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Active participation of women in nation's development

Nari Shakti Vandana Adhiniyam gives women the right to 33% reservation in Lok Sabha and state legislative assemblies

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PRIME MINISTER MODI ANNOUNCES
highest civilian honour decision

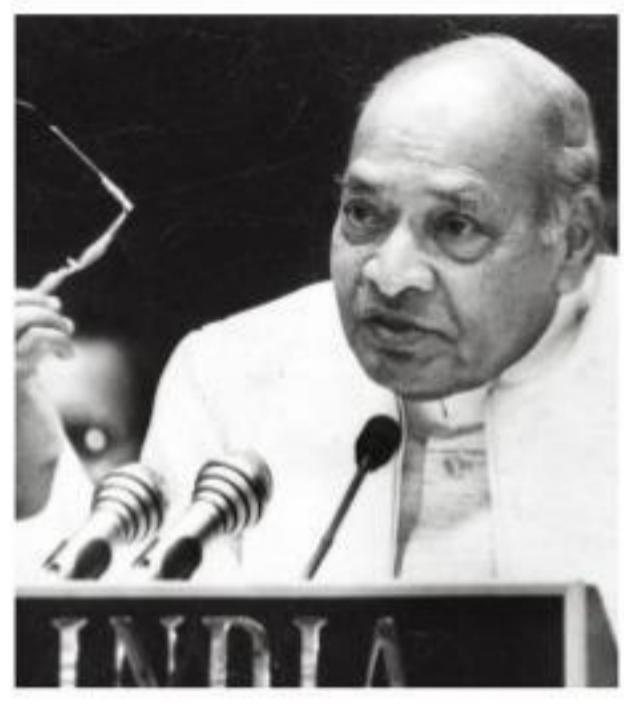
5 BHARAT RATNAS IN 2 WEEKS,
highest number for award in a year

OPPOSITION CONGRESS, RLD HAIL
decision to honour their leaders

Bharat Ratna PV Narasimha Rao, Charan Singh, MS Swaminathan

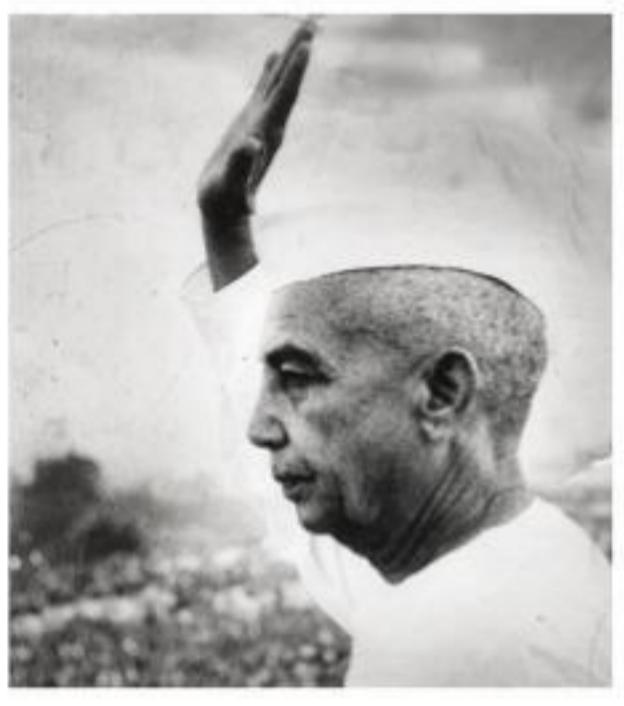
Strong political message from ruling alliance in countdown to Lok Sabha polls

VIKAS PATHAK
& LALMANI VERMA
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 9



THE REFORMER

P V NARASIMHA RAO
1921 - 2004



THE FARM LEADER

CHAUDHARY CHARAN SINGH
1902 - 1987



THE FARM REFORMER

M S SWAMINATHAN
1925 - 2023

Its Prime Minister the Cong forgot

BUSINESS AS USUAL

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MANOJ CG
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 9

IN A pointed attack on the Congress, Prime Minister Narendra Modi told Rajya Sabha two days ago that the party never considered B R Ambedkar worthy of Bharat Ratna and kept giving the honour to their "own family members". He said the Congress, which named parks, streets and squares after its "family members", was now giving the BJP advice and lessons

on social justice.

