

140 CISF personnel sent for training to Parliament ahead of Budget session

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 23

A CONTINGENT of 140 CISF personnel has been sent for training in Parliament complex as part of the new measure to frisk the visitors and their baggage from the Budget session that commences from January 31.

The move comes a month after the Centre asked the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) to carry out a survey of Parliament premises for regular deployment on comprehensive pattern in the wake of a breach by a few people, who entered the Parliament hall filled with MPs and sprayed coloured smoke canisters on December 13 last year.

Another major change would be a ban on taking photographs inside the premises by Parliament staff and the visitors. On Tuesday, a CISF spokesperson said: "We have sent a team of 140 personnel to conduct familiarisation training sessions before their deployment."

Following the security breach, a preliminary probe by a committee headed by CRPF Director General Anish Dayal Singh had found security lapses at the entry point during frisking of visitors. Eight security personnel were suspended for the breach.

Earlier, frisking of visitors was conducted by Delhi Police personnel.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA MINISTRY OF DEFENCE EX-SERVICEMEN CONTRIBUTORY HEALTH SCHEME STATION HQ (ECHS CELL), MEERUT PHONE : 0121 - 2658264, e-mail : shqmeerut@echs.gov.in

EMPLOYMENT NOTICE

1. ECHS invites applications to engage Medical, Para Medical & Non Medical Staff on contractual basis in ECHS Polyclinics Meerut, Muzaffarnagar, Bijnor and Baghpat for a period of one year renewable for additional period of one year/till attaining the maximum age subject to performance of candidates/other conditions according to the criteria as mentioned against each post :-

Appointment	Minimum Qualification	Vacancy Status				Fixed Remuneration
		Meerut	Muzaffarnagar	Bijnor	Baghpat	
28 Feb and 29 Feb 2024						
Officer In-charge	Graduate	—	01	01	—	Rs. 75,000/-
Gynaecologist	MS/MD	01	—	—	—	Rs. 1,00,000/-
Medical Officer	MBBS	05	—	01	02	Rs. 75,000/-
Dental Officer	BDS	01	—	01	01	Rs. 75,000/-
Nursing Assistant	GNM	—	—	01	—	Rs. 28,100/-
Dental Hygienist / Assistant / Technician / Mechanic / DORA	Diploma in Dental Hygienist / Assistant / Technician / Mechanic / DORA	01	—	01	—	Rs. 28,100/-
Pharmacist	Diploma in Pharmacy	01	01	—	—	Rs. 28,100/-
Lab Technician	BSc MLT / DMLT	02	01	01	—	Rs. 28,100/-
Lab Assistant	DMLT	01	—	—	—	Rs. 28,100/-
Driver	Eighth Class / Driving Licence	—	01	01	01	Rs. 19,700/-
Female Attendant	Eighth Class	01	—	01	—	Rs. 16,800/-
Chowkidar	Eighth Class	—	—	01	—	Rs. 16,800/-
Peon	Eighth Class	01	—	—	—	Rs. 16,800/-

2. **For Terms & Conditions, Application Form & Remuneration.** Website www.echs.gov.in. For additional details, may contact Station HQ (ECHS Cell) Meerut Telephone No - 0121-2658264 between 0900h-1400h or concerned ECHS Polyclinic.

Preference will be given to the Ex-servicemen.

3. **Last Date of Receipt of Application as per format given at our website.** Application as per requisite format alongwith self attested photocopies of testimonials in support of Education Qualifications and Work Experiences will be submitted to OIC, Station HQ (ECHS Cell) Meerut by 21 Feb 2024. Any application received after 21 Feb 2024 will not be accepted.

4. **Interview Date, Timing & Venue.** 28 Feb 2024 & 29 Feb 2024, 0800 hours at Station HQ Meerut for the interview.

Bringing original certificate / mark sheets / degree of 10th / Matric, 10+2 & Graduation / Post Graduation / Diploma / Course, work experiences and discharge book, PPO, service records and two PP size colour photographs mandatory for interview. No TA / DA is admissible. Only candidate meeting the **Qualification Requirements** may apply. Medical fitness certificate from SEMO / CMO will be attached with the application.

BIHAR COUNCIL ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

INDIRA GANDHI SCIENCE COMPLEX PLANETARIUM,
ADALATGANJ, BAILEY ROAD, PATNA- 800001

NIT No. :- 01/2024

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

Bihar Council On Science & Technology, Patna is soliciting sealed tenders from reputed hotel/restaurant/canteen/or /cafeteria "Two-bid" system -Technical Bid (un-priced) and Financial Bid (priced) for Restaurant, Catering Service, Maintenance & Management of Guest House at Indira Gandhi Science Complex Planetarium, Adalatganj, Nehru Path, Patna-800001 Interested bidders may download the tender documents from the Procurement Portal www.eproc.bihar.gov.in or from the Council's website www.bcst.org.in as per the following schedule:-

Schedule of Events:

Sn.	Schedule	Important dates
1	Tender No.	01/2024
2	Bid Publishing Date	22-01-2024
3	Pre bid meeting Date	29-01-2024 at 11.00 A.M. Online/Offline
4	Last Date of submission of bid	19-02-2024 up to 05.00P.M.
5	Bid opening date & Time (Technical & Financial)	Technical bid: 20-02-2024 at 11.00 AM Financial Bid: To be notified later on
6	Bid validity period	180 Days (One hundred and eighty days)
7	Contact Person	Project Director, Bihar Council on Science & Technology IGSC-Planetarium, Adalatganj, Patna-800001 Email id: - pd@bcst.org.in
8	Website	https://www.bcst.org.in

BCST reserves the right to accept or reject any or all tenders in full or part without assigning any reason.

PR. No. 015784 (Science&Tech.) 2023-24

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

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

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Notice is hereby given for the information of all concerned that Gold ornaments pledged with under mentioned branches of the company for the period upto 31.03.2023 & MSGL, SPL-16, One plus, Guide Prepaid, Super value, ADGL and all other 6 months tenure Gold loans upto 30.06.2023 and MSGB, SME Suvarna & EMU due to 31.12.2023 which were overdue for redemption and which have not been redeemed so far inspite of repeated notices, will be auctioned on 06.02.2024 from 10 am onwards.

DEWAS DISTRICT - DEWAS - AB ROAD: F5633, F5646, F5653, F5654, F5655, F5657, F5673, F5680, F5681, F5705, F5713, F5724, F5727, F5729, F5730, F5732, F5733, F5735, F5737, F5754, F5757, F5759, F5763, F5765, F5788, F5790, F5795, F5806, F5809, F5812, F5831, F5832, F5837, F5859, F5864, F5871, F5873, F5972, F5996, F5997, F6001, F6011, F6012, F6013, F6014, F6017, F6019, F6020, F6022, F6023, F6024, F6025, INDOR DISTRICT - ANNAPURNA ROAD-INDORE: 2146000005, 2146000011, 2146000015, 2146000016, 2146000017, 2146000018, 2146000019, 2146000020, 2146000021, 2146000022, 2146000023, 2146000024, 2146000025, 2146000026, 2146000027, 2146000028, 2146000029, 2146000030, 2146000031, 2146000032, 2146000033, 2146000034, 2146000035, 2146000036, 2146000037, 2146000038, 2146000039, 2146000040, 2146000041, 2146000042, 2146000043, 2146000044, 2146000045, 2146000046, 2146000047, 2146000048, 2146000049, 2146000050, 2146000051, 2146000052, 2146000053, 2146000054, 2146000055, 2146000056, 2146000057, 2146000058, 2146000059, 2146000060, 2146000061, 2146000062, 2146000063, 2146000064, 2146000065, 2146000066, 2146000067, 2146000068, 2146000069, 2146000070, 2146000071, 2146000072, 2146000073, 2146000074, 2146000075, 2146000076, 2146000077, 2146000078, 2146000079, 2146000080, 2146000081, 2146000082, 2146000083, 2146000084, 2146000085, 2146000086, 2146000087, 2146000088, 2146000089, 2146000090, 2146000091, 2146000092, 2146000093, 2146000094, 2146000095, 2146000096, 2146000097, 2146000098, 2146000099, 2146000100, 2146000101, 2146000102, 2146000103, 2146000104, 2146000105, 2146000106, 2146000107, 2146000108, 2146000109, 2146000110, 2146000111, 2146000112, 2146000113, 2146000114, 2146000115, 2146000116, 2146000117, 2146000118, 2146000119, 2146000120, 2146000121, 2146000122, 2146000123, 2146000124, 2146000125, 2146000126, 2146000127, 2146000128, 2146000129, 2146000130, 2146000131, 2146000132, 2146000133, 2146000134, 2146000135, 2146000136, 2146000137, 2146000138, 2146000139, 2146000140, 2146000141, 2146000142, 2146000143, 2146000144, 2146000145, 2146000146, 2146000147, 2146000148, 2146000149, 2146000150, 2146000151, 2146000152, 2146000153, 2146000154, 2146000155, 2146000156, 2146000157, 2146000158, 2146000159, 2146000160, 2146000161, 2146000162, 2146000163, 2146000164, 2146000165, 2146000166, 2146000167, 2146000168, 2146000169, 2146000170, 2146000171, 2146000172, 2146000173, 2146000174, 2146000175, 2146000176, 2146000177, 2146000178, 2146000179, 2146000180, 2146000181, 2146000182, 2146000183, 2146000184, 2146000185, 2146000186, 2146000187, 2146000188, 2146000189, 2146000190, 2146000191, 2146000192, 2146000193, 2146000194, 2146000195, 2146000196, 2146000197, 2146000198, 2146000199, 2146000200, 2146000201, 2146000202, 2146000203, 2146000204, 2146000205, 2146000206, 2146000207, 2146000208, 2146000209, 2146000210, 2146000211, 2146000212, 2146000213, 2146000214, 2146000215, 2146000216, 2146000217, 2146000218, 2146000219, 2146000220, 2146000221, 2146000222, 2146000223, 2146000224, 2146000225, 2146000226, 2146000227, 2146000228, 2146000229, 2146000230, 2146000231, 2146000232, 2146000233, 2146000234, 2146000235, 2146000236, 2146000237, 2146000238, 2146000239, 2146000240, 2146000241, 2146000242, 2146000243, 2146000244, 2146000245, 2146000246, 2146000247, 2146000248, 2146000249, 214600025



Rescuers after the Quake in China's Xinjiang. AP

CHINA

7.1 quake hits China's Xinjiang, three killed

Beijing: A magnitude 7.1 earthquake struck the Kyrgyzstan-Xinjiang border region on Tuesday with reports of several injuries and collapsed houses, Chinese state media reported. The epicentre of the quake struck at 2:09 a.m. (1809 GMT) and at a depth of 22 km in the mountainous border area of Wushi County in northwest China's Xinjiang region, as per China Earthquake Admin. Xinjiang Earthquake Agency said the epicentre is about 50 km from Wushi, with five villages located within a 20-km radius. Xinhua News said. REUTERS

IRAN

Iran executes 2022 protests prisoner

Dubai: Iran on Tuesday hanged another prisoner over crimes committed during nationwide protests that erupted in 2022 following the death of Mahsa Amini detained for improperly wearing her headscarf. Mohd Qobadlu was executed after being sentenced for killing a policeman and injuring five others after he ran them over in his car during a rally in the town of Parand. The report said the 23-year-old Qobadlu, who had confessed to his crime, had access to a lawyer during the trial. Qobadlu had appealed his death sentence, but the Supreme Court later upheld the verdict. AP

PAKISTAN

Torkham border reopens, Afghan trade resumes

Peshawar: Trade between Pakistan and Afghanistan resumed Tuesday after the two sides reopened a key northwestern border crossing shut for more than 10 days. Truckers for years have been able to cross the border without documents, so they generally do not have them. But Pakistan began mandating truck drivers get visas last week. The two sides after a series of meetings agreed to reopen the Torkham border crossing but Pakistan set a new deadline of March 31 for the truck drivers to get visas, said Ziaul Haq Sarhadi, a director of the Pakistan-Afghanistan joint Chamber of Commerce and Industry. AP

TURKEY

House agrees to vote Sweden's NATO entry

Ankara: Turkish legislators scheduled a long-delayed vote on Tuesday on Sweden's bid to join NATO, in a step that could remove a major hurdle for the previously nonaligned Nordic country's entry into the military alliance. Turkey, a NATO member, has been dragging its feet on ratifying Sweden's accession for more than a year, saying it was lenient toward groups it regards as security threats. AP

US, UK BOMB HOUTHI TARGETS IN YEMEN AGAIN

21 soldiers killed in Gaza in Israel's highest single-day loss since Oct 7

Forces encircle Khan Younis; won't stop till victory, says Bibi

REUTERS
GAZA, JERUSALEM, JAN 23

TWENTY-ONE ISRAELI soldiers were killed in Israel's worst day of losses in Gaza, the military said on Tuesday, as its forces encircled southern Gaza's main city, trapping Palestinian residents trying to flee.

