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eye
THE SUNDAY EXPRESS MAGAZINE
Portrait of an Artist
As he turns 90, a look at journey of artist and photographer Jyoti Bhatt
FOUR-PAGE PULLOUT

Viksit Bharat
Viksit Uttar Pradesh

Inauguration/Foundation Stone Laying of 782 Development Projects worth ₹34,700 Crore

Inauguration of Azamgarh, shravasti, Moradabad, Chitrakoot & Aligarh Airports and New Terminal at Chaudhary Charan Singh International Airport, Lucknow
(Cost : ₹3,628 crore)

Inauguration of Maharaja Suhel Dev State University, Azamgarh
(Cost : ₹108 Crore)

Inauguration/foundation stone laying of 5 NH Projects worth ₹11,500 crore
• Meerut-Najibabad section from Km 39.24 to Km 86.59 of NH-11 (Package-2) • 4 lane widening of Raebareli-Prayagraj section of NH-24B/NH-30 • 4-lane Western Spur Rampur-Rudrapur section bypass to connect NH-24 with NH-87 • Widening of 6 lane Chakeri to Prayagraj section of NH-2 • Widening of 4 lane Panipat to Shamli of NH-709 AD (Package-1)

Inauguration of 744 Roads (5,342 km) worth ₹3,700 crore in 59 districts Under Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana

Inauguration/foundation stone laying of 12 Railway Projects worth ₹8,200 Crore
• Doubling & electrification of Pharihа-Azamgarh-Sathiaon section • Doubling & electrification of Indara-Phephna-Burhwal section • Doubling & electrification of Roza-Sitapur Cantt-Burhwal section • Doubling & electrification of Banaras-Jhusi section • Doubling & electrification of Ballia-Bakulha section • Bhatni-Peokol bypass line • Doubling & electrification of Bhandai- Etawah section • Doubling & electrification of Barhan-Etah section • Electrification of Shikohabad-Mainpuri & Etawah-Mainpuri-Farrukhabad section • Gauge conversion of Bahraich-Nanpara-Nepalganj Road rail section • New broad gauge line from Ghazipur City and Ghazipur Ghat to Tarighat with a rail bridge over river Ganga • Rail service between Ghazipur City-Dildar Nagar Junction

Inauguration of 3 sewerage projects worth ₹1,114 crore under Namami Gange
• Interception, Repair & Diversion work of STPs of 16 MLD in Jhusi, 14 MLD in Phaphamau & 42 MLD in Naini in Prayagraj • Interception & Diversion work of 30 MLD STP in Jaunpur • Interception & Diversion work sewerage project for 45 MLD capacity plant in Etawah

Inauguration of 1,040 flats in Lucknow under the Light House Project
(Cost: ₹131 crore, Area: 47,827 square meters, 13 storey, 4 towers)

by

Narendra Modi
Prime Minister

In the august presence of

Yogi Adityanath — Chief Minister, Uttar Pradesh
Jyotiraditya M. Scindia — Minister, Govt. of India
Keshav Prasad Maurya — Deputy Chief Minister, Uttar Pradesh
Bhupendra Singh Chaudhary — MLC
Surya Pratap Shahi — Minister, Uttar Pradesh
A.K.Sharma — Minister, Uttar Pradesh
Yogendra Upadhyay — Minister, Uttar Pradesh
Om Prakash Rajbhar — Minister, Uttar Pradesh
Dara Singh Chauhan — Minister, Uttar Pradesh
Dinesh Lal Yadav 'Nirahua' — MP, Azamgarh
Yashwant Singh — MLC
Vijay Bahadur Pathak — MLC
Vikrant Singh 'Rishu' — MLC
Dhruv Kumar Tripathi — MLC
Ramsurat Rajbhar — MLC

Benefits of Projects
• Rapid development through an extensive network of airways, railways and national highways • The network of paved roads in rural areas is driving prosperity • Dignified life with affordable housing for BPL families • Higher education at the local level empowers youth to become partners in development

Date : March 10, 2024 | Time : 10:30 AM | Venue : Manduri Airport Complex, Azamgarh

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Information and Public Relations Department, U.P.

THE SUNDAY EXPRESS, MARCH 10, 2024

THE WORLD

REFERENCES TO 'MOTHER'S DUTIES IN HOME'

IRELAND TO KEEP 'SEXIST' CONSTITUTIONAL LANGUAGE

Ireland looked set to reject proposals to replace constitutional references to the makeup of a family and a "mother's duties in the home" in a significant defeat for the government. Prime Minister Leo Varadkar had pitched the referendum vote, held on Friday to coincide with International Women's Day, as a chance to delete some "very old-fashioned, very sexist language about women". He said the government would accept the results. **REUTERS**

TOP OF THE WORLD

Tayyip Erdogan

TURKEY

Erdogan says March election will be his final

Ankara: Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan said local elections scheduled for March 31 would be his last vote, the state-run Anadolu news agency reported on Friday. Erdogan, modern Turkey's most successful politician, has led the country for more than two decades. A winner of more than a dozen elections since 2002, Erdogan was re-elected for a five-year term during hotly contested elections in May 2023. "This is a final for me, under the mandate given by the law this is my last election," Erdogan said. "The result that will come out will be the transferring of a legacy to my siblings who will come after me," he was cited as saying by Anadolu. **REUTERS**

GREECE

House okays private varsities amid protests

Athens: Greece's parliament narrowly passed a bill early Saturday that will allow foreign private universities to set up branches in the country, bucking weeks of protests by students who say the move will devalue degrees from public universities. The legislation was approved by 159 lawmakers in the 300-seat parliament. Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis said it will help reverse an exodus of tens of thousands of students to universities abroad. The bill will help align Greece with the rest of the European Union and boost competition in higher education, he said. **REUTERS**

ITALY

Meloni replaces sherpa for G7 with spy chief

Rome: Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni Friday replaced the country's sherpa for the Group of Seven with the head of the secret service, in an unexpected move just three months ahead of the leaders' summit in Italy. Luca Ferrari will be appointed ambassador to Israel at a cabinet meeting expected for Monday. Elisabetta Belloni will replace him while retaining her job at the secret service, the government statement said. The G7 sherpa is in charge of all the preparatory work leading to the annual summit and for coordinating negotiations of the final statements. **REUTERS**

SUDAN

Paramilitaries agree to UN call for Ramzan truce

Cairo: Sudan's Rapid Support Forces (RSF) paramilitary group on Saturday welcomed a call by the United Nations Security Council for a cessation of hostilities in the Islamic holy month of Ramzan, offering a potential respite from the 11-month-old conflict. Ramzan is expected to start on Sunday evening. In a statement, the RSF expressed hope that the UNSC resolution would "lessen the suffering of the Sudanese people by ensuring smooth delivery of humanitarian aid". **REUTERS**

HOURS AFTER $467.5-BN PACKAGE CLEARED BY SENATE

Govt shutdown averted, Biden signs spending Bill

REUTERS
WASHINGTON, MARCH 9

US PRESIDENT Joe Biden on Saturday signed a spending bill that averted a partial government shutdown, the White House said in a statement.

Biden acted after the U.S. Senate on Friday approved spending legislation for several government agencies just hours before current funding was due to expire.

By a bipartisan vote of 75-22, the Senate approved a $467.5 billion spending package that will fund agriculture, transportation, housing, energy, veterans and other programs through the end of the fiscal year on Sept. 30.

The package easily passed the Republican-controlled House of Representatives earlier this week. *File*

The package now heads to Democratic President Joe Biden to sign into law.

Funding for those programs was due to expire at midnight.

The vote partially resolves a bitter, months-long battle over government spending that at one point left the Republican-controlled House of Representatives leaderless for three weeks.

"To folks who worry that divided government means nothing ever gets done, this bipartisan package says otherwise," Senate Democratic Leader Chuck Schumer said ahead of the vote.

The package easily passed the Republican-controlled House of Representatives earlier this week. But action in the Senate was delayed as some conservative Republicans pressed for votes on immigration and other topics. They all failed.

Congress must still work out a deal on a much larger package of spending bills, covering the military, homeland security, health care and other services. Funding for those programs expires on March 22.

Taken together, the two packages would cost $1.66 trillion. Far-right Republicans had pushed for deeper spending cuts to tame a $34.5 trillion national debt.

All these measures were supposed to have been enacted into law by last Oct. 1, the start of the 2024 fiscal year. While Congress rarely meets that deadline, the debate this year has been unusually chaotic. Congress so far has had to approve four temporary funding bills to keep agency operations limping along at their previous year's levels.

The spending bills include $241.3 million in earmarks - local projects secured by individual lawmakers - requested by Democratic Senator Dianne Feinstein. She died on September 29, 2023, two days before the start of the fiscal year.

The site of an Israeli airstrike in Rafah on Saturday. *Reuters*

Israel coerced some staff to falsely admit Hamas links, says UNRWA report

REUTERS
MARCH 9

THE UN agency for Palestinian refugees said some employees released into Gaza from Israeli detention reported having been pressured by Israeli authorities into falsely stating that the agency has Hamas links and that staff took part in the October 7 attacks.

The assertions are contained in a report by the UN Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) reviewed by *Reuters* and dated February 2024.

The document said several UNRWA Palestinian staffers had been detained by the Israeli army, and added that the ill-treatment and abuse they experienced included severe physical beatings, waterboarding, and threats of harm to family members.

"Agency staff members have been subject to threats and coercion by the Israeli authorities while in detention, and pressured to make false statements against the Agency, including that the Agency has affiliations with Hamas and that UNRWA staff members took part in the 7 October atrocities," the report says.

Reuters could not confirm the accounts of coercion, although the allegations of ill-treatment accord with descriptions by Palestinians freed from detention.

GAZA AID SHIP EXPECTED TO DEPART CYPRUS THIS WEEKEND: EU CABINET

Larnaca: A ship laden with relief supplies for Gaza was preparing to depart Cyprus on Saturday as part of efforts to aid a population on the brink of famine. The European Commission has said an aid corridor between Cyprus and Gaza could start operating as early as this weekend in a pilot project run by an international charity and financed by the UAE. **REUTERS**

Israel strikes near Egypt border as truce talks stall

Rafah: Israel struck one of the largest residential towers in Rafah in the southern Gaza Strip on Saturday, residents said, stepping up pressure on the last area of the enclave it has not yet invaded and where over a million displaced Palestinians are sheltering.

The 12-floor building, located some 500 metres from the border with Egypt, was damaged in the strike. Dozens of families were made homeless though no casualties were reported. The Israeli military did not immediately respond to requests for comment on the incident.

A Rafah-based official with the Fatah party, which dominates the Palestinian Authority, said he feared that hitting the Rafah tower was a sign of an imminent Israeli invasion.

Three Palestinian children died of dehydration and malnutrition at the northern Al Shifa Hospital overnight, said Gaza health ministry spokesman Ashraf Al-Qidra.

He said this raised to 23 the number of similar deaths in nearly 10 days. **REUTERS**

HAITI VIOLENCE SPARKS FOOD SHORTAGE

Residents fill their containers with potable water in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, on Friday. *AP*

- **Anti-government violence in Haiti has crippled the fragile economy and made it very difficult for many in the country to feed themselves.**
- **Scores of people have been killed and more than 15,000 have been forced from their homes since coordinated gang attacks began on February 29.**
- **The main Port-au-Prince port closed down, stranding food and medical supply containers. The UN says over 1.4 million people are starving.**

MARKS 25 YRS OF ALLIANCE MEMBERSHIP

Poland minister says NATO in Ukraine 'not unthinkable'

ASSOCIATED PRESS
WARSAW, MARCH 9

POLAND'S FOREIGN minister says the presence of NATO forces "is not unthinkable" and that he appreciates the French president for not ruling out that idea.

Radek Sikorski made the observation during a discussion marking the 25th anniversary of Poland's accession to NATO in the Polish parliament Friday, and the Foreign Ministry tweeted the comments later in English.

They reflect a larger European debate over how to help Ukraine as Russia has gained some momentum on the battlefield and Kyiv is running low on ammunition. The US Congress is withholding aid that Ukraine says it critically needs to hold off the Russians, putting more pressure on Europe to respond to the war that has shattered peace.

Last month French President Emmanuel Macron said the possibility of Western troops being sent to Ukraine could not be ruled out, a comment that broke a taboo among allies.

Russian President Vladimir Putin said if NATO sends combat troops, it would risk a global nuclear conflict.

Ukrainian servicemen fire a 122 mm mortar towards Russian positions at the front line near Donetsk. *Reuters*

Turkey offers to host peace summit after Erdogan-Zelenskyy meeting

Istanbul: Turkey is ready to host a summit between Ukraine and Russia to end the war, President Tayyip Erdogan said on Friday after talks with his Ukrainian counterpart Volodymyr Zelenskiy in Istanbul.

In a meeting lasting about an hour, Erdogan and Zelenskiy discussed developments in the Ukraine-Russia war, shipping security in the Black Sea including the defunct grain deal, and defence industry cooperation, according to the two sides.

NATO member Turkey supports Ukraine's territorial integrity, but also maintains cordial relations with Russia, and regularly speaks with both sides in the conflict.

"We discussed developments about the war in detail today, I stated our observations with all my sincerity," Erdogan said at a press conference alongside Zelenskiy. **REUTERS**

2ND TERM AS HEAD OF STATE

Zardari elected 14th President of Pakistan

Expected to be sworn in on Sunday

Pak PM Shehbaz Sharif (right) with newly-elected President Asif Ali Zardari in Islamabad on Saturday. *AP*

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
ISLAMABAD, LAHORE, MARCH 9

PAKISTAN PEOPLES Party co-chairperson Asif Ali Zardari was elected as Pakistan's 14th President on Saturday, becoming the head of state for a second time.

Zardari, 68, was the joint candidate of the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) and the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) while his rival Mahmood Khan Achakzai, 75, was the candidate of the Sunni Ittehad Council (SIC).

He received 255 votes while his opponent got 119 votes in the National Assembly and the Senate. The new president was elected by the electoral college of the newly elected members of the National Assembly and the four provincial assemblies.

In Sindh Assembly, where Zardari's PPP is at the helm, he bagged the most votes while he also swept Balochistan, bagging all votes polled there. In the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa assembly, where SIC/PTI has the government, Achakzai got the most votes against Zardari.

A businessman-turned-politician, Zardari is the husband of slain Pakistan prime minister Benazir Bhutto.

UNCONSTITUTIONAL: IMRAN REACTS TO PRESIDENTIAL POLLS

Lahore: Jailed former prime minister Imran Khan's party called Saturday's election of the President of Pakistan "unconstitutional and unacceptable" and urged the people to hold peaceful protests across the country against poll robbery on Sunday. "...the newly elected President Zardari will ride to the highest constitutional position on coattails of the votes of mandate thieves and... the electoral colleges were incomplete," PTI spokesperson Raoof Hasan said in a statement. **PTI**

Zardari, who served as the president from 2008 to 2013, will also be the first civilian to be elected for the second time as president. He is expected to be sworn in on Sunday.

As he starts his second term in office, the country faces a battered economic and political system with a greater need for reconciliation than any time before, and Zardari's innate ability to bring people with clashing ideas to the table would be put to the test.

Amid protests, S Korea to raise junior doctors' pay, denies medical crisis

REUTERS
SEOUL, MARCH 9

SOUTH KOREA plans quick measures to improve pay and working conditions for young doctors, the government said on Friday, addressing a key demand by medical trainees who have walked off the job, but denying there was a full-scale healthcare crisis.

Prime Minister Han Duck-soo said the current practice of forcing young doctors to work 36 hours at a stretch was partly responsible for their protest walkout and must be changed. He said the government would consider limiting it to 24 hours.

More than 10,000 medical interns and resident doctors are protesting against a government plan to increase medical school admissions by 2,000 a year to tackle a shortage of doctors.

More than 10,000 Korean medical interns and junior doctors are protesting. *Reuters*

The striking doctors argue that simply adding medical students will not address pay and work conditions, and could possibly exacerbate the problems. From this month, trainee doctors in paediatrics will receive an additional allowance of 1 million won ($757), and the government plans similar payments for other trainee doctors, Han said.

WORLD'S 5TH LARGEST EXPORTER OF WINE HAD OVER 2 BILLION LITRES UNSOLD IN MID-2023

Global drop in wine consumption forces Aus farmers to destroy vines

PETER HOBSON
GRIFFITH (AUSTRALIA) MARCH 9

MILLIONS OF vines are being destroyed in Australia and tens of millions more must be pulled up to rein in overproduction that has crushed grape prices and threatens the livelihoods of growers and wine makers.

Falling consumption of wine worldwide has hit Australia particularly hard as demand shrinks fastest for the cheaper reds that are its biggest product, and in China, the market it has relied on for growth until recent years.

The world's fifth largest exporter of wine had more than two billion litres, or about two years' worth of production, in storage in mid-2023, the most recent figures show, and some is spoiling as owners rush to dispose of it at any price.

"There's only so long we can go on growing a crop and losing money on it," said fourth-generation grower James Cremasco, as he watched clanking yellow excavators strip out rows of vines his grandfather planted near the southeastern town of Griffith.

About two-thirds of Australia's wine grapes are grown in irrigated inland areas such as Griffith, its landscape shaped by vine-growing techniques brought by Italian migrants arriving around the 1950s.

Unpicked grapes wither on the vine near the town of Griffith in southeast Australia. *Reuters file*

As major wine makers such as Treasury Wines and Carlyle Group's Accolade Wines refocus on more expensive bottles that are selling better, the areas around Griffith are struggling, with unpicked grapes shrivelling on vines.

"It feels like an era is ending," said Andrew Calabria, a third-generation vineyard owner and wine maker at Calabria Wines.

"It's hard for growers to look out the back window and see a pile of dirt instead of vines that have been there as long as they've known."

Nearby, the remains of 1.1 million vines that once comprised one of Australia's largest vineyards were piled in heaps of gnarled and twisted wood as far as the eye could see.

Red wine has suffered the most. In regions like Griffith, prices of the grapes going into it fell to an average of A$304 ($200) a ton last year, the lowest in decades and down from A$659 in 2020, data from industry body Wine Australia show.

The government, which forecasts lower prices again this year, said it recognises the significant challenges facing growers and is committed to supporting the sector, though many growers say it can do more. Cremasco said some of his red grapes sold for little more than A$100 a ton.

To balance the market and lift prices, up to a quarter of the vines in areas such as Griffith must be pulled up, said Jeremy Cass, head of Riverina Winegrape Growers, a farmers' group there.

That would destroy more than 20 million vines across 12,000 hectares (30,000 acres), Reuters calculations based on Wine Australia data show, or about 8% of Australia's total area under vine. Growers and winemakers in other regions have also been pulling out vines. "If half the vines in Australia were ripped out, it still might not solve the oversupply," said a wine maker in Western Australia. **REUTERS**

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Portrait of an Artist

As he turns 90, a look at journey of artist and photographer Jyoti Bhatt

FOUR-PAGE PULLOUT

ECONOMY

CRUDE WATCH

OIL DIPS 1%, POSTS WEEKLY LOSS

Houston: Oil prices closed 1% lower on Friday and fell even more for the week as markets remained wary of soft Chinese demand even as producer group OPEC+ extended supply cuts. **REUTERS**

FUEL RETAILERS CONTINUE TO INCUR UNDER-RECOVERY ON DIESEL SALES: PURI

'Any call on fuel price cut needs to be thought through very coolly by OMCs'

SUKALP SHARMA
NEW DELHI, MARCH 9

A REDUCTION in retail prices of petrol and diesel is a decision that would have to be thought through "very coolly" by public sector oil marketing companies (OMCs) in view of the volatility in the global energy market, geopolitical challenges, and the companies' financial health, Petroleum Minister Hardeep Singh Puri said Saturday. Indicating that the OMCs are not fully out of the woods yet in terms of profitability on fuel sales, Puri said that they are still incurring under-recoveries on diesel sales, but did not quantify it.

With the recent cuts in liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) and compressed natural gas (CNG) prices, speculation is rife that a reduction in petrol and diesel prices may be in the offing in view of the impending Lok Sabha polls. Responding to questions on the issue, Puri said that any such decision is the prerogative of the three OMCs—Indian Oil Corporation, Bharat Petroleum Corporation, and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation—and the companies will have to take a call based on a number of factors, stability in international prices being a key consideration. The minister also declined to give a timeline for resumption of regular revision in petrol and diesel prices, which has been on hold for nearly two years.

The OMCs are currently incurring an under-recovery of ₹3-5 per litre on diesel sales, while in the case of petrol, they are currently making a profit. *File*

According to highly placed sources in the government, the OMCs are currently incurring an under-recovery of Rs 3-5 per litre on diesel sales, while in the case of petrol, they are currently making a profit.

Under-recoveries refer to the difference between the retail price and the international price of the fuel. As per the pricing methodology followed by the OMCs, petrol and diesel prices should be revised daily based on the 15-day rolling average of international benchmark prices. However, the companies have not revised prices since early April of 2022, when global crude oil and fuel prices had surged in the aftermath of Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

In a scenario where the OMCs continue to have under-recoveries, a fuel price cut can be achieved if the government cuts taxes on the petrol and diesel, like it did on two occasions over the past couple of years, or if the OMCs decide to bear deeper losses at the government's behest. The latter, according to industry insiders, would essentially be a political call.

While acknowledging that the OMCs have reported robust financial results for the first three quarters of the current financial year 2023-24 (FY24), which raised hopes of a reduction in petrol and diesel prices, Puri said that the companies had suffered heavy losses in the previous financial year as they cushioned domestic consumers from extreme price shocks. The three companies have not been compensated for some of those losses and are still in the process of recouping a part of the hit they took at the time.

"The companies had losses of Rs 28,000 crore as they maintained LPG prices (despite a surge in international prices), and the government compensated them with Rs 22,000 crore...It (petrol and diesel price cut) has to be very coolly thought through...oil marketing companies lost Rs 30,000 crore (on petrol and diesel sales) and we still have not compensated them," Puri said.

According to a senior official in the Petroleum Ministry, volatility in the international prices of crude oil and fuels continues to remain a concern for the OMCs and the government. The official, who spoke on the condition of anonymity, did not completely rule out a price reduction but said that multiple factors that make up the pricing equation need to be carefully analysed before a call is taken. These factors include international oil prices, fuel spreads or margins, dollar-rupee exchange rate, outlook on prices, and market volatility assessments, among others.

Although crude oil prices have come down considerably from over $100 per barrel in 2022 to sub-$85 levels now, they remain prone to volatility given the unpredictable geopolitical situation in some regions and production regulation by major global oil producers. Just a few months ago, in September, the price of the global benchmark Brent crude had shot up and breached the $95-per-barrel level, before falling again subsequently.

As per industry insiders, OMCs would be comfortable in reverting to daily fuel price revisions once international crude oil prices stabilise under $80 per barrel.

Given the current pump prices and margins on the two automobile fuels in the international market, an oil price level of under $80 would ensure that the OMCs would not have to bear any under-recovery on petrol and diesel sales.

OMCs to absorb LPG price cut, unlikely to be compensated

SUKALP SHARMA
NEW DELHI, MARCH 9

PUBLIC SECTOR oil marketing companies (OMCs)—Indian Oil Corporation, Bharat Petroleum Corporation, and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation—will absorb the financial impact of the Rs 100-per-cylinder reduction in cooking gas prices announced Friday and the Centre does not plan to compensate them for it, according to highly placed sources in the government.

The OMCs on Saturday slashed the price of liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) for all domestic LPG consumers by Rs 100 per 14.2-kg cylinder in line with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's announcement that cooking gas prices were being reduced on the occasion of the International Women's Day on Friday. This price cut by the government comes just days ahead of the likely announcement of the 2024 Lok Sabha polls, and is likely to benefit nearly 33 crore households across India.

"There is no thinking within the government to compensate the OMCs for the LPG price reduction," said a senior government official, requesting anonymity.

The official added that LPG prices for domestic household consumers are not fully deregulated, so the companies are required to follow the government's decision and deal with its financial implications. Officials with the OMCs said that given the strong financial health of the three companies at present, they should be able to absorb the hit rather comfortably as they had the necessary headroom to accommodate the price cut. All three companies reported robust earnings for the first three quarters of the current financial year 2023-24 (FY24). However, it would have been a different story if they experienced the kind of stress they went through in the previous financial year when energy markets turned extremely volatile in the aftermath of Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

Usually, the OMCs bear the financial implications of price cuts, while the subsidy bill is footed by the Centre. *File*

As per ballpark estimates based on FY23 data on active LPG connections and average refill rates, around 181 crore refills in terms of the standard 14.2-kg LPG cylinders were consumed by households in India in that fiscal.

Assuming the LPG refill rates and consumer base remain similar to FY23 levels, the financial impact of the latest price cut would be around Rs 18,100 crore on an annualised basis. This is the second instance of the government announcing a reduction in LPG prices for households in the current fiscal.

Ahead of the Assembly polls in five states, a price cut of Rs 200 per cylinder was announced on August 29. Usually, the OMCs bear the financial implications of price cuts, while the subsidy bill is footed by the Centre.

Currently, LPG subsidy is only provided to poor households under the Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY), and is not available to all household LPG consumers.

However, there have been instances in the past when the OMCs sold LPG at reduced prices amid high international fuel price volatility, with the government later providing them with financial assistance to cover the losses they incurred on that count. For instance, the government provided a special one-time grant of Rs 22,000 crore to the three OMCs in 2022 to compensate them for selling LPG at a loss, which had resulted in accumulated losses of around Rs 28,000 crore.

The grant came at a time when the OMCs were grappling with significant losses, particularly in the fuel retail segment due to soaring prices in the international market and the companies' inability to pass those to domestic consumers. However, the companies have now largely recovered from the losses incurred during that period.

IPR laws facilitator, booster, and not barrier in process of research and development: FM

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, MARCH 9

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY rights (IPR) laws, the policy are all being given a certain push as research and development are happening in very big scale in India now because the environment is being made conducive for that purpose, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said on Saturday.

"So, we are trying to make them (IPR laws) as a facilitator, booster, and not certainly a barrier in the process of R&D. We've taken quite a few steps and I singularly thank the prime minister for this particular policy, which after a lot of consultation has come up in 2016," she said.

The law is a balance of protection for those who innovate, and the commercial propositions with which patents can be of use for the society, she said at the book launch event of Justice Prathiba M Singh on Patent Law.

Sharing details of the law, Sitharaman said, eight different items which have something to do with intellectual property have all been brought together under one umbrella.

Everything to do with the policy management on intellectual property rights are now under one framework, be it patents trademark, industrial designs, copyrights, geographical indications, semiconductor integrated circuit layout design, trade secrets, and also plant varieties, she said.

The legislative framework is Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) compliant, she said, adding, "it is necessarily for safeguarding IPR and as I said earlier it is trying to balance between patent protection as much as development concerns which they have to address".

Talking about steps taken encouraging greater patenting and also registering of patents, the minister said, the government has reduced the fee for startups and MSMEs and also for education institutions.

Office space demand to remain healthy across top cities in '24

Office space demand will remain healthy as firms will lease to expand their businesses, as per a FICCI-Colliers report.

GROSS LEASING OF OFFICE SPACE:

2024:	50-55 mn sq ft
2023:	58.2 mn sq ft

The demand could go up to 55-60 million square feet.

The leasing numbers could drop to 45-50 million square feet in a pessimistic scenario

Domestic origin companies are likely to contribute almost half of the anticipated office space uptake in 2024

The six major cities are Bengaluru, Chennai, Delhi-NCR, Hyderabad, Mumbai and Pune

Source: FICCI-Colliers/PTI

India can leapfrog to accelerated computing: NVIDIA Asia South MD

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, MARCH 9

AS THE world looks to double the data centre industry size to about $8 trillion, India has an opportunity to leapfrog into accelerated computing as it has no legacy infrastructure, a senior official of GPU major NVIDIA said on Friday.

Speaking at Tie-Con Delhi-NCR, NVIDIA Asia South Managing Director Vishal Dhupar said India can transform itself from being "back office" of the world to "the office" of the world.

He said the global data centre industry is around USD 4 trillion which is going to double and India has close to about 1-2 per cent of the total global capacity.

"We have no legacy. We are going to take this whole world's software into accelerated computing because it is common sense and I think yesterday's announcement (cabinet decision) is a signature to that fact," Dhupar said. The Cabinet has approved the India AI Mission with an outlay of Rs 10,372 crore for five years to encourage AI development in the country. Under the mission, supercomputing capacity, comprising over 10,000 GPUs (graphics processing units), will be made available to various stakeholders for creating an AI ecosystem.

Nivetti unveils India's fastest IP/MPLS router in Bengaluru

ANEES HUSSAIN
BENGALURU, MARCH 9

NETWORKING AND cyber security products and solutions company Nivetti Systems on Saturday unveiled the country's fastest homegrown internet protocol/multiprotocol label switching (IP/MPLS) router in Bengaluru, in the presence of Union minister for communications, electronics and information technology Ashwini Vaishnaw. MPLS is a telecommunications routing technique that guides data between nodes using labels instead of network addresses.

Nivetti's latest high-security core router has a capacity of 2.4 terabits per second (tbps), and runs on India's first and only, fully indigenous operating system, Nivetti NiOS, which has been evaluated for security by Defence Research & Development Organisation-Scientific Analysis Group (DRDO-SAG) and Standardisation Testing and Quality Certification.

Nivetti's latest high-security core router has a capacity of 2.4 tbps, and runs on India's first and only, fully indigenous operating system

The company claims that its IP/MPLS routers have been deployed on various large networks, including power grids, Indian Navy, Center for Development of Telematics, DRDO and a host of private enterprises.

"Within networking a core router like this is very important, and is at the core of the Digital India initiative under our PM Narendra Modi. I am glad that a complex equipment like this has been designed, developed, and made in India," Vaishnaw said during the launch event.

"We will also work on policy measures that remove any roadblocks that innovators face in their journey to create," he said.

Vaishnaw said the government started this journey through multiple structures, through design-led innovation, PLI and various startup modules.

"In Prime Minister Modi's third term we are going to see many of these structures scale up in a very big way, by which innovators can look at significant market opportunities in India, and through exports." **FE**

BRIEFLY

Govt notifies changes in competition law related to M&As

New Delhi: The government has notified certain changes under the competition law with respect to mergers and acquisitions that are also expected to reduce the regulatory burden on the Competition Commission of India. Notifications have been issued by the corporate affairs ministry related to Section 5 of the competition law. **PTI**

Bank employees to get 17% annual wage hike

New Delhi: Indian Banks' Association and bank employee unions on Friday agreed on an annual wage hike of 17 per cent, a move that will result in an additional yearly outgo of around Rs 8,284 crore for public sector banks. As many as 8 lakh bank employees are set to benefit from the wage hike, which will be effective from November 2022. **PTI**

India to sign trade agreement with EFTA today: What is the significance of the deal?

RAVI DUTTA MISHRA
NEW DELHI MARCH 9

INDIA IS all set to sign a trade agreement with the four nation European Free Trade Association (EFTA), an intergovernmental grouping of Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland, on Sunday. The pact likely builds in a plan to attract $100 billion in investment over the period of 15 years and diversify imports away from China. The Indian Express explains the significance of the deal for India.

Why is the timing of signing crucial for India?

Over 64 countries, including India, are headed into elections, which could mean a long pause in free trade agreements (FTAs) for India and its trade partners. However, time is running out as the global supply chain is fast undergoing a reset with investment, for the first time in recent past, moving away from China.

While India is seen as a top contender by global inventors, Asean nations led by Vietnam and North America nations like Mexico are also emerging as favorable investment destinations. A delay in streamlining investment flows and renewed attempts at global integration may turn out to be a missed geo-political opportunity. While India-EFTA trade deal is ready to be inked, major deals such as India's FTA with UK and EU still run the risk of political uncertainty.

While India is seen as a top contender, Asean and North America are emerging as favorable investment regions. *File*

EXPLAINED

Why did India push for investment commitment in the EFTA deal?

India runs a trade deficit with most of its top trade partners, except for the US. This is also true in case of FTAs that India has signed in the past, especially with Asean nations. While the Asean FTA did help India secure intermediate products, India's increasing average tariffs (18 per cent) has meant that India's FTA partners end up having better access to the Indian market after tariff elimination. Average tariffs in developed nations hover around 5 per cent.

The India-EFTA deal is also expected to widen the trade gap. Even as the legality of the $100 billion investment commitment by EFTA remains unclear, such investment could help India generate economic activity and jobs in exchange for giving market access to EFTA.

Moreover, India could see gains in the services sector and the deal could help India power its services sector further.

Which Indian sectors could EFTA investment benefit?

The funds from the EFTA region include Norway's $1.6 trillion sovereign wealth fund, the world's largest such 'pension' fund, which posted a record profit of $213 billion in 2023 on the back of strong returns on its investments in technology stocks.

The Indian Express earlier reported that India could see investment flow into the pharma, chemical sectors, food processing and engineering sectors. Government officials said that EFTA is also looking at joint ventures (JVs) in the above-mentioned sectors that will help India diversity imports away from China.

Currently, India's imports of chemical products from China in FY23 alone stood at a massive $20.08 billion. It imported $3.4 billion worth of medical and bulk drugs worth nearly $7 billion from China, as per commerce and industry ministry data.

2024 to see three new compact SUVs

VIKRAM CHAUDHARY
NEW DELHI, MARCH 9

THE CURRENT calendar year will see three big launches in the sub-4 metre SUV space, which is popularly known as compact sports utility vehicles (SUVs), the largest selling segment in the passenger vehicle space. There are already 15 models in this segment at present, forming 30 per cent of the market. The three launches later this year will see all the major manufacturers have compact SUVs in their portfolios.

The first such launch will be Toyota Urban Cruiser Taisor, which will be based on Maruti Suzuki Fronx. Toyota and Suzuki have a model-sharing agreement globally and share three models—Grand Vitara and Hyryder, Innova and Invicto, and Ertiga and Rumion—and the Taisor will be the fourth.

In 2023, Toyota Motor Corp had registered the wordmark 'Urban Cruiser Taisor' with the Indian Patent Office, and this week a Delhi-NCR-based Toyota dealer told FE that Taisor is possibly the Fronx with the Toyota badge. The second model to be launched will be Skoda's unnamed compact SUV, which the Czech carmaker announced in February. It will hit the roads in the latter part of the year. Skoda India said that the sub-4 metre SUV will help the carmaker meet the brand's annual sales target of 100,000 cars in India by 2026. "After the success of the Kushaq midsize SUV and the Slavia midsize sedan, we are expanding our reach with the upcoming launch of an all-new sub-4 metre SUV, targeting the largest segment in India," Piyush Arora, MD and CEO, Skoda Auto Volkswagen India, said. **FE**

CBIC issues circular to encourage women participation in int'l trade

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, MARCH 9

THE CENTRAL Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) has asked field offices to support in upskilling women logistics service providers and custom brokers as well as for custodians of freight stations to ensure safe and secure working environment.

The CBIC has issued two circulars coinciding with International Women's Day on March 8.

One relates to encouraging women participation in international trade, while the other is on inclusion of gender specific infrastructure facilities to be provided by the custodians of Inland Container Depot (ICD), container freight station (CFS) and Air Freight Stations (AFS).

"It has been decided that in addition the existing infrastructural facilities as provided by the custodian CFS/AFS/ICD -- following gender specific infrastructure facilities may also be encouraged for inclusiveness of women participation," it said. The CBIC said gender responsive infrastructure at the logistics facilities, including sufficient lighting, panic buttons, should be set up to improve workplace efficiency of women. Also provision should be made for care infrastructure and services, especially crèches, it added.

The CBIC directed its field formations to ensure representation of women in the Permanent Trade Facilitation Committee (PTFC) and Customs Clearance Facilitation Committee (CCFC) meeting.

The Sunday EXPRESS

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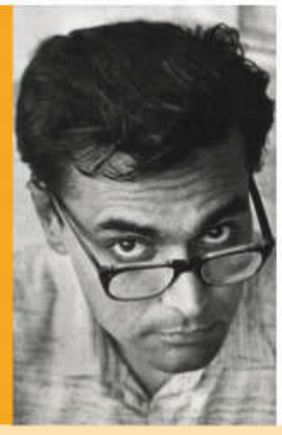


eye
THE SUNDAY EXPRESS MAGAZINE

Portrait of an Artist

As he turns 90, a look at the journey of artist and photographer Jyoti Bhatt

FOUR-PAGE PULLOUT

TDP, BJP, JSP announce pact, seat wrinkles ironed out

LIZ MATHEW & SREENIVAS JANYALA
NEW DELHI, HYDERABAD, MARCH 9

AFTER MULTIPLE rounds of discussions over seat-sharing, the BJP, TDP and JanaSena Party (JSP) officially announced on Saturday that they will be contesting the coming Lok Sabha and Assembly polls in Andhra Pradesh together.

A joint statement released by the three parties said that the seat-sharing formula would be released in "a day or two", while resolving to work for the progress of the country and Andhra Pradesh "under the dynamic and visionary leadership of Honorable Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modiji".

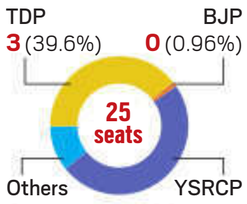
Sources said that the TDP has agreed to raise its offer to 8 Lok Sabha seats for the BJP, but on the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

2019 POLL RESULTS*

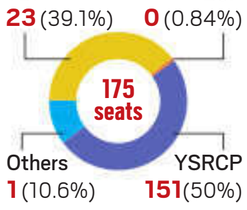
LOK SABHA

TDP 3 (39.6%) BJP 0 (0.96%)
Others 0 (10.44%) YSRCP 22 (49%)



ASSEMBLY

TDP 23 (39.1%) BJP 0 (0.84%)
Others 1 (10.6%) YSRCP 151 (50%)



*TDP fought separately after it left the BJP-led NDA; vote share in brackets

DAYS BEFORE LOK SABHA POLLS NOTIFICATION

EC quits, Commission is down to one; PM panel to meet next week

No transparency… raises questions on fairness of poll process: Opp

DAMINI NATH, MANOJ CG & RITIKA CHOPRA
NEW DELHI, MARCH 9

BARELY DAYS before the 2024 Lok Sabha elections are expected to be announced, Election Commissioner Arun Goel resigned Saturday leaving the three-member Election Commission, that already had one vacancy, down to a single office-bearer, Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Rajiv Kumar.

Arun Goel's tenure as EC was until Dec 5, 2027

A meeting of the Prime Minister-headed high-level panel to pick Election Commissioners is likely to be held on March 14 or 15 — before the poll schedule is announced — and the Government, sources said, has already sounded out Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury, the Opposition member in the panel, about the possible dates. Sources said Chowdhury was sounded out before Goel's resignation.

According to the new law on appointment of CEC and ECs

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

AN EXPRESS INVESTIGATION-PART 2

Under Ayushman Bharat, top treatments: cardiology, cancer, general surgery, orthopaedics

KAUNAIN SHERIFF M
NEW DELHI, MARCH 9

IN THE six years since the Centre's flagship free health insurance scheme Ayushman Bharat was launched in September 2018, more than a quarter of the total money spent by the government in treating the poor has been in five key specialties — cardiology (heart); general medicine; general surgery; orthopaedics (bones); and medical and radiation oncology (cancer).

Data analysed by *The Indian Express* from the dashboard of the National Health Authority, the apex body overseeing implementation of Ayushman Bharat, and obtained under the Right to Information Act shows that cardiology tops the expenditure chart, followed closely by general medicine, general surgery, orthopaedics, and medical oncology. These five (*see chart*) cumulatively account for

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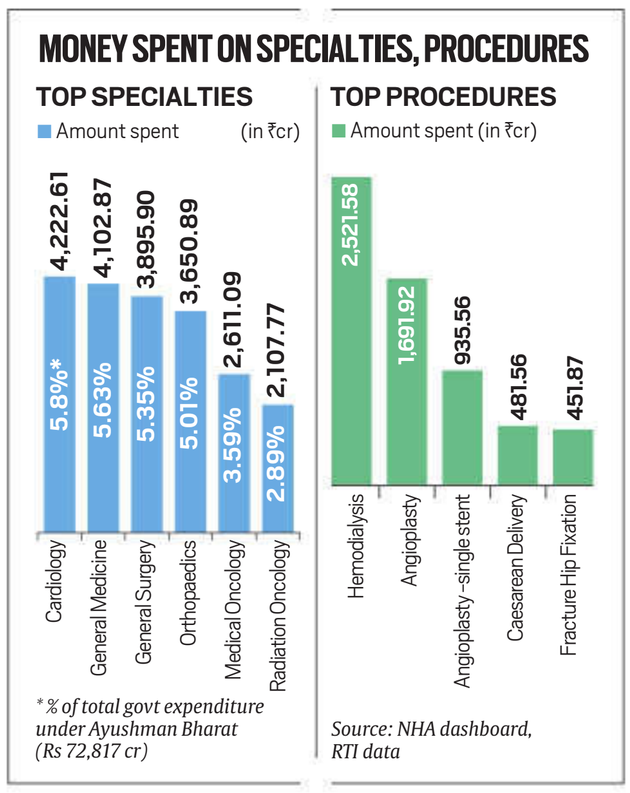


LAUNCHES UNNATI SCHEME WITH OUTLAY OF RS 10,037 CRORE

PM Narendra Modi at Kaziranga National Park, Saturday. *PTI*

PM unveils projects for N-E, says next step is expansion of industries

SUKRITA BARUAH
GUWAHATI, MARCH 9

LAUNCHING MEGA development projects for various Northeastern states during events in Arunachal Pradesh and Assam on Saturday, Prime Minister Narendra Modi declared that "Modi doesn't do work by counting the number of Parliament seats from a place".

During an event in Itanagar in Arunachal Pradesh, he launched the central government's new flagship project for the Northeast

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

An all-weather link to Tawang, Sela Tunnel boosts readiness at China border

AMRITA NAYAK DUTTA
NEW DELHI, MARCH 9

THE SELA Tunnel, that was "dedicated to the nation" by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday, is a key border infrastructure project as it connects Guwahati to the strategic Tawang sector round-the-year, thus aiding faster military movement to the Line of Actual Control (LAC).

EXPLAINED

Constructed by the Border Roads Organisation (BRO) at an altitude of around 13,000 feet and a cost of Rs 825 crore, the construction of the tunnel was aimed at providing all-weather connectivity to Tawang across Sela Pass on the Balipara-Chariduar-Tawang (BCT) Road,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

GOVT & POLITICS

DMK, CONG FINALISE 9+1 SEAT-SHARING DEAL FOR LOK SABHA

PAGE 6

Team India scale new summit, leave England with memory of false dawn

SANDEEP DWIVEDI
DHARAMSALA, MARCH 9

BY LUNCH on Day 3, the writing was on the wall. Still miles behind the total that would force India to bat again, half of England's team was back in the dressing room. A famous win for the home team looked inevitable. Fighting a lost cause with the tail-enders was England's old hand Joe Root.

That was when Sarfaraz Khan, fielding at short-leg,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Team India after defeating England by an innings and 64 runs to win the Test series 4-1, in Dharamshala. *PTI*

REPORT, P15

TRAIN HATE KILLINGS

2 more RPF cops dismissed: 'failed to discharge duty'

SWEETY ADIMULAM
MUMBAI, MARCH 9

TWO RAILWAY Protection Force (RPF) constables — who were on the Jaipur-Mumbai Central Superfast Express on July 31 last year, when Constable Chetansinh Chaudhary allegedly gunned down a senior colleague and three passengers — have been dismissed from service.

The dismissal orders for Constables Amay Acharya and

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

In year of Gaganyaan, also set to launch: Indian private space research organisation

PAGE 1
ANCHOR

ANONNA DUTT
NEW DELHI, MARCH 9

"MARCH 22-28, 2024". With this cryptic tweet on X at 12.56 am on Saturday, AgniKul Cosmos announced the launch window for India's second privately built rocket.

The IIT-Madras incubated start-up is expected to launch its 3D-printed suborbital rocket, Agnibaan SOrTeD, later this

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

SPACE START-UPS' PLANS FOR THIS YEAR

AGNIKUL COSMOS	Launching a 3D-printed suborbital rocket
SKYROOT AEROSPACE	Launching a three-stage orbital rocket
PIXXEL	Launching a constellation of hyperspectral satellites
BELLATRIX AEROSPACE	Tested electric and green fuel propulsion systems in space
DHRUVA SPACE	Tested platforms for small satellites in space

Agnibaan SOrTeD by AgniKul Cosmos is a 3D-printed suborbital rocket. *X/@AgnikulCosmos*

FROM PAGE ONE

FULL REPORTS ON WWW.INDIANEXPRESS.COM

EC quits, Commission is down to one

brought last year, a selection committee headed by the Prime Minister and comprising a Union Cabinet Minister to be nominated by the PM and the Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha or the leader of the single-largest opposition party in the House picks a name.

This came months after the Supreme Court had ruled that a three-member panel headed by the PM and comprising the Leader of the Opposition in Lok Sabha and the Chief Justice of India would select the CEC and EC until a new law was enacted by Parliament.

Goel was appointed Election Commissioner in November 2022 and since then has been part of the conduct of at least eight Assembly elections. His tenure at EC was until December 5, 2027, and he would have become CEC after incumbent Kumar retired in February next year.

This isn't the first instance of the EC being left with only one Election Commissioner. In April 2015, when Nasim Zaidi took over from H S Brahma as the Chief Election Commissioner, he was the sole remaining member in the three-member panel since the government, at that time, had not appointed V S Sampath and H S Brahma's successor after their retirement. The EC functioned as a one-man body for almost a month until the government appointed A K Joti as an Election Commissioner in May 2015 and O P Rawat in August 2015.

The calling of a meeting next week suggests the Centre may fill the two vacancies left after Anup Chandra Pandey's retirement as Election Commissioner last month and Goel's resignation on Saturday before the Lok Sabha poll schedule is announced, as the Model Code of Conduct (MCC) prohibits any big-ticket appointments in the government after the poll announcement.

However, legally, the Lok Sabha polls can be conducted by a one-member EC in case no fresh appointments are made before the MCC kicks in. But this would raise questions of propriety, as all powers of deciding crucial complaints of poll code violations and ensuring a level playing field during the Lok Sabha elections would rest with one person.

According to a Law Ministry notification, Goel's resignation was accepted by President Droupadi Murmu with effect from Saturday. It was not immediately known why he stepped down. Calls and messages to Goel and Kumar for comment went unanswered.

A senior EC official, when contacted by *The Indian Express*, said he was "unaware" of the circumstances of Goel's exit. "It was a surprise, we were caught off-guard," he said.

In the run-up to the Lok Sabha elections, Goel was part of the Commission's recent visit to Tamil Nadu, Odisha, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal. In fact, sources said, Goel was scheduled to travel to Jammu and Kashmir next on March 12 and 13 and his tickets for the review had been booked.

At the end of the most-recent trip to West Bengal, Goel did not attend the EC's customary end-of-visit press conference, which was addressed by Kumar. At the start of the press conference, an EC official announced Goel would not be joining due to health reasons.

Sources said Goel had been unwell since the visit and had not attended the crucial meetings on Friday at the EC's headquarters, Nirvachan Sadan, with Home Secretary Ajay Bhalla and Railway Board Chairperson Jaya Varma Sinha to review poll preparations. He is learned to have intimated his inability to attend shortly before the 11 am meeting.

Goel's resignation as EC is only the third instance in the poll watchdog's history. In 1973, CEC Nagender Singh resigned before completing his term to become a judge at the International Court of Justice. The second resignation happened recently in August 2020 when Ashok Lavasa quit to join the Asian Development Bank (ADB) as vice-president. Lavasa, like Goel, had more than two years left in his term and would have retired as CEC in October 2022.

