Have changed my name to Richa Kohli sagar,for all purposes.

0040715418-3

I, Ravi,S/o-Shri Shiv Kumar,R/o-H.No-JB/3/54, Gali No.3,Welcome,Sealampur,Shahdara,East Delhi-110032,have changed my name to Annu.

0040715385-1

<div data-bbox="255 386 3



आर्यभट्ट प्रैदान विज्ञान शोध संस्थान
Aryabhatta Research Institute of
Observational Sciences
(An Autonomous Institute under DST, Govt. of India)

CORRIGENDUM

Extension of last date for submission of application to the post of Director, ARIES

With reference to the Advertisement No.AO/ DR/2015-ESTT (Volume II) 1331 dated 20th December, 2023 regarding recruitment of Director, it is hereby informed that the last date of submission of application has been extended up to 10th March, 2024 and the last date for the submission of the applications for those applying from far-flung areas shall be 25th March, 2024.

sd/-
No. AO/23-24/1532 Date : 20th February, 2024 Registrar, ARIES

UJVN LIMITED

H.O.: "UJJWAL", Maharan Bagh, G.M.S. Road, Dehradun-248006, Telephone: 0135-2763508, 2763808 Fax: 0135-2763507 CIN No. U40101UR2001SGC025866, Website: www.ujvn.com

Ref. No.: 269 e-Tender Notice Dated : 20.02.2024

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

E-Tender No-37/EE/PCM/Dhalipur/2023-24

Name of work: Special Repair and Painting works P-I Type Quarters of Kuhal Power House Colony, Kuhal Dehradun

Estimated value of Tender: Rs. 27,00,250.00 (excluding GST)

Date & Time of availability of bid document on website: From 15.00 Hrs to 21.02.2024

Last Date & Time for submission of tender: Up to 15:00 Hrs 13.03.2024

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

Executive Engineer (PCM)

"Avoid Wasteful use of Electricity"

GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA HYDERABAD METROPOLITAN WATER SUPPLY & SEWERAGE BOARD

O/o Chief General Manager (Engg), Transmission Circle, Khairatabad, Hyderabad-500004, T.S.

e-PROCUREMENT - TENDER NOTIFICATION

e-Tender No. & Date	Name of Work	Ranging (approx.)	Bid document download start date
EP No.2 & 103 / CGM(E) TC / T3 / O&M Div.XI / 2023-24 Dtd: 19.02.2024	S.D & F of 600/700mm dia BFVs and 600mm dia Non Slam type nozzle check valves (NVR) for 1300/1475/ 1425 KV/pumpsets of 6.6KV Ph-II & III Ph's at Kpur, N/pally and Gondia, O&M Dn XI, Seebaganar.	Rs. 194.85 Lakhs & Rs. 97.57 Lakhs	21.02.2024 @ 03.00 PM
	The Tenderers are requested to upload the information on the Zip format preferably. Further details can be seen on www.eprocurement.gov.in .		

D/o: Chief General Manager (Engg), Transmission Circle, Khairatabad, Hyd-004, T.S.

UJVN Limited

H.O.: "UJJWAL", Maharan Bagh, G.M.S. Road, Dehradun-248006 Telephone: 0135-2763508, 2763808 Fax: 0135-2763507 CIN No. U40101UR2001SGC025866

RO No. 263 Tender cancellation Dated : 20/02/2024

Due to unavoidable circumstances, Tender Notice No. 25/EE/E&M-II)/LP/2023-24 through "e" procurement for "Supply & Construction of 11 KV feeders from Lakhwar Substation to Different Locations of Lakhwar MPP invited by Office of the Executive Engineer (E&M-II), LP, Dakpathar Dehradun is being cancelled

The detail of cancellation information, may be obtained from the e-procurement portal - uktenders.gov.in

Executive Engineer (E&M-II)

"Avoid wasteful use of Electricity"

CHAUDHARY CHARAN SINGH HARYANA AGRICULTURAL UNIVERSITY, HISAR

(Established by Parliament Act. No. 16 of 1970)

NOTICE

The following posts advertised earlier are hereby withdrawn due to administrative reasons:-

Sr. No.	Advt. No.	Name of Post	No. of Post Advertised
1.	01/2012	Mall	01
2.	01/2012	Helper	01
3.	02/2013	Mall	01

The application processing fee deposited by the candidates in response to the above advertisement will be refunded through NEFT, on request (offline / online via email of the candidates at drcchauh@gmail.com) within two months with effect from the date of publishing in newspapers to the Director of Research, CCS HAU, Hisar mentioning therein name of bank, bank account number, IFSC code, I.D proof, mobile number etc. along with proof of payment.

Sd/-
Director of Research

All other terms and conditions shall remain unchanged.

Sd/-
Executive Engineer
Water Management Dn, Rudri

Code No. 38
for Chief Engineer
Mahanadi Project, Raipur (C.G)

Earlier Published in E-procurement Present Amendment in E-procurement Website

Further details regarding the project, further details regarding the project, can be viewed on sub portal of water Resources Department, Chhattisgarh Resources Department, Chhattisgarh website <http://cgwrd.in> Announcements from Date 14/02/2024 to Date 16/02/2024

All other terms and conditions shall remain unchanged.

Sd/-
Executive Engineer
Water Management Dn, Rudri

Code No. 38
for Chief Engineer
Mahanadi Project, Raipur (C.G)

07907

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON

See Section 82 Cr. P. C.

Whereas a complaint has been made before me that accused person namely Aamil S/o Allauddin R/o Foothpath Jamna Bazar, Delhi, have committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence under FIR No. 230/20 U/s 356/379/411/34 IPC., has been registered at P.S. Kotwali, Delhi and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest there upon issued that the said, Aamil cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said, Aamil has absconded (or is concealing herself to avoid the service of the said warrant).

Proclamation is hereby made that the said accused Aamil of under FIR No. 230/20 U/s 356/379/411/34 IPC., Registered at P.S. Kotwali, Delhi is required to appear before this court to answer the said complaint on or before 21.03.2024.