Spokesman Rear Admiral Daniel Hagari said 21 soldiers were killed when two buildings they had mined for demolition exploded after militants fired at a nearby tank. Earlier, three soldiers were reported killed in a separate attack in southern Gaza.

"Yesterday we experienced one of four most difficult days since the war erupted," Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said. "...we will not stop fighting until absolute victory."

Meanwhile, U.S. and British forces carried out a fresh round of strikes on Monday in Yemen, targeting a Houthi underground storage site as well as missile and surveillance capabilities



Kin mourn at the funeral of a deceased Israeli military reservist in Haifa on Tuesday. Reuters

used by the Iran-aligned group against Red Sea shipping, the Pentagon said.

The Houthis, who control the most populous parts of Yemen, have said their attacks are in solidarity with Palestinians as Israel strikes Gaza.

The Houthi attacks have disrupted global shipping and stoked fears of global inflation. They have also deepened con-

cern that fallout from the Israel-Hamas war could destabilize the Middle East.

In the latest response, U.S. and British forces carried out strikes at eight different locations in Yemen, with support from Australia, Bahrain, Canada and the Netherlands, according to a joint statement signed by the six countries.

The Israeli Defence Forces (IDF) had on Monday launched a major operation to seize remaining parts of Khan Younis, the main city in the south of the enclave, which is sheltering hundreds of thousands of Gazans.

A total of 25,490 Palestinians have been killed and 63,354 have been injured in Israeli strikes on Gaza since October 7, the Gaza health ministry said in a statement on Tuesday.

The Israeli Defence Forces

Displaced again, Gazan families flee under fire

REUTERS
KHAN YOUNIS, JANUARY 23

MARIAM ABU Haleeb and her family were on the move again on Monday, the seventh time they had been displaced in less than four months of war.

She and other Gazans, their cars and donkey carts piled high with belongings, fled what they said was a terrifying night at the al-Aqsa university in the west of Khan Younis, where they had taken shelter after being told again it was risky to stay put.

They had no idea where to go next. "What hurts me most is that my old mother is under siege. My siblings and their children are besieged. Everyone, everyone. All of Khan Younis need help yesterday," she said.

"This is the seventh time I've been displaced, or maybe even more. Torture, torture, torture," she said, weeping.

Mohammad Haleeb said many had pitched their tents at the university after Israel warned them to move from other areas.

Seven killed, dozens injured as Russia hits Ukraine's largest cities

REUTERS
KYIV, JANUARY 23

NATO SIGNS \$1.2 BN DEAL FOR SUPPLIES, AID FOR UKRAINE

Brussels: NATO signed on Tuesday a \$1.2-billion contract to make tens of thousands of artillery rounds to replenish the dwindling stocks of its member countries as they supply ammunition to Ukraine to help it defeat Russia's invasion. The contract will allow for the purchase of 220,000 rounds of 155-millimeter ammunition, according to NATO. AP

"Strong explosions, our house ... was shaking," lawmaker Iryna Geraschenko wrote on Telegram. One person was also killed in the southeastern city of Pavlhorad, the regional governor said. Ukraine's air force said the military had destroyed 21 out of 41 missiles of various types launched by Russia.

The early-morning missile attack mostly targeted the country's two largest cities, the capital Kyiv and Kharkiv in the east.

At least two people were killed and 35 wounded in Kharkiv in strikes on apartment buildings, according to police and the regional governor. Reports varied about the exact number of dead and injured. Rescue workers were still digging through rubble to search for survivors, Mayor Ihor Terekhov told local television.

Kyiv city officials said up to 18 had been wounded after strikes on three districts, adding that several apartments had caught fire in the attack. They were also clarifying reports of one fatality.

Sunak Rwanda Bill suffers setback in Upper House

London: The upper house of Britain's Parliament has urged the Conservative government not to ratify a migration treaty with Rwanda. It's a largely symbolic move, but signals more opposition to come for the stalled and contentious plan to send some asylum-seekers on a one-way trip to the African nation.

Members of the Lords, who are appointed rather than elected, backed a motion saying Parliament should not ratify the pact until ministers can show Rwanda is safe. John Kerr, a former diplomat who sits in the Lords, said the Rwanda plan was "incompatible with our responsibilities" under international human rights law. AP

are the pillars of Prime Minister Rishi Sunak's bid to overcome a block on the deportations by the UK Supreme Court.

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The House of Lords voted by 214 to 171 on Monday evening to delay the treaty that paves the way for the deportation plan. The treaty and an accompanying bill

VAST MAJORITY ARE CHILD SURVIVORS, WHOSE NUMBERS ARE QUICKLY DWINDLING, WITH A MEDIAN AGE OF 84

Almost 80 years after the Holocaust, 2,45,000 survivors are still alive

KIRSTEN GRIESHABER
BERLIN, JANUARY 23

ALMOST 80 years after the Holocaust, about 245,000 Jewish survivors are still living across more than 90 countries, a new report revealed Tuesday.

Nearly half of them, or 49%, are living in Israel; 18% are in Western Europe, 16% in the United States, and 12% in countries of the former Soviet Union, according to a study by the New York-based Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany, also referred to as the Claims Conference.

Before the publication of the

demographic report, there were only vague estimates about how many Holocaust survivors are still alive. Their numbers are quickly dwindling, as most are very old and often of frail health, with a median age of 86. Twenty percent of survivors are older than 90, and more women (61%) than men (39%) are still alive.

The vast majority, or 96% of survivors, are "child survivors" who were born after 1928, says the report "Holocaust Survivors Worldwide: A Demographic Overview" which is based on figures that were collected up until August.

The numbers in this report



Six million European Jews and people from other minorities were killed by the Nazis and their collaborators. AP

are interesting, but it is also important to look past the numbers to see the individuals they represent," said Greg Schneider, the Claims Conference's executive vice president. "These are Jews who were born into a world that wanted to see them murdered. They endured the atrocities of the Holocaust in their youth and were forced to rebuild an entire life out of the ashes of the camps and ghettos that ended their families and communities."

Six million European Jews and people from other minorities were killed by the Nazis and their collaborators during the Holocaust.

It is not clear exactly how many Jews survived the death camps, the ghettos or somewhere in hiding across Nazi-occupied Europe, but their numbers were a far cry from the pre-war Jewish population in Europe.

In Poland, of the 3.3 million Jews living there in 1939, only about 300,000 survived.

Around 560,000 Jews lived in Germany in 1933, the year Adolf Hitler came to power. At the end of World War II in 1945, their numbers had diminished to about 15,000 — through emigration and extermination.

Germany's Jewish community grew again after 1990, when Germany surrendered. AP

China assures Pak support to defend sovereignty after Iran's airstrikes

Key Economic Corridor meeting held

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
BEIJING, JANUARY 23

CHINA HAS assured Islamabad of its support in defending its sovereignty and territorial integrity even while welcoming on Tuesday the restoration of diplomatic ties between Tehran and Islamabad after their recent air strikes against each other.

As China's Vice Foreign Minister Sun Weidong visited

Pakistan on a mediation mission, a statement from Foreign Ministry on Monday said it is maintaining close contacts with Pakistan and Iran to "bridge their differences."

China on January 18 offered to play a "constructive role" to ease tensions between Pakistan and Iran following their missile strikes against each other and asked the two countries to "exercise restraint and calmness and avoid escalation."

He said, China is willing to work with Pakistan to follow through on the important common understandings reached between the leaders of the two countries, deepen political mutual trust, expand practical cooperation, upgrade the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC),

He also took part in the key meeting of USD 60 billion CPEC over which India protested as it is being laid through the Pakistan Occupied Kashmir (POK).

Sun is a former Ambassador to Pakistan and India both.

China appreciates Pakistan's firm adherence to the one-China principle and "supports Pakistan in safeguarding its sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity," as well as its unity, stability, development and prosperity, Sun told Alvi.



CHINESE DELEGATION VISITS MALDIVES

Beijing, Male: A Chinese Communist delegation held talks with Maldives President Mohamed Muizzu to "promptly" implement 20 agreements signed between the two countries during his recent visit to China, including increasing flights from China to boost tourist numbers. The delegation, led by Sun Weidong, International Dept of the Communist Party of China (CPC), concluded the 3-day visit to Male. PTI

Voters at a polling station in Manchester, New Hampshire on Tuesday. Reuters

Trump seeks big win, Haley tries to block as New Hampshire votes

REUTERS
MANCHESTER, NH, JAN 23

VOTERS IN New Hampshire will decide whether to hand Donald Trump a glide path to the Republican presidential nomination or bolster rival Nikki Haley's long-shot bid to topple him on Tuesday in a pivotal primary election.

The former U.S. president and the former South Carolina governor made their final pitches to voters in what became a two-person race after Florida Governor Ron DeSantis, once seen as the party's best bet to take on Trump, dropped out and endorsed the New York businessman.

Polls show Trump with a wide lead over Haley, who needs a victory or a strong second place showing in New Hampshire to carry her to the next nominating contest in South Carolina, her home state, where Trump is also dominant in the polls.

Trump had a record-setting victory in Iowa's first-in-the-nation contest last week.

A resounding win in New Hampshire would represent a remarkable show of force early in the campaign and pave the way for him to secure the party's nomination despite multiple



criminal counts against him, two impeachments and his chaotic 2017-2021 presidency.

Trump, who is balancing campaign stops with appearances in various courts, denies wrongdoing. The Republican nominee will face President Joe Biden, the presumptive Democratic nominee, in the general election in November.

In Dixville Notch, a tiny hamlet in northern New Hampshire, Haley bested Trump 6-0.

Biden is not on the ballot in New Hampshire, having supported an effort by national Democrats to move their first primary election to the more diverse state of South Carolina.

But New Hampshire supporters will still be able to vote for him by writing Biden's name on the ballot, which would be a barometer of his political strength.



RACE FOR THE WHITE HOUSE

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more than 215,000 Jewish migrants and their families came from countries of the former Soviet Union, some of them also survivors. Nowadays, only 14,200 survivors still live in Germany, the demographic report concluded.

For its new report, the Claims Conference said it defined Holocaust survivors "based on agreements with the German government in assessing eligibility for compensation programs."

For Germany, that definition includes all Jews who lived there from Jan. 30, 1933, when Hitler came to power, to May 1945, when Germany surrendered. AP

SENSEX: 70,370.55 ▼ 1053.10 (1.47%) NIFTY: 21,238.80 ▼ 333 (1.54%) NIKKEI: 36,517.57 ▼ 29.38 HANG SENG: 15,353.98 ▲ 392.80 FTSE: 7,486.04 ▼ 1.67 DAX: 16,636.97 ▼ 46.39



GOLD

₹63,250



USD RATE

₹83.16



OIL

\$78.83



SILVER

₹75,700

Note: Gold, silver rates at Delhi spot market, gold per 10g, silver per 1 kg; Crude oil (Indian basket) as of January 22

International market data till 1900 IST

EXPLORING INCENTIVE STRUCTURES FOR PVT FIRMS TO SET UP COMPUTING CENTRES

Centre's sovereign AI push: Compute mission may get over ₹10,000 crore

SOUMYARENDRA BARIK

NEW DELHI, JANUARY 23

THE CENTRE'S ambitious artificial intelligence (AI) Mission may soon head for Cabinet approval and could have an outlay of more than Rs 10,000 crore, Union Minister of State for Electronics and IT Rajeev Chandrasekhar told reporters Tuesday.

As part of the programme, the government wants to develop its own 'sovereign AI', build computational capacity in the country, and offer compute-as-a-service to India's startups.

"We will take the proposal for the AI Mission to the Cabinet soon. We are still working out some contours, but the overall outlay for the initiative could be more than Rs 10,000 crore," he said.