The government's decision to award the highest civilian honour to former Prime Minister P V Narasimha Rao and earlier to former President Pranab Mukherjee, another Congress leader, fits well into the BJP's larger political narrative. That the Congress has always ignored its stalwarts outside the Gandhi family and played down their contributions to the country. While the relations between Rao and Sonia Gandhi were frosty, Mukherjee

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

FULL COVERAGE
**THE MESSAGE
IN THE RATNAS**
PAGES 10, 22

Dil jeet liya, says Jayant, hints at pact with BJP in western UP

LALMANI VERMA
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 9

"*DIL JEET liya*". This was what Jayant Chaudhary posted on X, responding to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's announcement on the Bharat Ratna for Chaudhary Charan Singh.

Speaking to reporters soon after, Jayant, grandson of the former Prime Minister and president of the Rashtriya Lok Dal (RLD) which is a key player in western UP politics, dropped broad hints of walking out of the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami meets police personnel injured in Thursday's violence. PTI

Haldwani toll 5, Dhami says 'rioters tried to kill' police, admn teams

authorities said both structures stood on Nazool land — government land not officially mentioned in revenue records. As stones were pelted, cars torched and the local police station surrounded by a mob, Chief Minister Pushkar Dhami called for shoot-at-sight orders.

On Friday, the administration took a tough line on what it called was a "planned" attack on the demolition team and the police. District Magistrate Vandana said that "stones had been

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Maharashtra to probe payment to accused in journalist murder



The Indian Express report published Thursday

VALLABHOZARKAR
MUMBAI, FEBRUARY 9

A DAY after The Indian Express reported that Ratnagiri Refinery Petrochemicals Ltd (RRPCL), a company set up by PSUs to execute the Konkan refinery project, had made a payment of Rs 4.44 lakh to Pandharinath Amberkar, prime accused in the murder of journalist Shashikant Warishe, Maharashtra Industries Minister Uday Samant said an inquiry would be conducted on why

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

17th Lok Sabha ends today with BJP-led discussion on Ram temple, PM role

LIZ MATHEW
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 9

A DISCUSSION on the construction of the "historic" Ram temple and the January 22 Pran Pratishta (consecration ceremony) of the idol of Ramlalla in Ayodhya will bring to a close proceedings of the 17th Lok Sabha

Ramlalla at the Ram temple in Ayodhya.

"Apart from the resolution, there will be a discussion on this government's pledge in Amrit Kaal for Viksit Bharat (a developed India) and its resolve to establish good governance as in Ram Rajya," the source said.

The discussion could be

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Pak Army behind him, Sharif reaches out to PPP for a govt, keep Imran out

SHUBHAJIT ROY
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 9

PAKISTAN ARMY'S favoured candidate, three-time PM Nawaz Sharif, reached out to rivals PPP, led by the Bhutto-Zardari family, Friday to form a coalition government as both parties trailed Imran Khan's PTI-backed candidates in the parliamentary poll results.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



Sharif with daughter Maryam, brother Shehzad Friday. Reuters

Meet HAPS: India's very own UAV that can fly 20 km high and float for months



First test flight of a prototype was conducted last week. NAL

manned aerial vehicle (UAV) that can significantly increase India's surveillance and monitoring capabilities in the border areas.

