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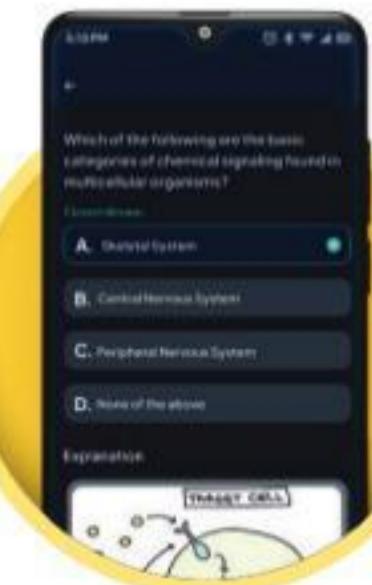
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THE WORLD

TOP OF THE WORLD



Thaksin Shinawatra

THAILAND Former PM gets parole, to be released

Bangkok: Thailand's former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra, who last year returned from more than a decade of self-imposed exile to serve a prison sentence for misdeeds committed while in office, has been granted parole and could be released this weekend, the country's justice minister announced Tuesday. Parole for Thaksin would be a symbol of reconciliation between his populist political party and the country's conservative establishment. Justice Minister Tawee Sodsong told reporters that Thaksin qualified for early release because he is in the eligible category of inmates who have serious illnesses. AP

IRAN UN watchdog: Iran is 'not fully transparent'

Dubai: The head of the United Nations' nuclear watchdog warned Tuesday that Iran is "not entirely transparent" regarding its atomic program, particularly after an official who once led Tehran's program announced the Islamic Republic has all the pieces for a weapon "in our hands". Speaking at the World Government Summit in Dubai, just across the Persian Gulf, Rafael Mariano Grossi, the director-general of the International Atomic Energy Agency, alluded to remarks made this weekend by Ali Akbar Salehi. Grossi noted "an accumulation of complexities" in the wider Middle East amid war in Gaza. AP

SRI LANKA Govt to amend controversial online safety Act

Colombo: The Sri Lankan Cabinet has decided to amend the Online Safety Act, the government said on Tuesday, after it came under attack for stifling dissent and harming the potential growth of the country's digital economy. However, when it was decided yesterday to go for an amendment, it was not stated which clauses of the Act would be amended, according to a Cabinet note released on Tuesday after Monday's meeting. The legislation, accepted in January, would have led to the establishment of the Online Safety Commission, which would have been empowered to make punitive rulings on offences. AP

NEPAL Indian arrested for 'smuggling gold, silver'

Kathmandu: An Indian national was arrested on Tuesday on charges of possessing undocumented gold and silver in Nepal, police said. Acting on a tip-off, police raided a jewellery shop in Pokhara city and arrested its owner Surjit Singh, 40, for smuggling gold and silver. Police recovered unaccounted 7,782 kg gold, 6 kg silver ornament and Rs 68 lakh cash. PTI

IMRAN WARNS AGAINST 'MISADVENTURE' WITH 'STOLEN VOTES'

Minus Imran's PTI, leading parties in Pakistan unite to form coalition govt

PMI-N president Shehzad Sharif says will request his brother Nawaz to become PM

SAJJAD HUSSAIN
ISLAMABAD, FEBRUARY 13

PAKISTAN'S LEADING parties, minus jailed former prime minister Imran Khan's party, on Tuesday announced that they will try to form a coalition government led by Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz, ending speculation about the future form of the political set-up.

Though it was not explicitly announced as who would be the prime minister, PMI-N president Shehzad Sharif said he would request his elder brother and the 74-year-old party supremo Nawaz Sharif to become the premier for a record fourth time. However, Shehzad, 72, would likely lead a govern-



Bilawal Bhutto Zardari with Nawaz Sharif. File

ment like the one he headed after Imran Khan was voted out of power in April 2022.

Shehzad along with Asif Ali Zardari of Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui of Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM) met at the residence of Shaukat Hussain of Pakistan Muslim League-Quaid (PML-Q) after a consultative meeting.

"Today we have united to tell the nation that we all accept the split mandate. I am thankful to Zardari and Bilawal that they decided for their party to vote for the PML-N," he said and thanked the other gathered leaders as well. To form a government, a party must win 133 seats out of 265 contested seats in the 266-member National Assembly.

PTI DRAWS PLANS, FACES CHALLENGES

A SENIOR official of Imran Khan's party said it will use the platform of two rightwing religious parties in its bid to form government in the Centre as well as in the provinces of Punjab and Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa. However, the PTI will not be able to gather enough strength to form either the federal or provincial government in Punjab. PTI can form a government in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa.

Earlier, Zardari said at the same press conference that a coalition government would be set up.

"We have decided to form a coalition government and pull the country out of the economic crisis," he said and added that the new government would also try to reconcile with everyone, including the PTI of jailed former prime minister Khan.

Meanwhile, Jailed former Pakistan prime minister Imran Khan Tuesday warned his political rivals against the "misadventure" of forming a government with "stolen votes".

"PTI will never compromise," Imran said. PTI

Other parties got 17 seats while the result of one constituency was withheld.

Shehzad said the new government would pull the cash-strapped country out of trouble.

Shehzad also announced that his niece Maryam Nawaz, daughter of Nawaz, would be the party candidate for the chief minister of Punjab, sending rumours about the future of the Punjab government.

The lawmakers approved the measure in a 70-29 vote that comfortably exceeded the chamber's 60-vote threshold for passage and sent the legislation on to the House. Twenty-two Republicans joined most Democrats to support the Bill.

"I call on Speaker Johnson to rise to the occasion, to do the right thing. Bring this bill to the floor quickly," Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer said.

It was not clear that Johnson would do so, having issued a statement before the Senate vote faulting it for lacking conservative provisions to stem a record flow of migrants across the U.S.-Mexico border.

The Senate vote occurred before sunrise, after eight hardline Republican opponents of Ukraine aid held a marathon of speeches that dominated the chamber floor from Monday afternoon into the early hours on Tuesday. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky quickly hailed passage of the bill. "American assistance brings just peace in Ukraine closer and restores global stability, resulting in increased security and prosperity for all Americans and all the free world," he said on X.

Both houses of Congress must approve the legislation before Biden can sign it into law.

US Senate okays Ukraine aid Bill, but path ahead unclear

Republican-controlled House of Representatives will consider the Bill

REUTERS
WASHINGTON, FEBRUARY 13

THE DEMOCRATIC-LED US Senate Tuesday passed a \$95.34 billion aid package for Ukraine, Israel and Taiwan, although it faced an uncertain path ahead in the Republican-controlled House of Representatives.

The lawmakers approved the measure in a 70-29 vote that comfortably exceeded the chamber's 60-vote threshold for passage and sent the legislation on to the House. Twenty-two Republicans joined most Democrats to support the Bill.

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RUSSIA, WEST TRADE BARBS AT UNSC

United Nations: Russia accused the West on Monday of sabotaging agreements that would have prevented the war in Ukraine – but the US and its allies put the blame squarely on Moscow, saying there is no escaping that President Vladimir Putin ordered the invasion of its smaller neighbour. Days before the second anniversary of Russia's invasion on February 24, 2022, Russia's UN Ambassador Vassily Nebenzia again put the cause of the war down to the failure to implement the 2015 Minsk agreements. The agreements aimed to resolve the conflict between Ukraine and Russia-backed separatists that flared in April 2014 after Russia's annexation of Crimea. AP

Senate Republicans last week blocked a bill that would have coupled aid for Ukraine and other allies with the most sweeping changes to border policy in decades, after Donald Trump loudly criticised that deal.

The legislation includes \$61 billion for Ukraine, \$14 billion for Israel in its war against Hamas and \$4.83 billion to support partners in the Indo-Pacific, including Taiwan, and deter aggression by China. It would also provide \$9.15 billion in humanitarian assistance to civilians in Gaza and the West Bank, Ukraine and other conflict zones around the globe.

Russia puts Estonia PM on wanted list for destroying Soviet-era monuments

REUTERS
MOSCOW/VILNIUS, FEB 13

RUSSIAN POLICE have put Estonian Prime Minister Kaja Kallas, Lithuania's culture minister and members of the previous Latvian parliament on the wanted list, according to the Russian Interior Ministry's database.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said Kallas was wanted for "desecration of historical memory".

Russian state agency TASS said the Baltic officials were accused of "destroying monuments to Soviet soldiers", which is punishable by a 5-year prison term under the Russian criminal code.

Following Russia's invasion of Ukraine in nearly two years ago, the Baltic nations of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania have demolished most of their Soviet-era monuments, including those commemorating Soviet soldiers killed in World War Two.

In response, the head of the Russian Investigative Committee, Alexander Bastrykin, ordered a criminal investigation into the matter.

The Baltic politicians risk being placed under arrest only if they cross the Russian border, said sources.

RUSSIA PREPARING FOR WAR WITH WEST, SAYS ESTONIA

Vilnius: Russia is preparing for a military confrontation with the West within the next decade, Estonia's Foreign Intelligence Service said on Tuesday. A growing number of Western officials have warned of a military threat from Russia to countries along the eastern flank of NATO, calling for Europe to get prepared by rearming. The chief of the intelligence service said the assessment was based on Russian plans to double the number of forces stationed along its border with NATO members Finland and the Baltic States of Estonia, Lithuania and Latvia.

otherwise declaring them as "wanted" is unlikely to have any practical consequence.

Estonian State Secretary Taimar Peterkop, Lithuanian Culture Minister Simona Kairys and about 60 of the 100 members of the previous Latvian parliament were put on the list, said sources.

INDONESIA VOTES TODAY

Poll officials use horses to carry ballot boxes to polling stations in remote villages of Andongrejo Indonesia, Tuesday. The world's third-largest democracy votes on Wednesday. Defence minister Pabowo Subianto, the frontrunner in the president race as per polls, is up against ex-governors Anies Baswedan and Ganjar Pranowo. AP

REUTERS
JOHANNESBURG, FEB 13

South Africa moves UN court as Gazans start fleeing Rafah



Palestinians leave Rafah, in fear of an Israeli military operation, on Tuesday. Reuters

ern sector of Rafah overnight, causing waves of panic, residents said. "I fled Al-Maghazi, came to Rafah, and here I am, returning to Al-Maghazi," said Nahla Jarwan. "Last night in Rafah was very tough. We're going back to Al-Maghazi out of fear." But she added: "Wherever we go, there is no safety."

Rafah neighbours Egypt, but Cairo has made clear it will not allow a refugee exodus over the border. US President Joe Biden said Washington was working on a hostage deal.

CHINESE-BUILT STADIUMS ARE RARELY DELIVERED WITH INFRASTRUCTURE TO SUPPORT THEM

China keeps building stadiums in Africa, but critics call it debt trap

ELIAN PELTIER

ABIDJAN AND SAN PEDRO, IVORY COAST, FEB 13

THE ALASSANE Ouattara stadium rises like a piece of sculpture from the dusty brown earth north of Ivory Coast's largest city, its undulating roof and white columns towering over the empty landscape like a spaceship that has dropped onto a uninhabited planet.

On Sunday, the three-and-a-half-year-old stadium will host its signature moment, when the national soccer teams of Ivory Coast and Nigeria compete in the final



Road to Ouattara stadium is not open yet. NYT

African Union — in exchange for diplomatic clout or access to natural resources.

Through that trillion-dollar program, known as the Belt and Road Initiative, China has become a central partner to the developing countries that benefit from expensive projects they might not otherwise be able to afford. But Chinese construction has sometimes been accompanied by charges of local corruption, and critics have questioned the value of the big-budget projects, noting they deliver dubious long-term economic benefits but very real debts that governments can struggle to repay.

"China doesn't ask why you need a stadium," said Itamar Dubinsky, a researcher at the African Studies Program at the Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, Israel. "It just finances and builds it." Over the past two decades, Chinese companies have built or renovated dozens of stadiums across Africa, including, in the past 15 years, nearly half of those that have hosted matches in the Africa Cup of Nations. That total includes three of the six used for this year's tournament, whose showpiece is the 60,000-seat Ouattara stadium, built by two Chinese state-owned companies. Its exterior of white columns and curving arches — inset with panels tinted green and orange, the national colors of Ivory Coast — is a stylistic improvement from earlier projects on the continent, which critics have derided as drab concrete monoliths. But three years after the stadium hosted its first game, the new road leading to it still hasn't opened, forcing fans to walk for up to an hour to reach the arena, and the sports city around it has yet to materialize. That, critics say, is another regular feature of the projects. Chinese-built stadiums are rarely delivered with the infrastructure to support them, or the know-how to maintain them. NYT


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THE INDIAN EXPRESS, WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2024



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MSP issue: what govt committee set up in 2022 has done so far

HARIKISHAN SHARMA
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 13

A MAJOR demand of the farmers who broke through police barricades and braved tear gas on their way to New Delhi on Tuesday is the enactment of a law to guarantee minimum support prices (MSP) for all crops, as per the formula recommended by the Dr M S Swaminathan Commission.

In the evening, Congress leaders Rahul Gandhi and Mallikarjun Kharge announced the party had made a "historic" decision to provide this legal guarantee to farmers.

This comes at a time when a committee appointed by the Centre in July 2022 continues to deliberate on ways to make MSP more "effective and transparent".

This panel was constituted seven months after farmers gathered at Delhi's border called off their year-long protest after Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced the repeal of the

farm laws. The committee's terms of reference do not include a legal guarantee for MSP.

The committee

The committee, which was set up to "promote Zero budget based farming, to change crop pattern keeping in mind the changing needs of the country, and to make MSP more effective and transparent", was notified by the Union Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare on July 18, 2022.

The committee, which has 26 members, is headed by Sanjay Agrawal, a former agriculture secretary.

Its other members are (i) NITI Aayog member (Agriculture) Ramesh Chand, (ii) two agricultural economists, (iii) an award-winning farmer, (iv) five representatives of farmers' organisations other than the Samyukt Kisan Morcha (SKM), (v) two representatives of farmers' cooperatives/groups, (vi) one member of the Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP), (vii)



Barricades at the Shambhu border between Punjab, Haryana. Gurmee Singh

three persons from agricultural universities and institutions, (viii) five secretaries of the Government of India, (ix) four officers from four states, and (x) one joint secretary from the Agriculture Ministry.

Under the category of farmers' representatives, the committee had three positions

for members of the SKM, the umbrella body of farmers' unions that had spearheaded the 2020-21 agitation, but they did not join it.

The SKM has not joined the ongoing protest so far. The farmers currently marching to Delhi belong to the Kisan Mazdoor Morcha (KMM) and Samyukt Kisan Morcha (non-political), a breakaway faction of the SKM.

Purpose of panel

On November 19, 2021, PM Modi announced that the government had decided to withdraw the three farm laws — the Farmers Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Act, 2020, the Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement on Price Assurance and Farm Services Act, 2020; and the Essential Commodities (Amendment) Act, 2020.

"A committee will be constituted to decide on matters like promotion of zero budget

farming, i.e. natural farming, scientifically change the crop pattern keeping in mind the changing requirements of the country, and make MSP more effective and transparent."

"The committee will include representatives of the central government, state governments, farmers, agricultural scientists and agricultural economists," Modi had said. The notification of the Agriculture Ministry was

along the same lines.

EXPLAINED AGRICULTURE

Mandate of panel

The ministry's July 18, 2022 notification said the committee's "subject matter" has three points: MSP, natural farming, and crop diversification.

On the MSP, the committee has been asked for suggestions to "make available MSP to farmers of the country by making the system more effective and transparent". The panel is also supposed to make recommen-

dations to strengthen the Agricultural Marketing System "as per the changing requirements of the country to ensure higher value to the farmers through remunerative prices of their produce by taking advantage of the domestic and export opportunities".

The body was asked for suggestions on the "practicality to give more autonomy to Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices and measures to make it more scientific".

Progress in panel

The committee on MSP had its first meeting on August 22, 2022.

The Agriculture Ministry has said the committee has been meeting on a "regular basis actively to deliberate" on the "subject matters assigned to it".

The July 18, 2022 notification did not specify the tenure of the Sanjay Agrawal committee. Therefore, the committee has no deadline by which it is required to present its report.

EXPLAINED GLOBAL

WHAT DID TRUMP SAY ABOUT NATO FUNDING AND WHAT IS ARTICLE 5?



Donald Trump speaks at a campaign rally in South Carolina on February 10. Reuters

FORMER US President Donald Trump has raised a storm of criticism from the White House and top officials for suggesting he would not defend NATO allies who failed to spend enough on defence, and would even encourage Russia to attack them.

What is NATO?

Founded in 1949 to counter the Soviet Union with Cold War tensions rising, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization is a political and military alliance of countries from North America and Europe.

Which countries are in NATO?

NATO currently has 31 members – most of them European nations, plus the United States and Canada. The newest member is Finland, which joined last April.

What did Trump say about NATO?

As US President, Trump often lambasted NATO and members such as Germany, accusing them of not paying enough for their own defence and relying on Washington to protect them.

Trump took his criticism to a new level at a campaign rally on Saturday in South Carolina, when he recounted what he said was a conversation with the "president of a big country". "Well sir, if we don't pay, and we're attacked by Russia – will you protect us?" Trump quoted the unnamed leader as saying. "I said: 'You didn't pay? You're delinquent?...No, I would not protect you. In fact, I would encourage them (Russia) to do whatever the hell they want. You gotta pay,'" Trump said.

How is NATO funded?

Trump's statements give the impression that the alliance is like a club with membership fee. But NATO operates differently. It has some common funds, to which all members contribute. The vast bulk of its strength comes from members' own national defence spending – to

REUTERS

What is NATO's Article 5?

In Article 5 of the founding treaty, NATO members declared that an armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or North America "shall be considered an attack against them all".

They agreed they would "assist the Party or Parties so attacked by taking... such action as it deems necessary, including the use of armed force."

However, Article 5 stops short of a commitment to an automatic military response to help an ally under attack. That means the strength of Article 5 depends on clear statements from political leaders that it will be backed up by action. This is one reason Trump's comments caused such a furore.

By suggesting he would not take military action to defend an ally, Trump undermined the assumptions that give Article 5 its power.

REUTERS

EXPLAINED SCIENCE

High in sky, a new-gen eye

India has successfully tested a HAPS prototype. These solar-powered vehicles can be used for surveillance, monitoring, and disaster management, and enjoy many significant advantages over drones and satellites



AMITABH SINHA

IN A major technology breakthrough, Bengaluru-based National Aerospace Laboratories (NAL) last week successfully flew a prototype of a new-generation unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV).

This was no ordinary UAV.

This one can fly at great heights, about 20 km above the ground, runs entirely on solar power, and can remain in the air for months on end. Such UAVs belong to a class of flying objects called high-altitude pseudo-satellite vehicles (HAPS) or high-altitude long-endurance vehicles (HALE).

The primary utility of HAPS vehicles is in the field of surveillance and monitoring, but there are other situations, like disaster management, in which they can be very useful.

HAPS technology is still under development. Several countries and companies have developed and flown such vehicles with encouraging success, but no one has mastered the technology yet. The world record for a vehicle of this class is held by Zephyr, manufactured by Airbus, that flew for 64 days in August 2022 before crashing.

The prototype tested by NAL last week spent eight and a half hours in the air. Next month, NAL, a Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) unit, plans to keep a vehicle in the air for at least 24 hours. The full-scale machine that NAL is trying to build by 2027 would remain airborne for 90 days at a stretch.

The need for a HAPS

The kind of jobs that HAPS are meant to do are currently done by UAVs and satellites. Both have certain limitations. UAVs, or drones as they are commonly called, are mostly battery-powered and cannot remain in the air for more than a few hours. Thus, continuous monitoring is not something they can do effectively. In addition, they fly at relatively low heights, because of which their vision is restricted to small areas.



Satellites can observe much bigger areas, but the ones in low-earth orbits are continuously moving with respect to Earth. They cannot constantly keep an eye over the target area. Geostationary satellites, located about 36,000 km above the ground, can keep a constant gaze over one area, but these are fairly expensive, and once deployed, cannot be repurposed or reoriented.

HAPS are meant to overcome all these shortcomings, and to do more.

"These stratospheric vehicles (flying about 20 km above the ground) are designed to loiter over a region. By the standards of flying objects, and in comparison to UAVs for example, they move really slowly, at just about 80-100 km per hour. That kind of slow speed 20 km above the ground means that objects on the ground pretty much don't move for them. They can easily keep an eye over 200 sq km of area. In fact, they can observe everything even over a 400 sq km area with a five-metre resolution. If you want to focus only on 1 sq km, for example, you can get a resolution as high as 15 cm," said Dr L Venkatakrishnan, chief scientist and head of Experimental Aerodynamics Division at NAL, who is leading the development of HAPS.

"HAPS vehicles work like geostationary satellites but with added flexibility. They can be easily redeployed over another location, or can be re-equipped with a different payload,"

Dr Venkatakrishnan said.

Engineering challenge

But developing such an autonomous flying machine faces major technological hurdles. That is the reason why, despite decades of work, a full-fledged HAPS vehicle continues to elude engineers. It is only now, with advanced technologies in solar cells, batteries, and composite materials, that this vehicle looks possible in the near future.

The primary challenge is to generate enough solar power to keep the aircraft flying, the payloads operating, and the batteries charging. The batteries need to be capable enough to continue operations through the night.

There are also design-related challenges. The aircraft needs to be extremely lightweight to minimise the power requirement, but it also has to be stable. This is one of the reasons why this aircraft is meant to fly in the stratosphere. The region between 17 km and 23 km above the Earth's surface is climatically conducive for their flight. The wind speed is very low, ideal for a light-weight aircraft to remain stable. It helps that this height, much above the region in which civilian aircraft fly, is favourable for observation and surveillance activities.

But temperatures at that height can drop to -50 degree Celsius or lower. Electronics

need to be kept warmer, and that is an additional burden on power resources. Also, air density is just about 7 per cent of what it is at sea level. This creates acute complications for the aircraft, for example in producing lift and thrust.

Because of space and weight limitations, solar cells and batteries need to be extremely efficient. For example, Dr Venkatakrishnan said, they were looking at battery cells with an energy density of 500 watt-hour/kg. Energy density is a measure of the amount of energy stored in a battery in proportion to its weight. For perspective, an average truck battery has the energy density of 75 watt-hour/kg, most Indian Space Research Organisation satellites have batteries with energy density of about 190-200 watt-hour/kg, and even Tesla, one of the most advanced car companies, is right now working with energy densities in the range of 240-260 watt-hour/kg, Dr Venkatakrishnan said.

"With HAPS, we are testing the limits of present technology. There is one company which has achieved 500 watt-hour/kg and the battery is commercially available, but it is extremely expensive. Even with other aspects of this aircraft — for example, design, materials, aerodynamics and aeroelasticity — we are working at the limits of technology. HAPS is the grand engineering challenge of aviation right now," Dr Venkatakrishnan said.