The Indian Express had earlier reported the capacity building will be done both within the government and through a public-private partnership model, highlighting New Delhi's intention to reap dividends of the impending AI boom which it envisions will be a crucial economic driver.

Last month, Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced the AI Mission and said its aim was to establish the computing power of AI within the country. This,



Computing capacity is among the most important elements of building a large AI system.

File

he said, will provide better services to startups and entrepreneurs and also promote AI applications in the sectors of agriculture, healthcare and education.

In total, the country is looking to build a compute capacity of anywhere between 10,000 GPUs (graphic processing units) and 30,000 GPUs under the PPP model, and an additional 1,000-2,000 GPUs through the PSU Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC), Chandrasekhar had earlier told this paper.

For context, according to a 2020 blog by Microsoft, the company had developed a supercomputer for OpenAI – the firm behind ChatGPT – which consisted of 10,000 GPUs among

other things.

The government is exploring various incentive structures for private companies to set up computing centres in the country – ranging from a capital expenditure subsidy model which has been employed under the semiconductor scheme, a model where companies can be incentivised depending on their operational expenses, to offering them a "usage" fee, Chandrasekhar had said.

Computing capacity, or compute, is among the most important elements of building a large AI system apart from algorithmic innovation and datasets. It is also one of the most difficult elements to procure for smaller businesses looking to train and build such AI systems.

The government's idea is to create a digital public infrastructure (DPI) out of the GPU assembly it sets up so that startups can utilise its computational capacity for a fraction of the cost, without needing to invest in GPUs which are often the biggest cost centre of such operations.

Apart from building computing capacities, the government is also working on building datasets and making them available to Indian startups. In May 2022, the Information Technology (IT) Ministry released a draft of the National Data Governance Framework Policy under which it proposed the creation of an India Datasets platform, which will consist of non-personal and anonymised datasets from Central government entities that have collected data from Indian citizens or those in India.

The idea is that the non-personal data housed within this programme would be accessible to startups and Indian researchers, the draft proposal said.

The Indian Express had earlier reported that the Centre is also considering issuing a directive to big tech companies like Facebook, Google and Amazon to share anonymised personal data in their possession with the India Datasets platform.

FB, Instagram may lose legal immunity over fake loan apps

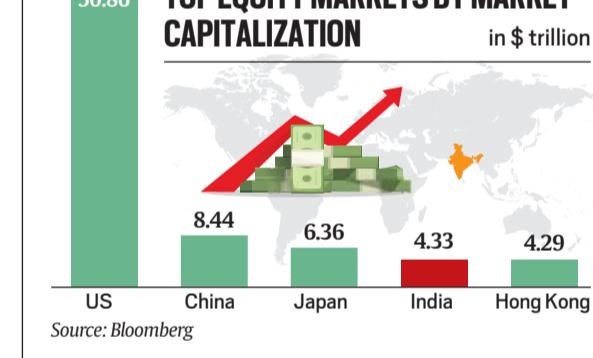
New Delhi: The central government is considering legislative measures to prevent social media platforms like Instagram and Facebook from hosting advertisements of fraudulent loan apps as it looks to curb the distribution of such apps on the Internet, Minister of State for Electronics and IT Rajeev Chandrasekhar told reporters on Tuesday.

The consideration comes after The Indian Express – in a two-part investigation published on November 20-21 last year – had reported how dubious loan apps advertise on Instagram and Facebook, and despite whatever filters the platforms claim to use, many such apps, including those red-flagged by the government, continue to offer their services on their platforms. **ENS**

Indian bourses now fourth-largest with combined stock value of \$4.33 trillion, surpasses Hong Kong

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU

NEW DELHI, JANUARY 23



INDIAN STOCK market surpassed Hong Kong to become the fourth largest equity market for the first time even as domestic indices fell 1.5 per cent on Tuesday.

The combined value of listed shares on Indian exchanges stood at \$4.33 trillion on Monday compared to \$4.29 trillion for Hong Kong, according to a Bloomberg report. The US, China and Japan are the top stock markets in the world. BSE's market capitalisation was Rs 366 lakh crore on Tuesday.

Hong Kong's fall was mainly due to an eroding China appeal and its lost nearly 36 per cent from the peak level.

A significant trend in global economic growth now is the underperformance of China and the outperformance of India, according to analysts.

"Since the important Chinese stocks listed in Hong Kong have crashed, the Hang Seng index is near a 19-year low. This trend is likely to continue

since the prospects for the Chinese economy and stock market appear bleak for now. However, if the Chinese economy stages a comeback the Chinese stocks will bounce back since their valuations are very low," said an analyst.

On the other hand, Indian stock markets rallied by 20 per cent in 2023 amid higher foreign inflows and growth prospects.

"This momentous milestone underscores the resilience and dynamism of India's economic landscape. As the nation forges

ahead, investor confidence and opportunities converge, propelling the stock market to new heights," said Suman Bannerjee, CIO, Hedonova, a Paris Based hedge fund.

"This achievement marks not only a numerical triumph but also signifies India's emergence as a key player in the international financial arena. It is a testament to the nation's economic fortitude and signals a promising trajectory for investors navigating the diverse and vibrant landscape of the Indian stock market," he said.

"The market witnessed a con-

tinuous decline today, abruptly turning negative despite a positive start, mainly due to substantial selling in heavyweight sectors, particularly finance. Mid and small caps witnessed more decline compared to the main indices," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Financial Services.

Selling by FIs due to reasons like high valuation and mixed results for the earnings season so far, along with recent escalations in tensions in the Middle East and Red Sea, prompted the investors to book profit from the recently, he said. FIs sold stocks worth Rs 3,150 crore on Tuesday.

Among sectors, except pharma and healthcare indices, all the major sectoral indices witnessed profit booking at higher levels but media index lost the most, shedding over 12 per cent.

Reliance Industries shares ended at Rs 2,656 apiece, down 2.11 per cent. **FULL REPORT ON** www.indianexpress.com

Sensex, Nifty fall 1.5%, Zee share plunge 33%

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU

MUMBAI, JANUARY 23

AFTER OPENING on a positive note, domestic equity benchmark indices, Sensex and Nifty, plunged 1.5 per cent on Tuesday due to decline in banking and finance stocks, profit booking and selling by foreign institutional investors (FIs). While HDFC Bank shares plummeted further, Zee Entertainment plunged by 33 per cent following the SONY move to call off merger plans.

The BSE's 30-share Sensex lost 1,053 points, or 1.47 per cent, to close at 30,370.55. The NSE's Nifty tanked 333 points, or 1.54 per cent, to finish at 21,238.80 on Tuesday. Zee Entertainment shares plunged 33 per cent to Rs 155.90 apiece, after its merger with Sony Pictures Networks India Private Ltd was called off. Worried investors, including some funds, sold Zee stocks, dealers said.

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tinuous decline today, abruptly turning negative despite a positive start, mainly due to substantial selling in heavyweight sectors, particularly finance. Mid and small caps witnessed more decline compared to the main indices," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Financial Services.

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DIRECT TAX COLLECTIONS

(in ₹ Rs Cr)

Financial Year	Corporate Tax	Personal Income Tax*	Other Direct Tax	Total	YoY growth
2018-19	6,63,572	4,73,179	967	11,37,718	13.5%
2019-20	5,56,876	4,92,717	1,088	10,50,681	-7.7%
2020-21	4,57,719	4,87,560	1,897	9,47,176	-9.9%
2021-22	7,12,037	6,96,604	3,781	14,12,422	49.1%
2022-23	8,25,834	8,33,307	4,545	16,63,686**	17.8%

*includes Securities Transaction Tax

**Provisional

Source: CBDT

TAX BUOYANCY

Financial Year	Direct tax-GDP ratio	Buoyancy factor
2018-19	6.02%	1.29
2019-20	5.23%	-1.21
2020-21	4.78%	**
2021-22	5.97%	2.52
2022-23	6.11%	1.18

*As both GDP growth rate were negative, tax buoyancy has not been computed for FY2020-21

NUMBER OF RETURN FILERS

Financial Year	Individual	Firm	HUF	Company	Total*
2018-19	5,95,44,767	13,18,828	11,66,432	8,47,860	6,33,18,586
2019-20	6,11,30,366	12,98,406	11,58,601	8,40,511	6,48,65,888
2020-21	6,31,71,013	14,10,154	12,01,502	9,24,296	6,72,08,614
2021-22	6,54,61,868	14,51,576	12,26,587	9,71,319	6,96,35,446
2022-23	6,96,90,925	15,10,551	12,46,413	10,27,200	7,40,10,269

*Total includes AOPs, local authorities and others

Source: Ministry of Finance

Direct tax-GDP ratio rose to 15-year high in FY23, tax buoyancy dipped

ANCHAL MAGAZINE

NEW DELHI, JANUARY 23

Direct tax-to-GDP ratio, which reflects the share of taxes in the overall output generated in the country, rose to a 15-year high of 6.11 per cent in the financial year 2022-23, time-series data released by the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) under the Ministry of Finance showed Tuesday. This was accompanied by an increase in the income tax return filers in India to 7.4 crore in FY23, up 6.3 per cent from FY22, even as the tax buoyancy was recorded at 17.79 per cent in 2022-23, higher than 15.11 per cent nominal GDP growth.

Tax buoyancy greater than 1 reflects a faster growth in taxes as against the country's national income. Net direct tax collections, which reflect collections after refunds, "increased by 160.52 per cent to 16.63 lakh crore in FY23, up 6.3 per cent from FY22, even as the tax buoyancy was recorded at 17.79 per cent in 2022-23, even as the growth rate of taxes in relation to the economy's nominal growth rate – declined to 1.18 in 2022-23 from 2.52 in 2021-22 and 1.29 in

The cost of tax collection – indicating the expenditure on tax collection as a proportion of the total tax collections – inched lower to 0.51 per cent in FY23, the lowest level since 2000-01, but it increased in absolute terms to Rs 8,452 crore, the highest level since 2000-01, the year for which data is last available, the CBDT data showed.

Tax buoyancy had stood at 1.29 in 2019-20 and it was not computed for the financial year 2020-21 as both the nominal GDP and tax collections contracted

Why Canada has put curbs on foreign students, how Indians are hit

RRAAKHI JAGGA
LUUDHIANA, JANUARY 23

CANADA'S FEDERAL government has said it is capping the number of international student visas for a period of two years beginning with the coming academic session. Fewer visas will mean fewer Indian students will be able to travel to Canada for a college degree.

By how much is Canada cutting the number of international student visas?

Marc Miller, the Canadian Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, announced on Monday that for the academic session beginning September 1, 2024, the number of new international student permits would be cut by 35% from the 2023 number.

"This is expected to result in approximately 360,000 approved study permits this year, and will be allocated to provinces and territories to distribute among their DLIs"

(Designated Learning Institutions), Miller said in a thread posted on his official X (Twitter) handle.

"Provinces must issue letters of attestation for the students they accept, and as such, the current intake of study permit applications will be paused until March 31st as provinces implement their systems," he posted.

The situation will be assessed at the end of this year to decide on the number of study permits for 2025. The cap on permits is not permanent, Miller said.

Miller, who spoke at a three-day retreat in Montreal for Ministers of the ruling Liberal Party ahead of an upcoming sitting of Parliament, also announced changes to the Post-Graduation Work Permit Program (PGWP), which allows international students to work in Canada after they have completed their studies.

"Starting in September (2024), we will no longer issue PGWPs to students studying under curriculum licensing arrangements"

(that is, public-private institution models), Miller said.

Also, "in the coming weeks, we will no longer issue work permits to spouses of international students, apart from those in masters and doctoral programs. We will work towards exempting those pursuing professional programs, such as medicine and law," he said.

Why has Canada taken these steps to curb the influx of international students?

Canadian media quoted Miller as saying the intake of international students needed to be capped so that "a sustainable level of temporary residence" in Canada could be maintained. Canada has an obligation to ensure international students "have access to the resources they need to succeed" in the country, the Minister said on X.

Last month, the Canadian government said that from 2024, international students

would have to show that they have more than \$20,000 — double the existing funds requirement — in addition to tuition fees to be eligible for a study permit.

Sean Fraser, who had been Immigration Minister earlier, told Canadian media that student intake had grown "beyond what certain communities could handle" — which was the reason for the decisions announced by Miller.

Also, "unscrupulous actors" had been "taking advantage of international students, rendering them vulnerable to abuse and exploitation", Miller said on X. The new measures would "ensure system integrity and sustainable growth", he said.