The high-altitude pseudo satellite vehicle, or HAPS, can fly at altitudes of 18-20 km from the ground, almost double the heights attained by commercial airplanes, and, thanks to its ability to generate solar power, can remain in air for months, even

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

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BISCUITS

FROM PAGE ONE

PM announces Bharat Ratna

The government said that Rao's contributions to India's foreign policy, language and education sectors underscore his multifaceted legacy as a leader who not only steered India through critical transformations but also enriched its cultural and intellectual heritage.

Modi praised Charan Singh for dedicating his entire life to the rights of farmers and their welfare, and Swaminathan for his "monumental contributions to our nation in agriculture and farmers' welfare" and "someone I knew closely and I always valued his insights and inputs".

The honour for the three men is also replete with political messaging on several levels in the countdown to the Lok Sabha polls, continuing a Modi-era trend when it comes to State awards.

At five, one more than the four announced in 1999, this is the maximum number of Bharat Ratnas announced in a year.

Charan Singh was a prominent farmer leader with a strong base among the Jats of western UP. In offering him the highest civilian award, the Modi government has reached out to farmers of north India in general and the Jat community of western UP, Rajasthan and Haryana in particular.

Significantly, the Jats of Haryana and western UP were at the forefront of the year-long agitation against the three farm laws legislated in 2021, on the borders of the Capital, eventually forcing the Prime Minister to announce their withdrawal.

The award comes at a time when there is growing speculation about the Rashtriya Lok Dal, set up by Charan Singh's son Ajit Singh and now led by his grand-

son Jayant Choudhury, breaking away from the Opposition INDIA bloc to join the NDA. "Dil jeet liya (You've won my heart)," Jayant posted soon after the announcement of the award.

Earlier, after the Bharat Ratna was named for Karpoori Thakur, who had pioneered EBC reservation in Bihar, the JD(U) split from INDIA and joined the NDA.

But the symbolism of the award to Charan Singh does not stop here. The farmer leader spent 38 years in the Congress before splitting the party in UP after it failed to get a majority in the 1967 state Assembly elections, and walked out with 16 MLAs. He then became the Chief Minister with the support of the Jana Sangh – the BJP's forerunner – along with the socialists, the Communists and the Swatantra Party.

While that government proved short-lived, it didn't halt Charan Singh. He returned as CM for another short tenure in 1970 with the support of the Congress.

After some more experiments with other parties, in 1977, post the Emergency, Charan Singh again found himself in the opposite ranks to the Congress, joining the Janata Party, which was formed by the merger of various Opposition parties including the Jana Sangh. He was Deputy Prime Minister in the Janata government that came to power, in which later BJP luminaries Atal Bihari Vajpayee and LK Advani were also ministers. Once the Janata Party started cracking due to its ideological contradictions, Charan Singh quit.

This time, he became PM for a brief while with the support of

FULL REPORTS ON
WWW.INDIANEXPRESS.COM

Indira Gandhi's Congress.

The Bharat Ratna to Charan Singh hence is recognition for a leader who stood up against the Congress, and was a co-traveller of the Jana Sangh for some years. In his post on the Bharat Ratna, Modi said Charan Singh's "deep dedication to our farmer brothers and sisters and his commitment to democracy during the Emergency are an inspiration for the whole country".

The outreach to farmers is further exemplified in the award to Swaminathan. It was the Swaminathan Committee that recommended in 2006 that the MSP should be 1.5 times the cost of production that a farmer incurs. He is also credited as the architect of the Green Revolution in the 1960s, making India self-reliant in foodgrain production.

"Dr Swaminathan's visionary leadership has not only transformed Indian agriculture but also ensured the nation's food security and prosperity," the PM said.

However, the most significant choice for the Bharat Ratna Friday was Narasimha Rao, the second life-long Congress leader to be honoured with this award by the Modi government after Pranab Mukherjee. Significantly, both the leaders had a testy relationship with the Gandhi family, and the Modi government honour for Rao comes just at a time when the PM has stepped up his attacks on the Congress, particularly the Gandhis. It fits into the BJP narrative that Congress leaders who don't have the Gandhi family's blessings don't get too far in the party or find themselves pushed to the sidelines.