Early start advantages

For India, HAPS is another technology area where it is entering the race at a relatively early stage. Joining technology development at an early stage results in capacity building, early adoption, control over patents, business opportunities, and spin-off technologies.

Dr Venkatakrishnan said India had moved into HAPS technology development at the right time, and the successful test flight showed it had capabilities similar to some of the other countries trying to develop this technology. "We are not playing catch-up. At the moment, we are not the leaders for sure, but we can confidently say that we have the lead runners firmly in sight," he said.

"For example, none of the advanced HAPS options, including Zephyr, has flown in tropical areas, which offers a much bigger challenge because of the presence of jet-streams in the upper atmosphere. We probably have an advantage here," he said.

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nial science, how do we reconcile the reality of the first offshore campus in Zanzibar?

Western and Indian

Initial Western guidance was necessary for the establishment of IITs, but their Indian character was never in doubt. By contrast, the Zanzibar campus of IIT Madras continues to be Indian, not African or Tanzanian. (Zanzibar is a Tanzanian archipelago in the Indian Ocean off the East African mainland.)

Today, as IITs are admitting foreign students and foreign universities are setting up campuses in India, the Dr K Radhakrishnan Committee has recommended the setting up of IIT campuses overseas. So, if IITs are territorial national expressions of postcolonial

delivering, IITs are making an audacious effort not just to mentor (as the Western powers did), but are ready to create a double in Zanzibar and in other cities outside India.

Indian, Zanzibari, both?

The IIT Madras campus in Zanzibar is not a Zanzibar Institute of Technology mentored by IIT Madras. It is a deterritorialised copy while still being an Indian institute. There can be a debate on which word to emphasise — Indian, or Madras, or Zanzibar. But it must be agreed that IIT Madras Zanzibar represents the journey of a postcolonial state to become a technological powerhouse.

The first overseas campus is a declaration of aspiration by both IIT Madras and India as a nation to shoulder responsibility and share its success story. Prof Raghunathan Rengaswamy, Dean of Global Engagement at IIT Madras and one of the brains behind the campus, sees Zanzibar as the gateway to the greater African region, iterating the sincerity of India's friendship with the continent.

On the day of the inauguration, November 6, 2023, Zanzibar's President Hussein Mwinyi described the campus as the high point of his term in office, and

hoped that IIT Zanzibar would be a driver of economic change that would help the island achieve sustainable development goals. He also said he expected the IITM campus to complement the nation's vision 2050 that requires skilled labour to transform the economy, and invited students from the entire region to utilise the opportunity presented by IITM.

While the IITM campus feeds the aspirations of Zanzibar in the pursuit of technology, it also offers Indians a legitimate reason to look at themselves and their achievements with confidence. The opening of IITM Zanzibar also demonstrates that India does not believe in separating the producers and consumers of knowledge, nor does it reduce African students into mere beneficiaries — rather, it is brotherhood and sisterhood in action.



Hamara Sankalp Viksit Bharat

Gujarat to SC:
Review Bilkis
order, remarks
on state are
unwarranted

SC quashed
state govt's
remission
granted to
11 convicts
in Bilkis case

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 13

THE GUJARAT government has approached the Supreme Court seeking review of its January 8 judgment cancelling the remission granted to the 11 convicts in the Bilkis Bano case, stating that some of the comments in it were "not only highly unwarranted and against the record of the case, but has caused serious prejudice to the State".

It termed as "extreme observation", the court's remarks in the order that the state government "acted in tandem and was complicit with Respondent No 3/accused" Radheshyam Bhagwandas Shah, who was among the 11 men convicted of raping Bilkis Bano and murdering seven of her family members during the 2002 riots.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



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PROTESTERS, SECURITY PERSONNEL INJURED IN CLASHES AT HARYANA BORDER

Punjab farmers back on road to Delhi, face teargas drones and barricades



Security personnel use teargas to disperse farmers at the Shambhu border on Tuesday. Kamleshwar Singh

Will not relent...
appeal to people
to turn up in huge
numbers, say
farm leaders

RAAKHI JAGGA
& SUKHBIR SIWACH
SHAMBHU, KHANAURI, FEB 13

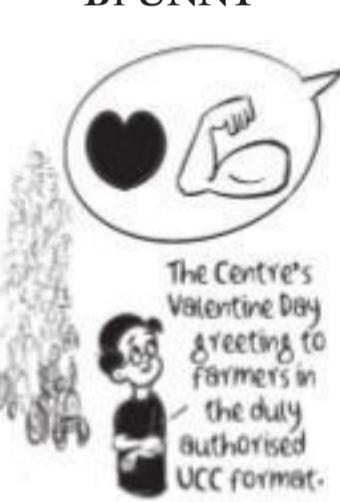
OVER TWO years after they ended their year-long protest at Delhi's borders following the repeal of the three new farm laws, Punjab's farmer groups were back on the road on Tuesday, trying to march to the Capital, through Haryana, even as security forces put up multi-layered barricades and fired teargas shells — including some dropped from drones — to stop them.

With Haryana sealing its borders, tension prevailed through the day at two points on the Punjab-Haryana border — at Shambhu (Patiala-Ambala border) and Khanauri (Sangrur-Hisar border). At least 26 protesters and

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

BUSINESS AS USUAL

By UNNY



The Centre's Valentine Day greeting to farmers in the duly authorised UCC format.

Come for talks, ready to set up panel: Munda to farmers

HARIKISHAN SHARMA
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 13

WITH PUNJAB'S farmers beginning their "Dilli Chalo" march to press for their demands including a legal guarantee on mini-

mum support price (MSP), Union Agriculture Minister Arjun Munda on Tuesday proposed the formation of a committee comprising farmer representatives and state governments to look into all their issues.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

If we honour
Swaminathan,
we have to take
farmers along,
says daughter

UPASIKA SINGHAL
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 13

THE PROTESTING farmers are "our annadatas" and cannot be treated as criminals, said Madhura Swaminathan, daughter of agricultural scientist M S Swaminathan, at an event on Tuesday to commemorate the confluence of Bharat Ratna on him.

"The farmers of Punjab today are marching to Delhi. I believe, according to the newspaper reports, there are jails being prepared for them in Haryana, there are barricades, there are all kinds

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

MORE REPORTS
PAGES 4, 5



PM Narendra Modi being greeted by UAE President Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan on his arrival in Abu Dhabi, Tuesday. ANI

India, UAE ink pacts on linking digital payment platforms, trade, energy

SHUBHAJIT ROY
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 13

AS PRIME Minister Narendra Modi met UAE's President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan in Abu Dhabi on Tuesday, India and the UAE signed pacts on bilateral investment promotion, port infrastructure development, power trade, interlinking of digital payment platforms like the UPI, credit and debit cards, and an intergovernmental framework agreement on the India-Middle East Economic Corridor.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

E Seven visits
since 2015

IN 2015, Narendra Modi became India's first PM in 34 years to visit the UAE, marking a new comprehensive and strategic partnership. Five more visits followed, most recently in Nov-Dec 2023 for the COP28 Summit in Dubai.

MORE REPORTS
PAGE 6



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

Punjab farmers back on road to Delhi, face teargas drones and barricades

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NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER

FHEL invites Open E-Tender (FHEL/Rai/TOM/45533), dt.12-02-2024 in single bid mode for the following work:-

Description	Operation & Maintenance of 12,000 MT Agri Logistic Centre (Including Controlled Atmosphere) at Rai, Sonipat (HR).
Contract Period	1+1 year; initially contract will be for one year, further extendable for one more year.
Last Date & Time of Submission of bids	09.03.2024 at 16.00 Hrs.
Date & Time of Opening of bids	11.03.2024 at 12.00 Hrs.
Estimated Cost	Rs. 30.80 Lakhs per Annum
EMD	Rs. 61,600/-

For brief of NIT, detailed E-Tender document and on-line submission, log on to www.tenderwizard.com/FHEL only. The tender document can also be viewed at www.concorindia.com or Central Procurement Portal (CPP). Comendum/Addendum to this Tender, if any, will be published on website www.concorindia.com & www.tenderwizard.com/FHEL and Central Procurement Portal (CPP) only. Newspaper press advertisement shall not be issued for the same.

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• RFP documents can be downloaded from the GMDC website (www.gmdctd.com) or nprocure portal (<https://gmdcnprocure.procure.com>).
• Bids shall be required to be submitted online on the nprocure portal (<https://gmdcnprocure.procure.com>).

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Name of Work: Civil Maintenance of Operational Elevated & Under Ground Stations, Viaduct and Two Depots of Pune Metro Rail Project of Maha-Metro for a period of one year.

Interested bidders may visit Pune Metro Rail website www.punemetrorail.org or CPP portal <https://eprocure.gov.in> download the bidding documents and obtain further details regarding the tender from our e-tender portal <https://maharashtrametrorail.tenders.in> from 17:00 hrs. on 14/02/2024 to 17:00 Hrs. on 14/03/2024

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E-Mail : prgstsps650@gmail.com, Ph. : 0761-2925650
Ref. : Tender Ref. No. 07-01/SPS/PH-V/U#12/PRG
Tender ID: 2023_MPPGC_315012_1

DOMESTIC COMPETITIVE BIDDING

INTIMATION OF UPLOADING; EPC TENDER FOR INSTALLATION OF 1X660 MW ULTRA-SUPERCritical UNIT AT SATPURA TPS -SARNI, DISTRICT: BETUL- M.P.

M.P. Power Generating Co. Ltd. have uploaded tender inviting E-Bids for Design, Engineering, Supply, Civil Works, Erection, Testing & Commissioning of 1X660 MW Ultra-supercritical Thermal Power Unit, on EPC Turnkey basis; at Satpura Thermal Power Station, Sarni; Distt. Betul (MP). The detailed NIT & Bidding Documents are available for sale on the e-tendering website www.mptender.gov.in from 07.02.2024 with last date of Bid submission and date of opening 25.04.2024 and 29.04.2024, respectively.

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Ref. No. 175 /Physical Verification/Lo/C.B./2024/ Dated. 07-02-24

Sealed tenders are invited from reputed firms/ Individuals to sell/ dispose of Unserviceable Items on "as is where basis is" at Chhattisgarh Sadan, 8-12, Factory Road, Safdarjung, New Delhi. The tender documents may be obtained from 7-8 Floor, Block-2, Plate-C, NBCC Office Complex, East Kidwai Nagar, New Delhi-110023 on payment of Rs. 1,000/- (non-refundable) in cash on or before 06.03.2024 between 11.00 AM to 05.00 PM on all working days. Tender documents can be downloaded from www.rccchhattisgarh.gov.in. Last date of receipt of tender is 07.03.2024 upto 03.00 PM.

Approved by Resident Commissioner

sd/-

Addl. Resident Commissioner

Chhattisgarh Bhawan, New Delhi

07661

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त्रृतीय निविदा सूचना

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महानिदेशक नगर सेना, अभिनशमन एवं आपातकालीन सेवाएँ तथा एस्ट्रो-आरएफ मुख्यालय सेक्टर 19 नवा रायपुर ला. की ओर से निविदा सूचना क्रमांक 35 दिनांक 08.01.2024 के तहत मूलनिर्भासांओं से अभिनशमन समाप्ती क्रय हेतु मुख्यालय निविदाएं आमंत्रित की गई। जिसका प्रकाशन जो क्रमांक 07003 के तहत किया गया, जिसमें फैसले द्वारा भाग नहीं लिया गया।

पुरुष निमाताओं एवं अधिकृत विवेताओं से अभिनशमन समाप्ती क्रय हेतु मुख्यालय निविदाएं आमंत्रित की जाती है। निविदा प्रपत्र अंतर्राष्ट्रीयकर्ता के कार्यालय से आवेदन प्रस्तुत कर 1000-00 (रु. एक हजार मात्र) नाम भूतान कर दिनांक 21.2.2024 के 16:00 बजे तक तक कार्यालयीन दिवस में प्राप्त किये जा सकते हैं।

निविदा प्रपत्र विक्री की अंतिम तिथि 21.02.2024 समय 16:00 बजे तक

निविदा जमा करने की अंतिम तिथि 22.02.2024 समय 12:00 बजे तक

निविदा खोलने की तिथि 22.02.2024 समय 13:00 बजे

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The decision to march to Delhi – 'Dilli Chalo' – was taken after marathon talks in Chandigarh remained inconclusive on Monday. The march, on tractor-trolleys, began at 10 am from Fatehgarh Sahib district towards Shambhu, and from Sangrur towards Khanaura.

At Shambhu, the first round of teargas shells was fired at about 11.30 am when a group of farmers tried to remove the first barricade on the bridge over the Ghaggar river. Water cannons and rubber bullets were also deployed to disperse the protesters.

Protesters tied ropes around concrete barriers, and then pulled these away with the help of tractors. They also removed other barricades, including barbed-wire coils and spike strips. By evening, they had managed to break past three layers of barricades, before setting fire to a night at the border.

Similarly, Khanaura too turned into a battleground for a couple of hours on Tuesday. The farmers started gathering at about 12:30 pm, and numbered about 4,000 by 3:30 pm. Nearly 500 farmers from Haryana also gathered in the area to extend support. With the farmers insisting on moving towards Delhi despite heavy barricading, the Haryana Police personnel used lathicharge and teargas to disperse them. As night fell, the farmers camped at the border.

"We never wanted a confrontation with the government, they have hurt us with these teargas shells, we are not going to relent," Sarwan Singh Pandher, general secretary of the Kisan Mazdoor Sangharsh Committee, told *The Indian Express*.

"This is the face of democracy... what the government is doing to us... we are being attacked, we only wanted our democratic rights... we are appealing to people to reach here in huge numbers," said Samyukta Kisan Morcha (non-political) convenor Jagjit Singh Dallewal.

"We are not going to allow farmers to enter Haryana's territory with their tractor-trolleys. If they want to cross over on foot, they are welcome to do so. In case they want to go to Delhi, they can do so in buses or trains. But we are not going to allow them to take their tractor-trolleys. We had received representations from several people that it creates law and order issue and blockades on highways. That was the reason that Section 144 of CrPC was initially imposed in several areas of Haryana. We cannot allow them to hold the state to ransom. They

can walk, if they want," said Inspector General of Police (Ambala range) Sibash Kabiraj.

But Amandeep Singh, a farmer from Kasuana village of Patiala, said: "They are not even allowing us to walk. When we tried crossing through the fields, they started firing teargas shells in the fields march of farmers".

Meanwhile, Haryana Home Minister Anil Vij said: "Talks are going on. The government is ready to hold talks with the farmers. I learnt that an agreement was also reached on a few points at yesterday's meeting, but more details can only be shared by those who attended the meeting".

In a related development, the Punjab and Haryana High Court issued notices to the two states of Punjab and Haryana on separate petitions on the farmers' protest. It also issued directions to impel the Centre as a party to the case. The case will come up for hearing on February 15.

unleashing lathicharge, rubber bullets, teargas shelling and mass arrests to prevent the Dilli Chalo

can walk, if they want," said

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BRIEFLY

CONGRESS CALLS IT BLACKMAIL

Cong does not deserve single seat in Delhi: AAP; offers one

JATIN ANAND & MALLICA JOSHI
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 13



AAP national general secretary (organisation) Sandeep Pathak; Delhi Congress president Arvinder Singh Lovely

In a public speech ahead of the Lok Sabha polls, the Aam Aadmi Party Tuesday said while Congress did not deserve a single seat in Delhi based on "merit" and "statistics", the party was offering one seat "keeping in mind the alliance dharma".

Delhi has seven Lok Sabha seats and all were won by BJP in 2014 and 2019. AAP and Congress have met twice to discuss the contours of a possible alliance in the city. AAP national general secretary (organisation) Sandeep Pathak said there has been a considerable delay in finalising the seat distribution.

Addressing a press conference after AAP's political affairs committee meeting Tuesday morning, Pathak said, "There have been two official meetings between Congress and AAP on January 8 and 12. Talks happened in a good atmosphere but there were no results. Following these two meet-

ings, there has been no meeting in the last month. We were told the Congress's (Bharat Jodo Nyay) yatra is going on and there will be a delay. We got to meet senior Congress leaders during this but even they had no idea."

Failing to come to an understanding in Punjab, both parties have decided to go alone in the state. Last week, AAP announced three candidates for Assam.

According to sources, the one seat AAP is planning to offer Congress in Delhi is Northeast Delhi.

Delhi Congress president Arvinder Singh Lovely, mean-

while, said alliances between political parties were not announced in press conferences. "Since the Congress is not only the largest opposition party in the country, but also the parent partner in the INDIA alliance, our senior leadership will take a call on the way forward regarding this matter," he added.

Lovely added that Congress was the only political player in the capital which had not only hit the ground but was prepared to give the BJP a tough contest. "Congress has had large public meetings on almost all seats; our worker is not only more enthusiastic than any

other party's but is committed to ensuring a better performance in these elections over and above the 2019 Lok Sabha polls," he said.

In the 2019 elections, AAP polled 18.1% votes, while Congress bagged 22.5% – both less than BJP's vote share of 56.5%.

Party sources said the Congress was incensed at the AAP's announcement regarding its offer. Another leader sought to attack the AAP for renegeing on its previous offer of agreeing to give three seats to the Congress and contesting four seats in Delhi.

"This is nothing but blackmail to get Bharuch and Chandigarh Lok Sabha seats along with posturing for an additional seat in Haryana. In the last meeting, they had agreed to a 4-3 seat-sharing arrangement," a senior leader said.

Despite Tuesday's developments, it might not signal an end for the alliance in the city. "It would be premature to say the alliance is no longer a possibility. Talks can happen at any time but we want clarity soon to start work on the ground," a leader said.

This budget, why AAP is turning its focus on developing villages

GAYATHRIMANI
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 13

In a bid to woo its rural and urban-rural voter base ahead of the Lok Sabha polls, the AAP-Delhi government is set to focus on village re-development in the 2024-25 budget.

According to sources, the government is planning to increase budget allocation for villages, with a key focus on repairing roads. There are more than 360 villages both urban and rural combined in Delhi and about 1,000 km of village roads will be redeveloped. "A four-fold increase in the department's budget is expected for this purpose..." said a source.

Incidentally, L-G VK SAXENA had also announced a village revamp initiative (Dilli Gramoday Abhiyan) to be undertaken by the Delhi Development Authority. As part of this, the 11 district magistrates and senior bureaucrats stayed overnight at

three seats to the Congress and contesting four seats in Delhi.

Meanwhile, Delhi BJP spokesperson Praveen Shankar Kapoor called the move "nothing but an electoral lollipop".

"Even if they increase (budget allocation), work will take time to start due to the elections... So, how many roads can the Delhi government improve in a short span of 4 months? This will be another scam in the name of village road improvement..."

selected villages and held dialogues with residents.

Why do these votes matter?

Three of the seven Lok Sabha Seats – Northwest, West and South Delhi – cover a major part of the Capital's urban and rural villages. "The percentage of rural population is higher in Northwest Delhi. The ratio there is 50:50 which increases if we add the semi-urban vote percentage. In West Delhi, the percentage of rural population is around 15%. In South Delhi, it is less than 10%..." said a senior leader.

He added, "But if we take both the rural and urbanised population into account, the share will increase to 20%. The problem in the urbanised part is that it has a large number of non-Delhi residents (domiciles). So, the vote percentage here comes to 10-12%, which is still good."

An AAP member said, "A 10-12% vote share is not small... The

development of villages has been a concern and this will increase the vote share..."

According to officials, many roads, be it in rural or semi-urban areas, are in poor condition. "At several places, the roads were dug up for laying a sewer or pipeline... and are marred with debris and potholes..." said an official.

Officials said estimates of several roads have been made and work will begin as the budget is released. In last year's budget, Rs 135 crore was allocated for rural development – of this, around Rs 3.8 crore was for village development.

Meanwhile, Delhi BJP spokesman Praveen Shankar Kapoor called the move "nothing but an electoral lollipop". "Even if they increase (budget allocation), work will take time to start due to the elections... So, how many roads can the Delhi government improve in a short span of 4 months? This will be another scam in the name of village road improvement..."

'How can there be a party office?': CJI irked at 'encroachment' on land allotted to HC

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 13

THE SUPREME Court on Tuesday expressed strong displeasure over a political party office encroaching on land allotted to the Delhi High Court. Stating that it "has to come to an end", the court directed urgent steps to return the land to the High Court.

A three-judge bench, presided by Chief Justice of India D Y Chandrachud and comprising Justices J B Pardiwala and Manoj Misra, was hearing a matter related to judicial infrastructure, when it was told by amicus curiae

senior advocate K Parameshwar that High Court officials, who went to take possession of the land, could not do so as "a political party office was built there".

Not naming the political party, Parameshwar told the bench, "I do not want to politicise the matter... we could not take possession." It, however, became evident later that the reference was to the "AAP office in Rouse Avenue".

Parashar said that prior to 2016, a bungalow occupied by a minister stood on the land, and the building was later converted into a political party office. He added that the High Court had made the necessary payments to the L&DO. The CJI then asked, "What is this? We are not asking

for judges' bungalows. We are asking for public amenities. And a political party sitting tight on that! Why did you allot it to the High Court then?" The CJI told the parties, "You better find out and tell us when you are giving unencumbered possession to the High Court... This has to come to an end. The HC is going to use it for residents of Delhi... to resolve their disputes in the court complex".

Scheduling the next hearing on February 19, the Court told the Delhi Chief Secretary, Secretary-In-Charge of PWD, and Finance Secretary to convene a meeting with the HC's registrar general to sort out all outstanding issues.

Rehabilitate stray animals: HC tells civic authorities

New Delhi: The Delhi High Court has recently said that it is the duty of the municipal authorities to take "concerted, sincere, and optimum steps" to ensure that stray animals are rehabilitated, while observing that it cannot be expected that the authorities will completely wipe out strays from the city roads.

A single-judge bench of Justice C Hari Shankar, in its February 7 order, observed, "It cannot be expected that the municipal authorities can completely wipe out, from the roads and municipal areas of Delhi, all stray animals, whether cattle, monkeys, dogs or other animals. The duty of the municipal authorities is to take concerted, sincere, and optimum steps to ensure that such animals are rehabilitated..."