On the decision to exclude public-private institutions from the PGWP program, the Minister said "these programs are notorious for lacking oversight and do not provide the quality academic experience that Canada is renowned for."

Mandeep, convener of the Montreal Youth

Students Organisation told *The Indian Express*: "There is a housing crisis in Canada currently. Rentals and the cost of living have increased a lot, while jobs are not that abundant. Also, some students have complained that private institutions were charging high tuition fees and offering poor quality education."

Who specifically will be impacted by the decisions? Will there be implications for Indians?

The two-year cap on student permits is only for undergraduate courses. Masters and PhD programs, as well as elementary and secondary school-level courses, are exempt.

The curbs will apply to only new applicants — international students who are already studying in Canada, whether in undergraduate or any other courses, are not impacted.

The visa cap will hit Indian students. According to data from Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), the

largest numbers of student visas are given to applicants from Asia, and India is on top of the list (followed by China).

Canada is a favourite destination for students from Punjab. Often, students are joined by their spouses on spouse visas within months of their beginning studies or getting a temporary job. Under the new rules, open work permits will be given to spouses only if they are enrolled in a postgraduate or doctoral program.

According to IRCC data, the population of international students rose from around 3.26 lakh in 2014 to more than 8 lakh in 2022. Last week, *The Globe and Mail* reported that at the end of December 2023, the number of study permit holders had crossed a million — 1,028,850, according to IRCC data quoted in the report — with more than half of them living in Ontario. The number of work permit holders was estimated at 1.4 million.

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EXPLAINED ECONOMICS

WHY DID THE MEGA SONY-ZEE MERGER PLAN COLLAPSE?

HITESH VYAS & GEORGE MATHEW
MUMBAI, JANUARY 23

JAPAN'S SONY Corporation on Monday said its Indian arm, Culver Max Entertainment Pvt Ltd — formerly known as Sony Pictures Networks India Pvt Ltd (SPNI) — has called off the \$10 billion merger plan with Zee Entertainment Enterprises Ltd (ZEE).

What did Sony say?

While the expected completion of the deal was December 21, 2023, Zee had sought an extension of the deadline, which was set to run out on January 20, 2024. The 30-day grace period was included in the merger pact signed in December 2021. The deal, however, couldn't be finalised before the deadline and Sony cited the delay in the merger for the termination.

The definitive agreements provided that if the parties were unable to agree upon an extension by the end of the discussion period, either party could terminate the deal after providing written notice, according to a statement by Sony.

Why did the deal fall through?

There was apparently a dispute about the leadership of the combined entity by Punit Goenka, MD and CEO of Zee.

In June 2023, market regulator Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) issued an interim order which restrained Goenka and Essel Group's Chairman Subhash Chandra from holding any key positions in any listed company. They were accused of diverting funds from Essel Group companies for their own benefit.

Goenka later got a reprieve from the Securities Appellate Tribunal (SAT), which overturned SEBI's order even as a

regulatory probe over the allegations remained open.

Sony was uncomfortable with this regulatory overhang in view of its corporate governance policies, market sources said. It was pushing the name of its India MD and CEO N P Singh for the top job, which Goenka opposed.

What did ZEEL say?

ZEEL refuted all the claims made by Culver Max regarding alleged breaches of the merger co-operation agreement.

It said: "The company is evaluating all available options and basis the guidance received from the board will take all necessary steps to safeguard the long-term interests of its stakeholders, including by taking appropriate legal action and contesting Culver Max and BEPL's claims in the arbitration proceedings."

What was the original merger plan?

The merger plan of ZEEL into SPNI was finalised on December 22, 2021. It would have created possibly the biggest entertainment entity in India, combining the two companies' linear networks, digital assets, production operations, and programme libraries.

The agreement said SPNI would have a cash balance of \$1.5 billion at closing, including through infusion by the current shareholders of SPNI and the promoters (founders) of ZEEL.

Sony would have also paid a non-compete fee to the founders of ZEEL, which would have been used by them to infuse primary equity capital into SPNI.

After the closing of the deal, Sony would have indirectly held a majority of 50.86% of the combined company, the promoters (founders) of ZEEL would have owned 3.99%, and the other ZEEL shareholders would have held a 45.15% stake.

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ALIND CHAUHAN & AMITABH SINHA
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 23

SHORTLY AFTER returning from the Pran Pratishttha ceremony at the Ram Temple in Ayodhya on Monday, Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced the launch of a new programme to install rooftop solar systems on 1 crore houses.

"On the auspicious occasion of the consecration in Ayodhya, my resolve has been further strengthened that the people of India should have their own solar rooftop system on the roof of their houses," Modi said, announcing the Pradhan Mantri Suryodaya Yojana.

"This will not only reduce the electricity bills of the poor and middle classes, but will also make India self-reliant in the energy sector," the Prime Minister said on X (Twitter).

Although the 1-crore-houses target is new, the installation of solar systems on rooftops has been an ongoing government programme for more than a decade. But it is running far behind schedule — and the announcement by the Prime Minister is an attempt to give a fresh push to decentralised solar power in the country.

Ongoing programme

In one of his first major decisions after becoming Prime Minister in 2014, Modi had set a target of installing 100 GW of solar power in the country by 2022. This was a five-fold jump from the existing target at that time. Forty per cent of this capacity — 40 GW — was supposed to come from grid-connected rooftop solar systems.

While the installed solar power capacity in the country has risen rapidly over the past decade, the 100 GW target for 2022 has been missed by a long margin, and so has the target for rooftop installations. At the end of last year, the total solar installed capacity had reached only 73.3 GW, of which grid-connected rooftop solar contributed just about 11 GW.

Part of the reason why the country fell behind the target was the disruption caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. But even before that, the growth trajectory was not sufficiently steep. The 40 GW target for rooftop systems is now supposed to be achieved by 2026.

The Suryodaya Yojana

The details of the new programme have

not been released yet, but its focus is slightly different in that it is targeting a certain number of households instead of installed capacity. From this perspective, this latest initiative is similar to the ones that have been launched in some other countries in the past.

In the late 1990s for example, the United States had unveiled plans to put rooftop solar systems on 1 million houses, a target that took about 20 years to achieve. A few countries in Europe too have had similar programmes.

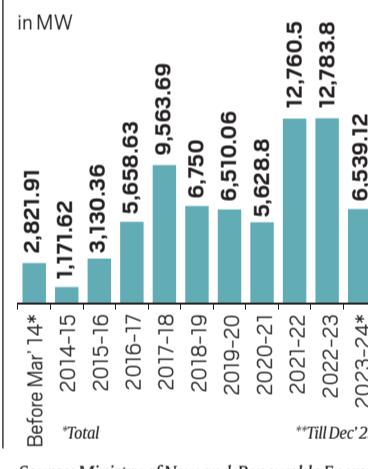
Also, the new programme announced by the PM is aimed primarily at individual households that have remained largely untapped

Rooftop solar system at St Xavier's High School in Mumbai in 2018. Archive

TOP 10 STATES WITH HIGHEST ROOFTOP SOLAR CAPACITY

States	Rooftop solar
Gujarat	2,898.16
Maharashtra	1,716.3
Karnataka	1,562.11
Rajasthan	1,002.44
Kerala	512.67
Haryana	486.23
Tamil Nadu	449.22
Telangana	343.78
Punjab	298.92
MP	296.02

YEAR WISE INSTALLED SOLAR POWER CAPACITY



Source: Ministry of New and Renewable Energy

by the ongoing schemes on rooftop solar. As a recent report by the public policy think tank Council on Energy, Environment and Water (CEEW) showed, the residential sector currently accounts for just 20% of the installations of rooftop solar capacity. The bulk of the current installations have happened in the commercial and industrial sectors.

Residential buildings, therefore, offer a vast, untapped potential. The same CEEW report showed that the nearly 25 crore households across the country have the potential to deploy 637 GW of solar energy on rooftops, and just a third of this is enough to meet

other measures too need to be taken to create an enabling environment for greater penetration. Experts say the learnings from the ongoing exercise would help in designing the right model that ensures greater success for the Suryodaya Yojana.

One of the key interventions needed in this direction is to enable and empower the distribution companies, especially ones that do not put an additional financial burden on them. Most of the electricity distribution companies are already bleeding, and improving their financial health is a prerequisite for the success of the new programme.

Why China hopes the lucky Year of the Dragon can boost births in 2024

RISHIKA SINGH
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 23

IN 2022, China recorded a decline in its population compared with the previous year for the first time since the 1960s. The fall continued in 2023 — the country saw around 11 million deaths and 9 million births. A falling population correlates with declining growth rates, and amid this trend, the term 'dragon babies' has gained traction — and brought hope.

'Dragon babies' are babies that are born in the Chinese Year of the Dragon — which begins in February 2024. Most recently, 2012 and 2000 were years of the dragon.

The animal-based classification of years is based on the Chinese zodiac, under which every year is associated with a particular animal: Rat, Ox, Tiger, Rabbit, Dragon, Snake, Horse, Sheep, Monkey, Rooster, Dog, or Pig. With 12 zodiac signs, every animal repeats after 12 years and the system applies on a rotational basis.

EXPLAINED GLOBAL

Each animal is seen as possessing specific personality traits, which are believed to be present in people born in that year.

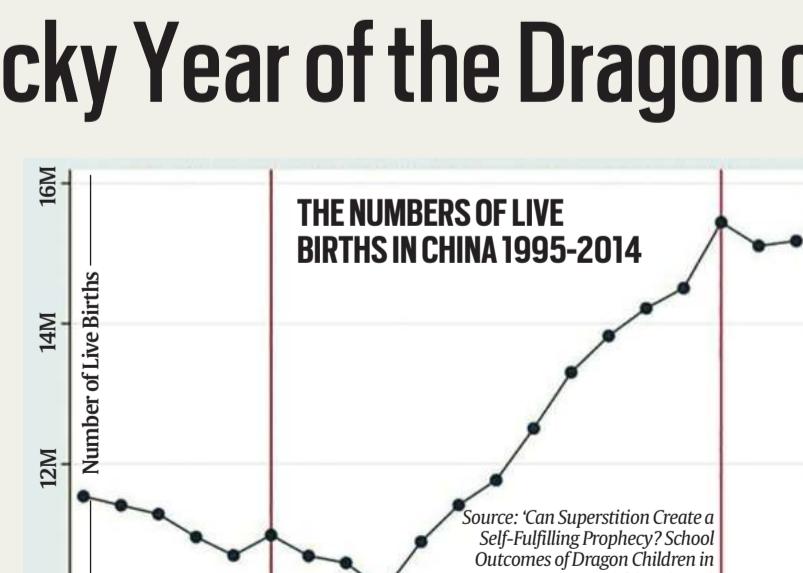
So what is the connection between the Year of the Dragon and birth of babies?

In recent Years of the Dragon, a slight uptick in births has been noticed in China, which appears to stem from the belief that the mythical animals are lucky. Couples often try to have children in the Year of the Dragon to ensure good fortune comes their way.

A report in *The South China Morning Post* noted: "In 2000...the birth rate in Hong Kong increased by over five per cent." Mainland China also saw an increase in births that year. A *Financial Times* analysis found spikes in births in other Years of the Dragon — such as 1988 and 1976 — in Singapore, China, Taiwan, and Hong Kong.

Are children born in Years of the Dragon more successful than other children?

The association of a year with an animal in the 2,000-year-old Chinese zodiac sys-



SCRAP FOR SALE (E-AUCTION)

E-auction forms are invited from intending buyers for disposal, strictly on "As Is Where Is" basis, around 300 MT collapsed Reinforcement Steel, Structural & Plate items & other misc. items- taxes extra.

Salvage belonging to M/s My Home Industries Pvt. Ltd.

Material can be inspected at M/s My Home Industries Pvt. Ltd., Srinagar, Mellacheruvu, Suryapet Distt., Telangana-508213 site between 24.01.2024 to 03.02.2024 after taking prior appointment from Mr. P. Srivasa Rao, Sr. DGM-Stores (8096508099).

E-auction date/time-06.02.2024 between 03:00 PM to 04:30 PM.

Interested buyers/bidders have to deposit an EMD (D.D.) of Rs. 5 Lacs in favour of "My Home Industries Pvt. Ltd." payable at Suryapet, Telangana to participate in the e-auction.

One or all bids/offers can be cancelled without assigning any reason.