For the BJP, the honour to Rao

also serves more purposes as he is seen as the liberator of the Indian economy, as well as the PM who many believe "let" the Babri Masjid demolition happen in 1992. While the Congress did not acknowledge Rao for a long time after his term as PM ended, the Bharat Ratna serves well the BJP claim that the Congress had mismanaged the economy, while tacitly honouring a leader who ended up giving a huge push to the Ram temple movement – the consecration ceremony of the Ram temple took place in Ayodhya last month with Modi leading the rituals.

"As a distinguished scholar and statesman, Narasimha Rao Garu served India extensively in various capacities... (His) tenure as Prime Minister was marked by significant measures that opened India to global markets, fostering a new era of economic development," Modi said Friday.

What would also have been on the BJP's mind are the coming Andhra Pradesh Assembly elections, held simultaneously with the Lok Sabha. Rao, who belonged to the Telangana region, remains the pride of Andhra as the only leader from the undivided state to have ever become PM. He was also the CM of unified Andhra.

The BJP, which is seeking to increase its Lok Sabha tally in the South, is currently in talks with both the ruling YSRCP and the Opposition TDP in Andhra, underlining its own importance for the two parties. The others conferred Bharat Ratna since Modi came to power in 2014 include educationist, freedom fighter Madan Mohan Malviya and former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee.

● Bharat Ratna for Rao: Its Prime Minister the Congress forgot

could never really earn her complete trust.

Campaigning during the Telangana Assembly polls last November, Modi said in Karimnagar that the region knows how "talent" had been insulted by "family arrogance". He said, "This land gave the country a Prime Minister in the form of P V Narasimha Rao. But the Congress's royal family didn't like it and insulted him every step of the way. That is not all. Even after Rao's death, the Congress's royal family did not leave a single opportunity to insult Rao."

On Friday, the Congress officially welcomed the award of Bharat Ratna to Rao, but many in the party said the UPA government itself should have bestowed the honour on him and conceded it was a missed opportunity.

Welcoming the government's decision, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge said, "Former Prime Minister and former Congress president PV Narasimha Rao has tremendously contributed to nation-building. Under his government, India embarked on a transformative journey with a series of economic reforms that played a pivotal role in shaping the middle class for generations to come. He also made significant contributions to India's nuclear programme and a number of foreign policy achievements marked his tenure, including the 'Look East' policy. His vital role in the prosperity and development of our nation shall always be cherished."

Rao has always been an Achilles' heel for the Congress, given the fraught relations Sonia Gandhi shared with him when he was Prime Minister. The demolition of the Babri Masjid in 1992 under his watch as Prime Minister was another sore point.

Incidentally, the decision to honour him with Bharat Ratna comes days after the opening of the Ram temple in Ayodhya.

The Congress had pinned the blame for its defeat in the 1996 Lok Sabha election on Rao. And he was soon marginalised and forgotten. Rather, the party under the leadership of the Gandhis chose to forget Rao as well as his contributions.

Some of the reasons cited for Sonia's disenchantment with Rao are real, some are hearsay, and some are intelligent conjectures. Whatever they may be, the bitter-

ness was real. Rao was a senior minister in the Rajiv Gandhi government and had no plans to stay in Delhi after the 1991 Lok Sabha elections. He virtually decided to retire from active politics and move back to Hyderabad as soon as the elections were over. But Rajiv Gandhi's assassination ended all those plans.

With the likes of N D Tiwari, Arjun Singh, and Sharad Pawar throwing the hat in the ring, the selection of the next PM was turning out to be a difficult task for the Congress. Sonia had earlier declined the party's proposal to take over as Congress president after Rajiv's assassination. She was not interested in the PM's post either.