By Order

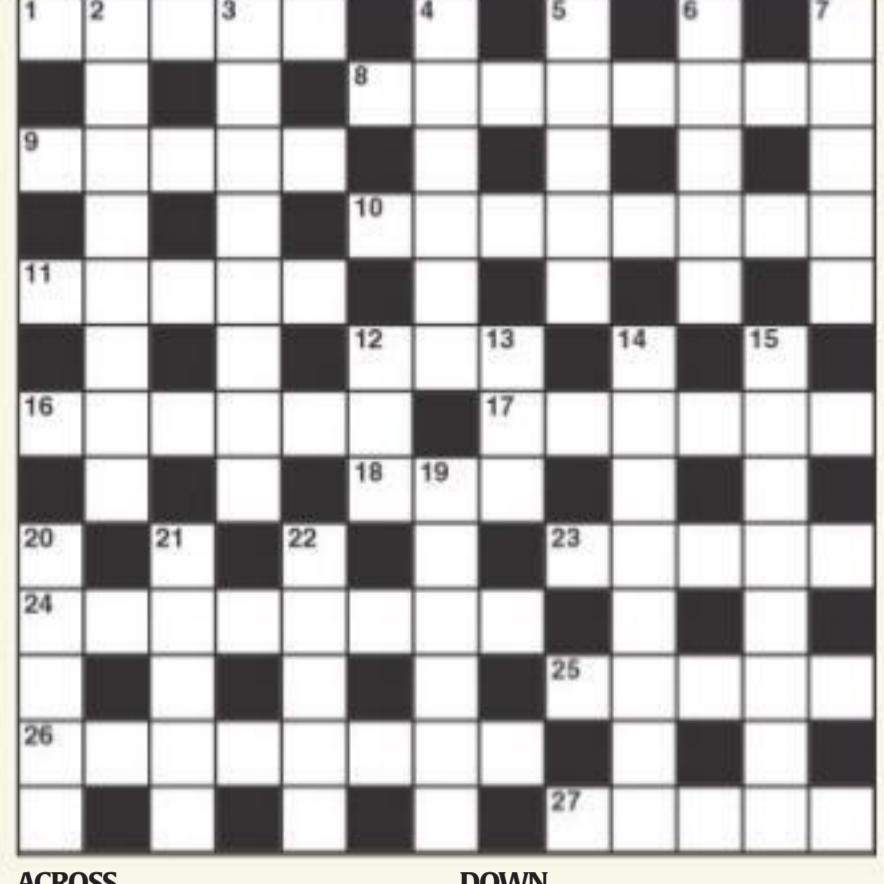
Ms. Meena Chouhan, MM-08,
Tis Hazari Courts, Delhi

DP/1727/N/2024

Rs. Meena Chouhan, MM-08,
Tis Hazari Courts, Delhi

Rs. Meena Chouhan, MM-08,
Tis Hazari Courts, Delhi</

CROSSWORD 5293



ACROSS

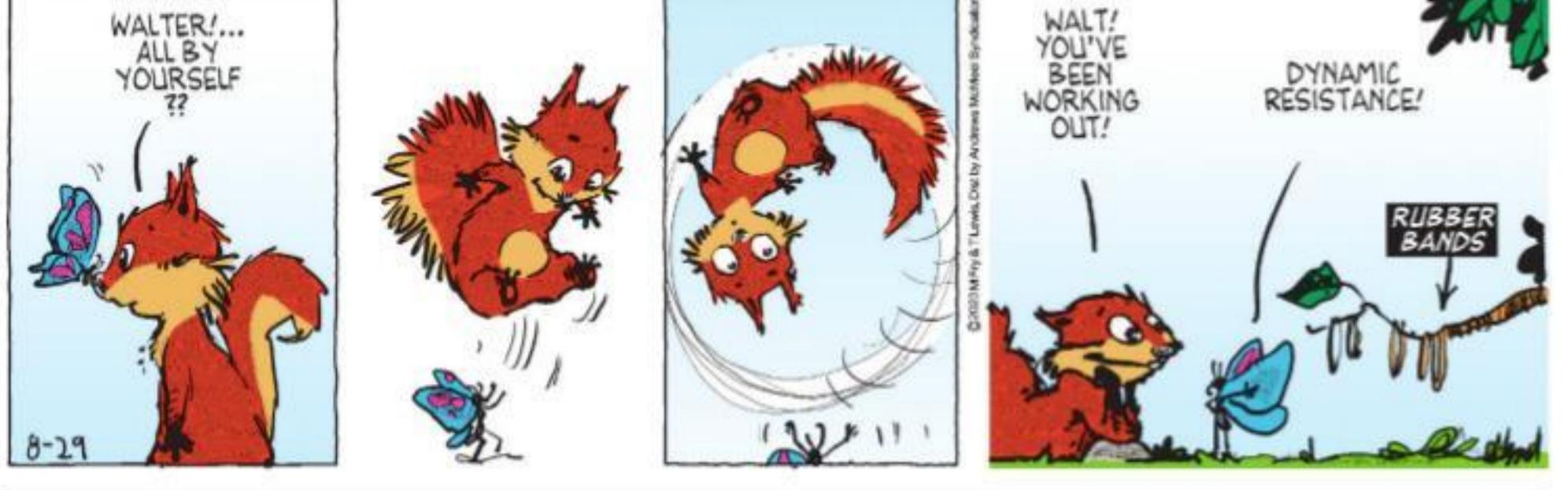
- Green open spaces? (5)
- Joins the embassy staff (8)
- Attain some rare achievement (5)
- Relevant data (8)
- The boy turned to me for reward (5)
- Anton lost to a girl (3)
- A holy man grows old by degrees (6)
- Confine one after another we hear (6)
- It's on the cards it may be shown (3)
- Faith in a business combination (5)
- A partner placed inside is cut off (8)
- Some projected amusements (5)
- Encircled ally making a comeback? (8)
- About any to depart may give hurt (5)