E-auction forms can be obtained from the Auctioneers Salvor Setters Pvt. Ltd., 203, 2nd Floor, Usha Kiran Building, Azadpur Commercial Complex, Near Akash Cinema, New Delhi-110033. Contact Mr. Jitender Thakur: 8744013008, 9654772277.

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e-mail : bschawla.ca@gmail.com

SEARCH FOR MISSING

General Public is hereby informed that a person namely **Pramod Kumar** S/o Rajkumar Sharma, R/o H.No. 467/E, Durga Galli, East Babarpur, Shahdara, Delhi. **Age:** 52 years, **Height :** 5'11", **Complexion-Sallow, Built-Thin, Face-Oval, ID Mark:** The little finger on the left hand is cut in half, **Wearing:** Black & Green colour Jacket and Blue colour Pant & Black colour Hawaii Slipper in his feet has been missing from his home since 17.01.2024 at 9.10 PM. In this regard a vide **DD No. 43A dated 19.01.2024** has been lodged at **P.S. Welcome, Delhi.**

Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out the missing person but no clue has come to light so far. If any one having any information about this person please inform undersigned.

E-mail : cic@cbi.gov.in **SHO Ph : 011-24368638, 24368641** **P.S. Welcome, Delhi** **Fax : 011-24368639** **Ph. : 011-22822746, 22826808,** **DP/842/NE/2024**

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY

E-Procurement Tender Notice No.-24/04 Date: 22.01.2024

E-Procurement Tender Notice

On behalf of the President of India, The Principal Chief Materials Manager, North Central Railway, Prayagraj, (An ISO 9001:2015 certified unit) invites the following E-Procurement Tenders.

S. N.	Tender No.	Short Description	QTY.	Tender Opening Date
1	30232268	Lever Hanger to ICF Drg. No. T-3-2-802	2418 Nos.	19.02.2024
2	30232271C	Mirror Assembly for CN Coaches	817 Nos.	19.02.2024
3	30232275	Lever for bogie brake for BMBC coaches	2238 Nos.	19.02.2024
4	30232452A	Sole Bar for ICF coach	311 Nos.	19.02.2024
5	30232265	Bracket complete for equalizing stay	1559 Nos.	19.02.2024
6	30232274	Lever without Bushes	1440 Nos.	19.02.2024
7	40233095B	PVC Conduit Pipe	1178 MTR	15.02.2024
8	40233072A	Surge arrester for Battery (LTBA)	10 Nos.	16.02.2024
9	20233029A	Bolester Arrangement (Fabricated)	06 Nos.	19.02.2024
10	64231085	Hydraulic Plug	500 Nos.	19.02.2024
11	64231086	Hydraulic Plug	500 Nos.	20.02.2024
12	64231087	Hydraulic Plug	500 Nos.	21.02.2024
13	64231088	Hydraulic Plug	150 Nos.	26.02.2024
14	64231089	Hydraulic Dummy	500 Nos.	19.02.2024
15	64231090	Hydraulic Dummy	500 Nos.	26.02.2024
16	64231091	Hydraulic Dummy	500 Nos.	21.02.2024
17	64231092	Hydraulic Dummy	500 Nos.	26.02.2024
18	64231093	Hydraulic Dummy	150 Nos.	23.02.2024
19	64235079C	Adaptor	5360 Nos.	12.02.2024
20	64235189	Coach Fan Light	713 Nos.	16.02.2024
21	64235109C	Alternator Assembly	3 Nos.	21.02.2024
22	64245025	Flexible Copper Cable	2350 Nos.	21.02.2024
23	64235095C	Pneumatic Straight Nipple	1015 Nos.	22.02.2024
24	64225053D	Spacer Ring for Tamping Unit	956 Nos.	20.02.2024
25	63235436	M/S Tapered Washer, Drg. No. T-3930	105000 Nos.	14.02.2024
26	63235435	Spherical Washer T-023(M)	15240 Nos.	15.02.2024
27	40233051	Three Phase Submersible Pump Set	54 Nos.	19.02.2024
28	40233141	Lead Acid Batteries 110 Volt 70 AH	63 Set	19.02.2024
29	30232259	Bracket For Anchor Link	1286 Nos.	08.02.2024
30	30232726	Secondary Vertical Damper	889 Nos.	19.02.2024
31	30233157	Anti Roll Bar Assembly	50 Nos.	19.02.2024
32	30241663	Hanger Block for Bolster Suspension	13100 Nos.	19.02.2024
33	30232446D	Hex Head Bolt M20x75	24000 Set	21.02.2024
34	30241643	Lower Spring Seat	1400 Nos.	21.02.2024
35	90232366 (e-R/A)	Pealed Bar Size 40 MM DIAx 3890 MM Long	624.7 MT	27.02.2024
36	60245003	Automatic Ticket Vending Mc.	175 Nos.	14.02.2024
37	60245005	Wheel Towing Trolley	3 Set	28.02.2024
38	60235072	Surge Tester	1 Nos.	27.02.2024

Note: The complete information of above tenders can be seen and downloaded from IREPS website i.e. <https://www.reps.gov.in>. For any change/ corrigendum in tender, please visit this website regularly. No separate corrigendum/change will be published in news paper.

135/24 FA

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MUTHOOT FINCORP LTD.

GOLD AUCTION NOTICE

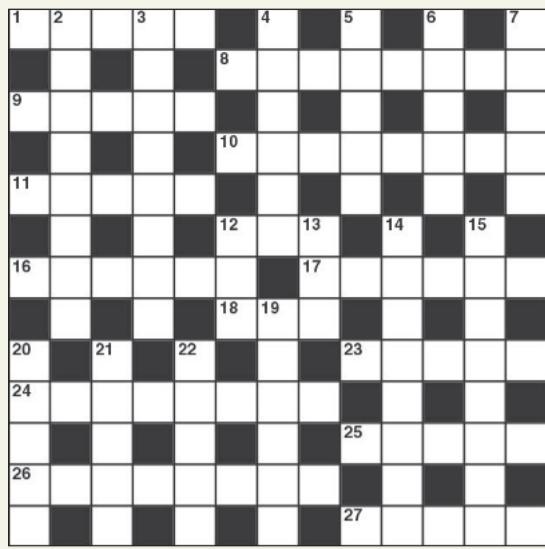
Regd. Office: Muthoot Centre, TC No 27/2022, Punnen Road, Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala, India - 695001.

CIN : U6929KL1997PLC011518, Ph: +91 471 4911400, 2331427

Notice is hereby given for the information of all concerned that Gold ornaments pledged with under mentioned branches of the company for the period upto 31.03.2023 & MSGL, SPL-16, One plus, Gude Prepaid, Super value, ADGL and all other 6 months tenure Gold loans up to 30.06.2023 and MSGB, SME Suvarna & EMII due up to 31.12.2023 which were overdue for redemption and which have not been redeemed so far inspite of repeated notices, will be auctioned on 07.02.2024 from 10 am onwards.

BHOPAL DISTRICT - ASHOKA GARDEN: F-1402, F-1709, F-2006, F-2120, F-2149, F-2173, F-2195, F-2204, F-2228, F-2238, F-2249, F-2252, F-2255, F-2260, F-2265, F-2267, F-2274, F-2278, F-2286, F-2301, F-2302, F-2312, F-2318, F-2323, F-2330, F-2331, F-2340, F-2344, F-2347, F-2352, F-2357, F-2362, F-2367, F-2372, F-2375, F-2380, F-2391, F-2394, F-2398, F-2401, F-2405, F-2409, F-2413, F-2417, F-2421, F-2425, F-2429, F-2436, F-2442, F-2450, F-2457, F-2462, F-2470, F-2472, F-2473, F-2487, F-2495, F-2500, F-2510, F-2521, F-2514, F-2519, F-2524, F-2534, F-2541, F-2546, F-2566, F-2569, F-2571, F-2575, F-2581, F-2585, F-2591, F-2595, F-2602, F-2607, F-2609, F-2612, F-2615, F-2619, F-2622, F-2625, F-2628, F-2632, F-2636, F-2640, F-2643, F-2647, F-2650, F-2653, F-2657, F-2661, F-2665, F-2669, F-2673, F-2677, F-2680, F-2684, F-2688, F-2692, F-2696, F-2699, F-2703, F-2707, F-2711, F-2715, F-2719, F-2723, F-2727, F-2731, F-2735, F-2739, F-2743, F-2747, F-2751, F-2755, F-2759, F-2763, F-2767, F-2771, F-2775, F-2779, F-2783, F-2787, F-2791, F-2795, F-2799, F-2803, F-2807, F-2811, F-2815, F-2819, F-2823, F-2827, F-2831, F-2835, F-2839, F-2843, F-2847, F-2851, F-2855, F-2859, F-2863, F-2867, F-2871, F-2875, F-2879, F-2883, F-2887, F-2891, F-2895, F-2899, F-2903, F-2907, F-2911, F-2915, F-2919, F-2923, F-2927, F-2931, F-2935, F-2939, F-2943, F-2947, F-2951, F-2955, F-2959, F-2963, F-2967, F-2971, F-2975, F-2979, F-2983, F-2987, F-2991, F-2995, F-2999, F-3003, F-3007, F-3011, F-3015, F-3019, F-3023, F-3027, F-3031, F-3035, F-3039, F-3043, F-3047, F-3051, F-3055, F-3059, F-3063, F-3067, F-3071, F-3075, F-3079, F-3083, F-3087, F-3091, F-3095, F-3099, F-3103, F-3107, F-3111, F-3115, F-3119, F-3123, F-3127, F-3131, F-3135, F-3139, F-3143, F-3147, F-3151, F-3155, F-3159, F-3163, F-3167, F-3171, F-3175, F-3179, F-3183, F-3187, F-3191, F-3195, F-3199, F-3203, F-3207, F-3211, F-3215, F-3219, F-3223, F-3227, F-3231, F-3235, F-3239, F-3243, F-3247, F-3251, F-3255, F-3259, F-3263, F-3267, F-3271, F-3275, F-3279, F-3283, F-3287, F-3291, F-3295, F-3299, F-3303, F-3307, F-3311, F-3315, F-3319, F-3323, F-3327, F-3331, F-3335, F-3339, F-3343, F-3347, F-3351, F-3355, F-3359, F-3363, F-3367, F-3371, F-3375, F-3379, F-3383, F-3387, F-3391, F-3395, F-3399, F-3403, F-3407, F-3411, F-3415, F-3419, F-3423, F-3427, F-3431, F-3435, F-3439, F-3443, F-3447, F-3451, F-3455, F-3459, F-3463, F-3467, F-3471, F-3475, F-3479, F-3483, F-3487, F-3491, F-3495, F-3499, F-3503, F-3507, F-3511, F-3515, F-3519, F-3523, F-3527, F-3531, F-3535, F-3539, F-3543, F-3547, F-3551, F-3555, F-3559, F-3563, F-3567, F-3571, F-3575, F-3579, F-3583, F-3587, F-3591, F-3595, F-3599, F-3603, F-3607, F-3611, F-3615, F-3619, F-3623, F-3627, F-3631, F-3635, F-3639, F-3643, F-3647, F-3651, F-3655, F-3659, F-3663, F-3667, F-3671, F-3675, F-3679, F-3683, F-3687, F-3691, F-3695, F-3699, F-3703, F-3707, F-3711, F-3715, F-3719, F-3723, F-3727, F-3731, F-3735, F-3739, F-3743, F-3747, F-3751, F-3755, F-3759, F-3763, F-3767, F-3771, F-3775, F-3779, F-3783, F-3787, F-3791, F-3795, F-3799, F-3803, F-3807, F-3811, F-3815, F-3819, F-3823, F-3827, F-3831, F-3835, F-3839, F-3843, F-3847, F-3851, F-3855, F-3859, F-3863, F-3867, F-3871, F-3875, F-3879, F-3883, F-3887, F-3891, F-3895, F-3899, F-3903, F-3907, F-3911, F-3915, F-3919, F-3923, F-3927, F-3931, F-3935