The appointment of Goel as EC led to some controversy as he was Union Heavy Industries Secretary when he took voluntary retirement from the IAS on November 18, 2022. A day later he was appointed to the Commission. His appointment was challenged in Supreme Court by the Association for Democratic Reforms.

Opposition parties expressed concern over Goel's resignation.

"Election Commission or Election Omission? India now has only one Election Commissioner, even as Lok Sabha elections are to be announced in few days. Why? As I have said earlier, if we do not stop the systematic decimation of our independent institutions, our democracy shall be usurped by dictatorship…ECI will now be among the last Constitutional institutions to fall," Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge said.

"Since the new process of selecting the ECs has now effectively given all the power to the ruling party and the PM, why has the new EC not been appointed even after… completion of latter's tenure? Modi Government must ... come out with a reasonable explanation," he said.

"There is absolutely no transparency in how a constitutional institution like the ECI has been functioning and the manner in which the government pressures them," senior Congress leader K C Venugopal said.

TMC's Rajya Sabha MP Saket Gokhale said: "…before the 2024 Lok Sabha polls, Modi will now appoint two of the three Election Commissioners after today's resignation." RJD's Rajya Sabha MP Manoj K Jha said such resignations on the eve of announcement of the election schedule raise doubts on whether the poll exercise will be free and fair.

• PM launches projects for N-E

— the Uttar Poorva Transformative Industrialisation Scheme (UNNATI) 2024 — which has a financial outlay of Rs 10,037 crore over 10 years and was approved by the Union Cabinet earlier this week. He also "dedicated to the nation" the strategic Sela Tunnel project, which is built at an altitude of 13,000 feet and connects Tezpur in Assam to Tawang in Arunachal Pradesh.

Modi said the expansion of industries will be the focus for the NDA government in the region. "In 10 years, we have expanded modern infrastructure in the region. Nearly one dozen peace agreements have been arrived at; we have solved multiple border disputes. The next step of development is the expansion of industry in the Northeast. The Rs 10,000 crore UNNATI scheme will bring new avenues for investment and employment. New sectors and services will come together for manufacturing here and the government will give its assistance for new industries. My emphasis has been that startups, new technologies, home stay, tourism, these kinds of different sectors in which our youth want to enter, I give the guarantee to completely support those young people," he said.

The Sela Tunnel project, executed by the Border Roads Organisation, includes two tunnels and a link road. "Through this tunnel, our people in Tawang will get all-weather connectivity. Coming and going, transport will become easier for local people. With that, tourism in Arunachal will also be expanded," he said.

He also hit out at the Congress and the INDIA alliance, accusing previous Congress governments of neglecting the region because of the small number of parliament seats from the Northeast.

"Earlier, when they should have been making modern infrastructure at our border, the Congress governments were busy doing scams. Congress was playing with the development of the country by keeping our border and its villages weak. To keep your own Army weak, your own people deprived of facilities, that is the way of the Congress's functioning… The Sela tunnel could have been built earlier as well. But Congress's priority was something else – 'There are only one or two seats, why should we put in so much effort?' Modi doesn't do work by counting the number of parliament seats. He does so keeping the country's needs in mind," he said.

Modi also laid the foundation stone for the 2880 MW Dibang Multipurpose Hydropower Project which he announced would be "India's highest dam" and also inaugurated, dedicated and laid the foundation stones for projects in Manipur, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura.

In the morning, Modi had participated in a safari in Kaziranga National Park in Assam after an overnight stay there and had unveiled a 125-foot high statue of Lachit Borphukan in Jorhat.

In the afternoon, he addressed a public meeting in Jorhat where he made a call to tourists to visit the Park. "In 2013, in one year, 27 rhinos had been poached . But our government came here and with the help of the people, in 2022, this number became 0," he said.

• An all-weather link to Tawang

which connects Tezpur in Assam to Tawang in Arunachal Pradesh.

Tezpur is the home of the Indian Army's IV Corps which looks after Assam and western Arunachal Pradesh.

At present, two separate routes connect Tezpur and Tawang: Balipara-Chariduar-Tawang (BCT) and Orang-Kalaktang-Shergaon-Rupa-Tenga (OKSRT), which meet at Sela Pass and merge into one route to Tawang.

There are plans to construct two alternate routes to Tawang, one of which is still on the drawing board.

The operational Tezpur to Tawang route has three major passes – Nechiphu, Bomdila and Sela. While the road passing through Bomdila was kept open throughout the year, there were foggy stretches at Nechiphu, and snow at Sela that would cut off Tawang.

The Sela Tunnel will thus be a major boost to India's operational preparedness along the LAC, aiding quick military mobilisation to the bordering Tawang sector, saving nearly 10 km of road distance, translating into nearly almost an hour of travel time for convoys. Heavy artillery guns can be transported through the tunnel.

This comes months after the inauguration of the Nechiphu tunnel by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh last September.

Both the tunnels would provide all-weather connectivity to Tawang, bypassing the foggy stretches on Nechiphu and the snow on Sela passes, together cutting down distance by about 15 km, thus aiding faster military deployment to Tawang.

With China seeking to claim Tawang as part of larger Tibet, while calling Arunachal Pradesh southern Tibet, India has always kept the region militarily fortified.

During the 1962 India-China war, Beijing had captured Tawang within the first few days. Tawang's historical significance lies in it being the birthplace of the sixth Dalai Lama, making it an important seat of Tibetan Buddhism after Lhasa.

From the military and strategic point of view, Tawang provides geographical access up to the Brahmaputra plains and provides the shortest axis to Tezpur in Assam. The lines of communication from Tawang stretch to Guwahati and the extended Siliguri corridor, amplifying its military importance.

According to the Defence Ministry, the Sela Tunnel has been constructed using the new Austrian tunnelling method and incorporates safety features of the highest standards.

The foundation stone of the tunnel was laid by Modi on February 9, 2019, and construction began on April 1 in the same year.

• Two more RPF cops dismissed

Narendra Parmar, issued by S K S Rathod, senior divisional security commissioner, RPF, Mumbai Division, Western Railway, on Friday, cited their "failure to discharge their duty".

Chaudhary, who was dismissed from service earlier, is currently in Akola jail. He is accused of gunning down three passengers — Abdul Kadar Mohamed Hussain Bhanpurawala, Syed Saifuddin and Asgar Abbas Sheikh — and RPF Assistant Sub-Inspector Tikaram Meena. After killing the four, he allegedly gave a hate speech, according to purported video clips of the incident.

The dismissal orders of the two constables said: "It was the responsibility of the accused constables on duty to provide security and protection to the passengers... They, however, failed to do the same. The act of the accused constables would erode trust among passengers towards RPF and... send a wrong message among other members of the force towards indiscipline. To ensure that there is no repetition of the same, retaining the constables in the force despite their failure to discharge their duty would be fatal for RPF."

The orders, reviewed by *The Indian Express*, detailed their specific failures. According to Acharya's dismissal order, he hid in the washroom of S-4 coach instead of intervening. He saw Chaudhary removing the rifle's safety catch, but left him alone with ASI Tikaram Meena, who was later killed, it said.

Parmar's dismissal order said Chaudhary took a passenger hostage at gunpoint in front of him, led him to another coach, and killed him. CCTV footage and witness statements showed that Parmar hid behind other passengers instead of intervening, it said.

Earlier, the Government Railway Police (GRP) had made Acharya the complainant in the FIR against Chaudhary, while Parmar was a key witness from the prosecution's side.

The Borivali GRP officials have filed a 1,097-page chargesheet against Chaudhary, with the accounts of nearly 39 eyewitnesses.

Meanwhile, Chaudhary's lawyer, Amit Mishra, has moved court asking for him to be shifted to any prison in Mumbai or Thane.

Chaudhary has been charged under IPC Sections 302 (murder), 153A (promoting enmity between different groups on grounds of religion, race, place of birth, residence), 341 (wrongful restraint), 342 (wrongful confinement), 364 (kidnapping for murder), 427 (mischief and causing loss), 506(2) (death threats) as well as sections of the Indian Railways Act, Prevention of Damage to Public Property Act.

WITH INPUTS FROM VIJAY KUMAR YADAV

• TDP, BJP, JSP announce pact

condition that the national party share seats from its kitty with the third partner, JSP.

For the Assembly polls, TDP supremo N Chandrababu Naidu has reportedly offered 30 Assembly seats in all, to the two partners.

Sources said that the BJP is expected to fight the Anakapalli, Araku, Rajahmundry, Eluru, Hindupur, Rajampet Lok Sabha seats, giving Machilipatnam and Kakinada to the JSP.

In their joint statement, the three parties praised Modi for "working tirelessly for the development and progress of the nation for the last 10 years". Recalling the TDP and BJP's "old relationship", from 1996 to 2018, the parties said their decision to ally again would help meet the aspirations of the people of Andhra Pradesh.

The statement also noted that in 2014, when the TDP and BJP fought the Lok Sabha and Assembly elections together, the JSP had offered them its support.

Talks have been going on between leaders of the three parties for several days. At the discussions held on Friday, the BJP side was represented by Home Minister Amit Shah and BJP national president J P Nadda, with Naidu and actor-turned-politician Pawan Kalyan representing their parties TDP and JSP, respectively.

The discussions were earlier stuck as Naidu did not want to part with more than 4-5 Lok Sabha seats for the BJP out of 25 in Andhra Pradesh. Of the 175 seats in the Assembly, he was ready to give the BJP only 15, though there he indicated more flexibility.

Having set a target of 370 for itself for Lok Sabha, the BJP wants to contest as many seats as possible on its own. But it has been open to bargaining, as adding allies will help it meet the target it has set for NDA, of 400-plus seats. A TDP source earlier said Naidu did not want to give away too many LS seats as he wanted to retain bargaining power in Parliament.

While the TDP and BJP had been allies earlier, Naidu broke the tie-up in 2018, citing the failure of the Centre to give Andhra Pradesh special category status as a reason. But if it was a strategic move ahead of the 2019 elections, it had backfired on the TDP miserably.

The TDP vote share had remained almost the same as 2014, but its seats in the Lok Sabha had dropped from 15 to just 3. The BJP had gone down from 2 seats and a vote share of 7% to 0 seats and only 0.98% of the votes. Since then, Naidu has been trying to claw his way back into the NDA camp.

But the BJP has been playing hard to get, particularly given the cushion enjoyed by it due to its friendly ties with YSRCP. The party tried to get the YSRCP on board the NDA, offering ministerial berths at Centre. But Jagan Reddy was reluctant, though promising to continue friendly ties with the Centre.

• Ayushman Bharat's top treatments: cardiology, cancer, general surgery

Rs 20,591 crore, or 28 per cent of the total government expenditure of Rs 72,817 crore under the scheme.

As far as specific procedures are concerned, the top five in terms of total expenditure over six years: are dialysis, angioplasty, single stent to unblock arteries, Caesarean deliveries and implants for fractured hip.

The data is significant, but not surprising, because these are areas where the poor have limited access to care. Treatment under Ayushman Bharat, which provides free health cover of up to Rs 5 lakh every year to a family, can be potentially life-saving or play a key role in improving the patient's quality of life.

For example, in rural India, medical expenses, on an average, for cancer in a government hospital is Rs 23,905, and over three times in a private hospital at Rs 85,326. For a heart problem, treatment in a private hospital costs Rs 42,759, almost six times that in a government hospital.

Government estimates show that heart or cardiovascular diseases alone claim 28.1% lives in India, chronic respiratory illness 10%, cancer 8.3%, stroke 7.1%, and diabetes 3%; overall, such non-communicable diseases account for 63% of all deaths in India.

In its first part Saturday, *The Indian Express* investigation had revealed that 54 per cent of Ayushman beneficiaries or 2.95 crore people used the scheme to access private hospitals, and they spent Rs 48,778 crore or more than two-thirds of the total expenditure of Rs 72,817 crore. Further, it showed that just five southern states accounted for 53 per cent of all patients.

Cardiology, general medicine, surgery top list

An analysis of NHA data and the Ayushman dashboard sheds light on where the government's healthcare spending linked to the scheme is directed.

The maximum money under the scheme — Rs 4,222 crore — is spent in cardiovascular or heart-related diseases, Rs 4,100 crore in general medicine, Rs 3,895 crore in general surgery, Rs 3,650 crore in orthopaedics, and Rs 2,611 crore in medical oncology.

Between 2018 and 2023, the analysis revealed that 10 states accounted for 80% of the total patients who accessed treatment under the scheme: Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, UP, Gujarat, Jharkhand, and Punjab. Six of these, including Chhattisgarh and excluding Karnataka, were ruled by non-BJP parties for a substantial part of 2018-2023.

Beyond this, specific procedures emerge as focal points of expenditure, showcasing where resources are most heavily invested.

Over the last six years, the top procedures where the government spent the most include hemodialysis for advanced kidney failure (Rs 2,500 crore), and percutaneous trans-luminal coronary angioplasty or PTCA with diagnostic angiogram (Rs 1,691 crore), a minimally invasive procedure crucial for opening narrowed or blocked heart arteries.

PTCA with single stent placement, a technique involving the insertion of a wire mesh tube to restore blood flow, also features prominently with the government spending Rs 936 crore over the last six years. Additionally, Caesarean delivery (Rs 482 crore) and fracture hip internal fixation (Rs 452 crore), stand out as key areas of government spending.

Cardiology in Karnataka, ophthalmology in Jharkhand

The data reveals another trend — that India is a complex healthcare landscape with diverse needs, with patients in different states or regions accessing distinct treatments or specialties under the flagship scheme.

SOUTH: In Tamil Nadu, the government incurred the highest expenditures on three key specialties: general surgery, paediatric medicine, and general medicine. As for procedures, alongside various packages, the maximum expenses were directed towards hemodialysis, COVID-19 tests, and treatments for animal bites.

In Karnataka, cardiology, cardio-thoracic and vascular surgery, and obstetrics and gynaecology emerged as the top specialties that saw significant government funding. Procedures such as PTCA with one or two drug-eluting stents, alongside Caesarean deliveries, dominated expenditure charts in the state.

In Kerala, cardiology, general medicine, and orthopaedics stood out as the specialties that received the most funding, while procedures such as PTCA, hemodialysis, and provision of PPE for COVID-19 cases constituted major expenses.

In Andhra Pradesh, orthopaedics took the lead in expenditure, followed closely by general medicine and general surgery. Top procedures included fracture hip treatments, hemodialysis, and management of fractures of long bones.

NORTH: In Uttar Pradesh, the highest expenditures were in general surgery, general medicine, and ophthalmology, with phacoemulsification with foldable hydrophobic acrylic or cataract surgery being the top procedure alongside PTCA and hemodialysis.

Meanwhile, in Madhya Pradesh, cardiology, general medicine and orthopaedics took precedence, with PTCA, hemodialysis, and Caesarean delivery ranking as top procedures.

In Chhattisgarh, the maximum expenditure was in obstetrics gynaecology, orthopaedics, and general surgery, with Caesarean delivery, normal delivery, and hemodialysis leading in medical procedures.

Jharkhand's top specialties were ophthalmology, general surgery, and general medicine, with hemodialysis, cataract, and gallbladder stone removal being the top procedures.

Punjab incurred the most expenses in orthopaedics, general surgery, and cardiology, with PTCA, hemodialysis, and gallbladder stone removal procedures topping the charts.

WEST: In Gujarat, the biggest share of healthcare expenditure was directed towards three key specialties: urology, cardiology, and medical & radiation oncology. Among procedures, the highest expenditures were attributed to hemodialysis, cataract surgery, and primary total knee replacement surgeries.

The takeaways

The data illuminates five key trends that shed light not only on prevailing healthcare priorities but also carry substantial implications for public health on a broader scale.

■ First, state-wise data reveals that each state has distinct healthcare needs and that a one-size-fits-all approach to access healthcare may not be effective.

■ Second, despite variation among states, certain medical specialties — general medicine, cardiology, and general surgery — have consistently received high government funding indicating where the government needs to focus its priorities while addressing healthcare needs.

■ Third, understanding these regional variations is crucial for policymakers to allocate resources effectively and address the diverse healthcare needs across the country.

■ Fourth, the data indirectly points out the critical departments within tertiary care infrastructure that demand further strengthening, evident from the influx of patients seeking treatment in these specialties.

■ Fifth, states lacking key specialties and related treatments among their top services indicate a relative deficiency in these facilities compared to other regions. For instance, in 2012, Chhattisgarh saw 13,61,293 patients attending NCD clinics (non-communicable disease) under the National Programme for Prevention and Control of Cancer, Diabetes, Cardiovascular Diseases, and Stroke. Among them, 31,690 patients were diagnosed with cancer, the highest nationwide.

However, according to Ayushman Bharat data, medical oncology ranked seventh in terms of treatment expenditure and ninth in terms of the number of patients treated, highlighting the urgent need for enhanced screening and cancer treatment facilities in the region.

Likewise, in Jharkhand, nearly a quarter of the six lakh patients visiting the NCD clinic were diagnosed with non-communicable diseases such as diabetes, hypertension, stroke, and cardiovascular diseases. However, Ayushman Bharat data reveals cardiology ranks eighth in terms of treatment expenditure and doesn't feature in the top ten for the number of patients treated. This underscores the pressing need for strengthening cardiology services due to the high prevalence of these diseases.

• Private space research organisation

month from its private launchpad at the Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Andhra Pradesh's Sriharikota. Hyderabad-based Skyroot Aerospace was the first private company in India to launch its suborbital rocket, Vikram-S, in November 2022. Suborbital rockets are spacecraft that reach outer space but don't stay there.

In the year that ISRO undertakes crucial flights for the Gaganyaan mission and plans key launches like the NASA-ISRO Synthetic Aperture Radar (NISAR), the country's private space sector is also set to make a huge splash, which includes creating a pioneering hyperspectral satellite constellation. Hyperspectral satellites take extremely detailed images to help identify objects or materials by capturing data in several wavelengths for each pixel.

"There are several things that show that we are moving in the right direction (towards the goal of capturing 8 per cent of the global market by 2033). There are over 200 start-ups in the sector now as compared to just around 40 or 50 three years ago. There has also been an expansion in the infrastructure set up by the private companies such as Anant, Dhruva, Skyroot, Pixxel, and Bellatrix. Companies such as L&T and Godrej, which were contractors for ISRO, are also looking to enter the space sector on their own," Dr Pawan Goenka, the chairperson of Indian National Space Promotion and Authorization Center (IN-SPACe), told *The Indian Express*.

IN-SPACe is an autonomous body under the Department of Space that has been entrusted with supervising, authorising, enabling, and promoting the sector. Stating that there was "serious" interest in Indian companies by international firms, he said foreign companies like OneWeb and Starlink have already applied to provide broadband services in India.

While ISRO readies its most powerful launch vehicle, LVM3, for human missions — and works towards developing heavier ones to set up a space station and take humans to the moon — private players like Skyroot Aerospace and AgniKul Cosmos are working towards qualifying their small satellite launch vehicles. The scope for growth in this sector is immense, say key players.

"More than 80 per cent of the launches over the next 10 years will be of small satellites that are less than 500 kg. Globally, however, there are only two companies — Rocket Lab and Firefly Aerospace — that offer launches in this category. So there is a lot of demand in the market," said Pawan Chandana, the co-founder and CEO of Skyroot.

Talking about the next step for Skyroot, he said, "There has been excitement in the market since our suborbital flight. We plan to launch Vikram-I (Skyroot's first orbital flight) in mid-2024 (from Sriharikota). We will reveal the payloads closer to the launch date, but there is already a pipeline of customers who need launch services such as this to reach the orbit easily."

In suborbital flights, the vehicle travels slower than the orbital velocity, which means that it is fast enough to reach outer space but not fast enough to stay in an orbit around the Earth. Skyroot's rocket had reached a height of 89.5 km during the 2022 launch, carrying three non-deployable payloads that collected data during the flight. For the sake of comparison, most commercial airlines fly at a height of around 10 km from the ground.

Lieutenant General A K Bhatt (retired), the director general of Indian Space Association (ISpA), the apex industry body for the Indian space industry, said Agnikul's suborbital launch will mark another important milestone.

"Unlike other rockets, Agnikul's rocket has been completely 3D-printed," he said, listing another significant milestone — the launch of the first commercially manufactured Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV), which is ISRO's workhorse launch vehicle.

"After years of deliberations, the technology was transferred to the industry. L&T and Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) are manufacturing a PSLV that is likely to be launched this year. ISRO will then focus on developing newer technologies, like the Next Generation Launch Vehicle (NGLV)," said Lt Gen Bhatt.

Other than commercial launches, 2024 will also see a key satellite mission by Pixxel. The mission, a first for the company, will see the launch of six commercial satellites to create the world's first hyperspectral constellation.

This constellation of six satellites, called Fireflies, is expected to be launched in two batches around June. "The launch will either be carried out by ISRO's PSLV or SpaceX's Falcon 9," said Awais Ahmed, founder-CEO of Pixxel.

• Team India scale new summit

floated a suggestion to England's young off-spinner Shoaib Bashir. "Hit out and finish the game so that we can go to the mountains to see the snow," he would be heard saying on the stump microphone.

Sarfaraz was speaking for many in the stands, too. Just before tea, England's resistance would end. The innings-and-64-run win in two-and-a-half days gave India a 4-1 series triumph and the fans a weekend to explore the tourist destination in the foothills of Himalayas. It was a tame end to a series that had promised to change the status quo of international cricket.

After England's come-from-behind win in the first Test at Hyderabad in the last week of January, India's Test domination at home seemed under threat. Back then, England captain Ben Stokes's 'Test on steroids' brand of cricket, that had caught the imagination of the world, looked capable of beating India in India.

But in the next six weeks, India would win four Tests, discover a bunch of 20-something match-winners and show the world that they can win at home on fair pitches by playing aggressive and entertaining cricket.

Stokes would concede that they "lost to a better team." India coach Rahul Dravid did say that they missed key players — read Virat Kohli and Mohammed Shami — but others delivered. "Terrific to see youngsters do well. I am learning from them all the time. Rohit (Sharma) is a terrific leader. The guys gravitate towards him phenomenally, which is fantastic to see," he said, summing up the series that was much closer than the scoreline suggests.

Playing the long game

The one-sided Dharamsala win was the final confirmation that while England largely played one-dimensional aggressive cricket, India was more rounded, their approach more suited and nuanced to the game's oldest format. Taking stock of the top run-getters of the two sides — openers Yashasvi Jaiswal and Zak Crawley — gives an idea about the difference between the two sides.

Jaiswal, 22, with 712 runs, won the Man of the Series award. He also set a new Indian record of hitting 26 sixes in a series. His two double hundreds showed that he was no slogger but knew the art of building an innings. A new-age player who sharpened his big-hitting skills while playing for IPL franchise Rajasthan Royals, he hasn't forgotten the lessons he learnt on the Mumbai maidans.

Compare him to England's Crawley, 26, who scored 407 runs. Stokes has constantly talked him up, calling him a talented cricketer who will serve England for long. He had four 50s in the five Tests but couldn't make his starts count. On Saturday here when his team wanted him to stick around, he was out for a duck.

Among the five Indian debutants in the series, Sarfaraz, Dhruv Jurel and Akash Deep showed the temperament to pull their team out of trouble. Clearly, India's young were more equipped to deal with pressure.

England had a dodgy plan to counter the Indian spinners. Stokes would spell it out at the end of the series. "When India gets on top with the ball, a lot of men come around the bat and you have to find ways to keep those guys out of play and you need to be positive enough to take those risks and sometimes it could lead to downfall," he would say. It wasn't sometime, it was most of the time.

England distracted

This was the case on what turned out to be the final day of the series. Jonny Bairstow, playing his 100th Test, would swing his bat like a golf club when Ravichandran Ashwin was weaving his spin-web. He did connect for three sixes and scored 39 runs but when your team has conceded a first-innings lead of 259, a senior player needs to come up with a better game plan.

Before he got out defending to left-arm wrist-spinner Kuldeep Yadav, Bairstow was busy arguing with Shubman Gill in the slips. "Why did you tell Jimmy that he should retire?" — the stump mic would relay the out-of-place query to the world. This was in reference to the exchange England veteran James Anderson had with the young Indian batsman on Day 2. England needed Bairstow to battle with the bat.

Commitment was something coach Dravid would point out when asked about the takeaways from the series. "Ashwin coming back to the team after what all he went through for 24 hours. This is what the team is about and the character of the team," he said referring to the off-spinner's middle-of-the- Rajkot Test trip to Chennai and back because of his mother's sudden illness.

HARYANA SEGMENT OF DWARKA EXPRESSWAY

Ahead of grand opening tomorrow, final checks on

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
GURGAON, MARCH 9

AHEAD OF the inauguration of the Haryana segment of the Dwarka Expressway by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar on Saturday inspected preparations at the site, the four-layer trumpet sections, the helipad, and the venue for the public meeting.

According to a statement by the Gurgaon administration, the PM will enter Haryana at the Bajghera border via road where he will be welcomed by Governor Bandaru Dattatreya and Khattar, along with other dignitaries. Following this, he will inaugurate the Dwarka Expressway at Sector 84 and address the public.

Meanwhile, issuing a traffic advisory, Gurgaon Traffic Police asked commuters not to take the road from the cloverleaf interchange towards IMT Manesar — where the rally will be held near Antariksh Chowk — on Monday.

"Heavy vehicles' entry on Dwarka Expressway will be restricted from Sunday at 5 pm, so drivers are advised to use KMP during this time. Vehicles from Rewari, Narnaul, and Dharuhera towards the rally will proceed towards Antariksh Chowk via Rampura Chowk and Vatika Chowk. Vehicles from Faridabad, Palwal, Sohna will approach the rally site at Antariksh Chowk via Cloverleaf Road on Dwarka Expressway. Vehicles from Pataudi heading to the rally will use the Sati Chowk route to reach the rally site at Antariksh Chowk," the advisory said.

Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar inspects preparations at the site in Gurgaon on Saturday. *Express*

DCP (Traffic) Vijender Vij said there will be traffic jams near Rampura and Vatika Chowk towards Sector 82 when the rally will proceed: "It is likely that the PM might take part in a programme on NH-48. Though it has not been confirmed, traffic will be affected."

On Saturday, Gurgaon Deputy Commissioner Nishant Kumar Yadav imposed curbs on the use of drones, under CrPC Section 144, on March 10-11. The Expressway is set to connect Shiv Murti near IGI Airport to Kherki Daula toll, offering an improved commuting option in Gurgaon and facilitating travel to Delhi. Being built at an estimated cost of Rs 9,000 crore, it is segmented into four parts, with two in Delhi (10.01 km) and two in Haryana (18.9 km).

Gr Noida: 76 college goers among 90 hospitalised due to 'food poisoning'

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NOIDA, MARCH 9

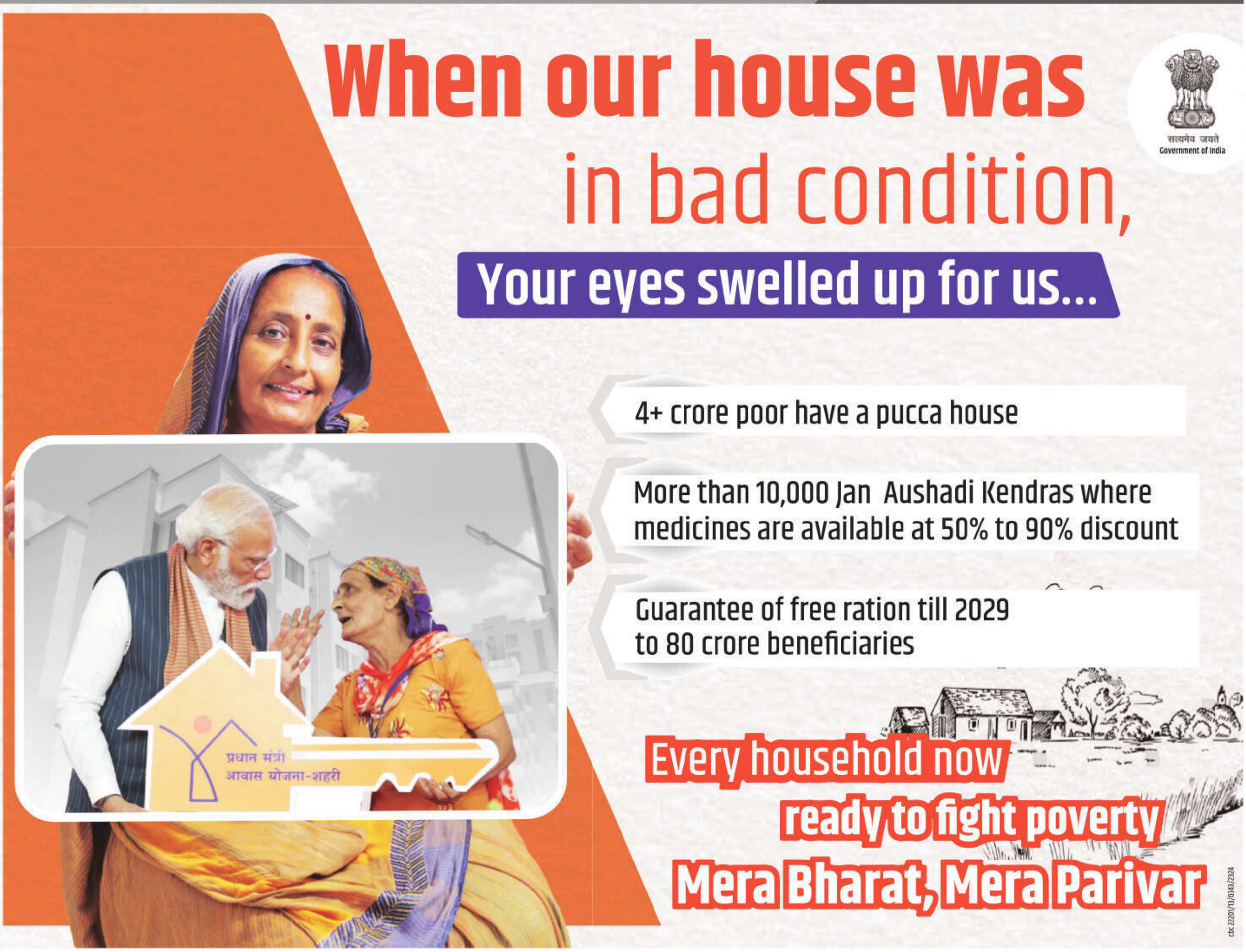
MORE THAN 90 people, including 76 college students residing in a private hostel in Greater Noida, were hospitalised in two separate incidents of suspected food poisoning after they consumed "*puris*" made from buckwheat flour (kuttu ka atta) on Friday night, said officials.

District food department officials have visited the hostel and collected samples of the meal for examination, said officers in the know. According to police, they were informed on Friday evening that more than 70 students had fallen unwell after consuming a meal to break their fast at the hostel in Knowledge Park area, on the occasion of Maha Shivaratri.

Ashok Kumar, additional DCP of Greater Noida, said: "The incident took place at Aryan Residency, where students from different colleges live. The food was prepared around 9 pm, and within a few minutes after eating it, students complained of uneasiness, vomiting, and diarrhoea. Police immediately admitted all of them to a nearby hospital, where they are undergoing treatment. All the students are now stable, and the Food Inspector has collected samples of the meal."

The Aryan residency, meanwhile, said that the students had '*puris*' made of buckwheat flour. "After having the meal, students complained of uneasiness, and then fell sick. We are taking care of them, along with their medical expenses," said an official.

In a similar incident, 17 other people from a locality in Barola village, Sector 49, were admitted to the district hospital for suspected food poisoning. "They had eaten buckwheat flour purchased from a local shop, following which, they complained of vomiting and dizziness. They were admitted to a hospital late Friday night. So far, no case has been registered in the matter," said another official.



ANAND VIHAR	ROHINI	R K PURAM	PUSA
Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
137 AQI PM 2.5	136 AQI PM 2.5	142 AQI PM 2.5	154 AQI PM 10

0 – 500 At 6 pm

0-50 Good | 51-100 Satisfactory | 101-200 Moderate | 201-300 Poor | 301-400 Very Poor | 401-500 Severe

SKYWATCH

FORECAST: March 10
Partly cloudy sky

MAX: 28 — 0.4° C below normal

MIN: 11 — 3° C below normal

BRIEFLY

Boy killed after concrete girder at expressway construction site falls on him

New Delhi: A 12-year-old boy was crushed to death when a heavy concrete girder beam fell on him at a construction site of the Delhi-Dehradun Expressway in Geeta Colony area in East Delhi, police said on Saturday. The incident took place on Friday afternoon after which the boy's family members and neighbours held a protest at the site demanding action against the contractors and the construction company, they said. Police said a case under IPC sections 287 (negligent conduct with respect to machinery) and 304A (causing death by negligence) has been registered against the contractors. "Preliminary inquiry revealed that the heavy slabs were kept in haphazard manner and the space was also not guarded by the company," a police officer said. According to the officer, the boy lived with his family, who are originally from Bangladesh, at Multani Mohalla near the construction site. Around 1.30 pm, police received a call regarding a boy lying under the beam near Shani temple in the area, another officer said. A team was dispatched to the spot and a hydraulic crane was called to lift the beam and remove the boy, the officer said. Police said he was rushed to a hospital where he was declared brought dead.

Man shot dead in NE Delhi

New Delhi: A man was shot dead and another injured in Northeast Delhi's Seelampur area late on Saturday, police said. The alleged attack occurred at 8.45 pm. Arbaz and Abid suffered multiple bullet injuries, an officer said. The victims, aged between 25 and 30, were taken to a nearby hospital where doctors declared Arbaz dead, the officer said. Abid has been admitted to GTB Hospital where his condition is said to be critical, he added. DCP (Northeast) Joy Tirkey said a murder case is being registered. CCTV camera footage is being analysed, the DCP added. **PTI**

BJP HITS BACK AT KEJRIWAL FOR 'GIVING FALSE HOPES'

AAP follows a development model, BJP destruction: CM

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, MARCH 9

COMMENDING THE Budget presented by his cabinet colleague Atishi, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal Saturday sought to draw a contrast between two separate governance paradigms prevalent in the country — the AAP's "development" versus the BJP's "destruction" models — in the Delhi Assembly.

Accusing the BJP of unleashing central agencies such as the ED and CBI on opposition leaders seeking to wipe out its political rivals, Kejriwal urged Delhiites to rally against "forces hindering crucial services" such as mohalla clinics, education and free electricity, to save the city from such 'enemies'. Delhi BJP president Virendra Sachdeva, in response, accused the CM of giving false hope of development to the people of Delhi for the last decade.

Kejriwal said, "In 2014-15, two significant events occurred... In May 2014, the people of the country gave a strong mandate to Narendra Modi *ji* and the BJP, with 282 seats in the Centre... in February 2015, the people of Delhi gave a huge mandate by giving 67 out of 70 seats, forming a new government in Delhi under AAP".

Kejriwal once again accused the BJP of unleashing central agencies such as the ED and CBI on Oppn leaders. *Amit Mehra*

"... Both these governments presented two types of governance models... that... guarantee victory in elections... One governance model is a development model, and the other is a model of destruction," he said.

Despite not having "any power", the AAP national convenor said, the AAP slowly but steadily, took recourse to "fighting, and pleading" to fix the city's schools, hospitals, ensuring 24x7 free electricity and water among others as part of the "AAP's development model."

On the other hand, the BJP's "model of destruction" sought to "crush, eliminate, buy MLAs, break, arrest, put in jail, use the ED and CBI" against opposition party leaders, so "no one will be left to contest the elections". "... they (BJP) don't do good work themselves, and stop others from doing good work... If they had done some work, they wouldn't have needed the ED, CBI, police, and IT (department)...," he alleged.

After AAP leaders like Manish Sisodia, Satyendar Jain and Sanjay Singh being sent to jail, the CM said it was now his turn. "... There are many friends in the BJP... they informed me that first, they will put me in jail, then topple the AAP government. The first thing they'll do after toppling the government is stopping the free 24x7 electricity scheme," he alleged.

"They have sent me so many notices as if I'm the biggest terrorist in the country... I have received 8 summons from the ED, and they say the 9th one is on the way. I want to announce in this House that eight summons have come, eight new schools will be built in Delhi," he added.

Reacting to the CM's allegations, Sachdeva said, "For the last decade, Kejriwal has been giving false hope of development to Delhiites to mislead them..."

SPRING IN DELHI

At the NDMC's flower festival at Central Park, Connaught Place, Saturday. *Praveen Khanna*

'For housewives like me, Rs 1,000 is a lot': Women weigh in on govt's new scheme

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, MARCH 9

"EMPOWERMENT CANNOT happen with an empty pocket", said Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal Saturday at an event while highlighting the Delhi government's recent budget announcement of providing women over 18 years with Rs 1,000 per month.

Among his audience were several women who believed the scheme will be to their benefit.

Anita, a 48-year-old resident of Trilokpuri, said, "For housewives like me, even Rs 1,000 is a lot. For women who don't get any money from their husbands, it is important, and this will benefit them." She also hailed the government's move of arranging buses to ferry them to the venue.

Shalu (32), also from Trilokpuri, attended the event with her two children. She said: "A lot has been done, like for education... My child studies in a school, under the EWS category. The government is offering free electricity and water, but because we live in a rented house, we have to pay for that... If women can access this money, it will be good."

Ashiya Begun (45), a housewife from Mayur Vihar, said: "Some of that money can go towards tuition for children or for buying a gas cylinder. It will be of use... We live in a jhuggi and have our own meters, so we get free water and electricity."

Women attend a Mahila Samman Samroh, where CM Kejriwal addressed the audience, Saturday. *Amit Mehra*

Meanwhile, Lakshmi (60), from Kotla Mubarakpur, said: "I don't know when we will start getting this or how, but it is a good scheme. Women can spend it on food, tuition..."

Calling it the "world's biggest women empowerment programme", the CM told the women: "In the name of empowerment, there has been fraud so far. All political parties have been promising to empower women... In the name of empowerment, a woman party member is given something, and then it is said that they have been empowered. Women should be given posts and tickets... but only some women benefit from that. What do other women get? Nothing."

He added: "Now, in every woman's purse, I will put Rs 1,000 every month. Empower-ment cannot happen with an empty pocket... Real empowerment will happen now... This has never happened anywhere in the world yet... that women over the age of 18 are given Rs 1,000 every month. Except for women who pay income tax, get pension or are government employees, everybody else will get this amount. If there are three eligible women beneficiaries in a family, they all will get it... Rs 3,000 per month, Rs 36,000 a year..."

Taking a dig at the opposition, he said, "These people, from the other party, are opposing me. '*Kejriwal paise kharab kar raha hain. Mahilayein bigad jayengi*'. Isn't this what they are saying? *Zyada se zyada ek mahila bechari kya kar legi? Jaise kisi ne kaha... golgappe kha legi, kapde khareed legi... bas itna hi toh kar legi, aur kya bigad jayegi. Picture dekh legi...*," said Kejriwal.

He added that the AAP has "done a lot for the women" like free bus rides, and free electricity, water and education. "A woman runs the household... women bear the brunt of the rising expenses," said the CM.

"After this announcement, talk all around is that all the seven (Lok Sabha) seats will go to Kejriwal. But don't think of this and sit at home... I give you three responsibilities — every woman will vote. The second responsibility is to make the men of the family vote... The third is you campaign in the mohalla... If we have these seven seats, we will be stronger... The L-G, BJP, and the Centre will not be able to stop any work," he said.

AAP workers and supporters were also part of the event.

Reacting to the CM's statements, Delhi BJP Mahila Morcha president and spokesperson Praveen Shankar Kapoor said Kejriwal in 2022 had made a similar announcement to provide the women of Punjab with Rs 1,000 per month, but "could not show that the beneficiaries were getting the amount regularly".

Gangster couple Kala Jathedi & Anuradha to tie the knot — under watchful eye of 200 cops

UPASIKA SINGHAL
NEW DELHI, MARCH 9

TUESDAY'S WEDDING at Santosh Garden, a banquet hall in Dwarka, will be a peculiar one. Apart from the bride and groom, their family and friends, around 200 police personnel will be in attendance — as many as the guests expected to be part of the event. The couple, in question, are notorious gangsters Kala Jathedi and Anuradha Choudhary who have received the court's permission to officially tie the knot.

When contacted, Delhi Police spokesperson Suman Nalwa refused to comment on the details of deployment that would be put in place citing security concerns.

According to police sources, however, an estimated 150-200 personnel from several units would be deployed in and around the venue on March 12. These, sources said, would include personnel from units including SWAT, the 3rd Battalion, Special Cell and district police.

Haryana Police personnel, sources added, will take over Jathedi's security after he enters the state's jurisdiction for the Grah Prawesh ceremony to be held at his house in Sonepat before he is scheduled to go back to Mandoli Jail, where he is serving time.

A senior Delhi Prisons official said the jail administration had conveyed the court order to the Delhi Police, whose 3rd Battalion would escort and secure Jathedi during his parole period for the ceremonies.

According to Jathedi's legal team, around 150-200 people will be attending the wedding. From Anuradha's side, her sister and brother will be in attendance. The guest list is still being decided by Jathedi's family, which will be shared with DCP Dwarka on Monday once finalised, they said.

Arrangements at the venue, police sources said, included hydraulic platforms which would raise the couple above the ground for the *jaimala* (exchange of garlands) and a "golden theme" for decorations at the banquet hall.

Kala Jathedi and Anuradha Choudhary met in 2020

Duo met 4 years ago

Jathedi alias Sandeep Jhanjhariya was born into an agricultural family. As a youngster, he liked to wrestle and dreamt of joining the Armed forces. However, he became involved in petty crimes from a young age and was jailed for the first time in 2004. His crimes eventually escalated to murder and extortion, according to police sources, citing his interrogation report.

Jathedi, sources said, landed in jail again in 2012 after attacking a police vehicle and killing three men, and stealing rifles. In January 2020, while lodged in Bhondsi jail, he was introduced to gangsters Lawrence Bishnoi and Sampat Nehra through his childhood friend, Raju Basodi. They planned his escape from prison — the following month, Jathedi escaped custody in Faridabad after a shootout, said sources.

It was later that year, in November 2020, that Jathedi was introduced to Anuradha — aka Madam Don — in Indore, where she arrived while on the run. Love blossomed and after an informal temple wedding, the two continued to give Delhi Police the slip before being arrested by the Special Cell in UP's Saharanpur in 2021.

Anuradha had been involved in several kidnapping and extortion cases in the past, which she had carried out at Rajasthan gangster Anand Pal's behest, as per police sources. She had alleged, as per sources, that she ran Pal's gang for a short time while he was on the run between 2015 and 2017, but later recanted the statement saying his daughter and brother, Vicky Singh (who introduced her to Jathedi) had run it in his stead. She was also reportedly in a relationship with Pal until he died in a police encounter in 2017. Pal and Vicky also had links to the Bishnoi gang.

According to police sources, it was Bishnoi and gangster Goldy Brar who had instructed Anuradha to teach Jathedi how to hide his tracks digitally while the two remained on the run. A BTech graduate in Computer Science who also holds an MBA degree, she readily took up the task.

As per police sources, the two lived as husband and wife in Indore for four months before shifting base to Bihar's Purnia in March 2021. Till their arrest, the couple went to Lucknow, Mumbai, Tirupati, Mathura, and Agra before settling at Haridwar. Anuradha managed to get bail post arrest; Jathedi is in jail.

Surprisingly, the two managed to keep in touch despite their circumstances. "For Jathedi, marriage will be a valid reason to seek frequent paroles while Anuradha can have a place to stay with her in-laws," said a senior police officer.

L-G visits colonies and slums to flag civic issues again, Govt hits back

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, MARCH 9

THE AAP-Delhi government and the L-G's office locked horns over conditions at slums and unauthorised colonies following another visit by L-G VK Saxena to assess the situation on the ground.

Taking to X over the issue following a visit to two such locations, Saxena termed the conditions a vivid example of "inaction and insensitivity." The AAP countered by alleging that nearly 3 lakh slum dwellers had become homeless at Saxena's directions since he took over.

"Complaints about lack of public facilities are being continuously received from every part of Delhi. In this context, yesterday I went to JJ Cluster located in Golakuan Tehkhand and Sanjay Colony, Okhla and saw the ground reality from there. A more vivid example of inaction and insensitivity cannot be found than this" Saxena alleged, posting pictures from his visit to the two locations.

Taking on Saxena, a Delhi government source alleged that since he took office, he had "demolished as many 'jhuggis' as never before in Delhi."

"In the 1.5-2 years, nearly 3 lakh slum dwellers have become homeless under the directions of L-G *sahab*... on the orders of L-G sahab, there was an attempt to demolish Ghosiya Colony in Mehrauli inappropriately. When the Kejriwal government raised the voice of the people living there in court, the High Court stayed the demolition," sources alleged.

"In the last few days, L-G *sahab* has rendered numerous people homeless. Because of this, now before the elections, he has to play this drama... he knows that this time, people living in unauthorised colonies and slums in Delhi will vote against the BJP," the source alleged.

On their part, L-G House sources called the Delhi government's response a "typical and blatant lie", adding that not a single jhuggi had been removed at the L-G's directions.

"Infact, on many occasions, the last being at Majnu ka Tila, demolitions have been stopped due to LG's intervention...," L-G House sources alleged.

YouTube lessons to disguises: How a gang posing as differently abled people burgled homes in South Delhi

ARNABJIT SUR
NEW DELHI, MARCH 9

AS THE clock struck 6 am, four men in their 20s would wake up at their one-room flat in Ghaziabad and get ready for work. Armed with items "essential" for their get-up — black glasses, walking sticks, backpacks, and pamphlets seeking donations for their 'deaf, dumb and blind' organisation — they would form a chain holding onto each other's shoulders before stepping out to catch a bus to South Delhi. There, posing as visually challenged men, they entered gated societies and asked domestic helpers and drivers about the whereabouts of their employers. Once they had enough information, they would sneak into homes and make off with any valuables they could find.

According to senior Delhi Police officers, the gang burgled at least five houses during each 'visit', targeting posh areas including South Extension, Jangpura, Hauz Khas, Safdarjung Enclave and Saket. This year alone, police data recorded their involvement in at least 30 burglaries.

A recent incident that brought the gang back into focus was a spate of electronic gadget thefts reported from students' paying guest (PG) accommodations in and around South Delhi during the day. As many as 27 phones and 11 laptops were stolen in 15 days. In February, police nabbed four men — P Sathyavelu, 22; Shiva, 22; Kumar, 24; and Prabhu, 24.

The MO

According to a police officer, "new recruits" — mostly young men — are hired every three months and taught mannerisms and gestures of a person who is specially challenged through YouTube videos.

Mostly from villages in Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka, the accused allegedly travel to Delhi and other metros by train — with four-five gang members choosing a city each. They mostly live on the outskirts and pose as differently abled men before their landlords while renting a flat to evade suspicion.

After zeroing in on targets, two would land outside homes with fake IDs and convince people to donate to a generous cause. To make the act seem convincing, they would show forged signatures of around 100 residents in and around the society who had already donated to their fictitious organisation. Police said if the victim was convinced and stepped away to get money, two from the gang would sneak in and steal valuables — high-end laptops, iPhones, tablets and DSLR cameras and speakers.

Officers said the men remained in a city for 15 to 20 days before heading back with at least Rs 5 to 10 lakh worth of stolen valuables before selling them at handsome prices in their states.

Recent cases

To crack the PG thefts, a team of the Special Staff of the South district, led by Inspector Dheeraj Mahlawat, was formed to trace and nab the accused persons. On February 21, the team received a tip-off that burglars would be at Press Enclave Road; the police caught them but the accused communicated only through gestures and continued their charade.

"They presented a letter showing some entries of charitable donations given to them by different people with signatures. However, when their belongings were searched, several mobile phones and laptops were recovered," said DCP (South) Ankit Chauhan.