DOWN

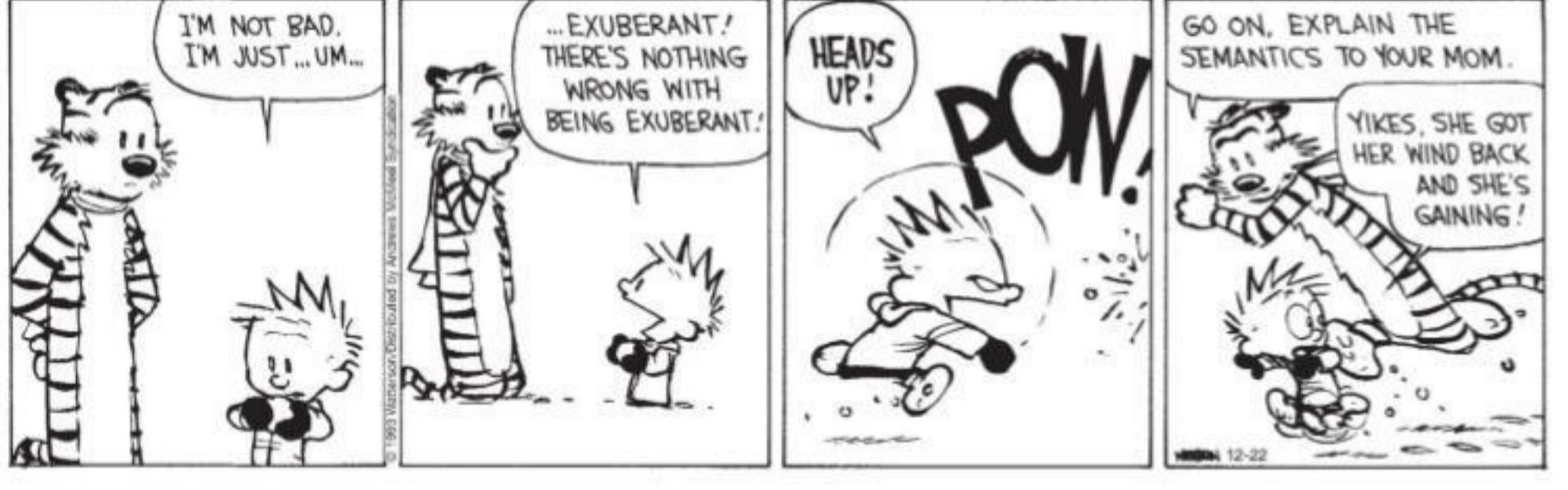
- Light entertainment to repeat all over the place (8)
- Trade using former coins (8)
- Rain on the way leads to stress (6)
- Those who have this shouldn't feel hungry (5)
- Yet it provides academic standing (5)
- New lamps put into service (5)
- A serpent when quiet (3)
- Pinch a little whisky (3)
- A sailor in the cast is naturally a good mimic (8)
- Exert force on a chap to be a journalist (8)
- Propose at home to nurse (6)
- Couples from Paris (5)
- An accident to make light of (5)
- Checks foundation garments (5)

Solutions Crossword 5292 Across: 1 Chessmatch, 6 Comb, 10 Trace, 11 Editorial, 12 Confetti, 13 Steep, 15 Aerobic, 17 Egrets, 19 Toddler, 21 Athlete, 22 Elgar, 24 Property, 27 Hopscotch, 28 Ticks, 29 Duet, 30 Vegetables Down: 1 City, 2 Hamoured, 3 Sheep, 4 Aseptic, 5 Cuisine, 7 Olive, 8 Billposter, 9 Forsooth, 14 Cattle shed, 16 Ballroom, 18 Sceptical, 20 Repulse, 21 Aconite, 23 Guise, 25 Extra, 26 Uses

OVER THE HEDGE by Michael Fry & I Lewis



CALVIN & HOBBES by Bill Watterson



MARVIN by Tom Armstrong



JUMBLE WORDS

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 quiz.

_is the immediate __ of human consciousness. -Max Planck (3,7)

NTAAE
AGINCT
CXIOT
ABELDGD

INCPAL
I HOPE THIS TRIP TO THE PRINCIPAL DOESN'T TAKE TOO LONG!
INCIPAL
I DON'T WANT TO MISS SNACK TIME!

SUDOKU 5479

Difficulty Level 4s
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.

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

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

SOLUTION SUDOKU 5478

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

Answers: EATEN, TOXIC, ACTING, CALIBER

कार्यपालक अभियंता का कार्यालय

पेयजल एवं स्वच्छता प्रमंडल, रामगढ़

ई-प्रोक्योरमेन्ट अति-अल्पकालीन विविद सूचना

T. Reference No.: RMG/20/2023-24

Date 19.02.2024

S. No.	Name of Work	Approximate value of work (Rs in Lakh)	Bid Security (Rs. in Lakh)	Cost of Tender Paper (Rs)	Time of Completion
1	Construction of Multipurpose Community Hall, Hesagara in Mandu Block District Ramgarh under D.W & S. Division Ramgarh	183.53594	3.68000	10000.00	12 Months
2	वेबसाइट पर निविदा प्रकाशन की तिथि	21.02.2024	समय 05.00 बजे अपराह्न तक		
3	निविदा प्राप्ति (आने लाईन विलोग) की अनिम तिथि एवं समय	28.02.2024	समय 05.00 बजे अपराह्न तक		
4	सरकार के सचिव, सूचना प्रौद्योगिकी एवं ई-गवर्नेंस, झारखण्ड मंत्रालय, के झापांक 120 दिनांक 03.10.2023 के आलोक के विलोक के मूल्य एवं अधिन की राशि Online जमा करने की तिथि एवं समय	28.02.2024	समय 05.00 बजे अपराह्न तक		
5	तकनीकी विवेद खोलने की तिथि एवं समय	29.02.2024	समय 02.00 बजे अपराह्न		
6	तकनीकी विवेद खोलने का स्थान	कार्यपालक अभियंता, पेयजल एवं स्वच्छता प्रमंडल, रामगढ़।			
7	निविदा आमत्रित करने वाले पदाधिकारी का नाम/पदनाम :-	ई-अंतिल प्रसाद गुप्ता कार्यपालक अभियंता,			
8	निविदा आमत्रित करने वाले कार्यालय का टेलिफोन नं.	पेयजल एवं स्वच्छता प्रमंडल, रामगढ़।	06553-223193		
9	ई-प्राक्षेपण-सेल का हॉल लाइन रो	0651-2480345			

Note :- केवल ई-प्राक्षेपण ही स्वीकार की जायेगे।

1. परिस्थिति प्रति एवं अग्रदृशी की राशि घट दब सकती है।

2. पथ निर्माण विभाग झारखण्ड सरकार के पार्किंग 2146(S) दिनांक 09.09.2020 एवं पेयजल एवं स्वच्छता विभाग झारखण्ड रोड के पार्किंग 2133 रोडी दिनांक 28.09.2020 में निहित प्रावधान तारूर रोडगा

3. वेबसाइट पर निविदा की जाने वाली सभी कागजात राश्य एवं पर्याप्ती प्रति अपलोड करेंगे ताकि पदा जा सके। राश्य एवं पर्याप्ती प्रति अपलोड नहीं किए जाने पर निविदा अमान्य कर दी जायेगी।

Note :- विवेद जानकारी के लिये वेबसाइट - <http://jharkhandtenders.gov.in> पर देखा जा सकता है।

कार्यपालक अभियंता

पेयजल एवं स्वच्छता प्रमंडल, रामगढ़।

PR 319579 Drinking Water and Sanitation (23-24)_D

Jharkhand Urja Sancharan Nigam Ltd.
(CIN: U40108JH2013SGC001704)