It also examined status reports filed in the matter, and noted that the estimated cattle population in Delhi after the Covid-19 pandemic stood at around 83,671. ENS

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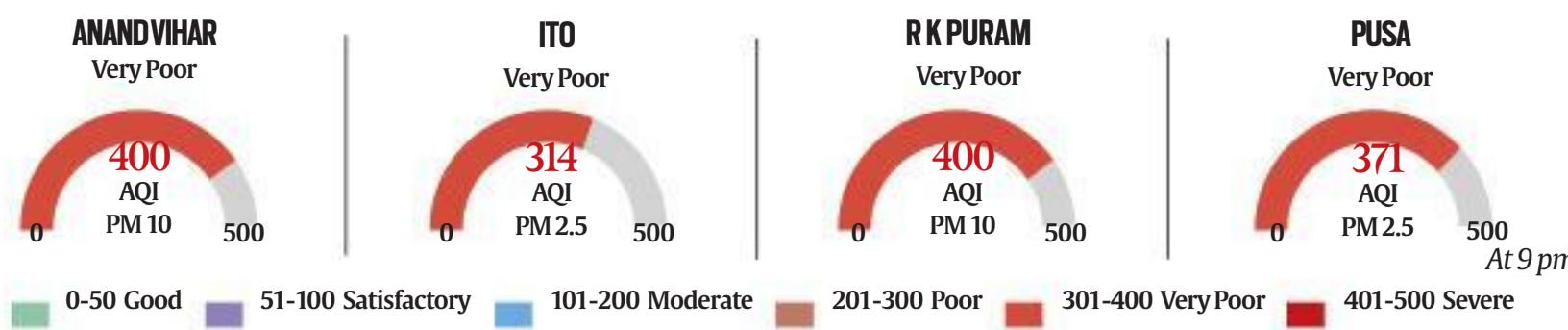
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UNAUDITED STANDALONE FINANCIAL RESULTS FOR THE PERIOD ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2023 (₹ Crore)						
Sr. No.	Particulars	Quarter Ended		9 months Ended		Year Ended
		31.12.2023 [Unaudited]	30.09.2023 [Unaudited]	31.12.2022 [Unaudited]	31.12.2023 [Unaudited]	
1	Total Income from Operations	12,239.64	11,560.83	9,965.88	35,502.99	28,463.40
2	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period (before Tax, Exceptional and/or Extraordinary Items)	2,130.19	2,131.32	1,546.35	6,006.59	4,421.43
3	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period before Tax (after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary Items)	2,130.19	2,131.32	1,546.35	6,006.59	4,421.43
4	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period after Tax (after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary Items)	1,594.20	1,560.31	1,169.97	4,494.91	3,345.25
5	Total Comprehensive Income for the period [Comprising Profit / (Loss) for the period (after tax) and Other Comprehensive Income (after tax)]	1,594.20	1,560.31	1,169.97	4,494.91	3,345.25
6	Paid-up share capital	17,080.00	17,080.00	17,080.00	17,080.00	17,080.00
7	Reserves (excluding Revaluation Reserves)					48,808.52
8	Securities Premium Account	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
9	Net Worth	69,613.78	68,019.58	63,183.23	69,613.78	63,183.23
10	Paid up Debt Capital / Outstanding Debt*	7,09,038.43	6,33,653.99	6,12,330.09	7,09,038.43	6,12,330.09
11	Outstanding Redeemable Preference Share	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
12	Debt-Equity Ratio	10.07	9.21	9.57	10.07	9.57
13	Earnings Per Share (EPS)	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
14	Capital Redemption Reserve	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
15	Debenture Redemption Reserve	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

NA = Not Applicable

* Paid up Debt Capital / Outstanding Debt includes Outstanding Deposits, Bonds & Debentures and Borrowing

Notes: 1) The above is an extract of the detailed format of Unaudited Financial Results for the quarter and nine months ended 31.12.2023 filed with the Stock Exchanges under Regulation 52 of the SEBI (Listing Obligation and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The full format of Unaudited Financial Results for the quarter and nine months ended 31.12.2023 are available on the Stock Exchange websites (NSE: [www.nseindia](http://www.nseindia.com)



S K Y W A T C H
FORECAST: February 14
Partly cloudy sky. Shallow to moderate fog in the morning.

MAX: 24
0.6°C above normal | MIN: 8
2.2°C below normal

CONCRETE BLOCKS, BARRICADES FORTIFY BORDERS

At Singhu border, 1,000 cops wait for farmers



Security personnel deployed at Singhu border. Amit Mehra

Many people had to travel across border points on foot to reach Haryana or Delhi

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, NOIDA, FEB 13

THOUSAND PERSONNEL in riot gear deployed across the 8-km-long stretch leading up to the Haryana border, and over 100 barricades and concrete boulders covered by barbed wires lining the road: Singhu border Tuesday saw heavy security, with forces ranging from RAF, CAPF and the Delhi Police standing guard in a bid to prevent farmers from entering the city.

After talks failed with the Centre on Monday, farmers began their 'Dilli Chalo' march Tuesday to press their demands including a legal guarantee for minimum support price (MSP).

Special CP (Law and Order, Zone 1) Ravinder Yadav was at the spot, along with DCP (Outer North) Ravi Kumar Yadav and DCP (Crime) Amit Goel, supervising the preparations.

Dozens of cranes were also deployed to move boulders and create more layers of security. Vehicles were told by police to turn back or take a diversion because of the barricading. The flyover leading to Kundli was completely sealed, with vehicles being restricted till Narela intersection.

Several passersby, meanwhile, had to travel through the border points on foot in order to reach either Haryana or Delhi. Vimlesh (37), who goes by her first name and works as a cook, said she has to travel from Tikri village to Kundli 5 km away for her job. She generally takes a bus but on Tuesday, she faced a lot of inconvenience due to the border being sealed. "I have to walk now

as there is no mode of transport... I'm taking breaks by sitting at food stalls on the road," she said.

Lala Ram (38), who came to the border from Chandigarh via bus along with his three children and wife, was on his way to Bhajanpura in Delhi. "It's very difficult for us to walk such a long distance... my children are young and it's tiring for them... we have a lot of luggage... We'll see if we get any mode of transport beyond the barricades," he said.

3 farmers detained

The Ghaziabad Police Tuesday detained three farmers, who identified themselves as the members of Bhartiya Kisan Union (Mahatma Tikait group), said officers, adding that they were part of a 12-member group trying to cross the border to reach Delhi.

The three — Manoj Tyagi, Anuj Pandit, and Aasu Tyagi — are farmers from Meerut and Ghaziabad, said police. "You must be aware CrPC Section 144 is already in place in the Ghaziabad Commissionerate... Three farmers were detained and later released, after completing the legal process. Manoj said he is the president of Mahatma Tikait group (West area)...," said Swatantra Kumar Singh, ACP, Indirapuram.

Nimish Patil, DCP Trans Hindon, said the district police, the PAC force, and quick response teams have been deployed at Ghaziabad border. "Based on the alert (issued by Delhi Police), Ghaziabad Police has deployed more than 100 personnel at Ghaziabad border... Today, traffic crawled amid checking at many places, but it was normal by evening," said Patil.

Multiple layers of barricades, stringent checks at borders, and several routes being partially blocked led to traffic piling up, especially near Singhu, Ghaziabad and Chilla, in Delhi on Tuesday.

Security was upped and long traffic jams were reported. Roads leading to the Singhu border remained choked after police installed barricades and allowed vehicles to drive only on a single lane.

The restrictions will remain in place on Wednesday, with North and East Delhi expected to be worst hit as movement on the DND flyway will be restricted only to two lanes.

In Delhi, the Singhu and Tikri borders are likely to remain shut.



(clockwise from top) Traffic at Ghaziabad border; people crossing Singhu border on foot; security at Singhu. Amit Mehra

Restrictions at DND, Singhu & Tikri borders: Brace for more traffic today

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 13

MULTIPLE LAYERS of barricades, stringent checks at borders, and several routes being partially blocked led to traffic piling up, especially near Singhu, Ghaziabad and Chilla, in Delhi on Tuesday.

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Heavy congestion was also seen at Ghaziabad and Chilla, con-

nnecting Delhi to Ghaziabad and Noida. Senior traffic officers said appropriate force was deployed to both restrict and divert traffic in view of the farmers' protest. Traffic was restored to normal by Tuesday evening.

On Wednesday, police officers from Delhi, Uttar Pradesh and Gurgaon will be on their toes to make sure agitating farmers do not make it to Delhi.

ADCP (Traffic), Ghaziabad, Veerendar Kumar said, "The traffic situation was affected in the afternoon as one of the roads on the border was completely blocked... However after around 3 pm, things started getting normal and both sides were made operational. The traffic was completely clear on Ghaziabad, Anand Vihar, and other borders in the evening."

While Uttar Pradesh's border

with Delhi is unlikely to be shut completely, diversions and strict checks will be in place, police officers added. Traffic may be diverted from Ghaziabad and Anand Vihar borders if farmers arrive, another UP Police officer added.

The Delhi Police, meanwhile, said that traffic headed to Haryana via NH-44 should use the Delhi-Meerut Expressway and the Eastern Peripheral Expressway instead.

"Traffic coming from Ghaziabad towards Delhi may enter the Maharajpur border near ISBT Anand Vihar through Vaishali-Kaushambi. Traffic coming from Ghaziabad towards Delhi from Ghaziabad border may also enter from Khora Colony, Mayur Vihar Phase-3 through paper market, Pragati Marg, Mayur Vihar Phase-3," said the advisory.

The advisory.

Won't turn stadium into jail: AAP govt to Centre

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 13

AS THOUSANDS of farmers from Punjab began marching towards the national capital as part of the 'Dilli Chalo' protest, the AAP government in Delhi has refused a proposal by the Centre to set up a temporary "jail" for protesting farmers at a Bawana stadium.

According to Delhi government sources, the request to earmark the Rajiv Gandhi Stadium in Bawana for protesting farmers, who may enter Delhi, was sent by the Delhi Police. The request was made for Tuesday and Wednesday.

Calling the farmers' demands genuine, Delhi Home Minister Kailash Gahlot wrote in a letter to the Chief Secretary, "It is the constitutional right of every citizen to make a peaceful protest. It is, therefore, incorrect to arrest the farmers. The central government, in fact, should invite them over for talks and try to find a solution to their genuine problems."

"Farmers of the country are our 'annadatta', and treating them in this way, by arresting them, would be like rubbing salt into their wounds. We can't be a



Delhi Home Minister Kailash Gahlot called the farmers' demands genuine

party to this decision of the central government. Hence, approval cannot be given for converting a stadium into a jail," the letter stated.

Former Delhi home minister Satyendar Jain had, similarly, refused permission to limit a protesting farmers' gathering to the Bawana stadium in 2021, calling the setup a "jail".

Thousands of farmers from across Punjab began moving towards Delhi on Tuesday, as part of their protest over several demands, including a legal guarantee of minimum support price for their crops. Security has been ramped up in Haryana as the farmers look to cross Shambhu border and enter the state, en route to Delhi.

Gates of 9 Metro stations shut briefly, ops unaffected

New Delhi: In view of the farmers' protests and increased security at the Capital's borders, the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) closed the gates of 9 stations Tuesday. The metro body cited security instructions for taking the action.

The Delhi Metro took to social media to inform commuters that some gates at Central Secretariat, Rajiv Chowk, Udyog Bhawan, Patel Chowk, Mandi House, Barakhamba Road, Janpath, Khan Market, and Lok Kalyan Marg were closed on Tuesday afternoon.

However, the stations remained operational with regular running of trains, DMRC officials said. Commuters were advised to plan their journey in accordance with the gate closures.

The DMRC then updated commuters later in the evening that all gates had been opened for entry and exit.

The Delhi Airport also issued an advisory on social media urging passengers to use the Metro to ensure timely arrival at the airport, considering traffic restrictions due to the protest. ENS

A control room with info on ICU beds in real-time: HC asks if it can be set up

MALAVIKA PRASAD
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 13

THE DELHI High Court, while appointing a six-member "committee of experts" to consider issues plaguing infrastructure of the city's government hospitals, asked it suggest ways to set up a mechanism for establishing a control room to show real-time information on availability of ICU beds. It observed that "huge investments, along with structural reforms, are required" in their functioning "without entering into a blame game". It also asked the panel to submit monthly reports.

A division bench of Acting Chief Justice Manmohan and Justice Manmeet Pritam Singh Arora said "it is apparent that infrastructure, (be it in the form of machines, medicines or man-

power) is woefully inadequate at Delhi hospitals. With only six CT scan machines being available in 19 Delhi government hospitals (which cater to a population in excess of 3 crore), infrastructure needs to be ramped up manifold. After all, in cases of emergencies like serious accident(s) or strokes or heart attacks, there is no time to shift patients to private clinics for scans. Without critical infrastructure being available at Delhi government hospitals, the 'golden hour' of saving a life may be lost".

The order came in a 2017 suo motu plea over the alleged lack of ICU beds and ventilators in government hospitals. Last month, the court had taken note of a report by *The Indian Express*, about a man who had gotten injured after jumping out of a PCR van and was denied admission to four government hospitals, and later died.

The committee chaired by ILBS Chancellor Dr S K Sarin will comprise Dr Nikhil Tandon, professor and head of department (Endocrinology and Metabolism) at AIIMS; Dr D K Sharma, master of surgery, Dr R P (Eye Centre) at AIIMS; Dr Suresh Kumar, director of LNJP Hospital; Dr Piyush Gupta, professor (paediatrics and principal) at University College of Medical Sciences; and Dr Deepak K Tempe, senior professor (anaesthesia/vice chancellor) at ILBS.

Terms of reference of the committee includes suggesting ways of "optimisation of existing resources in various hospitals; ways to maintain functional high-end medical equipment" among others. The matter is listed on April 1.

Meanwhile, Health Minister Saurabh Bharadwaj said a statement: "We welcome the formation of the committee".

DELHI'S GARBAGE mountains — some of which are popular sites for shooting movies and web series — are now facing a peculiar problem. Despite the city having four dedicated plants to process construction and demolition (C&D) waste, a lot of it is landing up at the Bhalswa, Ghaziabad and Okhla landfills. The Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) has now written to the Commission, directing him to investigate and take action against agencies tasked with disposing of waste.

In September last year, in an bid to make Delhi garbage and debris-free, MCD had earmarked 158 locations to dump C&D waste. Mayor Shelly Oberoi, during a

press conference Tuesday, revealed there are "major irregularities" with the process. Designated collection points help improve segregated collection — as directed by the C&D Waste Management Rules, 2016. However, Oberoi said despite setting

up designated locations, MCD was unable to meet its intention of eliminating the C&D waste issue.

According to a standing committee report from last December, Delhi produces approximately 6,000 tonnes of construction and demolition waste per day. MCD

sources, however, said that daily production now stands at around 7,000 tonnes per day.

The MCD budget presented for the current fiscal year, meanwhile, says the civic body currently has plants with the capacity to manage 5,000 tonnes of C&D waste per day at Bakwala, Rani Kheda, Shastri Park, and Burari. According to a recent Center for Science and Environment report, Delhi has reported the highest generation in the country, followed by Ahmedabad, Faridabad, Noida and Ghaziabad.

Oberoi alleged that the issue still persists despite adequate preparations as the concessionaires are mixing municipal solid waste with C&D waste from these points and sending it to landfill sites. This defeats the purpose of setting up designated

'First guarantee': Cong promises law on MSP if INDIA bloc wins

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
RAIPUR, FEBRUARY 13

SUPPORTING THE farmers' agitation, the Congress party on Tuesday said it will fulfil their key demand of a law guaranteeing Minimum Support Price (MSP) for crops once the opposition INDIA bloc comes to power.

Criticising the Narendra Modi government for stopping the Punjab farmers from marching to New Delhi "using spikes, barbed wires, boulders and walls", it asked the Prime Minister to directly talk to the protesting farmers.

Two years after they forced the Centre to repeal three farm laws before ending their year-long protest at Delhi's borders, farmer unions from Punjab were once again marching towards the Capital on Tuesday, a day after talks with the Government failed.

Addressing a rally at Ambikapur city in Chhattisgarh's Surguja district, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge said the law on MSP was his party's "first guarantee" for the Lok Sabha polls. "We will also solve all other problems faced by farmers," Kharge said.



Congress leaders Mallikarjun Kharge, Rahul Gandhi, Sachin Pilot, KC Venugopal, Bhupesh Baghel and TS Singh Deo during the Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra in Ambikapur, Tuesday. PTI

While referring to the recent decision by the Centre to confer the Bharat Ratna on the late agricultural scientist M S Swaminathan, Kharge took a dig at Modi, saying, "Green Revolution was brought by Swaminathan ji during (late PM) Indira (Gandhi) ji's time. We followed what Swaminathan ji said."

"What did you do for the farmers?" Kharge said. "Our UPA government waived Rs 72,000 crores of loan. During UPA, the country's loan amount was Rs 55 lakh crore but it tripled during Modi's rule and now it's Rs 150 lakh crore."

In a Hindi post on X, Rahul wrote: "Farmer brothers, today is

a historic day! Congress has decided to give a legal guarantee of MSP to every farmer on crops as per the Swaminathan Commission. This step will change the lives of 15 crore farmer families by ensuring their prosperity. This is the first guarantee of Congress on the path of justice. #Kisan-NYAYGuarantee."

Earlier, at the rally, Rahul said, "The BJP government at the Centre announced Bharat Ratna for M S Swaminathan, but it is not ready to implement his suggestions (on agriculture and farmers)."

"If INDIA (Opposition bloc) comes to power, we will give a legal guarantee on MSP. We are

EXPLAINED E Changed stance

The Congress was evasive on making MSP a legal guarantee during the 2020-21 farmers' protest. Even in its manifesto for the 2019 elections, it spoke of a panel to recommend "appropriate MSP" that would only be "ordinarily binding on government". This changed in February last year when, at the AICC session in Raipur, the party passed a resolution for MSP to be "a legally enforceable right" of farmers and purchasing below it punishable.

making a manifesto. We will work for farmers and labourers," he added.

Party leader Randeep Singh Surjewala said, "Our only demand is that PM Modi should directly talk to the farmers and provide them 'nyay' (justice)."

With PTI inputs

Why BJP is unruffled by farm protests this time unlike '20-21

LIZ MATHEW
& VIKAS PATHAK
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 13

THE BJP was forced to do a U-turn in 2021 when the year-long farm protests at Delhi's borders forced it to withdraw three contentious agricultural laws. Though farmers from Punjab, UP, and Haryana are again on the march towards the national capital, the ruling party is not worried about its political impact.

BJP leaders admitted that the protests made for "bad optics" and could damage it in Punjab but said they were optimistic about "counter-polarisation" in the state along with Haryana and west Uttar Pradesh. BJP functionaries argued the party would gradually "expose the illogicality of the demand for a law to guarantee MSP for all crops".

"... It would have made sense had they protested after the new government was formed," said a BJP leader.

Back in 2020-21 protests, the BJP leadership was nervous about the farm protests as it was worried about its impact in Uttar Pradesh ahead of the Assembly polls. Top BJP leaders assumed it could adversely affect its Jat support base in west UP. This time, the BJP's confidence about min-

imising the impact of the protests comes from the fact that the Jayant Chaudhary-led RLD has joined hands with it. "The Bharat Ratna for Chaudhary Charan Singh, the Jat patriarch, will also defuse anger among Jat farmers, if any. The party does not see a big potential in the current agitation to have a similar impact," said a party leader from UP.

However, party leaders want to de-escalate the situation.

Union Agriculture Minister Arjun Munda said, "There may be some people there who want not a solution but want to see it as a problem. So, I will ask farmers to be cautious of people who want to create an adverse atmosphere."

Haryana Home Minister Anil Vij hinted the Centre was willing to talk to farmers but suggested that their intention seemed to be something else. "The Central government is coming here to talk to them. It is beyond comprehension why they wish to go to Delhi. Maybe their intention is something else," he said. A BJP leader

said, "There are reports of talks going on between the SAD and the BJP for the Lok Sabha polls. Such an alliance would have posted decent results in Punjab. Hence, this protest has perhaps been done with the hope that it paralyses the system. Since the epicentre of the farm agitation of 2021 was

Punjab, Haryana, and west UP, there is an attempt to create the impression that these states are up in arms against the BJP."

Hitting back at the Congress BJP Kisan Morcha president Rajkumar Chahar told *The Indian Express*, "The Modi government and the BJP have done more for farmers than anybody else ... What has the Congress done?"

BJP campaign and Punjab unease

BJP sources said the party would launch an intense campaign on "Opposition politics behind the protests". The ruling party will reach out to eminent personalities and community leaders to convince voters that the demands are "illogical". But some leaders in Punjab admitted that the protests could hurt the party in the state, where it has struggled electorally. Another section of BJP leaders said the "politically motivated protests" might trigger "counter-polarisation".

They said since Jat Sikhs were largely a part of the protests, other communities could consolidate against it. In UP, when Jats joined the 2020-21 agitation, others, including Gujjars, threw their weight behind BJP in 2021 Assembly polls. [FULL REPORT](#)
[www.indianexpress.com](#)

Govt in cahoots with profiteers, says Akhilesh

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 13

SAMAJWADI PARTY president Akhilesh Yadav Tuesday said the "Central government is in cahoots with profiteers and does not want to give MSP to the farmers".

Yadav said, "Why is the government, which wants to garner votes in the name of farmers and has given Bharat Ratna to (MS) Swaminathan and farmers' leader Chaudhary Charan Singh, not giving MSP to the farmers? Either the government does not want to give MSP or it is in collusion with big people and those who want to make profit. The result is that the government is doing such work to suppress the voice of the farmers."

Senior CPI(M) leader Brinda Karat Tuesday accused the BJP government of "betraying farmers and denying their rights". "Why do they (the Centre) say no to the law to guarantee minimum support price (MSP) for crops?" she said, adding farmers across the country are calling the assurances given by the PM "farce and fraud". "Farmers all over India are going to observe 'Gramin Bandh' on February 16," she said.

West Bengal CM Mamata Banerjee dubbed the action on protesting farmers "BJP's brutal assault". "How can our country progress when the farmers are attacked with tear gas shells for fighting for their basic rights? I strongly condemn the brutal assault on our farmers by BJP," Banerjee said in a post on X.

"Instead of suppressing their protest, BJP must focus on humbling their inflated egos, power-hungry ambitions and inadequate governance that has harmed our nation," she said.

In a first, Haryana air-drops teargas shells on protesters via drones

VARINDER BHATIA
CHANDIGARH, FEBRUARY 13

IN A first of its kind action in any part of the country, the Haryana government Tuesday deployed drones to reach deep and drop teargas shells on farmers who tried to breach the barricades set up to stop them from marching to Delhi as part of a planned protest.

The paramilitary forces' Tear Smoke-Unit (TSU) deployed at Shambhu barrier on Haryana-Punjab border dropped multiple teargas shells from the unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs).



A drone drops teargas shells on farmers at the Shambhu border on Tuesday. Gurmee Singh

tential force multiplier to enforce law and order. Even as protesters tried shooting down the drones by pelting stones, they said that UAV kept making multiple sorties and dropping tear gas shells till late evening.

Such drones can drop multiple grenades at a time compared to pump guns that are manually loaded. "The drones are capable of firing several munitions at one go and the launch is controlled by a remote," an official said.