The DCP added, "In this particular case, the men operated in the early hours of the day to target homes, especially in areas adjoining educational institutions where students lived as they usually owned costly electronic gadgets... They posed as students or members of deaf and dumb schools/orphanages and urged their victims to donate; they also showed a member certificate from the (fake) organisation".

In another case in Jangpura on January 16, advocate Akarsh Mishra alleged a man posing as a specially challenged person entered his house on the pretext of seeking funds for a charity and made off with six laptops, smartwatches, phones and a speaker. A week later, police arrested one Venkatesh from Andhra Pradesh with the stolen items.

"During questioning, the five arrested men claimed they saw YouTube videos on how differently abled people behave and picked up their characteristics...," added an officer.

While being produced in court too, officers said the men continued to proclaim innocence to be confronted with interrogation videos of confessions.

HOW THE GANG OPERATED

Four gang members were arrested in Feb. *Express*

- Four-five men travel to Delhi and other metropolitan cities from villages in Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu and rent a flat on the outskirts, posing as differently abled people
- They then head to their victims' homes donning a disguise -- black sunglasses and walking sticks -- and hand out pamphlets seeking donations for their fictitious organisation
- They carry out a recce of their target area mostly South Delhi localities like Safdarjung Enclave and Hauz Khas, among others
- When the victim steps away to get the money, two of them would sneak in and steal valuable items like mobile phones, cameras

Returning to their hometowns, they would sell these items at higher prices in markets there

KMC audi renovation likely to start next week

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, MARCH 9

FRANK THAKURDAS Memorial Auditorium — the heart of Kirori Mal College's cultural ecosystem — will soon sport "cutting-edge infrastructure" nearly two decades after its roof started leaking in 2003, and it was declared unsafe for students.

At 2 pm on Saturday, the *bhoomi pujan* and foundation stone laying ceremonies for the renovation work of the auditorium were held in the presence of Delhi University Vice-Chancellor Professor Yogesh Singh, Director (South Campus) Shri Prakash Singh, Registrar Vikas Gupta, and Proctor Rajni Abbi.

According to a statement issued by the college on Friday: "A team, led by the Vice-Chancellor, examined the auditorium which is in dilapidated condition, and they were also briefed about the proposed designs for the renovation project slated to begin next week... The KMC auditorium is at the heart of the college's cultural ecosystem. Substantial progress in terms of gathering support, designing cutting-edge infrastructure, and proposing future directions has been made."

"A team, led by the Kirori Mal College principal, Professor Dinesh Khattar, made a presentation to the Ministry of Culture in February 2024, which then awarded the college a financial grant of Rs 6 crore for the construction and renovation of the auditorium. The alumni contribution of Rs 2.17 crore has been enhanced to Rs 4.35 crore...," the statement added.

This comes nearly two decades after the roof of the KMC auditorium started leaking in 2003. *Express*

Following the damage to the roof — small repairs notwithstanding — a design for a renovation plan of the auditorium was asked to be put in place in 2005. However, no action was taken. In 2010, the structure was declared unsafe and entry was banned.

To be sure, the enduring image of KMC is of an institution with a rich cultural life — it is well known for its famous theatre society, 'The Players', formed in 1957 under the stewardship of Frank Thakurdas (after whom the auditorium is named), a Partition migrant from Lahore.

IN ENTRY-LEVEL CLASSES

Admission for EWS, differently abled in pvt schools to begin soon

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, MARCH 9

THE ADMISSION process for the category comprising the economically weaker section, disadvantaged groups, and children with special needs in private schools in the national capital is likely to begin soon, Delhi government sources have said.

This year's admission schedule and guidelines for EWS admissions are also yet to be released. This comes after the Delhi High Court, in an interim order on Tuesday, said that the annual family income limit for school admission in the EWS category will now be Rs 2.5 lakh, up from the previous amount of Rs 1 lakh.

On Tuesday, the High Court modified a December 5 judgment of a single-judge bench, which had directed the Delhi government to increase the threshold income for EWS admissions from Rs 1 lakh to Rs 5 lakh, with an immediate effect. Following the December judgment, the Directorate of Education (DoE) had moved an appeal in the matter.

In private unaided schools, 25 per cent of seats are reserved for the EWS, DG and CWSN students; with 3 per cent of this for CWSNs.

For students under the general category, the admission process for nursery, kindergarten (KG), and Class 1 in private schools began on November 23, 2023. The academic year usually kicks off in April.

In 2023, the admission process for the EWS, DG and CWSN students had kicked off earlier with the opening of an online module for filling up applications on February 10. The first computerised draw of lots by the DoE for the admission of students under these categories was conducted on March 3, as per the admission schedule released last year. In 2022, the online application process for admission had begun on March 22, and on April 7 in the year 2021.

Several seats under the category remain vacant each year. For instance, out of nearly 35,000 seats available in private schools for nursery, KG, and Class I students last year, more than 6,000 remained vacant, according to data submitted to the Delhi Assembly in response to a question raised in December.

People in distress, fix water issues in 7 days: Resolution in Assembly directs chief secy

New Delhi: The Delhi Legislative Assembly, in a Resolution on Saturday, directed Chief Secretary Naresh Kumar to resolve issues of sewage overflow, and water contamination and leakage in the national capital within a week.

The "indifference" of government officials concerned in this regard has plunged Delhi residents in different parts of the city into distress, as they grapple with the issues of water scarcity and sewage overflow, read the Resolution. With unanimity, the Assembly emphasised accountability, asserting that if the issues persist beyond March 15, the Chief Secretary, who has been directed to monitor the matter personally, will bear the responsibility.

Water Minister and Delhi Jal Board (DJB) chairperson, Atishi, while supporting the Resolution presented by fellow member Dilip Pandey, said they receive "numerous complaints daily" related to sewage overflow, contaminated water supply, and broken water pipelines. "On Friday alone, I received 80 complaints — both on my official email and personal email — related to DJB matters within 24 hours... The DJB's grievance redressal portal has over 10,000 pending complaints...," she said. **ENS**

After cool start this March, Delhi's mercury may start rising next week

The minimum & maximum temperatures were 10°C and 26.9°C, respectively, in Delhi on Saturday. *Amit Mehra*

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, MARCH 9

WHILE DELHI has been seeing cooler-than-normal nights this week, a gradual rise in temperature is expected over the week ahead, going by the India Meteorological Department's (IMD) forecast.

The minimum temperature early Saturday was 10 degrees Celsius, four degrees below the normal.

The minimum temperature has remained below 10 degrees Celsius all week, when the normal or long-period average for this time of the year is 13 to 14 degrees Celsius. With a western disturbance bringing strong winds of 20 to 30 kmph to Delhi, the maximum temperature on Saturday was 26.9 degrees, a notch below normal.

This may rise next week. An IMD bulletin issued on Saturday said that the maximum temperature over northwest India could see a gradual rise by 3 to 5 degrees in the next five days.

With this, the maximum temperature in Delhi could rise to around 31 degrees by March 12, while the minimum temperature could remain at around 12 or 13 degrees next week, going by the forecast.

Another western disturbance is likely to affect northwest India from March 12 onwards, and very light rainfall and strong winds of 25 to 35 kmph are on the forecast for Delhi on March 13, according to the IMD.

The rest of the week is likely to remain dry.

CORRIGENDUM
POSTPONEMENT OF WALK-IN-INTERVIEW FOR THE POSTS OF ASSISTANT MANAGER (01) AND OFFICE ASSISTANT (01) UNDER RKVY -RAFTAAR PROJECT

Due to administrative reasons, the walk-in-interview for the posts of Assistant Manager (01) and Office Assistant (01) under RKVY-RAFTAAR Project which was scheduled to be held on 11.03.2024 at 11:00 A.M. and 03:30 P.M. respectively has been postponed till further notice.

-Sd/-
Principal Investigator
RABI, CCSHAU

IRCON INTERNATIONAL LIMITED
NAVRATNA COMPANY
(A Govt. of India Undertaking)
Website : www.ircon.org, CIN - L45203DL1976GOI008171

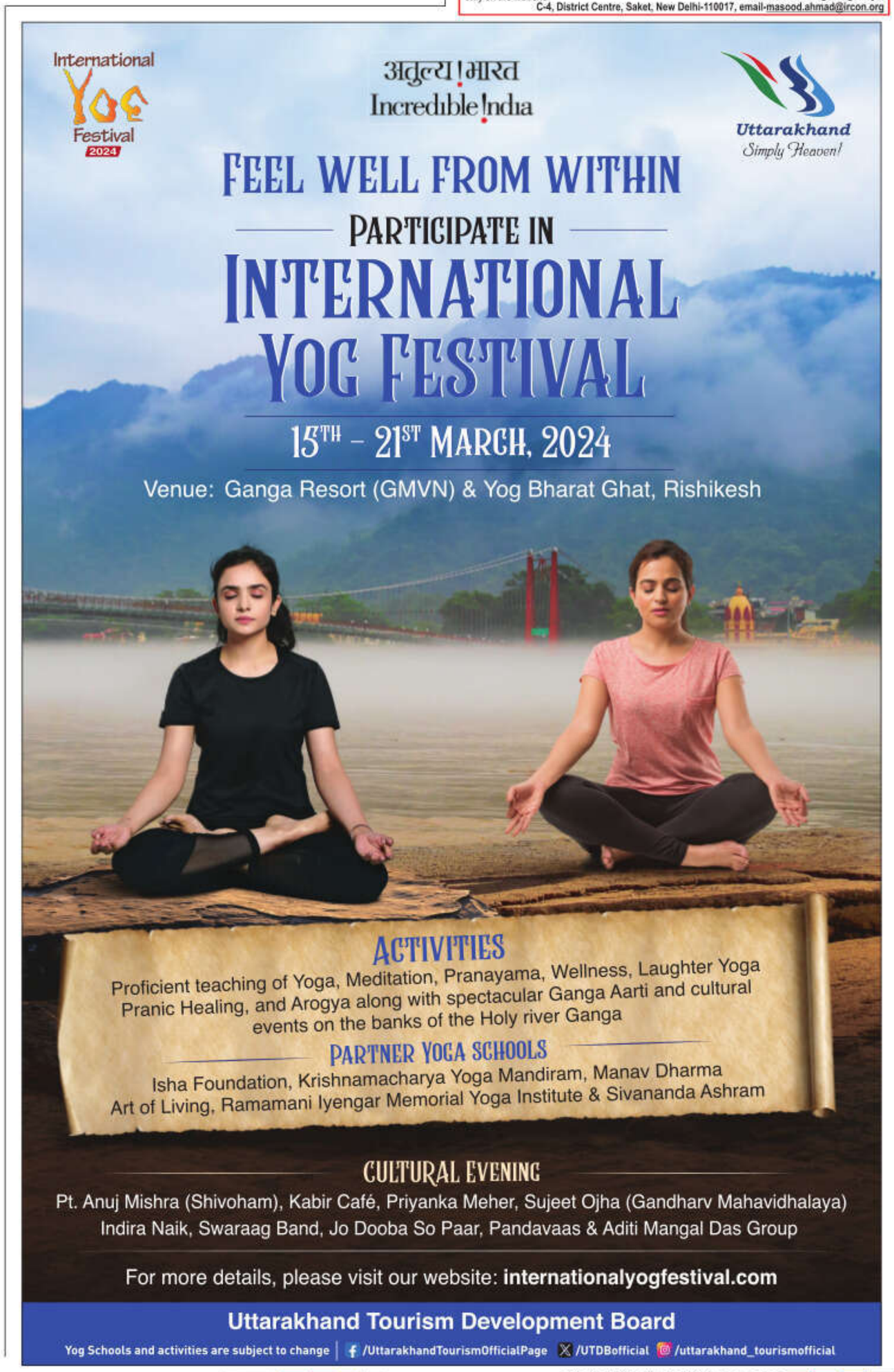
Request for Proposal

On behalf of Ministry of Micro Small and Medium Enterprises (Govt. of India), proposals are invited from bidders meeting qualifying requirements for **"Development of MSME Technology Centre at following locations on Public Private Partnership (PPP) with Built, Operate and Transfer (BOT) Mode"**:

Sl. No.	Technology Centre Name/Location	NIT No. and Date	Estimated Cost including GST	Last Date of e-Bid Submission
1	Sindhudurg (Maharashtra)	IRCON/MSME/e-Tender/RFP/PPP/TC Sindhudurg/ET03 Dt.: 11.03.2024	Rs.182.21 Crore	10.04.2024
2	Nagpur (Maharashtra)	IRCON/MSME/e-Tender/RFP/PPP/TC Nagpur/ET04, Dt.: 11.03.2024	Rs.182.69 Crore	10.04.2024
3	Pune (Maharashtra)	IRCON/MSME/e-Tender/RFP/PPP/TC Pune/ET05, Dt.: 11.03.2024	Rs.181.82 Crore	10.04.2024
4	Jhansi (UP)	IRCON/MSME/e-Tender/RFP/PPP/TC Jhansi/ET06, Dt.: 11.03.2024	Rs.182.21 Crore	10.04.2024
5	Ambala (Haryana)	IRCON/MSME/e-Tender/RFP/PPP/TC Ambala/ET07, Dt.: 11.03.2024	Rs.159.44 Crore	10.04.2024
6	Samba (J&K)	IRCON/MSME/e-Tender/RFP/PPP/TC Samba/ET08, Dt.: 11.03.2024	Rs.160.82 Crore	10.04.2024
7	Bokaro (Jharkhand)	IRCON/MSME/e-Tender/RFP/PPP/TC Bokaro/ET09, Dt.: 11.03.2024	Rs.182.21 Crore	10.04.2024
8	Coimbatore (TN)	IRCON/MSME/e-Tender/RFP/PPP/TC Coimbatore/ET10, Dt.: 11.03.2024	Rs.167.82 Crore	10.04.2024
9	Jabalpur (MP)	IRCON/MSME/e-Tender/RFP/PPP/TC Jabalpur/ET11, Dt.: 11.03.2024	Rs.187.33 Crore	10.04.2024
10	Bilaspur (Chhattisgarh)	IRCON/MSME/e-Tender/RFP/PPP/TC Bilaspur/ET12, Dt.: 11.03.2024	Rs.183.36 Crore	10.04.2024
11	Rourkela (Odisha)	IRCON/MSME/e-Tender/RFP/PPP/TC Rourkela/ET13, Dt.: 11.03.2024	Rs.177.52 Crore	10.04.2024
12	Thiruvanantpuram (Kerala)	IRCON/MSME/e-Tender/RFP/PPP/TC Thiruvanantpuram/ET14, Dt.: 11.03.2024	Rs.164.41 Crore	10.04.2024
13	Rajkot (Gujarat)	IRCON/MSME/e-Tender/RFP/PPP/TC Rajkot/ET15, Dt.: 11.03.2024	Rs.181.79 Crore	10.04.2024
14	Kopparthy (AP)	IRCON/MSME/e-Tender/RFP/PPP/TC Kopparthy/ET16, Dt.: 11.03.2024	Rs.175.70 Crore	10.04.2024

Tender Document will be available on e-tender portal website https://etenders.gov.in/eprocure/app w.e.f. 13.03.2024. Corrigendum, if any, would be hosted only on the website.

Chief General Manager/Highways,
C-4, District Centre, Saket, New Delhi-110017, email-masood.ahmad@ircon.org



Maharashtra-State Infrastructure Development Corporation Ltd.
(A Government of Maharashtra Undertaking)
CIN-U43900MH2023SGC412992
Head Office- B/13, 13th floor, Bakhtawar building, 229, Nariman Point, Mumbai 400 021
Mail.id- maha-infra@outlook.com Ph.no 022-20822684 /022-20822685

E-TENDER NOTICE NO.04 OF 2023-2024

Maharashtra-State Infrastructure Development Corporation Ltd. (the "Authority"), A Government of Maharashtra undertaking, is engaged in the development of infrastructure in Maharashtra and as part of endeavour, The Authority has decided to undertake road development works on EPC mode in the state of Maharashtra through**15** packages spread over **Konkan** region. Maharashtra-State Infrastructure Development Corporation Ltd. now invites online bids for following works:
Details are as follows:-
1. Date of Issue of E-Tender Notice: (Online) 10/03/2024 Time -10.30 Hrs.
2. Pre-Bid Meeting: 22/03/2024 Time -15.00 Hrs.
3. Last date of submitting the E-Tender Notice: (Online) 12/04/2024 Time- 17.00 Hrs.
4. Tender opening (If possible):- 15/04/2024 Time- 15.00 Hrs.
Notes:
1. All eligible/interested contractors who want to participate in tendering process should compulsory get enrolled on tendering portal "http: mahatenders.gov.in" the appropriate category applicable to them.
2. It is compulsory for all participates to submit all documents online
3. Other term and conditions are displayed in online e-tender forms.
4. Right to reject any or all online bid of work without assigning any reasons thereof is reserved.
5. Above Tender Notice is displayed on website www.mahatenders.gov.in. and office board of CE, MSIDC, at Bandhkam Bhavan,4th floor, Fort, Mumbai-400001.

No. MSIDC/Mumbai/Tender/ 53/2024
Chief Engineer,
MSIDC, 4th floor, Badhkam bhavan Fort, Mumbai
Date: 07/03/2024
Engr.R.R.Hande
Chief Engineer, MSIDC, Mumbai

E-TENDER NOTICE NO.05 OF 2023-2024

Maharashtra-State Infrastructure Development Corporation Ltd.(the "Authority"), A Government of Maharashtra undertaking, is engaged in the development of infrastructure in Maharashtra and as part of endeavour, The Authority has decided to undertake road development works on EPC mode in the state of Maharashtra through **24** packages spread over **Nashik** region. Maharashtra-State Infrastructure Development Corporation Ltd. now invites online bids for following works:
Details are as follows:-
1. Date of Issue of E-Tender Notice: (Online) 10/03/2024 Time -10.30 Hrs.
2. Pre-Bid Meeting: 22/03/2024 Time -15.00 Hrs.
3. Last date of submitting the E-Tender Notice: (Online) 12/04/2024 Time- 17.00 Hrs.
4. Tender opening (If possible):- 15/04/2024 Time- 15.00 Hrs.
Notes:
1. All eligible/interested contractors who want to participate in tendering process should compulsory get enrolled on tendering portal "http: mahatenders.gov.in" the appropriate category applicable to them.
2. It is compulsory for all participates to submit all documents online
3. Other term and conditions are displayed in online e-tender forms.
4. Right to reject any or all online bid of work without assigning any reasons thereof is reserved.
5. Above Tender Notice is displayed on website www.mahatenders.gov.in. and office board of CE, MSIDC, at Bandhkam Bhavan,4th floor, Fort, Mumbai-400001.

No. MSIDC/Mumbai/Tender/54/2024
Chief Engineer,
MSIDC, 4th floor, Badhkam bhavan Fort, Mumbai
Date: 07/03/2024
Engr.R.R.Hande
Chief Engineer, MSIDC, Mumbai

E-TENDER NOTICE NO.06 OF 2023-2024

Maharashtra-State Infrastructure Development Corporation Ltd.(the "Authority"), A Government of Maharashtra undertaking, is engaged in the development of infrastructure in Maharashtra and as part of endeavour, The Authority has decided to undertake road development works on EPC mode in the state of Maharashtra through **19** packages spread over **Nagpur** region. Maharashtra-State Infrastructure Development Corporation Ltd. now invites online bids for following works:
Details are as follows:-
1. Date of Issue of E-Tender Notice: (Online) 10/03/2024 Time -10.30 Hrs.
2. Pre-Bid Meeting: 22/03/2024 Time -15.00 Hrs.
3. Last date of submitting the E-Tender Notice: (Online) 12/04/2024 Time- 17.00 Hrs.
4. Tender opening (If possible):- 15/04/2024 Time- 15.00 Hrs.
Notes:
1. All eligible/interested contractors who want to participate in tendering process should compulsory get enrolled on tendering portal "http: mahatenders.gov.in" the appropriate category applicable to them.
2. It is compulsory for all participates to submit all documents online
3. Other term and conditions are displayed in online e-tender forms.
4. Right to reject any or all online bid of work without assigning any reasons thereof is reserved.
5. Above Tender Notice is displayed on website www.mahatenders.gov.in. and office board of CE, MSIDC, at Bandhkam Bhavan,4th floor, Fort, Mumbai-400001.

No. MSIDC/Mumbai/Tender/55/2024
Chief Engineer,
MSIDC, 4th floor, Badhkam bhavan Fort, Mumbai
Date: 07/03/2024
Engr.R.R.Hande
Chief Engineer, MSIDC, Mumbai

E-TENDER NOTICE NO.07 OF 2023-2024

Maharashtra-State Infrastructure Development Corporation Ltd. (the "Authority"), A Government of Maharashtra undertaking, is engaged in the development of infrastructure in Maharashtra and as part of endeavour, The Authority has decided to undertake road development works on EPC mode in the state of Maharashtra through **29** packages spread over **Pune** region. Maharashtra-State Infrastructure Development Corporation Ltd. now invites online bids for following works:
Details are as follows:-
1. Date of Issue of E-Tender Notice: (Online) 10/03/2024 Time -10.30 Hrs.
2. Pre-Bid Meeting: 22/03/2024 Time -15.00 Hrs.
3. Last date of submitting the E-Tender Notice: (Online) 12/04/2024 Time- 17.00 Hrs.
4. Tender opening (If possible):- 15/04/2024 Time- 15.00 Hrs.
Notes:
1. All eligible/interested contractors who want to participate in tendering process should compulsory get enrolled on tendering portal "http: mahatenders.gov.in" the appropriate category applicable to them.
2. It is compulsory for all participates to submit all documents online
3. Other term and conditions are displayed in online e-tender forms.
4. Right to reject any or all online bid of work without assigning any reasons thereof is reserved.
5. Above Tender Notice is displayed on website www.mahatenders.gov.in. and office board of CE, MSIDC, at Bandhkam Bhavan,4th floor, Fort, Mumbai-400001.

No. MSIDC/Mumbai/Tender/56/2024
Chief Engineer,
MSIDC, 4th floor, Badhkam bhavan Fort, Mumbai
Date: 07/03/2024
Engr.R.R.Hande
Chief Engineer, MSIDC, Mumbai

E-TENDER NOTICE NO.08 OF 2023-2024

Maharashtra-State Infrastructure Development Corporation Ltd. (the "Authority"), A Government of Maharashtra undertaking, is engaged in the development of infrastructure in Maharashtra and as part of endeavour, The Authority has decided to undertake road development works on EPC mode in the state of Maharashtra through **30** packages spread over **Amravati** region. Maharashtra-State Infrastructure Development Corporation Ltd. now invites online bids for following works:
Details are as follows:-
1. Date of Issue of E-Tender Notice: (Online) 10/03/2024 Time -10.30 Hrs.
2. Pre-Bid Meeting: 22/03/2024 Time -15.00 Hrs.
3. Last date of submitting the E-Tender Notice: (Online) 12/04/2024 Time- 17.00 Hrs.
4. Tender opening (If possible):- 15/04/2024 Time- 15.00 Hrs.
Notes:
1. All eligible/interested contractors who want to participate in tendering process should compulsory get enrolled on tendering portal "http: mahatenders.gov.in" the appropriate category applicable to them.
2. It is compulsory for all participates to submit all documents online
3. Other term and conditions are displayed in online e-tender forms.
4. Right to reject any or all online bid of work without assigning any reasons thereof is reserved.
5. Above Tender Notice is displayed on website www.mahatenders.gov.in. and office board of CE, MSIDC, at Bandhkam Bhavan,4th floor, Fort, Mumbai-400001.

No. MSIDC/Mumbai/Tender/57/2024
Chief Engineer,
MSIDC, 4th floor, Badhkam bhavan Fort, Mumbai
Date: 07/03/2024
Engr.R.R.Hande
Chief Engineer, MSIDC, Mumbai

E-TENDER NOTICE NO.09 OF 2023-2024

Maharashtra-State Infrastructure Development Corporation Ltd. (the "Authority"), A Government of Maharashtra undertaking, is engaged in the development of infrastructure in Maharashtra and as part of endeavour, The Authority has decided to undertake road development works on EPC mode in the state of Maharashtra through**13** packages spread over **Nanded** region. Maharashtra-State Infrastructure Development Corporation Ltd. now invites online bids for following works:
Details are as follows:-
1. Date of Issue of E-Tender Notice: (Online) 10/03/2024 Time -10.30 Hrs.
2. Pre-Bid Meeting: 21/03/2024 Time -15.00 Hrs.
3. Last date of submitting the E-Tender Notice: (Online) 12/04/2024 Time- 17.00 Hrs.
4. Tender opening (If possible):- 15/04/2024 Time- 15.00 Hrs.
Notes:
1. All eligible/interested contractors who want to participate in tendering process should compulsory get enrolled on tendering portal "http: mahatenders.gov.in" the appropriate category applicable to them.
2. It is compulsory for all participates to submit all documents online
3. Other term and conditions are displayed in online e-tender forms.
4. Right to reject any or all online bid of work without assigning any reasons thereof is reserved. 5. Above Tender Notice is displayed on website www.mahatenders.gov.in. and office board of CE, MSIDC, at Bandhkam Bhavan,4th floor, Fort, Mumbai-400001.

No. MSIDC/Mumbai/Tender/58/2024
Chief Engineer,
MSIDC, 4th floor, Badhkam bhavan Fort, Mumbai
Date: 07/03/2024
Engr.R.R.Hande
Chief Engineer, MSIDC, Mumbai

E-TENDER NOTICE NO.10 OF 2023-2024

Maharashtra-State Infrastructure Development Corporation Ltd. (the "Authority"), A Government of Maharashtra undertaking, is engaged in the development of infrastructure in Maharashtra and as part of endeavour, The Authority has decided to undertake road development works on EPC mode in the state of Maharashtra through **20** packages spread over **Chhatrapati Sambhaji nagar** region. Maharashtra-State Infrastructure Development Corporation Ltd. now invites online bids for following works:
Details are as follows:-
1. Date of Issue of E-Tender Notice: (Online) 10/03/2024 Time -10.30 Hrs.
2. Pre-Bid Meeting: 21/03/2024 Time -15.00 Hrs.
3. Last date of submitting the E-Tender Notice: (Online) 12/04/2024 Time- 17.00 Hrs.
4. Tender opening (If possible):- 15/04/2024 Time- 15.00 Hrs.
Notes:
1. All eligible/interested contractors who want to participate in tendering process should compulsory get enrolled on tendering portal "http: mahatenders.gov.in" the appropriate category applicable to them.
2. It is compulsory for all participates to submit all documents online
3. Other term and conditions are displayed in online e-tender forms.
4. Right to reject any or all online bid of work without assigning any reasons thereof is reserved.
5. Above Tender Notice is displayed on website www.mahatenders.gov.in. and office board of CE, MSIDC, at Bandhkam Bhavan,4th floor, Fort, Mumbai-400001.

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Date: 07/03/2024
Engr.R.R.Hande
Chief Engineer, MSIDC, Mumbai

GROUP ACCOMPANIED BY TWO BJP MLAs

Himachal crisis continues: Six Cong rebels, 3 Independents shifted to Uttarakhand hotel

AVANEESH MISHRA & SAURABH PARASHAR
DEHRADUN, CHANDIGARH, MARCH 9

AS THE Congress party continues to battle a rebellion against Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Suhkvinder Singh Sukhu, 11 MLAs from the state, including the six Congress rebels who voted for BJP's Harsh Mahajan in the Rajya Sabha polls, arrived in BJP-ruled Uttarakhand on Saturday.

According to sources in the Himachal BJP, the Congress rebels were accompanied by two BJP MLAs, Vikram Thakur and Trilok Jamwal. Also in the group were three Independent MLAs Hoshiar Singh, K L Thakur and Ashish Sharma who had sided with the BJP in the Rajya Sabha polls despite supporting the Sukhu government.

Sources said the 11 legislators arrived from Haryana's Panchkula on Friday and checked into Hotel Taj, about 30 kilometres from Rishikesh along the Rishikesh-Badrinath Road. Personnel of the Haryana Police were deployed at the hotel, the sources said.

CM Sukhu at a Shivratri procession in Mandi on Saturday. *PTI*

The development came two days after the Himachal CM met the Congress leadership in Delhi to discuss the crisis. On Saturday, Sukhu said the BJP is shepherding the six disqualified MLAs from one place to another.

The six Congress MLAs — Sudhir Sharma, Rajinder Rana, Inder Dutt Lakhanpal, Devinder Kumar Bhuttu, Ravindra Thakur and Chaitanya Sharma — were disqualified by the Congress after they defied the party whip on the state Budget, a day after the Rajya Sabha polls. They have challenged their disqualification in the Supreme Court.

Uttarakhand Congress spokesperson Shanti Prasad Bhatt said that by "giving shelter" to the disqualified Himachal MLAs in Uttarakhand, the party had committed "a Constitutional sin".

"It was said that a BJP leader has flown from Chandigarh to Uttarakhand with the rebel MLAs of Himachal, and these rebel MLAs have been given security at a luxurious hotel in Rishikesh... The Supreme Court will hear on the disqualification of these rebel MLAs on Monday, but BJP has once again committed a constitutional sin by embarrassing the land of Uttarakhand," Bhatt isaid n a statement. "Let it be known that in the past, when the BJP toppled the Congress-led Harish Rawat government, the High Court commented that such an act was a 'constitutional sin', today the BJP has again done the same thing," he added.

Speaking to *The Indian Express*, Himachal BJP president Rajeev Bindal criticised CM Sukhu for what he said was his "failure to address the political turmoil". "The government lacks the moral authority to remain in power and cannot blame the BJP for everything," he said.

When asked about the six Congress rebels being taken to a BJP-ruled state, Bindal said: "They (the MLAs) are not children. Their whereabouts are in the public domain."

Meanwhile, Union Minister of State for Development of North Eastern Region B L Verma said the Congress government in Himachal Pradesh will soon collapse. "The Sukhu government is battling internal conflicts. It will not last long because of this infighting," Verma said during an event in Haridwar.

DMK LEAVES 21 SEATS FOR ITSELF

Deal with DMK done, Congress gets 9 TN seats and Puducherry

ARUN JANARDHANAN
CHENNAI, MARCH 9

THE DRAVIDA Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) Saturday finalised its Lok Sabha seat-sharing agreement with the Congress, leaving 21 seats out of a total of 39 in Tamil Nadu for itself. The Congress, meanwhile, will contest nine seats in Tamil Nadu and the lone seat in Puducherry, mirroring the formula from the 2019 general polls.

In 2019, the Congress had won nine out of the ten seats it contested. Party leader K C Venugopal, in Chennai to finalise the alliance talks with DMK chief and Chief Minister M K Stalin, said this agreement is about putting up a unified stand against the "divisive and anti-federal" government at the Centre.

Earlier, DMK allocated two seats each to the VCK, CPI(M), and CPI, and a seat each to the Marumalarchi Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (MDMK), Indian Union Muslim League and Kongunadu Makkal Desiya Katchi. This time, however, there may be some nuanced adjustments in the allocation of seats. For instance, said sources, the Congress will likely exchange its Trichy seat for Mayiladuthurai, transferring the former to MDMK on DMK's request. Also, the Congress will likely relinquish Aarani to DMK in return for Cuddalore, where former TN Congress chief K S Alagiri could potentially be fielded.

The DMK is also learnt to have asked for the Tiruvallur seat from the Congress, citing the bleak prospects of the latter's candidate. The Congress, reportedly, has promised to field a new candidate to retain the seat.

A top leader said the party may take the Coimbatore seat from the CPI(M) amid speculation of a strong BJP contender being fielded there — state chief K Annamalai. The DMK has also assured the CPI(M) of a favourable shift to Dindigul.

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin and his minister son Udhayanidhi with Makkal Needhi Maiam (MNM) leader Kamal Haasan at the DMK office in Chennai on Saturday. *PTI*

Haasan party joins DMK bloc: Star campaigner for one, RS seat for another

ARUN JANARDHANAN
CHENNAI, MARCH 9

KAMAL HAASAN'S Makkal Needhi Maiam (MNM) joined the DMK alliance in Tamil Nadu on Saturday. The move signals a new phase in the state's politics, showing Haasan aligning with the DMK to stay relevant, despite his initial aim of challenging the established parties, DMK and AIADMK.

The Indian Express had on February 21 reported that Haasan faced two crucial choices in alliance talks: run in Coimbatore, or help the campaign and secure a Rajya Sabha seat. Haasan wanted Chennai South, but the DMK, protective of its urban stronghold, declined. With the decision on him for weeks, Haasan ultimately chose the Rajya Sabha seat, committing to support the DMK-led campaign in the elections.

The decision on Saturday is to give MNM one seat for the 2025 Rajya Sabha polls, reflecting a broader strategy to consolidate support while managing electoral dynamics.

While the deal primarily focused on campaign collaboration, it is significant as the decision is also about DMK adding one more party to their coalition framework.

"My party and I are not contesting this election. But we will give all cooperation to this alliance. We have joined hands as this is not just for a position, this is for the nation," Haasan said, elaborating on the ideological alignment and common cause between the MNM and the DMK.

MNM's commitment includes extensive campaign efforts across Tamil Nadu's 39 Lok Sabha constituencies and one seat in Puducherry Lok Sabha constituency.

MNM's electoral performance, garnering a 3.72% vote share in the 2019 Lok Sabha elections and a 2.52% in the 2021 Assembly elections, reflects both its impact and its challenges.

Arunachal Cong chief: No word from party over offer to resign, will continue

Itanagar: Former Arunachal Pradesh chief minister Nabam Tuki Saturday said that he had offered to resign as state Congress president but will continue in the post as as he did not receive any response from the AICC.

Tuki dismissed reports that he had resigned after the defection of three MLAs to the BJP.

Tuki, the Sagalee MLA, said he had sent a letter to the party's leadership on election preparedness in the state and in that letter, he had expressed his willingness to resign from the post till the elections were over.

"However, I did not receive any response from the All India Congress Committee, so I would continue to carry out my responsibilities as the party's state unit president," he said. **PTI**

Ex-MLA Amanmani Tripathi joins Cong

New Delhi: Former UP MLA Amanmani Tripathi Saturday joined the Congress. He is the son of Amarmani Tripathi who was a minister in the UP government. Amarmani and his wife Madhumani were convicted in the Madhumita Shukla murder case. Amanmani was expelled from the BSP last year for "anti-party activities". **PTI**

Veteran Cong leader Suresh Pachouri joins BJP in MP

ANAND MOHAN J
BHOPAL, MARCH 9

THE STREAM of people leaving the Congress for the BJP since the Assembly election loss continues, with former Union minister and veteran leader Suresh Pachouri becoming the latest on Saturday, along with several other ex-MLAs and MPs.

Apart from Pachouri, the others who joined the BJP on Saturday included former Congress Indore-1 MLA Sanjay Shukla, who lost to senior BJP leader Kailash Vijayvargiya in the 2023 state polls, former Congress Dhar MP Ganjendra Singh Rajukhedi, former MLAs Vishal Patel, Arjun Palia, Satpal Palia, and Bhopal District Congress president Kailash Mishra.

Like other Congress leaders to join the BJP before him, Pachouri cited the party's decision to stay away from the Ayodhya Ram Temple consecration ceremony as one of his main reasons.

His desertion is a psychological blow to the Congress as he is widely respected as "an honest politician" who helped build the party at the grassroots for years.

Pachouri also accused the Congress of "raising questions" over the Army's bravery, presumably referring to comments by party leaders — particularly senior Madhya Pradesh leader Digvijaya Singh – on cross-border "surgical strikes" conducted by the Modi government.

Ex-Union minister Suresh Pachouri with Madhya Pradesh CM Mohan Yadav in Bhopal on Saturday. *ANI*

Pachouri, 71, said: "The Congress would talk about establishing a caste-less society, but now they are talking about caste. In the last few days, the political and religious decisions (taken by the Congress) made me uneasy. I have served in the Defence Ministry. Never were questions raised about the Army's bravery. There was never talk to provide 'evidence' (as sought by Congress leaders regarding the 'surgical strikes')," Pachouri said.

Over the past few months, the BJP claims to have weaned away as many as 4,500 Congress workers from across the state to its side, including district presidents, mayors, sarpanchs.

Welcoming Pachouri into the BJP, Chief Minister Mohan Yadav said his decision showed that honest leaders were not respected in the Congress. "In every party, there are clean people. It is unfortunate that the Congress leadership has not been paying attention to leaders working for the nation," he said.

State BJP president V D Sharma noted that Pachouri had earned the moniker of "Saint of Madhya Pradesh" because of his honesty, and the BJP was proud to have him in its ranks.

Former CM Shivraj Singh Chouhan said he knew Pachouri since the time he was a student politician. "We followed different ideologies, but the culture I saw in him, I have been its admirer for years. The Congress was not the right place for him. He was a minister under two PMs, and there was never any hint of an allegation against him."

Pachouri said: "Shri Ram's consecration was announced... and using un-parliamentary language, the invitation was denied. I feel hurt because, from the start, I wanted the Ram Mandir to be built. In Ayodhya, the locks of Ram temple were opened... under whose tenure did that take place (the Congress was in power at the Centre)? Then what was the need to deny the invitation letter?"

Uttarakhand: Khanduri son back in BJP after 5 years

AVANEESH MISHRA
DEHRADUN, MARCH 9

EXACTLY five years after he joined the Congress and lost his Lok Sabha seat by a huge margin, the son of BJP stalwart B C Khanduri, Manish Khanduri, returned to the BJP Saturday.

Manish, whose father and sister Ritu Khanduri Bhushan continue to be in the BJP, announced his resignation from the primary membership of the Congress Friday. While Ritu is the MLA from Kotdwar and the Uttarakhand Assembly Speaker, Khanduri Senior, a retired Major General who was Minister of State (Independent) for Road Transport and Highways under the Atal Bihari Vajpayee government, is a respected name in the state.

Manish's departure is another blow to the Congress, which failed to wrest power back from the BJP in the 2022 Assembly polls despite being seen as in with a chance. Then Congress president Rahul Gandhi had himself welcomed Manish into the party at a rally in Dehradun in March 2019.

The Congress had fielded him from the Pauri Garhwal seat in the Lok Sabha elections. He lost to the BJP's Tirath Singh Rawat by over 3 lakh votes.

Pawar gives green signal, Sule to fight LS poll from Baramati

MANOJ MORE
PUNE, MARCH 9

NCP (SP) CHIEF Sharad Pawar Saturday announced his daughter Supriya Sule as the party's candidate from the family bastion of Baramati — setting up a likely contest with her sister-in-law Sunetra Pawar, the wife of Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar.

Addressing an MVA rally in Bhor Saturday, Sharad Pawar said: "I am announcing the candidature of Supriya Sule for the Baramati Lok Sabha seat. Supriya is among the most outstanding parliamentarians in the country. She was among the top two or three MPs, who had the highest attendance in Parliament. Here is a candidate who has won the Sansad Ratna award seven times. It is your responsbility to get her elected."

Supriya Sule

Sule, who herself has started campaigning, has restrained herself from running down Sunetra Pawar — except once when she said she doesn't need her husband to deliver speeches. Sunetra Pawar, so far, has not attacked Sule. But Ajit Pawar, the nephew of Sharad Pawar, has been aggressive. He had told voters in Baramati: "If you want development, then elect the candidate of my choice."

The naming of Sule as the Baramati candidate for NCP (Sharad Chandra Pawar) comes soon after she denied announcing her candidature from the seat. She said she had sought a ticket and was waiting for the MVA leadership to make the announcement.

BJP spokesperson, author of book on Modi, made SC panel chair

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
AHMEDABAD, MARCH 9

KISHORE MAKWANA, the joint spokesperson of the Gujarat BJP and a member of the Prime Ministers' Museum and Library Society (PMMLS), has been appointed as the chairperson of the National Commission for Scheduled Castes (NCSC) by President Droupadi Murmu.

The NCSC is a constitutional body established to provide safeguards against the exploitation of SCs and Anglo-Indian Communities and to protect and promote their social, economic, educational, and cultural interests, as per its website.

Makwana, 58, a Dalit writer from Ahmedabad, has written several books on Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar. In 2015, he wrote a book on Prime Minister Narendra Modi titled *Modi: A Common Man's PM*. As a "journalist", he accompanied former PM Atal Bihari Vajpayee on his historic bus tour to Lahore in 1999 and joined veteran BJP leader L K Advani's Somnath Yatra in 1990.

Kishore Makwana

A BJP member since 2004, he was appointed to the PMMLS, formerly known as the Nehru Memorial Museum & Library, in 2019. Hailing from Dholka village of Ahmedabad, Makwana has written more than 30 books — nine of them on Dr Ambedkar and one on Swami Vivekanand. A Masters in Psychology, Makwana also publishes *Samaj Samvedana*, a Gujarati magazine. He also runs a website that aims to "spread the vision of Dr Ambedkar worldwide".

Makwana was also editor of *Sadhana*, the Gujarati mouthpiece of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, for eight years.

What ticket for Bansuri Swaraj from New Delhi says about Modi's Mission '24

While Bansuri has shades of Sushma in oratory, PM has shown he can let bygones be bygones and that in 370-seat target, priority this time is winnability

THE NEERJA CHOWDHURY COLUMN

Weekly insight into what's changing in national politics — and why

AMONG THE most unexpected entrants in the BJP's first list of Lok Sabha nominees was Bansuri Swaraj, the 40-year-old daughter of Sushma Swaraj, for whom the late BJP leader was known to leave meetings at times, to rush to be at the bus stop when she came back from school.

The choice of Bansuri has taken many by surprise, including those in the BJP, not just because she is a virtual newcomer to politics, but also because the BJP top brass has picked a newbie for the high-profile New Delhi seat. This, despite Sushma being a protege of L K Advani, who had opposed Narendra Modi's projection as the party's prime ministerial candidate in 2014.

It is clear that the BJP leadership was unhappy with Meenakshi Lekhi, who was seen to have lost ground in New Delhi after winning the seat twice comprehensively, in 2014 and 2019. Given that women will be a decisive vote in 2024, wooed by every party – with Modi going out of his way to underline "Nari Shakti" – the BJP appears to have been careful to pick a fellow woman leader to replace Lekhi in the prestigious seat.

In Delhi, the BJP has ditched four out of its five MPs in the seats for which tickets have been announced so far, with two names still pending (it had won all seven seats in 2019). The BJP appears to be plugging any loopholes given that the Aam Aadmi Party and Congress are contesting together in Delhi and, on paper, make a formidable coalition.

With Bansuri's nomination, the BJP appears to have set the tone for the polls in the Capital. If she manages to defeat the AAP's Somnath Bharti, who is himself a strong contender, she will establish herself as a giant killer; with the victory to be construed additionally as a rap for AAP supremo Arvind Kejriwal, who is an MLA from the New Delhi Assembly segment.

So far, Bansuri, a practising lawyer, has impressed, proving both confident and articulate in the few interventions she has made on the party's behalf on TV. Those who still recall Sushma's oratory skills will draw an easy connection with the daughter. The late leader, in fact, was only 25 when she first became a minister, in Haryana, and was among the top campaigners against Indira Gandhi during the Emergency and after.

Old-timers especially recall Sushma's felicity in striking a rapport with women in villages, who don't easily open up. One of her ways was to ask, generally, in a crowd, "Are there women here named Kaushalya (a reference to Lord Ram's mother in the Ramayana)?" Several hands would go up automatically. Then she would ask if there were women called Sumitra (Lakshman's mother). When hands went up again, Sushma would let drop: "Is there anyone who has named her daughter Kaikeyi (Dashrath's third wife, besides Kaushalya and Sumitra, who manipulated her husband to banish Lord Ram to exile, and make own son Bharat the King)?"

BJP's New Delhi candidate Bansuri Swaraj. *Tashi Tobgyal*

When the answer came back with a resounding "No", Sushma would let the penny drop. Indira Gandhi had behaved like Kaikeyi, she would imply, to "enthrone" her son Sanjay at the cost of others. The audience would nod in appreciation.

While Sushma contested elections from many parts of the country, including Vidisha in Madhya Pradesh, and more famously Bellary in Karnataka – taking on Sonia Gandhi in her first-ever polls – she is remembered in Delhi as well, for her short stint as CM.

Hoping to retain power in the Capital against odds, the BJP had turned to Sushma just ahead of the 1998 elections and made her CM. The BJP had failed to win the polls, but Sushma had grabbed eyeballs with her campaign theme "Ab Dilli soyegi, aur main jaagoongi (Now Delhi will sleep, I will keep vigil)".

The question being discussed in BJP circles is whether the ticket to Bansuri is the first step towards a larger role for her in Delhi, to take on the AAP.

Several positive messages have already been sent out with the ticket to her – for one, that contrary to what his rivals might say, Prime Minister Narendra Modi can be flexible, and can let bygones be bygones. Apart from being seen as part of the anti-Modi camp in the BJP, Sushma was also considered a possible PM face herself. But after she was accommodated by Modi in his government, she was relegated to the sidelines in her role as External Affairs Minister. The PM himself ran the show, with Sushma not even part of the delegation for several important foreign trips.

In 2019, an ailing Sushma did not get a ticket for the Lok Sabha and was neither offered a ministry. She died soon after, in August 2019, of a cardiac arrest.

New Delhi has been represented by many tall figures in the past, including Vajpayee and Advani, and superstar Rajesh Khanna for the Congress. This time, the ticket for Bansuri is as much about her as about Modi, and his determination that the party win every constituency it can, to reach its target of 370 – with factors like caste, controversy, loyalty etc taking a backseat.

There is much speculation about why the number 370. There have been suggestions that it alludes to the historic abrogation of Article 370 by the Modi government, and apprehension among rivals that the resultant two-third majority would leave the PM free to muscle through constitutional amendments and systemic changes.

However, whatever the number entails, BJP leaders point out, what it all boils down to is that the approach towards seats is winnability, and only winnability.

That is why 42 sitting MPs have been dropped in the first list of 195 names. And that is why many sitting MPs who were facing party ire have got a ticket again in UP.

Many not likely to be renominated were allowed the chance to make an honorable exit. Cricketer Gautam Gambhir and former MoS, Finance, Jayant Sinha, for example, chose it to announce retirement from "active politics".