CROSSWORD 5269



- ACROSS**
- 1 Nick's not at church (5)
 - 2 Access to transport (8)
 - 3 Chair manufactured in the Andes (5)
 - 4 A place where lots go (8)
 - 5 Condition in which one will live in America (5)
 - 6 The girl appears in trepidation (3)
 - 7 Southern union about to reach agreement (6)
 - 8 Is about to get up but flags (6)
 - 9 A positive indication (3)
 - 10 Gets excited about a point reached in development (5)
 - 11 British capitalist (8)
 - 12 A shade inexperienced (5)
 - 13 Hurry to prepare eggs (8)
 - 14 Indistinct sign of illness (5)
- DOWN**
- 1 Subtle implication but a patently obvious one (8)
 - 2 Whip, it's possibly used in hunting (8)
 - 3 Like marquetry of fashionable Dali design (6)
 - 4 Case for cheese that is overstrong (5)
 - 5 With a nod we provide money (5)
 - 6 Article from central European country is full of microbes (5)
 - 7 It's kept by a host of drinkers (3)
 - 8 Help one gets in this day and age (3)
 - 9 I go after the winner with a very long ruler (8)
 - 10 Outrageous gear seen around in colour (3,5)
 - 11 A singularly unwell American playwright (6)
 - 12 Ignition takes place at this point (5)
 - 13 Growl and answer back right and left (5)
 - 14 Brief stop for many in a trance (5)

Solutions Crossword 5268 Across: 1 Muscovites, 6 Eros, 10 Libya, 11 Ever after, 12 Elsinore, 13 Daddy, 15 Everest, 17 Sent out, 19 Lentils, 21 Aliment, 22 Cobra, 24 Latitude, 27 Idle hands, 28 Awash, 29 Noes, 30 Benefactor Down: 1 Mole, 2 Subaltern, 3 Okapi, 4 Iceboat, 5 Elephants 7 Rated, 8 Sony state, 9 Cardinal, 14 Reflection, 16 Epitaphs, 18 Overdraft, 20 Silence, 21 Artist, 23 Bilge, 25 Tara, 26 Thor

OVER THE HEDGE by Michael Fry & T Lewis



CALVIN & HOBBES by Bill Watterson



MARVIN by Tom Armstrong



JUMBLED WORDS

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

— doors and opens windows that weren't even there before. — Mignon McLaughlin (4,7)

NSEOO

LMOCNU

CULLS

CEHTKV

before — doors and opens windows that weren't even there before — Mignon McLaughlin (4,7)

Difficulty Level 4s

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

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

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

SUDOKU 5451

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

SOLUTION SUDOKU 5450

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

DAY TODAY

BY PETER VIDAL

ARIES (Mar 21 - Apr 20)

What you really need is domestic security. You must feel safe and loved and nourished, and who can blame you? But, is there any way that you can offer others some support and sustenance in return? After all, life is a game of give and take.

TAURUS (Apr 21 - May 21)

Today's aspects are relaxed, but form a prelude to the next few days' worth of drama. You will be forced to take a lighter attitude to life than usual, and that may be no bad thing. Seize the opportunity to promote your imaginative ideas and leave practical details until later.

GEMINI (May 22 - June 21)

Interesting travel prospects are likely to arise quite soon as a result of the general wide-ranging possibilities that are coming your way. One thing is certain, partners must be taken into account. I suspect you will also have to stand up for your rights.

CANCER (June 22 - July 23)

Smooth progress this morning could be followed by delays this afternoon and even a dramatic twist of events this evening. But the precise nature of the day's events is unclear, and you will have plenty of room for manoeuvre. But you must hang on to your financial freedom.

LEO (July 24 - Aug 23)

You're facing a social split. Should you go out with this person or that? Go to a restaurant or a movie, a club or country walk? If you think too much, you might end up doing nothing, so why not just get out and do the first thing you think of?

VIRGO (Aug 24 - Sep 23)

You'll make quick business decisions, but don't fall into the trap of failing to weigh up the pros and cons. This is a common means by which you tend to waste money which you have spent much effort earning. This is, perhaps, not a good week for clear thinking, but it is a fine moment for letting your imagination loose.

PISCES (Feb 20 - Mar 20)

There's lots of excitement in the air today. Mind you, a lot of the excellent offers that are around are just froth and not to be taken seriously. Keep an eye on the facts and you'll figure out something which nobody else has ever realised before.

AQUARIUS (Jan 21 - Feb 19)

A series of moderate planetary aspects bring benefits to an area which has been causing problems: your home. If repairs, improvements or even a move have been held up, events should now start to move faster. In fact, everything is about to move much, much faster.

PISCES (Feb 20 - Mar 20)

Regd. Office : PSEB Head Office, The Mall, Patiala

CIN: U40109PB2010SGC033813; Website: www.pspcl.in

(Contact No. 96461-47777)

TENDER ENQUIRY No. TSQ-1146/TD-1

Dy. CE/TD, Design, B-1 Shakti Vihar, PSPCL, Patiala invites E-tender of 66KV line/S/S Bus Bar h/w fittings for ACSR Panther & Zebra, Earthwire fittings (7/2*24mm) and Tower Accessories as per relevant IS and PSPCL specification TSQ-1146/PSPCL/TD-1.

For detailed NIT & Tender Specification please refer to https://eproc.punjab.gov.in from 24.01.2024 from 11.00 AM onwards.

Note: Corrigendum and Addendum, if any will be published online at https://eproc.punjab.gov.in

C-59/24

31697/PB

NORTHERN RAILWAY

Railway Recruitment Cell (RRC),
Lajpat Nagar-1, New Delhi-24.
RRC Website: www.rrcn.org

Corrigendum Dated 19.01.2024

Please refer to Employment Notification No.01/2023/Act Apprentice for engagement of Act Apprentices under Act Apprentices Act 1961 for the year 2023-24 published on 04.12.2023 in the newspaper

It is apprise that under the cluster of Delhi in ELS/GZB the slots of HI for the trades of Mechanic Machine Tool Maintenance and Welder (Gas & Electric) are given as 19 and 16 respectively. But now it is to be intimated that the slots of HI for the trades of Mechanic Machine Tool Maintenance and Welder (Gas & Electric) be treated as 0 (Zero).

Hence no slots of HI exists for the above mentioned trades.

Rest of the conditions for the notifications will remain same and unchanged.

Chairperson/RRC/NR

261/2024

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

CORPORATE BRIEFS



AWARD — POWERGRID

POWERGRID has been bestowed SCOPE Meritorious Award for CSR & Responsiveness. It was presented by Jagdeep Dhankhar, Vice President of India & received by RK Tyagi, CMD POWERGRID in a ceremony held at Vigyan Bhavan. The SCOPE awardees were selected by a panel of eminent jury under the Chairmanship of Justice TS Thakur, former Chief Justice of India. Corporate Social Responsibility is embedded into POWERGRID's business model. POWERGRID has been consistently contributing to the field of social development in & around its business establishments spread across the country. Adopting a 360-degree approach towards implementation of CSR interventions, the Company consults & engages with all its stakeholders. It also emphasizes on community participation by way of effective collaboration, capacity building and sustainability aligned to the UN Sustainable Development Goals. POWERGRID has commissioned & operating 276 Sub-stations & more than 1,76,531 ckm transmission lines & 5,17,861 MVA of transformation capacity.

EVENT — SCOPE

The Vice-President of India, Jagdeep Dhankhar conferred the SCOPE Awards at Vigyan Bhavan, New Delhi during the event organised by Standing Conference of Public Enterprises (SCOPE). Sandeep Kumar Gupta, Chairman, SCOPE; Atul Sobti, DG, SCOPE & Brajesh Kumar Upadhyay, Vice Chairman, SCOPE were also present on the dais. The function was attended by Senior Government Officials from various Ministries & Departments of Government; senior officials from PSEs & national, international associates of SCOPE. The program was attended both physically and virtually by a large number of participants. SCOPE Awards commemorate the innovative, development driven and entrepreneurial spirit of Public Sector Enterprises. Speaking on the occasion, the Vice-President commended the potential and capability of the Public Sector Enterprises by calling them the pride of the Nation & spine of the Indian economy. He appreciated the rich human resources of the PSEs & also guided them to optimise their talent pool, take initiatives towards research and development while embracing emerging & disruptive technologies. Chairman, SCOPE,



SPORTS DAY — EIL

EIL celebrated the Annual Sports Day 2024 on January 20, 2024 at Office Complex, Gurugram to encourage a spirit of sportsmanship and team building among employees. The day-long event was graced by Ms. Vartika Shukla, CMD & Functional Directors of the company & witnessed the participation of a large number of employees & their family members.



INAUGURATION — NBCC

New Delhi's only World Trade Centre at Nauroji Nagar recently saw the inauguration of its first office space. The state-of-the-art office of CRCS was inaugurated by Amit Shah, Union Minister for Home and Cooperation. CRCS will be occupying approximately 41,000 sqft of super built up area valuing approximately Rs. 165 cr at World Trade centre, Nauroji Nagar. The world trade centre will also have provision for ample car parking space. Development of Nauroji Nagar and other GPRAs colonies MoHUA, Gol appointed NBCC, a Navratna, Gol Enterprise, as implementing agency for re-development of Nauroji Nagar, New Delhi. NBCC is authorized to market the commercial space on freehold basis.

VISIT — NCC

"Creativity, interpersonal skills, emotional intelligence & sensitivity are the qualities which will make a person relevant & employable in the present age of machines and artificial intelligence," said Raksha Mantri Rajnath Singh while addressing the NCC cadets during his visit to the Republic Day Camp at Delhi Cantt. on January 20, 2024. He appreciated the NCC for equipping the cadets with these qualities and ensuring their

SHORT SINGLES

Patidar called up in place of Kohli

Hyderabad: With Virat Kohli missing the first two Tests, India have called up Rajat Patidar to the squad. The middle-order batsman has already linked-up with the Indian team in Hyderabad and even attended the BCCI Annual Awards on Tuesday evening.

After Kohli requested a break for the first two Tests citing personal reasons, all eyes were on the selection committee as to who they will name as a replacement. Though Shubman Gill, Shreyas Iyer and KL Rahul will make India's middle-order in the first Test, there was no other back up batsman in the squad in case of a last minute injury or to use as a concussion substitute.

It is understood that Patidar, who returned after spending nearly 8 months with an injury, was Indian team management and selectors unanimous choice. The Madhya Pradesh batsman, who is known for his temperament, is used to batting at No.4 and in domestic circuit comes across as an assertive batsman, who likes to put pressure on bowlers from the word go.

More importantly, Patidar has made it to the Test squad on the back of scoring a 151 for India 'A' against England Lions last week. Though Abhimanyu Easwaran was part of the team in South Africa, there are still apprehensions about him as he hasn't scored in crucial knockout games in Ranji Trophy.

The inclusion of Patidar means India are not looking at Cheteshwar Pujara, who started the Ranji Trophy with a double century. And with Patidar joining the national squad, the selectors have included Rinku Singh as his replacement in India 'A' squad.

VENKATA KRISHNA B



VENKATA KRISHNA B
HYDERABAD, JANUARY 23

IN 2019, more than a year after Rishabh Pant made his debut, as South Africa came visiting, India sprung a surprise. At Visakhapatnam, they drafted in another wicketkeeper Wriddhiman Saha ahead of Pant. Saha hadn't played a Test for 20 months. On turning pitches, where the ball can do all sorts of tricks, they valued the primary skills of Saha over what Pant offered with the bat. With their spinners capable of creating plenty of chances they didn't want any of them to go begging.

And five years later, despite a new team management and captain in place, in the pearl city of Hyderabad, India are fully valuing the gem of a wicketkeeper they have in KS Bharat.

Not even the presence of a brittle middle-order in the absence of Virat Kohli for the first two Tests against England is making Rohit Sharma and Rahul Dravid go with KL Rahul as a fill-in and rope in an extra batsman in Rajat Patidar.

Even when Kohli was around, the form of Shubman Gill and Shreyas Iyer would have tempted the team management to look at the possibility of handing the keeping gloves to Rahul. After establishing himself as their No.1 keeper in ODIs, Rahul had done nothing wrong in the two Tests he kept in South Africa.

But the question was whether he could keep wickets in Indian conditions, especially when fronting up to the spinners on pitches where even the world's best batsmen struggle. Bharat didn't do anything substantial with the bat during the last home series against Australia. That the selectors even drafted in uncapped Dhruv Jurel, showed Bharat's spot in the XI wasn't sealed.

But two days ahead of the first Test, head coach Rahul Dravid asserted that Rahul will not be considered as a wicketkeeper. "(KL) Rahul will not be playing as a wicketkeeper in this series, and we are clear about that. We have picked two other wicketkeepers, and obviously, Rahul did a fantastic job for us in South Africa and really played a big part in helping us draw the series. But considering five Test matches and playing in these conditions, the selection will be between the two other keepers we have," Dravid said in Hyderabad.