It is said those close to the Gandhi family – such as M L Fotedar and R K Dhawan – were against Tiwari, Singh and Pawar. They favoured the "harmless" Rao. Singh too withdrew from the race later and favoured Rao to checkmate Pawar. But Rao was not Sonia's first choice. She preferred the then Vice-President Shankar Dayal Sharma. However, she did not object to Rao's elevation and endorsed the proposal.

A Congress leader who was a minister in the Manmohan Singh government was witness to Rao's meeting with Sonia after it was decided he would be the next Prime Minister. The leader, who happened to be there to meet V George at 10, Janpath, recalls that "when the door was opened for Rao to go in and meet Mrs Gandhi, Rao lay down prostrate on the floor". It was his way of telling Sonia that he would remain loyal to her. But the equations soon changed.

The first break happened soon, sometime in 1992. S Bangarappa was the Chief Minister of Karnataka. He wanted George, who was the private secretary of Rajiv Gandhi, to be given a Rajya Sabha ticket because George had been instrumental in making him the CM. But Rao had other ideas.

He wanted the ticket to be given to another leader. He skilfully tossed it into Gandhi's court saying if she says I will give it to George. Gandhi was in a different state of mind. She never said yes and she never said no and the ticket went to the person who Rao wanted.

It is said that the arrest of George's brother-in-law in a TADA case was another pinprick. But se-

rious differences soon followed.

The demolition of the Babri Masjid became the rallying point for the likes of Arjun Singh and Tiwari to openly take on Rao. It is said that those close to Sonia at that time tacitly backed Singh and Tiwari. It was seen as backing by 10, Janpath, Singh and Tiwari used to meet Sonia to complain about the PM, which upset Rao. It is said that Singh and Tiwari had the blessings of 10, Janpath when they led an abortive political coup against Rao.

But things came to a head in 1995. Sonia was upset over the slow progress in the investigation into Rajiv's assassination case.

"Gandhi had a meeting with the then Sri Lankan president Chandrika Kumaratunga. They shared a strong emotional bond. Talking about her husband's assassination and the involvement of some LTTE elements who were now wandering freely around in Sri Lanka, Chandrika had mentioned in passing that India had not even sought their extradition ... I think at that point she felt very disturbed," a senior leader said.

In August of 1995, Gandhi openly accused the Rao government of going slow on the investigation into her husband's assassination. "She felt he did not want the inquiry to proceed," a senior leader said. So, Sonia shared an uneasy relationship with Rao even before she entered active politics, the leader added.

The rest is history. Rao was replaced by Sitaram Kesri as the Congress president after the party's defeat in 1996. Two years later, Rao was denied a ticket in the 1998 Lok Sabha elections. Kesri declared the party would not give him a ticket because of his failure to protect the Babri Masjid.

And when Sonia took over as Congress president in 1998, she and those close to her ensured that Rao didn't get a pride of place. It became natural for the party not to include his photograph at AICC plenary sessions alongside the pictures of other former Congress PMs. And the bitterness continued until his death and after.

Vinay Sitapati, in his book *Hail Lion: How PV Narasimha Rao Transformed India*, writes that Rao's family wanted him to be cremated in Delhi. He quotes Rao's son Prabhakar as saying, "Soniji did not want ... him to be seen as an all-India leader."

● Haldwani violence death toll 5

because it is part of his vision, and his decision on Bharat Ratna for three persons, particularly Chaudhary Charan Singh, has sent a big message across the country."

Reminded that he had said he would not flip like a coin, he said, "I express my view according to the prevailing situation. In politics, what the Opposition says should be forgotten. One should remember what the government says." The RLD had contested the UP Assembly in 2022 in alliance with the SP.

The district, meanwhile, remained under curfew, with movement restricted, police deployed at every corner, and Internet services suspended. As many as 1,100 police personnel were deployed to prevent tensions from flaring.

At the police station, some personnel could be seen wearing bandages or plaster, while the streets were being cleared of charred vehicles.