Regd. Office: 2nd Floor, JUSNL (SLDC) Building Kusai Colony, Doranda, Ranchi - 834002

E-mail: cetjusnl@gmail.com

RFP Notice

RFP No. 647/PR/JUSNL/2023-24

RFP in two parts i.e. Technical (Part-I) and Financial (Part – II) is invited from the reputed, capable, experienced and financially sound consultancy firm for the following works:

Name of Work Appointment of Tax consultant for Jharkhand Urja Sancharan Nigam Ltd. (JUSNL)

Period of Contract 24 Month. Further extendable up to 01 (one) years

Minimum average annual turnover during last three year. Rs. 01 Crore per annum

Earnest Money Rs. 60,000.00 Online mode

e-RFP fee (non-refundable) Rs. 5,000.00+18% GST= Rs. 5,900.00 online

Start Date & Time of Download Load the Tender Documents 26.02.2024 at 11:00 AM

Date of Pre-bid meeting 04.03.2024 at 12:30 PM

Start Date and time of upload of BID 26.02.2024 at 01:00 PM

End date and time of upload of BID 18.03.2024 upto 04:00 PM

BID Opening date for technical part 19.03.2024 at 04:00 PM

BID Opening date for price part Will be communicated

Procurement Officer and address for communication GENERAL MANAGER, (C&M) NWBP, JUSNL, SLDC Building Kusai Colony Doranda Ranchi - 834 001

1. e-RFP document and BOQ including terms & conditions, Scope of work can be downloaded from website <https://jharkhandtenders.gov.in>. Any details required in this regard can also be had from the office of the undersigned (8987421011) during office hours.

2. The bids will be received through electronic tendering mode only.

3. No claim shall be entertained on account of disruption of internet services being used by bidders. Bidders are advised to upload their bids well in advance to avoid last minute technical snag.

स्विटिल एवं राष्ट्रित में कृपा बधावें। बुधवार अपनी बिलिंग को 10003456670 (फोन सेन्टर) पर इन्वर्न करवाएं।

PR.NO.319757 Jharkhand Urja Sancharan Nigam Ltd(23-24):D

Sd/-
General Manager, C&M (NWBP)
JUSNL, Ranchi

HP STATE COOPERATIVE MILK PRODUCERS FEDERATION LIMITED TOTU, SHIMLA - 171 011.

No: No: 501/P&I-8/21-XVIII Dated: 19.02.2024

Short term tender notice

E-tender is hereby invited for the purchase of raw material of Cattlefeed i.e. De-Oiled Rice Bran- 700 MT, on FOR Basis for MPP Lalsinghi, Distt. Una, inclusive all taxes. The Bid document is available online on 20.02.2024 upto 4:00PM and bid should be submitted in online mode on website hptenders.gov.in. Bidder would be required to register in the website which free of cost. For submission on bids, the bidder is required to have digital signature certificate (DSC) from one of the authorized certifying Authorities.

If the date of receipt of tender happens to be holiday then the tender will be received/opened on next working day at the same time. The undersigned reserves the right to reject any or all the tender offers without assigning any reason. For more detail you can see hptenders.gov.in website.

Sd/-
Managing Director,
1274/HP

SECTION 1

Superintending Engineer, 4th Circle, HP PWD Shimla HP

NOTICE INVITING TENDER (NIT)

BRIEFLY

Kohli, Anushka become parents of baby boy

New Delhi: Virat Kohli on Tuesday announced that he and his actress wife



Anushka Sharma were blessed with a baby boy on February 15. Kohli and Anushka are already proud parents of a three-year-old daughter Vamika. "With abundant happiness and our hearts full of love, we are pleased to inform everyone that on 15th February, we welcomed our baby boy Akaay & Vamika's little brother into this world!" Kohli informed in an Instagram post. "We seek your blessings and good wishes in this beautiful time in our lives. We request you to kindly respect our privacy at this time." Kohli had opted out of the ongoing Test series against England, citing personal reasons. PTI

Nagal, Ramanathan in pre-quarterfinals

Pune: Top seeded Sumit Nagal and wildcard Ramkumar Ramanathan on Tuesday entered the pre-quarterfinals of the ATP Challenger 100 international tournament after winning their respective round of 32 matches here on Tuesday. Nagal defeated Chinese Taipei's Yu Hsien Hsu 7(6)-6, 6-4 at the centre court at the Mhalunge Balewadi Tennis Stadium. Ramanathan scored a 7(6)-5 7(6)-5 win over 160th ranked Stefano Napolitano, who won the Bengaluru Open last week. PTI

Hodgson, 76, leaves Crystal Palace

London: Roy Hodgson, the oldest ever manager in the English Premier League at age 76, left Crystal Palace on Monday just days after falling ill during a training session amid widespread reports he was about to be replaced. The former England coach said he made the decision to step aside so Palace could bring forward its plans to appoint a new manager. Hours later, the club hired Austrian coach Oliver Glasner as Hodgson's replacement on a deal until the end of the 2025-26 season. Glasner led Eintracht Frankfurt to the Europa League title in 2022. AP

Gulveer pays price for lane infringement

Tehran: India's Gulveer Singh lost his men's 3000m gold medal in the Asian Indoor Athletics Championships here after he was disqualified for 'lane infringement'. Gulveer had clocked 8 minutes 07.48 seconds to finish on top of the podium in the 3000m final, a non Olympic athletics event, late on Monday. He was later disqualified for lane infringement and a late night 'appeal' by the Athletics Federation of India (AFI) was also rejected. PTI

Sabalenka loses in Rd 2 to Vekic

Dubai: Aryna Sabalenka lost her first match since successfully defending her Australian Open title when she was overhauled by an old foe at the Dubai Championships on Tuesday. The No. 2-ranked Sabalenka blew a set and 2-0 lead as Donna Vekic of Croatia rallied to win 6-7(5), 6-3, 6-0 in the second round. They go back eight years, and Vekic dominated the early matchups. PTI

BAZBALL & GENGENPRESSERS

Like Klopp did in football, McCullum's England play heavy metal cricket

SANDIP G
FEBRUARY 20

IN CRICKET, eleven different men could play in eleven different ways and win a game in eleven different manners, unbound by a common playing theme, style or structure.

Football, though played by eleven men and devouring massive real estate, contrarily to cricket, is bound by structures, styles, and philosophies. Thus, cricket has not had the equivalent of Catenaccio, Total Football, or Tiki Taka or Gegenpressing.