Neerja Chowdhury, Contributing Editor, The Indian Express, has covered the last 10 Lok Sabha elections. She is the author of How Prime Ministers Decide

नरेन्द्र मोदी
प्रधानमंत्री

पुष्कर सिंह धामी
मुख्यमंत्री, उत्तराखण्ड

उत्तराखण्ड शासन

सशक्त उत्तराखण्ड समृद्ध उत्तराखण्ड

पुष्कर सिंह धामी

मा. मुख्यमंत्री, उत्तराखण्ड के कर कमलों द्वारा

कुल रु. 8275.51 करोड़ की योजनाओं का लोकार्पण एवं शिलान्यास का वर्चुअल कार्यक्रम

मा. मंत्री गण उत्तराखण्ड सरकार, मा. सांसद गण, मा. विधायक गण तथा राज्य के समस्त नागरिकों की गरिमामयी उपस्थिति में किया जा रहा है।

शिलान्यास एवं लोकार्पण

लगभग रु. 7227.36 करोड़ | **लगभग रु. 1048.15 करोड़**

दिनांक 10 मार्च, 2024 को प्रातः 10:30 बजे
स्थानः मुख्य सेवक सदन, देहरादून (मा. मुख्यमंत्री कैम्प कार्यालय)

शिलान्यास किये जाने वाली प्रमुख योजनायें

- उत्तराखण्ड ईन्टीग्रेटेड एण्ड रेजिलिएन्ट अर्बन डेवलेपमेन्ट प्रोजेक्ट (ए.डी.बी.) - रु. 162.90 करोड़
- उत्तराखण्ड ईन्टीग्रेटेड एण्ड रेजिलिएन्ट अर्बन डेवलेपमेन्ट प्रोजेक्ट - एडिशनल फाइनेन्सिंग (ए.डी.बी.) - रु. 2163.37 करोड़
- उत्तराखण्ड लिवेबिलिटी इम्प्रूवमेन्ट प्रोजेक्ट (ए.डी.बी.) - रु. 373.20 करोड़
- उत्तराखण्ड लिवेबिलिटी इम्प्रूवमेन्ट प्रोजेक्ट (ए.डी.बी.) - रु. 240.25 करोड़
- "Interception & Diversion (I&D) and STPs for Muni ki Reti-Dhalwala (8.0 MLD STP), Neelkanth Mahadev (1.5 MLD STP), Jonk-Swargashram (3.0 MLD STP) at Uttarakhand" under Namami Gange Programme - Rs. 94.06 Crore
- 'I&D work of Rispana and Sewage Treatment Plant (15 MLD) work at Sapera Basti, Dehradun - Rs. 78.99 Crore
- 'Supplying, Laying, Jointing, Constructing, Testing and Commissioning of Sewerage Network, House Connections and Sewage pump station in Rishikesh (Zone GSZ-1, Zone PSZ-4A, Zone PSZ-4B, Zone PSZ-4C and Zone PSZ-5) under Package-5 - Rs. 183.68 Crore
- ए.डी.बी. द्वारा बाह्य सहायतित उत्तराखण्ड क्लाइमेट रिजिलिअन्ट पावर सिस्टम डैवलपमैन्ट प्रोजेक्ट के अन्तर्गत देहरादून शहर के प्रमुख मार्गों की उपरीगामी विद्युत लाइनों को भूमिगत किये जाने का कार्य - 977.03 करोड़
- ऊर्जा मंत्रालय, भारत सरकार द्वारा वित्त पोषित रिवैम्प्ड रिस्ट्रिब्यूशन सैक्टर स्कीम (आर.डी.एस.एस.) के अन्तर्गत उत्तराखण्ड राज्य में एडवांस मीटरिंग इन्फ्रास्ट्रक्चर सर्विस प्रोवाइडर के कार्य - रु. 2027.11 करोड़

लोकार्पण किये जाने वाली योजनायें

- जनपद पिथौरागढ़ के विकास खण्ड धारचूला में काली नदी के दॉये पार्श्व पर स्थित घटगाड़ नाले से टैक्सी स्टैण्ड तक तटबन्ध सुदृढ़ीकरण की योजना (भाग-2 एवं भाग-3) (मा. मुख्यमंत्री घोषणा संख्या-64/2019) - रु. 91.83 करोड़
- नमामि गंगे कार्यक्रम के अन्तर्गत रिस्पना एवं बिन्दाल नदी में आई.एण्ड.डी. कार्य (केन्द्र पोषित) - 67.39 करोड़
- ऋषिकेश देहात पम्पिंग पेयजल योजना (बाह्य सहायतित) - रु. 65.55 करोड़
- जीवनगढ़ पम्पिगं पेयजल योजना (बाह्य सहायतित) - रु. 60.56 करोड़
- नथनपुर पम्पिगं पेयजल योजना (बाह्य सहायतित) - रु. 66.61 करोड़
- ढ़ालीपुर जल विद्युत परियोजना (3x17 मे.वा. का नवीनीकरण एवं आधुनिकीकरण) - रु. 152.65 करोड़

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PM slams TMC on corruption, dynasty politics

ENS & PTI
SILIGURI, MARCH 9

REACHING OUT to the Gorkhas of north Bengal, PM Narendra Modi said in Siliguri Saturday that the BJP sympathises with the community's aspirations and challenges and is "close to finding a solution" to address their concerns.

The Gorkha community in Darjeeling has been for long demanding a separate state comprising Darjeeling and parts of North Bengal. "BJP determined to realise every aspiration... Ayodhya finally got its Ram Mandir, and J&K got rid of Article 370. BJP has fulfilled all such dreams. We have also addressed issues of the Adivasi communities. We have worked tirelessly to resolve all your issues."

"We have made continuous efforts to address your concerns. We are close to finding a solution," he added.

Modi highlighted BJP's agenda for development of north Bengal, focusing on infrastructure and the promotion of the "Tea-Timber-Tourism" industry.

He criticised past administrations, alleging neglect of the region's needs. "The struggles and aspirations of the people of the area were ignored first by the Leftists and then by TMC. They were busy seizing the land of the poor," Modi said while mentioning Centre's initiatives such as PM Ujjwala Yojana are not allowed in Bengal by TMC, thus depriving over 14 lakh women.

Emphasising the need to oust the Mamata Banerjee-led TMC from power in Bengal, Modi said, "The door to oust the corrupt TMC government from West Bengal will open from Lok Sabha polls." "The corrupt TMC government is anti-Dalit, anti-tribal, anti-OBC, and anti-women. The TMC government has committed a scam in the ration scheme itself. Their leaders and ministers are in jail in the ration scam case. The party is looting the people of Bengal," he said. "The TMC is only bothered about its nephew whereas the Congress is bothered only about the royal family," he said in an apparent reference to TMC national general secretary Abhishek Banerjee and the Gandhi family in Congress.

"Since I work for the development of the poor, the leaders of the INDIA bloc such as TMC and Congress don't like me. The TMC is worried about their nephew. The Congress wants to promote the sons and daughters of their royal family. The Left wants to maintain coordination with these two so that they are in the fray," he said.

Referring to recent incidents in Sandeshkhali, he said, "Today, what TMC leaders have done to the poor, Dalit and tribal sisters in Sandeshkhali is being discussed in the entire country." Modi also accused the TMC of embezzling funds meant for welfare schemes like MGNREGA, citing instances of fake job cards being created to siphon off central funds. "They (TMC) have made 25 lakh fake job cards and distributed them to siphon off funds of the MGNREGA," he said.

Meanwhile, the PM unveiled infrastructure projects worth more than Rs 4,500 crore in northern Bengal.

Calling allegations of corruption and dynasty politics by the PM "baseless", the TMC accused the BJP-led Centre of depriving the state and equated the BJP leaders with "migratory birds" who only resurface before elections.

Former HC judge Abhijit Gangopadhyay with PM Narendra Modi in Siliguri, Saturday. *PTI*

Vande Bharat sleeper trains in 6 months: Minister

SANATH PRASAD
BENGALURU, MARCH 9

UNION RAILWAY Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw Saturday said Vande Bharat sleeper trains will start running in six months. The minister said 10 Vande Bharat sleeper trains will start trial run in the next four-five months following which the commercial operations will begin.

Speaking after unveiling the body structure of Vande Bharat's sleeper coaches at a Bharat Earth Movers Limited (BEML) facility here, he said the Railways has placed orders for 100 more Amrit Bharat (non-A/c sleeper) trains in view of rising demand.

On Vande Bharat sleeper coaches features, he said vibration and noise level in the sleeper coaches will be close to nil. These AC trains will have 16 coaches.

The Railways will launch two more Vande Bharat Express in Karnataka. The first one will run between Kalaburagi and Bengaluru. The Bengaluru-Chennai route will now get another Vande Bharat connecting Chennai via Bengaluru and Krishnarajapuram, officials said. PM Narendra Modi will flag off Benglauru-Kalaburgi Vande Bharat on March 12.

CBI to probe vet varsity student's death: Kerala govt

SHAJU PHILIP
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, MARCH 9

THE KERALA government Saturday decided to hand over the case pertaining to the death of Veterinary University student J S Sidharthan, who was found hanging in his hostel room February 18 after alleged torture by a gang of students led by a few SFI members.

An official communication from the CMO said Sidharthan's parents met CM Pinarayi Vijayan and demanded the case be handed over to CBI. "His death was shocking and police have conducted a fair probe into it. But the family wanted the case to be handed over to the CBI. Considering their sentiments, the government has decided to entrust the case with the CBI,"it said. All the accused have been arrested.

An 18-member gang of students had allegedly tortured him over an alleged incident of misbehaviour with a girl. Opposition Congress and BJP have been on a warpath alleging that CPI(M) was shielding the accused SFI men.

AAP-Cong show of unity in Bharuch amid undercurrent of differences

KAMAAL SAIYED & ADITI RAJA
NETRANG (BHARUCH), VADODARA

THE GROUNDSWELL at Netrang in Bharuch on Saturday turned into a political spectacle as AAP workers gathered with their yellow and blue party flags around a cutout of Rahul Gandhi while waiting for his arrival along with Congress workers.

On the third day of the Gujarat leg of the Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra, as it proceeded from Bodeli in Chhota Udepur district to Rajpipla in Narmada and then to Netrang in Bharuch, the party flags of Congress and AAP were seen together. However, an undercurrent of differences was unmissable.

Faisal Patel and his sister Mumtaz Siddiqui, the son and daughter of late Congress veteran Ahmed Patel, remained conspicuous by their absence. Both had earlier openly expressed their disappointment over AAP Dediapada MLA and party's Gujarat working president Chaitar Vasava contesting from Bharuch, their father's stronghold. Speaking with *The Indian Express*, Faisal Patel on Saturday said, "I am in Delhi, taking care of my mother and my daughter as I am a single parent. According to me, faith comes first, then family, followed by other things." The on ground camaraderie was also missing on the bright red jeep that Rahul Gandhi rode Saturday. Even as Chaitar stood behind Rahul, the Congress MP did not acknowledge him in public while he interacted with locals in Netrang.

Earlier, on Thursday, when the Yatra entered the state in Jhalod, Rahul did not mention AAP Gujarat chief Isudan Gadhvi and national joint secretary Gopal Italia in his address.

In Netrang, on Saturday, after interacting with locals, Rahul turned around to greet Chaitar, who had climbed onto the jeep, and accepted a cotton thread garland. However, in his pitch to the crowd to bring back Congress to power, Rahul made no mention of ally AAP or its LS candidate standing by his side.

Rajendrasinh Rana, the Bharuch district Congress unit chief, was also on the jeep but he and Chaitar did not even exchange a glance.

Earlier in the day, in Bodeli in Chhota Udepur, Congress leader Arjun Rathwa and AAP leader Radhika Rathwa were seen giving joint interviews about INDIA bloc. They maintained they were "following the decision" of their respective high commands. Incidentally, Radhika Rathwa is a former Congress leader and daughter of former Congress MP Amarsinh Rathwa, who switched over to AAP ahead of 2022 Assembly polls.

Reiterating his demand for the caste census, Gandhi on Saturday asserted, "They (the BJP government) don't want to share details of the population in the country as they are concerned about the calculation about caste census. If the caste-based census, which is our demand, is done, everybody will know how many people are tribals, Dalits, of the general category, and others. We have two demands before the government. The first is caste-based census and the other is Economic or Financial survey."

Congress and AAP supporters with Rahul Gandhi in Bharuch on Saturday. *Express*

Jhargram BJP MP Hembram quits party, cites personal reasons

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, MARCH 9

WEST BENGAL BJP MP Kunar Hembram quit citing personal reasons. Hembram is the MP from Jhargram and the development comes days before PM Narendra Modi is scheduled to hold a public meeting in the tribal-dominated former Maoist hotbed in the state.

Hembram told mediapersons he has already informed the party about his decision. "Due to personal reasons, I want to quit the party. I have no desire to join any other party. I am engaged in other social work. I will continue to serve the people through such initiatives," the engineer-turned-politician said. Sources, however, said the BJP was not keen to nominate him from Jhargram this time. PM is likely to hold a public meeting in Jhargram on March 11.

Earlier, Mukut Mani Adhikari, BJP MLA from Ranaghat Dakshin Assembly seat, joined TMC and party MP John Barla expressed his displeasure after he was not nominated from Alipurduar. BJP state spokesperson Samik Bhattacharya said, "It has nothing to do with Lok Sabha polls... developments like these will not impact the party's prospects in LS polls."

Union Home Minister Amit Shah in Patna, Saturday. *PTI*

Will hang land mafia upside down: Shah targets Lalu

SANTOSH SINGH
PALIGANJ (PATNA), MARCH 9

TARGETING RJD chief Lalu Prasad, Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Saturday said a committee would be set up to probe the cases of land-grabbing and recommend strict action, and warned that they would "hang the land mafia upside down".

Addressing a public meeting in Paliganj, about 50 km from Patna, organised by the BJP OBC Morcha, Shah launched a direct attack on Lalu. *"Woh ek hi kaam kar sakte hain — OBC aur EBC ki bhumi hathiya sakte hain. Magar is manch se mai aaj RJD aur Lalu ko chetavani de raha hoon. Double engine ki sarkar aa gayi hai jo bhu-mafia ko ulta latka ke sidha karne ka kaam sarmar karegi* (He can only do one thing — grab land belonging to OBC and EBC. But let me announce from this stage that now that the double-engine government is back, we will hang the land mafia upside down and set them straight)," he said.

"A committee will be set up by the new NDA government to look into all cases of land grabbing and recommend stern action," said Shah, who was on his first tour of Bihar since the BJP returned to power in the state, following the return of Chief Minister Nitish Kumar to the NDA.

Lalu and his family members are facing a probe in the alleged land-for-jobs case, which pertains to Group-D appointments made in the West Central Railway Zone in Jabalpur (Madhya Pradesh) when he was the Railways Minister, from 2004 to 2009, allegedly in return for land parcels transferred to his family and associates.

"It was PM Narendra Modi who bestowed the Bharat Ratna to (former CM) Karpoori Thakur, not the Congress or the RJD. The Congress only bestowed honour to their families, and Lalu only worked for his family. Sonia's goal is to make Rahul Gandhi the PM, and Lalu's goal is to make his son (Tejashwi Prasad Yadav) the CM. Such people cannot work for the well-being of OBCs, EBCs and Dalits," he said.

"Narendra Modi has now been CM and PM for the last 23 years. But nobody, not even the Opposition, can accuse him of corruption," he said.

Shah said the Congress had not given constitutional validity to the National OBC Commission, and did not provide reservation for OBCs in central government institutions. "Our 84 MPs had supported the government of V P Singh, who implemented the recommendations of the Mandal Commission. Rajiv Gandhi had given a two-hour-long speech, vociferously opposing quotas for OBCs," he said. "Lalu Prasad had stopped L K Advani's rath yatra. Laluji, what can you do now? Modi has done the bhoomi pujan for Ram temple and inaugurated it too," he said.

20 years after Major killed in J&K, his daughter joins Army

MAN AMAN SINGH CHHINA
CHANDIGARH, MARCH 9

SHE WAS two-and-a-half years old when her father, Major Navneet Vats, died while battling terrorists holed up in a building in Jammu and Kashmir. Twenty years later, Inayat Vats was commissioned as Lieutenant in the Military Intelligence Corps after passing out from Officers Training Academy, Chennai on Saturday.

Inayat's mother Shivani Vats raised her in Chandigarh where she has been teaching in Army Public School, Chandimandir ever since she lost her husband.

Shivani was in Chennai to witness the proud moment of her daughter donning the same olive green uniform that her husband once wore. Air Chief Marshal V R Chaudhari reviewed the passing out parade by the contingents at the Parameshwaran drill square.

Major Vats belonged to Chandigarh and was commissioned in the Fourth Battalion of the Third Gorkha Rifles. He was serving with 32 Rashtriya Rifles. On November 20, 2003, he led an operation to clear a telecom building in Srinagar where some terrorists had holed up. He received gunshot wounds and succumbed to his injuries. He was posthumously awarded the Sena Medal for gallantry.

Inayat did her masters in political science from Hindu College, New Delhi. Prior to that she had secured her bachelor's degree from Lady Sriram College. Family friends informed that she was always very keen to join the Army. Welcoming her, the Army Training Command posted a message on the X. "Inayat was barely three years, when she lost her father Major Navneet Vats in a counter insurgency operation. More than two decades later, she gets commissioned into the Indian Army and dons the same uniform that her hero dad once did," read the message.

Reviewing the passing out parade Air Chief Marshal Chaudhari said, "India's security dynamics involves multi-faceted threats and challenges. It would require us to build multi-domain capabilities and execute operations simultaneously and in shortened timeframes." He called upon the young officers to stay abreast with technological advancements.

Lieutenant Inayat Vats being 'pipped' with badges of rank at OTA, Chennai, Saturday. *Army Training Command*

If Modi is re-elected, nobody will be poor in Hindustan: Rajnath

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
RAIPUR, MARCH 9

EMPHASISING VARIOUS central government schemes for farmers and efforts to alleviate poverty, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh told farmers at the Kisan Mahakumbh rally in Chhattisgarh's Raipur city that if PM Narendra Modi is elected for the third term in the 2024 Lok Sabha polls, "not even one poor person will be left in Hindustan. This is our promise."

Citing a NITI Aayog report, Singh said due to PM Modi's policies 25 crore people in India are now above BPL and added every poor person will now get a proper house and tap water connection in rural India.

Referring to India's formidable position in global affairs, Singh praised Modi for ensuring the safe return of medical students from India stuck in war-torn Ukraine. "Our PM Modi's position is such that when parents of 26,000 children stuck in the Ukraine-Russia war asked Modiji to bring their children back, he called up Russian President (Vladimir) Putin, Ukraine President (Volodymyr) Zelenskyy and US President (Joe) Biden and stopped the war for four and half hours. This is our stature."

"Now Ram Rajya's Silsila has started in Hindustan. We are entering a new age. Today, the world listens to what India has to say unlike in the past," he said, referring to the inauguration of Ram Temple in Ayodhya.

Singh listed Modi government's various initiatives for farmers like the Soil Health Card scheme, Kisan Samman Nidhi and underlined how fertilisers, which are expensive in the US, are supplied to farmers at a subsidised rate. "In America, one bag of urea fertilisers is available for Rs 3,000… India is the only country where urea is being provided to farmers at Rs 300 per bag. Russia-Ukraine war resulted in price rise but the Modi government did not allow prices of seeds and fertilisers to go up. We will not allow the problems of farmers to increase at any cost," he added.

"...I am the son of a farmer and hail from a village. Farmers can yield gold from the soil with their efforts and hard work. My government is standing shoulder to shoulder with farmers… I can say that without development of farmers and villages, India cannot be developed," he said. Targeting the previous Congress regime, he said, "There are no corruption allegations against us. We have a clean track record unlike the previous Congress regime..."

WITH PTI INPUTS

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh with Chhattisgarh CM Vishnu Deo Sai at Raipur airport, Saturday. *Express*

'FDI policy fine balancing act... investments up in space sector'

IN A major boost to the space industry, the Cabinet recently approved 100% foreign direct investment (FDI) through three categories of liberalised entry routes. The Indian National Space Promotion and Authorization Center (IN-SPACe) — an autonom6ous body under the department of space entrusted with supervising, authorising, enabling and promoting the sector — aspires to make space a $44 billion market by 2033, of which $11 billion will be generated through export. **DR PAWAN GOENKA**, the chairperson of IN-SPACe, talks to **ANONNA DUTT** about the growth in investments and earnings that the industry will start seeing soon.

How will new FDI policy help?

It will bring in new capital to the business. This (decision) was a fine balancing act between any security concern and making global funding available to the private sector.

An increase in investment has already happened over the past few years. We are going to close this year with an investment of 135 to 140 million dollars. And this is just investments that have come in. We do not have a number of the investments that have been made by the companies themselves.

This figure is without FDI. So, the numbers are likely to be a lot bigger in the coming year.

What has been the impact of policy support and hand-holding by the government?

There are several things that show that we are moving in the right direction.

There are over 200 start-ups in the sector now as compared to just around 40 or 50 three years ago. There has also been an expansion in the infrastructure set up by private companies such as Ananth, Dhruva, Skyroot, Pixxel and Bellatrix.

Companies such as L&T and Godrej, which were contractors for ISRO, are also looking to enter the space sector on their own. Other companies like Tata and Reliance have also taken interest.

THE EXPRESS INTERVIEW

WITH
DR PAWAN GOENKA
IN-SPACe CHAIRPERSON

There is also serious interest from international companies. Firms such as OneWeb and Starlink have already applied to provide broadband services in India.

And, as I mentioned, investments are going up in the sector.

When do you think the Indian industry will get a bigger share in the global space pie?

The companies are already generating some revenue, but we are likely to see a significant increase soon. Take the launch companies Skyroot and Agnikul, for example, they are likely to start commercial launches next year onwards. We are also in the process of transferring SSLV to the private sector.

We envision 24 commercial launches a year from the new spaceport Kulasekharapatnam. With every launch costing around Rs 35 to 40 crore, the launches alone will bring in nearly Rs 1,000 crore. Then, of course, revenue will also be generated from the data coming in from the satellites that have been launched as well as the manufacturing of the satellites.

Would the expanding space sector also bring in newer technology to the country?

Of course, there will be a lot of technological advancements in the country. It will come from big missions that ISRO has been working on. And, there have been many big announcements that have been made, including plans to send humans to the Moon and building our own space station. There will also be more Chandrayaan missions. ISRO is also working on developing a reusable launch vehicle. It is the need of the hour. As you know, Falcon 9, the workhorse of SpaceX, is a reusable vehicle making it cost-competitive.

Technology will also come from the private sector... They are developing different technologies. Take for example, Bellatrix is developing new thrusters that are not in use anywhere in the world or Digantara working on space debris analysis which is completely new.

Technology will also come from foreign companies that enter the Indian market either on their own or in partnership.

What are the key areas in which the space sector still needs support to grow?

First is the policy support. Most of the heavy lifting has already been done with the Indian space policy and the FDI policy. The space policy was path changing. Till then private companies were mainly vendors to ISRO or they were in telecommunications. After that, everything — all space activities — was open to the private sector.

The second is technology transfer. We are now working on transferring ISRO technology to the private sector. We are in the process of completely transferring SSLV to the private sector, meaning private companies will own and operate it.

The third is skill development. Most of the skill in the space sector is primarily with ISRO at the moment. We are now organising short-term courses for the industry. We are also working with 14 universities to offer a degree in space technology as one of the engineering streams.

FULL INTERVIEW ON www.indianexpress.com

Goel faced legal challenge in appointment as EC

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, MARCH 9

THE APPOINTMENT of former Punjab-cadre IAS officer Arun Goel as Election Commissioner in November 2022 not only raised eyebrows, but was also challenged in the Supreme Court. His resignation from the post on Saturday, when he had three years remaining in his tenure, too has taken people by surprise.

After 37 years in the IAS, Goel took voluntary retirement on November 18, 2022, a month before he was set to retire on December 31. The very next day, November 19, the President appointed him as Election Commissioner, filling the post that had been vacant since May 15, 2022. He took charge as EC on November 21.

Goel's appointment came at a time when the Supreme Court was hearing petitions on the procedure for appointing Chief Election Commissioner and Election Commissioners. The Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR) moved the court in April 2023 against Goel's appointment, saying it was arbitrary and that he seemed to have "remarkable foresight" to seek voluntary retirement ahead of his appointment as EC.

The Supreme Court had dismissed the challenge in August 2023, as a Constitution Bench of the court had already given its judgment on the matter of appointment of election commissions in March last year.

Arun Goel took voluntary retirement from the IAS in November 2022. *File*

At the time of taking voluntary retirement from the IAS, Goel was Secretary, Ministry of Heavy Industries, having held the office of Culture Secretary and Delhi Development Authority vice-chairperson prior to that.

"As Secretary, Heavy Industries, he catalysed E-vehicle movement in India to a tipping point. He implemented Production Linked Incentive scheme for auto Industry in a record time getting investments worth Rs 67,690 crore against target of Rs 42,500 crore and PLI for Advanced Chemistry Cell Battery Storage getting manufacturing set up for 98 GW against target of 50 GW," says Goel's profile on the EC website.

While in the Punjab Government, Goel oversaw the masterplan of New Chandigarh as principal secretary and implemented "the much delayed power reforms", the profile said.

Goel, who was born in Patiala, has an MSc. in Mathematics.

Goel's resignation comes at a time when the EC was travelling across the country to review poll preparations and the schedule for the Lok Sabha elections was expected to be announced in a few days. On Friday, the EC held meetings with top Union Home Ministry and Railway officials on the deployment and movement of security personnel across India for the parliamentary elections. With Goel's resignation, the EC, which is a three-member body, is left with only Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar. There was already a vacancy in the EC after Election Commissioner Anup Chandra Pandey retired last month.

Madrasas 'opting for modern education' will get funds: Khattar

AISWARYA RAJ
NUH, MARCH 9

HARYANA CHIEF Minister Manohar Lal Khattar Saturday said all gurukuls and madrasas "opting for modern education" will get annual financial assistance upon registration with the Haryana School Education Board.

"Gurukuls and madrasas with 50-80 students, opting for modern education through the Haryana School Education Board, will be provided with Rs 2 lakh per year. For those with 81-100 students, it will be Rs 3 lakh, for 101-200 students, it will be Rs 5 lakh, and for more than 200 students, Rs 7 lakh will be given," Khattar said. He was speaking at an event to commemorate the martyrdom of Hasan Khan Mewati, a 16th-Century ruler from Alwar.

Khattar also announced a slew of projects worth around Rs 700 crore for Nuh.

He said the previous governments had exploited the people of Mewat by considering them solely as a vote bank. He said that his government had launched several development initiatives in the region despite it having no BJP MLA.

Stating that no government has celebrated Hasan Khan Mewati who fought Mughal king Babur, Khattar said a research chair will be established in the late king's name at Shaheed Hasan Khan Mewati Medical College, Nalhar.

He also unveiled statues of Hasan Khan and Mahatma Gandhi. He also announced a sports stadium in the village. "External elements are seeking to disrupt the unity of Mewat's community and residents should uphold the spirit of brotherhood, drawing inspiration from the patriotism of Shaheed Raja Hasan Khan Mewati," he said.

More than a thousand people were present at the event held at Badkali Chowk and were ferried to the spot by several Haryana Roadways buses. Azam Khan (45), a labourer from Basai in Nuh, said the sarpanch of his village asked them to go to the rally. "The sarpanch said they needed people and we attended. No one forced us to come...," he said.

Another labourer, Abdullah Khan (35), said the fact that Hasan Khan's name came up was surprising. "...this is the first time the CM has spoken about it. Otherwise, Mewatis are called Pakistanis. Today, Hasan Khan's martyrdom is celebrated," he said.

Mohammed Saad (50), who lives in Bhadas, said the projects announced by the CM were promised earlier. He added that the Congress had also tried to tap the sentiments of Mewatis by constructing a medical college in Nalhar and naming it after Hasan Khan. "The hospital does not provide advanced services, it mostly refers patients to hospitals in Gurgaon," he said.

Farmers to sit on 4-hour rail roko in Punjab, Haryana today

RAAKHI JAGGA
LUDHIANA, MARCH 9

ON A nationwide call by the Kisan Mazdoor Morcha (KMM) and Samyukta Kisan Morcha (non-political), the protesting farmers will observe a four-hour rail roko will be observed at nearly 60 places across Punjab and Haryana between 12 noon and 4 pm on Sunday.

Section 144 has been clamped in Ambala ahead of the rail roko and the police are reaching the houses of farmer union leaders in Ambala, revealed information.

The rail roko will be held to demand justice for Shubhkaran Singh who died on February 21 allegedly due to firearm injury in his head, MSP calculation according to the formulae of C2+50, MSP as a legal guarantee and others. Jagjit Singh Dallewal, coordinator of the KMM said, "The Union government will now realise the importance of the farmers and will also see their unity."

At least 50 locations are in Punjab, the farmer leaders said. The rail roko is expected to affect passengers travelling to other states and also those who will travel on intercity trains.

Smoke billows from the upper floors of Secretariat building in Bhopal on Saturday. *PTI*

Fire erupts in MP secretariat, Congress alleges foul play

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
BHOPAL, MARCH 9

A FIRE broke out at the Madhya Pradesh secretariat complex, Vallabh Bhawan, on Saturday morning. Nobody was injured in the incident, officials said.

Bhopal municipal corporation fire officer Rameshwar Neel told *The Indian Express*, "the fifth floor suffered major brunt of the fire. Floors 3 and 4 also had some damages. The cause of the fire is yet to be ascertained."

An official said five 'karamcharis' trapped inside the building, were rescued. The blaze was brought under control within five hours after the Army, National Disaster Response Force and police firefighters joined the municipal fire brigade, the official said.

Chief Minister Mohan Yadav ordered a probe into the incident.

Meanwhile, the Congress alleged it was a "conspiracy to destroy the evidence of corruption". Congress state chief Jitu Patwari and Leader of Opposition Umang Sarang protested outside the secretariat, seeking a CBI probe into the "man-made fire". "Fire incidents were reported at Vallabh Bhavan at least four times before. This is a man-made fire to hide the sins of corruption," Patwari said.

Bofors scam: Plea pending since 2005, advocate urges SC for urgent hearing

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, MARCH 9

HIS 2005 appeal against the Delhi High Court order, quashing the charges against the Hinduja brothers and Bofors company in the Bofors scam case, still pending before the Supreme Court, advocate Ajay Agrawal has urged the top court again to hear and decide it without further delay.

In his application, Agrawal said, "This is one case in the history of independent India wherein... Central governments have been trying to scuttle the investigation and misleading the courts and abusing the judicial process. Even the senior law officers of the government, including Attorney General of India, Solicitor General of India and Additional Solicitor Generals were giving solicit opinions and trying their best to save the accused person."

"This case has to be decided and guilty be punished so that it would have deterrent effect on society and such type of criminal acts be not repeated in future, like the AgustaWestland, which also occurred with the same modus operandi...," Agrawal said.

He contended that "had the Bofors scam... not happened, the country would have acquired Sofma Guns manufactured by the French government, which were far better than Bofors".

According to the advocate, the seniormost officers of the Army for four years in a series of trials and meetings "preferred Sofma over Bofors since it had a better shooting range of 29 kms, while Bofors had only 21 kms".

"And these were cheaper in cost than Bofors… the handling of Sofma guns was much easier than Bofors guns and the most important point in favour of Sofma as well as for India is that Sofma was transferring its manufacturing technology to India and it was ready to establish a manufacturing unit in India...," he said.

Assailing the May 31, 2004 judgment of the HC, quashing the charges, the application said the single judge had altered his own judgment of May 20, 2004 on a recall/clarification application filed by the Hinduja brothers.

"The order is bad in law and lacks jurisdiction...," it said, adding that the respondents "had got the orders by committing fraud with the SC and also with Delhi HC".

Agrawal said though he had filed a plea before the SC on August 5, 2007 for early hearing, the request is yet to be allowed.

Publications Division
Ministry of Information and Broadcasting
Govt. of India
Soochana Bhawan, CGO Complex, New Delhi-3.

Applications invited for preparation of panel of Casual Editors, Casual Translators, Casual proofreaders and Casual Typists in the Publications Division Headquarter, New Delhi as well as its Regional Units.

Publications Division(DPD) Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Soochana Bhawan, Lodhi Road, New Delhi-3 invites applications from the eligible and willing persons to prepare the following panels of Casual Editors, Casual Translators, Casual Proofreaders and Casual Typists in the Publications Division Headquarter, New Delhi as well as its Regional Units located in different parts of the country for various professional services relating to books/journals in Assamese, Bengali, English, Gujarati, Hindi, Kannada, Malayalam, Marathi, Odia, Punjabi, Tamil, Telugu and Urdu.

I. Panel of casual editors and casual typists to be engaged on per day basis.
ii. Panel of casual translators and casual proofreaders to be engaged and paid on word basis.

2. The applications in prescribed proforma (Annexure-1 attached with the detailed advertisement on DPD websitewwww.publicationsdivision.nic.in) should reach the respective Units by speed post/ hand / e-mail by 15th April 2024

3. Please visit Publications Division website www.publicationsdivision.nic.in (URL:https://www.publicationsdivision.nic.in/system/storage/upload/MenuScript/ProfessionalsPanel.pdf) for further details of eligibility conditions, selection procedure, application format and postal addresses of the officers to whom applications are to be addressed.

(Kamla Verma)
Director

CBC 22213/11/0007/2324

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Government of India

Powering India's
Green Energy Ambitions
With Solar Energy

Foundation Stone Laying of
NTPC REL BARETHI
SOLAR POWER PROJECT
(630 MW - worth ₹3200 crore)

By

Shri R.K. Singh
Hon'ble Union Minister of Power, New and Renewable Energy

&

Dr. Virendra Kumar
Hon'ble Union Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment

In the august presence of

Shri Rajesh Kumar Shukla
Hon'ble MLA, Bijawar

Smt. Lalita Yadav
Hon'ble MLA, Chhatarpur

Shri Arvind Pateriya
Hon'ble MLA, Rajnagar

Sunday, March 10, 2024 | 10:30 am | Barethi, Madhya Pradesh

Project Benefits
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- Low-cost power to beneficiary States
- Generation of new Employment Opportunities
- 12 Lakhs tons of CO_2 emissions is avoided every year

Classifieds

PERSONAL

I,Surendra kashana S/o Rajendra singh R/o-I-29, Ram Vihar loni Ghaziabad UP-201102, have changed my name to Surendra kasana 0040718901-1

I,Subhash Chander,S/o RADHA KISHAN R/O RZ-3 TODARMAL COLONY NAJAFGARH DELHI-110043,HAVE CHANGED MY NAME SUBHASH Bansal. 0040718981-7

I,SUMBUL SALIM,W/O SAAD AHMED R/O 8894 S F. NAYA MOHALLA, AZAD MKT DELHI-110006,HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO SUMBUL. 0040718978-4

I,SAKSHI SALUJA,w/o Raman Kumar Saluja R/o H-149, old Gupta Colony Delhi-110009, Have changed my name to Seema Saluja. 0040718981-6

I,Ravindra Madan S/o Lekh Raj Madan R/o-23,Nai,Basti B14 Govind,Nagar Bijnor UP-246701,have changed my name to Ravinder Kumar Madan. 0040718977-8

I,Ravinder Kumar,S/o Ram Partap,R/O AB-60 MIANWALI NAGAR PASCHIM VIHAR, DELHI-110087,HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO RAVINDER KUMAR GOYAL. 0040718981-8

I,Ravinder Goyal,S/o Ram Partap,R/O AB-60 MIANWALI NAGAR PASCHIM VIHAR DELHI-110087,HAVE CHANGED MY NAMETO RAVINDER KUMAR GOYAL. 0040718981-5

I Tushar Sharma, son of Shri Surinder Kumar Sharma, resident of C-923, Gaur Homes, Govindpuram, Ghaziabad, declare on oath that Tushar Kant Sharma and Tushar Sharma are the names of the same person i.e. me, the affiant. I swear that in future I,will be known as Tushar Sharma. 0070893333-1

I Jagdeep S/o Pritam Singh R/o H. No-62, Kanhai Colony, Sector- 44, Kanahi (73), PO-Gurgaon Sector- 45, Dist-Gurgaon, Haryana- 122003, have changed my name to Jagdeep Parwal 0070893339-1

I Digvijay Singh s/o. Jagvir Singh R/o.F. no.J-106, Kapil Vihar Society, Sec. 21-C, Faridabad, Haryana-121001. have changed my name Digvijay Singh Sheoran to Digvijay Singh for all future purposes. 0040718898-1

I Budhprakash Jangir S/o Banwari Lal Jangir R/o Jangir Work Shoap, Devaji Ki Pyau Ke Samne, Ward No.-42, Sikar, Sikar, Rajasthan-332001, have changed my name to Rakshit Jangir 0070893305-1

I,Mohinder Pal Singh,S/O Kuldip Singh,House.No.25, B/8,New Rohtak-Road, Karol-Bagh,New Delhi-110005,have changed my name to Mahender Pal Singh,S/o Kuldeep Singh,for all,future purposes. 0040718982-2

I, Ojasvi Tyagi, D/O Kapil Tyagi R/O B -8/106, Sec -3, Rohini Delhi-85, declare that Nanmun and Ojasvi Tyagi both are my names. 0050238535-1

I,hitherto known as KUMKUM JAHAN,D/O MOHAMMAD ZAHIRUDDIN,R/o-157,MANGAL -CHOWK BLOCK-H-2,JAHANGIR PURI,DELHI,DELHI-110033,have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as KUNTUM JAHAN. 0040718981-10

I,VASANTA K,mother of,Vivek G,residing at,S A Nivas PO Kanhirode (via)Koodali Kannur Kerala Pin-670592,have changed my name,from Vasanta K to Vasantha K,vide-Affidavit Dated-09.03.2024,at New-Delhi. 0040718982-8

I,Usha Rani W/o Bhupender Kumar,R/o H.No.86, Gali.No. 1, Tilpat Road, Chajjan Nagar, Palla.no.4,Sector-91,Faridabad, have changed my name to Usha Raghav after-marriage. 0040718981-1

I,Sushil Kumar Chaurasia S/o Ram Sajeevan Chaurasia R/o-K-92, 4th-5thFloor, Jahangir-puri Delhi-110033,have changed my name to Sushil Kumar Chaurasiya 0040718981-2

I,Musharafin,S/o Zahuruddin, H.No.6276, Gali Marwari, Nawab Road,Quresh Nagar, Sadar Bazar,Delhi-110006, changed my name to Mohd Mushrafin. 0040718977-3

I,Naveen Kumar Jain,S/o Sarwan Kumar,R/o 1540D, Durga Block,Gali No.10,Jain-Nagar Karala,Delhi-110081, have changed my name to Naveen Jain,for all purposes. 0040718977-7

I,Nutan W/o Avinash Kumar, R/o-301,Tower H, BPTP Princes Park,Sector-86, Faridabad, have changed my name to Nutan Kumar after-marriage. 0040718978-1

I,P U ANTONY alias ANTONY PALAKAKKOTTU ULAHANNAN S/O ULAHANNAN THOMAS R/o-B1/18, Vindhya,Shree Apartments, Burari,Delhi-110084,have changed my,name to ANTONY PALAKAKKOTTU ULAHANNAN. 0040718981-3

I,Husna Ara,W/o Mohd Mushrafin, H.No.6276,Gali Marwari,Nawab Road, Quresh Nagar,Sadar Bazar,Delhi-110006,changed my name to Husnara. 0040718977-2

I,Ranjna spouse.of,shivram presently Residing vill.ram nagar.post bharamau kanpur-209306,have changed my name from Ranjna to Ranjna devi,vide-Affidavit. date. 05.03.2024 at New-Delhi, 0040718982-7

I,Shyam Mehta S/o Khareti Lal Mehta R/o 14/15,Ashok Nagar, New Delhi-110018,have changed my name to Shyam Sunder Mehta. 0040718978-5

I,RAVI KUMAR GAUTAM,S/O ANIL KUMAR,R/O A-2/198,STREET-02 AMAR COLONY GOKAL PUR,DELHI-110094,HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO RAVI KUMAR. 0040718977-5

I have changed my name from Kalpana Gupta to Kalpana Mittal for all future purpose. Kalpana Mittal W/o Sachin Kumar Mittal R/o H-1 sector-23 Sanjay Nagar Ghaziabad 0070893308-1

I, NIDHI W/O SUNIL KANOJIA R/O DB-71,B DDA FLATS, HARI NAGAR, DELHI-110064, have changed my name from NIDHI to NIDHI BECTOR for all future purposes. My aadhar no-502445444294. 0040718932-1

I,Md Akhtar,S/o Md Khalil,R/o-718/B, Gali No.20A,Zakir Nagar,Jamia Nagar ND-110025,have change my name to Md Akhtar Hussain. 0040718982-1

I,Manish Tayagi S/o Rakesh Tyagi R/o-1839,Sector-2,Ballabgarh faridabad,have changed my name to Manish Tyagi 0040718901-2

I,Mahender Kumar Chutani,S/o Lok Nath R/o 47/9 Shivpuri, Gurgaon,have changed my name to Mahender Kumar. 0040718977-1

I,MODH KASIM s/o MUKHTAR AHMAD,R/O U-88,U-BLOCK WELLCOME PHASE-3 SEELAM PUR,DELHI-53,HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO MOHD-KASIM. 0040718978-3

I,LAL BABU MEENA,S/O KISHUN DEV THAKUR R/O,KH-NO-13/3,GALI-NO-18 NATHU COLONY BURARI,DELHI-110084,HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO LAL BABU THAKUR. 0040718977-4

I,KAUSHALYA,W/O Raj Singh Gulia,R/O 66/65,C block Najafgarh-Park colony, Najafgarh,Delhi-110043,have changed my name to KAUSHALYA DEVI, permanently. 0040718981-4

I,Jagmohan S/o Munshi Lal Saini,R/o 41, Madan Park,Street.No.4-East Punjabi-Bagh,New Delhi-110026,have changed my name to Jagmohan Saini. 0040718977-6

I,GIRISHAN K,father of,Vivek G,residing at,S A Nivas PO-Kanhirode(via)Koodali Kannur Kerala Pin-670592,have changed my name,from Girishan K to Gireesan K,vide-Affidavit,Dated-09.03.2024 at New-Delhi. 0040718982-9

I,Bhupinder Choudhary,S/O Hotu Ram,R/O 173, Ambica Vihar, Paschim-Vihar New Delhi-110087,Have Changed my Name to Bhupinder Chaudhary. 0040718978-2

I, Savita Sharma, wife of Mr. Surinder Kumar Sharma, resident of C-1023, Gaur Homes, Govindpuram, Ghaziabad, declare on oath that Savita Rani Sharma and Savita Sharma are the names of same woman i.e. me, the affiant. I swear that in future I,will be known as Savita Sharma. 0070893329-1

I, Ruchi Paliwal, wife of Mr. Tushar Sharma, resident of C-923, Gaur Homes, Govind puram, Ghaziabad, declare on oath that Tushar Kant Sharma and Tushar Sharma are the same person, that's my husband. I swear that my husband shall in future be known-as Tushar Sharma 0070893331-1

I MOHEMMAD YAMIN S/O ABDUL SHAKUR R/o H.NO-27, New GANESH PARK RASHID MARKET KRISHNA NAGAR DELHI 110051, HAVE CHANGED my NAME TO MOHAMMAD YAMIN. 0040718730-2

BUSINESS

TYFFYN provides All types of Women/ Men Jeans, Jackets, Blazers . Contact us- Shri Balaji Traders, Gandhi Nagar, Delhi-110031. Mobile- 9873684951, 9319450631. 0040718751-2

PUBLIC NOTICE

PUBLIC NOTICE

Be it known to all that my client **Ms. Jamuna Devi Aggarwal** w/o Late Sh.Suresh Chand Aggarwal R/o B-6, Gali no.2, East Azad Nagar, Krishna Nagar, Delhi-110051 has severed all relationship/ connection with her son & daughter in law namely **Deepak Aggarwal** & **Niharika Aggarwal @ Neha Aggarwal** respectively and has disowned and disinherited them of all her movable and immovable property. Further, my client shall not be responsible for any of their acts in any circumstances.

Sd/-
RAGHAV MEHDIRATTA
Advocate
(D/1078/16)

PUBLIC NOTICE

Be it know to all concerned That my clients MALUK CHAND S/O SHRI SITA RAM AND ARTI W/O MALUK CHAND BOTH R/O B-1075A/B, SANGAM VIHAR, NEW DELHI-110080, have severed all their relations & disowned/debarred their son AMIT from their all moveable & immoveable properties in Delhi and anywhere in India due to his Cruel nature, disobedience, bad/irresponsible behavior & non fulfill his moral duties towards my clients. My clients & their family members shall not be responsible for any acts, deeds done by their son AMIT at any point of time.

TUSHAR SINHA (Advocate)
En. No.D-192/2011

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the share certificates, nos 500 equity shares of ALBERT DAVID LTD Address D-Block, 3rd Floor, GILLANDER House, Netaji Subhas Road Kolkata, 700001 with Distinctive no(s) 317893 to 317942, 479143 to479192, 945922-946021, 1875591-1875640, 4351955-4352204 shares in respect of Folio No P00468 Registered in the name of POONAM GUPTA are reported to be lost and the company has received application for issue of duplicate share certificates.If no objection from any interested person is received by the Company's Registrars Maheshwari Datamatics Pvt. Ltd, 23, R.N MUKHERJEE Road, 5th floor, Kolkata 700001, within 15 days from the publication here of the company will proceed to issue duplicate share Certificate(s) to the applicantDate-10.03.2024

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is hereby, informed to the General Public that, I/we MS. PRITI KAPUR D/O MR. UMESH MEHROTRA, R/O D-06-01, VERTICAS RESIDENSI, 10 JLN CEYLON, 50200 KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA have lost the Original Provisional Allotment Letter No. JGNKLP122204 dated 28.02.2008 issued by Jaiprakash Associates Limited in respect of Unit bearing No. KLP0122204 in KALYPSO COURT project, situated at Jaypee Greens, Sector 128, Noida on dated 12.12.2023. Any one finding the said documents is requested to kindly return the same to me.

Name: MS. PRITI KAPUR
Address: MS. PRITI KAPUR
D/O MR. UMESH MEHROTRA
R/O D-06-01, VERTICAS RESIDENSI
10 JLN CEYLON, 50200 KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA
Mob: - +60 18-250 5178
Email ID: KAPURPRITI@GMAIL.COM

PUBLIC NOTICE

Be it known to public at large that my client Joginder Chauhan S/O Shri Suresh Chauhan R/O Flat No.5118, 2nd Floor, Pocket-B-7, Vasant Kunj, New Delhi 110070 has been running in partnership J.C. FITNESS situated at J- 211, Basement, Saket, New Delhi 110017 on the profit and loss bases for last three years. The center has undergone to a loss of Rs.30 Lacs. My client has not left in a position to run it continuous so he desires to close it and shows intent to refund membership fees of active members. Around Rs.30 Lacs are required to make payments to the members and other liabilities as RENT, ELECTRICITY AND WATER BILLS. My client has tried best at his level to contact other two partners but they are not responded. If rest of both partners do not respond to this notice within seven days then my client shall be at liberty to dispose of the workout equipment and other assets to make payments of the members and other liabilities.

ANANT PRAKASH (Advocate)
Chamber No. 838, B.S. Mehta Lane Patiala House Court, New Delhi-1

TO WHOMSOEVER IT MAY CONCERN

This is to inform the General Public that the following certificate of Krishanswarup Shantiswarup Vasudev having its Registered Office at A 2/10, First Floor, WHS DDA Marble Market, Kirti Nagar, New Delhi-110015 registered in the name of Asahi India Glass Ltd. following shares of Shareholder/s have been lost by them. Krishanswarup Shantiswarup Vasudev Folio No. K0000614, Certificate No. 206353, Distinctive Nos. 115244052-115248051.Total 4000 shares.

The Public are hereby cautioned against purchasing or dealing in any way with the above referred share certificates.Any person who has the claim in respect of the said share certificate/s should lodge such claim with the Company or its Registrar and Transfer Agents Link Intime India Private Limited C 101,247 Park L.B.S Marg Vikhroli West Mumbai-400083 within15 days of publication of this notice after which no claim will be entertained and the Company shall proceed to issue Duplicate Share Certificate/s.