When asked, Haryana Police sources said that the drones were operated by the paramilitary forces. "The teargas firing gun has a specific range and a particular

trajectory needs to be followed to avoid any physical injury to those protesting. But, the drones that air drop teargas shells can cover upto 400-500 meters range and even beyond, easily. Tear smoke shells are placed tightly in a metal cage fixed under a hexacopter drone.

The drone system, operated remotely, then drops the tear shell from the air at the designated spot. This is why, these drones were used to disperse the crowd," another official said, adding that the BSF use these drones to blind infiltrators and terrorists in the border areas during specific operations.

While the paramilitary forces

formed the first line of defence at Shambhu border; the Haryana police formed the second line of defence in case protesting farmers were able to breach the multi-layer barricades. Patiala DC Showkat Ahmed Paray said, "I had told

Amabal DC not to use drones to drop teargas shells deep inside Punjab's territory. He had even assured me it would be stopped."

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Note: Any further Addenda/Corrigenda/Extension of Dates/Clarifications/Responses to bidders' queries in respect of the above tender shall only be posted on Bank's website <https://www.idbibank.in> and no separate notification shall be issued in press. Bidders are therefore requested to regularly visit Bank's website to keep themselves updated in this connection.
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(DGM – APU) Belapur

350 NEW ELECTRIC BUSES ON DELHI'S ROADS

RIDES ARE FREE FOR WOMEN ON ALL BUSES ON ALL DAYS



12-meter Low-floor AC Buses



CCTV cameras



GPS and Live Tracking



Zero smoke, 100% electric



Panic Buttons



Bus kneeling with ramp for differently-abled

FLAG-OFF CEREMONY

Date : 14th February, 2024

Time : 11:00 AM

Venue: Baansera, Sarai Kale Khan, New Delhi

Chief Guest

Guest of Honour

In august presence of

Vinai Kumar Saxena
Lieutenant Governor, Delhi

Arvind Kejriwal

Chief Minister, Delhi

Kailash Gahlot

Transport Minister, Delhi



Transport Department, Government of NCT of Delhi

Rajasthan stone, Ganga waters: Abu Dhabi temple steeped in symbolism

DIVYA A
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 13

EIGHTEEN LAKH bricks, seven lakh man hours and 1.8 lakh cubic metres of sandstone from Rajasthan – Abu Dhabi's first Hindu temple has been made in the Nagara style of architecture, just like the Ram Temple in Ayodhya. Built in the Emirate's Abu Mirekhah Cultural District at an estimated cost of Rs 700 crore, this is the Middle East's first traditional stone Hindu temple.

Scheduled to be inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday (February 14), the UAE temple is among 1,200 such temples built and managed by the Bochasanwasi Akshar Purushottam (BAPS) Swaminarayan Sanstha, an or-

ganisation in India and countries with a sizeable Indian community like the US, UK, Australia and New Zealand.

Around 50 km away stands the Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque, the country's largest mosque, which receives 50,000 visitors – worshippers and tourists alike – on a daily basis.

In a unique gesture in April 2019, ahead of the temple's foundation-stone laying ceremony, UAE's Minister of Tolerance Sheikh Nahyan bin Mubarak had taken Mahant Swami Maharaj, the spiritual leader of BAPS, and 50 other senior priests from India on a tour of the mosque. The Mahant not only paid respects to the 99 names of Allah that are calligraphed on the wall of the mosque, but also signed the guest book, praising the efforts of

the UAE government and its people in promoting global harmony.

The 13.5 acres on which the temple complex is built was gifted by Sheikh Mohammed Bin Zayed Al Nahyan, the President of the UAE, in 2019, says a BAPS office-bearer. Built at a height of 108 feet, the temple is also fitted with 300 earthquake sensors.

Talking to *The Indian Express* over phone from Abu Dhabi, Lina Barot, a volunteer and BAPS office-bearer, said, "Considering the warm climate of UAE, nano tiles have been used. These will be comfortable for visitors to walk even in hot weather. Non-ferrous material has also been used in the temple."

The temple's traditional Nagara style follows in the tradition of other Swaminarayan



Abu Dhabi's first Hindu temple has been built at an estimated cost of Rs 700 crore. BAPS Swaminarayan Sanstha

temples across the world, including New Delhi's Akshardham Temple. However,

to "bring the two nations and cultures together", Barot adds.

For instance, the temple has been assigned seven shikharas (spires), representing the seven

Emirates form the UAE. At the entrance, eight idols symbolise universal values such as faith, charity and compassion. Various landmarks from across the world – East to West – have also been shown, while the word 'harmony' has been written in 30 different ancient and modern languages on the Wall of Harmony.

The temple's external facade uses pink sandstone from Rajasthan. The interiors use Italian marble. 20,000 tonnes of sandstone pieces were carved in Rajasthan and then shipped to Abu Dhabi in 700 containers," Barot told *The Indian Express*.

Many labourers who helped construct the temple over five years belong to Gujarat and Rajasthan. Even the marble mined from Italy was first shipped to India for carving and

then back to the UAE.

Sanjay Parikh, BAPS head of procurement and design who has led the building of over 40 such temples around the world, says, "The best thing, we have realised, is for the artists to work near their homes rather than on a temple site for years."

Besides bringing a tiny slice of India in a vast desert space, the Abu Dhabi temple has also given space to deities from across the country, including Lord Ram, Lord Shiv, Lord Jagannath, Lord Krishna, Lord Swaminarayan (considered a reincarnation of Lord Krishna), Tirupati Balaji and Lord Ayappa.

To build a temple of this scale in a desert, engineering experts and consultants from other parts of the world were roped in. Sia Keong Kong from Malaysian firm SOE Consult Sdn Bhd, which has

expertise in design of structures in geographic regions with high seismic/high-wind design requirements, worked on this temple, says BAPS. Besides them, Vasimahmed Behlum UAE's RSP Architects Planners and Engineers worked as the lead structural engineer, while Shapoorji Pallonji was the project executor.

Apart from 15 tales from India, including the Ramayana and Mahabharata, stories from Mayan, Aztec, Egyptian, Arabic, European, Chinese and African civilizations have also been depicted in the temple. The structure is surrounded by rivers that were created artificially from waters of the Ganga and Yamuna. Varanasi-like ghats have been created on one side, through which the artificial river passes.

Sonia opts for RS, Priyanka may choose Raebareli for LS poll debut



Sonia Gandhi, daughter Priyanka Gandhi Vadra. File

MANOJ CG
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 13

BARELY A month ahead of the expected announcement of the Lok Sabha election schedule, Congress Parliamentary Party (CPP) chairperson Sonia Gandhi has opted for a Rajya Sabha berth instead of contesting again from Raebareli that she has represented since 2004. Her decision to take the Upper House route triggered talk in party circles about her daughter and All India Congress Committee (AICC) general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra making her electoral debut from Raebareli.

Gandhi will contest from Rajasthan, where the Congress is in a position to win one of the three seats up for grabs in the February 27 polls. Her decision to contest from Rajasthan and not from the vacancies available in the southern states of Telangana or Karnataka, where the party is in government, is aimed at sending a signal that the Gandhi family is not abandoning the Hindi heartland.

"In 10 years, it is my seventh visit to the UAE," Modi said. "I am deeply grateful to each and every one of you." The Prime Minister also said he was fortunate to have been bestowed with the Order of Zayed, the highest civilian award of the UAE. "It is an honour not just for me but for 140 crore Indians," he said.

"At that time, I was welcomed at the airport by the then Crown Prince and today's President (Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan). I can never forget that warmth," he said.

"Mere prati unka apnatawa meri bahut badi poonjhi hai (His affection towards me is a big treasure for me)," the PM said, also thanking the UAE President for enabling the construction of the Hindu temple in the country.

Recalling his first visit to the UAE in 2015, Modi said he was new to the Central government at that time and new to diplomacy, and it was the first UAE visit by any Indian Prime Minister in three decades. Modi's visit to the UAE is his third in eight months.

"You have scripted history by coming in such large numbers here. You may have come from different parts of the UAE and from different states of India, but everyone's hearts are connected," Modi said.

"This is the time to hail the friendship between India and the UAE. In this historic stadium, every heartbeat echoes the same sentiment, 'long live Bharat-UAE friend-

ship,'" Modi said at the event that began with the National Anthems of the two countries.

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हरियाणा सरकार

“वर्तमान सरकार ने निर्धारित समय के तहत भर्ती प्रक्रिया को पूरा करने के साथ-साथ पूरी प्रक्रिया को पारदर्शी बना दिया है। इससे प्रत्येक युवा को अपनी क्षमताएं प्रदर्शित करने के समान अवसर प्राप्त हुए हैं।”

- नरेन्द्र मोदी



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Coaching student ends life in Kota, 3rd case this year

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
KOTA, FEBRUARY 13

A 16-YEAR-OLD JEE aspirant allegedly hanged himself in his hostel room in Kota, hours after the National Testing Agency (NTA) published the answer key for the first edition of JEE-Main 2024, police said on Tuesday.

The NTA on Monday published the answer key for the first edition examination of JEE-Main 2024 and announced the results on Tuesday. This is the third case of suspected 'suicide' by coaching students in Kota this year so far, police added.

Shubh Choudhary's body was found hanging from the ceiling fan of his hostel room in Jawahar Nagar area on Tuesday morning. Circle Officer (CO) DSP Bhawani Singh said.

Choudhary, who hailed from Chhattisgarh, was a student of Class 12 and had appeared in the JEE-Main 2024 examination, Singh said. However, the police is yet to ascertain the status of his results, he added. After the boy did not respond to his parents' repeated calls on Tuesday morning, they asked the hostel warden to check on him. The warden found Choudhary's body hanging from a ceiling fan.

25-yr-old killed, JCO injured as gunfights break out in Manipur

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
GUWAHATI, FEBRUARY 13

A 25-YEAR-OLD man from the Meitei community was killed on Tuesday in an exchange of fire that took place across the border between Manipur's Imphal East and Kangpokpi districts.

The deceased has been identified as Sagolsem Loya. In the exchange of fire that started on Monday night and continued into Tuesday evening, two others were also injured on the Imphal East side. The deceased and the injured were at Pukhao Shantipur, in the Meitei-dominated Imphal East district, near the border with Kuki-Zomi-dominated Kangpokpi.

An Army officer was also injured in Imphal East when security forces went to control another firing incident on Tuesday, which began at around 11.30 am, in the general area of Khamalol Ridge.

"At approximately 12.50 pm, a Junior Commissioned Officer of the Indian Army, who was part of the column, sustained gunshot wound in his right calf.

JEE Main: 23 students score perfect 100; 7 from Telangana

R RADHIKA
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 13

AS MANY as 23 male students across India scored a perfect 100 in the first session of JEE Main results announced by the National Testing Agency Wednesday, with the highest from Telangana.

Among the 23, seven are from Telangana, three each from Andhra Pradesh, Rajasthan, Maharashtra, two each from Delhi and Haryana, one each from Tamil Nadu, Gujarat and Karnataka. In 2023, 20 students were on the list of perfect scorers in the first session.

According to the merit list, while no female student featured in the top scores list, Dwija Dharmeshkumar Patel from Gujarat bagged the top spot among girls with a score of 99.99.

With the first session results out, students have a chance to improve their scores in the second session of JEE Main to be held from April 4-15. The NTA will announce the ranks by taking into consideration the best of the two NTA scores.

In the first session from January 27 to February 1, 2024, a



Rishi Shekher Shukla from Telangana with his parents in Hyderabad, Tuesday. ANI

total of 11.7 lakh students took the exam, an up tick from last year's 7.69 lakh. Over the past five years, the first session of JEE Main 2024 saw the highest registration of 12.2 lakh students up from 8.72 in 2023. Rishi Shekher Shukla, one of the seven toppers from Telangana and son of ISRO scientists, told *The Indian Express* he was "sure about the result". Shukla, who is aiming for a seat in IIT Bombay and enrolls in its computer science programme, wants to pursue a career in research and innovation.

About his preparations, Shukla said, "I have always given three hours to each subject." As he was against studying through the night, Shukla, who prepared for

two years, said he used to study at least nine hours in the day. Tanish Reddy, a topper from Andhra Pradesh, said he has been preparing since Class 8 and studied 13 to 14 hours a day. "I used to spend two days preparing and two days for tests. I spent a lot of time solving previous years' question papers. In the test, many questions were very similar to the ones in the previous years' papers," said Reddy.

Reddy's parents — Sreenivasa Reddy and Ganga Maha Devi — are both teachers. "Whenever my marks were low, they always encouraged me to look ahead and not worry about it." He also wants to study computer science at IIT Bombay. Tamil Nadu's Aradhana R scored 99.99 to become the topper in the Scheduled Caste category while Telangana's Jagannadham Mohith with 99.99 topped in the Scheduled Tribe category. Shaik Suraj from Andhra Pradesh, Mukunth Prathish S from Tamil Nadu, Gajare Nilkrishna Nirmalkumar from Maharashtra, and Himanshu Thalor from Rajasthan were toppers in the Other Backward Classes category with a perfect score of 100.

Sources said AIIMS Jammu, will start operations by opening OPD services in about 50 specialties.

UP: 3 held for abduction and murder of their teenage friend

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
LUCKNOW, FEBRUARY 13

CHITRAKOOT POLICE have arrested two young men and detained a 17-year-old boy for the murder of their 16-year-old friend in Chitarkoot. One of the accused is absconding.

Police said the three — one a student of Class X and the other two Class XII students — had abducted the 16-year-old with a motive to collect Rs 50 lakh ransom since the victim's father is a prominent businessman in Chitarkoot. The 16-year-old was allegedly with his friends on Saturday when they allegedly abducted him. His family thought that he was out with his friends and did not pay attention to his absence. On Monday, his father, who was then in Kanpur, got a phone call in which a demand of Rs 50 lakh ransom was made. He immediately informed his wife, who approached the police.

Police found that the cellphone number used by the caller belonged to the victim's neighbour. The neighbour said that his SIM card had been stolen. When the police played the ransom call, another neighbour identified the caller's voice as that of a youth from a neighbouring area.

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'Handler in Pak': Srinagar man held for 'killing' 2 from Punjab

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, FEBRUARY 13

THE JAMMU and Kashmir Police have arrested a man who they say was "influenced on social media" in connection with the killing of two men from Punjab in the Valley on February 7.

Amritpal Singh and Rohit Masi were shot around 7 pm on February 7 in the Shaheed Gang area of Srinagar. Both worked as carpenters and had landed in Srinagar that evening, police said. While Amritpal died at the spot, Masi succumbed to his injuries in the hospital the next day.

Inspector General of Police (Kashmir Zone) V K Birdi said,

PM to inaugurate projects, address rally in Jammu on February 20

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, FEBRUARY 13

PRIME MINISTER Narendra Modi, who is visiting Jammu on February 20, will inaugurate various projects, including AIIMS, Jammu, world's highest railway bridge over Chenab, and north India's first river rejuvenation project — Devika river project — in Udhampur. He will also address a public rally in Jammu the same day, said Union Minister Jitendra Singh.

The visit, Modi's second to J&K in his second term, assumes significance in view of the coming Lok Sabha polls.

"We want the Prime Minister to visit J&K before the start of the election code of conduct," said Singh in Udhampur. "The PM's programme has been finalised for February 20, during which he will launch various projects and also address a public meeting," the minister told mediapersons there. Singh, who visited Martyr Captain Tushar Mahajan railway station in Udhampur to witness the halt of Vande Bharat Express there, said that J&K, especially Udhampur, has always remained on the priority list of the Prime Minister who started his 2014 election campaign after offering prayers at Mata Vaishno Devi shrine. He also thanked the Railway Minister for accepting the demand of the people for Vande Bharat's halt at Udhampur and Kathua.

Sources said AIIMS Jammu, will start operations by opening OPD services in about 50 specialties.

He (Suchana) gave clear and rational answers in her assessments. She did not report any active death wishes or suicidal tendencies. Her judgement is intact and no psychotic or pervasive mood symptoms were elicited in responses," the reply said. Last week, Suchana's father had filed an application in the court and sought directions to

"Based on field and technical analysis, we unearthed clinching evidence. Some suspects were rounded up and we eventually arrested Adil Manzoor Langoo." Birdi said the accused was in contact with his handler in Pakistan, "who convinced him via social media to carry out the attack."

A pistol provided to him on February 4 has also been recovered, the IGP said.

Langoo is a resident of Zaldagar in Srinagar and has "no terror related antecedents". Police say he was "influenced and pressured on social media".

"It came to fore that the accused had conspired with his handler in Pakistan for commission of the terror crime. His han-

dler in Pakistan radicalised him on social media and motivated him to carry out the terror attack," police said.

The Resistance Front, an affiliate of the Lashkar-e-Taiba, had claimed responsibility for the attack on their social media channels.

J&K Police said the accused identified his targets and tracked them in the lanes of Shalla Kadal on the day of the attack.

A Special Investigation Team has been constituted under the DIG, Central Kashmir to further probe the incident. The FIR in this case was registered under sections 302, 307 of the IPC, 7/27 Arms Act, and relevant sections of the UAPA at Shaheed Gun police station.

Suchana's mental health assessment indicates 'no psychopathology', her 'judgement intact': Police

PAVNEET SINGH CHADHA
PANAJI, FEBRUARY 13

GOA POLICE on Tuesday told a Children's Court that a mental health assessment of Suchana Seth, the Bengaluru-based CEO accused of murdering her four-year-old son at a Goa hotel last month, did not find any case of psychopathology, and that she gave "clear and rational answers" during the medical examination.

The reply filed by the police in the court in Panaji cited a report of the medical examination conducted at the Institute of Psychiatry and Human Behaviour (IPHB) in Bambolim on February 2, which stated that "serial mental status examinations did not reveal any case of psychopathology".

"She (Suchana) gave clear and rational answers in her assessments. She did not report any active death wishes or suicidal tendencies. Her judgement is intact and no psychotic or pervasive mood symptoms were elicited in responses," the reply said. Last week, Suchana's father had filed an application in the court and sought directions to

the police to get her medically evaluated to assess her mental health, claiming that she was suffering from an illness.

In the previous hearing, Goa police had told the court that Suchana's medical examination had been conducted at the IPHB and the report was awaited.

The court on Tuesday adjourned the matter for February 21 and extended her judicial remand till February 26.

Suchana and Venkatraman married in 2010 and had son in 2019, following which differences cropped up in their marriage. The embroiled in divorce and custody proceedings. Police had earlier told *The Indian Express* that strained relations with her husband and a custody battle may have led her to allegedly commit the crime. She was caught by the police from Karnataka's Chitradurga district while allegedly trying to flee in a cab with her son's body.

The qualified bidders who meet the Eligibility Criteria can participate in the E-auction, by bidding for less than the Reserve Price as mentioned above.

The Interested applicants are requested to refer to the detailed E-Auction Process Document for the details of assets available, payment terms and the online process to be followed for participation in the E-auction till the conclusion of the sale. The documents are available on the e-auction website <https://mesi.co.in/auction-notices-under-ibc/>. Last date to submit the EMD is 13.03.2024 till 11:00 PM.

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Sc/Notice

CAP ON NET BORROWINGS

As Centre, Kerala agree to talk, SC adjourns hearing

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 13

WITH THE Centre and the Kerala government agreeing to its suggestion to hold talks over the latter's borrowing limits, the Supreme Court on Tuesday adjourned hearing on a suit filed by the state against the Centre on the issue till February 19.

Taking up the matter on Tuesday morning, a bench of Justices Surya Kant and K V Viswanathan asked Attorney General R Venkataraman, appearing for the Centre, and senior advocate Kapil Sibal, appearing for Kerala, why the Union Finance Minister and State Finance Minister could not discuss the issue and sort it out.

The AG agreed to seek instructions and inform the bench in the afternoon.

When the court resumed the hearing at 2 pm, the AG said the Centre is open to the court's suggestion. "The suggestion which fell from the court has received the highest regard that it deserves. The government is open to a meeting... I hope there could be an

सार्वजनिक सूचना

कार्यदाती संस्था जै-4 (Pavilion Height & Pavilion Court), सेटर्टर-128 की संपत्ति दिनांक 29.11.2009 को प्राप्त की गई, तात्परता संभवत योजना के नवन मानविक्रय का पुनर्विकास दिनांक 25.11.2011, 30.11.2020 व 29.10.2021 को हुआ है, जिसके प्राप्त में त्रुपार्कोण पॉकेट संस्था जै-4 (Pavilion Height & Pavilion Court) द्वारा उक्त दीर्घालिक दिवारी (DoC) दिनांक 26.08.2015 को नएका प्राविकरण में संशोधन करने हेतु प्राप्तियां प्रति दिन एक दिन तक अपार्नेट्स रसायनिक/रेसिफिल्ड वेलफेर एसोसिएशन द्वारा उक्त संस्था में सूचीबद्ध करना है कि सार्वजनिक सूचना प्रसारित होने के 15 दिन के अन्दर किसी भी कार्य दिवास में सूचीबद्ध 9.30 बजे से दोपहर 12.30 बजे तक अपार्नेट्स रसायनिक/रेसिफिल्ड वेलफेर एसोसिएशन द्वारा उक्त संस्था में सूचीबद्ध करने हेतु लिखित आपत्तियां आमित्रित की जायेंगी। उक्तसे कोई अविवाहित आपत्ति नहीं है। नियोजित अविवाहित आपत्ति द्वारा उक्त संस्था पर अपार्नेट्स रसायनिक/रेसिफिल्ड वेलफेर एसोसिएशन द्वारा उक्त संस्था में सूचीबद्ध करने के 15 कार्य दिवासों में प्राप्त कराई जा सकती है। नियोजित अविवाहित आपत्ति के उपरान्त प्राप्त आपत्ति/सुझाव पर कोई विवाह नहीं किया जायेगा।

महाप्रबन्धक (नियोजित)

नएका

AMBICA POLAD PRIVATE LIMITED (IN LIQUIDATION)
Regd Office: Plot No. M-2, MIDC-Watal, Aurangabad, Maharashtra- 431136
E-AUCTION
Under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, 2016
Sale of the Land & Building, Plant & Machinery & Misc. Assets of the Company
Last date for application: 28.02.2024
Date and time of E-auction: 15.03.2024
02.00 PM to 04.00 PM (with unlimited extension of 5 minutes each)
Pursuant to Regulation 32 of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (Liquidation Process) Regulations, 2016, Public Announcement is hereby made inviting for the Expression of interest from prospective bidders for the purposes of submission of bid in respect of auction sale of Land & Building Plant & Machinery & Misc. Assets of the Corporate Debtor M/s. Ambica Polad Private Limited (in Liquidation).
The interested bidders are forming part of the Liquidation Estate formed by the Liquidator, who is appointed by the Hon'ble NCLT, Mumbai Bench vide order dated 10.01.2024. The sale will be done by the undersigned through the E-auction platform provided at the web portal: <http://e-auction.up.nic.in/migcp/app>

Asset Reserve Price (Rs. In Cr.) END Bid Incremental Value (Rs. In Cr.)