It is a move that shows not just the nature of surfaces that will be rolled out during the series, but one that once again highlights why a specialist keeper is non-negotiable in these parts. It is the reason why even England are inclined more towards placing Ben Foakes – arguably the best wicketkeeper around the globe – ahead of Jonny Bairstow behind the stumps.

"Sub continent conditions are most difficult for wicketkeepers. It is challenging because you need extremely good hand-eye co-ordination and reflexes. It is a test of your concentration, character because you can't really predict the path of the ball at all times and the overhead conditions can also be harsh. It can be quite intimidating to keep in the subcontinent. There will be inside edges and outside edges and the ball will keep low with the odd one jumping off. So these things have to be factored before you pick your keeper," R Sridhar, India's fielding coach between 2014-2021 tells *The Indian Express*.

These wicketkeeping challenges are also what made India to fall back on Saha for the Tests against South Africa in 2019. Though Pant was a better package, Saha's skills behind the stumps is what the conditions demanded and despite Rahul's exceptional glovework in whiteball, Sridhar says having a specialist in Tests is always preferable.

Bharat fits like a glove

Safe hands, agility and experience of keeping in Tests at home makes him the ideal specialist for the five-match Test series



KS Bharat (L) and Dhruv Jurel ahead of the first Test match in Hyderabad on Tuesday. With KL Rahul not to don the big gloves, Bharat is set to get a game. PTI

Not ultra-attacking, our batsmen are attacking by nature: Dravid

VENKATA KRISHNA B
HYDERABAD, JANUARY 23

AHEAD OF Test series it is quite common to hear about coaches speaking about batting approaches. Some demand them to show intent. Some back their players to go aggressive. There are instances where they are told to be bold. And then there is the entire Bazball approach, which has even managed to find a place in Collins dictionary. As India are set to embrace the Bazball challenge at home starting Thursday, India head coach Rahul Dravid's message to the batting group was rather simple: play to the situation.

Ever since Bazball took Test cricket by storm, other teams have been faced with this question as to whether they would be tempted to adopt the same approach. With India set to roll out turners – where invariably a ball with your name on it could arrive any moment – adopting an aggressive approach with the bat has helped batsmen get out of jail. In fact, last time England visited India, Rohit Sharma's century in the first innings at Chennai (second Test) proved to be a game-changer.

However, Dravid said India will not have any fixed plan, especially with regards to adopting an aggressive game. "By nature most of our players are attacking in nature. I don't think we are going out there to try to be ultra-attacking," said the former India captain, who is the last one to win a Test series in England.

"I think we look to play what's in front of us, what the situation demands, what it calls for. By nature, if you look at our top six-seven



India coach Rahul Dravid during a press conference in Hyderabad. PTI

batsmen, there are a lot of guys who are naturally positive and look to take the game on. So, they're not going to be looking to change that in any particular way. There'll be some different situations in which we may need to look to push the game along or we might have to bat for long periods. We'll just respond to what comes in front of us. But I can't see any of my batsmen taking a backward step or looking to be defensive," Dravid said of the batting group which will be without Virat Kohli for the first two Tests.

Going on the defensive on turning tracks has seen teams, including India, to get into a shell. And on such pitches when wickets fall in a heap, teams have found themselves in deep trouble, which is why some of the batsmen prefer to counter-attack their way out of trouble.

During the last Test series held at home, Australia's only win against all odds came

when they counter-attacked against Indian spinners at Indore. Travis Head blasted a 53-ball 49 in the fourth innings chase with 6 fours to make it a breeze. When they mean bazball, England could well be talking about such knocks; not slogging. And more importantly, during the WTC final at the Oval, it was Head's aggressive knock of 163, especially the unbeaten 146 of 156 deliveries on Day 1 while coming in at Australia placed at 76/3, that landed early blows on India. Such types of knocks on turners can tend to be a virtual knockout blow.

And when England last won a Test series here in 2012, it was Kevin Pietersen's counter-attacking knock of 186 at Mumbai that proved to be the one that tilted the scales and from there on, the hosts couldn't arrest the slide. England might well look at Australia's Indore blueprint from last March. Indians were bowled for 109, with the inexperienced left-arm spinner Matthew Kuhnemann taking a five-for. Australia got a 88-run lead before Nathan Lyon took a 8-wicket haul to once again bowl out India for a paltry score.

While India may not adopt an ultra-aggressive approach, their bowlers will definitely be tested by one from England. "They have been playing very good cricket but we know that it's going to be a challenge for them in these conditions as well. These are conditions where we have got experience in our attack. Everyone is looking forward to watching it. I'm looking forward to how our boys respond. When put under pressure, they respond positively," Dravid said.

MONTY PANESAR ON ENGLAND SPINNERS

Can visitors crack India code with young tweakers backing Leach?

and mouse game," Panesar tells *The Indian Express*.

"What Ben Stokes would want from the young spinners is to take 5/100 in 20, even 16 overs. He wouldn't mind them going for 100 runs. But do that and take those wickets in 20 instead of 40 overs. I reckon that'll be the Bazball mentality with the ball," Panesar says.

While the selection of the three does come across as a bold move, Panesar explains that the choice was more so made for England, rather than from them. Back home, first class cricket opportunities have dwindled down for the slower bowlers.

"It's to do with the pitches because the county season starts early in April and half the season is done by May. And then we have the T20 blast, the Test matches, and we also have to accommodate the Hundred in August. Whereas in July-August, you're supposed to have at least 3-4 matches of county cricket, so that the spinners can play. It's the best time to play for the spinners. Therefore, most county teams don't use spinners as a containing bowler. They use a third medium pacer for that role. Spinners miss out because of the scheduling of county cricket," Panesar adds.

The dearth of numbers on paper however, doesn't mean England don't have options in their dugout to accompany their first-choice spinner in Leach.

Bashir, second spinner?

With a first-class debut dating back to



Other than Jack Leach, Rehan Ahmed, 19, is the only spinner with a Test cap. His only Test was against Pakistan in Karachi last year.

only six months ago, Shoaib Bashir makes a strong case to be England's second spinner in the Hyderabad Test starting Thursday. The benefits, Panesar believes, are two-fold.

"He's a tall guy who can extract good bounce from the surface." While left-arm spinner Tom Hartley stretches equal to Bashir on the measuring scale, the latter offers an angular advantage to complement Leach. "Bashir

and Leach will have opposing angles of turn, which makes all the difference. It's challenging when you have to keep setting yourself for an off spinner, then a left-arm off spinner."

Panesar's former England teammate Graeme Swann had also offered his vote to Bashir, pressing on the 'ridiculous' size of his fingers that'll help him to stay consistent with the turn as the series progresses.

The Axar clone

The last time England visited these shores, it was a debutant Indian spinner, who pulverized their batting cast with a nigh unbelievable count of 27 wickets in three matches. On rank turners that reduced five-day matches to three – even two – Axar Patel would deceive the English with his stock ball, the one that went straight to either clean them up or trap them plumb. It was only apt that Stokes and Co found themselves a bowler with a similar penchant.

From what he's seen of Tom Hartley, Panesar says, "he's a similar bowler to Axar. He is more of a roller. Axar knows he doesn't have to put much spin on it. He looks to set the batter up to the non-turning delivery. And then you'll get the odd one, because his seam is slightly squarer, he'll get that ball to bite that little bit. Not as sharp as Jadeja. That's why they complement each other. One's really tall, the other one is a bit shorter."

It may also be a combination England dwell on, bowling the left-arm duo of Leach – whose stock ball turns away from the right hander – and Hartley in tandem.

Rehan will need Root support

The legspinner Rehan Ahmed arrives in India as England's second most-experienced full-time spinner. The 19-year-old had made an instant impact on his debut against Pakistan in Karachi back in 2022 with seven wickets. In India however, Panesar believes

Ahmed may need the backing of a part-time spinner in an all-rounder's capacity to make the final cut.

"I think if he comes in as a second spinner, that can be a little bit more pressure for him. He can be a good third spinner. If he knows he's not a frontline spinner, he can relax and try to bowl those googlies, a bit of topspin and show us a few of his tricks. But if you give him that second spinner role, he may just end up bowling quick leggies," he says.

In comes Joe Root, who had clinched a first-ever Test 5-fer – conceding only eight runs – on his last tour to India. "If Bashir doesn't play, Root can be the more containing, defensive bowler. Rehan can be the more attacking," Panesar suggests.

"Ben Stokes knows if his spinners go for 4-5 an over, he can go to Joe Root for 5-10 overs to control one end while they attack from the other. They can dovetail like that. If all else fails, he can call Root to get a bit of control back in the game. It's going to be an important role for Stokes in this series: how he utilises Root. They are quite inexperienced but then the excitement for these young spinners is that they are going to be playing on turning pitches," says Panesar. "Doesn't matter if it's a good ball or a bad one, they'll still be in the game. They've got the opportunity to get wickets of Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli, the best players in the world. If you do well in India as a spinner, everyone recognises that at the world stage."

Sinner faces hour of reckoning

22-year-old Italian has had a flawless tournament, but ultimate test against 10-time champion Djokovic awaits

NAMIT KUMAR
JANUARY 23

AMONG THE many storylines surrounding the Australian Open this year, it has relatively slipped under the radar that Jannik Sinner, the 22-year-old World No. 4 from Italy, is the most in-form player in the world.

His 6-4, 7-6 (5), 6-3 win over the fifth-seeded Russian Andrey Rublev on Tuesday was his 18th victory in the last 19 matches, which has included a talismanic Davis Cup win for his country. He has stormed through this tournament's draw without dropping a set, and suffering only two breaks of serve.

The 26-year-old Rublev is in the peak of physical shape and is now an experienced campaigner who has spent much of the last four years among the world's top 10 players. Yet, both his temperament and game have betrayed him on the big stage. Tuesday's loss meant he had been defeated in each of his 10 quarterfinal appearances at the Majors.

Despite having to drown out the deafening hype that surrounded him as a teenager, Sinner has taken considerably less time than others, like Rublev, in the generation just before him to prove that he is more comfortable on the big stage.

He enters the second Grand Slam semifinal of his career where he will play the same opponent he faced in his first, at Wimbledon last year. And the upcoming contest on Friday will be the clearest indicator of whether the precocious Italian is ready to take the next step in his career.

With no active player his equal and the prospect of creating more history looming around each Major, Novak Djokovic remains men's tennis's ultimate boss; and even more so in his Melbourne lair, where he is a 10-time champion and currently on a 33-match unbeaten streak.

With his 7-6 (1), 4-6, 6-2, 6-3 win over Taylor Fritz on Tuesday, Djokovic sauntered into the final four of the first Major of the year despite having been several notches below his best throughout the tournament. There were no realistic scares, but none of his five opponents so far have challenged him to raise his game.

The scoreline may make it seem like the 12th-seeded Fritz, coming into the match with the hype that most top-rated Americans enjoy, was a resilient presence. To his credit, he had saved 15 break points on the trot at one stage to level the match at one



Jannik Sinner defeated Andrey Rublev in straight sets on Tuesday. *Reuters*

set apiece, but Djokovic was much superior when it really counted, and Fritz displayed such a tendency to deteriorate when the stakes were raised, that the win never felt outside Djokovic's reach.

In that sense, Sinner should represent a greater test for the Serb, who lives for these big moments. Not only has the Italian won two of the pair's last three encounters, he also possesses the kind of playing style that pushes Djokovic out of his comfort zone.

Pure ball striker

Despite his wiry physique and calm demeanour, Sinner has a deceptively powerful game. Rather than muscling his shots, the pure connection he makes with the ball on his flat groundstrokes – particularly on his backhand side – allows him to hit through any opponent's defence.

The Italian finds depth and pinpoint accuracy even when he is on the stretch, which offers him a solid base to build his game

around and hides some of its undercooked features.

On Thursday, Rublev, whose power game allows him to match Sinner's ball striking from the baseline, recovered from losing the first set by isolating some of those weaknesses. The Russian used his superior forehand to target Sinner's weaker wing cross-court, and put immense pressure on the Italian's average second serve.

But it was Sinner's precision from the baseline, composure, and clutch first serves that allowed him to come through the pressure moments, get over the physical discomfort he was feeling in his abdomen, and take the set deep into a tiebreaker.