Name of Legal Claimant- Uma Gandhi
Place-New Delhi, Date - 09.03.2024

MATRIMONIAL

RAJPUT

Suitable match for hindu rajput boy, 1995, 6' teetotaller, B.tech. Working in MNC. Preferred working girl. Caste no bar. 99150-23890 0020473737-1

SIKH/PUNJABI

Looking for a beautiful, Educated Jat Sikh girl who is social and willing to settle in small family preferably NRI for a Jat Sikh (Grewal) boy 32 years old 6' feet tall born brought up in London. Boy has done an MSc in Economics from San Francisco and is working for a FinTech company in London. Father in business and real estate developer and mother on a very senior position in the NHS. One younger sister unmarried and running her own business. Family has good landed property in Ludhiana district.Contact/ whatsapp 00447711578013 0020473510-1

BRAHMIN

36y CA working in Hyd, Telugu vaidiki brahmin girl, 5'5", family settled in Hyd, gifted sketcher, painter. Issueless divorcee no encumbrances, seeks well educated, well settled groom working in India from affectionate South Indian veg families. Reply to pmsvhyd@gmail.com <mailto:pmsvhyd@gmail.com > 0130040807-1

GENERAL

USA Settled family, seeking match for beautiful daughter : 34, 5'.3", graduate, IT Professional, US Citizen, never married, Brahim -no bar. WhatsApp : 91- 8146730150 . Email-rdkl204a@gmail.com <mailto:Email-rdkl204a@gmail.com> 0050236083-2

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform the Public at large that my client Sh. Pradeep Kumar Madhavan Nair S/O Late Sh. Madhavan Nair and his wife Smt. Pushpalata Pradeep Kumar Nair, both Resident of House No. - A-601, Indhra Prasta, Sector-9, Vasant nagari, Vasai East, Palghar, Maharashtra - 401208, have Disowned their Son namely Arun Kumar Pradeep Nair Resident of 719, Essel Tower EWS, Indian Airlines Pilots Society, Sushant Lok Phase I, Sector 28, Gurugram, Haryana - 122022and his wife namely Monica Menon, along with his legal heirs due to their act, conduct and Behavior. They have severed all their ties with them and Debarred them from their property and Assets. If any person deals with them, he will do so, at his own risk and consequence. **SAMADHAAN LEGAL CHAMBER J-10 Eldeco County JHANSI-284001 (UP)**

DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM
Government of Uttar Pradesh

UTTAR PRADESH TOURISM
U.P. sabi dekha, Jab India sabi dekha

Paryatan Bhawan, C-13, Vipin Khand, Gomti Nagar, Lucknow - 226010
Email Id: ppp.uptourism@gmail.com

Request for Proposal (RFP) for Tourism Gap Analysis, Survey of Locations, Identification Shelf of Projects and Propose Implementation and Marketing Strategies - for 12 Mega Circuits each - Ramayana, Krishna-Braj, Buddhist Circuit; Mahabharata Circuit; Shakti Peeth Circuit; Adhyatmik Circuit; Sufi-Kabir Circuit; Jain Circuit; Bundelkhand Circuit; Wildlife and Eco Tourism Circuit; Craft Circuit; and the Swatantrata Sangram Circuit

Online e-bids are invited from the interested bidders, starting from **9th March 2024; 1200 hrs** for TOURISM GAP ANALYSIS, SURVEY OF LOCATIONS, IDENTIFICATION SHELF OF PROJECTS AND PROPOSE IMPLEMENTATION AND MARKETING STRATEGIES' - separate bids for all 12 circuits Pre-bid meeting for all the circuits will be organized jointly on 15/03/2024; 12:00 PM at Paryatan Bhawan, Lucknow.**Last date of submission of e-bids is 30/03/2024; 18:00 PM.** RFP documents are available on the e-tender website https://etender.up.nic.in. The Department of Tourism, Government of Uttar Pradesh reserves the right to cancel any or all the e-bids or annul the bidding process without assigning any reason thereof.

(Director General Tourism)

GOVERNMENT OF ASSAM
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ENGINEER, PWD (ROADS), ASSAM, CHANDMARI, GUWAHATI -03

No. CE/Maint/MMPPNA/01/2023-24/ 29

PRESS NOTICE INVITING TENDER

The Chief Engineer (Roads), PWRD, Assam, Chandmari, Guwahati-3 invites bid on behalf of Governor of Assam for **1 (One)** package for Construction of Roads & Bridges including Routine Maintenance for 4 (four) years under **Mukhya Mantrir Paki Path Nirman Achani (MMPPNA) for the year 2023-24** in **Hojai District** of Assam amounting to **Rs.5 Crores** (approx.) including GST etc. from approved & eligible Contractors registered with PWRD, Assam.

Details may be seen from **14-03-2024 to 04-04-2024** at website **www.assamtenders.gov.in**. Amendment /Addendum to the SBD, if any, and further notifications shall appear in this website and also at the office of the undersigned during office hours. The contractor/bidder must be registered with the Electronic Tendering System (ETS) of PWRD, Assam website **www.assamtenders.gov.in**.

Formal work order will be issued after receipt of Administrative Approval from competent authority.

Note: - N.I.T Value is inclusive of GST (12%), Labour cess (1%) etc.

Sd./-
Chief Engineer, PWD (Roads)
Assam, Chandmari, Guwahati-3

Janasanyog/CF/6416/23/10-Mar-24

GOVERNMENT OF ASSAM
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ENGINEER, PWD (ROADS) ASSAM, CHANDMARI, GUWAHATI-03

No. CE/CW/40/2023-24/

PRESS NOTICE RE-INVITING TENDER(Re-Bid)

The Chief Engineer (Roads), PWRD, Assam, Chandmari, Guwahati-3 re-invites bids on behalf of the Governor of Assam from approved & eligible contractors registered with PWRD, Assam for one work under **Mukhya Mantrir Paki Path Nirman Achani (MMPPNA)** for the year **2023-24** under West Guwahati LAC in Kamrup (Metropolitan) district of Assam.

Details along with packages for the works may be seen at website **www.assamtenders.gov.in** and also at the office of the undersigned in the "**City Works Cell**". Amendment/Addendum to the SBD, if any, and further notifications shall appear in this website and also at the office of the undersigned during office hours. The contractor/bidder must be registered with the Electronic Tendering System (ETS) of PWRD, Assam website **www.assamtenders.gov.in**.

Note: NIT Value is inclusive of GST (12%), Labour Cess (1%), etc.

Sd./-
Chief Engineer, PWD (Roads),
Assam, Chandmari, Guwahati-3

Janasanyog/CF/6419/23/10-Mar-24

कार्यालय नगर निगम, बरेली।

पत्रांकः 83/पर्या.अभि./एस.डब्लू.एम./2023-24 दिनांक 04 मार्च 2024

TENDER NOTICE

Bareilly Municipal Corporation invites Engagement of agencies for O&M of Material Recovery Facility along with IEC activities in Nagar Nigam Bareilly.

Work Description	Tender & EMD Fee
Engagement of agencies for O&M of Material Recovery Facility along with IEC activities in Bareilly	The Tender INR 5000.00 & EMD is INR 01 Lakh which will be in the form of FDR/TDR/BG/RTGS of Nationalized / Scheduled bank of India in favour of the "MUNICIPALCORPORATION BAREILLYN"

Event of Calendar:

SI. No.	Events	Date & Time
1.	Bid downloading Start Date	10/03/2024 from 12.00 PM 10
2.	Bid downloading End Date	15/03/2024 up to 11:00 PM 15
3.	Last date & Time of Receipt of Online Submission of Bid	16/03/2024 from 12:00 PM 16
4.	Bid Opening date	16/03/2024 up to 04.00 PM 16
5.	Last date & Time Submission of Pre Bid Query	13/03/2024 at 12.00 PM 13
6.	Pre Bid Meeting Date	13/03/2024 at 02.30 PM 13

The tender document can be downloaded from **https://etender.up.nic.in**. "Corrigendum if any. Would appear only on the **https://etender.up.nic.in** site and not to be published in any News Paper."

हस्ता./-
प्रभारी अधिकारी (एस.डब्लू.एम.)
नगर निगम, बरेली।

Govt. of Jharkhand
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER

Field Survey Division, Advance Planning, Road Construction Department, Nirupan Bhawan, 4th floor, 56-Set Chowk, Doranda, Ranchi-834002
e-mail--- eercdapfsdran-jhr@nic.in

e-Procurement Short Notice

e-Tender Reference No .-RCD/FSD /AP/ RAN/**73**/23-24 Dated **07.03.2024**

1-	Name of Work	Consultancy services for preparation of Detailed project report for construction of Bypass or Ring Road in Saraikela including replacement of culverts and bridges, proposal of new culverts and bridges, complete Land Acquisition Proposal including ownership details all complete as per latest guidelines, Resettlement and Rehabilitation Proposal and Forest Diversion Proposal including clearance of all stages etc as required, at Saraikela Kharsawan in the state of Jharkhand.. from Consultants empanelled in Category-I with the Road Construction Department, Government of Jharkhand vide letter no -3063(S) W.E dated 22-08-2022 are allowed to bid.
2-	Tentative Length of Work	5.0 Km.
3-	Work completion time	60 Days
4-	Cost of Tender Document & Earnest Money Deposit (EMD)	**Cost of Tender Document** - Rs 5,000/- (Rupees Five Thousand) (Non-Refundable) through online mode only. **EMD :-** Rs- 20,000/- (Rupees Twenty Thousand) through online mode only. As per the Departmental Letter no.-4652(S) dated 06.10.2023, cost of tender document and Earnest Money Deposit will be received in online mode only through e-procurement portal (https://jharkhandtenders.gov.in) by Internet banking/ NEFT/ RTGS facility as per Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) issued by Information Technology & e-Governance Department, Government of Jharkhand vide letter no- 120 dated 03.10.2023.
5-	Date and Time of Publishing of Tender on official website	12.03.2024, 05.00 PM
6-	Last date and Time of submission of Tender (With Tender Fe e and EMD)	27.03.2024, 12.30 PM
7-	Date and Timing of Bid opening	28.03.2024, 12.30 PM
8-	Tender Inviting Authority	Executive Engineer, Field Survey Division, Advance Planning, RCD, Ranchi, Nirupan Bhavan, 56 set Chowk, Doranda, Ranchi-834002, Mobile No-9431591027
9-	Mode of Bid Submission	e-Tendering (http://jharkhandtenders.gov.in)

For further information please go through the website http://jharkhandtenders.gov.in

PR 321997 Road(23-24)#D

Executive Engineer, Field Survey Division,A.P Road Construction Department,Ranchi

"IMPORTANT"

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NORTHERN RAILWAY

Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

Name of Work and its location	**30-Elect-54-T-R1-23-24-E3** **(i)** Electrical work in connection with S&T conference hall at room no. 207 & 208 annexe-I B, House, New Delhi. **(ii)** Electrical work in connection with renovation/upgradation of Conference Hall, Kitchen, Wash room of Commercial Branch, Baroda House.
Approx. Cost of the works in	Rs. 33.09 lacs
Address of the office	Sr. Divil Elect. Engineer/General, New Delhi.
Bid Security	Rs. 66200.00
Date & time of submission of tender	02.04.2024, 12.00 Hrs.
Opening of tender	02.04.2024, 12.00 Hrs.
Website & notice board	www.ireps.gov.in & Sr. Divl. Elect. Engineer/General, New Delhi

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE 747/24

NOTICE INVITING e-TENDER

NIeT No. F.23(34)-Agri (FM)/SSP/2024-25/1778, dtd 07-03-2024

On behalf of Govt of Tripura, the Department of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare invites an e-Tender in two-bid system (Technical & Financial) from the bonafied manufactures or their authorized dealers upto 16:00 Hrs of 27-03-2024 for **"Supply of 10,000 MT SSP Fertilizer (16% P2O5 powdered) during 2024-25".**

Estimated Tender Value :- Rs. 13,20,00,000/-
EMD:- Rs. 44,18,000/-
Tender Fee:- Rs. 5,000/-
Bid submission end date & time:- 27-03-2024 upto 16:00 Hrs.
For details visit website www.tripuratenders.gov.in.

Sd/-
(Saradindu Das)
Director of Agriculture Tripura

ICA/C/5096/24

TAMIL NADU MARITIME BOARD
(GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL NADU)

Tender Notice - Lump sum Items Rate Contract (Two Cover System)

No.1036/CE/2024 - 02 **Dated 08.03.2024**

Tamil Nadu Maritime Board Invites Tender for the work of **"Creation of Berthing Facilities (Floating Jetty) at Cuddalore, Tamil Nadu"**. The Schedule of Important dates are as follows:

Tender Schedule available from	11.03.2024 @ 11:00 Hrs
Last date of submission	11.04.2024 @ 15:00 Hrs
Tender Opening Date	12.04.2024 @ 15:30 Hrs

For further details and Tender Documents, Please visit the website https://tntenders.gov.in/nicgep/app

DIPR 1492/Tender/2024

State Port Officer
Tamil Nadu Maritime Board

UPDCC

Office of General Manager,
PIU Song Dam Drinking Water Project, UPDCC
Ground Floor, Lakhwad Field Hostel,
Yamuna Colony, District Dehradun - 248001

NATIONAL COMPETITIEVE BIDDING
e-Tender Notice

Office of the General Manager (Civil), Song Dam Project, UPDCC Limited (A Govt. of Uttarakhand Construction Corporation), Yamuna Colony (Dehradun), invites online bids from interested parties. Brief summaryof bid is given as below:
Bid Identification No:01/GM/PIUS/Dam/2023-24

Name of work : Civil Works including HM works for Construction of 130.6 M High Concrete Gravity Dam and Appurtenant Works Across River Song of Song Dam Drinking Water Project in District Dehradun, Uttarakhand

Estimated cost (Exclusive of GST) : 1306.40 Cr
Date of availability of bid document on website : 11.03.2024 11:00 AM onwards
Clarification Start Date : 11.03.2024
Clarification End Date : 20.03.2024
Date of Meeting Pre Bid : 22.03.2024 11:00 AM onwards
Reply of Clarifications : 30.03.2024
Last date for submission of bid son website : 16.04.2024 till 05:00 PM
Date of opening of Technical Bids : 18.04.2024 3:30 PM

For full & further details, kindly Visit e-procurement portal "**http://uktenders.gov.in**"

General Manager (Civil)

"Avoid wasteful use of Water"

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON

(See Section 82 Cr.PC)

Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused **Karan, S/o Govind R/o C-16/2, Gali No.7, New Govindpura, New Delhi** also at **136 Gopal Park, Krishna Nagar, Delhi** has committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence in case **FIR No.135/2018 u/s 307/336/506/34 IPC & 25/37 Arms Act, P.S. Malviya Nagar, Delhi** and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said accused **Karan** cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said accused **Karan** has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant).

Proclamation is hereby made that the said accused **Karan** of **FIR No.135/2018 u/s 307/336/506/34 IPC & 25/37 Arms Act, P.S. Malviya Nagar, Delhi** is required to appear before this Court to answer the said complaint on or before **27.03.2024.**

By Order,
Sh. Vishal Pahuja
Additional Sessions Judge (FTC)-02, Room No.502,
Saket Court, South Delhi, Delhi

DP/2250/SD/2024

Chaudhary Charan Singh, Haryana Agricultural University, Hisar
(Established by Parliament Act 16 of 1970)

E-Tender Notice

The Director Farm, CCS HAU, Hisar is re-inviting e-tenders for various field operations/work (For Research Farm Area and Palledari work) in the University through e-tendering at Central Level. For detail information and e-tendering/tenders schedule, please visit the website http://etender.hry.nic.in and University website http://hau.ac.in.

Dates for start of bid preparation, closing of bid submission, Opening of Technical Bid are as under: -

Tender Type	Bid submission start Date	Bid submission end date	Bid opening date
Tenders of Research Farm Area and Palledari work	12.03.2024	21.03.2024	22.03.2024

Note:
1. All updates, amendments, Corrigendum etc. (if any) will be posted only on the CCS HAU website/Tender website. There will not be any publication of the same through Newspapers or any other media.
2. Interested bidders are advised to deposit bid security/EMD on or before 48:00 hrs of expiring date and time of bid online so as to get the payment verified.

Sd/- Director Farm

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF A PERSON ACCUSED

(See Section 82 Cr. PC)

Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused person namely **Rajesh S/o Gangu Ram R/o H.No. 231 Near Khatta Doongar Mohalla Tikona Park, SHD** has committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence in case **FIR No. 551/13 U/s 33 D-ex Act at PS: Farsh Bazar, Delhi** and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said accused **Rajesh** can not be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said accused **Rajesh** has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant). Proclamation is hereby made that the said accused **Rajesh of FIR No. 551/13 U/s 33 D-ex Act at PS: Farsh Bazar, Delhi is required to appear before this court to answer the said complaint on or before 28.05.2024.**

By order
Akhil Malik
Metropolitan Magistrate-02
Room No. 38, Shahdara
Karkardooma Courts, Delhi

DP/2752/SHD/2024

Ministry of Civil Aviation
Government of India

Modern Infrastructure for Viksit Bharat
Modi Sarkar ki Guarantee

Gift of Airport Projects worth over ₹ 9,800 Crore to Seven States/UT

Inauguration of New Airports at

Aligarh, Azamgarh, Chitrakoot, Moradabad and Shravasti

& Inauguration of New / Upgraded Airport Terminal Buildings of

Gwalior, Pune, Adampur, Kolhapur, Jabalpur, Delhi and Lucknow

and Foundation Stone Laying for New Airport Terminal Buildings at

Kadapa, Hubballi and Belagavi

Salient features and benefits

- New Airports & New/upgraded Terminal Buildings being inaugurated will have combined capacity to serve more than 6 Crore passengers annually
- Foundation stone laying for New Terminal Buildings with combined capacity to serve 95 Lakh passengers annually
- New Airports in Uttar Pradesh under UDAN - RCS scheme to accelerate economic growth of the region
- Design of Terminal Buildings and interiors inspired from vibrant culture and heritage of the region

by

Shri Narendra Modi
Prime Minister

in the august presence of

Shri Yogi Adityanath
Chief Minister, Uttar Pradesh

Shri Jyotiraditya M. Scindia
Union Minister of Civil Aviation and Steel

Shri Keshav Prasad Maurya
Deputy Chief Minister, Uttar Pradesh

Sunday, 10th March, 2024 | 12 Noon | Azamgarh, Uttar Pradesh

Aligarh

Azamgarh

Chitrakoot

Moradabad

Shravasti

Watch the event live on DD News

cbc 03111/15/0016/2324

epaper.indianexpress.com

'Bharat Shakti' at Pokhran on March 12

New Delhi: The integrated tri-service exercise 'Bharat Shakti' will be held at Pokhran in Rajasthan on March 12, a top army official said on Saturday.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi is expected to attend the exercise. The exercise will also demonstrate the prowess of indigenously manufactured defence equipment of the three services. **PTI**

Punjab excise policy: Imported booze gets cheaper, no hike in country liquor price

KANCHAN VASDEV
CHANDIGARH, MARCH 9

THE PRICE of the imported foreign liquor (IFL) is set to drop while there will be no increase in the rates of country liquor, as per the Punjab excise policy for 2024-25, which also aims to generate over Rs 10,000 crore in revenue. The Cabinet, in a meeting chaired by Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann, Saturday approved the new excise policy.

"We aim to generate Rs 10,145.95 crore through liquor sales, up from Rs 6,151 crore revenue during the previous Congress regime," Finance Minister Harpal Cheema said after the meeting. This is for the first time that the revenue from liquor sales is estimated to cross five-figure mark in a fiscal year, he added.

Justifying the cut in IFL rates, a senior government official, said, "It was felt that the IFL is consumed at weddings and at other celebrations, but it was being smuggled from Haryana and Chandigarh, where it is cheaper than Punjab. This segment had been troubling us. Now, we have rationalised the fee structure by bringing about changes in the price-determining formula".

A bottle of IFL is likely to go cheaper by Rs 100-200, the official said, adding that no change has been effected in the prices of country made liquor as it was a mass segment catering to rural masses and generates big revenue. Punjab already allows unlimited liquor quota, and the AAP government, while announcing its first excise policy in 2022, had made the Indian Made Foreign Liquor (IMFL) and country liquor cheaper than Chandigarh and Haryana.

To mobilise additional revenue and ensure enough availability, the quota of country liquor (Punjab Medium Liquor or PML) in the financial year 2024-25 has been increased by 3 per cent, which is 8.286 crore proof litre, over the last year.

Minister Cheema said that the new policy envisages allotment of liquor vends through a draw of lots.

Instead of 172 groups, 232 have been formed this time, he said, adding "The group size has been decreased and kept at Rs 35 crore with 15 per cent variation. This has been done to accommodate those traders, who have been crying that they were left out".

NCB arrests film producer & ex-DMK worker in global drugs trade case

Top party leader may be summoned

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, MARCH 9

THE NARCOTICS Control Bureau (NCB) on Saturday arrested expelled DMK functionary and Tamil film producer Jaffer Sadiq for his alleged involvement in an international drugs trafficking nexus, which sourced Pseudoephedrine in India and trafficked it to Australia, New Zealand and Malaysia.

NCB Deputy Director General (operations) Gyaneshwar Singh told reporters here that Sadiq's linkages with the film industry, some "high-profile" people apart from some instances of "political funding", were under the scanner of the agency.

Sources told PTI that a high-profile DMK leader could soon be summoned by the NCB for questioning with regard to monetary transactions worth a few lakhs of rupees. "We will intensely investigate the drug money trail in this case," the DDG said when asked if any political persons were under the scanner of the agency.

The NCB said in February this year it seized around 50 kg of narcotics-making chemical Pseudoephedrine during a raid at a godown of Sadiq's company Aventa in Delhi's Basai Darapur area and arrested three of his accomplices. Sadiq,36, whose full name is Jaffar Sadiq Abdul Rehman, went into "hiding" soon after the raids. He travelled from Chennai to Thiruvananthapuram, Mumbai, Pune, Ahmedabad and Jaipur before being taken into custody following his brief questioning by the NCB. The NCB said the three arrested persons and Sadiq informed them that a total of 45 pseudoephedrine consignments were sent by them over the last three years, containing about 3,500 kgs of pseudoephedrine valued at over Rs 2,000 crore in the international market.

The searches by the NCB along with the special cell of the Delhi Police came on a tip-off they received towards the end of 2023 from the Australian and New Zealand authorities about "large quantities" of Pseudoephedrine concealed in desiccated coconut powder and mix food powder being smuggled into their countries from India. An additional input from the US DEA (Drug Enforcement Administration) indicated that the source of these consignments was in the national capital, the NCB said. Sadiq, according to Singh, invested his alleged drugs trade earned money into his "front or cover businesses" of movie production, real estate and hospitality among others.

A Tamil film, Mangai, was "entirely funded" by the accused from drugs money. He also constructed a hotel in Chennai, the DDG said.

According to NCB officials, Sadiq allegedly used to get Rs 1 lakh per kg "cut" (commission) from the smuggling of narcotics.

—WITH PTI INPUTS

SUICIDE OF TWO MINOR GIRLS IN KANPUR

Days after rape victim's father found dead, mother and sister of 1 accused held

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
LUCKNOW, MARCH 9

THE HAMIRPUR police, probing the alleged suicide of the father of one of the two teenaged rape victims who also allegedly died by suicide in Kanpur recently, on Friday arrested the mother (43) and sister (18) of one of the accused in the rape case. The two women were booked on charges of criminal intimidation and abetment to suicide, officers said. Police arrested the two women on Friday while they were trying to shift to another hideout. The two were produced before a local court of Hamirpur which sent them to judicial custody, said SP, Hamirpur, Deeksha Sharma.

The two women were arrested on the basis of a statement of the victim's neighbor, she added.

Additional Commissioner of Police, Kanpur, Harish Chander, said that although the post-mortem report has been received, police are waiting for other medical reports to reach any conclusion regarding the rape charges made in the case..

On February 28, the bodies of the two teenaged girls were found hanging from a tree in a Kanpur village.

SALUTE THE SOLDIER

Constable Sita Ram

INDO-TIBETAN BORDER POLICE (ITBP)
10 March 2024

ITBP salutes its braveheart Constable Sita Ram of 11th Battalion, who made supreme sacrifice in the line of duty on this day in Jammu & Kashmir in 2002.

Resident of : VPO- Dhabiri, Teh.- Barsar, Distt.- Hamirpur, (Himachal Pradesh)

No. CE/MAINT/MMPPNA/01/2023-24/28

CANCELLATION NOTICE

It, is for general information to all concerned that the tender process for the Package No- Maint/MMPPNA/2023-24/83, at Sl. No 83 in Detailed Notice Inviting Tender vide this office letter no. CE/Maint/MMPPNA/01/2023-24/02, Dated 08/12/2023 under Mukhya Mantrir Paki Path Nirman Aachani (MMPPNA) for the year 2023-24 is hereby cancelled due to technical reason.

All other terms and conditions will remain the same.

Sd./-
Chief Engineer, PWD (Roads)
Assam, Chandmari, Guwahati-3

Janasanyog/CF/6413/23/10-Mar-24

Pune Mahanagar Parivahan Mahamandal Ltd.
Shankarsheth road, swargate, Pune - 37

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL - PROCUREMENT OF BUSES ON GCC BASIS

Duration : 11/03/2024 TO 12/04/2024 till 05.00 pm
Acceptance Details : 11/03/2024 TO 12/04/2024 till 05.00 pm
Pre-Bid Meeting : 20/03/2024 at 3.00 pm
Technical tender opening date : 15/04/2024 till 02.00 pm

Tender No.	Department	Work description	Tender set price	Eastimate Amount	Earnest Money	Work Period
11-CE-2024	PMPML – Chief Mechanical Engineer	Selection of Operator(s) for Procurement, Operation and Maintenance of 400 nos. of 12-meter BRT compliant Non-AC CNG Buses within Pune Metropolitan Region on Gross Cost Basis	59,000/- (Inclusive of GST)	B2 Tender	55,00,000/- (Fifty five lakhs only)	7 Years

All relevant details of the procurement are available in Request For Proposal (RFP) document. The RFP document is available & can be purchased online from www.mahatenders.gov.in All subsequent notification, announcement, changes, extension & amendments would be posted on website.

sd/-
(Dr. Sanjay Kolte, IAS)
Chairman & Managing Director
Pune Mahanagar Parivahan Mahamandal Ltd.

Adv. No. : CE/08
Date : 07/03/2024.

TAMIL NADU CIVIL SUPPLIES CORPORATION (TNCSC)
(Government of Tamil Nadu)
No. 12, Thambusamy Road, Kilpauk, Chennai – 600 010
E-TENDER NOTICE
E-Tender Reference No:ME5/010781/2022, dated:09.03.2024

TNCSC a Government of Tamil Nadu organization invites e-tenders under "Two Cover System" from Private Players for Selection of Private Operator for the Operation and Maintenance of 50000 MTs capacity Scientific Silo facility at Erukkur MRM Campus, Mayiladuthurai District for a period of 10 years on Public Private Partnership (PPP) mode.

The Tender documents can be downloaded at www.tntenders.gov.in from 12.03.2024. The details of the tender is as follows:

1	Pre-bid meeting	08.04.2024 at 3.00 PM
2	Due Date & Time of submission of the tender	08.05.2024 up to 11.00 AM
3	Date & Time of opening of the tender	09.05.2024 up to 11.30 AM
4	Earnest Money Deposit	Rs.20,00,000/- (Rupees Twenty lakh only). The procedure for remittance of EMD is given in the Tender Document.

DIPR/1514/TEN/2024 MANAGING DIRECTOR

Pune Mahanagar Parivahan Mahamandal Ltd.
Shankarsheth road, swargate, Pune - 37

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL - PROCUREMENT OF BUSES

Duration : 11/03/2024 TO 12/04/2024 till 05.00 pm
Acceptance Details : 11/03/2024 TO 12/04/2024 till 05.00 pm
Pre-Bid Meeting : 20/03/2024 at 11.00 am
Technical tender opening date : 15/04/2024 till 02.00 pm

Tender No.	Department	Work description	Tender set price	Eastimate Amount	Earnest Money	Work Period
10-CE-2024	PMPML – Chief Mechanical Engineer	Selection of Eligible Bus Manufacturer to Design, Manufacture, Supply, Commission and Support of 12 Meter 100 Nos. CNG Non AC BRT buses for 12 years	59,000/- (Inclusive of GST)	B2 Tender	55,00,000/- (Fifty five lakhs only)	7 Months

All relevant details of the procurement are available in Request For Proposal (RFP) document. The RFP document is available & can be purchased online from www.mahatenders.gov.in All subsequent notification, announcement, changes, extension & amendments would be posted on website.

sd/-
(Dr. Sanjay Kolte, IAS)
Chairman & Managing Director
Pune Mahanagar Parivahan Mahamandal Ltd.

Adv. No. : CE/07
Date : 07/03/2024.

BIHAR SCHOOL EXAMINATION BOARD

SHORT NOTICE INVITING e-TENDER
(Through e-procurement mode only over https://eproc2.bihar.gov.in)
Re-Tender Notice No.- PR 103/2024

Bihar School Examination Board, Patna invites e-tenders under two bid systems from the reputed Suppliers/ experienced Firms /Companies/ Agencies/ Societies for **"Providing Operational & Maintenance Support with Cloud Hosting for Online Facilitation System for Students (OFSS) of Bihar School Examination Board."**

Scope of work	Cost of Tender Document (Inclusive of All Taxes)	Tender Processing Fee (Inclusive of All Taxes)	Earnest Money
Providing Operational & Maintenance Support with Cloud Hosting for Online Facilitation System for Students (OFSS) of Bihar School Examination Board.	₹5,900/- (Rupees Five Thousand Nine Hundred only)	₹3,540/- (Three Thousand Five Hundred Forty Rupees Only)	₹2,00,000/- (Rupees Two Lakh only)

Tender Schedule/ Programme:

Particulars	Date/Time: Duration
Online Sale/Download date of Tender documents	From: 10/03/2024 (11:00 Hrs.) to 23/03/2024 (13:00 Hrs.) (https://eproc2.bihar.gov.in)
Pre-Bid Meeting	13/03/2024 at 11:30 Hrs. (Bihar School Examination Board, Sinha Library Road, Patna-800017)
Last Date/ Time for submission/ of Bid	23/03/2024 up to 13:00 Hrs. (https://eproc2.bihar.gov.in)
Submission of EMD (in case of BG) in Hard copy/ Original	23/03/2024 up to 14:00 Hrs. (Bihar School Examination Board, Sinha Library Road, Patna-800017)
General Bid Opening Date & Time	23/03/2024 at 14:30 Hrs (https://eproc2.bihar.gov.in) (Bihar School Examination Board, Sinha Library Road, Patna-800017)
Financial Bid Opening Date and Time	Date to be announced later by competent authority.

- Corrigendum/Addendum, if any, will be published on e-Procurement Portal, Bihar https://eproc2.bihar.gov.in itself.
- Contact Details: Sh. Vinod Kumar Singh, Nodal officer - +91 62999 23095, E-Mail ID – eproc-bseb-bih@gov.in/ eproc.bseb@gmail.com
- Note: - Bihar School Examination Board reserves the right to Accept/ Cancel/ Reschedule tenders without assigning any reasons.

Secretary

कार्यालय अधिशाषी अभियन्ता सार्वजनिक निर्माण विभाग विद्युत खण्ड उदयपुर

क्रमांक–टीएस/D–32 दिनांक :– 29.02.2024

निविदा सूचना संख्या: 32/2023–24

राजस्थान के राज्यपाल महोदय की और से विद्युत कार्य. (1) अनुमानित राशि 493.33 लाख में दोष निवारण एवं उनके सुधार (मय डी.एल.पी अवधि) शर्त सहित सार्वजनिक निर्माण विभाग में उपयुक्त श्रेणी एवं राज्य सरकार / केन्द्र सरकार के अधिकृत संगठनों में समकक्ष श्रेणी में पंजीकृत संवेदकों से निर्धारित प्रपत्र में निविदा दिनांक 20.03.2024 को साथ 6.00 बजे तक आमंत्रित की जाती है। निविदा से संबंधित समस्त विवरण वेबसाइट http://dipr.rajasthan.gov.in/tender.asp व www.eproc.rajasthan.gov.in तथा http://sppp.rajasthan.gov.in पर देखा जा सकता है। शुद्धि पत्र केवल http://sppp.raj.nic.in व www.eproc.rajasthan.gov.in वेबसाईट पर अपलोड किये जोयगें।

NIB Code:- PWD2324A4821
UBN:- PWD2324WSOB20857

अधिशाषी अभियन्ता
सा.नि.वि विद्युत खण्ड
उदयपुर

DIPR/C/2477/2024

ENGINEERING WORKS IN TINSUKIA DIVISION

Tender Notice No. : TSK/Engg/15 of 2024, Dated: 05-03-2024; E-Tender are invited by the undersigned for the following work; **Item No. 1; Brief Description of Item :** At Tinsukia Division-TBCSR of existing channel sleepers by H-Beam sleeper of Bridge No. 14(300 nos) between Moranhat-Dhamalgaon Jn. **Tender Value:** ₹1,13,07,744/-; **Earnest Money**: ₹2,06,500/-; Date & time of **closing** of above tenders at **15:00** hrs. and **opening** at **16:00** hrs. on **28-03-2024**. The complete information with the tender document of above e-tender will be available upto**15:00** hrs. on **28-03-2024** in website **www.ireps.gov.in.**

DRM(W), Tinsukia
NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY
Serving Customers With A Smile

ENGINEERING WORKS AT RANGIYA DIVISION

Tender Notice No.: 121-ENGG-RNY-2023-24, Dated: 05-03-2024; E-Tender are invited by the undersigned for the following work; **Tender No. 1; Brief Description of Item:** Replacement of existing RCC slabs of 6.10m span to PSC slab of 6.10m span of existing bridge no. 485, 505, 509, 511, 518, 519, 520, 453, 474, 478/A and 478/B in between New Bongaigaon-Rangiya-Agthori section. **Tender Value:** ₹29,05,09,199.81; **Earnest Money :** ₹16,02,600/-; Date & time of **closing** of tender at **15:00** hrs. and opening at **15:30** hrs. on **27-03-2024**. For details please visit in website **http://www.ireps.gov.in.**

DRM (Works), Rangiya
NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY
Serving Customers With A Smile

OFFICE OF TH EXECUTIVE ENGINEER WATER WAYS DIVISION, MEDININAGAR.
CORRIGENDUM

In Bid Reference No.-WRD/Water Ways Division, Medininagar/ Turnkey-01/23-24, Dated-07.02.2024 ,PR 318388 District (23-24).D due to late uploading of Executive Summary over the website, the Period of availability of Bidding document on Website and the corresponding dates are extended as follows: -

Period of availability of Bidding document on Website	From 12.02.2024 at 4:00 PM to 18.03.2024 upto 5:00 PM
Period of online submission of Bids	From 12.02.2024 at 4:00 PM to 18.03.2024 upto 5:00 PM
Date and Time of Opening Prequalification Bid	22.03.2024 upto 2.00 PM

Rest will be the same.

Executive Engineer
Water Ways Division,
Medininagar.

PR 322003 District (23-24)D

NORTHERN RAILWAY
Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav
CORRIGENDUM

Ref:- i) Tender Notice No. 91/2023-2024 dated 07.02.2024.
ii) Tender No. 15235260 due on 16.04.2024.
01. In reference to above tender, the due date has been extended from 11.03.2024 to 16.04.2024. All other terms & conditions remain unchanged.
The Corrigendum has been published on website www.ireps.gov.in. 756/2024

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

कार्यालय अधीक्षण अभियंता, जन स्वा. अभि. विभाग, वृत बांसवाड़ा

SE/CIRCLE/NIT/2023-24/2260-69 Dated: 05-03-2024

ई-निविदा सूचना संख्या 49-65/2023-24

राजस्थान के राज्यपाल महोदय की और से उपयुक्त श्रेणी में पंजीकृत ठेकेदारों से ऑनलाईन निम्न निविदा आमंत्रित की जाती है।

NIB CODE-

S. No.	NIT No.	Particulars of Work	URN No
1	49	PROVIDING WATER SUPPLY THROUGH FHTC IN VILLAGE Sarsaphala UNDER JJM BLOCK Garhi DISTT BANSWARA WITH ONE YEAR DEFECT LIABILITY PERIOD	PHE2324WSOB 15006
2	50	PROVIDING WATER SUPPLY THROUGH FHTC IN VILLAGE Bodiya, UNDER JJM BLOCK Garhi DISTT BANSWARA WITH ONE YEAR DEFECT LIABILITY PERIOD	PHE2324WSOB15011
3	51	PROVIDING WATER SUPPLY THROUGH FHTC IN VILLAGE Jamora, UNDER UM BLOCK Garhi DISTT BANSWARA WITH ONE YEAR DEFECT LIABILITY PERIOD	PHE2324WSOB15012
4	52	PROVIDING WATER SUPPLY THROUGH FHTC IN VILLAGE Pichhora Bara, UNDER JJM BLOCK Garhi DISTT BANSWARA WITH ONE YEAR DEFECT LIABILITY PERIOD	PHE2324WSOB15013
5	53	PROVIDING WATER SUPPLY THROUGH FHTC IN VILLAGE Nadiyada Bara, UNDER JJM BLOCK Garhi DISTT BANSWARA WITH ONE YEAR DEFECT LIABILITY	PHE2324WSOB15015
6	54	PROVIDING WATER SUPPLY THROUGH FHTC IN VILLAGE Jagapura, UNDER JJM BLOCK Garhi DISTT BANSWARA WITH ONE YEAR DEFECT LIABILITY PERIOD	PHE2324WSOB15016
7	55	PROVIDING WATER SUPPLY THROUGH FHTC IN VILLAGE Chimboli, UNDER JJM BLOCK Garhi DISTT BANSWARA WITH ONE YEAR DEFECT LIABILITY PERIOD	PHE2324WSOB15017
8	56	PROVIDING WATER SUPPLY THROUGH FHTC IN VILLAGE Ojariya, UNDER JJM BLOCK Garhi DISTT BANSWARA WITH ONE YEAR DEFECT LIABILITY, PERIOD	PHE2324WSOB15019
9	57	PROVIDING WATER SUPPLY THROUGH FHTC IN VILLAGE Bhantulai, UNDER UM BLOCK Sathi DISTT BANSWARA WITH ONE YEAR DEFECT LIABILITY PERIOD	PHE2324WSOB15020
10	58	PROVIDING WATER SUPPLY THROUGH FHTC IN VILLAGE Chivda Talai, UNDER UM BLOCK Garhi DISTT BANSWARA WITH ONE YEAR DEFECT LIABILITY PERIOD	PHE2324WSOB15018
11	59	PROVIDING WATER SUPPLY THROUGH FHTC IN VILLAGE Jhalon Ka Garha, UNDER UM BLOCK Garhi DISTT BANSWARA WITH ONE YEAR DEFECT LIABILITY PERIOD	PHE2324WSOB15021
12	60	PROVIDING WATER SUPPLY THROUGH FHTC IN VILLAGE Hathdiya Pada, UNDER JJM BLOCK Garhi DISTT BANSWARA WITH ONE YEAR DEFECT LIABILITY PERIOD	PHE2324WSOB15022
13	61	PROVIDING WATER SUPPLY THROUGH FHTC IN VILLAGE Sakariya, UNDER JJM BLOCK Garhi DISTT BANSWARA WITH ONE YEAR DEFECT LIABILITY PERIOD	PHE2324WSOB15023
14	62	PROVIDING WATER SUPPLY THROUGH FHTC IN VILLAGE Sarodi Chhoti, UNDER JJM BLOCK Garhi DISTT BANSWARA WITH ONE YEAR DEFECT LIABILITY PERIOD	PHE2324WSOB15024
15	63	PROVIDING WATER SUPPLY THROUGH FHTC IN VILLAGE Aadarshpura, UNDER JJM BLOCK Garhi DISTT BANSWARA WITH ONE YEAR DEFECT LIABILITY PERIOD	PHE2324WSOB15025
16	64	PROVIDING WATER SUPPLY THROUGH FHTC IN VILLAGE Lorda, UNDER JJM BLOCK Garhi DISTT BANSWARA WITH ONE YEAR DEFECT LIABILITY PERIOD	PHE2324WSOB15026
17	65	PROVIDING WATER SUPPLY THROUGH FHTC IN VILLAGE Umi, UNDER JJM BLOCK Garhi DISTT BANSWARA WITH ONE YEAR DEFECT LIABILITY PERIOD	PHE2324WSOB15027

निविदा से संबंधित विवरण ऑनलाईन वेबसाईट www.sppp.raj.nic.in, eproc.rajasthan.gov.in व www.dipr.rajasthan.gov.in पर देखा जा सकता है।

हस्ता/-
अधीक्षण अभियन्ता
जन स्वा. अभि. विभाग वृत-बांसवाड़ा

DIPR/C/2619

Office of The Chief Engineer (Bhopal Zone)
P.W.D Bhopal (M.P.)
Tender Notice

NIT No. 06/ G. /1/Mis/Bpl.Z./2019 (Year 2024) **Bhopal, Date 05-03-2024**

Online Tender for mentioned below are being invited. The Tender have been uploaded on the e-Procurement system of Public Works Department on the Portal https://mptenders.gov.in Tender details are as below:-

S. No.	Tender No.	District	Nature of work	Name of work	Call No.	Cost of Project (PAC) (Rs. In lack)	Remarks
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1	2024_PWDRB_334953_1	Betul	Plan	Construction of Dhaywani to Babjai Road. Length 5.00 Km.	Call No.	842.77	EMD/All Document are to be submitted online only.
				Total		842.77	

The document can only be purchased online from the above website after making online payment. The last date & time for purchase of Document on line is Dated 13-03-24 up to (17:30.) Detailed NIT and other details can be viewed on the above mentioned portal. Amendments to NIT, if any, would be published on website only, and not in newspaper.

Sd/-
Chief Engineer (Bhopal Zone)
P.W.D. Bhopal Madhya pradesh

G-25772-23

OFFICE OF CHIEF ENGINEER (URBAN & NRW), PUBLIC HEALTH ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT, JAL BHAWAN, 2-CIVIL LINES JAIPUR, RAJASTHAN

No.: SE/(MM)/NIT/23-24 /23299-316 Date: 29.2.2024

BID NOTICE

On behalf of the Governor of Rajasthan, PHED invites bids online in electronic format on website **http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in**, from manufacturers for Procurement of ISI Marked Deep well Hand pump components conforming to IS15500 (Amended/Revised up to date) & ISI Marked CID Joints Size 80-600mm class 10,15 & 20 as per IS 8794 (Amended/Revised up to date). For details please visit website **www.sppp.rajastan.gov.in** & **http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in.**

NIB Code: PHE2324A5912
UBN Code:-
HP Spare :-PHE2324GLRC14126
CID Joints:-PHE2324GLRC14127

Sd/-
(RAKESH KUMAR MUDGAL)
SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER
MATERIAL MANAGEMENT CIRCLE
PHED, RAJASTHAN, JAIPUR

DIPR/C/2454/2054

Office of the Superintending Engineer
Bulandshahr Circle, P.W.D., Bulandshahr

No- 2382/96M(iv)-BSR Circle/2023-24 **Dated-02.03.2024**

Short E-Procurement Inviting Tenders

On behalf of Governor of Uttar Pradesh, Superintending Engineer Bulandshahr Circle, U.P.P.W.D., Bulandshahr invites following percentage rate bid online through **http://etender.up.nic.in** from the eligible and approved Contractors registered with P.W.D. class as per column no. 10 below Building work Category as applied from Date 12.03.2024 to 18.03.2024 upto 12:00 Noon as per the prescribed T-2 of Govt. of U.P. The technical bids will be opened online on dated 18.03.2024 at 12:30 P.M. 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 any validity of bid will be considered from the original date. The date and time of opening of the financial bid shall be notified on the website.

1. Time allowed for completion of Whole work is mention in col. No. 5 with including rainy season.
2. The Tender Document fee must be deposited through Internet Banking only.
3. All registered contractors have to upload Turnover certified by C.A. of last 5 years and details of maximum cost of work satisfactorily completed in last 5 years on Chanakya Software before submission of tender.
   Details of e-tender uploaded on http://etender.up.nic.in shall also be uploaded on UP PWD Chanakya software, before last date & time of submission of bid.
4. Terms & other conditions related to bid are available on http://etender.up.nic.in
5. In PWD technical evaluation of tenders is to be done by Prahari Software URL for Prahari is http://wms.uppwd.gov.in/Prahari/.

Sl. No	Name of Work	Estimated cost (Rs.in Lakh)	Bid Security (Rs.in Lakh)	Time of Completion work including rainy season	Tender document fee including GST (In Rs.)	Address of Executive Engineer executing the work	Address of Superin-tending Engineer	Address of Chief Engineer	Category
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1	जनपद गौतमबुद्धनगर में वित्तीय वर्ष 2023–24 में क्षेत्रीय आपदा प्रतिक्रिया केन्द्र का निर्माण कार्य।	148.50	9.43	12 Months	Tender Cost Rs. 300+2000 +18% G.S.T.Rs. 414.0 = 2714.00	Executive Enginner Provincial Division, P.W.D., Gautam-budhnagar	Superin-tending Engineer Bulandsha har Circle, P.W.D., Buland-shahar	Chief Engineer Meerut Zone, P.W.D., Meerut	A,B Building Work

(Kanchan Singh)
Executive Engineer
P.D., PWD,
Gautambudhnagar

(S.K.Gautam)
Superintending Engineer
Bulandshahar circle, PWD
Bulandshahr

UPID-205260 Date 07/03/2024
www.upgov.nic.in

कार्यपालक अभियंता का कार्यालय
पटना भवन प्रमंडल, भवन निर्माण विभाग, पटना
बिहार सरकार
अवधि विस्तार सूचना

इस कार्यालय के पत्रांक 605_दिनांक 07.02.2024 द्वारा आमंत्रित राष्ट्रीय / स्पर्द्धा ई–कोटेशन आमंत्रण सूचना सं0–23 / 2023.24 आमंत्रित की गई है, जिसका पी0आर0 सं0–017072 (BCD) 2023-24 है, को संशोधित करते हुए अवधि विस्तार किया जाता है, जो निम्नवत है:–

क्र0		आमंत्रित तिथि	संशोधित तिथि	पुनः संशोधित तिथि
1	निविदा कागजात प्राप्त करने (डाउनलोड) की तिथि एवं समय	Till 02.03.2024 15:00 hours	Till 09.03.2024 15:00 hours	Till 03.04.2024 15:00 hours
2	निविदा कागजात जमा करने (अपलोड) करने की तिथि एवं समय	Till 04.03.2024 15:00 hours	11.03.2024 till 15:00 hours	04.04.2024 till 15:00 hours
3	परिमाण विपत्र की बिक्री स्थान	Only on website www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in		
4	तकनीकी बीड खोलने की तिथि एवं समय	05.03.2024 15:00 hours	12.03.2024 15:00 hours	05.04.2024 15:00 hours
5	प्रिबीड मिटिंग की तिथि, समय एवं स्थान	27.02.2024 15:00 hours at SE, SBC, BCD ptna And 28.02.2024 at CE (patna) of fice, BCD Visvesvaraya bhawan patna	05.03.2024 15:00 hours at SE, SBC, BCD ptna And 06.03.2024 at CE (patna) office, BCD Visvesvaraya bhawan patna	01.04.2024 15:00 hours at SE, SBC, BCD ptna And 02.04.2024 at CE (patna) office, BCD Visvesvaraya bhawan patna
6	वित्तीय बीड खोलने की तिथि एवं समय	After decision of technical Bid		
7	निविदा वैधता की तिथि	120 days	120 days	120 days

शेष शर्तें यथावत् रहेगी।

PR. No. 019276 (BCD)2023-24

कार्यपालक अभियंता
पटना भवन प्रमंडल, पटना

नशे से बनानी दूरी है, क्योंकि परिवार जरूरी है

WEST CENTRAL RAILWAY
OPEN E-TENDER NOTICE
No. BPL / TRD / DRG / WC / 414RT 2-1
Dated: 07.03.2024

Sr. DEE/TRD/WCR, Bhopal acting for and on behalf of the President of India, invites E-Tenders against following works, upto 11.00 hours on the dates mentioned against each tender. The complete tender documents and details information regarding tender, is available on the website **http://www. ireps.gov.in**. Manual offers are not allowed against these tenders. For any correction, in this tender. if necessary, corrigendum will be uploaded on website prior to tender opening date which may be seen up to the date of tender opening. **Tender No.:** BPL/TRD/ DRG/WC/ 414RT2-1, **Description of work:** OHE work in BINA-Agasod 3rd line due to Bina yard remodeling work in, Bhopal division (Phase-1). **Completion perion:** 4 month, **Estimated Cost (Rs.):** 10877232.88, **EMD (Rs.):** 204400.00, **Closing Date and Time for submission of Tender:** 20.03.2024 at 11.00 Hrs.