Sale of the Land & Building, Plant & Machinery & Misc. Assets of the Corporate Debtor situated Plot No. C

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THE INDIAN EXPRESS, WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2024



THE EDITORIAL PAGE

The Indian EXPRESS

FOUNDED BY

RAMNATH GOENKA

BECAUSE THE TRUTH INVOLVES US ALL

ONE BY ONE

Movement of leaders, parties only in one direction, BJP's, ahead of an important election, points to realpolitik with gloves off

THREE HIGH-PROFILE DESERTIONS from INDIA and Congress and cross-overs to the BJP-led NDA, in quick succession in the run-up to parliamentary polls, underscore the state of political play. In Bihar, Nitish Kumar's JD(U), a flag-bearer of Mandal politics, which was also being seen as a pillar of the national Opposition front, has walked back into the saffron fold. In UP, the RLD, rooted in an agrarian politics that was once seen, in local contexts, as a countervailing force to Hindutva, has tied up with the NDA. And in Maharashtra, former chief minister, Ashok Chavan, after 38 years in Congress, and having been targeted for alleged corruption by the BJP, has cast his lot with the BJP. All three highlight the BJP's predatory politics — the party is determined to not just put together the numbers, but also to shore up total domination. But they also turn the spotlight on the continuing deshabille of Congress and the unchecked shrinking of INDIA even before it is fully formed.

The contrast only grows starker as the general election draws closer. The BJP shows agility and political imagination, and uses carrot as well as stick, weaponising its control of Central agencies like the ED-CBI now, and strategically holding out the Bharat Ratna then, to court parties and fold in constituencies that are not traditionally counted as its own, in order to spread its net wider, expand and layer its appeal. In Maharashtra, Chavan's switch follows the split of both the Shiv Sena and the NCP, one of the two halves of both aligning with the BJP. And the latest Bharat Ratna announcements at the national level — Karpoori Thakur, P V Narasimha Rao and Charan Singh — underline the BJP's incursions into political territory once thought to be dominated by ideologically differing if not antagonistic forces. This is after it has sealed its "core" promise of a Ram temple at Ayodhya with the grand consecration. On the other side, Congress is not all there to either guard its base or stitch up seat-sharing with potential INDIA allies — because its top leader Rahul Gandhi, who may no longer be party president but still runs the show, is on an ill-timed yatra. In a critical time, this manifests in a lack of urgency and unconscionable delays in the party's decision-making. The AAP has already said that it will go it alone in Punjab and made a take-it-or-leave-it offer to Congress in Delhi. And in West Bengal, Mamata Banerjee has predicted, unflatteringly, that Congress may not win even 40 LS seats.

The unchecked weakening of the Opposition bodes ill for a democracy that, at any given point, and whichever the party or parties in government, requires a competitive polity to be the best version of itself. The movement of leaders and parties only in one direction, ahead of an important election, points to a realpolitik with gloves off, and to a polity in search of a new equilibrium.

THE MAYOTTE DILEMMA

France's decision to scrap birthright citizenship on the island speaks of a larger European anxiety over immigration

FRENCH INTERIOR MINISTER Gérald Darmanin's declaration of an "extremely strong, clear, radical measure" to address an immigration crisis in the French Indian Ocean island of Mayotte is an indication of the tightrope that France has been walking on the issue. In a country that grants citizenship through parentage ("droit du sang") and birthplace ("droit du sol"), the new plan, announced by the minister and applicable only to Mayotte, scraps birthright citizenship — it "will no longer be possible to become French if you are not the child of a French parent". Mayotte, which had voted in a 1974 referendum to remain with France and became a French department only in 2011, has been mired in protests against rising levels of crime, poverty and a steady influx of indigent migrants from neighbouring Comoros Island. Darmanin's announcement came in part to assuage the weeks-long unrest in the island and has been taken up by the country's right wing for implementation in mainland France too. The announcement reflects the Macron government's larger struggle to strike an elusive balance between guaranteeing the rights of immigrants, migrants and asylum seekers and an increasingly restive French society caught in a flailing economy.

In recent years, France's immigration policy, once among the most liberal in Europe, has reflected the country's — and Europe's — growing anxieties around the unprecedented migrant crisis, especially in a post-Covid economy. Last June, the shooting of a 17-year-old French-Algerian youth in Nanterre had seen protests across the country. While President Macron has insisted that France will continue to welcome international students and skilled labour in sectors facing shortage, his own weakened stature has seen a greater capitulation to the demands of the right wing, especially when it comes to immigration. The Mayotte announcement comes soon after a new immigration legislation that had sparked a rebellion in Macron's government in December and found favour with the country's right. It stands to, among other things, weaken the right to appeal for asylum seekers, introduce migration quotas that put a cap on residency permits and citizenship and potentially delay access to welfare benefits.

These policies also show that immigration is a subject whose complexity does not make for easy solutions. In December last year, the European Union reached an agreement to overhaul its asylum policies and limit the number of people coming in to protect its interests; the UK's Supreme Court recently struck down the government's plan to send asylum seekers to Rwanda. In a strife-torn world where resources are limited and the clamour for balance louder than ever before, there are no easy answers to this humanitarian crisis.

DON'T FREEZE

When it comes to the big games, Australia are simply a few miles ahead of their opponents, including India

FOR STEVE WAUGH'S Invincibles, India was the final frontier, the lone unconquered shore in their era of absolute supremacy. In 54 years, the indefatigable Australians have managed to win just one Test series in India. In ICC tournaments, though, Australia have been India's final frontier. The defeat of the U-19 cricketers in Benoni, South Africa, was the third instance in seven months that Australia defeated India in the final of a global tournament. If the loss in the World Test Championship at the Oval is a distant, fading memory, the stumble in the 50-over World Cup final in front of shocked spectators in Ahmedabad is like an unhealed wound.

The fatalists would call it a jinx. Others might term it as a mental block. Some would say it is DNA. But when it comes to the big games and moments, Australia are simply a few miles ahead of their opponents in handling pressure and negotiating tough times. India, on the other hand, tend to freeze in those moments when icy veins and cool heads are required. It's easier said than done because international sport is ultra competitive and even the slightest mistakes could be ruthlessly punished. Australia excel at that, borne out by the collection of 14 ICC trophies in their gallery. Even if they might not possess a glittering array of talent as they once used to, they inevitably rise above themselves in the knockout.

Nonetheless, a defeat in the final offers valuable lessons for the teenaged cricketers, most of whom would soon step into the intense world of senior cricket. The loss would sting, but it would also make them realise that nothing comes easy in professional sport. Despite the stumble in the final, there is considerable talent in the batch of 2024, a foundation for the coaches to work with, a potential to be harnessed into world-class packages. The defeat should only inspire them to breach India's final frontier in ICC tournaments, that is, Australia.



RAJA MANDALA
BY C RAJA MOHAN

IT IS PERHAPS fitting that one of his last international trips in his second term as Prime Minister takes Narendra Modi to the United Arab Emirates and Qatar. The inauguration of the Bochasanwasi Akshar Purushottam Swaminarayan (BAPS) temple in Abu Dhabi and the release of eight Indian ex-naval personnel held on espionage charges in Doha this week are two different kinds of events.

Together, they are a high watermark for Modi's diplomacy and symbolise the transformation of India's relations with the Gulf during the last 10 years. It was unimaginable that a large Hindu temple would be built in the deeply Islamic and conservative Arabian peninsula with full state support, and the Indian Prime Minister would be there for its inauguration. When the eight former naval personnel were handed a death sentence last October, it was considered near impossible to secure their release.

Much has changed in how India and Arabia deal with each other today. The new terms of endearment with the Arabian Gulf constitute one of the most significant gains for Indian diplomacy in recent decades. Five factors underlie this transformation.

The first is diplomatic. For a long time, the Middle East did not figure in the political priorities of Indian diplomacy. Consider the following: During the 10 years of the UPA rule, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh travelled to the Middle East only four times — and two of those visits were to attend the non-aligned summits in Cairo and Tehran.

Since he took charge in 2014, Modi has travelled 15 times to the Middle East. His visit to the UAE in 2015 was the first by an Indian prime minister since 1981, despite the extraordinary growth in its importance for India. This is Modi's seventh visit to the UAE and the second to Qatar.

A key change has also been the quality of engagement. Modi recognised that developing a personal connection with the emirs was key to advancing the ties with the region. The Gulf monarchs value personal ties at the leadership level and are ready to calibrate their national policies based on mutual trust and political give and take.

The second is in the political domain. For a long time, there was not much "political" in the Indian engagement with the Gulf beyond Delhi's public support for "Arab

causes". Although Indian support to the big Arab issues was welcome in the Gulf, there was much disappointment in Delhi's lack of interest in a broader strategic engagement. While India focused on declaratory positions — anti-imperialism and anti-Zionism — it seemed to have little interest in Arab political and economic life beyond those issues. There is a strong strain of pragmatism in Arabia that India struggled to work with in the past. That has changed.

The setting up of the I2U2 group in 2022 — with India, Israel, the US and the UAE — and the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor announced on the margins of the G20 summit underline the radical reorientation of India's geopolitical engagement with the Middle East. If Delhi had kept its distance from the US and the West, Israel and the conservative Arabian kingdoms in the past, they have become valuable regional partners today.

Third, India's past impractical approach was reinforced by the tendency to view the region through a religious lens. The country's partition on religious lines and Pakistan's outreach to the Middle East seeking Islamic solidarity inevitably complicated independent India's diplomatic strategy in the Gulf. There was an overestimation of the religious factor binding the Gulf and Pakistan, and an underestimation of the depth of goodwill in Arabia for India and the desire for greater cooperation.

Discarding the Pakistan obsession has been a major factor in boosting India's ties with the Gulf over the last decade. Delhi and Islamabad have traded places in the Gulf. As Modi celebrates India's special relationships with the Gulf, Pakistan struggles to build productive engagement with the region.

The Swaminarayan temple in Abu Dhabi reflects an important new trend that is not fully appreciated in India. The outflow of radical Islamic ideas from Arabia in the last quarter of the 20th century had negatively affected the Subcontinent. Today, religious conservatism at home and the export of radicalism abroad in Arabia are yielding place, especially in the UAE and Saudi Arabia, to growing religious tolerance. The unfolding social and religious reform in Arabia would hopefully dampen the rise of religious extremism across the Subcontinent and help restore harmony between different religions and sects.

between different religions and sects.

Fourth, the last decade has seen the relationship move from purely transactional to strategic in the economic domain. The talk in Delhi about the economic rise of India had not been matched by a recognition of the Gulf's emergence as a major centre of global capitalism. The accumulation of hydrocarbon wealth over the decades has generated "Khaleeji capital" — in Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and the UAE — with growing influence around the world, from sports to real estate and banking to technology. If India's focus in the past was on oil purchases, labour exports, and hard currency remittances, the potential of the Gulf's capital to accelerate India's economic growth has come to the fore today.

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Finally, the last decade has seen the expansion of counter-terror collaboration between India on the one hand and Saudi Arabia and the UAE on the other. If there is one area that remains well below potential, it is the defence domain. Today, the Gulf countries are trying to diversify their defence partnerships amid the shifting regional geopolitics and are looking to India to redeem its claims to being a regional security provider. Meanwhile, Saudi Arabia, Qatar and the UAE have also emerged, in their own right, as major geopolitical actors in the Western Indian Ocean, the Middle East, and the Mediterranean.

Although the scale and scope of India's military exchanges with the Gulf have grown, much more can be done, including the joint development of weapons and military technologies. In his recent speeches, Modi has talked about doing bolder things in his third term. That new agenda for the Gulf must include deeper cooperation with the region in promoting prosperity and peace in the Western Indian Ocean.

The writer is a contributing editor on international affairs for The Indian Express



AAKSHI MAGAZINE

YASH RAJ FILMS recently re-released a couple of its older films calling it the "nostalgia film festival" on social media. The nostalgia could be for the films, but the attraction is the experience of watching the films in a theatre. You can, of course, watch these films on OTT — conveniently pausing them as and when life takes over — but there is a charm in watching them in a cinema hall. And cinema halls, particularly in India, have rarely been about convenience.

While the trend of re-releasing older films may be a marketing gimmick meant to attract audiences, it evokes the preciousness of the cinema theatre experience. Recent films like Sriram Raghavan's *Merry Christmas* and Aki Kaurismaki's *Fallen Leaves* also pay an ode to it. At a time when going to the theatre is becoming uncommon due to rising ticket prices and shifting attention spans, it is inevitable for this to feel nostalgic.

"Keep your longings in check" — warns a scene in *Merry Christmas* — almost like a self-aware nod to the film-audience relationship. Sitting apart in two different rows of the theatre they have come to, the film's two strangers are as aware of each other, as we are of the space they inhabit. Cinema hall film

MAGIC IN THE DARK

In the cinema hall, time is experienced differently

In the theatre, time is experienced differently. This is not like the calculativeness of the OTT experience. It demands making peace with boredom. You have to risk the possibility of disappointment. You have to be patient with waiting, mishearing dialogues and talkative audiences. Before multiplexes took over, it worked on the opposite of consumerist logic, for the cinema was never about convenience or comfort. It had a bigger heart.

Sometimes a film will turn out to be a dud and you will find your time wasted. Wasted time itself can have hierarchies — it can be "time-pass" or "time-waste". Sometimes you will forget time itself. One can't happen if you are not ready for the other. It is a love story.

Fallen Leaves centres a significant part of

scenes have always been fascinating, reminding us of our own identities as audiences. Perhaps they make us feel important.

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Fallen Leaves centres a significant part of its own love story around a cinema theatre as a backdrop. Though recently released on OTT, it is the kind of film you wish you were watching in a theatre. The first time its protagonist smiles is when she gets asked out to go to the cinema. The cinema is both leisure and pleasure, something missing in her working-class life. It is also a promise of life

that is still to be lived.

As the years go by, regular theatre-goers accumulate memories of the cinema, not all of which have to do with the films. I like to pay attention to shifts in mood, silence and laughter. It makes me see the same film differently. There are also audience comments. Once in the middle of a loud dance sequence, a man sitting next to me picked up his phone and nonchalantly lied that he was in an office meeting. Another time, a talkative couple, after being policed into silence, commented that we should be watching the film at home if we want the luxury of silence.

But my first cinema hall-related memory is of watching a film in which a baby falls off a building. I must have been five or six years old then, but it is startling how well I remember it. The baby turns out to be a doll, but my recollection is less interested in that resolution or the relief it provides. It is the shock of that fall which is arrested in my memory. It is hard to tell if it is the scene or the feeling of the scene that has stayed with me. If it felt real, then it must have been real.

The writer is a film scholar and critic based in Delhi



FEBRUARY 14, 1984, FORTY YEARS AGO

DEMANDS DAY

A NATIONAL DEMANDS day, observed by opposition parties in state capitals and other important towns against the present regime, by and large, passed off peacefully barring a bomb attack on a CPI(M) procession at Bilaspur, 25 km from Agartala. The day, which was observed in pursuance of the decision of the Calcutta conclave non-Congress (I) parties, was marked by public meetings and protest rallies.

PLAN OUTLAYS SLASHED

THE LAST YEAR of the Sixth Five Year Plan is

going to end on a limping note with the Planning Commission having slashed the plan outlays of the states as well as the Centre for the year 1984-85. According to present indications, the hike in plan investment in 1984-85 is going to be only around 12 per cent against the 21 per cent increase that was proposed in the budget for 1983-84.

NEW PARTY LEADER

SIBERIAN-BORN KONSTANTIN UCHERNENKO, 72, who was denied the party leadership 15 months ago after the death of his close friend and party mentor Leonid I Brezhnev, was named general secretary of the Communist

Party. In a speech after his election, he praised his predecessor Yuri Andropov and vowed that the Soviet Union would never bow to what he termed a war-threatening West.

OFFICIAL FOREIGN VISITS

THERE IS A possibility that Natwar Singh, secretary in the Ministry of External Affairs, will visit China in a couple of months. His Beijing visit is apparently being contemplated as part of a series of visits he is to undertake during March and April. These will take him to ASEAN countries like Singapore and Malaysia, Indonesia and the Philippines on the one hand, and Japan and China on the other.

THE IDEAS PAGE

BJP's 'Free Incoming' policy

Taking in Ashok Chavan in Maharashtra, after Ajit Pawar, is part of a BJP playbook that first accuses and then appropriates



GIRISH KUBER

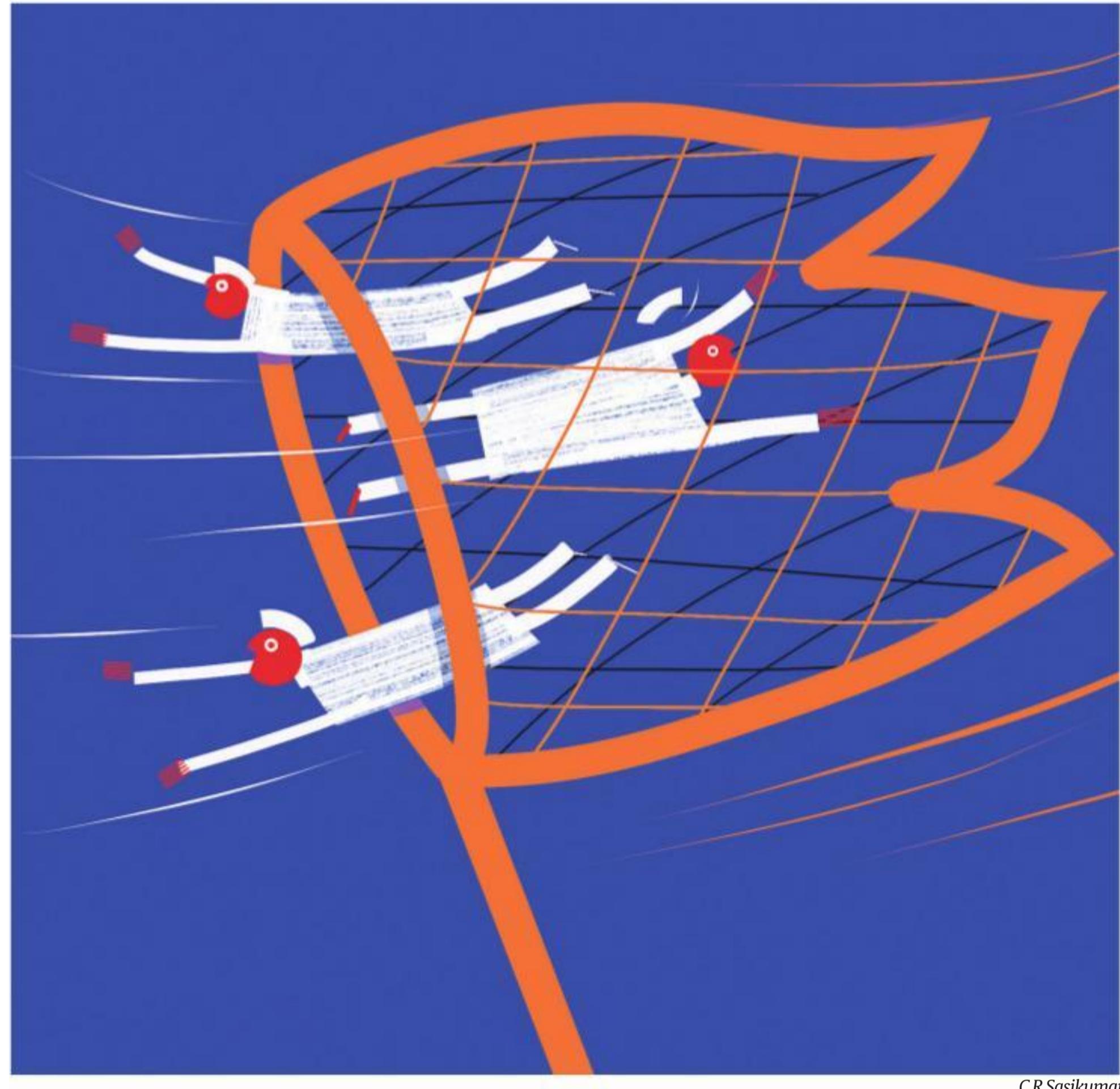
ON MARCH 30, 2014, when he was in Nanded to campaign for the Lok Sabha elections, then Gujarat chief minister Narendra Modi received huge applause for his announcement that should he become prime minister, he would send Ashok Chavan to jail "within six months". In 2023, with the incumbent PM expecting to begin his third innings, Chavan found himself mentioned again for his role in the Adarsh scam in the Modi government's much tom-tommed White Paper, presented by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman last week.

However, as the 10th anniversary of the promise made in Nanded approaches, and barely four days after coming up in Parliament for his alleged role in the Adarsh scam, Ashok Chavan has joined the BJP. This is perfectly in line with the BJP's current policy: Accuse and appropriate. Last year, when addressing party workers in Bhopal, Modi charged the NCP leadership of swindling Rs 70,000 crore in various misdeeds, including the Maharashtra State Cooperative Bank scam, irrigation scam and illegal mining scam. Soon, Ajit Pawar, an alleged kingpin in these scams, joined hands with the BJP, sharing the deputy chief ministership with its home-grown stalwart, Devendra Fadnavis. The BJP's "Free Incoming" policy, read with PM Narendra Modi's frequent trips to the state, underlines the importance given to Maharashtra in pursuit of its "Mission 400" in the upcoming parliamentary polls. In contrast to its rhetoric, the BJP's unabashed import of tainted leaders hints at how unsure it is about Maharashtra. Why this palpable desperation?

Having peaked in the Hindi heartland, two states are crucial for the BJP's parliamentary arithmetic — Bihar and Maharashtra. Thanks to habitual turncoat Nitish Kumar, the BJP is assured of its position in Bihar. However, Maharashtra continues to be its Achilles' heel. This reality was reflected in the recent survey conducted by a private agency for a media house, which gave the ruling combine not more than 22 seats. This is despite the BJP making every effort to split the Shiv Sena and the NCP to form a three-party government in the state. If this poll is to be believed, the residual Shiv Sena led by Uddhav Thackeray and the NCP that is led by the old Maratha war horse, Sharad Pawar, could walk away with as many as 26 seats. The fact that in the 2019 general elections, the BJP-Shiv Sena combine had pocketed 41 out of 48 seats speaks of how tough the task in Maharashtra is for the BJP.

The BJP needs Maharashtra to retain its strength in Parliament. With 48 seats — second only to Uttar Pradesh, which has 80 seats — the western state has been making the BJP nervous since the 2019 assembly elections when it failed to get a majority on its own. The subsequent experiment by the Congress, the Sharad Pawar-led NCP and the Shiv Sena to join hands and keep the BJP at bay forced the saffron party to adopt a two-pronged strategy: Split the Shiv Sena and the NCP and later weaken the Congress by incorporating many of its leaders.