According to eyewitnesses, the demolition drive started around 4.30 pm, and soon after it was finished, around 5.30 pm, stone pelting started, which escalated to arson and gherao of the police station. As the available police forces proved insufficient, reinforcements were brought in, and the situation was brought under control by 9 pm.

Speaking to *The Indian Express*, Rajendra Prasad (50), a Prantika Rakshak Dal (PRD) jawan admitted at the Soban Singh Jeena Base Hospital, said that although the PAC and other personnel had protective gear, PRD personnel did not. "By around 5.30 pm, the situation had spiralled. Stones were hurled and vehicles torched. I ran to save myself, but the lanes were narrow and stones were coming from all sides. A brick hit me on my left shoulder and everything went black. The next thing I knew I was in hospital. I was told a Sardar ji brought me in on his scooter," said Prasad, lying on a bed in the emergency ward.

A woman police officer told reporters that she, along with 15-20 personnel, "entered a house to save our lives. We made calls to officials and sent them our location".

Dhami said the anti-encroachment drive had been going on as per the court's direction, and the administration had notified people in advance. "When police and administration teams went to remove the encroachment, they were attacked with petrol bombs, stones. There was arson, an attempt to kill. Some people tried to create tension in Uttarakhand. Strict action will be taken as per the law. Video footage of the whole incident is being retrieved, and those who damaged government and public property will be made to pay for it... we are with the people who got injured," the Chief Minister said.

District Magistrate Vandana said the property where the two

structures stood is registered as Nagar Nigam's Nazool land. She said that for the past 15-20 days, the demolition drive had been underway to free the roads of traffic congestion.

A notice, issued on January 30, required the encroachment to be removed within three days or for ownership documents to be provided. On February 3, several locals visited the Nagar Nigam to discuss with our team. They submitted an application and requested time to appeal to the High Court, agreeing to abide by the court's decision," she said, adding that more time was not given because sufficient time had already been provided.

"That night, our forces conducted a flag march in preparation for demolition the next day. However, the locals presented a 2007 High Court order issued to the then DM of Nainital regarding the disposal of an application. Unable to verify the legality of the disposal, we postponed the demolition to ensure adherence to proper legal procedures. We sealed the structure known as madrasa with consensus, confirming it was unoccupied," the District Magistrate said, noting that all legal formalities were completed prior to the demolition.

"The following day, after the 2007 order was examined in our office, the party concerned sought a stay on the notice from the High Court. After a two-day hearing, the High Court declined to grant relief. Since our preparations for the demolition were already finalised, we proceeded with the drive," she said.

Shakeel Ahmad, Councillor of Ward Number 31, under which the incident took place, however told *The Indian Express* that the High Court had not given a final decision in the case. "The next date of hearing was February 14 and when the administration came, we requested them to stop until then. We said we will not stop the administration from demolishing the structure if the court decision is against us. But they did not listen... If they had waited for the final decision of the High Court, there would have been no resistance," he said.

The District Magistrate said the violence was not communal but an attack against the state machinery. "The mob was not trying to save the structure, but we felt they were just trying to attack the authorities. It was not against any community, but against the state authority and machinery. It was against the symbols of the state government," she said.

She claimed that within half an hour of the demolition drive, anti-social elements had gathered on rooftops and started pelting stones. She claimed that when the legal process was going on, stones had been gathered, showing it was a planned attack to demoralise the state machinery.

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District Magistrate Vandana said the property where the two

● Journalist murder: Maharashtra to probe payment to accused

the payment was made. "If it has been revealed during the police investigation and contains facts, their action would be taken against those responsible for it. An inquiry will be conducted about everything which is revealed in the investigation," Samant said at a press conference in Thane.

The Indian Express reported on Thursday that Amberkar, the accused in the murder of Ratnagiri-based Warishe, was involved in a slew of land deals in and around the Barsu village in Rajapur. This region was identified

for acquisition of land by the state government.