Sr. DEE, TRD, WCR, Bhopal

स्वच्छ भारत अभियान
एक कदम स्वच्छता की ओर

कार्यपालक अभियंता का कार्यालय ग्रामीण विकास विशेष प्रमंडल, देवघर
अति अल्पकालीन ई–निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना
ई– निविदा सूचना संख्या – RDD/SD/DEOGHAR/25/RE1/2023-24

1.कार्य की विस्तृत विवरणी:

क्र० एवं ग्रुप सं०	कार्य का नाम	प्राक्कलित राशि	अग्रधन की राशि	परिमाण विपत्र का मूल्य	कार्य पूर्ण करने की अवधि
I	देवघर जिला के मारगोमुण्डा प्रखंड अन्तर्गत ग्राम– खरजोरीटॉड में जोरिया पर पुल निर्माण।	16333600.00	327000.00	10000.00	15 माह

2. वेबसाइट में निविदा प्रकाशन की तिथि – 11.03.2024
3. ई–निविदा प्राप्ति की तिथि एवं समय – दिनांक 14.03.2024 से दिनांक 21.03.2024 को अपराह्न 5:00 बजे तक
4. ई–निविदा खोलने का स्थान – कार्यपालक अभियंता का कार्यालय, ग्रामीण विकास विशेष प्रमण्डल, देवघर
5. ई–निविदा खोलने की तिथि एवं समय – 23.03.2024 अपराह्न 2:00 बजे
6. ई–निविदा आमंत्रित करने वाले पदाधिकारी का नाम एवं पता :– कार्यपालक अभियंता, ग्रामीण विकास विशेष प्रमंडल, देवघर
7. ई–निविदा प्रकोष्ठ का दूरभाष सं० – 6432317195 (संबंधित कार्यपालक अभियंता का दूरभाष नम्बर)
8. परिमाण विपत्र की राशि घट–बढ़ सकती है तदनुसार अग्रधन की राशि देय होगी।
9. निविदा शुल्क एवं अग्रधन की राशि केवल Online Mode द्वारा स्वीकार्य होगी।
10. निविदा शुल्क एवं अग्रधन की राशि का ई–भुगतान जिस खाता से किया जायेगा, उसी खाते में अग्रधन की राशि वापस होगी। अगर खाता को बंद कर दिया जाता है तो उसकी सारी जवाबदेही आपकी होगी।

विस्तृत जानकारी के लिये वेबसाईट www.jharkhandtenders.gov.in एवं कार्यालय की सूचना पट्ट पर देखा जा सकता है।

कार्यपालक अभियंता
ग्रामीण विकास विशेष प्रमंडल,देवघर।

PR 322011 Rural Development(23-24)D

Across THE AISLE

P CHIDAMBARAM
Website: pchidambaram.in
Twitter @Pchidambaram_IN

Democracy deserves a festival

THE NOTIFICATION of the Election Commission of India (ECI) announcing the schedule of the Lok Sabha elections is expected this week. In the past, the schedule was criticized for appearing to accommodate the Hon'ble Prime Minister's travels around the country. Whether the schedule will be more rational and compressed this time will be known shortly.

There are many shortcomings in the conduct of elections. The first is the number of phases of polling. There should be no more than three phases of election in the country and polling in a state should be held on one day; in bigger states, it can be on two days. In 2019, the polling dates were stretched over 39 days from April 11 to May 19. Polling was held in seven phases in Bihar (40 seats), Uttar Pradesh (80) and West Bengal (42). Tamil Nadu & Puducherry (39+1) have about the same number of constituencies as Bihar and West Bengal, yet polling took place on one day. Why should polling be done on four dates in Madhya Pradesh which has only 29 constituencies? U. P. has twice the number of Tamil Nadu; why should polling be done on seven dates?

No Plausible Reason

The reason given is that there are 'security' considerations and it requires time to move the central armed police forces from one region to another of a state. It doesn't wash. Once elections are announced, the police and CAPF are deployed in *all* constituencies of a state. On polling day, while polling is taking place in the Phase 1 constituencies, the campaign will go on in other constituencies, and police and CAPFs will be deployed to maintain law and order. It is not that before and after the polling day, a constituency is not policed. Besides, according to the BJP, there is a double-engine government in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, and law and order has improved tremendously. So, why should there be any apprehension of violence in these states?

The suspicion is that multiple phases are intended to facilitate the movement of leaders and the party workers from one part of the state to another. However, there are several negative consequences. Firstly, if the polling dates are different, the "silent periods" will also be different. On the so-called silent days and polling day in constituency *A*, the leader can campaign in neighbouring constituency *B* and the speech will travel through TV, radio, newspapers and social media to constituency *A*. Secondly, in multi-phase polling, the post-poll assessments of the likely results in Phase I will certainly influence the voting behaviour in Phase II and subsequent phases.

Discriminatory Rules

The other matter that should concern the ECI is the discriminatory rules applied by the Chief Electoral Officers who represent the ECI in the states. For instance, in Tamil Nadu in 2019, the CEO banned display of posters, flexboards, banners and flags in town panchayats and municipalities. He did not allow roadshows except on one day per candidate. He restricted the points at which the campaigners may address the voters. He did not allow more than 3 vehicles to accompany the candidate. When a public meeting or rally was scheduled, the CEO allowed flags to be displayed in the local area on the previous day, the day of the meeting/rally and the day after. All these restrictions were enforced strictly, even when the people of Tamil Nadu wondered how towns and cities in other states were inundated with posters, banners, flags, etc. and multiple road shows with numerous vehicles were allowed. The ECI should end the discrimination and enforce uniform rules and norms throughout the country.

The effect of these undue restrictions on open campaigns has been to rob the essence of elections in a democracy — an election is a festival of democracy. For the better part of the campaign period in 2019, Tamil Nadu wore a funereal look. The restrictions drove the elections underground. The campaign was pushed into the dark with party workers moving silently from house to house seeking votes.

Money Goes Underground

I have reserved the most important matter to the end: money and the role it plays in elections. Thanks to the infamous electoral bonds, the playing field is not level. The BJP has amassed a huge war chest that will be deployed in the elections. A rally addressed by the Hon'ble Prime Minister reportedly costs several crores of rupees. Candidates are present on the stage, but a proportion of the expenditure is *not* attributed to each candidate — I think, quite rightly. But in the last Lok Sabha election in Tamil Nadu, if candidates were present on the stage with a party leader (a star campaigner), a proportion of the expenditure was attributed to each of the candidates and added to his/her election expenditure. The ECI must rectify this discrimination.

Election campaigns going underground are the cause of the abomination of cash for votes. Fortunately, many voters vote according to their desire, but the distribution of cash has made elections prohibitively expensive. If more money is allowed to be spent openly by candidates or their political parties and the election campaign brought over ground, the practice of cash for votes may be eliminated in course of time. ECI must try different measures to restore the combative, noisy, cheerful, festive atmosphere of elections. Democracy deserves a festival.

Fifth COLUMN

TAVLEEN SINGH
Twitter @tavleen_singh

Prosperity is good, poverty horrible

THERE HAS been some snarky commentary on the splendiferous pre-wedding festivities of Mukesh Ambani's youngest son. So let me begin by saying that it made me happy to see that one of India's richest men was able to celebrate on a scale unseen since princely times. Guests who returned from the festivities in Jamnagar have come back with tales of wonder and extravagance. The reason why I feel happy that a rich Indian can celebrate without being ashamed of his wealth is that I spent my formative years in those socialist decades when nearly all Indians lived in extreme poverty. Those who were rich were too scared to show that they were rich.

It is my considered view that no country becomes prosperous if it does not celebrate prosperity. In the India in which I grew up and began my career as a journalist, we celebrated poverty. Never wealth. The shabby condition of our cities and the squalor of our villages were justified by our political leaders as inevitable since we were a poor country. They loved showing that they revered the poor and hated the rich.

They did not dare admit that it was because of their economic policies that millions of Indians had remained mired in extreme poverty for so long. They did not dare admit that it was because of the debilitating License Raj that Indian industrialists did not dare grow beyond their quotas. They could be fined for producing that extra two-wheeler or motor car. That was how absurd our economic policies were. More absurd still was that our policymakers believed bureaucrats were better businessmen than businessmen themselves.

It was into this centrally planned, quota-controlled Delhi that Dhirubhai Ambani arrived in the eighties. I first heard of him in a context that painted him as a villain and not a great entrepreneur. I remember newsrooms buzzing with rumours of how he bought up officials and politicians to enable him to evade their insane rules and regulations. Today, he is seen as a great Indian and a hero by a huge, aspirational middle class. This would have been impossible in socialist times, because the Indian middle class was miniscule and irrelevant. It is a good thing that we have begun to shake off the shackles and memories of that India, in which poverty was worn as a badge of honour by our leaders.

So, when I hear Rahul Gandhi's economic views, a chill runs down my spine. His campaign in the last general election was based on trying to convince voters that Narendra Modi was a thief who was stealing 'their money' to put in the pockets of his 'four rich friends'. It worries me that he has not moved too far from this bizarre idea. He has rarely made a speech on his Nyaya Yatra in which he does not spit out the names Adani and Ambani, as if they were words of abuse. His hatred of India's two richest men is so apparent that it often worries me that he may have become a crypto-Marxist.

His economic ideas do not seem to resonate with the Indian voter and this could be because, like me, there are millions of Indians who remember those 'socialist' decades with horror. If Narendra Modi had seen Khan Market then, he would never have reviled it as an enclave of privilege. It certainly was not. It was the only market near where I lived, so I was obliged to visit it often. I remember it as a dump that reeked of rotting garbage and as a place where we queued endlessly for groceries, gas cylinders and almost everything else. The shops sold shoddy goods that gave Made in India a bad name. And those who could afford foreign-made equivalents, sought them out from shopkeepers who sold them on the sly.

In socialist times, air-conditioners were considered a luxury that only rich people could afford. Middle-class people relied on the 'jugaad' talents of Indian mechanics and engineers, who worked in makeshift shops on the edge of Khan Market. As I remember it, these air-conditioners were noisy and leaky, and usually packed up on the hottest summer days of the year. But they did cost less than half the price of branded, brand-new air-conditioners.

India has come a long, long way since. But we have a long, long way to go before we become a fully developed country. The Prime Minister's idea of a 'Viksit Bharat' is not yet on the horizon, but at least he urges us to join him in trying to get there. If he wins a third term, as every poll suggests, it will be because he appeals to an aspirational new India that might sometimes seem too obsessed with temples and identity politics, but it is one that wants to move forward. If Congress loses its third general election in a row, it will be not so much because of 'parivarvaad' but because it continues to cling to economic ideas that are stale and defunct.

It was when 'socialism' was the only economic idea around that politics became a lucrative business. Most Indians were too poor to notice that their leaders became very rich from espousing socialism. So rich that they discovered the best legacy they could leave their children was to gift them a political party. It was the beginning of hereditary democracy or 'parivarvaad'.

inside TRACK

COOMI KAPOOR

Real power centre

The BJP's central election committee, which includes Chief Ministers, state presidents, election in-charges of various states and other senior party leaders, was scheduled to meet at 8 pm on February 29 at the party headquarters at Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Marg. The members, including the CMs of UP, Rajasthan, Assam and Madhya Pradesh, were kept waiting for almost three hours. The proceedings did not start till 11 pm, since PM Narendra Modi, Home Minister Amit Shah and party president J P Nadda were in an over two-hour long meeting at Lok Kalyan Marg to shortlist names for the first list of BJP Lok Sabha candidates. One embarrassed CM explained that he utilised the waiting time gainfully at the BJP's office by examining the extensive book collection at the party library. When the official meeting finally started, general secretary, organisation, B L Santosh read out the names and few dared interject or make suggestions. The common refrain was "whatever the party thinks appropriate". So much so that 50-odd names from UP were cleared in barely 20 minutes.

No loose talk

Last week, PM Modi summoned a meeting of all Central ministers, both juniors and seniors, to meet him at the swanky new convention centre, Bharat Mandapam, at Pragati Maidan. No government official was present. Modi gave cautionary guidelines to his ministers in the run-up to the Lok Sabha polls. He warned that in the next few weeks they should be extremely careful about who they meet and what they say. There should be no loose talk that could embarrass the party or be misinterpreted. In this context, Modi referred to the meeting between the late Pramod Mahajan and Sharad Pawar that ended in a googly. Some of those present were too junior to be aware of the history of the failed talks the PM was referring to (In 2004, Mahajan met Pawar to discuss a Sena-BJP-NCP tie-up under then PM Atal Bihari Vajpayee's instructions. However, Mahajan leaked the news prematurely and the deal was called off). Is there a secret deal this time with a regional party that the BJP wants to keep under wraps till just before the polls?

Way "not" to go

Almost the entire Congress party believes it is unwise for Rahul Gandhi to contest again from Wayanad in Kerala, where he won 64 per cent of the votes in 2019. Gandhi's victory was thanks to the support of its ally, the Indian Union Muslim League (IUML), since 29 per cent of the constituency's voters are Muslim. The apprehension is that IUML support to Gandhi in Kerala could backfire for the Congress in north India. Even CPI(M) general secretary Sitaram Yechury, considered a close confidant of the Gandhi family, advised Rahul against it. Congress's principal opposition in Kerala, the LDF, made it clear that it will not put up a token fight against the Congress in Wayanad, even though it is an ally in the INDIA bloc at the national level. To demonstrate its determination, the Left alliance pre-empted the Congress announcement by saying that heavyweight Annie Raja, wife of CPI general secretary D Raja, will contest from Wayanad. Practically the only person rooting for Wayanad is K C Venugopal, since he handles the constituency, which enhances his clout with Rahul. The alternative choice of a seat in south India for Rahul was between Karnataka and Telangana. Since a party survey in Karnataka suggested that no seat was 100 per cent safe, Telangana Chief Minister Revanth Reddy was keen on Rahul standing from his former Lok Sabha seat of Malkajgiri. But such is Venugopal's clout that Rahul is to contest from his old constituency.

One foot still in

Pollster Prashant Kishor declared in 2021 that he was opting out of political consultancy, which has earned him both prominence and affluence. For the last 17 months, Kishor has been touring the interiors of Bihar, his home state. He has been campaigning under the banner of Jan Swaraaj, against Bihar's alleged maladministration under both Lalu Yadav and Nitish Kumar. While Kishor claims he has given up political consultancy work, the organisation he founded, the Indian Political Action Committee (IPAC), is still thriving. IPAC has been hired in West Bengal by the TMC for its Lok Sabha campaign. Officially, IPAC is headed by Pratik Jain, director and co-founder. Kishor claims he has no stake in the company, but Jain still deferentially describes Kishor as his mentor.

IPAC, which handles tweets and videography for TMC candidates, has been hired by Mamata Banerjee's nephew Abhishek Banerjee, even though the Bengal CM herself is deeply unhappy with the polling company, whose brash, eager-beaver young employees have trod on the toes of many old-time politicians. Interestingly, Kishor met Chandrababu Naidu for three hours in Hyderabad recently, although IPAC had worked for his rival Jagan Mohan Reddy in the 2019 Assembly poll in AP.

history HEADLINE

MANRAJ GREWAL SHARMA

Chamkila and songs of resistance in Punjab

MENTION IMTIAZ Ali's forthcoming film *Chamkila* and chances are that you think of Diljit Dosanjh, the singer-actor who is the hero of this film.

But in Punjab, the name Chamkila is a sobering reminder of a dark decade. It transports you to 1988, a year marked by the ominous reign of militants in the state. Amar Singh Chamkila, arguably the first superstar of Punjabi pop — it's said he was booked for over 400 programmes in a year — was shot dead by militants along with his wife and co-singer Amarjot Kaur at Mehsampur near Jalandhar in March 1988. He was all of 27.

Those weren't good times for poets, writers, singers and dreamers. Prof Jagrup Sekhon, co-author of *Terrorism in Punjab: Understanding Grassroots Reality*, recounts how, in April 1987, militants had laid down a 13-point code called Samaj Sudhar Lehar, putting down rules for how people should dress, interact and even marry. The boisterous Punjabi *baraat* was reduced to just 11 people and lehenga was a no-no for brides who were told to stick to salwar-kameez.

The year 1988 began on a bloody note with the killing of Jaimal Singh Padda, 45, a Naxal poet, singer and peasant leader. Paramjit Judge, author of *Religion, Identity and Nationhood: The Sikh Militant Movement,* remembers interviewing Padda in 1981 for his thesis on Naxals. "He was a simple man who lived an austere life in two rooms."

Padda's work inspired filmmaker Anand Patwardhan to make a documentary on Punjab Communists with the title borrowed from a popular Padda song, "Ona Mitran Di Yaad Pyaari" (In sweet memory of those comrades).

Padda, who coined the slogan "Na Hindu raj, na Khalistan, raj karega mazdoor kisan (No Hindu state, no Khalistan — it's the working class that will rule)", was gunned down by militants of the Khalistan Commando Force (KCF) outside his house in Lakhan Ka Padda village near Kapurthala on March 18, 1988.

Five days later, militants shot down Pash, 37, one of the most celebrated Punjabi poets. Born Avtar Singh Sandhu to an Army officer, Major Sohan Singh, Pash began writing poetry at the age of 15. Greatly influenced by the Naxal movement and Bhagat Singh, he was 18 when he published his first book of revolutionary poems, *Loh-Katha* (Iron Tale), in 1970. The state, in a bid to silence him, arrested him on trumped up charges of murder, of which he was acquitted after two years in prison.

Amar Singh Chamkila (*right*) and his wife and co-singer Amarjot Kaur were shot dead by militants near Jalandhar in March 1988. *File*

Prof Chaman Lal, who translated *Loh Katha* into Hindi — he won a Sahit Akademi award for it — says Pash openly raised his voice against militants. Working as a schoolteacher in a village next to his native Talwandi Salem near Nakodar, Pash started publishing a wallpaper called Deewar in which he would quote verses from Sikh gurus to show how the movement was antithetical to the principles of Sikhism. Warned by friends and family about the imminent threat from militants, he moved to the US in 1986, where he continued penning the wallpaper and pamphlets decrying militancy.

In 1988, he had returned to India to get his visa renewed when he was shot dead at the village well on March 23, the death anniversary of Bhagat Singh. He was to leave for the US the next day. "Death couldn't silence Pash; his influence has only grown, and he is one of the most translated poets of India," says Chaman Lal.

Despite the diktat of militants, Chamkila's popularity continued to grow. Prof Judge, who is penning a book on Punjabi singers, says Chamkila, a Ramdasiya who wrote his songs himself, used to sing on three subjects — the valour of Sikh gurus, the plight of the poor, and illegitimate relations. "He was just holding a mirror to society when he sang about the male gaze or desire but he was called a 'lecherous' singer. Militants had given a diktat against what they called 'vulgar' songs and most singers complied."

It was a chilly day in March when Chamkila and Amarjot were killed in a hail of bullets at Mehsampur village near Jalandhar. "There are many theories about his death, one is that he was killed for marrying a Jat woman despite being a Dalit, another was that he was eliminated by other Punjabi singers who were jealous of his popularity. But the predominant theory was that the couple fell to militants. Those days, it was easy to blame any killing on militants," says Judge.

Another killing that rocked the entertainment world was that of Veerendar Singh, the superstar of Punjabi cinema and a cousin of popular Bollywood star Dharmendra. The 40-year-old was shot dead while he was filming *Jatt te Zameen* in Ludhiana in December 1988. His death remains shrouded in mystery but back then, militants were blamed.

Chaman Lal, who was then teaching Hindi at Punjabi University, Patiala, says such was the fear of the gun that diktats by militants were followed even by eminent vice-chancellors. At Punjabi University, all notice boards were painted saffron and press releases by militants were posted prominently. But clearly not satisfied, the militants shot down Dr Ravinder Ravi, a well-known Punjabi author and president of the university teachers' association, at his home in May 1989. An open critic of violence, Ravi was the first PhD scholar of the varsity.

The targeting of writers and scholars had begun much earlier, though. It was in February 1984 that Sumeet Singh aka Shammi, 30, the editor of *Preetlari*, a highly respected left-of-centre literary journal which preached Hindu-Sikh unity, was shot dead by militants. Madan Lal Didi, his father-in-law and general secretary of the Punjab unit of the All India Trade Union Congress (AITUC), later said that Shammi had paid the price for his boldness in criticising the terrorists despite repeated threats.

But these killing failed to silence the voices of peace and sanity. Poets, writers and playwrights continued to pen their agony, targeting both the militants and the state repression that followed.

As Manjit Tiwana, a Sahitya Akademi award winner, wrote:

What times are these,
Sitting on the threshold of it,
We ask the whereabouts of our home.

On the LOOSE

LEHER KALA
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If and when it's the end of love

THE ALLAHABAD High Court recently called for amending the Hindu Marriage Act to include irretrievable breakdown of marriage as grounds for divorce, considering modern lifestyles. Justice Vivek Kumar Birla and Justice Donadi Ramesh noted that society is more permissive and individualistic in nature saying, "education, financial independence, breaking of caste barriers, modernisation and effect of Western culture also affect a relationship between two people". The provocation was an appeal moved by an ex-Army doctor against the family court's refusal to grant him a divorce from his wife, though they had lived apart for six years by the time he moved court.

It always takes longer for the law to catch up with societal norms, so as things stand today, there is no legal recourse for couples keen to end a marriage for what many may consider to be a haphazard, non-reason like ennui. The idea of irreconcilable differences remains puzzlingly intangible, akin to the whimsical demands of a spoilt child. Because bruised and battered by life in general, Indians tend to be depressingly pragmatic when it comes to matters of the heart. The first question from family for women contemplating a separation usually is 'Is he beating you?' or 'Is he an alcoholic?'. God knows the answer better not be 'the magic's gone' or something as banal as 'we don't enjoy each other's company'. The logic being, on the scale of potential disasters hovering ominously all the time, tedium doesn't qualify as a problem. The situation must be dire, as if only a physical threat justifies abandoning the institution of marriage.

All this valiant plodding towards domestic stability clearly stems from the fact that the more mundane aspects of daily living in India remain fraught — right from water and electricity, to traffic and money stresses. So, most of us can't afford uncertainty in our personal lives as well. However, a new generation has lost patience with the idea that they need to stick it out in substandard relationships, judging by the 30 per cent increase in filings for divorce by mutual consent in the last decade in cities like Delhi and Mumbai. An older lot will likely shake their heads disapprovingly at anyone making the dramatic leap, from mechanically responding to the drudgery of life, to seeking out something better (but risking that whatever follows might be worse). It is the main peril of having plenty, the conviction that something vital is missing; but then, emotions and feelings overrule wisdom passed down.

One of the main areas where eastern philosophy diverges from Western thought is in how we address the complex question of how best to spend our brief time on earth. The ethos in the East is there's nothing unique about misery but calmly accepting turmoil as transient takes the sting out of its rippling effects. Perhaps, centuries of believing that something special awaits beyond earthly horizons has made us experts in delayed gratification. Translated to marriage, just because a heady cocktail of love neuro-chemicals have worn off doesn't mean any new, imaginary destination has the answers. Conventional belief says time will heal the bond. Urban Indian youth are more in tune with Western practicality; if you don't like something, change it. Even if romance tends not to last, the thinking goes, the pursuit of lasting happiness is a right.

There is no overarching truth in either choice, no definitive path that comes with guarantees. We are destined to face the same quandaries the people who came before us have; some parts will work out and some won't. It's worth remembering the famous tragedy *Anna Karenina*, where one storyline leads to ruin but the other thread resolves with a glorious wedding. There's always hope that once the chaos settles, new joys will surface again.

The writer is director, Hutkay Films

BRIDGE

Dealer: South Vulnerable: North/South

NORTH	WEST
♠ 64	♠ 1052
❤ A KQ10	❤ 98
♦ Q742	♦ KJ6
♣ J107	♣ Q6532

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
		1C♣	
pass	1H❤	1S♠	1NT
pass	3NT	pass	pass
pass			

You lead the two of spades to East's king and South's ace. Who has what in spades?

The one thing you are sure of is that South has the queen of spades. East would not play the king if he had the king and queen. South follows with the ace of clubs. East discards the three of hearts on this. South has five clubs, the AK984. After losing a trick to you he will have four club tricks. Assuming South gives you a club trick, how many tricks will he have available? Also, for the record, how many points did he promise with 1NT and how many has he shown up with so far?

The East hand: S-KJ973H-6543D-A1095C-

The South hand: S-AQ8H-J72 D-83C-AK984

He will have two spades, four hearts, and four clubs. He will have ten tricks when he gets in. The second question asked what South rates to have for his one notrump bid. Normally, his 1NT rebid shows 12-14 points. He usually has a maximum when he rebids 1NT freely. Fourteen is a fair guess as to his hand. Even though you have not seen the queen of spades, you know he has it so you can count on his having six points in spades and seven in clubs. South does as you expected. He leads a club toward dummy. You take it because South would have nine tricks if you did not take it. What should you do now? You know your partner has the ace of diamonds. You can lead the king and jack and if East has good enough spots along with his ace, you may be able to run the diamond suit. On this hand the defense wins because East has four nice diamonds. The important thing is that you count the points and tricks and see that being passive is the same thing as giving up.

Note that even though you know partner has the ace of diamonds, you have to decide how much to wish for. You can lead a small diamond and take three tricks for sure. Or you can lead the king and jack, hoping East has good enough diamonds to set 3NT. If you lead the king and jack and South has the ten of diamonds, you only get two diamond tricks. There is no way to tell what to do so the winning play is somewhat in the hands of fate.

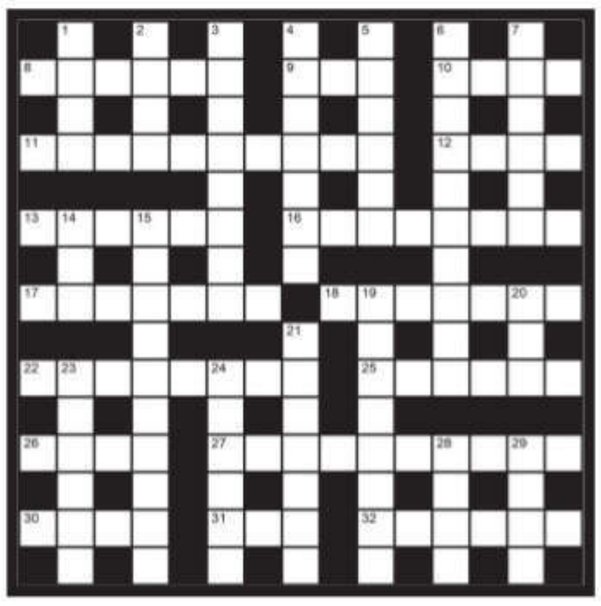
Dealer: South Vulnerable: East/West

NORTH	SOUTH
♠ K85	♠ AQ
❤ A2	❤ 10975
♦ 73	♦ AQ82
♣ KQ7543	♣ J102

West	North	East	South
	1D♦		
pass	2C♣	pass	2NT
pass	3NT	pass	pass

South plays in 3NT with the lead of the six of hearts. Some plays in bridge are just not intuitive. You learn these plays one at a time. The hand here is one such. The only danger to your 3NT contract is that the opponents can take four heart tricks and a club. Given that they have led hearts, there could be a threat to 3NT. Does your play at trick one make any difference

SUNDAY CROSSWORD 2468



QUICK CLUES

ACROSS

8. Vedic god (6)
9. Kyushu mountain (3)
10. Sore, as muscles (4)
11. Board game (10)
12. Hindu goddess (4)
13. A miserable person (6)
16. Controversies or altercations (8)
17. Simplest (7)
18. Blemished (7)
22. Cleaning agent (8)
25. Oily (6)
26. Take it easy (4)
27. Sympathy for someone (10)
30. Girl's name (4)
31. Atomic mass unit, acronym (3)
32. Nevertheless (6)

DOWN

1. Mother (4)
2. Discarded material (4)
3. Shivaji and his descendants? (8)
4. Indian river, "and a mar" anagram ? (7)
5. Leaps or jumps (6)
6. Dull and uninspiring, in a way ? (10)
7. Defer (6)
14. Genetic material (3)
15. Consisting of three chambers (10)
19. Brilliant spectacles or parades (8)
20. Conversational stopgaps (3)
21. Large dolphin (7)
23. Breads or pieces of bread (6)
24. College's annual function (6)
28. Trudge (4)
29. Wild party (4)

CRYPTIC CLUES

ACROSS

8. Singer needing transport to get on the American circuit (6)
9. Is this organization ₹U' ? Certainly not ! (3)
10. Absurd ruses lacked energy behind the iron curtain (4)
11. Informal neckwear injured people (10)
12. The vehicle backed a few feet (4)
13. As for counsel, they must be prepared to be round about, not in (6)
16. It may be the next earl outside (8)
17. Did pack in the travelling case and they carry the bags (7)
18. Smell the flowers (7)
22. Southern belle, of literary world, clatters about (8)
25. How Joe might look in a sweater (6)
26. Is not curtailed in broken tins (4)
27. Work of art in church made convert calm, it's said (5-5)
30. Done nothing for club game (4)
31. Bit late in the day for this early bird (3)
32. Pound Ken and Nell endlessly (6)

DOWN

1. James and Valerie won't end up in Indonesia (4)
2. University backing simple accommodation for Africans (4)
3. Commander having drinks before this French get together (8)
4. Recoiled from the birds entering first by the front door (7)
5. Five hundred over paper money, for a change, indicates inaction (6)
6. Money you don't get for nothing? (4,3,3)
7. As a parent an artist puts the finishing touch to this town in Eritrea (6)
14. A C.A. has the intelligence like this to be blooming yellow (3)
15. Had sat too long, one realised (10)
19. Facing a pitcher that isn't working (2,6)
20. Despot has little Dorothy encompassing such extra-sensory perception (3)
21. Speak in broken English? (7)
23. Obstinate chap the Editor (6)
24. David ran back with Edward and escaped (6)
28. Young William leaves billions to radicals currently charged (4)
29. Get teeth into gum ? (4)

Solutions to 2467

QUICK CLUES Across: 8 Diva, 9 Lorca, 10 Gnaw, 11 Expand, 12 Vladimir, 13 Stressed, 15 Antics, 17 Scrouge, 19 Mistral, 22 Ashram, 24 Atomizer, 26 Circular, 28 Denial, 30 Anon, 31 Noses, 32 Sion **Down:** 1 Jinx, 2 Sarajevo, 3 Glades, 4 Provide, 5 Varanasi, 6 Ageist, 7 May I, 14 Ticks, 16 Craze, 18 Gambling, 20 Thinnest, 21 Fairest, 23 Recant, 25 Oddish, 27 Iona, 29 Atop **CRYPTIC CLUES Across:** 8 Beau, 9 These, 10 Eyot, 11 Sewell, 12 Floating, 13 Aswan dam, 15 Nowell, 17 Presage, 19 Write-up, 22 Wigwag, 24 Energise, 26 Embitter, 28 Enlist, 30 Abib, 31 East's, 32 Nine **Down:** 1 Meme, 2 Funerals, 3 Styled, 4 Perfume, 5 New owner, 6 Bestow, 7 Coon, 14 Serai, 16 Louis, 18 Go-getter, 20 Tag along, 21 Peeress, 23 Whitby, 25 Ever so, 27 Mobs, 29 Sung

If it's your Birthday

Sunday March 10
The future is bright: you've done the hard work, and now it's time to cash in and gain the benefits of all your efforts. Happily, you'll feel one particular burden lifted from your shoulders soon.

Monday March 11
Good times are returning, like some strange emotional boomerang. You might be completely happy with everything you hear in coming weeks.

Tuesday March 12
Helpful stars are coming your way. Deep stirrings in positive regions of your solar chart will soon burst into the open and, when they do so, you'll gain confidence.

Wednesday March 13
Good fortune lies around the corner. You'll be receiving your share of opportunities and offers in four days', four weeks' or four months' time.

Thursday March 14
This week's stunning lunar alignments urge you to make a fresh start in every area of your life which is personal, private and deeply emotional.

Friday March 15
Be laid-back, but don't give in to complacency just yet. The moment you relax your grip, someone else will steal a march on you or gain the advantage.

Saturday March 16
Today's refreshing Sun-Moon alignments encourage you to make your own way in the world. If we look ahead over the next twelve months, it's clear your strength is single-mindedness.

YOUR WEEK AHEAD

ARIES (Mar 21 - Apr 20)
The Moon is giving you a head start. Now is the time for a personal clean-out, making a break with the people and places of the past, in order to prepare for a bright future. You can now look forward to the next month with hope.

TAURUS (Apr 21 - May 21)
There's an increasingly belligerent mood in the air, with people around you disturbingly willing to blow their tops. You should escape personally unscathed but must allow partners to voice their feelings. The problem is that you may have a hard job establishing the facts. Don't be impatient.

GEMINI (May 22 - June 21)
Social commitments are likely to prove costly. What can you have done to incur such large expenses? All that can be achieved now is damage-limitation to salvage what you can out of a financial mess. Mercury will enable you to stay the course, but only because it encourages you to face the real facts.

CANCER (June 22 - July 23)
You really ought to press ahead with professional activities if that is what concerns you at the moment. Many Cancerians will be rooting on behalf of a partner or loved one who is aiming for promotion. You may still be facing some opposition over a vital personal matter, but don't let it bother you.

LEO (July 24 - Aug 23)
If you know what's good for you, you'll start planning a break now, whether it's a short trip or a long-distance journey. There is no need to worry about all those extra commitments here at home, as these should easily be taken care of by other responsible people, at least, in theory. This is time for growth.

VIRGO (Aug 24 - Sep 23)
In many ways it's a mysterious week. Someone may be encouraging you to take a risk, but you must be warned that this is not the ideal time to gamble. If you do decide to go for a get-rich-quick scheme, then you must keep something in reserve. In fact, if you plan for the future now, you will thank yourself.

LIBRA (Sep 24 - Oct 23)
Social trends are looking better and better, the only drawback being that some of your wildest hopes may remain unfulfilled. Be realistic from the start, otherwise someone may let you down. Venus, planet of love, maintains a good romantic and social outlook .

SCORPIO (Oct 24 - Nov 23)
Your two planetary rulers, energetic Mars and obstinate Pluto, are still in a challenging relationship. As they move, they will be like the irreversible force meeting the immovable object, so be prepared. Overall, this is a time for independence.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov 24 - Dec 23)
By and large the planets are very well positioned. The only word of caution is to avoid plots and conspiracies and, if you are feeling bitter or resentful, not to direct your anger against the wrong target. A generally adventurous air suits you down to the ground, and I can see you taking the initiative across the board.

CAPRICORN (Dec 23 - Jan 20)
Everything should go according to plan, just as long as you get your family relationships and domestic affairs in order. This is why you should do everything in your power to reach early agreement with relatives. Swift action now will guarantee your future security, at least in the short-term.

AQUARIUS (Jan 21 - Feb 19)
You can now begin to push ahead with a very private goal, one which seems to have romantic overtones. Travel is very strongly figured in your solar horoscope, encouraging you to take a short break. It is more likely that you will go somewhere nearby than far afield. Make final plans soon.

PISCES (Feb 20 - Mar 20)
You should now be feeling much more prosperous, perhaps due to a recent windfall or possibly just because you are more optimistic about the future. Your romantic stars favour discretion. Your business plans are to be put into practice, although you may have to spend a little now to get more back next month.

JUMBLED WORDS

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

Brave men rejoice in ___, just as brave soldiers triumph in war. - Lucius Annaeus Seneca (9)

FMAER

EHIRDT

BQUIS

EPRUVY

SOLUTION: FRAME, SQUIB, DITHER, PURVEY
Answer: Brave men rejoice in **adversity**, just as brave soldiers triumph in war. - Lucius Annaeus Seneca

SUDOKU 5497

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

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

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

SOLUTION SUDOKU 5496

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

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 **Bimla W/o Lt. Alexander** R/o H.No. B-17, Christian colony, Delhi, have committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence under **FIR No.246/16 U/s 448 IPC.**, has been registered at **P.S. Mourice Nagar, Delhi** and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest there upon issued that the said, **Bimla** cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said, **Bimla** has absconded (or is concealing herself to avoid the service of the said warrant).

Proclamation is hereby made that the said accused, **Bimla of FIR. 246/16 U/s 448 IPC., registered at P.S. Mourice Nagar, Delhi** is required to appear before this court to answer the said complaint on or before **12.04.2024.**

By Order
Ms. Shipra Dhankad, Ld. MM-01,
Tis Hazari Court, Delhi

DP/2773/N/2024

NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY

E-TENDER NOTICE

Dy. Chief Electrical Engineer (Construction), North-Western Railway, Jodhpur through for and on behalf of the President of India, invites e-tenders (Open Tender - Single packet system), for the following work:- **1. Tender No.: EL/C/Gen./BKN/MHU-BWK/2023-24/T-2 R 2. Name of the work with its location:** Electrification of Station, S&T, TTM Rest Room Bldg. including FOB, Rly. Staff Quarters, Covered, Uncovered Platform with water supply arrangement & modification of OH Rly. Track Crossing in connection with Manheru (MHU) - Bawani Khera (BWK) doubling of BKN Div. **3. Approx. cost of work:** Rs. 17904397.47 **4. Earnest Money to be deposited:** Rs. 239500.00 **5. Tender Closing date & time:** 03.04.2024 upto 15.00 hrs. **6. Detail of particular, where e-tender can be seen & filled up: www.ireps.gov.in 7. Official email address: dyceecju@gmail.com**

324-AC/24

Follow us on /NWRailways NWRailways_

NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY

OPEN TENDER NOTICE
Through e-Tender

E-tender Notice No. 33245060 Date 08.03.2024 On the behalf of President of India e-Tenders are invited by the Sr. DMM/DSD/ NWR,Jodhpur. **1. Name of item:** Supply, Installation and commissioning of WASHER EXTRACTOR Minimum 120 Kg as per attach specification. **2. Approximate Cost of items:** Rs. 4026897.00 (Rs. forty Lakhs Twenty Six thousand Eight Hundred Ninty Seven Rupees Only) **3. Earnest Money to be deposited:** Rs. 80540 (Rs. Eighty Thousand Five hundred Forty only.) **4. Last date and time for Submission of e-tender Opening of e-tender:** 02-APR-24 14:25 **5. Website from e-tender forms can be obtained: www.iresp.gov.in 6. Address of NIT issuing Office:** Office of the Sr.DMM/ DSD, NWR, Jodhpur-342001(Rajasthan).. **Note: 1.** Manual offers are not allowed against this tender ,and any such manual offer received shall be summarily rejected. **2.** Cost of tender document & EMD online through e-transfers i.e. through payment gateway facility on the **IREPS** website.

325-AC/24

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राजस्थान राज्य बीज एवं जैविक प्रमाणीकरण संस्था
(राजस्थान सरकार द्वारा स्थापित)
तृतीय तल, पंत कृषि भवन, जनपथ,
सी-स्कीम जयपुर-302005 (राज.)

Director Rajasthan State Seed And Organic Certification Agency, (Established By Rajasthan Govt.)
III rd Floor Pant Krishi Bhawan
C- Scheme Janpath, Jaipur-302005 (Raj.)

F.1(92)/RSSOCA/Store/2024/1740 **Dated: 04.03.2024**

E-Procurement Tender Notice

The Bids for Supply of Label Printing Machine, Satin/white color tags ect. are online invited from interested bidders approx cost amount Rs. 2.08 Crores up to 2:00 PM of dated 15.03.2024. other terms and condition of the bids may be viewed on the website of department http://www.agriculture.rajasthan.gov.in and SPP Portal website http://sppp.rajasthan.gov.in & http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in

UBN No. - SCA2324GLOB00003

Sd/-
(Kailash Chand Meena)
Director

DIPR/C/2547/2024

Office of Additional Chief Engineer PHED, Region Bharatpur

Telephone No 05644-222731, 221500, Email: rj_acebha@nic.in
Notice Inviting Bid No. 122-129/2023-24

Online bids for NIT No. 122-129/2023-24 (08 work), Costing Rs. 1275.69 Lacs is invited on behalf of the Governor of Rajasthan from eligible enlisted in appropriate class contractors of PHED, Rajasthan and meeting eligibility criteria. Contractors enlisted with other departments of Government of Rajasthan and enlisted with CPWD/ Postal/ Telecom/ Railways/ MES/ other State Government/ Central Government undertakings/organization in class equivalent to "A/AA" class of Rajasthan (as applicable) and meeting prescribed eligibility criteria may also apply. Details of this Bid notification and pre-qualification criteria can also be seen in NIB exhibited on web site **www.dipr.rajasthan.gov.in**, **http://sppp.rajasthan.gov.in** and **http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in**. Bids are to be submitted online electronic format on web site **http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in** from **05-03-2024 to 02-04-2024 (6PM)** & Bids are to be opend at **11.00 AM on 03-04-2024**.

NIB Code: PHE2324A6066
UBN No.
1. PHE2324WSOB14543
2 PHE2324WSOB14544
3. PHE2324WSOB14546
4. PHE2324WSOB14547
5. PHE2324WSOB14548
6. PHE2324WSOB14549
7. PHE2324WSOB14550
8. PHE2324WSOB14551

Sd/-
(Ramniwas Meena)
Addl. Chief Engineer,
PHED, Region, Bharatpur

DIPR/C/2536/2024

NORTHERN RAILWAY

Invitation of Tenders through E-Procurement system

Principal Chief Materials Manager, Northern Railway, New Delhi-110001, for and on behalf of the President of India, invites e-tenders through e-procurement system for supply of the following items:-

S. N0	Tender No.	Brief Description	Qty.	Closing Date
01	08245083	5 WATT VHF HANDHELD TRANSRECEIVER SET	5529 NOS	03-04-24
02	08241426	WEB DETECTORS FOR DIGITAL AXLE	945 NOS	08-04-24
03	15235294A	RAIL STATIC WEIGH BRIDGE 100 MT	01 NOS	08-04-24
04	10240052	FIRE RETARDANT CURTAIN FABRIC (BLUE COLOUR)	12783 MTR	08-04-24
05	15245036	SELF-CONTAINED COMPRESSED AIR BREATHING APPARATUS	20 NOS	08-04-24
06	03240854	HSS TWIST DRILL SIZE 3.8 MM	176984 NOS	08-04-24
07	08241252	TRACK FEED BATTERY CHARGER	2737 NOS	15-04-24

NOTE -1. Vendors may visit the IREPS website i.e. www.ireps.gov.in for details. 2. No Manual offer will be entertained.
Tender Notice NO. 100/2023-2024 Dated : 08.03.2024 757/2024

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

झारखण्ड राज्य ग्रामीण पथ विकास प्राधिकरण (JSRRDA)
एफ०एफ०पी० भवन, तृतीय तल्ला, धुर्वा, राँची –834004, झारखण्ड

अल्पकालीन ई–पुनर्निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना (3rd Call)
PR No.-314105 Dated : 22.12.2023

अल्पकालीन ई–पुनर्निविदा संख्या:-372/2023-24 दिनांक :- 07.03.2024

मुख्य अभियंता, जे०एस०आर०आर०डी०ए०, राँची द्वारा निम्नविवरण के अनुसार e-procurement पद्धति से निविदा आमंत्रित की जाती है।

क्र० सं०	आईडेन्टीफिकेशन संख्या / पैकेज संख्या	प्रखण्ड का नाम		कार्य का नाम	प्राक्कलित राशि अंक में (लाख में)	प्राक्कलित राशि अक्षर में (रूपये में)	कार्य समाप्ति की अवधि
1	2	3		4	5	6	7
1	JH-M-SIM-08 /2023-24	कोलेबिरा	1	बंदरचुआ लुरगी स्कूल से करमघाट तक पथ का सुदृढ़ीकरण कार्य।(लं०–1.000 कि०मी०)	1228.768	बारह करोड़ अठ्ठाईस लाख छिहत्तर हजार आठ सौ रू० मात्र	15 महीना
		कोलेबिरा	2	छपरडीपा से लसिया पथ का सुदृढ़ीकरण कार्य। (लं०–4.510 कि०मी०)			
		कोलेबिरा	3	पहाड़पुर से लसिया पथ का सुदृढ़ीकरण कार्य। (लं०–8.575 कि०मी०)			
		कोलेबिरा	4	L036-सिमरटोली से डोमटोली पथ का सुदृढ़ीकरण कार्य। (लं०–6.206 कि०मी०)			

2. वेबसाईट मे निविदा प्रकाशन की तिथि:–12.03.2024
3. ई–निविदा प्राप्ति की अंतिम तिथि एवं समय:– 18.03.2024 अपराह्न 5.00 बजे तक।
4. निविदा खोलने की तिथि एवं समय:–19.03.2024 .अपराह्न 5.00 बजे।
5. निविदा आमंत्रित करने वाले पदाधिकारी का नाम एवं पता:– मुख्य अभियंता का कार्यालय, जे०एस०आर०आर०डी०ए०, राँची, एफ०एफ०पी० भवन, तृतीय तल्ला, धूर्वा, राँची –834004, झारखण्ड।
6. ई–निविदा प्रकोष्ठ का दूरभाष सं०– .....

विस्तृत जानकारी के लिए वेबसाईट **jharkhandtenders.gov.in** मे देखा जा सकता है।

मुख्य अभियंता
जे०एस०आर०आर०डी०ए०,राँची

PR 321946 Rural Work Department(23-24).D

।। कार्यालय, जिला परिषद्, दुमका ।।
E-mail- z.pdumka2014@gmail.com

अति अल्पकालीन ई०–पुनर्निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना संख्या– ZP-DUM-11/2024

1.कार्य का नाम :– दुमका जिलान्तर्गत 15th स्वास्थ्य मद् अन्तर्गत योजना निविदा की सूची।

क्र0	कार्य का नाम	प्रा0 राशि	अग्रधन की राशि	परिमाण विपत्र का मूल्य	कार्य समाप्ति की अवधि	अभ्युक्ति
1	प्रखंड जामा अन्तर्गत प्राथमिक स्वास्थ्य केन्द्र लक्ष्मीपुर का निर्माण।	14300000.00	286000.00	10000.00	15 माह	

2.	वेबसाइट में निविदा प्रकाशन की तिथि	दिनांक 18.03.2024
3.	ई–निविदा प्राप्ति की अंतिम तिथि एवं समय	दिनांक 26.03.2024 (अपराह्न 3:00 बजे तक)।
4.	निविदा खुलने की तिथि एवं समय	दिनांक 27.03.2024 (समय 2:00 बजे अपराह्न)
5.	निविदा खोलने का स्थान	जिला परिषद् कार्यालय, दुमका।
6.	निविदा आमंत्रित करने वाले पदाधिकारी का नाम एवं पता	ई० उदय कुमार सिंह, जिला अभियंता, जिला परिषद् दुमका।
7.	ई–निविदा प्रकोष्ठ का मोबाईल नंबर	9431396243
8.	निविदा शुल्क एवं अग्रधन की राशि केवल ऑन–लाईन मोड द्वारा ही स्वीकार्य होगा।	
9.	निविदा शुल्क एवं अग्रधन की राशि का ई०–भुगतान जिस खाता से किया जायेगा, उसी खाते में अग्रधन की राशि वापस होगी। अगर खाता को बंद कर दिया जाता है तो सारी जवाबदेही आपकी होगी।	

नोट :– निविदाकारों को भवन निर्माण विभाग / ग्रामीण कार्य विभाग / जिला परिषद्, दुमका में पंजीकृत होना अनिवार्य है।
निविदा द्वि–लिफाफा पद्धति के माध्यम से किया जायेगा।
विस्तृत जानकारी के लिए वेबसाईट www.jharkhandtenders.gov.in एवं कार्यालय के सूचना पट्ट पर देखा जा सकता है।

जिला अभियंता,
जिला परिषद्, दुमका।

PR 321974 (District) 23-24 (D)

झारखण्ड सरकार
पथ निर्माण विभाग, पथ प्रमण्डल, गिरिडीह

ई–प्रोक्योरमेंट सूचना, (प्रथम निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना)

ई–निविदा प्रसंग सं० :– **RCD/GIRIDIH/ 268** दिनांक :– **06.03.2024**

1.	कार्य का नाम	बुधियाडीह मोड़ (सालसल आयरन फैक्टरी के सामने) (SH-13 पर)–श्रीरामपुर मार्केट–टीकोडीह–पुरनानगर–चतरो (SH-13 पर) पथ (कुल लम्बाई – 7.950 कि०मी०) का चौड़ीकरण, मजबूतीकरण एवं पुनर्निर्माण कार्य (भू–अर्जन सहित) वर्ष 2023–24
2.	प्राक्कलित राशि (रूपये में)	रू0 20,57,43,302.00 (बीस करोड़ सनतावन लाख तैंतालिस हजार तीन सौ दो रूपये मात्र)
3.	कार्य समाप्ति की अवधि	7 (सात) माह
4.	निविदा प्राप्ति की अंतिम तिथि एवं समय	09.04.2024 12:00 बजे दिन तक
5.	वेबसाईट पर निविदा प्रकाशित होने की तिथि एवं समय	13.03.2024 10:30 बजे पूर्वाह्न
6.	प्रीबीड बैठक	19.03.2024 12:00 बजे
7.	निविदा आमंत्रित करने वाले का नाम एवं पता	कार्यपालक अभियंता का कार्यालय, पथ निर्माण विभाग, पथ प्रमण्डल, गिरिडीह।
8.	प्रोक्योरमेंट पदाधिकारी का सम्पर्क नं०	06532 – 227054
9.	ई–प्रोक्योरमेंट सेल का हेल्प लाईन नं०	0651 – 2401010

नोट :– प्राक्कलित राशि घट–बढ़ सकती है।
अतिरिक्त जानकारी के लिए वेबसाईट पर देखें :– http://jharkhandtenders.gov.in

कार्यपालक अभियंता,
पथ निर्माण विभाग, पथ प्रमण्डल, गिरिडीह

PR 321954 Road(23-24)#D

OFFICE OF DEPUTY DEVELOPMENT COMMISSIONER RANCHI

Ref No: - 35(i) Date: - 07-03-24

SUB –Short Term Expression of Interest for Rate Contract for Supply & Installation of Digital Learning Classroom in Schools of Different Blocks in Ranchi District under CSR Fund 2023-24.