Having achieved the first two, the BJP is now on the third. A point worth noting is that



CR Sasikumar

all these imported settlers have a common imprint. Almost all of them are Marathas — be it Narayan Rane, Radhakrishna Vikhe Patil, Harshvardhan Patil, etc — who were brought in a few years ago, or the fresh ones like Ajit Pawar and Ashok Chavan. The BJP's quest for Maratha votes has a solid reason: It lacks its own Maratha leader who has popular appeal, particularly in western Maharashtra and Marathwada. The BJP has high hopes for Ajit Pawar for the former region, while it expects Ashok Chavan to deliver in the latter, where the BJP has been unable to find an able successor to the late Gopinath Munde. The legacy of Munde — who hailed from Beed, adjacent to Ashok Chavan's constituency, Nanded — has three claimants: Two of his daughters, Pritam, a doctor and MP, and Pankaja, an MLA, and his nephew Dhananjay, who has joined hands with Ajit Pawar after a stint in the BJP. Even the three together do not wield the kind of influence that Munde did. Since his demise in 2014, the BJP has been in search of a formidable face in the region.

Ashok Chavan can hardly be considered that. Like his father, the late Shankarrao Chavan, a former chief minister and Union minister, Ashok Chavan is far from being a popular leader. Father and son have always been the High Command's men. Shankarrao Chavan, called Headmaster for his disciplinarian approach to politics, was completely subservient to the High Command and had been severely criticised for staying silent even in the face of the late Sanjay Gandhi's

Last year, when addressing party workers in Bhopal, Modi had charged the NCP leadership of swindling Rs 70,000 crore in various misdeeds, including the Maharashtra State Cooperative Bank scam, irrigation scam and illegal mining scam. Soon, Ajit Pawar, an alleged kingpin in these scams, joined hands with the BJP, sharing the deputy chief ministership with its home-grown stalwart, Devendra Fadnavis. The BJP's 'Free Incoming' policy, read with PM Narendra Modi's frequent trips to the state, underlines the importance given to Maharashtra in its 'Mission 400'.

excesses during the Emergency. His son followed in his footsteps in being His Master's Voice — whoever that master might be.

This trait and, of course, his role in the infamous Adarsh scam, where land reserved for defence forces in Mumbai's tony Colaba area was usurped by politicians and bureaucrats, came in handy for the BJP. It used these as a tool to "woo" him, as it sought a Maratha face, especially when Chief Minister Eknath Shinde, also a Maratha, is seen as stealing the march on the Maratha reservation issue. It was Devendra Fadnavis, as chief minister, who kept the Adarsh scam issue alive and had given the nod for Ashok Chavan's prosecution. The BJP kept the sword of the scam hanging over Chavan's head but also ensured that it did not fall on him. A few years ago, when the three-party government of the Shiv Sena, NCP and Congress was ruling the state, central agencies raided an alleged frontman for Ashok Chavan but stopped short of touching the leader himself.

Since then, his joining the BJP was a mere formality. It's not that the BJP isn't aware of Ashok Chavan's true political potential, or rather, lack thereof. It went ahead only because, like in Bihar, it wants to set the narrative in Maharashtra, too: That it can strike Congress at its will.

In doing so, the BJP may want to showcase its strength and political muscle power. But is it, instead, exposing its weak underbelly, exhibiting a lack of confidence?

The writer is editor, Loksatta

A kind of half-light

On Valentine's Day, of loves old and sure, new and frantic



DEVAPRIYA ROY

OUR LOVE IS old and sure, not new and frantic. / You know I'm yours and I know you are mine. / And saying that has made me feel romantic. / My dearest love, my darling valentine. — Wendy Cope

"I would like a Valentine's Day present this year," I inform my husband.

We are in the park. It is a golden afternoon in Delhi, the sky so blue and the sunlight so dappled that the subject seems apt.

We have been together a long time, Mr Jha and I, and Valentine's Day has never occasioned a budget in the past. I dimly remember a first V-day celebration. This would be circa 2003, and the expense was certainly minor: a small gift (given ironically of course) and a halved mutton patty each, in the era when Flury's still had white walls and no franchises. (The patty was Rs 14 and the gift, two soft-toy pigs that kissed to Chinese music, in the range of Rs 100.) The celebration was entirely surreptitious. If our college friends at Presidency found out we had participated in such a bourgeois affair, we would hear no end of it. Valentine's Day was meant to be mocked: This was our youth.

Later, as right-wing attacks against celebrating couples in cities grew rampant, many of these former mockers of our generation decided to embrace V-day as protest, and interesting things such as the Pink Chaddi cam-

paign were launched. But by then we were married, struggling in the struggling-writers' world, far too grown up for such fripperies. Valentine's Days came and went without comment. Soon, it became a day when girlfriends got together for lunch.

2024: The present. The park, a profusion of flowers, the very mild scent of spring in the air, everything conspiring to erase — temporarily — all the worries of our time that we carry around in our hearts. "I would like a Valentine's Day present this year," I tell Mr Jha. "Is it the expensive stroller?" "No," I say wistfully. Then: "It is the expensive high chair."

The subject of this conversation wriggles in my arms. She would like a better view of the parakeets who are, along with pigeons and squirrels, pecking at grain, while a cold breeze, still carrying the breath of winter, gently shakes the branches above — and, therefore, the shadows below. We are her slaves, and so, careful to not disturb the birds, we inch closer. Masha laughs.

We look at each other; Mr Jha and I, and shake our heads ruefully. A quarter of an hour ago, we'd had to flee from the children's shop where said stroller and high chair were arrayed in impressive rows of strollers and high chairs. Masha had considered being strapped into a stroller a mighty insult. She was

screaming bloody murder. Now, she softly calls the birds to her. "Come, come, come," her hands gesture.

We who live in the world of adults, of razors and knives, apocalypse and war, are only just learning to savour these quiet afternoons of parakeets and babblers.

After a difficult pregnancy (during which my daily Valentine was my beloved doctor, Ruma), when Masha was born many weeks before her due date, Mr Jha and I felt our love for each other leave our individual frames, where they had lived — not always painlessly — and become a conjoined pulsating ball that hovered just outside the NICU of Gangaram Hospital, where she spent a month in a little tray. Our bodies would return home every night while the ball waited with her. Some days, when the going was good, it glowed in the dark; other days, it was a grey cloud that stalked the doctors and pestered the nurses: "Is she going to be okay?"

This new and frantic love of ours was so wrought with superstition that everything seemed like audacious arrogance on our part, breathing, walking, telling the world about her, even giving her a name. Very often, we didn't know what to do with it, where to place it — this impossible love which apparently our parents had wordlessly carried for us all these years without our knowing — in

our house with its hundreds of dusty books and our ever-present uncertainty about the future.

In the face of this new and frantic love, so demanding that everything else receded in its wake, did the conjoined ball, now home and hovering above her, morph into an old and sure thing? Can romantic love ever be old, ever be sure? Who can tell.

Valentine's Day 2024. Halfway through this essay I am writing, we have a big fight, Mr Jha and I. All our worries about money and unmet deadlines, all our anguish about our formerly bohemian lives and our wasted years, all the interrupted nights of little sleep and my constant worry about her weight: They collide and implode. We shout at each other. I am full of recriminations.

Then, chastened, we bring our new and frantic love back upon her throne, our former marital bed. She glowers, scolds us, and then — her eyes widening in unbelievable innocence — she vomits. As I hold what was her lunch in my upturned palms and her father hunts for towels, as our guilt unfolds and panics, I look up at the ceiling and find the ball of our love hovering up there, directly above the kid, radiant with a kind of half-light.

Roy is a Delhi-based author. Her most recent book is Cat People, an edited anthology

WHAT THE OTHERS SAY

"We urge the parliament to address the inherent credibility crisis of the newly formed committees, and reform them if possible. This is not merely a matter of procedural compliance — it is a moral imperative."

— THE DAILY STAR, BANGLADESH

Election is over, challenge begins

If Pakistan is to realise its potential, it must allow civilian governance to flourish. Inflation, relations with India remain daunting



RISHABH BHANDARI

PAKISTAN'S FRAGILE DEMOCRATIC process has delivered yet another varied and tumultuous result. A hung parliament has confounded pollsters and generals alike, setting the scene for some familiar skullduggery ahead. The expectation is that a coalition might be stitched between the Nawaz Sharif-led PML-N and the Bhutto-Zardari-led PPP under the watchful eye of the military. Yet, with neither party being the largest in parliament, whether this outcome genuinely reflects popular aspirations remains to be seen. What is certain though is that stability in Pakistan is of profound importance, not just domestically but beyond its shores.

A few immediate trends can be discerned from the verdict. First, the results do not point to any surge for PML-N across the electorate. Supporters had hoped that Nawaz Sharif's homecoming after several years in exile would galvanise the public.

But a tally of approximately 75 seats out of 265 is hardly convincing. The party did well in its traditional sphere of influence in Punjab but it wasn't as dominant as before. It fared poorly in Sindh, Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Nawaz Sharif's claim of economic competence failed to persuade the voters. He stood in two constituencies with mixed results — he won from Lahore but embarrassingly lost in Mansehra to a PTI-backed candidate. That's not a headline the party wants to trumpet. The overall impression remains of a party rooted in its Punjabi heritage, struggling to create a pan-Pakistani identity.

As for the Bhutto-Zardari-led PPP, the results were abysmal. The party languished with around 54 seats. It is a desultory outcome for a party once seen as the natural party of civilian governance in Pakistan. The PPP has continued to retain sway in Sindh but its appeal has diminished in other parts of the country. In a country that has a huge population of young people — about 44 per cent of the electorate is under 35 — Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari has failed to win over the youth. He underscored his own lack of confidence by standing in three constituencies, losing ignominiously in Lahore (NA-127 seat) where he came third. The underlying message from voters is that age-old tropes recalling the glory days of the PPP do not ease unease. Inflation is currently around 30 per cent and unemployment is running high. That will come to a head as an IMF bail-out approaches maturity this year. It will be a huge test for any incoming government.

Second, in a nation as diverse as Pakistan with varied cultural, social and religious traditions, successive governments have struggled to articulate a coherent organising vision which amounts to more than blatant jingoism. This is a challenge shared across the subcontinent. But the goal remains to prioritise social development and economic self-interest above all other ideological concerns. Third, the elephant in the room is India. There is a rational case for de-escalating tension with India by speaking the language of commerce and diplomacy. In the past, the Pakistan army hasn't been overly supportive of such an overt but a desperate economic situation might lead it towards this course.

The path ahead is unlikely to be straightforward. In a society bedevilled by religious-military-feudal settlements, reforms will seldom follow a straight-line path. But the hope remains that public sentiment from within will prompt changes.

If Pakistan is to realise its potential, then it must approach the future with an open mind and allow civilian governance to flourish, leaving aside the military weight of the past. Only then will the familiar chorus of "Dil Dil Pakistan" lead to redemption.

The writer is a London-based lawyer and political commentator

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

INCLUSIVE GROWTH

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'A political document' (IE, February 13). The government's White Paper appears to be primarily a political tool to showcase the shortcomings of the previous administration while highlighting its own achievements. However, it lacks a balanced assessment by overlooking crucial issues such as job creation, unemployment, poverty trends, and stagnant wages. To truly address India's economic challenges and aspirations, there's a need for a more comprehensive and forward-looking approach, focusing on inclusive growth and sustainable development rather than mere political point-scoring.

Urjita Roy, Bangalore

NO LABELS

THIS REFERS TO the article, 'Love without a name' (IE, February 13). Gulzar's lines written in 1968 are as appropriate today as they were then. Even now, our society has not fully reconciled with the idea of a couple living together regardless of intention to marry. Uttarakhand government should not have interfered with the private affairs of adults and instead focussed on preventing violence against women in all spheres. The right to choose partners has to be left to the citizens only.

Subhash Vaid, New Delhi

NEED FOR SCHOOLING

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'Classroom vs coaching' (IE, February 12). Education is the key to the future, but our foundations tend to stand on rote learning. This gives rise to coaching "factories" where the idea is to ensure laser-like focus for students when it comes to solving papers. For those who will be the future of India, there must be a strong foundation of skills, empathy, compassion, discussions and a problem-solving approach to life. This foundation-building should take place in a school classroom, which shapes the personality of children. Coaching should only be a secondary tool. This will require the combined efforts of all stakeholders. "Parents should not treat their child's report card as their visiting cards." — PM Modi.

Prachi Dixit, via email

SHRINKING SPACES

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'A political document' (IE, February 13). The Black Paper presented by the Congress against the Modi government and the White Paper released by the BJP against the erstwhile UPA government were both unnecessary. The UPA was afflicted by corruption and, later, Congress failed to act as a credible Opposition. The BJP, on the other hand, has stumbled on many fronts like creating employment opportunities and improving the economy. PM Narendra Modi is the BJP's only trump card. The Black and White Papers show how little space contemporary politics has for contrary opinions.

SS Paul, Nadia

Classifieds

PERSONAL

I, Anindita Adhikari W/o Siddhartha Sankar Adhikari R/o 405, Richmond Park, GH-9, Sector-6, Vasundhara, Ghaziabad-201012 have changed my name to Anindita to Anindita Adhikari for all future purposes. Both are same person. 0040713768-1

I, Amit S/o Om Parkash R/o Tower-E-3-2701, Cleo County Society, Sector-121, Noida-201301, have changed my name to Amit Arora, for all, future purposes. 0040713772-1

I, Umesh Kumar Jain S/o Sh. Mamchand Jain R/o D-442, Palam Extension, Sector-7 Dwarka, N.Delhi-75 have changed my name to Umesh Jain for all purposes. 0040713774-1

I, Sarita Rani Sharma alias Sarita Sharma D/o Sh. Mukul Raj Sharma W/o Sh. Surinder Sharma R/o 5266, Kolhapur Pur House, Kamla Nagar, Malka Ganji, Delhi-110007 have changed my name to Sarita Sharma for all purposes. 0040713756-3

I, Sangeeta D/o Jaswant Singh R/o C-29, Mansarovar Park, Shahdara, MCD School, North East Delhi, Delhi-110032 have changed my name to Preet Kaur for all purposes. 0040713756-2

I, Priyansha D/o Ram Babu Prasad R/o J-109, PC Colony, Kankarbagh, Kankarbagh, PO Lohia Nagar, Patna, Bihar-800020, have changed my name to Priyansha Nanda 0070888699-1

I, Deepak S/o Sh. Makardhan R/o Kh. No.11/19, Kamal Vihar, Gali No.11, A-Block, Kamal Pur Majra, Burari, North Delhi, Delhi-110084 have changed my name to Deepak Kushwaha for all purposes. 0040713756-1

I, Army No. 15379840K NK (Retd)- Munesh Kumar R/o H.No. E-313 Sector Gamma1 Greater Noida Gautambuddha Nagar. In my army documents, My Daughter's name was mistakenly spelled as Sweeta Dishwar. The correct spelling of her name is Shweta Dishwar. 0070888759-1

I, It's general information that, I, Sajid Ajaz Ganaie,S/O- Ajaz Ahmad Ganaie,R/O- Chithi Bandi,Bandipore,Jammu and Kashmir-193502 declare that my name has been wrongly written as Sajid Ajaz Ganie in my electrical Engineering dual degree in a Spl.(M.tech,Dual 5Y) educational documents. My actual name is Sajid Ajaz Ganaie. Which my be amended accordingly. 0020472002-1

I, It is for general information that I, PANKJ KUMAR,S/O KAMESHWAR THAKUR,R/O WZ-120-B,RING-ROAD,NARAINA, NARAINA VILLAGE,SOUTH-WEST DELHI,DELHI-110028, declare that name of mine has been wrongly-written as PANKAJ KUMAR THAKUR in my 12th class marks sheet and certificate. The actual name of mine is PANKAJ KUMAR,which may be amended accordingly. 0040713826-8

I, It is for General information that I Reshu Bhandari wife of Shri, Prakash Singh Bhandari residing At C-89/B, Sector-19, Noida, Gautam Buddha Nagar, Uttar Pradesh-201301 Declare that name of my husband has been wrongly written as Prakash Singh Bhanari in my minor son's name Aayush Bhandari Aged 12 years in his school records. The actual name of my husband is Prakash Singh Bhandari respectively Which may be amended accordingly. 0040713770-1

I, SHAMA W/O MOHD FAISAL ANSARI, ADD-F-21, HAJI COLONY GHAFRAH MANZIL JAMIA-NAGAR OKHLA SOUTH- DELHI 110025,have changed my name to SHAMA PARVEEN ANSARI,for all,future purposes. 0040713782-3

I, it,hether known as NARENDR KAUR SAINI W/O,RATTAN CHAND SAINI R/O,B-253, BLOCK-A, SUDESHAN-PARK, MOTI-NAGAR, RAMESH-NAGAR, WEST-DELHI-110015,have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as NARENDR KAUR SAINI. 0040713789-1

I, Yash S/o Harish Kumar,R/o D-4/30,Sector-20,Rohini,Delhi-110086,have changed my name Yash Tilwanil. 0040713893-8

I, VINOD KUMAR,S/O JAI NARAYAN,R/o 1081,BYE PASS PALWL ROAD OPPOSIT CANAL REST HOUSE SOHNA GURGAON-122103(Haryana),have changed my name to VINOD GARG. 0040713782-7

I, USHA RANI,W/O VINOD GARG,R/o 1081, BYE PASS PALWL ROAD OPPOSIT CANAL REST HOUSE SOHNA GURGAON-122103(Haryana),have changed my name to USHA GARG. 0040713782-8

I, Sonu Goyal,S/o Sajjan Kumar, R/o,C-1/31-32,S.F,Near Veer Bazar-Road,Sanjay Enclave,Uttam-Nagar, Delhi, have changed my name to Sonu Goyal,for all purposes. 0040713893-3

I, Mohammad Zaki S/o Mumtaj Ali R/o F2025, Cloud9, Ahinsakhand-2, Indirapuram, Ghaziabad have changed my name to Mohd Zaki. 0070888747-1

I, Sarina Charles Coelho,D/o Charles Coelho,R/o DLF-Express Green,M-1,D-104,Sector-1,IMT Road Manesar-122051,have changed my name to Sarina Corlho. 0040713782-6

I, SUSEELA KRISHNAN CHENTHAMARA,W/O.CHEINTHA MARA KRISHNAN,ADD-A-169,PANDARA-ROAD KHAN MARKET-NEW-DELHI 110003,changed my minor child name RISHABH KRISHNAN CHENTHAMARA to RISHABH KRISHNA,for all,future purposes. 0040713893-6

I, SUNIT KUMAR JAIN,S/O RAJ KUMAR JAIN,ADD-E-12, KALINDI COLONY MAHARANI BAGH,SOUTH EAST-DELHI-110065,changed my name to SUNEET KUMAR JAIN,for all,future purposes. 0040713826-3

I, SHRUTI BENGANI D/O MANOJ KUMAR BENGANI R/O B-164, SECOND-FLOOR BLOCK-B,YOZNA VIHAR DELHI-11092, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO GEETA GUPTA,for all,future purposes. 0040713921-1

I, Firoz Khan S/O Mushtaq Khan R/O S-221/54,Gali No-4, Vishnu Garden Delhi-110027, have changed my name to Mamatha. 0040713921-5

I, Rishi Raj Bansal,s/o Late Rameshwar Nath Bansal,R/o,R/2-3/2,B1,1st-Floor, J&K-Block, Ramesh Park,Laxmi-Nagar,Delhi-110092,have changed my name to Rishi Bansal, permanently. 0040713921-2

I, Ravi Kumar,S/o Raju,R/o H.No.123,Munrika Enclave,Munrika,Delhi-110067,have changed the name of my minor daughter,from Kanishka to Kanishka,for all,future purposes. 0040713934-1

I, Ram Lal,S/o Moti Lal,R/o,H.No.102, Kh.No.104/12, Amar Colony,Mundka, Nangloi,Delhi-110041,inform that Ram Lal Kashyap and Ram Lal both are same and one-person i.e. Ram Lal. 0040713923-5

I, RAHKKSUDIN ABBASI, S/O IQRAMMUDIN,R/O-H.NO.08.OKHLA VILLAGE,JAMIA NAGAR,NEW DELHI-110205,INFORM THAT IN MY LIC POLICY MY name wrongly-written as MOHD.RAIS ABBASI. My correct name is RAHESUDIN ABBASI, FOR ALL FUTURE PURPOSES. 0040713782-10

I, PRAVEEN CHAUHAN S/O NATHA LAL,R/O 1547/48, BLOCK-B,JAHANGIR PURI,DELHI-110033,HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO PARVEEN KUMAR CHAUHAN. 0040713923-4

I, PATRICK PETER S/O PATRASH,R/O B-7/85,SECOND FLOOR,SECTOR-17,ROHINI,DELHI-110089.HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO PATRICK. 0040713923-3

I, NARINDER KUMAR,S/O RAJ KUMAR,R/O H.No.205,DDA FLATS-JAIDEV PAEK,EAST PUNJABI BAGH,DELHI-110026,have changed my name to NARINDER KUMAR PURI. 0040713921-4

I, Murti,D/o Puran Singh,W/o Hoshier Singh,House.No.1266, Sector-21,Dundhera,Gurugram,Hary ana-122016,have changed my name to Murti Devi, and correct-my date-of-15/01/1946 as per my pan-card. 0040713893-7

I, Mohd Aslam,S/o Mohd Salim,R/o E-58A, Gali-No.5-E, Block-B,Shastri Park,Delhi-110053,have changed my name to Aslam,for all,future purposes. 0040713921-3

I, Mohd Anis Qureshi,S/O Mohd Yunus Qureshi,R/o-6888, Fourth Floor,Gali-New Walli Ahata Kidara Bara Hindoo-Rao Delhi-110006,have changed my name to Mohammad Anis Qureshi,for all,future Purposes. 0040713826-6

I, Minatullah,S/O,Faizul Bari, R/House,No-D6/1,Ground Floor,M.I.G DDA Flat,Saray Khalil,North Delhi-110006,Have Changed My Name to Mohd Minatullah, Permanently. 0040713826-5

I, Maya,W/o Jitender Yadav,R/o F-6,First Floor,Ganga Appts., Shanti Nagar,Gurgaon, Haryana,have changed my name to Maya Devi,for all purposes. 0040713893-5

I, Mangli Devi W/o Chingu,R/o/House.No.N-62/11-T-huts, Near Patrachar Vidyalaya, Timarpur North Delhi-110054,have changed my name "Mangli Devi"TO "Chandan Kumari" for all,purpose in future. 0040713923-2

I, S. Shakti ranganathan,S/o-Shekhar ranganathan, Address-JG-2/408, Vikasnagar,new delhi-110018,Changed my name to Shakti ranganathan. 0040713893-9