The closest a bunch of eleven cricketers have conformed to a uniform way of playing or embodying the same spirit as the others in the team, is Bazball, the radical code of Brendon McCullum's England Test team.

In full flow, it's thrilling to watch. Batsmen attack from the first ball; bowlers bound out off their blocks; fielders are often uniquely stationed, no condition fazes them; no opposition daunts them. The aggression is relentless, similar to Jurgen Klopp's Borussia Dortmund gegenpressers, who pressed and

probed the adversaries to submission. It was heavy metal football, just as McCullum's England blast heavy metal cricket. Loud and beautiful, bold and audacious. The Klopp-ball press began with the forwards, just as Bazball begins with the openers, and flows down seamlessly. Each of those eleven men, though deputed with different roles and operating in different positions, is defined by the overriding duty to stick to their method and style.

Players are picked to cater to the system. Ben Duckett was surprisingly recalled; the inconsistent Zak Crawley was offered a new lease of life, and he is in many ways their pulse. Duckett is not your conventional opener, just like Roberto Firmino was not a conventional No 9. But that's how it worked.

Klopp picked full-backs that offered attacking vim rather than defensive sturdiness; McCullum moved away from England's traditional habit of preparing seaming tracks for home Tests, even if it meant self-neutering the threat of arguably the greatest swing-bowler of all time. In India, he unpacked a band of green spinners. If England had a pack of tearaways in the county, he would have

picked them all to complement Mark Wood, who is relishing his time under Ben Stokes and Brendon McCullum.

To attack is the soul of Bazball, as it was originally for Klopp-ball. In a way, it is as much about emotion as it is about intensity of purpose. Klopp's Liverpool league and Champions League winners were ultimate mentality monsters; so are Stokes and Co.



McCullum-coached England's aggression is similar to Borussia Dortmund's gegenpressers when Klopp was manager of the club. File

Needless to say, they have been incredibly successful. England have won 13 of the 19 Tests (until Rajkot) in the Bazball era. The five defeats (one by a run, another by two wickets) don't vex them.

This is not a minor or a passing tweak, but rather a whole new system that contradicts some of the founding principles of the game. Like the art of batting time, like the concept of a draw. It is their anathema like it is for modern-day football managers. Or like leaving the first hour to the bowler, or starting off with a seven-two field.

For a time, the cricket world seemed not to know how to react. Bazballers baz-rolled all and sundry. Australia, with their sheer courage and single-mindedness of captain Pat Cummins, managed to retain the Ashes, but those that have watched the series would vouch for the tentative nature of the defence. England landed in India and have shaken their convictions of dishing out a turnover. It's hard to imagine a series where India have looked wary, even if they have bounced back from the defeat in the series opener.

How the future of Bazball pans out would

more mistakes they would commit. "Whoever has the ball has fear, and whoever does not have it is thereby stronger," he would advise them. An ultra-defensive team would perhaps arise to shackle Bazballers.

■ C) A synthesis is arrived upon at some point, where teams pick some elements of Bazball, blend them with their styles, and adopt them for the next few years. History instructs that extreme methods rarely stand the test of time.

The fourth possibility is that Bazball itself could evolve, adding more layers and tones to its skin. Like pressing, Klopp's latest Liverpool reiteration does not press as vigorously as the first avatar. There is more patient build-up and broader passing patterns. A lot of factors determine the evolution, like loss of form, retirement, burnout, injuries, and most importantly, a chain of defeats, which could impact and dilute the concept.

But whatever the future of Bazball is, it deserves an important place in the game's history. That eleven men, for the first time, are bound and defined by a common thread of philosophy and style.

INTERVIEW: MANOJ TIWARY ON RANJI TROPHY

'Some umpires nurse hangover ... one said he prefers whisky on rocks'

DEVENDRA PANDEY
MUMBAI, FEBRUARY 20

MANOJ TIWARY, a pillar of Bengal cricket and with over 10,000 First-class runs under his belt, retired last week. A week before he hung up his boots, Tiwary posted on X that there were 'so many things wrong' in Ranji Trophy cricket, the country's premier domestic tournament. "It is losing its charm and importance. Absolutely frustrated." Tiwary, a Trinamool Congress politician and the Bengal sports minister, spoke to *The Indian Express* about why he ranted; from hungover umpires to IPL-contracted players not ready to grind it out in domestic cricket. Excerpts.

You had recently posted on X that Ranji Trophy should be 'scrapped off from the calendar' Why?

It is based on what I witnessed while playing. The significance and charm of Ranji Trophy has diminished because the IPL auction happens before the tournament. Once a player gets an IPL contract, they don't have the drive to play Ranji Trophy. There is also the fear that an injury during a Ranji Trophy game, could affect the IPL contract. I think domestic cricket needs 'servicing' now.

Do you think those with IPL contracts don't take Ranji Trophy seriously enough?

Players don't play with seriousness after that (getting an IPL contract). When we started playing domestic cricket, we were told to play with seriousness, be determined and aim to be a match-winner. I don't see that hunger in domestic cricket anymore. Players picked for IPL, they come and play only one way. I'm not saying it's bad but it's similar style. Ranji Trophy is the tournament, which can produce cricketers who are ready for Test cricket. IPL can teach a player about 'intent' but carelessness also creeps in as players are trying to score off every ball.

You also spoke about scheduling issues.

India A matches should not be scheduled at the same time as Ranji Trophy games. Time and effort goes into preparing a team for a Ranji Trophy season. And then three to four players from that team are called up for India A duty. In our team (Bengal), the top two players were representing India A and one was on India duty.

What about matches held in winter in North India?

In North Zone and East Zone there is fog and playing matches at that time has resulted in draws and teams having to split



Manoj Tiwary batting during his last First-class game against Bihar at Eden Gardens. Tiwary played 148 FC matches and scored 10195 runs. PTI

Many times I have seen umpires walking out to the middle while still nursing a hangover. The umpires have looked sleepy. How can he function properly in such a situation? I asked, 'Sir kya liye tha kal raat mein? (Sir, what did you drink last night?). The reply was: I prefer whisky on the rocks.'

points. It affects a team's position on the points table. An example was our game against Uttar Pradesh. There was no play for two days because of bad weather. Same thing happened during the game against Chhattisgarh. We lost out on points.

You had said on X that you were frustrated. What are your other concerns?

Umpiring for me is the main concern. The standard of umpiring is poor in domestic cricket. The BCCI should think about how they can improve umpiring. I have been witnessing this for a number of years. There are big mistakes but there are some childish ones too.

What about the facilities at venues?