Asked if there would be any inquiry into RRPLC, Samant said, "Instead of saying the inquiry of RRPLC, the inquiry would be conducted of whoever has paid the money. If it is there in the investigation, then it would be inquired as to why and for what purpose the money was transferred by that person. Everything would be checked and if anyone is found guilty, then action would be taken," Samant said.

The Indian Express investiga-

tion of land records of the past three years in the villages where the refinery was proposed shows that Amberkar, his sister Pratiksha Khadpe and his nephew (cousin's son) Akshay Amberkar are linked to 34 land transactions covering over 10.2 hectares and worth an estimated Rs 2.8 crore.

A scrutiny of the chargesheet filed by the Ratnagiri Police in May 2023 had revealed that RRPLC paid Rs 4.44 lakh to Sai Krupa Travels, a firm owned by Pandharinath Amberkar in December 2022. Amberkar, who

was a supporter of the refinery project, had also been providing logistics services to RRPLC.

In the past three years, Amberkar himself had bought six land parcels, sold one, and held the power of attorney for eight others, representing the buyer or the seller, records show. Total worth of these transactions: Rs 80.64 lakh. Amberkar's nephew Akshay who worked closely with him is also involved in 19 land transactions (8.41 hectares) between October 2021 and April 2023, valued at over Rs 2 crore.

The outcome means that the Army was propping up a Nawaz-Bhutto-Zardari coalition, along with help from deserters from PTI's breakaway faction, that would keep Khan's party away from the Prime Minister's office.

The view among Pakistan's analysts was that Sharif and Bhutto-Zardari not getting enough numbers actually works well for the Army since none of them will be in a commanding position and will be subservient to the establishment. Also, the strong showing by the PTI-backed candidates can be spun by the Pakistan establishment as proof that it was not a sham election.

The delay in the declaration of results, shutting down of Internet and mobile services on Friday led to allegations of massive rigging. Some sure-shot winnable candidates from PTI, who were leading

by more than 50,000 votes, found they had lost. Panelists in TV debates in Pakistan said the slogan "vote ko izat do" (respect the ballot) had been shredded to pieces.

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The test flight by NAL was the result of a separate initiative of R&

Trace, verify data of 62,000 foreign nationals, DCPs told

The foreign nationals came to India on medical grounds, for travel purposes, and higher studies in last 3-4 years

MAHENDER SINGH
MANAL
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 9

THE SPECIAL Branch of Delhi Police has shared with DCPs of all 15 districts in the Capital data of as many as 62,000 foreign nationals with the direction to verify their credentials after tracing them, it has been learnt.

A few days ago, Union Home Secretary Ajay Bhalla had called a meeting, which was attended by Delhi Police Commissioner Sanjay Arora, to take an update on this initiative.

A source said the details of 62,000 foreign nationals were shared by the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) with the special branch, adding the Ministry of Home Affairs has issued the directions to trace them.

"It came to fore that there is no current updated data of foreign nationals, who came to India on medical grounds, for travel purposes, and higher studies in the last three to four years. There is no updated data

A source said data shows that among the 62,000 foreign nationals, a majority was from Nigeria and Afghanistan

of them after their visa expired, and the Centre is also not aware whether they have applied for extension or not," the source said.

Last month, at the All-India Conference of Director/ Inspector Generals of Police in Jaipur, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had asked all the state police chiefs to make a data bank of all the foreign nationals, adding every police station should have that verified data.

A source said data shows that among the 62,000 foreign nationals, a majority was from Nigeria and Afghanistan. "The list, which was shared by the MEA, was prepared by the Immigration Branch, asking them to verify it. They have also shared a dongle with the

Additional DCP of all the districts along with the DCPs of the specialised units in which they have shared all the details," the source said.

The special branch, a nodal agency of the Delhi Police, has asked all the Deputy Commissioners of Police (DCPs) to visit every address to conduct a proper verification. "Following the visit, if it comes to the fore that the person has already applied for an extension, the special branch should be informed so that the data can be updated," the source said, adding that the district DCPs have been also told to deport the foreign national if they are found staying illegally.