I, MURSALIN,S/O,ABDUL GAFFAR, ADD-A-339,F/F,OOLD POLICE-CHOWKI AMAR PURI,NABI KARIM PAHARGAN,CENTRAL DELHI-110055,Changed my name to MURSALEEN,for all,future purposes. 0040713826-2

I, MOHAMAD ATA,S/O,GULAM IMAHAMMAD R/O-6804 GALI LAMBI WALI AHATA KIDARA,DELHI-110006,HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO MOHAMAD ATA,FOR ALL PURPOSES. 0040713826-1

I, Devender Kataria S/o Surendra Singh Kataria R/o Jc-2,first floor bari wala bagh hari nager new Delhi-110064 have changed my minor son name from Garva Kataria to Garv Kataria for all future purposes. 0070888757-1

I, Khushbu D/o Ashok Kumar R/o 1728,Sector-55,faridabad-121004 (Haryana),have change my name to Khushbu Thakur. 0040713782-9

I, Jitender S/o Banwari Lal,R/o F-6,First Floor,Ganga Appts., Shanti Nagar,Gurgaon, Haryana,have changed my name to Jitender Yadav,for all purposes. 0040713893-4

I, JAWHHAR SINGH,S/O MANVEER SINGH,R/o 0119-G AKANSHA APARTMENT, ABHAY KHAND-3, INDIRAPURAM,GHAZIABAD UTTAR PRADESH-201014,changed my name to SUNIL CHAUDHARY. 0040713893-6

I, POONAM KAPUR, D/O SURAJ PARKASH PAOKAR, R/O HOUSE NO.-A/35, FIRST FLOOR, ALOK KUNJ, ROHINI SECTOR -15, ROHINI, NORTH WEST DELHI, DELHI-110089. Have changed my name to POONAM BHUTANI for all future purposes. 0070888665-1

I, Mohammad Zafar Khan S/o Mohd Zaki R/o F205,Cloud9, Ahinsakhand-2, Indirapuram, Ghaziabad have changed my name to Mohd Zafar Khan. 0070888744-1

I, Mayank S/o Anand Tiwari R/o Flat No. 9032, Tower-2, Block-E2, GHT, Ghaziabad, UP-201016 have changed my name to MAYANK TIWARI for all future purposes. 0070888742-1

I, Mamatha Sandeep D/o Rama Serigra R/o 5-9, Aleevoor Upidi Karnataka-574118, have changed my name to Mamatha. 0040713789-9

I, MANORANJAN JENA S/O SH. D' NENA R/O-PLLOT NO-5 FLAT NO-B-106, STREET NO-24, SADH NAGAR II, PALAM VILLAGE, SOUTH WEST DELHI-110045, declare that name of mine has been wrongly misspelled as MANORANJEN JENA in my DRIVING LICENCE. The actual name is MANORANJAN JENA which needs to be amended accordingly. 0040713896-1

I, Komal Gupta W/o Ajeept Khandelwal R/o B-491/A, B-Block, J.J.Colony, Inderpur, New Delhi-110012, have changed my name to Komal Khandelwal. 0040713789-5

I, Deepali Taneja,D/o Ravinder Oberoi,R/o Flat No.240, Pocket-D-17, Sector-3, Rohini, Delhi-110085, have changed my name to Deepali Oberoi,for all purposes. 0040713782-5

I, Chhotey S/o Mohd. Khalil R/o Z-6B, DDA Flats, New Ranjeet Nagar, New Delhi-110008, have changed my name to Mohd. Amirul permanently. 0040713789-3

I, Bikram Singh Dkhatar, S/o Sh. Khusht Lal, residing at 290A 3floor masjid Moth, South Extension part 2 New Delhi 110049 have change my minor daughter's name from LEISHA to LEISHA BIKDHAR for all future purposes. 0070888779-1

I, Asha Ahuja W/o Pramod Grover R/o B-19, Old-Qtrs., Ramesh Nagar, New Delhi-110015, have changed my name to Chetna Grover permanently. 0040713789-7

I, Deepali Singh,S/o Balbir Singh,R/o A-129, Sudershan Park,Delhi-110015,have changed my name to Daljeet Singh for all future purposes. 0040713826-6

I, Bholu Singh,S/o Tara Singh,R/o 855,Nand Colony,Pehowa,Kurukshetra,Ha ryana-136128,have changed my name to Bholu Singh. 0040713893-1

I, Bader Muneer Zaidi,D/o Intezar Hussain and,W/o Shamim Akhtar,R/o E-256,Gali-No.6,-West-Vinod Nagar,Delhi-110092,have changed my name to Tahseen Fatema,for all,future Purposes. 0040713782-11

I, BHARAT BHUSHAN,S/O-KRISHNA LAL,R/o-93D-Block, Sector-A,Bhagwati Vihar,Uttam Nagar,West Delhi,Delhi-110059,have inform that my name wrongly-written in year-2012 by Sub Registrar during a Consent Letter,as BHARAT BHAGWATI.The Actual Name of mine is BHARAT BHUSHAN on my Aadhar card, Pan Card and all other Documents,which May be implemented accordingly. 0040713788-9

I, Zulekha D/o Yusuf Khan R/o Y-111, DDA Flats, New Ranjeet Nagar, New Delhi-110008, have changed my name to Zulekha Khan. 0040713789-2

I, Shaheed D/o Kailash Chand R/o F-7/3, Third Floor Sector-16, Rohini Delhi-110085 have changed my name to Shaheed. 0040713759-1

I, Savitri W/o Ram Kripal R/o T-166/2 Punjabji Basti, Baljeet Nagar, Delhi - 08 declare that the name of mine has been wrongly written as Kamla in my school & PF record. The actual name of mine is Savitri respectively which may be amended accordingly. 0040713776-1

I, SUNIL AGGARWAL AND SUNIL KUMAR S/O RAM BHAGAT GARG R/o 333, 2nd FLOOR, TARUN ENCLAVE, PITAMPURA, DELHI-110034 HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO SUNIL GARG FOR ALL FUTURE PURPOSES. 0040713766-1

I, SHAKUNTALA DHAWAN HAVE LOST MY PROPERTY, ORIGINAL DDA-ISSUED ALLOTMENT, LETTER, DATED.11/10/1992 IN THE NAME OF SURESH KUMAR,S/O NARAIN DASS PROPERTY NO.LIG FLAT NO.1-C-FIRST-FLOOR POCKET A-1, KUNDLI GHAROLI MAYUR,VIHAR PHASE-3, DELHI-110095, FINDER CONTACT- 9711032633. 0040713921-10

I, Lost my Original-Alotment Letter bearing Flat.no.139, Jahanzeb Apartment Inner Enclave Rohtak Road Delhi-87, Finder-contact Ghanshyam S/o Babulal at above address. 0040713923-10

I, Rajender S/o Hans Raj Juneja R/o 17/3A, Moti Nagar, New Delhi-110015, have changed my name to Rajender Juneja. 0040713789-4

I, Punit Pathak S/o Om Narayan Pathak R/o 148, Pathakpura, Orai, UP have changed my name to Punit Sagar Pathak. 0070888750-1

I, Neetu Singh,W/o-Shyam Lal Verma,Address-E-110, first floor kalkaji New Delhi 110019,changed my name to Neetu. 0040713893-10

PUBLIC NOTICE

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is for general information that I, PRITAM KUMAR SHARMA S/o SH. LAKHMI CHAND SHARMA R/o VIJAY COLONY, GARHI HARSARAU(46), GUR

TAMIL NADU CIVIL SUPPLIES CORPORATION
 Head Office, 12, THAMBUSAMY ROAD,
 KILPAUK, CHENNAI - 600 010.
 Ph. No. (044) 26426773, Email id : tnscs.tn@nic.in
 CIN: U15137TN1972SGC006157
E-TENDER NOTICE

BS3/004775/2024 Date: 13.02.2024

e-tender No. BS3/004775/2024 - TNCS/23-24

Online electronic tender for "PURCHASE OF 600 LAKH NUMBERS OF FORTIFIED RBD PALMOLEIN OIL 1 LITRE POUCHES (910 gms)"

Complete e-tender document can be viewed and downloaded from <https://tnintenders.gov.in/nicgep/app> on 14.02.2024 @ 07.00 P.M.

The bidders have to participate online bidding only with Digital Signature Certificate (DSC) of Class-II or Class-III.

Last Date for Online Submission : 18.03.2024 up to 11.30 A.M.

DIPR/917/Tender/2024

MANAGING DIRECTOR

SEARCH FOR MISSING

General Public is hereby informed that a boy (depicted in the photo), **Named:** Md. Aman S/o Md. Anish R/o House No. B-370, Resettlement Colony, Khyala, New Delhi has been missing since 28.12.2023 from his house. In this regard a case vide DD No. 55A dated 03.01.2024 has been lodged at Police Station Khyala, Delhi. His physical description is as under:-

Age: 22 Years, **Height:** 5'10", **Complexion:** Shallow, **Face:** Long, **Built:** Medium, **Wearing:** Black Colour Jacket & Blue Colour Jeans and White Colour Shoes in feet.

Any person having any information/ Clue about this missing boy, may inform SHO, Khyala, Delhi at E-mail Id: cic@cbi.gov.in or website: <http://cbi.nic.in>

Phone: 011-24368638, 24368641 **P.S. Khyala, Delhi**
Fax No. 011-24368639 **Ph. No. 8750871132, 9718081879,**
DP/1061/WD/2024 **8178335662**

M.P. POWER GENERATING CO. LTD.

(CIN No. U40109MP2001SGC014882)

Office of the Executive Director (Prg)

Shed No. 1 & 2, Rampur; Jabalpur (M.P.), Pin-482008

E-Mail : prgstsps660@gmail.com, Ph. : 0761-2925650

Ref. : Tender Ref. No. 07-01/STPS-PH/V-U/12/PRG

Tender ID: 2023_MPPGC_315012_1

DOMESTIC COMPETITIVE BIDDING**INTIMATION OF UPLOADING; EPC TENDER FOR****INSTALLATION OF 1X660 MW ULTRA-SUPERCritical****UNIT AT SATPURA TPS -SARNI, DISTRICT: BETUL- M.P.**

M.P. Power Generating Co. Ltd. have uploaded tender inviting

E-Bids for Design, Engineering, Supply, Civil Works, Erection,

Testing & Commissioning of 1X660 MW Ultra-supercritical

Thermal Power Unit, on EPC Turnkey basis; at Satpura Thermal

Power Station, Sarni; Distt. Betul (MP). The detailed NIT &

Bidding Documents are available for sale on the e-tendering

website www.mptender.gov.in from 07.02.2024 with last

date of Bid submission and date of opening 25.04.2024 and

29.04.2024, respectively.

M.P. Madhyam/113767/2024 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR (PRG)**

/SAVE ELECTRICITY//

जल संसाधन विभाग

कार्यपालक अभियंता का कार्यालय

सिंचाई प्रमण्डल, लक्ष्मीपुर जमुई

पत्रक्रम-168/लक्ष्मीपुर अल्पकालीन निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना संख्या - 05/2023-24

1. कार्य का विवरण -

क्र. सं.	कार्य का नाम	प्राकलित राशि (लाख रुपये में)	अधिकारी की विधि (लाख रुपये में) (आनंद लाइन वाले वैक सारांश में शुरूतेवाले)	परियोग की मूल्य (आवधारणालीय)	परियोग का मूल्य (आवधारणालीय)	बेटवार्स को देय वित्त प्रोसेसिंग फी (आवधारणालीय)	कार्य समाप्ति की विधि
01	02	03	04	05	06	07	
1	RENOVATION WORK OF BAJAN BRANCH CANAL- 01 OF BAJAN WEIR SCHEME UNDER IRRIGATION DIVISION LAXMIPUR JAMUI	62.58219	1,25200/-	10000.00	590/-		31.07.2024

2. निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना निर्गत करने की विधि : दिनांक - 09.02.2024

3. निविदा कार्यालय तात्पुरता एवं अपलोड करने की अवधि : दिनांक - 20.02.2024 से दिनांक 23.02.2024 के 3.00 बजे तक

4. तकनीकी विधि योग्यता की विधि एवं समय : दिनांक - 28.02.2024 समय 3.30 बजे अपराह्न में।

5. वित्तीय विधि योग्यता की विधि एवं समय : दिनांक - 01.03.2024 से 01.03.2024 तक

6. निविदा खोलने की विधि एवं समय : दिनांक - 10.03.2024

7. निविदा की घोषणा अवधि : दिनांक - 10.03.2024

8. विज्ञापनदाता का पदनाम एवं पता : सिंचाई प्रमण्डल, लक्ष्मीपुर जमुई

9. विज्ञापनदाता प्राप्त करने हेतु वेबसाइट [www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in, एवं state.bihar.gov.in/prdbihar](http://www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in/prdbihar) पर देखा जा सकता है।10. उक्त सूचना state.bihar.gov.in/prdbihar पर भी देखी जा सकती है। सिंचाई प्रमण्डल, लक्ष्मीपुर जमुई 90- 7463889333

PR-017183 (W/RD) 2023-24

नशो से बचने का है एक ही उपचार, दृढ़ संकल्प और परिवार से प्यार।

पत्रक्रम-168/लक्ष्मीपुर अल्पकालीन निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना संख्या - 05/2023-24

पत्रक्रम-168/लक्ष्मीपुर अल्पकालीन निविदा आमंत्रण

SENSEX: 71,555.19 ▲ 482.70 (0.68%) NIFTY: 21,743.25 ▲ 127.20 (0.59%) NIKKEI: 37,963.97 ▲ 1,066.55 HANG SENG: 15,746.58 ▼ 131.49 FTSE: 7,524.54 ▼ 49.15 DAX: 16,882.33 ▼ 155.02



GOLD

₹63,100



USD RATE

₹83



OIL

\$81.94



SILVER

₹75,400

Note: Gold, silver rates at Delhi spot market, gold per 10g, silver per 1kg; Crude oil (Indian basket) as of February 9

International market data till 1900 IST

Banks, fintechs partner to tap young Indian tourists with zero forex cards

AGGAM WALIA
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 13

WITH THE Indian outbound tourism industry recording a sharp recovery post-Covid, banks and fintech startups are looking to add a niche yet growing segment of young international travellers into their fold by making overseas expenditure significantly cheaper.

Fintech startup Fi, for instance, reduced the foreign currency transaction fee for its Amplifi credit card from 1 per cent to 0 per cent in December, matching the zero forex markup feature already available on its debit card. Like Fi, fintech startups Jupiter and Scapia also offer credit and debit cards charging zero forex markup, all in collaboration with Kochi-based Federal Bank. Others like Equitas Small Finance Bank, SBM Bank, and DCB Bank also provide such co-branded cards, each in partnership with another fintech startup, Niyo Global.

"When it comes to international travel, people want some amount of certainty in their minds regarding their net expenditure. Uncertainty can be a huge problem as it can make discretionary spending particularly difficult," Shalin Warrier, executive director at Federal Bank, told *The Indian Express*. "Everybody worries when they hear in the market 3 per cent or 5 per cent forex markup. Thus, offering zero forex markup is a way to give people the confidence that we're taking away that burden from them," she added.

Certain zero forex markup credit cards also require a linked fixed deposit (FD) on which the cardholder earns interest. For instance, Niyo Global's zero forex markup credit card offered in collaboration with SBM Bank needs to be linked to an FD amount of at least Rs 5,000, on which an annual interest rate of upto 7.25 per cent is applicable. The underlying FD for such cards determines the credit limit and mitigates potential risks for the bank by ensuring that the credit line is secured. For customers, such cards become an attractive proposition as they can earn interest on the FD and avail of the zero forex markup feature to make international travel cheaper.

According to Warrier, a combination of factors including the coronavirus lockdown, rising disposable incomes, increasing affordability of international destinations, and a travel-loving

younger generation make the customer value proposition of zero forex markup cards especially strong. "It has been said that there's revenge tourism coming in now as the pandemic had impacted our ability to travel. Today, there is a growing awareness of the travel market and of the ability to travel and see places," Warrier said.

As per a McKinsey report published in November, outbound tourism in India has recorded much quicker recovery than most Asian countries, touching 61 per cent of the pre-pandemic market. With countries such as Thailand, Malaysia, and Sri Lanka removing visa requirement for Indian tourists, coupled with affordable stay options in and flights to countries in Southeast Asia, Central Asia, and the Middle East, more and more Indians are looking outwards for their next vacation. For such travellers, avoiding a forex markup of 3 to 5 per cent, which is typically charged by cards on all foreign expenditure, increases the likelihood of staying within budget and can potentially also encourage greater discretionary spending.

Warrier explained that the zero forex markup feature is specifically targeted towards the salaried millennial between the age group of 27 to 36 years old, typically working a software or consultancy job. "The tech-savvy salaried millennials probably enjoy one international trip per year. For that profile of customers, zero forex markup cards are quite attractive," she added. Anil Goteti, founder and CEO at Scapia, said that Scapia's products, which include a co-branded credit card issued in partnership with Federal Bank and an in-app travel booking platform, are also aimed at young Indian travellers. The Scapia-Federal Bank credit card has zero joining and annual fees in addition to zero forex markup fees. "On the international front, Scapia's user community has used the app and card to travel across 50 countries in 5 continents," Goteti told *The Indian Express*.

Given the target segment of zero forex markup cards, Warrier explained why collaboration with fintechs is key.

"For Federal Bank, partnering with fintechs is a means to expand distribution. While we have branches, you can never reach the nook and corner of the country like a digital can," she said.

FULL REPORT ON
www.indianexpress.com

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU
MUMBAI, FEBRUARY 13

RELIANCE INDUSTRIES Ltd (RIL) became the first Indian company to cross Rs 20 lakh market capitalisation during the trading session on Tuesday.

The benchmark Sensex gained 0.68 per cent, or 483 points, at 71,555.19 and the NSE Nifty moved up by 127 points to 21,743.25. The RIL stock surged to its 52-week high of Rs 2,958 before closing at Rs 2,928.95. RIL market capitalisation at close was Rs 19.81 lakh crore. Market capitalisation is the total market value of all listed shares of a company. Nifty bounced back from Monday's losses after India's Consumer Price Index (CPI) inflation came in at a three-month low of 5.10 per cent. All sectors ended in green, except metals.



RIL market capitalisation at close was Rs 19.81 lakh crore. File

banking and financial services were the top gainers. Shares of public sector undertakings (PSU) bounced back after witnessing profit booking over the last few sessions.

"Noteworthy support from heavyweight RIL spurred the

rally, propelling the index. Global markets trading on a positive note further strengthened the rally," said Om Mehra, Technical Analyst, SAMCO Securities.

MSCI Global Standard Index saw a quarterly rejig on Tuesday that could lead to inflows of

Passenger vehicle retail sales touch record high in January

Improved vehicle availability, introduction of new models and a shift towards premium options contributed to demand, as per Federation of Automobile Dealers Associations (FADA)



Two-wheeler sales:
Increased 15% year-on-year to 14,58,849 units in Jan

Commercial vehicles:
Flat sales growth last month at 89,208 units

Three-wheeler retail sales:
Saw an increase of 37% to 97,675 units

Tractors:
Sales rose 21% year on year to 88,671 units

50-55 days range: Serious concerns remain regarding PV inventory level

Source: FADA/PTI

Revenue growth of auto component industry to moderate to 5-7% in FY25

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 13

ANNUAL REVENUE growth of leading auto component manufacturing companies will come down to 5-7 per cent in the next fiscal due to moderation in domestic volumes and a drop in exports, rating firm Icra said on Tuesday.

According to Icra estimates, its sample of 45 auto ancillaries, with aggregate annual revenues of Rs 2.7 lakh crore in FY23, is likely to grow by 9-11 per cent in FY24, driven by healthy domestic de-

mand despite a high base and moderate growth in exports.

For FY25, the growth is likely to be relatively lower to 5-7 per cent, with expected moderation in domestic volume growth and a weak outlook for exports, Icra said. It also noted that capex towards capacity enhancements and technological development resulted in higher investment in FY24, which is likely to continue in FY25.

The industry is estimated to incur a capex of at least Rs 20,000-25,000 crore in FY25, with incremental investments being towards new product ad-

ditions, product development for committed platforms, and development of advanced technology, the rating agency stated.

The capex would also go into EV components, capacity enhancements and upcoming regulatory changes, it added.

Factors like rising supplies to new platforms because of vendor diversification initiatives by global original equipment manufacturers (OEMs), higher value addition and aftermarket demand potential in overseas markets, with the ageing of vehicles augur well for Indian auto component suppliers, Icra said.

Underwrite disruptions to improve market penetration: IRDAI chief to insurance players

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 13

INSURANCE PLAYERS need to underwrite disruptions to make the vision of 'insurance for all' a reality by 2047, regulator IRDAI's chief Debasish Panda said on Tuesday.

The chairman of the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) also emphasised that the approach of 'one-size-fits-all' has become a thing of past due to the radical technology-driven changes taking place in the industry.

"It's time we retrieve our base, firm up our resolve and collectively underwrite disruptions in the insurance sector and make the vision of 'insurance for all' a reality by 2047. In this process, the role of the actuary becomes paramount. The disruptions in the insurance sector cannot happen without the support of actuaries," Panda said at the 23rd global conference of actuaries organized by the Institute of Actuaries of India here.

"There is a need to come out of the traditional and conventional roles and embrace dynamism and agility and also there is a need to see the sector

from a different lens," he said, acknowledging the role of actuaries in designing the insurance products and drive the growth of the sector.

With over 850 million internet users and 750 million smartphone users in the country, every click, every keyboard button press, swipe or tap is generating data. These digital footprints are available and most importantly, today's customers do not shy away from sharing information in exchange of personalised experiences, he said.

Thus, any insurance company operating purely on the traditional sides will find it difficult

to survive against the ones having predicted customer needs and offer the right product through the right channel to the right customer, he said.

Today, he said, blockchain-enabled smart contracts have enabled the settlement of insurance debt within seconds and even fraud detection has become more effective with the help of data analytics.

Artificial intelligence, machine learning, big data, internet of things (IoT) and many more such new technologies are causing disruptions and changing the traditional fabric of the sector, the chairman said.

Flight curbs imposed at Mumbai airport to ease congestion: Govt

New Delhi: The civil aviation ministry on Tuesday said flight restrictions have been imposed at the Mumbai airport to ease congestion, caused by various factors, including non-scheduled flight operations during peak hours. The airport is operated by the Mumbai International Airport Ltd (MIAL).

In a detailed statement issued late on Tuesday, the ministry said the airport operator should have proactively taken steps to streamline and regulate the air traffic

movements to address the congestion issue. However, since no such action was initiated by the airport operator, the ministry said it has had to step in.