From there, Sinner did what top players do. Despite trailing 1-5 in the breaker, he remained an aware presence on the other side of the net as his opponent buckled under pressure, raising his game just enough to pounce at the precise moment and win six consecutive points to steal the set. The semi-

final was within his grasp from there.

Dealing with nerves

Sinner's rise may have been a lot steadier than the rapid ascent of Carlos Alcaraz, who was a Grand Slam champion and World No. 1 in his teens. The Italian took more time to grow into his body and deal with the physical demands of the tour.

There has also been a competitive flabbiness associated with his collapses at the Grand Slams. He lost from two sets up against Djokovic in the 2022 Wimbledon quarterfinal. Soon after at the US Open, he played his part in an all-time classic five-set quarterfinal against Alcaraz, which he lost despite holding a match point in the fourth set.

The draw at last year's Australian Open was lopsided and inexplicably opened up in his half, but despite recovering from a two-set deficit with momentum on his side in the fourth round against Stefanos Tsitsipas, Sinner leaked too many errors to falter in the fifth. After their wins, Djokovic and Alcaraz went on to lift the trophy, and Tsitsipas reached the final.

As much as Sinner's recent results against Djokovic, form and playing style may also work in his favour, but he will have to break down the psychological barrier of attempting to take down this sport's greatest player, on his favourite court, to prove he is not just making noise, but ready to take over.

Sabalenka to face Gauff in semis

COCO GAUFF hopes she's got her "bad" match out of the way at the Australian Open before meeting defending champion Aryna Sabalenka in the semi-finals.

The 19-year-old US Open winner overcame 51 unforced errors, nine double-faults and had just 17 winners to beat Marta Kostyuk 7-6 (6), 6-7 (3), 6-2 Tuesday in a quarterfinal match that lasted three hours, eight minutes.

Sabalenka's title defence has been gathering momentum and her 6-2, 6-3 win over No. 9-seeded Barbora Krejčíková was her fifth straight-set victory in a row. "I played great tennis," Sabalenka said. "I hope I can keep playing that way, or even better." AP

Goalless, pointless, but Stimac still lives in denial

SHASHANK NAIR
JANUARY 23

THREE GAMES, over 270 minutes of football, six goals conceded, none scored and no points earned – India's campaign at the 2023 AFC Asian Cup came to an underwhelming end on Tuesday with the team succumbing to a 1-0 loss to Syria at the Al Bayt Stadium in Doha.

The final 10 minutes of the game were a sight to behold – eerily similar to how the curtain came crashing down for the men's football team at the Asian Games. It was a group of 11 chasing, harrying and finally winning the ball, only to have every good idea come to naught with no final ball and an end product. The lack of options when presented with the ball and helplessness at the continental level has been a resounding theme around the two teams. Igor Stimac has taken to the two big recent assignments.

Against Syria on Tuesday, the Indian team played to the script. They fought to the best of their abilities. They created a couple of moments that may have become chances. They even pressed hard in midfield, fighting an obvious physical disadvantage that translated into slower, smaller players who simply couldn't match up, except for a better level of stamina, against the Syrians. Eventually the overwhelming odds that follow this Indian team, at even the Asian level, made all the difference.

India managed a grand total of five shots on target through three games of Asian football. They were only able to win the possession battle against Uzbekistan, a team who were more than willing to let India pass the ball in their defensive third after scoring three past them in the first 45 minutes. In a season of tournament football when Japan were shocked by Iraq in Asia and Ghana were dumped out of the African Cup of Nations, India were stoic in their continental mediocrities.

Handed a tough group with all of Australia, Uzbekistan and Syria ranked higher than them, Stimac's team were already looking at an uphill task. But it was the lack of quality upfront – in contrast to what India hinted at in three tournaments at home – that proved to be the bugbear against better opposition. On Tuesday, India were way off the pace when trying to move forward. The combination plays that they had shown against Kuwait and Lebanon simply did not show up against Syria in Doha.

Stimac said after the game that lack of club experience held the team back in this regard. "It was a good learning experience for us. In three games, we could see we can compete at



Sunil Chhetri reacts on Tuesday. *Reuters*

this level. This was a good lesson, and we can say in the next edition of the Asian Cup, we will be much stronger. The team created enough chances but couldn't finish because of their lack of club level experience," he reasoned.

The assessment that the team created any chances is hard to back up considering the only real opportunity India had all tournament was a Rahil KP half-volley that careened off the crossbar against Uzbekistan. Barring that chance (one that came their way when India were already 0-3 down), there was no instance when they showed that they were capable of scoring. Even on Tuesday, when Lallianzuala Chhangte pressed hard, and won possession from the Syrian goalkeeper, his first instinct was to pass the ball to the nearest Indian player rather than shoot at an open goal. To consider a poor choice as a chance doesn't give the full picture of what happened.

Instead, Stimac took the chance to snipe at individuals who have at best been role players at the national team level. "We had a clear plan to take the game to 60 minutes and then bring in fresh legs, but that didn't happen. Only Udanta (Singh) tried to make it. My simple philosophy is to give chances to players whose progress I see in training every day. That's why Udanta got his chance. I don't want casual players. I feel sorry for Liston (Colaco), who was feverish and didn't want to expose himself," Stimac said told a press conference.

India next play Afghanistan in two games home and away in the World Cup qualifiers in March. They are placed well in a group with Qatar and Kuwait and could possibly make the third round of the World Cup Qualifiers for the first time in the country's history.

BRIEFLY

Roshibina named female wushu sanda player of year by IWUF

New Delhi: Two-time Asian Games medalist Naorem Roshibina Devi was on Tuesday named International Wushu Federation's (IWUF) female athlete of the year in sanda category after a month-long public voting. The 23-year-old Roshibina, who won a bronze and a silver in the 2018 and 2022 Asian Games, polled 93545 votes to beat Shahrano Mansouriyan Semiroomi (88179) of Iran and Wu Xiaowei (46753) of China. Roshibina had lost to Xiaowei in the women's 60kg Wushu sanda event final at the Hangzhou Asian Games last year. The Manipuri also won a bronze medal in the 2016 World Junior Wushu Championships. PTI

Gurman shines with 15 raid points in tie

Hyderabad: The Maharashtra derby between U Mumba and Puneri Paltan lived up to its billing as they played out a thrilling 32-32 tie in the Pro Kabaddi League here on Tuesday. Gurman Singh was the star on the night for U Mumba with 15 raid points, while Mohammadreza Shadlou Chiyaneh notched 6 tackle points in the match. Aslam Inamdar grabbed two raid points as the Paltan led 4-2 in the third minute, while Sanket Sawant also joined the party with tackles against Heidari Ekrami and Gurman, helping the Pune side prolong the lead. Nevertheless, Ekrami caught out Gaurav Khatri and kept U Mumba in the contest at 5-7. PTI

Madrid gets F1 race from 2026 to 2035

Madrid: Madrid will host the Spanish Formula One Grand Prix from 2026 to 2035 on a new circuit around the capital's IFEMA exhibition centre, the sport announced on Tuesday. Barcelona's Circuit de Catalunya currently hosts the country's grand prix and has a contract until after the 2026 race. There was no mention of that circuit in the F1 statement. The country currently has two Formula One drivers -- Carlos Sainz at Ferrari and double world champion Fernando Alonso, now 42 but still a frequent podium finisher last season, at Aston Martin. Madrid last hosted a grand prix at Jarama to the north of the city in 1981, with Barcelona hosting the Spanish race in 1991. REUTERS

Paddler Sreeja furiously chasing ranking points

ANIL DIAS
MAPUSA, JANUARY 23

INDIA'S NATIONAL women's table tennis champion Sreeja Akula seems to be on an expedited mission, and she's ready to go all out to meet her targets.

It didn't matter that she had to leave most of the Indian contingent and travel halfway around the world from Doha to Texas to play a tournament a few tiers below what she normally plays. It didn't matter to her that she had to travel as many as 32 hours back home to Telangana, only to spend a few hours there before heading to Goa to play another tournament.

After the high of winning the Commonwealth Games mixed doubles gold alongside Sharath Kamal, her confidence was taking a beating off late, and she knew she had to do something about it.

That was when someone suggested that she play a lower-tier WTT Feeder tournament, rather than a WTT Contender. The only problem was that the Feeder tournament was in the US and she was already in Qatar where the Contender was going to be held. Her hunger to do well and improve her rankings made her choose the former, even though it could have well been a waste of time.

Her risk paid off though, and how! Showing impeccable maturity, the 25-year-old secured her maiden international title, winning the WTT Feeder Corpus Christi in Texas, beating some top names on the way, including World No. 37 Lily Zhang who she stunned in straight games in the final.

While Sreeja was able to dominate USA's Lily in the title clash, it was her quarterfinal win over World No. 35 and top seed Amy Wang that erased all doubts in her mind.

"I would always feel disheartened and question myself whether I could play at this level and this just showed me I'm capable of competing at a high level," she told *The Indian Express* on the sidelines of the WTT Star Contender Goa on Tuesday.

Olympics on her mind

The win also saw her jump 28 places to best-ever ranking of 66 in the world. "For an Olympic year, this ranking is so important," she says.

"For India to qualify for the Olympics as a team, we need to get our individual ranking higher. The cut-off for qualification is mid-June so I'm ready to play any tournaments, not just contenders but feeders as well," she said.

India can also qualify for the Olympics if they reach the quarterfinals of the World Team Championships next month and Sreeja says they have a good chance.

"Last year in the team championships



National TT champion Sreeja Akula. File

we lost in the pre-quarterfinals to Chinese Taipei but this year everyone in the team has been performing well. Our rankings also are collectively much better so we're confident of making it to Paris," she says.

Battling injuries

While she's ready to play in whatever tournaments to ensure qualification for the Olympics, Sreeja needs to be mindful of an injury for which adequate rest is a must.

"I have tennis elbow, which can be very problematic for a paddler. I've been playing back-to-back tournaments for the last couple of years and now I have to be extremely careful about it. That's why I do strength training separately for an hour and a half every day," she says.

Fresh challenge

Now that Sreeja is ranked 66th in the world, she will have to face a new challenge. To now improve her ranking or stay at that level, she will have to consistently beat the top-50 players. That means she will be facing Asian players -- the Chinese and Japanese in particular -- more often. And she knows she has to up her game by some distance.

"More than anything, I need to get mentally stronger against top Asian players. I have improved no doubt, but Asians are very quick and so I am working on improving the quickness of my feet. Since I play with a pimpled rubber, I need to learn how to improve my variations and flip my bat mid-rally, something which Manika has mastered," Sreeja said.

After her win in Texas, she's bound to grab a few eyeballs when she plays at the ongoing WTT Star Contender where she has made it to the main draw. She may be sleep-deprived and jet-lagged, but she's fueled up and raring to go.

Inauguration of Kaushal Bhawan by Smt. Droupadi Murmu Hon'ble President of India

New Moti Bagh, New Delhi | 24 January, 2024 | 12:15 PM Onwards

Kaushal Bhawan – Enabling Convergence and Enhancing the Skilling Ecosystem

- A seven storey structure with a built-up area of 23,065 sq. mts.
- State-of-the-art office building with modern facilities and infrastructure with a seating capacity for 700+ office staff
- Auditorium with a seating capacity of 240 people with four big conference rooms
- Rain water harvesting facility and a water treatment plant for sustainable water management
- Adorned with 7 large trees including a Banyan tree with a girth of 7 meters; 4-star GRIHA (Green Rating for Integrated Habitat Assessment) rated, adhering to environment friendly and sustainable design practices
- Solar power system with a capacity of 30 kilowatts peak (kWP) for reduced reliance on conventional power
- Automatic occupancy sensors on each floor for reduced electricity consumption
- A Gymnasium, yoga place for fitness and wellness activities and a Crèche for employees' children
- Advanced Sewage Treatment Plant utilizing Membrane Bio Reactor (MBR) technology for efficient treatment with the capacity of 90 KLD
- Parking of more than 200 cars enabled through Electronic Car Parking System

In the august presence of

Shri Dharmendra Pradhan
Hon'ble Minister of Education,
Skill Development and Entrepreneurship,
Government of India

Shri Rajeev Chandrasekhar
Hon'ble Minister of State for Electronics & IT,
Skill Development and Entrepreneurship,
and Jal Shakti, Government of India