In Kerala, we played at Xavier's college ground (in Thumba). The college dressing rooms were very small and close to each other. There was no privacy for both the teams. If we spoke or planned anything, the opposition team could hear us. Ranji Trophy games should be played at venues where there are basic facilities.

You had said on X that you were frustrated. What are your other concerns?

Umpiring for me is the main concern. The standard of umpiring is poor in domestic cricket. The BCCI should think about how they can improve umpiring. I have been witnessing this for a number of years. There are big mistakes but there are some childish ones too.

Are you happy with the pitches being prepared for domestic cricket?

The neutral curator concept should be done away with. A neutral curator takes over the preparation of the pitch some 5-6 days before each game. They have to ensure that the home team does not get an advantage. But in one game, the ball began to turn from the first few overs. The game lasted just four sessions.

Any regrets looking back on your career?

I feel sad that I wasn't able to play Test cricket. One day I would like to ask Mahi bhai (MS Dhoni) why I was dropped from the playing XI in 2011 after scoring a century (versus West Indies in an ODI)? I had the potential to be a hero just like Rohit Sharma, Virat Kohli. Today, when I see many people getting more opportunities, I feel sad. Overall it has been a great ride for me and cricket has given me everything. So no complaints.

Rahul to miss Ranchi Test

New Delhi: KL Rahul, who missed the third Test because of a sore knee, will not be available for the fourth match starting in Ranchi from Friday. Devdutt Padikkal, Rahul's Karnataka teammate, retains his place in the squad as a replacement. "KL Rahul is ruled out of the fourth Test. His participation in the final Test match in Dharamsala is subject to fitness," the BCCI said in a release. Rahul had missed the 2nd Test match in Visakhapatnam due to a quadriplegia injury. ENS

tering or stop it altogether.

For Ranchi, India have Mukesh Kumar (who has rejoined the squad after being released ahead of the third Test) and uncapped Akash Deep to choose from as Mohammed

WORLD CUP WINNER DIES

World Cup winner Andreas Brchme, whose late penalty in the 1990 final against Argentina in Italy handed Germany their third world title, has died at the age of 63, his family said. REUTERS

IPL from Mar 22; to be played in India in poll year

DEVENDRA PANDEY
MUMBAI, FEBRUARY 20

THE 17TH edition of the Indian Premier League is set to begin from March 22 and will be played in its entirety in India amidst the general elections, IPL chairman Arun Dhimal said on Tuesday. "We are looking for a March 22 date to start the IPL this season," Dhimal told *The Indian Express*, furthermore adding that the schedule of the first 10 days will be announced initially, while the roster for the remaining games shall be announced once the dates for the general elections are made official.

"We don't want to be in a situation where we announce the full IPL schedule and then the security agency informs us that they won't be available to provide security for the specific venue games," the IPL chairman added. "It takes a lot of logistical challenges to change the last moment, lot of machinery work behind the scenes, and they need time to conduct each IPL game. So we thought let's wait and announce only the first few games scheduled. We will announce the complete schedule once we get a clear picture of which state will be holding elections on specific dates."

ARUN DHIMAL, IPL chairman

The dates for the Lok Sabha polls are expected to be announced in early March. When asked if there's a chance that the league might be staged elsewhere owing to the elections, Dhimal made it clear that "it won't happen overseas. That is why we are waiting for Lok Sabha election dates, so that we can plan the venues accordingly."

It's not the first time the league has been staged at the same time as the general elections. Back in 2009, the second season of the IPL was moved to South Africa while in 2014, the first 20 matches of the season were played in the UAE and the rest in India.

In 2019, while the league was staged at the same time as the Lok Sabha polls, all the games were staged in the country.

With the T20 World Cup to begin starting June 1, it is expected that the IPL will conclude in the last week of May.

As has been the norm of the last few seasons, the opening fixture will be between the two finalists of the last season — Chennai Super Kings and Gujarat Titans.

"We will announce the complete schedule once we get a clear picture of which state will be holding elections on specific dates."

ARUN DHIMAL, IPL chairman

The dates for the Lok Sabha polls are ex-

pected to be announced in early March. When asked if there's a chance that the league might be staged elsewhere owing to the elections, Dhimal made it clear that "it won't happen overseas. That is why we are waiting for Lok Sabha election dates, so that we can plan the venues accordingly."

It's not the first time the league has been staged at the same time as the general elections. Back in 2009, the second season of the IPL was moved to South Africa while in 2014, the first 20 matches of the season were played in the UAE and the rest in India.

In 2019, while the league was staged at the same time as the Lok Sabha polls, all the games were staged in the country.

With the T20 World Cup to begin starting June 1, it is expected that the IPL will conclude in the last week of May.

As has been the norm of the last few seasons, the opening fixture will be between the two finalists of the last season — Chennai Super Kings and Gujarat Titans.

Siraj's partner.

But in the lone Test he played in the series at Vizag, on a flat deck, Mukesh struggled to pose any sort of threat to the Bazballers.

With a 2-1 lead in the bag, India are wary of not losing the momentum, particularly because at Dharamsala — the venue for the fifth Test — England would feel more at home because of the conditions. Akash Deep had a good outing against England Lions. But exposing a newcomer to Bazball could be risky, which is why playing an extra spinner is being considered. Even at Vizag, where Siraj was released, India had initially planned to play Washington, but eventually went with Mukesh, who bowled 12 overs in the match.

Even if it isn't a turner, India believe playing another spinner would strengthen the team as both Washington and Axar are bankable options with the bat. The reason India are sceptical about playing on a rank turner is their inexperienced batting unit. A clear picture is expected when head coach Rahul Dravid makes his first dash to the pitch on Wednesday afternoon.

Even if it isn't a turner, India believe playing another spinner would strengthen the team as both Washington and Axar are bankable options with the bat. The reason India are sceptical about playing on a rank turner is their inexperienced batting unit. A clear picture is expected when head coach Rahul Dravid makes his first dash to the pitch on Wednesday afternoon.

For Ranchi, India have Mukesh Kumar (who has rejoined the squad after being released ahead of the third Test) and uncapped Akash Deep to choose from as Mohammed

Neelash and Akash Deep to choose from as Mohammed

Neelash and Akash Deep to choose from as Mohammed

Neelash and Akash Deep to choose from as Mohammed

Neelash and Akash Deep to choose from as Mohammed

Neelash and Akash Deep to choose from as Mohammed

Neelash and Akash Deep to choose from as Mohammed

Mbappe to join Real Madrid in summer: Reports

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
FEBRUARY 20

Paris Saint Germain forward Kylian Mbappe has finally agreed to join the 14-time Champions League winners Real Madrid by the end of the ongoing season, according to a BBC report.