While Mumbai airport is running at its full capacity, the ministry said it was found that the persistent congestion was caused due to "excessive slot distribution with limited time margins on behalf of the airport operator", non-adherence of the slots on behalf of the airlines and non-scheduled operations during peak hours. PTI

GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA HYDERABAD METROPOLITAN WATER SUPPLY & SEWERAGE BOARD
O/o Chief General Manager (Engg), Transmission Circle, Khairatabad, Hyderabad-04, T.S.
e-PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTIFICATION

EP No. 99 & 100 CGM/E/CTC/T & O&M Div/XI 2023-24, Dtd-14.02.2024

Supply, delivery and fixing of 600/700mm dia Butterfly valves and 600mm dia Non Slant type check valves (NVR) for 1300/1475/1425 KW pumps at 6.6KV Phase I & II pump houses at Kondapur, Nasirpura and Godakondia under Electrical sub division, O&M Div.No.XI, Seebhagar.

The Tenderers are requested to upload the information on Zip format preferably. Further details can be seen on www.eprocurement.gov.in.

Sd/- Chief General Manager (Engg), Transmission Circle, Khairatabad, Hyderabad-04, T.S.

'India susceptible to trade disputes without permanent solution for food security'

RAVI DUTTA MISHRA
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 13

1

INDIA WILL be susceptible to trade disputes at the World Trade Organization (WTO) and face increased push back over food subsidies if it fails to achieve a permanent solution on public stockholding for food grains at the 13th ministerial conference in Abu Dhabi later this month, according to senior trade experts and former negotiators.

2

A permanent solution at WTO will give India and a coalition of developing countries the flexibility to give out higher farm support.

3

This assumes special significance as farmers are holding yet again protests in the national capital seeking a law to guarantee minimum support price (MSP) for all crops. Several farmers groups have long held the opinion that India should walk out of WTO.

4

However, giving out higher farm support could land India into legal disputes at WTO on account of distorting global trade.

5

India is already facing pushback from the Cairns Group — a group of agricultural exporting countries that include Australia, Brazil and Canada who claim that India's public stockholding (PSH) programme is highly subsidised, especially for rice, and that this is affecting food security of other countries.

6

The main reason why India is very keen on a permanent solution is that some of the provisions in the peace clause are ambiguous. So we don't know how those provisions will be interpreted by WTO panel. That creates uncertainty and unpredictability for us. Our invoking the peace clause from 2020 onwards has been subjected to detailed questioning by many countries. The objective is to make the peace clause more restrictive," Abhijit Das, expert on international trade and former head, Centre for WTO Studies said.

7

Government officials had earlier said that India will not discuss any other issues on agriculture as long as the issue of permanent solution is not resolved.

8

Developed and developing nations continue to differ on the subject of domestic support for farmers so much so that the WTO Director-General, Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala in November last year said that ongoing agriculture negotiations have "failed to achieve" the progress WTO members have called for.

India has invoked the 'peace clause' several times at the WTO

members have called for.

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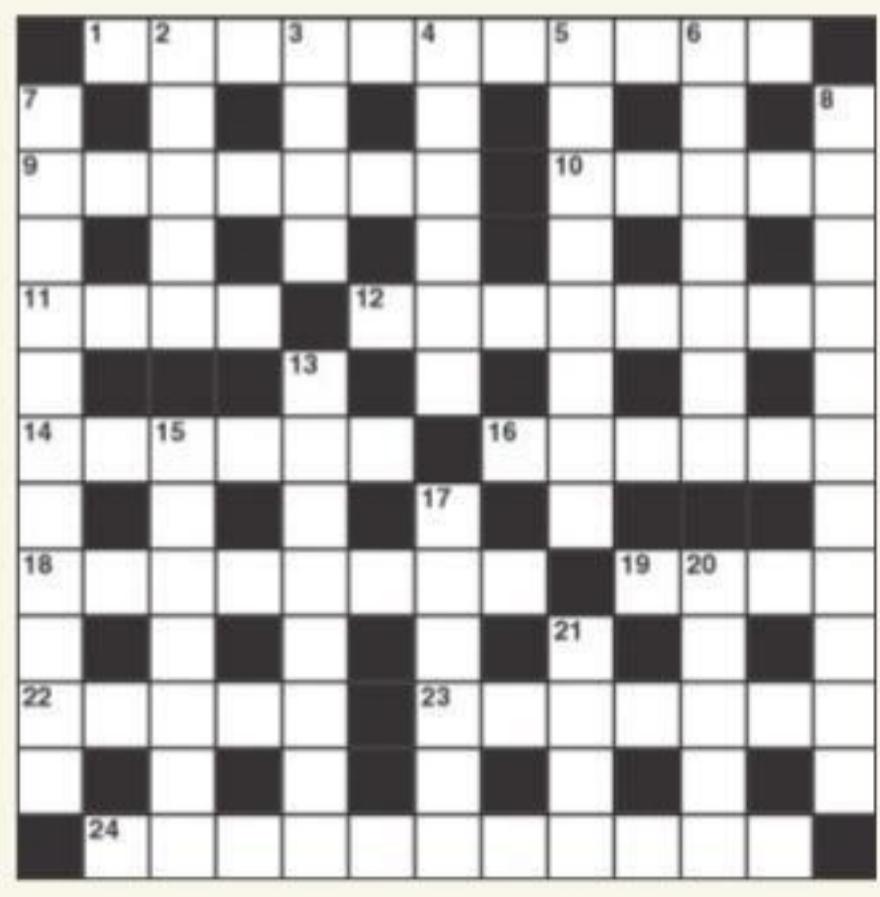
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CROSSWORD 5287



- ACROSS**
- Final stage of house extension (4)
 - Dishing out punishments (7)
 - It's held to dispel gloom (5)
 - Excellent yet not well done (4)
 - The verdict of the court is in code oddly enough (8)
 - She may raise people's spirits (6)
 - Start breeding a bird dog (6)
 - Poital packet that goes overseas (4,4)
 - Raising the stake for hotly tipped runner (4)
 - Not a subject needed by most schoolchildren (5)
 - Nut and date confection which is ridiculed (7)
 - Honeymoon express perhaps may be held up (6,5)
- DOWN**
- Succession of command (5)
 - A bird engaged in making her nest (4)
 - One who tries out a canopy (6)
 - Involved tale about one in the end (8)
 - Not being straight in a game (7)
 - It makes things easy to forget (5,6)
 - Get new owners and new staff (6,5)
 - Told off (8)
 - His money may be well-earned (7)
 - It's used for colouring new plates (6)
 - Everybody's playtime? (5)
 - A sticky attachment in a manner of speaking (4)

Solutions Crossword 5286 Across: 1'Parcel, 4'Spellout, 9'Safely, 10'Seasongs, 12'Pool, 13'Bader, 14'Etna, 17'In proportion, 20'Bedtime story, 23'Lurs, 24'Leant, 25'Bees, 28'Imperial, 29'Driver, 30'Hacienda, 31'Hearts Down: 1'Post-paid, 2'Regroups, 3'Eels, 5'Presentiment, 6'Lest, 7'Ornate, 8'Tuscan, 11'Law of the land, 15'Loser, 16'Joust, 18'Moreover, 19'Eyesores, 21'Elfish, 22'Tropic, 26'Free, 27'True

OVER THE HEDGE by Michael Fry & I Lewis



CALVIN & HOBBES by Bill Watterson



MARVIN by Tom Armstrong



SUDOKU 5472

Difficulty Level 3

Instructions

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

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

Difficulty Level

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

SOLUTION SUDOKU 5471

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

DAY TODAY

BY PETER VIDAL

ARIES (Mar 21 - Apr 20)

The Moon introduces a joyful note to the day's proceedings, but the angle between the Sun and Neptune is still pushing you towards unrealistic hopes. It may be best to keep your more ambitious plans under wraps for now, at least until you've sounded out the opposition.

LIBRA (Sep 24 - Oct 23)

The choice is yours but, if you know what's good for you, you'll continue to stick to principles over cash and career matters. Compromise and flexibility are all very well, but you don't want to be pushed completely off course. Other people need to know that you really do mean business.

TAURUS (Apr 21 - May 21)

Friendly relations do love an argument from time to time. The problem is that nobody has got their facts straight, perhaps not even you! However, you can exert an influence on temperate colleagues, presenting them with the facts whether they like them or not.

SCORPIO (Oct 24 - Nov 23)

Some offers have seemed irresistible, but perhaps you were right to hold out for better terms. In a sense, it's your attitude that counts more than the outcome. This is because what this current period is all about is personal growth and self-understanding rather than material benefit.

GEMINI (May 22 - June 21)

The Moon offers a series of opportunities, but you don't have to take them! In other words, promises may not be translated into action. You should probably make more effort to seize the initiative and compensate for other people's unwillingness to get grips with practical tasks.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov 24 - Dec 22)

Loved ones or close companions may be unreasonable, but there are ways to escape from emotional tension. What you can do, is make a conscious decision to treat all differences of opinion in a mature, calm and rational manner – and never lose your cool.

CAPRICORN (Dec 23 - Jan 20)

Mercury, the planet of the mind and all forms of communication, is gradually altering its position for the better. All those differences of opinion at home should become less important, and you'll soon find it easier to put your ideas across in other related areas.

CANCER (June 22 - July 23)

You are responsible for your own success. Every current opportunity stems from events which took place six months ago. Those of you with long memories will realise that current stress levels date back even further. It's time to smile and get on with positive plans.

LEO (July 24 - Aug 23)

Your purpose is to maintain the peace. Arguments and disputes can be avoided. Quite frankly, this is one of those times when people who have no self-control create havoc but individuals with a mission to fulfil will make great strides. Hopefully, that includes you.

AQUARIUS (Jan 21 - Feb 19)

Your natural intuitive abilities are in excellent working order but, to feel their benefit, you need to banish all that mental clutter and allow your mind to relax. Only then will important hunches and long-term dreams succeed in attracting your attention.

PISCES (Feb 20 - Mar 20)

It's a moment to watch, wait and listen. The point is that the correct behaviour depends on exact timing, and you will instinctively know when it is right to spring into action. Meanwhile, family responsibilities and domestic duties keep you busy.

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.

Victory attained by violence is tantamount to a defeat, for it is momentary

— Mahatma Gandhi

CGAER

AFLUMN

CNUOT

AEHMMY

Answers: Victory attained by violence is tantamount to a defeat, for it is momentary

SOLUTION: CGAE, CNUOT, AFLUMN, AEHMMY

Difficulty Level 3
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.

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

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5s = Very Hard;
6s = Genius

Difficulty Level

1s = Very easy; 2s = Easy;
3s = Medium; 4s = Hard;
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LONG READ

Paris via wrestling hub Dagestan

If Chhatrasal was a finishing school, centres in Dagestan, Vladikavkaz and Yakutia are where India's Olympic hopefuls aspire to attain mastery

MIHIR VASAVDA

AMAN SEHRAWAT was 11 when his uncle dropped him at the Chhatrasal Stadium, not too long after he had lost both his parents.

For a decade since, the prodigious light-weight wrestler has been training – and staying – at the fabled, and unforgiving, akhara in North Delhi. But last month, after his coaches sensed the urgency to upskill, Aman stepped outside the familiar confines for the first time.

His choice of destination wasn't surprising – Dagestan.

More by design than coincidence, Aman – the junior world champion, senior Asian Champion, Asian Games bronze medalist and the only Indian to win a title so far this year – was simply following the footsteps of all the famous Chhatrasal alumni.

For years, India's top male wrestlers – Sushil Kumar, Yogeshwar Dutt, Bajrang Punia, Ravi Dahiya and Deepak Punia – have flocked to the Eastern European powerhouse. Even before the Tokyo Olympics, where India won two wrestling medals, the entire team camped in Russia before flying to the Japanese capital directly from there.

They go there in search of better quality sparring partners and also because training only at home often stalls their progress.

If Chhatrasal was a finishing school, the wrestling hubs in Russia – Dagestan in particular but also places like Vladikavkaz and Yakutia – have been the Ivy League-like institutions where they hope to attain mastery over their art.

"To become a national champion, you leave your local akhara and do everything you can to join Chhatrasal," says Deepak, the 86 kg category World Championship medalist who came within six seconds of a Tokyo Olympics bronze. "And if you want to win a big international medal, the Olympics or World Championship, you go to Russia."

Like Aman, Russia was the first overseas training stop even for Deepak back in 2020.

Since then, he's gone there every year. And if all goes as per plan, he'll be headed to Dagestan once again before the Asian Olympic Qualification tournament takes place in April.

Another Indian currently at the place dubbed as the wrestling capital of the world is Bajrang, the Tokyo Olympics bronze winner who is charting his way back into the team after spending a major part of the last year leading the protests against former Wrestling Federation of India president Brij Bhushan Sharang Singh.

"Here, it's only wrestling," Bajrang says over the phone from Dagestan, in the South of Russia. "There's no other sport. Only UFC and wrestling, UFC and wrestling."

Football and ice hockey may dominate Russia's vast sporting landscape. But in Kayakent, Makhachkala and Khasavyurt – the wrestling towns in Dagestan – the sport is a centuries-old custom. Just like in Haryana, it is also a way of life.

This similarity, however, is not what appeals to India's wrestlers. They choose Russia because of the differences. In playing style, technique, sparring and climate.

"Broadly speaking, world wrestling has three main powerhouses in men's freestyle: the USA, Iran and Russia," says 2012 Olympics bronze medalist Yogeshwar. "The wrestling philosophy of India and Iran is very similar. From the way we stand on the mat to how we fight and the speciality – underhooks – is all quite identical. So, if you go to Iran, you won't learn anything new."

Hence, the US – the Olympic training centre in Colorado Springs being the preferred choice – and Russia are the two countries India's wrestlers frequent regularly.

"I would give the US 11 on 10. Be it training, facilities, sports science, food, water: A to Z. Everything top class," says Deepak, who just returned from a training stint there. "Russia has bare minimum facilities and a very old system. But they have the best sparring partners."

And so, like moths to flame, they flock to the mountains of Dagestan. Another attraction is the emphasis on technical aspects, which makes Russian wrestlers irresistibly good in every mat position apart from the

WHY RUSSIA:

■ The USA, Russia and Iran are the three main wrestling hubs for men's freestyle. India and Iran's styles are the same, say wrestlers, which means they don't learn anything new by training alongside them.

■ And while the US provides top-class facilities, Russia has the best sparring partners. That along with the emphasis on technical aspects of the sport appeals to the Indian wrestlers.

WHY DAGESTAN

■ A small province in the south of Russia where the Caucasus mountains meet the Caspian Sea, Dagestan is dubbed as the wrestling capital of the world.



For years, India's top male wrestlers, including Olympic medallists like Sushil Kumar, Yogeshwar Dutt, Bajrang Punia and Ravi Dahiya have made Dagestan, known as a wrestling and UFC hub, a training base. *Bajrangpunia 60/Instagram*

Even the local wrestlers are world-class. You will barely notice much difference between the number 1 ranked wrestler and number 10. And then, you will also have some of the best in the world coming here to get better."

BAJRANG PUNIA
TOKYO OLYMPICS BRONZE MEDALIST

The coaches and wrestlers there spend a lot of time researching match situations – I am pushed into this corner, how can I save myself; the best areas to score points and ways to wriggle out of a hold and not concede."

DEEPAK PUNIA
WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP MEDALIST

takedowns and throws.

Not the one for exaggeration, Bajrang says it is a 'different universe'.

"Even the local wrestlers are world-class. You will barely notice much difference between the number 1 ranked wrestler and number 10. And then, you will also have some of the best in the world coming here to get better," Bajrang, who has been going to Russia since 2018, says.

At the Rio Games, the last time when Russia competed without any restrictions at the Olympics, Dagestani wrestlers won five medals. Russian empires have won medals for former Soviet bloc nations and even countries like Bahrain, Lebanon and Hungary. "In my weight category alone, there are four wrestlers from Russia who represent other countries," says Bajrang, referring to reigning world champion Iszmail Muszukajev, who competes for Hungary, Abdulmazid Kudiev (Tajikistan), Alibeg Alibegov (Bahrain) and Umidjon Jalolov (Kyrgyzstan).

It's not a one-way relationship, though. In 2021, Bajrang was chatting with two-time Olympic champion Roman Vlasov on social media. The casual conversation led to an unexpected invite to Moscow, where Bajrang trained with Vlasov.

This would've been a routine training session if not for the fact that Vlasov is a Greco-Roman wrestler while Bajrang is a freestyle champion. It's like getting a rifle and pistol shooter to train together; same sport in the-

■ Smaller than Haryana in size and population, the wrestlers from there have won as many medals in men's wrestling in one Olympics – five, at the Rio Games – as many as India has managed in this century.

■ Wrestlers from Dagestan represent not just Russia in international events, but also change nationalities and play for other nations.

■ Currently, in Bajrang's weight category (65kg) alone, four Dagestani wrestlers represent other countries. This includes the reigning world champion Iszmail Muszukajev, who competes for Hungary, Abdulmazid Kudiev (Tajikistan), Alibeg Alibegov (Bahrain) and Umidjon Jalolov (Kyrgyzstan).

ory but vastly different in practice.

Yet, the session turned out to be eye-opening for the Indian. "Training with a Greco-Roman wrestler means my upper-body holds improved. I got to learn their techniques with grips and ground defence," Bajrang says of the 2021 stint.

Bajrang has a dedicated fan base now and there are times when the crowd cheers for him even when he's competing against a local favourite. But this time, he's there not as a world wrestling star but as a man hoping to resurrect his career.

Training, he hopes, will involve a lot of 'lakdabadi' – translated loosely as quick back-and-forth. At the Asian Games, speed deserted Bajrang after he spent most of 2023 away from the mat. High-intensity sparring in Dagestan, he expects, will help him get in shape faster for the selection trials expected to be held around this time next month for the Olympic qualifiers.

"Agar zyada lakdabadi hogi kushti mein, toh zyada benefit hogi (It'll be more beneficial if there's quick back-and-forth while wrestling)," Bajrang says. "If my partner is attacking, I'll defend; if I attack, he'll defend. Since the wrestlers here are experts in such technical wrestling, the quick transitions improve your game as well apart from increasing speed and stamina."

For Deepak, situational practice is high on the agenda ahead of the qualifiers apart from the usual skill top-ups involving mat training, grips, explosive power and holds.

"The coaches and wrestlers there spend a lot of time researching match situations – I am pushed into this corner, how can I save myself; the best areas to score points and ways to wriggle out of a hold and not concede," he says.

Deepak and Tokyo silver medalist Ravi have gone a step further – not only do they visit Dagestan, but they even got Dagestani coaches relocated to Delhi so that the lessons never stop.

Ahead of the Tokyo Games, Murad Gaidarov and Kamal Malikov – who briefly trained Sushil Kumar as well in his failed comeback bid for the 2020 Olympics – were stationed at Chhatrasal. Malikov is still in India, attached to the Army wrestlers which means Deepak still seeks his help as and when needed. Bajrang, too, is soon likely to join forces with a Russian coach, Ali Shabanov.

"They (Russian coaches) bring expertise which we lack in India," admits Lalit Kumar, who has coached Aman from the time he was admitted to Chhatrasal 10 years ago. "That's also why we have sent Aman to Russia. He aspires to become an Olympic medalist. Training in Dagestan will open doors to a new world."



Bajrang Punia warms up ahead of a practice session in Dagestan.

UWW lifts ban on Indian body

MIHIR VASAVDA
MUMBAI, FEBRUARY 13

In a decision that is likely to create confusion domestically but will allow India's athletes to once again compete under the national flag internationally, the United World Wrestling (UWW) Tuesday lifted the suspension it imposed on the Wrestling Federation of India (WFI).

The UWW said the reinstatement of WFI – after it served a suspension for six months for failure to conduct its elections – is conditional. As a part of the deal, the WFI – led by a close aide of Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh, accused of sexual harassment by the country's top wrestlers – has to provide the UWW with 'written guarantees that all wrestlers will be considered for participation without any discrimination'.

"This non-discrimination includes the three athletes who protested against alleged wrongdoings by the former President," the UWW said, referring to Vinesh Phogat, Bajrang Punia and Sakshi Malik who led the protests against Brij Bhushan.

Speaking to *The Indian Express*, WFI president Sanjay Singh said he would personally call the three wrestlers and invite them to participate in the trials for the Olympic qualification tournament to be held in April.

While Sakshi announced her retirement after Sanjay was appointed the president, Vinesh recently won a gold medal at the National Championship in her first tournament in more than a year. Bajrang is currently



WFI president Sanjay Singh is known to be close to former president Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh. File

in Russia preparing for the trials.

"I have held talks with the UWW. I won't take any names but I will invite the three wrestlers personally for the trials. Every wrestler eligible will be allowed to take part in the tournament," Sanjay told this paper.

The UWW's decision, however, will lead to an anomalous situation where the WFI is now recognised by the world body but remains suspended domestically.

The government has mandated an ad-hoc committee, instituted by the Indian Olympic Association (IOA), to take care of the day-to-day affairs of the WFI including team selections and conducting tournaments.

The government took the decision days after Sanjay succeeded Brij Bhushan as the WFI president. One of the reasons cited for the move was that the Sanjay-led committee, the government noted, 'appeared to be in complete control' of the BJP MP.

The ad-hoc body had recently conducted its own National Championship, separate from the competition held by the WFI. It has even announced the dates, venues and eligibility for the selection trials for the Olympic qualifiers.

Until now, the UWW coordinated with the ad-hoc committee for India's participation. Now that they have lifted WFI's suspension, the ad-hoc committee – for them – will cease to exist. As per competition rules, they will accept only those entries for tournaments that come via the national governing body.

Blupinder Bajwa, a member of the ad-hoc body, did not respond to calls seeking comments. Prem Chand Lochab, the WFI secretary general who worked alongside the ad hoc body, said he was waiting for details on the UWW decision.

Sanjay, meanwhile, said new dates and venues for the trials will be announced soon. "Since the WFI is responsible for ensuring participation of India's wrestlers in international tournaments, we will conduct the selection trials as well as the National Championship for junior age groups," he said.

Another condition that the UWW has imposed on the WFI is the elections of its Athletes' Commission. Rendering the earlier election – wherein London Olympics bronze medalist Yogeshwar Dutt was elected chairman – null and void, the world body said the candidates for the commission shall be 'active athletes'.

"The WFI has to re-convene the elections of its Athletes' Commission. The candidates for this commission shall be active athletes or retired for no longer than four years. The voters shall be exclusively athletes. These elections shall take place during trials or any senior national championships where this operation can take place, but no later than July 1, 2024," the UWW said.

RECOVERY & LEGAL SECTION, CIRCLE OFFICE, 3rd Floor, Luv-Kush Tower, Exhibition Road, Patna - 800001, Ph.: 0612-2320180, Email : npacopat@canarabank.com					
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