NO	INFORMATION/SUBJECT	DETAIL
1	2	3
01	NAME OF WORK	**Rate Contract for Supply & Installation of Digital Learning Classroom in Schools of Different Blocks in Ranchi District @ maximum rate of 2.5 lakh per unit under CSR Fund 2023-24.**
02	DATE OF PUBLICATION OF BID	9th March 2024 (11:00 AM)
03	EARNEST MONEY TO BE DEPOSITED	RS 30,000.00 (Thirty Thousands Only) in Favour of DDC Ranchi, Payable at Ranchi. MSME Registered Organization to be exempted as per Jharkhand Procurement policy 2014.
04	LAST DATE & TIME FOR BID SUBMISSION	18th March 2024 (1:00 PM)
05	BID SUBMMISSON PLACE	DRDA Office, Vikash Bhawan, Ranchi
06	DATE AND TIME FOR BID OPENING	9th March 2024 (3:00 PM)
07	BID OPENING PLACE	DRDA Office, Vikash Bhawan, Ranchi
08	NAME AND OFFICE FOR INVINTING EOI	DRDA Office, Vikash Bhawan, Ranchi
09	HELPLINE NO. AND EMAIL ADDRESS	0651-2202076 Drdaranchi2017@gmail.com

NOTE: - FOR FURTHER DETAIL PLEASE VISIT WWW.RANCHI.NiC.IN
District Administration, Ranchi reserves the right to have negotiation with any or all, accept or reject any or all the EOI Proposal and annual this process at any time without assigning any reason whatsoever be.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER,RANCHI

PR 322034 Ranchi(23-24)D

कार्यपालक अभियंता का कार्यालय
राष्ट्रीय ग्रामीण नियोजन कार्यक्रम, पश्चिमी सिंहभूम, चाईबासा।
–: अति अल्पकालीन ई–निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना :–

ई–निविदा सूचना संख्या– EE/NREP/CHAIBASA/13/2023-24 (2nd Call)

1.कार्य की विस्तृत विवरणी :–

क्र० सं०	प्रखण्ड	कार्य का नाम	प्राक्कलित राशि	अग्रधन की राशि	परिमाण विपत्र का मूल्य	कार्य पूर्ण करने की अवधि	अभ्युक्ति
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
09	बन्दगाँव	बन्दगाँव पंचायत के मतकोलोयोंग सुनिया घर से बारी पुलिया तक पी0सी0सी0 पथ निर्माण।	24603900	492100	10000	06 माह	2nd Call

1. जिला का वेबसाईट में निविदा प्रकाशन की तिथि– **12/03/2024**
2. ई–निविदा प्राप्ति की तिथि एवं समय–दिनांक **12/03/2024** से **18/03/2024** तक समय अपराह्न 5:00 बजे तक।
3. ई–निविदा खोलने का स्थान–कार्यपालक अभियंता का कार्यालय, राष्ट्रीय ग्रामीण नियोजन कार्यक्रम, पश्चिमी सिंहभूम, चाईबासा।
4. ई–निविदा खोलने की तिथि एवं समय –**19/03/2024** अपराह्न **05:00** बजे।
5. ई–निविदा आमंत्रित करने वाले पदाधिकारी का नाम एवं पता :– कार्यपालक अभियंता, राष्ट्रीय ग्रामीण नियोजन कार्यक्रम, पश्चिमी सिंहभूम, चाईबासा।
6. ई–निविदा प्रकोष्ठ का दूरभाष सं० – **7004618937** (संबंधित कार्यपालक अभियंता का दूरभाष नम्बर)
7. परिमाण विपत्र की राशि घट–बढ़ सकती है, तदनुसार अग्रधन की राशि देय होगी।
8. सरकार के संयुक्त सचिव ग्रामीण कार्य विभाग झारखण्ड सरकार राँची के पत्रांक 02 (नि०नि०–17)–251 / 23 ग्रामीण कार्य विभाग 3130 (अनु०), राँची, दिनांक 09.10.2023 द्वारा दिये गये निदेश के अनुपालन में सभी कागजात के साथ, निविदा शुल्क एवं अग्रधन की राशि Online Mode द्वारा स्वीकार्य होगी।
9. निविदा शुल्क एवं अग्रधन की राशि का ई–भुगतान जिस खाता से किया जायेगा, उसी खाते में अग्रधन की राशि वापस होगी। अगर खाता को बंद कर दिया जाता है तो उसकी सारी जवाबदेही आपकी होगी।
10. ग्रामीण विकास विभाग (ग्रामीण कार्य मामले) झारखण्ड, पथ निर्माण विभाग, के अन्तर्गत पंजीकृत समुचित श्रेणी के संवेदक भाग ले सकेंगे।

विस्तृत जानकारी के लिये वेबसाईट **www.jharkhandtenders.gov.in** एवं कार्यालय की सूचना पट्ट पर देखा जा सकता है।

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PR 322020 West Singhbhum(23-24)D

MADHYA PRADESH METRO RAIL CORPORATION LTD.

(A Joint Venture of Government of India And Government of Madhya Pradesh)
2nd Floor, Smart City Development Corporation Office Building, Kalibadi Road, BHEL, Sector-A, Berkheda, Bhopal-462022
Bhopal, Date : 09.03.2024

NOTICE INVITING TENDERS

MPMRCL invites tenders for the following two (02) works:

1. Tender Notification No. - 580/MPMRCL/IN/O&M/2024/01 : "Annual Maintenance Contract for Civil works of yellow line from Gandhinagar to Super Corridor 3 Stations including Viaduct and Depot for 1(one) year" - Tender Package IN/O&M/2024/01. For further details please visit https://etenders.gov.in/eprocure/app from **19.03.2024.**
2. Tender Notification No. - 581/MPMRCL/2024/BH-10: "Miscellaneous Civil works and Annual Maintenance Contract for Civil works of orange line from AIIMS to Subhash Nagar Stations including Viaduct and Depot for 03(three) years" - Tender Package BH-10. For further details please visit https://etenders.gov.in/eprocure/app from **19.03.2024.**

Any clarification/corrigendum/addendum to the tender documents will be uploaded on the official e-portal only, without any obligation of press notification.

M.P. Madhyam/114264/2024 **DIRECTOR (Projects)**

NEW ZEALAND TAKE LEAD

Kane Williamson and Tom Latham had hit the pause button on a frenetic Test match with a partnership of 105 that erased Australia's first-innings lead and put the home side 17 runs ahead. Australia skipper Pat Cummins bowled Kane Williamson in the final hour of play. **REUTERS**

Ben Stokes said 'failure is a great teacher for sports teams'

Write me and this team off at own peril: Stokes

New Delhi: England skipper Ben Stokes said the Test series loss to India won't be seen in the dressing room as a failure of their attacking philosophy, popularly known as Bazball.

"Failure is a great teacher to sports teams. You either let failure and disappointment eat you up, but you can learn from failures and you make sure you don't lose the enthusiasm of what we do. We've got a massive summer coming up with six home Tests – Pakistan and New Zealand. I am obviously disappointed but write this team off, write me off at your own peril," Stokes said after the loss .

England had won the first Test match in Hyderabad to raise hopes that coach Brendon McCullum's Bazball approach would work against an Indian team with a strong spin attack comprising Ravichandran Ashwin, Ravindra Jadeja and Kuldeep Yadav. However, despite India missing key players Virat Kohli, KL Rahul and Mohammed Shami, England lost four Tests on the trot.

Stokes said India were too good in their home conditions. "Obviously, a lot was said about certain (Indian) players not being here. But this series has shown the depth of Indian cricket," Stokes said. **ENS**

SCORECARD

INDIA vs ENGLAND
HPCA STADIUM, DHARAMSALA
Toss: England won, chose to bat
Result: India win by innings & 64 runs

ENGLAND 1st Innings: 218
INDIA (O/N) : 473-8

K Yadav c Foakes b Anderson	**30** (69b, 2x4)
J Bumrah st Foakes b Bashir	**20** (64b, 2x4))
M Siraj not out	**0** (2b)
■ **Extras** (lb 4, nb 2)	**6**
■ **Total** (all out; 124.1 overs)	**477**

■ **FoW:** 9-477 (Kuldeep Yadav, 123.4 ov), 10-477 (Jasprit Bumrah, 124.1 ov)
■ **Bowling:** James Anderson 16-2-60-2, Mark Wood 15-1-89-0, Tom Hartley 39-3-126-2, Shoaib Bashir 46.1-5-173-5, Ben Stokes 5-1-17-1, Joe Root 3-0-8-0

ENGLAND 2nd Innings

Z Crawley c Khan b Ashwin	**0** (16b)
B Duckett b Ashwin	**2** (5b)
O Pope c Jaiswal b Ashwin	**19** (23b, 3x4)
J Root c Bumrah b Kuldeep	**84** (128b, 12x4)
J Bairstow lbw b Kuldeep	**39** (31b, 3x4, 3x6)
B Stokes b Ashwin	**2** (10b)
B Foakes b Ashwin	**8** (17b)
T Hartley lbw b Bumrah	**20** (24b, 4x4)
M Wood lbw b Bumrah	**0** (2b)
S Bashir b Jadeja	**13** (29b, 3x4)
J Anderson not out	**0** (5b)
■ **Extras** (b 6, lb 1, nb 1)	**8**
■ **Total** (all out; 48.1 overs)	**195**

■ **FoW:** 1-2 (Ben Duckett, 1.5 ov), 2-21 (Zak Crawley, 5.3 ov), 3-36 (Ollie Pope, 9.2 ov), 4-92 (Jonny Bairstow, 17.4 ov), 5-103 (Ben Stokes, 22.5 ov), 6-113 (Ben Foakes, 26.4 ov), 7-141 (Tom Hartley, 34.2 ov), 8-141 (Mark Wood, 34.4 ov), 9-189 (Bashir, 45.5 ov), 10-195 (Joe Root, 48.1 ov)
■ **Bowling:** Jasprit Bumrah 10-2-38-2, Ravichandran Ashwin 14-0-77-5, Ravindra Jadeja 9-1-25-1, Kuldeep Yadav 14.1-0-40-2, Mohammed Siraj 1-0-8-0

INDIA WIN SERIES 4-1

Red cherry on the cake

Ashwin stars in his 100th Test with a record-breaking five-for as India beat England by an innings and 64 runs in final game

SANDEEP DWIVEDI
DHARAMSALA, MARCH 9

IT WAS the last over before lunch and Ravindra Jadeja, in the middle of his spell, was heading towards his bowling mark. Also changing ends were the stand-in captain Jasprit Bumrah and offie Ravichandran Ashwin, after taking three wickets from 8 overs before he was taken off. Almost casually, Ashwin would ask Bumrrah if he could have one more over from the pavilion end. He would nod his head and ask Jadeja to take position at mid-on. It would prove to be an inspired call.

In the nick of time, on the 5th ball of his 9th over, Ashwin, like many times this bright sunny morning, would once again come up with the perfect ball for the situation and the player. England captain Ben Stokes, batting on 2 and infamous for getting stuck to the crease against spinners in this series, would try to lunge forward to a slider that would sneak between the bat-pad and hit the stumps. Half of the England team was back in the hut and they still needed 100 more runs to force India to bat again.

A voracious reader, Ashwin was reading the English batsmen like some book that he knows by heart. He was second-guessing their strokes and strategies and getting it right with uncanny regularity. India's most trusted match-winner, playing his 100th Test, got his 36th five-wicket haul, crossing Anil Kumble's India record. His figures of 5/77 had exposed the frailty of England's Bazballers and helped India continue their spin legacy at home.

Play the man, not the card

Before the start of the series, broadcasters had put up a video of India's highest wicket-taker Kumble interviewing Ashwin. This was more of the high priests of Indian spin exchanging notes. Kumble would ask the younger spinner, who in the series had crossed 500 wickets, his way for preparing for Tests. His answer gave an idea about the efforts that go into the making of a world-class sportsperson.

Ashwin would start by saying that spin was like poker, you "play the man, not the card."

"I study all the batsmen I have to bowl to. I usually watch all their dismissals, their best innings, their recent matches. I also see how they play their first few 20 balls or so, to see if they attack or grind it. I also take note of their release shot. I anticipate when it's coming and adjust the field accordingly," he said.

Watching the fall of England wickets gives an idea about how Ashwin got into the mind of their batsmen. For the first time in this series, Ashwin would get the new ball. Opener Ben Duckett at the start of the innings is known to take on the bowlers. Against the spinners, he steps out and with a slightly horizontal bat, clubs them over covers. Unfortunately for him, Ashwin is also aware of it. So as Duckett moved out, he bowled a fuller ball that would hit the stumps. The procession had started.

Ollie Pope would be Ashwin's next victim. He was out playing his release shot. Pope tends to fall back on the fierce sweep when he is tied down or in trouble. His 23-ball stay at the crease was a struggle. Between Bumrah and Ashwin they could have got him out at least three times. Ashwin would have anticipated a sweep so he bowled one that went away from him and was pitched outside off. In the worst case of wrong shot selection, Pope swept and the top-edge went to Yashasvi Jaiswal at square leg.

Post lunch he would get wicket-keeper Ben Foakes too who would get frustrated and play a shot he shouldn't have. This was probably the easiest of Ashwin's wickets. With 113/5, Foakes would end his 17-balls innings with a heave-ho slog sweep. He would completely miss the straight ball that would hit the stumps. This wasn't a planned dismissal, it was a gift from the frustrated batsman.

Ashwin would celebrate his fifer with a smile. Kuldeep Yadav would fetch the ball and hand it to him. Ashwin would hold the ball high and acknowledge the applause. Someone from the joyous huddle would ask him to show the ball to the silent Barmy Army stand. Rather reluctantly Ashwin would do it with a naughty smile. In the interview with Kumble, the thinking bowler who spends hours plotting for his wickets, had said that he had one regret in his long career. "I didn't enjoy my cricket much," he said. After 500 Test wickets, in his 100th Test, he certainly was enjoying every moment of it.

Off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin after taking his 36th five-wicket haul, a record for India in Test cricket. *PTI*

BREAKING KUMBLE'S FIVE-FOR RECORD

Ashwin's 36th Test five-wicket haul took him past Anil Kumble's tally for the most Test five-fors among Indians. He is also the only bowler to achieve a five-wicket haul in his debut and 100th Test.

9/128 **R Ashwin recorded the best figures by a bowler appearing in his 100th Test, claiming 9/128 to surpass Muttiah Muralitharan's 9/141 in his milestone match.**

17 **Ashwin has dismissed Ben Stokes 17 times in international cricket — the most for an Indian against any opposition batter.**

Playing five bowlers instead of more batsmen was brave: Dravid

SANDEEP DWIVEDI
DHARAMSALA

IT'S NOT everyday that Rahul Dravid shares dressing room conversations or throws his head back and laughs at his own joke at a press conference. But it's not everyday, Indian team, minus Virat Kohli, wins a crucial home series despite regularly losing key players because of a spate of injuries.

It was a question about India's depleted squad before the second Test at Vizag that sparked laughs in the media room. This was the time when India, after losing the first Test, were informed that two key players — Ravindra Jadeja and KL Rahul — were not available for selection and all-rounder Axar Patel got into the playing. The sight of Axar going out to bat made the two 90s cricketers in the dressing room — coach Dravid and his assistant Vikram Rathore — nostalgic.

"When I saw Axar walk in at No.6, I remember looking at Vikram and thinking, 'Jeez, VVS (Laxman) used to walk out at that position'. With due respect to Axar (laughs), he is a lovely player," Dravid would say and chuckle away.

This was Dravid explaining that despite injuries they didn't opt for the safer option of packing his team with batsmen. "That's the bottomline of what me and Rohit have always spoken about. That's what wins you Tests...being able to take 20 wickets as quickly as possible. It was the braver option and I am glad we went with that. That's what paid off," he said.

Captain Rohit Sharma hugely benefited from playing five bowlers in all five Tests.

Rahul Dravid, without undermining Axar Patel batting at No.6, said it was once VVS Laxman's spot. *File*

When England batsmen would get into an aggressive zone, he would juggle his bowlers. There have been games when the spinners have gone for runs, that's when the two pacers would step up.

In the third Test at Rajkot, when the spinners were going for runs and Jasprit Bumrah too was not effective, it was Mohammad Siraj who stepped it up. In Dharamshala, the story was different. In the first innings, Bumrah and Siraj couldn't get wickets and the two finger spinners — Ashwin and Jadeja — too weren't successful on the hard first day track. In comes wrist spinner Kuldeep to take four of the top five wickets.

A close scrutiny of all the games shows that the key battle was between India's bowling and England's batting since both were full of experienced players.

Experience of bowlers counted

"England came here with an experienced batting line-up. Their inexperience was in their bowling. Their experience was in the batting and they had the ascendancy with bat in hand at that point of time and we needed to respond. Our experience was in bowling and we won those contests. Our experience and nous in those moments triumphed over their experience and that was a critical part of the series," Dravid said.

The coach would also explain the complexity of picking a playing XI that is full of highly talented players. This in context to Kuldeep Yadav's long wait to get a Test. "It's been tough on Kuldeep. He's bowling at a time when there are legends of the game (Ashwin and Jadeja) who are playing as spinners. So it's not been easy for Kuldeep. He hasn't played a lot of red-ball cricket since making his debut here in 2017. Given the context, for him to come into this series and perform the way he has, it's been absolutely superb," he said.

So does he play when India travels abroad? "What happens when we go overseas, we will have to just see. Ashwin, 500 wickets in 100 Tests, sometimes doesn't play in those games. When we go abroad, we don't get wickets that allow us to play more than one spinner. Sometimes we are playing without a spinner on wickets like that. Those are the kind of wickets that are being prepared. Sometimes it's tough," said the coach. Dravid was pensive again.

RS 40 CRORE CORPUS

BCCI announces big-money for Tests; incentive upto Rs 45 lakh per game

DEVENDRA PANDEY
DHARAMSALA, MARCH 9

ON A day when India completed a 4-1 Test series triumph over England – one of its more significant victories at home in recent years – the Indian cricket board announced a financial incentive scheme, amounting to Rs 40 crore, to encourage players to turn out for the longest format of the game.

The Test Cricket Incentive Scheme, spelt out by BCCI secretary Jay Shah on Saturday, will act as a boost for players in the Test team.

"Commencing from the 2022-23 season, the 'Test Cricket Incentive Scheme' will serve as an additional reward structure on top of the existing match fee for Test matches, set at INR 15 lakh," Shah wrote on X, formerly known as Twitter.

According to the structure proposed, players who have featured in the playing XI of more than 50 percent of Tests in a season since 2022-23 will receive a financial incentive of Rs 30 lakh per game with the BCCI announcing a total Rs 40 crore corpus for the scheme. The payout will increase to Rs 45 lakh per game for every player who features in at least 75 percent of matches in a season.

"The new initiative will help players like Cheteshwar Pujara, KS Bharat and Umesh Yadav. They are all dedicated Test players"

JAY SHAH, BCCI SECRETARY

This incentive will be in addition to the Rs 15 lakh paid per Test match.

The incentive scheme also applies to players who are in the squad but not in the final XI. Every cricketer who is a non-playing member of the squad for more than 50 percent of Tests in a season will receive Rs 15 lakh per match. If the number of Tests for which one is a non-playing squad member gets to more than 75 percent, the corresponding incentive amount increases to Rs 22.5 lakh per match.

Even Cheteshwar Pujara, who is not part of the current Test team, will benefit from the scheme which covers the 2022-23 season too. *File*

Shah said that the move was "a step aimed at providing financial growth and stability to our esteemed athletes."

Speaking to *The Indian Express*, Shah said the new initiative was also designed for the benefit players who may not be in the scheme of things as of now, but have played Tests in the recent past, so will be eligible for the payout that will be made in retrospective effect from the 2022-23 season.

TEST CRICKET INCENTIVE SCHEME

Matches Played	Playing XI Incentive	Non-Playing XI Incentive (INR)
< 50%	NA	NA
> 50%	30 lakhs	15 lakhs
> 75%	45 lakhs	22.5 lakhs

"The new initiative will help players like Cheteshwar Pujara, KS Bharat and Umesh Yadav. They are all dedicated Test players," the BCCI secretary said.

These three players are not in plans of the team management at the moment, but will stand to benefit as they turned out for Tests going back to the 2022-23 season.

The financial incentive for players not in the final XI for Tests is significant as wicket-keeper-batsman Ishan Kishan complained of mental fatigue after being mostly a travelling squad member during series.

Incentivising Tests has been a major focal point in recent times, with even skipper Rohit Sharma saying recently that chances will be given to players who show the 'hunger' for Test cricket.

"Test cricket is the toughest format. If you want to excel and achieve success in this format, you have to show the hunger," Rohit had said after the Ranchi Test.

"Yeh pata chal jata hai kisko bhookh nahin hai aur kin logon ko yahan pe rehna nahin hai. Yeh pata chalta hai. Jo logon ko bhookh hai, tough conditions mein khelna hai, un logon ko preference diya jayega (It becomes apparent who is not hungry and who does not want to stay here. Those who are hungry, who want to play in tough conditions, will be given preference). It's very simple," he said.

Referring to some players not making themselves available for the longer format and seemingly preparing, or keeping themselves in optimum condition, for the IPL, Rohit had hinted that they may opted for the easier option."IPL is a very good format for us, but this (Tests) is the toughest format and difficult to excel (in). You have to work hard to win…the last three wins didn't come easy, bowlers had to do long spells, batsmen had to grind it out. It's tough," he added.

In the BCCI press release, Shah acknowledged the recent changes that the proliferation of domestic T20 competitions has brought to the structure of the sport worldwide."This scheme is not only designed to encourage players to engage in the purest format of the sport but also addresses the evolving dynamics of the cricketing landscape, ensuring parity with match fees in other formats and league cricket," he said.

Reward for hard work

However, speaking in Dharamsala after the financial incentive was announced, head coach Rahul Dravid said that money shouldn't be the main motivation for playing Test cricket. "It's just nice that the hard work and how tough Test cricket can be is being recognised. So I wouldn't see it as an incentive to make people play Test cricket. I hope it never really comes to that. It's a reward. It's just probably a recognition that this is a tough format. It takes a special person to play 100 Test matches. We don't celebrate 100 T20s in the same way, do we?" Dravid said.

Harmanpreet's epic 95* takes MI to playoffs

VINAYAKK MOHANARANGAN
MARCH 9

ON SATURDAY at the Arun Jaitley Stadium, Harmanpreet Kaur turned the clock back to 2017. In what is arguably the best knock of the Women's Premier League so far, the India captain produced a chasing masterclass to help Mumbai Indians become the first team to qualify for the playoffs.

The comparisons to her incredible 171* in the 2017 World Cup semifinal were unavoidable. A sedate start. A steady shifting of the gears. An explosive finish. Beth Mooney, the Gujarat Giants captain, would have had a sense of deja vu. She – along with Ash Gardner – witnessed an all-time great World Cup knockout innings in Australia's colours that day in Derby. In orange this time, they were once again at the receiving end as MI chased down 191 with a ball to spare.

On that day in 2017, she scored her 100 off 90 balls and the smashed her last 71 runs off 25 deliveries. In this chase, she was on 20 off 21 balls at the end of the 14th over, Mumbai's score – incidentally – read 100. And that's when the foot firmly went on the pedal. With MI needing 91 off 36 balls, Harmanpreet went after Meghna Singh in the 15th over. A six and two fours shifted the momentum. In the 16th over, a slice of luck. Phoebe Litchfield was taking absolute stunners in Australia's colours during their visit to India a couple of months back. Here, she dropped a sitter at long on. The ball trickled to the fence for four.

In the 18th over, she dismantled Sneh Rana with effortless aggression. 4, 0, 6, 4, 4, 6. It was the over that truly ignited the night – while also setting off the sprinkler in the outfield that caused the delay.

As it turned out, for Giants, it was only delaying the inevitable. A six each in the 19th and 20th overs, and soon Harmanpreet Kaur leapt in joy. A day after turning 35, the Indian superstar provided a throwback to the day Indian cricket changed forever. In many ways, the 171* paved the way for the WPL to eventually become a reality. And on that very stage, she provided a nice reminder that she's still got it.

Brief scores: ***GG 190/7 in 20 overs (Beth Mooney 66, Dayalan Hemalatha 74; Saika Ishaque 2/31) lost to MI 191/3 in 19.5 overs (Yastika Bhatia 49, Harmanpreet Kaur 95*; Tanuja Kanwar 1/21) by 7 wickets.***

Vidarbha enter the lion's den

41-time Ranji winners Mumbai face a resilient side that knows how to win

MIHIR VASAVDA
MUMBAI, MARCH 9

THE WAY he puts it, it's almost like Faiz Fazal is obliging Mumbai.

"In our last meeting," says the former Vidarbha captain, "we won by an innings. Of course, that was at our home. But we don't mind beating them at Wankhede."

Fazal won't be on the field if that happens – on the biggest, grandest stage in domestic cricket, the Ranji Trophy final that starts Sunday. He retired recently, drawing curtains on a two-decade-long career during which he led Vidarbha's transformation into a domestic force. But his words capture the mindset of his former teammates.

A decade ago, a fixture like this might have unnerved, even intimidated, Vidarbha. Today, they go into the match feeling like equals. In this Maharashtra derby, the big brother syndrome exists no more. And since it's Ranji, Mumbai and Wankhede, a heady mix for all the nostalgia and cliches, this final can also be called the battle between 'Khadoos' and 'Khadoos lite'. "We have become khadoos now. The moment we are pitted against a bigger team, we are at our best," Fazal says.

This isn't them being the noisy neighbours. Taken at face value, the final is a mismatch in some ways. The pedigreed Mumbai, going for their 42nd title, against a team that doesn't even have that many appearances at an elite level, forget the trophy count.

Zoom into the last decade, however, and you see a different picture. During this period, Vidarbha have been the more successful of the two. Mumbai's last title came in 2015. Since then, Vidarbha have emerged as a prominent force, winning back-to-back crowns in 2017 and 2018, and now aiming for the third.

Neither have they been one-season wonders nor was their success an overnight phenomenon. "When we won Ranji in 2017-18, we won CK Nayudu (for U-23) before that, the under-19 title…" captain Akshay Wadkar counts.

He missed one title, which Mumbai skipper Ajinkya Rahane remembered. "The Irani Trophy, too," Rahane said. "When you are reaching Ranji finals, it means you are playing consistently. They always play together. They are a very good team. We respect them."

That's high praise coming from a former India Test captain and the leader of domestic giants who boast of a local structure that's second to none. Vidarbha had none of that – they didn't even know what it took to win in Ranji Trophy. Their approach, too, is a study in contrast. While Mumbai keeps on churning quality players, largely because of hard-working grassroots-level coaches who spent countless hours under the sun on the maidans, Vidarbha have relied on outside help, conscious that they did not have a vibrant local circuit.

Vidarbha players train on the eve of the Ranji Trophy final against Mumbai at the Wankhede Stadium. *Pradip Das*

"When our junior cricket academy was set up in Nagpur, we got a few coaches from outside. Then, we had these couple of pros every year who could contribute," Fazal says. "Sometimes, you need players who have played internationals or enough first-class cricket and have that experience to guide the young or developing players."

He goes on a breathless run to name some of the players who helped Vidarbha – former Mumbai spinner Sairaj Bahutule, Tamil Nadu's Hemang Badani and S Badrinath, Odisha's SS Das, Ambati Rayudu who started his journeyman career with Andhra and had a detour in Vidarbha, Karnataka's Ganesh Satish and the domestic legend, Wasim Jaffer.

Few coaches had a bigger impact than Chandrakant Pandit. Until he was made Vidarbha's coach, the team had never come close to reaching a Ranji final. In 2017 and 2018, he led them to back-to-back titles.

There are many other reasons, too, that led them to the crowns – most importantly, Fazal says, an attitude change wherein the players started devoting more time towards the game and raised the bar for themselves rather than settling for mediocrity.

But Pandit instilled a champion's mindset and, with his unique team-building exercises, ingrained a feeling of 'togetherness' that Rahane alluded to. Fazal gives the example from the trophy-winning years when Vidarbha had a travel committee, a food committee, an entertainment committee, and so on. "The players took on different roles. The travel guys would take care of the airline check-in process, for instance; those on the food committee would speak to the chef at the hotel where we would stay and sort out the menu. The entertainment guys would plan movie nights and dance competitions. It was all stupid and silly things but ultimately, made a lot of sense and we connected tremendously with each other," Fazal adds.

Coaches changed and there was a transition in the playing group but this ethos has remained. On the field, they've become smarter and ruthless, as they have been this season with the team selection; not afraid to tinker with the winning combination and adopting a horses-for-courses policy.

There can't be a better test for them to gauge how far they've come. Mumbai, after all, are the gold standard.

"To play Mumbai in Mumbai is massive," Fazal says. "But I don't remember when Mumbai last won the Ranji Trophy. When was it?" 2015, Faiz. "Well, so they are under pressure more than us." He laughs; the 'khadoos lite' seem ready for another upgrade.

PLAYING TODAY: Mumbai vs Vidarbha, 9.30 am, **Live on:** Jio Cinema

Sen's wild-hitting method flops against World champ

SHIVANI NAIK
MARCH 9

LAKSHYA SEN loves playing at a scorching pace, adrenaline flowing, his feet skating around the court, the reflex defense looking spectacular and the attack all flash. It all looks very glamorous. Until suddenly it doesn't. Against the steadiest, most unflappable and technically sound opponent on the circuit, world champion Kunlavut Vitidsarn, Sen's flashy style ends up being shaded as faintly ridiculous. For the second time since the last World Championship, Sen's rush-of-blood insistent aggression simply splintered into nothing shots, as he went down 22-20, 13-21, 11-21 at the French Open semifinals.

Sen has almost sealed his Olympic ticket making the Last 4 at Paris. But he wouldn't be very pleased with how he went about his semifinal, especially after winning the opener.

The young Indian did all the hard work in taking the opening set. But it was almost as if he felt the necessity to keep vrooming on the accelerator, without heeding to speed breakers. Wild hitting, sloppy rally patterns and restlessness to rush to victory without putting in the mileage, meant Kunlavut calmly raised his own tempo, kept his serene head and whipped off the necessary points to take Set 2 and Set 3. The Thai led 12-2 in the second, and 15-5 in the third. And Sen had no plans except hitting his way through, trying to wrap it up, before he botched it.

Sen doesn't defensively falter when he falls behind. But he does get consumed by staying in the rally, sometimes rooted to a spot, and doesn't snap out of that siege-mode quick enough to counter. His attack lost all direction, and literally deflated in the second and third. He allowed Kunlavut to dictate rallies, and having lost monopoly on the pace, couldn't summon enough patience to slow things down, recalibrate and construct points all over again.

Kunlavut simply kept the shuttle in play, and did enough to sharpen his speed.

The Indian's grit with the insane defensive work rate and dramatic retrieves will always outshine his killer-shot: a glamorous little rabbitty hop off the surface and an arched racquet down-the-line smash. It's quite unlike anyone else's straight stick smash, because it's unreal acceleration from round the head. He times his little leap perfectly, and gives the shuttle the catapult treatment, a snappy zap that sends it swirling into open space. When a winner, it looks fantastic as it did when he

Lakshaya Sen went down 22-20, 13-21, 11-21 to Kunlavut Vitidsarn at the French Open semifinals.

closed out the first set to break the 20-20 deadlock.

But it's not a sure-shot winner: and Kunlavut twice struck his hand out horizontally and used his own rubber wrists for forehand defensive winners as he ran away with a 12-2 lead in the second.

Sen managed a better start than his previous three matches taking the opener. Partly because Kunlavut was taking his time to find his range. And when the monkish Thai does that, the pace on his strokes tends to be gentler, so Sen snuck in some pace-laced points. Sen would exploit his backhand far corner, and then attack straight on the other flank with the round the head.

Whenever he could force the pace, Sen hurried the Thai. But that blistering pace is impossible to sustain over three sets, and Sen doesn't help himself by wild, often mindless hitting to keep pretence of the pace. It's how he literally frittered the second set and most of the third.

Addicted to the tempo, Sen simply couldn't work himself into any composure from the start of the second set. He had relied on Kunlavut erring on the back line, but the Thai found his radar, and started smashing within the lines. As soon as his autonomy over the pace of the match was taken away, and that was to be expected, Sen fell apart.

At 11-19 in the decider he didn't disguise his impatience with such wild hitting that even Prakash Padukone might be driven to having a stern word. The flashy backhand jump drop bulged the net as he pirouetted, with nothing to gain from that little dance. Sen has the game to beat anybody. But he also has the impatience to lose anytime, slip from any vantage point.

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THE SUNDAY EXPRESS MAGAZINE

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Letting in the Light

Swiss architect Peter Zumthor on what lies at the core of his work, skills that India should hold on to and his advice to young architects

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Laws of Laughter

Maamla Legal Hai showrunner Sameer Saxena and its co-writer Kunal Aneja unpack this courtroom comedy

PHOTOS COURTESY: VADEHRA ART GALLERY

PORTRAIT OF AN ARTIST

As he turns 90 on Tuesday, a look at the journey of Jyoti Bhatt, the pioneering artist and photographer who documented the indigenous traditions of rural India and is recognised for his modernist engagements in printmaking

Vandana Kalra

ARTIST JYOTI Bhatt was only 12 when one of his earliest paintings signalled the course his expansive artistic career would take. Titled "*Chheta R'ejo Maa Baap*" (Please keep distance sir), the watercolour depicted a Dalit carrying human waste on his head and a broom in his hand, walking down the street yelling, so that the upper castes were informed of his arrival and kept their distance. Exhibited at his school in Bhavnagar, it evoked complaints from parents but Bhatt's art teacher Jagubhai Shah told them that artists must have freedom of expression. "I was exposed to the caste system and had developed a dislike for it because I was inspired by my (freedom fighter and educationist) father's way of thinking and behaving," says Bhatt, adding, "This was in 1946, when Gandhi*ji* was understood better than he is today."

Years later, he continues to impart those lessons to the steady stream of young artists who turn up at his house in Vadodara. Less than five kilometres from the Faculty of Fine Arts (FoFA) at Maharaja Sayajirao University (MSU), where he spent decades — first as a student, then a teacher — Bhatt is grateful for their support. "I am fortunate that there are a large number of younger artists in Baroda who continue to visit me, mainly to help solve my technical problems, which I am unable to do myself due to my health condition," notes the artist-educator. Several of them have also planned a celebration on March 12, when the noted artist turns 90.

A pioneering photographer who documented the indigenous traditions of rural India and is recognised for his modernist engagements in printmaking, the 2019 Padma Shri awardee — whose works are in prestigious collections, including the Museum of Modern Art in New York, Smithsonian Institution in Washington DC, and British Museum in London — is also presenting a solo of his paintings after 60 years at Delhi's Vadehra Art Gallery. Titled "Revisitations: Engaging the Archive", the show closes on March14. Comprising over 80 works, spanning over two decades, the reverse paintings rendered in acrylic on plastic film, feature his inquiries into iconography, portraiture, rural life, still live, and the natural world. "I call this my 'Golden Period'. I have used gold paint in most of these current paintings," he says.

■ ■ ■

Born in 1934 in an India fighting for Independence, Bhatt inherited from his father, Manshankar Bhatt, a desire to see a nation on the road to progress. Noticing his passion for drawing and painting as a child, his teachers at Gharshala trained him and he found mentors in artists such as Somalal Shah and Jagubhai. An ardent reader of artist and writer Ravishankar Raval's Gujarati literary magazine *Kumar*, he studied the works of numerous artists, including stalwarts NS Bendre and KG Subramanyan, who were to become his teachers at MSU when he enrolled there as part of the first batch of students in 1950. "All these teachers considered themselves our parents... Though our curriculum was not much different from the one followed by other art schools, except Santiniketan, prominence was given to experimentation and creativity. Apart from this, equal importance was given to extracurricular learning. We were fortunate that a vast public garden, including a zoo and a large museum, were just across the road and we were encouraged to spend as much time there as we could," recalls Bhatt. With students from across the country, FoFA was a melting pot where young artists were encouraged to develop individual aesthetics. Bhatt recalls his own experiments with charcoal, pastels, oil colours and watercolours. Assisting Subramanyan on a mural, he learnt the encaustic technique, where beeswax was mixed with ingredients such as resin and turpentine to produce colourless and translucent material that could be mixed with oil colours that were more expensive in comparison.

By the time he travelled to Naples in 1961-62 to study at the Accademia Di Belle Arti on a scholarship from the Italian government, he was already a faculty member at MSU and an artist of repute, who had received formal training in mural and fresco painting at Banasthali Vidyapith in Rajasthan. He had also won the 1956 President's Gold Plaque at National Exhibition of Art in Delhi.

In a Europe rebuilding itself in the aftermath of World War II, Bhatt was captivated by its art and architecture, and the heavily textured and layered canvases of artists such as Antoni Tàpies and Alberto Burri. This is also where he made his first etching and an intaglio print from a collagraph plate. As new materials like sand, jute cloth, iron pieces, brass sheets, plywood, tapes, stone pebbles and linoleum entered his vocabulary, he produced works such as *Burnt Place* (1962), using oil, sand and iron pieces to raise the surface, and burnt the *gunny* surface to create holes. Several of his friends recall how on his return to India, he lugged back enormous amounts of white glue that he had found to be useful; unaware that the similar Fevicol was now available in the domestic market.

Credited later with introducing the intricacies of the intaglio process to several of his contemporaries, there was still time before Bhatt could create an etching at MSU, where the etching press required repairing. "As a part of the press was damaged during transportation, we were not able to use it for 16 years, till 1966, due to bureaucratic rules," recalls Bhatt. Though a postgraduate course in printmaking was introduced at the institute in 1968, and artists such as Jeram Patel and Bhupen Khakar had also started making etchings, finding the right tools, ink and paper remained a challenge. Bhatt's own expertise in the medium, though, was honed during a two-year Fulbright scholarship to study printmaking at the Pratt Institute and Pratt Graphic Art Center in New York (1964-66). The period saw him produce mixed intaglios such as the abstract *Metaphysical Landscape* (1964/68), and *Forgotten Monument* (1964/68). Textual references entered works such as *A Face* (1972) and *Pseudo Tantric Self Portrait* (1969). In *Kalpavruksha* (1972) the woman's eyebrows took the form of *dhanushya* (bow) and formed part of a mythical tree. The self, too, came to the fore in works such as *Self Portrait in New York* (1964) and *Man Under the Sky* (1965).

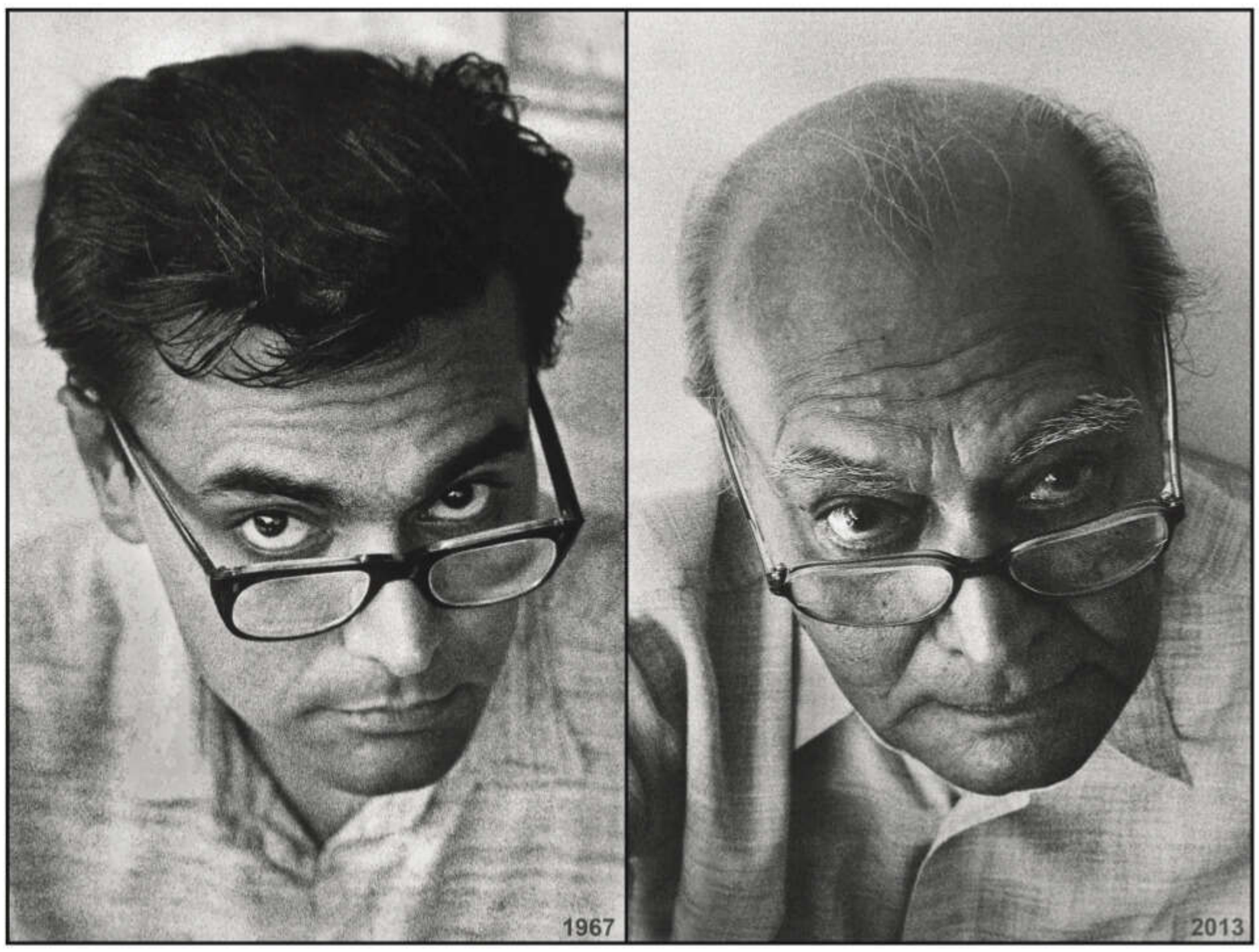
■ ■ ■

While the image and the possibilities of its myriad meanings remained central to his oeuvre across all mediums he pursued, a 1957 travelling exhibition curated by Luxembourgish-American photographer Edward Steichen, and brought to Ahmedabad by MoMA, convinced him about the communicative power of photography. When a seminar on Gujarati folk art at Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan in Mumbai was announced to take place in 1967, armed with a Canon SLR analogue camera, and accompanied by artist-friends Gulammohammed Sheikh and Khakhar, Bhatt set out to document the visual culture of Gujarat, transversing the tribal areas of south Gujarat, spending hours on the road, taking trains, buses and walking miles to reach uncharted territories. The realisation that the native art traditions of India were dying and there was a need to document them also led to journeys across Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha and the four erstwhile states of south India. He also travelled to areas in Punjab, Jammu, Ladakh, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal and Andaman Nicobar Islands, making his last visit for the purpose of documentation to Odisha in 1994. "Art and culture could not be seen exclusive of people but formed inseparable parts of their lives," notes Bhatt.

Embodying pictorial values of rural arts interspersed with art historical references, his images are testament to the lived past and an archival record that documents, among others, beliefs and religious practices, stone carvings and shrines, wall paintings and intricate embroideries. Their reflections are also evident in Bhatt's paintings and prints that incorporate symbols of the indigenous past he witnessed. If the *Kalpavruksha* series, for instance, embodies the principle of *purush–prakruti* (man-nature), in the iconic 2005 acrylic *A-B-Zee of My India*, he interspersed recurring motifs, from parrots and peacocks to *nag devta*, with words and phrases in English and Gujarati that bring together India. "In every aspect, he was ahead of his times. In his art, he was doing certain things way before notions of post-modernism were enquired. Within the framework of ecleticism, this was a man who was looking at how language constructs could marry themselves in extremely different ways. Disregarding neither traditional spaces nor the ideas of change that occur because of events in history or technology, he was always curious about things. So, his preservation through photography of things that were being lost was not in the notion of a conservative idea of holding on to a past, but looking at something that needs to be remembered and 'archived' way before the ideas of archiving came into existence," says artist Rekha Rodwittiya, who was his student at FoFA from 1976 to 82. She remembers his 'feminist politics' and how he wanted his students to grow beyond him. "He never imposed linguistic preferences as a teacher. Someone who understood the value of investigation, research and collaborations, he encouraged these kinds of premises," she adds.

Along the way, numerous biases within arts were also addressed. "As it has been in our caste system, there is a parallel hierarchical classification followed among most of those related to the art world in India. Thus, a photograph is considered inferior to a 'graphic print'. And, the print, in turn, is given a lower place than a painting, by both art galleries as well as art collectors. As if this is not erroneous enough, there are sub-castes also," he stated in an essay written for the catalogue of his 2019 solo in Vadodara.