With rumors of the much anticipated signing swirling around over the past month, the Frenchman intends to leave the Ligue 1 club in June and has agreed on a five-year deal with the Spanish giants, which will see him earn 15m euros (£12.8m) per season, plus a 150m euro (£128m) signing-on bonus.

Mbappe has been linked with Real Madrid for multiple seasons during his PSG stint, which began in 2017-18 when he made the move to the French capital from AS Monaco. A deal that saw him become the most expensive teenager in football history. In the 291 games that have followed, Mbappe has scored 244 goals and 93 assists to his name for the Ligue 1 champions.

But at the end of the 2021/22 season, the links for a move to Madrid were the strongest and it was believed that the French winger was set to depart for the Los Blancos at the end of his initial contract with the Parisians but ended up signing a new two-year deal.

In Spain, the transfer – not yet made official – is already considered a done deal with the national sports daily displaying a full page cover of Mbappe with the text, 'Ya está firmado (It's already signed)'.

It is also being suggested that if Luka Modric, the veteran Croatian midfielder, leaves Madrid at the end of the season, Mbappe will be donning his number 10 jersey.



Kylian Mbappe would take the number 10 jersey if veteran midfielder Luka Modric leaves Real Madrid. Reuters

India's double act, now in a duel

Squad restrictions mean only one goalkeeper, either Sreejesh or Pathak, will play at the Paris Olympics

MIHIR VASAVDA
ROURKELO, FEBRUARY 20

PR SREEJESH has retirement plans. But he has no reason to walk into the sunset just yet.

Krishan Pathak is eyeing succession. The understudy, now an heir apparent, patiently waiting for his time.

Together, they form the most formidable goalkeeping pair India have had in more than a decade. Alternating quarters, pushing limits and outdoing each other. But when the time comes, in July during the Paris Olympics, one will have to make way for the other.

In every other tournament, countries field at least an 18-player squad that includes two goalkeepers. But the squad restrictions at an Olympics, where only 16 members can be entered, mean coaches are often forced to sacrifice a goalkeeper to accommodate an additional outfield player.

At the Tokyo Olympics, Sreejesh was the No. 1 goalkeeper by a country mile, and Pathak travelled as a reserve. The former made a last-minute save that ended India's decades-long medal drought. The latter was the only player not to get a medal because he wasn't officially in the team.

In the three years since, Pathak has caught up. Whether it's enough to challenge the ever-green Sreejesh, who yet again came up with an age-defying performance against Spain on Monday, is a question coach Craig Fulton will have to find an answer to.

Fulton has set a few selection parameters. "Current form, penalty corner defence, shoot-outs and managing his defence in terms of how he organises," he says. "That, from a leadership point of view is very important."

This puts Sreejesh, 35, and Pathak, 26, in a terrific duel, which can only be good news for the team. Sreejesh had to unlearn and relearn the art of goalkeeping mid-career, which enabled him to not just survive the big churn in Indian hockey but also emerge as one of the finest the country has ever produced.

His big frame allows him to easily cover all corners of the goal and requires less power. In shoot-outs, he is among the best in the world and is an on-field coach, always ensuring the players play within the structure.

Dennis van de Pol, the Dutchman who fre-



At the Tokyo Olympics, PR Sreejesh (right) was the No. 1 goalkeeper and Krishan Pathak travelled as a reserve. Hockey India

quently flies down to India to train the goalkeepers, had once said that Pathak's biggest asset is that opponents think he can be beaten easily because he is smaller. But what he doesn't have in height, he compensates with power and agility.

"Even balls that are going to the top corner, which I would feel would be tough for him, he made them look so easy," Van de Pol says. "This wasn't the case three-and-a-half years ago."

Guiding hand

Sreejesh has had an outsized role in where Pathak is today. The veteran of three Olympics provided his junior colleague – and other goalkeepers – with something he never got: proper guidance. "After 2012 (Olympics), I learnt my basics. That was the toughest time for me," Sreejesh says. "How you stand, where you keep your hands. In India, you keep your hand like

this (palm open, chest high) or you just move all the time. You (were) never (taught) to stay calm. We never had former goalkeepers who learnt modern techniques and imparted them to us. They learnt 1+1 is 4 and taught us that. But no, 1+1 is 2."

The archaic coaching methods hit Sreejesh in the face especially when he learnt what was happening in Europe, where because of a proper league structure there used to be full-blown research into goalkeeping methods as well as the latest scoring techniques.

Sreejesh ensured the generation that followed him would not have to endure the same problems. During the 2016 Junior World Cup, which India won and when Pathak burst onto the scene, he took a break from training and joined the team as a goalkeeping coach – a career he is considering the day he decides to hang his boots. From that batch, Pathak has emerged as a worthy candidate to eventually succeed his mentor. "Before I came into the team, I watched Sree bhai play. I learnt a lot by just watching him. From there to joining the senior team, then training alongside him and

now playing with him, it's been a big learning phase," Pathak says.

Pathak had to wait for his chance with the national team, getting sparse opportunities as Sreejesh became the reliable custodian of India's fortunes. But former coach Graham Reid, who guided India to the Olympic podium, began giving both goalkeepers an equal opportunity by playing them in alternate quarters.

"Thanks to Graham Reid for that. Goalkeeping cannot be improved by sitting on the sidelines. You need to step in, feel the pressure and experience it," Sreejesh, who mostly plays the second and fourth quarters, says. Who goes when depends largely on which goalkeeper will be needed in case of shoot-outs, with the one playing the fourth quarter staying on for the tie-breakers as well.

Training and playing together has ensured a 'healthy competition', Pathak says. Gone are the days of insecurity, Sreejesh laughs. "Whatever we do, the team should win. When he gets a chance, I feel he should do well so that the team does well. We have moved on from the old mentality."

Indian women rally from 0-2 down to beat Spain

ANIL DIAS
FEBRUARY 20

THE INDIAN women's team stood firm and launched a spirited comeback after going two matches down to beat Spain 3-2 in their final group-stage clash of the World Team Table Tennis Championships in Busan on Tuesday.

With the narrow win, India finished second in their group with three wins from four matches, and made it to the knockouts, but they have been handed a challenging draw that could thwart their quest to qualify for the Olympics as a team.

India have to reach the quarterfinal of this tournament to earn a direct qualification for the Paris Games. In the Round of 32, they face a strong Italy team who finished third in their group. They may go into that game as favourites, but the winner of the tie will meet a very strong Chinese Taipei side in the pre-quarterfinal.

Ayshika leads fightback

It was Sreeja Akula who played India's opening match against Spain's World No. 63 Maria Xiao and the national champion was unable to counter Xiao's aggressive play. Sreeja, who reached a career-high ranking of World No. 49 only earlier this month, did manage to win the second game courtesy of some powerful forehand winners, but Xiao responded with even more aggression to take the tie 3-1 (11-9, 9-11, 13-11, 11-4).

Spain then went 2-0 up with World No. 120 Sofia-Xuan Zhang stunning India's top-ranked player Manika Batra in five games. Manika, who's trying to be more aggressive with her forehand, did well against the quick 24-year-old but just wasn't able to finish off crucial points, losing 3-2 (13-11, 11-8, 11-11, 9-11, 4).

The third rubber was a do-or-die situation, but luckily for India, it was Ayshika Mukherjee, who beat China's World No. 1 Sun Yingsha in the first match of the tournament, up against the slightly inexperienced Elvira Rad. The Spaniard didn't make it easy, stretching Ayshika to five games before the Asian Games bronze medallist reached into her well of experience to close out the final game and drag India back into the tie.

It was then time for a Manika special. India's 'Golden Girl' seemed unperturbed



After losing her first match against Spain, Manika Batra played a sensational second match to draw India level in the tie. File

by her earlier loss, and played arguably her best match of the tournament to thrash Xiao 3-0. She seemed to find her forearm smashes that were missing in the earlier match, and that will bode well for India in the knockouts.

Sreeja, who only last month won her first WTT title at the Feeder event in Corpus Christi, finished off the remarkable comeback for India, winning her match against Zhang 3-1. It did seem that Zhang was suffering from some sort of arm injury in the fifth game, but Sreeja and India didn't seem to mind.

Chinese Taipei on their minds

The Indian team will undoubtedly be focused on the match against Italy early on Wednesday, but they will also be gearing up to face Chinese Taipei, should they reach the pre-quarterfinals.

The Chinese Taipei side has Cheng I-Ching, World No. 10, who only last month won the women's singles title of the WTT Goa Star Contender, beating India's Sreeja Akula in the quarterfinal. They also have World No. 41 Su Yu Chen, who also recently defeated Sreeja in Doha last month.

India will however take heart from the fact that Manika has beaten Cheng in straight games last year and, of course, they are a superbly confident squad, especially after this win over Spain and their wins over the World No. 1 and World No. 2 in their opening encounter.

Long jump: Plan to eliminate foul jumps to be trialled this year

REUTERS
FEBRUARY 20

A PLAN to eliminate foul jumps from the long jump event is to be trialled this year, World Athletics CEO Jon Ridgeon said.

Ridgeon believes the discipline needs to get rid of the large number of foul jumps recorded to make it more appealing to the public.

"At the World Championships in Budapest last summer, a third of all the jumps were no-jumps, athletes stepping over the front of the take-off board," Ridgeon said on the Anything But Footy podcast.

"That doesn't work, that's a waste of time. So we're testing, for example, a take-off zone rather than a take-off board, so we measure from where the athlete takes off to where they land in the pit. That means every single jump counts, it adds to the jeopardy of the competition, the drama of the competition."

World Athletics also wants to ensure the new rules would not cause delays. "We're working out ways of how we can get instant results so you don't have to wait 20 or 30 seconds before the result pops up," Ridgeon said.

The aim is to test out the idea with top athletes this year, and Ridgeon said any global introduction of the new rules may not happen until 2026, if at all.

The proposed rule change, however, already has high-profile critics.

Carl Lewis won long jump gold at four consecutive Olympic Games and his leap of 8.87 metres in 1991 is third on the world all-time list. "You're supposed to wait until April 1st for April Fools jokes," the American on social media platform X. "I guess it supports what I've been saying, that the long is the most difficult event in track and field. That would just eliminate the most difficult skill from the event."

"Just make the basket larger for free throws because so many people miss them."

It (rule change) would just eliminate the most difficult skill from the event. Just make the basket larger for free throws because so many people miss them..."

--CARL LEWIS
9-TIME OLYMPIC GOLD MEDALLIST

8-year-old boy of Indian origin beats Polish Grandmaster

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
FEBRUARY 20

ASHWATH KAUSHIK (in pic), an eight-year-old Indian origin boy hailing from Singapore, stunned Polish chess grandmaster Jacek Stopa at the Burgdorfer Stadthaus Open on Sunday. With this feat, he became the youngest ever player to beat a grandmaster in the classical version of the game.

The previous record was held by Serbia's Leonid Ivanovic, who is also 8 years of age but is several months older than Kaushik, beat 60-year-old Bulgarian grandmaster Milko Popchev at the Belgrade Open almost a week ago. According to a Channel News Asia report, Kaushik, who represented Singapore, defeated Stopa, who at 37 is nearly five times older than him. "I felt proud of my game and how I played, especially since I was worse at one point but managed to come back from that," Kaushik, who is ranked world No. 37,338 on FIDE, said.

Kaushik ultimately finished the tournament in 12th place after losing against Harry Grieve and he is set to gain 84 rating points on the next list, as per Chess.com.

Kaushik was born in India but has been living in Singapore for the past 6 years. He first came into the limelight when he won triple gold in the Under-8 category of the Eastern Asian Youth Championship in 2022 when he was just 6.

In the same year, he also became the World Under-8 Rapid Champion while he was two years shy of the age limit.

According to Chess.com, the 8-year-old spends up to seven hours a day on chess and solves thousands of puzzles on his old chess program. His father Kaushik Sriram also revealed that his son has a photographic memory, saying, "He solves long complex puzzles visually. He finished GM Jacob Aagaard's entire Grandmaster series recently without using a board."

Singaporean grandmaster and CEO of the Singapore Chess Federation Kevin Goh lauded Ashwath's feat on X, saying, "Dad is super supportive, boy is dedicated, school allows flexibility and of course he has natural talent."

"Remains to be seen how far he can go as interests can change as the boy gets older. Still, we are hopeful." Goh also joked that as he is only eight years old, Ashwath still "needs a booster cushion to reach the other side of the board".

The Indian EXPRESS
JOURNALISM OF COURAGE

RELIGARE
Values that bind

Presents

The Indian EXPRESS ADDA



The Express Adda hosts

Michael Sandel
Philosopher, Author,
Global Public Intellectual

in conversation with

Anant Goenka
Executive Director
The Indian Express Group

By invitation only

Associate Partner

DeVANS

Hospitality Partner

Le MERIDIEN
NEW DELHI