Bhatt continues to learn and discover. "He is someone who insists of himself that the practice of art is like an everyday riyaaz," says Rodwittiya. So new meanings are being unearthed as he browses through 'sketchbooks' he has been maintaining since his student days, when he recalls completing at least 30 sketches daily, from his surroundings and portraits of his co-students, for Bendre's assessment. There are also diaries scribbled with notes detailing his observations during his travels. "After a few years, I started adding sketches of my ideas, adding written notes about colours, materials and methods that could be used to make a painting," notes Bhatt. He has also turned to some of these for the ongoing exhibition in Delhi. "The sketchbooks became a kind of time machine that took me back to the days when those sketches were made and I realised that I have started enjoying remembering those early days. So, I decided to start working on those old sketches without or with as little changes as possible, adding necessary details and colours the way I might have done during the days when the sketches were actually made. My intention to do this decided the final form of these paintings," he adds.



UNDER THE PAINTED SKY

(Clockwise from top left) *Crows Everywhere Are Black; Shakuntala; Still Life*; Bhatt's self portraits

DOWN IN JUNGLELAND

RANJIT LAL *Author, environmentalist and bird watcher*

PLAYING WITH FIRE
What's the use of being a billion-dollar economy, if our children have black lungs?

EXPRESS ARCHIVE

It's Up in the Air

The great outdoors in our cities have become a dangerous place to be in — it's now a gas chamber

PARENTS AND teachers often complain that their children don't go out and play like the way they used to when they were children. Kids these days are glued to their iPods, smartphones or laptops and seem averse to going out into the big outdoors. They don't climb trees, they don't roll down grassy slopes, they don't wade or swim in ponds and streams, they don't find out by experience which ants will bite them and which won't; they don't experience nature in any form and, therefore, are unable to connect with her.

Well, how much of all this is the fault of the children? True, many are hooked to their electronic devices (which adults make available) but given a choice between playing some dizzy computer game and running wild on a beach, most normal kids will make the obvious choice. Recently, on the beaches in Goa, I saw so many beaming, utterly delighted kids — from toddlers to adolescents doing what any normal child does on the beach: build sandcastles, get rolled over by the waves, race and chase each other, frown as they bent over scuttling crabs, collect shells and rescue starfish.

> No sane parent or guardian would allow their child to put a toe into the Yamuna

It's the adults who rein them in: 'No, you can't go out and play in the rain; You'll get wet and may slip and fall; You will catch a chill or it's muddy and slushy. Don't pick up that insect, don't pet that puppy or kitten. They will sting and bite and scratch and you could get rabies...*katega*!' That apart, most playgrounds are being converted into synthetic surfaces — de-weeded, insects killed with pesticides, trimmed and manicured, neat and tidy with not a breath of life.

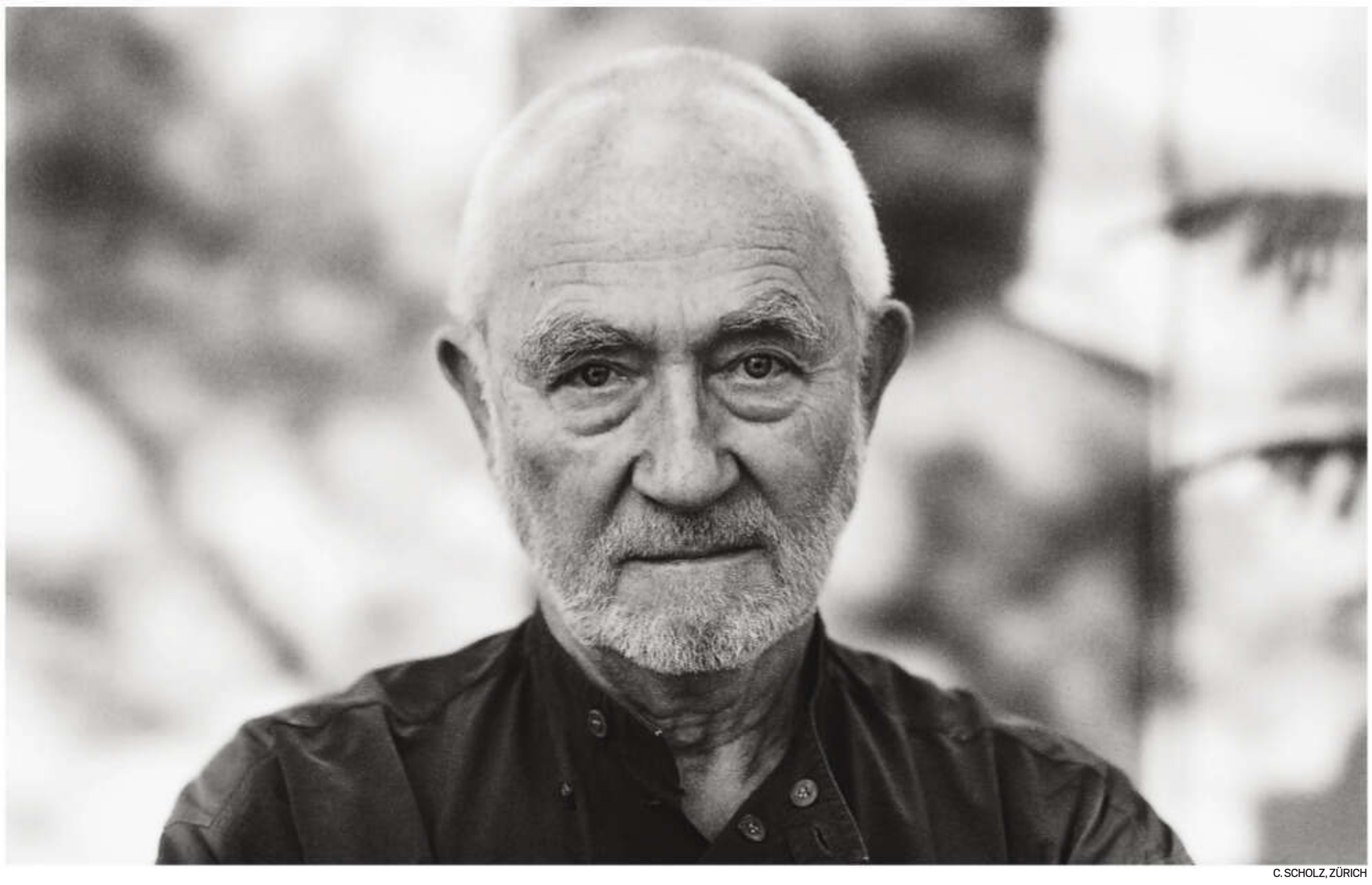
But there is another more insidious reason why we hold our children back — especially in Indian cities: a reason you cannot really argue with. The great outdoors is now really a very dangerous place to be in: it's become a great gas chamber. It is hazardous to let kids out to play. Dutifully, the authorities warn us when this is so and to keep our children locked indoors. Motor vehicles are being held largely responsible for the pollution, but get this: I just checked the Air Quality Index for Los Angeles, which has around 5.5 million cars. The figure was 32 in Chinatown and 29 in North Hollywood. London, which has 4.6 million cars driving through every day, had an AQI of 42. Beijing with 6.25 million vehicles had an AQI of 38. And Delhi which has 7.5 million cars, has at the moment an AQI of 376 in an area near me (that's Civil Lines).

So, clearly how seriously is the problem and why isn't this number one on our list of priorities? Simply because pollution is, like lead, a slow-killer. If tomorrow everyone (and politicians, in particular) in Delhi had violent nosebleeds, or all their hair fell out due to it, you could bet the problem would be solved in 24 hours. (Of course, the politicians and well-to-do have another way of protecting their children — they send them abroad).

It's not only dirty air. In Delhi, no sane parent or guardian would allow their child to put a toe into the holy Yamuna. Swimming or paddling or just sitting next to a river should be a childhood rite of passage for all those living next to a river or for that matter any waterbody. I remember Anita Desai writing about going for picnics on the Yamuna riverbed when she was a child, which today would be unthinkable and very stinkable. Recently, while flying low over Delhi, before landing, the plane banked over the Yamuna. The river was sludge brown, and there was this barrage or bridge across the river, possibly Okhla, but I can't be sure. But what I can be sure of was that there were three or four fat pipes at the base of the barrage, like great gun barrels, that were spewing what can only be described as vomit, into the river — yellow-white stuff that spread across the surface. What's so difficult in following those pipes to their source and shutting down those responsible for it?

Many great cities have been built on the banks of rivers: London, Paris and New York. All three have cleaned up their once foul and toxic rivers. For the Hudson River in New York, authorities went systematically to the source of every polluting industry upriver and got them to either shut down or clean up. (General Electric was one dirty villain).

We keep boasting that we're very shortly going to become a trillion dollar economy, so clearly money is not a problem. We have to ask ourselves, what use is the gazillion-trillion dollars, if our children have black lungs?



C. SCHOLZ, ZÜRICH

QUIET PLACES
Architect Peter Zumthor

Letting in the Light

Swiss architect Peter Zumthor on what lies at the core of his work, skills that India should hold on to and his advice to young architects

Shiny Varghese

IN A conversation in 2018 in Finland between Swiss architect Peter Zumthor and Finnish architect Juhani Pallasmaa, they discussed spaces of comfort and experience in their homes. While Pallasmaa spoke about the mood of the space, Zumthor was more definite in his explanation. "I like to sit in a space and have a wall at my back, I would like to look at the sea... or the mountains, but I don't have that... But what I have is a garden, which is pure luxury, it makes me quiet. I know nothing of plants but I feel protected... There, to the left are three steps going up to the kitchen, to my right is the *stube* (living room)... and what is extremely important for me, is the corner bench in the kitchen... the *stube* has to be in wood and it needs a fireplace." In these few lines, Zumthor seemed to have laid out the "how-it-is-ness" of things.

As an architect who has been designing for over four decades, it is not form or the visual aspects that captivate him but how the floor feels beneath the feet, how the walls curve and respond to touch, how light scoops the darkness out of a space, or how a façade hides and reveals the inner workings of a building.

The Pritzker Prize laureate, Zumthor, 80, was in Delhi for the India Design ID and subsequently gave talks in Mumbai, Chandigarh, and Bengaluru last month, which were organised by the Embassy of Switzerland, part of its SwitzerlandIndia 75 initiative.

One would imagine the central theme of Zumthor's architecture is time. In 1998, an elderly farmer couple in Germany wrote to Zumthor requesting if he would draw out a plan for a chapel they wanted in a field back in their village in Mechernich-Wachendorf. Zumthor agreed to do it because Bruder Klaus was also his mother's favourite saint and the patron saint of Switzerland. It would take nine years to finally build the Bruder Klaus Field Chapel, which took conventional farmers and an unconventional technique to become a one-of-a-kind chapel, which can hold about three to four people at a time. A deeply meditative space, that expands and contracts as one moves from the entrance to the centre of the chapel, it was shaped as a wigwam, with a teardrop oculus at the top to allow in light. The interior walls were formed with 112 tree trunks laid out with 50 cm-high layers of rammed concrete, packed one above the other, for 24 working days. When finished, the dried timbre was set on fire for three weeks, giving the undulating concrete walls a charred finish. The chapel floor was covered with lead and then melted manually on site. It would be apt to say Zumthor manages to defamiliarise the everyday through his work, be it a chapel, a museum, an apartment or a pavilion.

> It is not form that captivates Zumthor but how the floor feels beneath the feet, how the walls respond to touch, how light scoops the darkness out of a space

"Nowadays architecture is treated as fashion. It's all about form and structure. You never see the inside because it's all steel and concrete. The walls and flooring are prefabricated, everything is made in a factory. It's perfect for a glossy magazine but that's not how you measure space. Such sleek spaces carry no human trace of making, and that's such a goddamn loss. It would be best if you can see a wall or a window and say, 'ah there he made a mistake', if they allowed for those imperfections, that's us. These skills still exist in India, it shouldn't die out," says Zumthor, as we talk beneath a peepal tree at the National Crafts Museum in New Delhi.

His years spent being an apprentice to his father, a cabinetmaker, gave him a centrality and sense of proportion, that was further reinforced when he studied at the Basel Arts and Crafts School and later, industrial design and architecture at Pratt Institute in New York. In the 1970s he moved to Graubünden, Switzerland, to work for the Department for the Preservation of Monuments, where he honed his understanding of materials and skills of looking and making. So when he began his practice in 1979 in the remote forested village of Haldenstein, Switzerland, it was his way of keeping away from the distractions of city life, and a commitment to be on the quieter planes of building.

"Architecture has to be practical, someone needs a space to live and to work. That's where I start. The core of my profession is to create space. First, I must understand the place and look at what people want and their context and then see what I can do. I try to imagine what I have to design, I have a good sense of space, maybe I have some talent," he says. His project models are legendary for the ability to walk-in through them.

A place that testifies to that is the Thermal Vals in Switzerland. The village, known for its hot springs, had seen a tourism revival, which got the Val municipality to invite Zumthor to design new baths for a spa hotel in 1983. Using over 60,000 quartzite slabs as a salute to the beauty of the valley, Zumthor drew out six pools, with different temperatures from fire to ice, taking users on a journey down cavernous paths, letting light and shadow flit and float through the space. When it was inaugurated in 1996, it was applauded for its contemporary take on Roman baths, and its "lesson in boldness and aesthetics". The space has a Keatsian lilt, with unheard melodies and embalmed darkness, and Zumthor lets in the light without chasing the shadows.

If in his 2007 Kolumba Art Museum in Cologne, Germany, he resurrects the ruins of a Gothic church that was destroyed in World War II being "completely at ease with its many layers of history", in the new wing for the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA), he did away with columns, giving the museum an amphibious shape, with 60-ft-long cantilevers and and a contiguous exhibition space that's almost three football fields long. It replaces four older buildings, to which Zumthor says, "old has to go and new has to come".

He has said in the past, "you cannot order a Zumthor building". His way of "fussing over" details and innate knowledge of materials and honouring experience more than reason makes him the architect who doesn't follow a prescribed rulebook. When young architects ask him for advice, he says: "Do it the way your mother likes it".

Cream of the Crop

From Operation Flood to online cooking classes, Amul has come a fair distance and in the process united farming communities to create lasting change

SLICE OF LIFE

Suvir Saran

Suvir Saran is a chef, author, educator and world traveller

JAYEN MEHTA is the managing director of Gujarat Cooperative Milk Marketing Federation Ltd (GCMMF), the largest food product marketing organisation in India, based out of Anand. I first heard of Mehta through Manu Chaudhary, an IIT graduate working under him, on the marketing team. Manu found me on Instagram and reached out to invite me to participate in online cooking classes that Amul was hosting. And so, Manu reignited my love affair with Amul and brought me into its world in a whole new way.

It was summer of 2020 and the world was gripped by the fearful panic of COVID-19, with India in the first wave. Manu's charming phone presence and his incomparably gracious voice and manner of speech stole all my attention as he spoke of Amul India's "Amul's Simple Homemade Recipes" with 2.5 million views a day and 1,500 chefs over 40 countries participating. It made sense to join this campaign celebrating home cooking with Indian homestyle recipes and the incredible way India always comes together in hours of necessity and challenge. It wasn't long after Manu and Mehta brought me onto Amul's virtual cooking stage that Vardaan Marwah and Haridashv Malhotra, my culinary assistants and sons, joined me in cooking and sharing simple recipes that brought out the goodness of dairy and gave Sunday treats to home cooks and professional chefs.

My first dalliance with Amul had me as part of a roundtable on the importance of dairy and how fake products were wreaking havoc on India and, as a result, its public health outcomes. This conversation showed me that the deceptive marketing for analogous dairy was so gradual that by the time it became apparent that these products were dangerous to public health and many things worse, they had already entrenched themselves most insidiously into Indian food and fork ways. As the Amul team shared their findings, I studied products like synthetic creams made from palm oil to cheese and butter with trans fats. I saw flashing in front of my eyes the obesity pandemic that plagues the US, and how its roots are connected to the consumption of dairy that isn't pure or honest and to ingredients that come with fancy names but have no connection whatsoever to any whole foods or anything remotely fresh, healthy or nutritious. I was pained at that meeting to find that my country, India, Bharat, is being consumed by poison that is unleashed upon it by multinationals without any care for the lives of the consumers they target. They accomplish this through marketing campaigns that render the delicious and time-tested into crap, and toxins into tasty elixirs of good health and so-called age-reversing power foods.

That meeting with Amul executives in 2020, as I was recovering from my own medical saga, gave me a reason to cook and share, to speak and organise. I am grateful that Mehta and Manu believed in me. I look back to that moment and am thankful that these men made me part of the movement that brought India into the kitchen during the pandemic, and in doing so, made India's familial connectivity and health much better than what we saw in many other nations.

SUVIR SARAN

WHITE HOPE
Amul transformed India from a dairy-deficient nation to a global leader in milk production

Through the agility and vision of Mehta and Amul, India comforted itself through essential entertainment and distraction that came with generous doses of education and good health and much yumminess. Almost 24x7 cooking marathons, eight daily cooking demonstrations, a weekly discussion on the history and benefits of an ingredient made with dairy, and a playful manner of dispersing facts and boring scientific data had people hooked and my team and I committed to keep cooking online with tens of thousands every Sunday. Aamir Rabbani, then the creative head for my company American Masala, was our camera person and shared questions from the viewers for Vardaan, Hari and me. It was clear that our different styles, our varied looks and accents, all had rattled India in a deliciously lasting way.

That was 2020-21, and now we are in 2024. Much has changed globally, and much has remained the same. Amul has only gotten bigger, better, richer, and more powerful as a company and an idea that changed agriculture in India and showed the world the power of cooperative farming and mindful thinking. From the world's largest agricultural programme, Operation Flood — the work of Dr Verghese Kurien, the father of the white revolution — to the ongoing cooking classes that bring simple and comforting recipes to homes across the world, Amul has shown that it moves nations forward and unites farming communities to create lasting change that betters lives across regions. With every new and innovative initiative, Amul has given us reason to look at this Indian phenomenon for what it truly is, a corporation that envisions, works, thinks, strategies, builds, sustains and markets itself as a disruptive thinker and game changer. No wonder then that it is Amul that transformed India from a dairy-deficient nation to the global leader in milk production.

As I heard Prime Minister Narendra Modi speak at the golden jubilee celebration for Amul at the Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad, I was enjoying the Amul topical heading released to mark that moment, "A Golden Present. An Amrit Future". The Prime Minister spoke to thunderous applause as he celebrated female dairy farmers and committed himself to ensuring a brighter and more lucrative future for them. He was proud to share the staggering growth that dairy production has seen during his 10-year term. He seemed to enjoy the dance that was staged by the farmers to the famous song from Shyam Benegal's 1976 film, *Manthan, Mero gaam katha parey*. I connected through that song with the PM and everyone else at that giant stadium, and together we all saluted dairy, the white revolution, and Amul, The Taste of India.

As Amul starts its next 50-year cycle, I as an Indian have much to be excited about, and I am confident that with a corporation as soulfully centered as Amul, and with a leader as professional, empathetic, decent, magnanimous, kind and smart as Mehta, India and its citizens can expect some tasty and wondrously brilliant and utterly butterly dairylicious outcomes that will benefit the nation, citizenry and the farmers of India and impress the world at large.

Laws of Laughter

Maamla Legal Hai showrunner Sameer Saxena and its co-writer Kunal Aneja unpack this courtroom comedy and find humour in a chaotic world

Alaka Sahani

AFTER Saurabh Khanna and Kunal Aneja, writers of Netflix's *Maamla Legal Hai,* shared with showrunner Sameer Saxena the idea to tell humorous stories set in the chaotic and quirky world of a sessions court, they decided to zero in on the everyday life of those who are cogs in the legal machinery. The makers of this eight-part comedy series tried to look beyond the Hindi-cinema inspired image of a lawyer outraging over "*tarikh pe tarikh* (cases being adjourned)" or a gavel-slamming judge saying "*tamam sabooton ko aur gawahon ko madde nazar rakhte hue*...(after taking into consideration all the evidence and testimonials)".

As Khanna and Aneja browsed through real cases and spent time on court premises, they believed "reality is stranger than fiction but ground reality is stranger than non-fiction". That's something they even make the character of the court manager (played by Anant Joshi) reiterate on the show. This unique world, featuring a mixed bunch of lawyers — from idealistic rookies to cynical veterans — is set in the fictional Patparganj district court in Delhi. The show does not spare much time in introducing the audience to the oddities one encounters in such a place as the first episode shows a man seeking divorce on the ground that his wife was not coy on their wedding night.

In the following episodes, there is a case filed against a foul-mouthed parrot; a female prisoner desires not only to tie the knot but also to consummate her marriage; and the lawyers coming up with ways, including veiled threats, when a groom's father is adamant on getting his son's marriage annulled. The series, however, is not about these legal matters alone. It is also about the people who exist in this world, their dreams and hustles.

CLOAK AND DAGGER
Scenes from *Maamla Legal Hai*

At its centre is Ravi Kishan, who essays the character of VD Tyagi, the president of the Patparganj Bar Association, whose eyes are set on winning the Delhi Bar Association election. Kishan, who played a paan-chewing inspector in the recently-released *Laapataa Ladies*, shows his comic timing all over again in this show. "Ravi Kishan's name was suggested by our casting director, Vaibhav Vishant. Kishan has that charm that makes the audience root for him even when he does something wrong. The audience can believe, '*Yeh Banda shaitani karege par paap nehin karega* (He might be up to some mischief but won't do anything wrong)'," says Saxena, who has directed *Jaadugar* (2022) and *Kaala Paani* (2023).

The cast also features several established actors such as Tanvi Azmi as a judge; Yashpal Sharma as Tyagi's rival; and Brijendra Kala as a veteran lawyer. Nidhi Bisht plays a mid-career lawyer, who dreams of having her own chamber, and Naila Grewal is a Harvard-graduate who dreams of following in her grandfather's footsteps and working as a 'legal aid'. These female characters stand out with their individuality and agency. "We saw them as characters, not mere placeholders. As it should happen in comedies, they have to have those lines and plot points to make the audience laugh," says Aneja, who has written shows like *Dil Bekaraar* (2021) and *Flames* (2018-19).

The challenge for the writers was to keep the storytelling crisp though the series aims to piece together a picture of the goings-on inside the courtroom and the activities outside of it. Aneja says, "It was difficult. As writers, we were eager to share all the fun stuff and dialogues. But you have to draw a line since you have to make the show engaging." Since the idea was not to have lengthy episodes (the longest is 38 minutes), they had to edit quite a bit at the scripting level as well as later.

While making a comedy show, it can be tough to get the laughs without offending anyone. "For the sake of a joke, we didn't want to hurt anyone's sentiments. That's something we decided during the writing stage. It was never our intention to make a statement about something that's not right," says Saxena. Their intention was also to show that the system might have flaws but people working there are trying to do their best and putting up a fight. The show is directed by Rahul Pandey, who had helmed Nirmal *Pathak Ki Ghar Wapsi* (2022).

"Even though comedy is the most difficult genre, it never gets its due credit. Jim Carrey and Govinda are called comic actors. The fact remains that they are great actors. In comedy, you depend on the comic timing of actors unlike crime shows or dramas," says Saxena, who will be working on thriller and sci-fi shows next. Another big challenge while working on a comedy is to make it interesting from the start. "While the audience will give drama a chance, a comedy show is likely to be dismissed if people don't like it in the first 10 minutes," says Aneja.

Maamla Legal Hai's first season ends on a high note even though Tyagi doesn't win the elections. The final sequence was not easy to pull off and the writers reworked it multiple times. "The intention was to create a high as well as give Tyagi and other key characters an arc," says Aneja. Even though the show has been well received, there have been criticisms about the slow pace in a few episodes while some did not find it quite hilarious. "We are open to criticism. We weren't expecting such a warm response. We didn't know whether this tone and treatment would work. However, all's well that ends well. More importantly, a good ending leaves a nice aftertaste," says Saxena.

The Women Who Raged

After dominating the Mahindra Excellence in Theatre Awards in 2019 with a play based on the *Mahabharata*, Joy Maisnam is back with another story from the same epic

Dipanita Nath

IT HAS been two years since Delhi-based theatre director Joy Maisnam visited his ancestral village, Pungdongbam, 13 km from Imphal in Manipur. During this time, ethnic conflict has ripped apart the state, adding fresh bloodshed to its turbulent history.

"I am Meitei and have many friends who are Kuki but now they don't take my calls anymore. Maybe, they are afraid. There are reports of phones being tapped to find the locations of people," says Maisnam, who passed out of Delhi's National School of Drama in 2008 and London International School of Performing Arts in 2017.

Violence has been a constant in Maisnam's theatre. He has looked at it from many angles — from the declining number of the Nongkin, the state bird of Manipur, in the 2015 play, *Echo*, to 2017's *Journey of Sorrow*, about farmer suicides. In 2019, Maisnam's *Andha Yug*, based on a Dharamvir Bharti text about the Kurukshetra war, won the Best Play, Best Stage Design and Best Costume awards at Mahindra Excellence in Theatre Awards (META). This month, Maisnam is back at META with another play, *AgniSuta Draupadi*. It is again on the Kurukshetra war but seen through the eyes of the woman who is blamed for it. In a conversation between workshops, he spoke about his practice:

PHOTOS COURTESY: PRASHANT GAUTAM

FIRE FIGHT
(Left) Director Joy Maisnam; *AgniSuta Draupadi* shows women trapped in the cycle of violence

Why do you turn to epics to comment on contemporary realities?

I feel if I do a play based on an epic story, it would resonate with everybody in India. Somehow, a story from the *Mahabharata* or the *Ramayana* or a folk tale strikes at the emotional core of the audience across the country.

The position of a woman during war was brought alive by another Manipuri play, Heisnam Kanhailal and Heisnam Sabirti Devi's *Draupadi*. Did this classic inspire you?

I was at NSD in 2005-06, when I watched Sabirti Devi as Draupadi and was shocked by its bold, symbolic protest at the end. The play, based on a work by Mahasweta Devi, was a response to the atrocities committed by security forces on women in Manipur. The play disturbed society, its show was stopped. But, when Thangjam Manorama was raped and killed in custody, the Mothers of Manipuri stood in front of Kangla Fort and protested nude in the way Sabitri Devi has done on stage. The lesson I took away from the play was that theatre had to stay ahead of its time. *Draupadi* is the reason I keep thinking about what my contribution to society can be.

How does *AgniSuta Draupadi* differ from the mythological plays that have become popular?

We have seen the great war of the *Mahabharata* from the eyes of the Pandavas, the Kauravas and Krishna. What would Draupadi have to say about it? She married five men. Would that be accepted today? Did she accept it? My theatre is influenced by the culture of Manipur. Historically, the women of Manipur have been leaders at home, in the farms and in fighting authority. When I came to live in Delhi, I realised that in north India women do not have a lot of freedom. I wondered what Draupadi would want to say about how a war happened simply because she had laughed at her brother-in-law.

You have grown up amid violence in Manipur, and even been attacked by militant groups and security forces. How did you respond to the unrest as a young person?

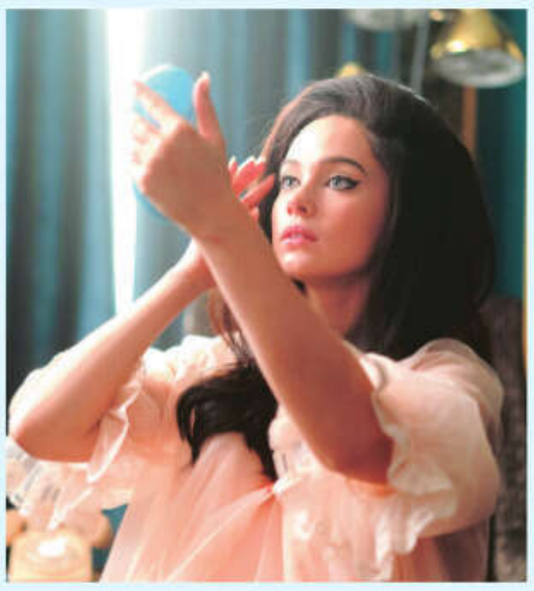
My village is on the foothills and, when I return home, I go to the room where I used to sleep as a child. I see the walls on which I used to write constantly because I never used to talk to anybody. I am afraid to go in there now. I did not know, and my family did not know, that I was suffering from depression. I am afraid that illness will come back for me.

Does *AgniSuta Draupadi* refer to the role being played by women in the current violence in Manipur?

That is the subject of my next play, *Endless Nights*, which revolves around women who are keeping their villages safe by keeping watch at night. These women haven't slept at home for almost a year, because they are spending the nights outside as the violence continues. It is ironic that the worst sufferers of the present violence are Meities and Kukis, two communities who always enjoyed a friendly relationship in my childhood. Peace between the communities will come only if the state acts. Maybe then, the Ima or mothers of Manipur will go home to rest.

On the Road to Graceland

Actor Cailee Spaeny on playing the titular lead in Sofia Coppola-directed *Priscilla* and the choices her character makes



Alaka Sahani

WHILE GROWING up in Tennessee, young Cailee Spaeny remembers accompanying her parents on road trips to Graceland, Memphis, Elvis Presley's famous estate where he breathed his last. With speakers blaring out Elvis's songs, her dad was moved to tears, making Spaeny realise the kind of impact the rock-and-roll superstar had on America. However, it is while preparing to play the role of Priscilla Presley, Elvis's former wife, that the actor learnt about his life away from his popular persona.

In Sofia Coppola-directed *Priscilla*, a faithful adaptation of Priscilla Presley's memoir *Elvis and Me* (1985), Spaeny plays the titular protagonist. "I found Priscilla's story and all the things that she went through touching. I felt an enormous amount of pressure to get it right. We were telling the story that represented her life and I could imagine no one better than Sofia who could tell this story," says Spaeny. She received the Best Actress award at the Venice Film Festival and a Golden Globe nomination for her performance in *Priscilla*, which is currently streaming on MUBI. It was also screened at the Habitat International Film Festival, Delhi, on Saturday.

Priscilla's story has long been overshadowed by the immense fame that Elvis enjoyed. The movie, which re-examines "one of history's most complicated love stories", follows the life of Priscilla Beaulieu when she was only 14 and living in West Germany in the late 1950s and receives an invitation to a party with Elvis (Jacob Elordi), who was then serving the US Air Force. Brought closer by mutual attraction and loneliness, theirs was a long courtship, which later unfolded in the sprawling Graceland and was followed by a turbulent marriage.

The memoir was Spaeny's "touchstone" while preparing for the role. "Priscilla tells the story candidly with lots of detail. It was useful to hold on to that. I also sat down with Priscilla herself. She was kind enough to take out the time and go through certain moments of her life. That was a huge part of my preparation and putting this puzzle together. It was incredible to sit down in front of her and take in who she is and how she holds herself," says the 25-year-old actor. Though the initial days of their romance was dreamy, the narrative subsequently captures young Priscilla's isolated life in the sprawling Graceland.

BURNING LOVE
(Top) Cailee Spaeny as Priscilla Presley; brought closer by mutual attraction and loneliness, Elvis and Priscilla's was a long courtship followed by a turbulent marriage

Since there is not much footage of Priscilla with Elvis available, Spaeny also had to rely on Coppola's vision to essay the character. One of the challenges for Spaeny was to play Priscilla at different stages of her life. "Since I am not a mother, I had to lean on Sofia for how motherhood changes you emotionally," says the *Pacific Rim: Uprising* actor and adds that "hair, make-up and costumes" too helped her in putting together her performance. "We had such an amazing hair, make-up and costume department. These were so essential in those moments of anchoring me and grounding me," she says. Priscilla was famous for her attention-grabbing beehive and winged eyeliner.

The film was shot in 30 days. There were days when Spaeny, in the morning, shot a scene in which Priscilla was pregnant, and later in the day faced the camera as the 14-year-old who was in love with Elvis. "It was the costumes that reminded me of where I was in the story. I needed to hold on to my look to remind me how I was going to play this arc," she says. Talking about her performance, Coppola had stated, "Cailee is so expressive and has an incredible ability to move between different stages of life."

What Spaeny found most touching about her role was the strength that Priscilla found within her when she was 24 and decided to end their marriage. "Even though she was married to someone as famous as Elvis, Priscilla decided that she wanted more and a life of her own. That's inspirational."

When your own blood rescues your hair

Platelet-rich-plasma (PRP) therapy is gaining traction among the young to regrow their hair

Rinku Ghosh

THIS IS the story of a doctor who tested a therapy on herself before recommending it to her patients. And of a patient, who benefitted as much as she did, both of them fighting their hair loss together with their own blood! Delhi-based Dr Rashmi Sharma, senior consultant of dermatology at Fortis, Vasant Kunj, chose platelet-rich plasma (PRP) therapy to keep her hair bouncy, long and thick enough to fight air pollution, tap water, long hours at work and stress. "A viral infection was the last straw as I lost length. My hair looked fuller and longer after three months of therapy. That's when I started using it on others," says the 34-year-old.

Forty-four-year-old Jammu homemaker Snehal Sharma, who lost her hair in clumps after a bad bout of Covid, balding out in patches, chose PRP as she wanted her ponytail back. On a follow-up visit at the clinic, she unties it to show how her hair now swayed from side to side. "I researched comparative benefits before agreeing to this therapy," she says.

PRP is one of the safest hair therapies there is and is gaining traction in the post-pandemic years as more and more younger people experience early hair loss as a side effect of Covid. Done at the right time, it can arrest hair loss and prevent premature balding using your own cells.

A REGENERATIVE PROCESS

The therapy is based on the regenerative power of our own body. "We draw about eight to 10 ml blood from the patient, then we run the tubes containing samples in a centrifuge machine till the plasma separates and settles at the top and the red blood cells sink below. We extract the plasma layer that's concentrated with platelets. These are rich in growth factors, or proteins that regenerate cells, and inject them into the scalp. In short, each hair follicle gets a localised shot of the best proteins, vitamins and minerals your blood has to offer and grows better hair. There are no side effects or allergies because you are using your own nutrients instead of medication," says Dr Sharma.

A FAST AND PAINLESS PROCESS

Besides, the procedure, which is done an hour after a numbing cream is applied to your scalp, takes just 30 to 40 minutes. "After the shots are done, we wipe off the cream, disinfect your scalp and you can resume your daily activity. Wash your hair after 24 hours. It is relatively painless because we use micro needles and they are just pricks, the kind you have with insulin needles, on the scalp. The soreness is momentary," says Dr Sharma.

LIFE POSITIVE

Snehal, who has done six sessions in all, the first three for hair growth and the latter three for improving texture and maintenance, has a steady growth now. Results usually show after three months, so the first three procedures are mandatory. "Maintenance is hassle-free. I just wash my hair every third day, condition my hair, eat clean and exercise," says Snehal, who now does a follow-up once in six months.

"Lifestyle correction is very important for PRP therapy to succeed as hair loss is often the manifestation of underlying health conditions and hormone imbalance. Once your parameters are in range, the effects of the PRP therapy will hold longer. Otherwise, problems may recur again," explains Dr Sharma. This twin-pillar approach ensures a success rate between 70 to 80 per cent as corroborated by the US-based National Institutes of Health study on post-PRP hair regrowth. So far, most of Dr Sharma's patients have not needed repeat treatments after a year. "There is an 18-month efficacy window but that depends on a lot of discipline. Choose mild shampoos and definitely don't oil your scalp, which ends up clogging pores. You can only use oil to condition the hair, so wash your hair within half an hour of application. Keep it simple and don't go by fad remedies," she advises.

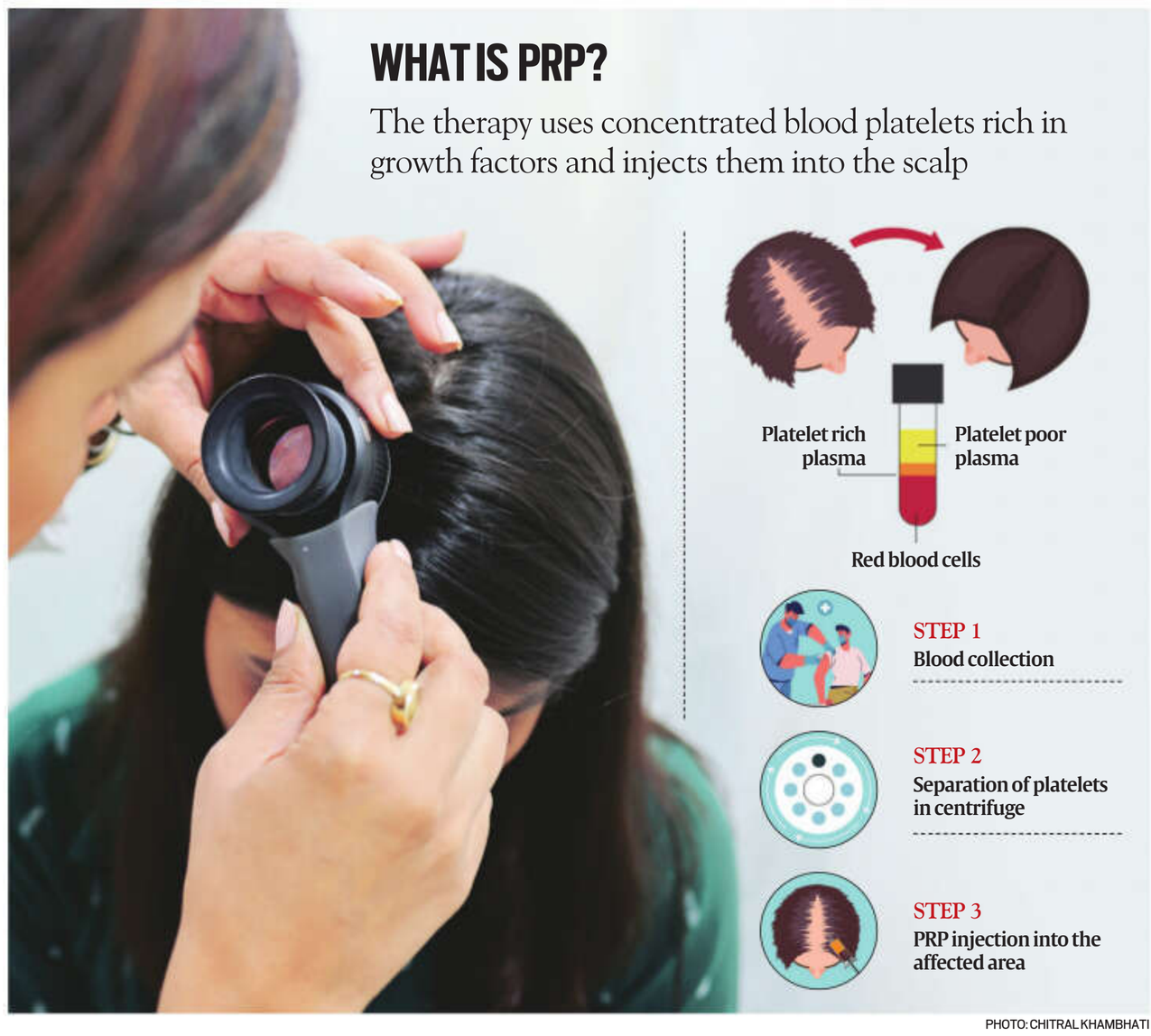


PHOTO: CHITRAL KHAMBHATI

NEED TO KNOW

Lifestyle correction is important for PRP therapy to succeed as hair loss is often the manifestation of underlying health conditions and hormone imbalance

WHAT'S CAUSING HAIRFALL AMONG THE YOUNG?

Both men and women tend to lose hair thickness and volume as they age because of heredity, genes and changes in the hormone testosterone. Inherited, or pattern baldness, affects more men than women, the former losing hair in a spherical manner on the crown, the latter from the central parting as it keeps widening. "However, the reason I am getting patients in their 20s is because they have had an underlying condition or infection, nutritional deficiency and stress. Any kind of deficiency in zinc, iron, vitamin D and protein result in thinning hair. Young people consume more sugar and fatty foods as they eat out frequently. You need to have legumes, poultry, fish, good fat and leafy greens to feed your hair follicles. Stress means extra levels of the hormone cortisol, which can shorten the growth phase of the hair shaft prematurely," says Dr Sharma. Of course, youngsters these days are more into hair styling products, treatments and hair colour on a daily basis, which, she feels, are equivalent to a chemical attack.

That's why the dermatologist insists on doing a basic bloodwork to understand hidden causes before she decides on doing a procedure. Studying the scalp of a 24-year-old through a trichoscope, Dr Sharma finds that one of her follicles has just a single strand of hair instead of three. "She has normal alopecia where her hair follicle has shrunk and thinned out and stunted even the single hair she has. PRP improves circulation in the treatment area, opens up the hair follicle and ensures that even if the old hair falls out, the new hair grows robust and thicker in its place. It further stimulates inactive hair follicles around a barren patch and revives hair growth," says Dr Sharma.

CAN PRP WORK BETTER THAN HAIR TRANSPLANTS?

Alopecia areata or patchy hair loss occurs when the body's own immune system attacks hair follicles and may be brought on by severe stress. "In such cases, where the hair follicle has been badly damaged, only hair transplantation works, which involves surgically implanting donor hair from healthy growth areas of the scalp to the leaner growth patches. PRP guarantees best results for patients in the early stages of hair loss and can be used as a supportive treatment for stubborn baldness. However, PRP is much better than minoxidil — a medication that can be administered both orally and topically — which has to be taken for a prolonged period. Also the drug doesn't work on receding hairlines," she adds.

COST OF A CROWNING GLORY

Hair restoration through PRP doesn't come cheap as you must get it done from a certified dermatologist only. Being a cosmetic procedure, it is not covered by health insurance. Between Rs 4,000 to Rs 6,000 per session and a minimum of six sittings that's recommended, you have to set aside anything between Rs 25,000 to Rs 36,000 for a cycle that lasts a little over a year. But then, as Snehal says, she would save up to have her ponytail and confidence back.

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ADVERTORIAL

A Journey to India's Farthest Corners

Let's uncover the stories these regions tell, stories of resilience, of ancient trade routes, and of natural wonders that continue to draw people from across the world.

After an adventurous exploration of the Garden Route in South Africa last week, I want to divert our attention back to Incredible India. Our country, a land of vast diversity and contrasts, spans from the snowy peaks of the Himalayas in the north to the sun-drenched beaches of the Indian Ocean in the south. From the dense forests of the east to the vast deserts of the west. India's geographical diversity is both complex and mind-blowing at the same time. So today, I wanted to explore India's farthest corners - its northernmost, southernmost, easternmost, and westernmost points.

These locations, each with their own unique characteristics and significance, together sketch the territorial boundaries of India and mark the edges of a landscape that has shaped the economic activities, cultural practices, and historical narratives of the diverse communities that inhabit our nation. Let's uncover the stories these regions tell, stories of resilience in the face of climatic extremities, of ancient trade routes that shaped economic destinies, and of natural wonders that continue to draw people from across the world.

Nestled amidst the grandeur of the Himalayas, India's northernmost point, is not just a geographical marker but a symbol of resilience and sovereignty. This point, located in the Siachen Glacier region, represents the sheer will and determination of India to protect its boundaries. The Siachen Glacier, often referred to as the world's highest battlefield, stretches to an altitude where only the brave dare to tread.

At the same time, the Siachen Glacier holds immense geopolitical significance for India. It serves as a crucial buffer zone between India and our neighbours, Pakistan and China. Control over Siachen ensures India's strategic advantage, enabling surveillance and offering a vantage point that is critical for our national security. The climate in the Siachen region is unforgiving. Temperatures can plummet to minus 60 degrees Celsius, making human habitation almost impossible. The glacier is prone to avalanches and blizzards, posing significant risks to the soldiers stationed there. Despite these challenges, the Indian Army has maintained a continuous presence, adapting to the extreme conditions with remarkable resilience.

Beyond the strategic importance and climatic challenges lies the human element of Siachen. The soldiers stationed here live in some of the most challenging conditions on Earth, away from their families and the comforts of home, to safeguard our nation's frontiers. Their bravery and sacrifices are a testament to the spirit of the Indian armed forces.

Far removed from the icy confines of the Siachen Glacier, India's southernmost point paints a contrasting picture of tropical abundance and serene oceanic beauty. Indira Point, located on the Great Nicobar Island in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, marks the southern tip of the Indian territory. Cloaked in dense tropical forests and fringed by the azure waters of the Indian Ocean, Indira Point is not just a geographic landmark but a mosaic of biodiversity and cultural narratives.

Indira Point is emblematic of the rich ecological mix that characterizes the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. The region is a hotspot of biodiversity, housing a multitude of endemic species of flora and fauna. The surrounding waters are part of a vibrant marine ecosystem, home to coral reefs teeming with diverse marine life.

The Andaman and Nicobar Islands, with Indira Point as their southernmost marker, are steeped in a rich cultural and historical heritage. The indigenous tribes of the islands, some of the most isolated human populations in the world, offer a glimpse into a way of life that is closely intertwined with nature. These communities, including the Great Nicobarese, the Onges, and the Sentinalese, remind us of the diverse cultural diversity that India embodies.

The history of the islands is also marked by their strategic importance in maritime trade routes, as well as their role during the colonial era. Indira Point and the surrounding islands have witnessed significant historical events, from ancient maritime trade to being a pivotal base in World War II, shaping the socio-political narrative of the region. Indira Point's serene beauty, coupled with its ecological and cultural significance, makes it a unique jewel in India's crown.

Neil Patil
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Venturing to the eastern extremities of India, we find ourselves in Kibithoo, a small village in Arunachal Pradesh that marks the country's easternmost point. Kibithoo is affectionately hailed as India's Land of the Rising Sun. Each morning, it is here that the day begins for India, as the first golden rays of dawn hit Kibithoo. Nestled in the lush landscapes of the Eastern Himalayas, Kibithoo is not just a geographic landmark, but a place characterized by a diverse socio-economic landscape shaped by its geographical isolation and strategic location near the border with China.

Kibithoo is surrounded by breathtaking natural beauty, with dense forests, rushing rivers, and panoramic views of the Himalayas. The region's pristine landscapes offer tremendous potential for eco-tourism, attracting visitors seeking adventure and tranquility in India's untouched wilderness. The cultural fabric of the easternmost point of India is woven with the traditions and customs of the indigenous tribes of Arunachal Pradesh. The people of Kibithoo and its neighbouring areas celebrate their heritage through festivals, dances, and traditional crafts, offering a window into the rich cultural diversity of the region. This cultural vibrancy, combined with the scenic beauty of the landscape, makes Kibithoo a symbol of the harmonious co-existence of nature and culture.

The westernmost point of India is located in Guhar Moti, Gujarat, a region that presents a stark contrast to the lush landscapes of the east and the icy terrains of the north. Guhar Moti is an emerging tourism gem that offers a blend of history, culture, and natural beauty. Visitors can explore ancient maritime heritage, vibrant local festivals, and serene beaches along the Arabian Sea coast here. The region's proximity to the Rann of Kutch and historic sites like Dwarka, further adds to its allure. Moreover, the region's delicious cuisine, and the warmth of its people add another layer of significance to India's westernmost point, making it a vibrant part of the nation's diverse mosaic.

The four farthest points of India - Siachen Glacier in the north, Indira Point in the south, Kibithoo in the east, and Guhar Moti in the west - span vast distances across diverse landscapes. The distance between these points underscores the vastness of India's territory and the diversity of our geography and culture. From the northernmost to the southernmost point, the distance is over 3,000 kilometers, a testament to the vertical expanse of our country. Similarly, from the easternmost to the westernmost point, the country stretches for about 3,000 kilometers, showcasing India's vast horizontal spread.

Planning a trip that includes all four extremities would definitely be an ambitious endeavour, given the distances and the varied terrain involved, but not unachievable in my opinion. As the saying goes, Impossible is Nothing, we have had our guests explore three kinds of trips: 1) Kashmir to Kanyakumari over 40 days through 32 cities. 2) Gujarat to Guwahati over 30 days through 27 cities. 3) The Great Indian Peninsula over 50 days through 45 vibrant cities. So let me leave you with only one thought today: India is indeed incredible, so Dekho Apna Desh! Dil Se! Pyaar Se! Samman Se! That's it for today then, see you next week. Until then, keep Celebrating Life.

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