According to the data of "NCRB-Crime in India 2021" report, a total of 4,925 foreigners were involved in different crimes registered across the country in 2021.

In 2019, Union Home Minister Amit Shah had told the Rajya Sabha that the government will identify illegal immigrants staying on every inch of the country's soil and deport them as per international law.

Being harassed by troll on social media: Pranab daughter in police complaint

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
GURGAON, FEBRUARY 9

FORMER PRESIDENT Pranab Mukherjee's daughter Sharmista Mukherjee on Friday filed a police complaint, alleging sexual harassment by a person on social media who she called "a close associate of Congress".

Tagging the Delhi Police on her X account before approaching the Gurgaon Police - since she resides there - with a formal complaint in the matter, Mukherjee also wrote an open letter to Congress MP Rahul Gandhi and Indian National Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge, demanding 'nyay' (justice).

"As@RahulGandhi seems 2 b talking about #Nyay, I demand Nyay from him 4 character-assassinating me & my father in his name," she wrote in a post on X accusing a person she called a close associate of the Congress. She told police that the sexual harassment began after the release of her book on her father a month ago.

In her open letter to Rahul Gandhi, Mukherjee, who contested the 2015 Delhi Assembly elections on a Congress ticket, but maintains that she has since quit politics, said the person harassing her with "vilest abuse with sexual connotation" had a social media account that was "followed by many senior leaders" of the party's social media team.

When reached out for comment, Mukherjee confirmed that she had filed a formal complaint in the matter with the cyber crime unit of the Gurgaon Police.

A senior police officer said they would provide all necessary help to Mukherjee in the matter.

Two men shot dead inside Najafgarh salon, police suspect personal enmity

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 9

TWO MEN were shot dead inside a salon in Southwest Delhi's Najafgarh on Friday evening, officers said.

Purported CCTV footage of the incident surfaced on social media where one of the victims could be seen pleading with the attackers before he was shot in the head at point-blank range. An employee opens a door, comes out, sees the man, and runs back inside.

According to DCP (Dwarka) Ankit Kumar, they received a PCR call at Najafgarh police station wherein the caller said a person had been shot in a salon at Indra Park. Another call was received at Mohan Garden police station regarding two persons being admitted to a hospital with gunshot wounds.

Said the DCP, "The men, Sonu and Ashish, succumbed to their injuries. Crime and FSL teams are at the spot."

The DCP said they did not work at the salon. Sonu made a living from rental income. Ashish has two previous criminal cases against him, said police.

Police said while Sonu was shot in the head once, Ashish re-

ceived three bullet injuries in his head and one in his chest.

A senior police officer said, "Prima facie, the motive appears to be personal enmity... we have identified the two shooters from CCTV footage... they came on a motorcycle and shot the two men, who were sitting inside the salon, in the presence of employees. They then fled. We are questioning the family members of the deceased to ascertain the exact motive."

(With PTI inputs)

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Date: **10.02.2024** Sd/- REGISTRAR



Mithilesh K Jha (Tabla) Akram Khan (Tabla)

For information contact : Rajiv Giri : 9899465865

SPIC MACAY, 41/42, Lucknow Road, Delhi - 110 054 www.spicmacay.org

PASSED BY DJB, TO BE PLACED BEFORE CABINET: ATISHI

Govt revives scheme to clear faulty water bills in one go

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 9

AHEAD OF the Lok Sabha polls, the Delhi government has decided to bring back its one-time scheme to settle faulty water bills. According to the government, 10 lakh consumers who have received inflated bills would stand to benefit.

Addressing a gathering after he laid the foundation stone of a school in Mayur Vihar on Friday, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal said: "I know people are getting inflated water bills... there are some problems... But don't worry, there is no need to pay the bill... I am bringing a detailed plan to correct it..."

Long-pending water bills as well as generate good revenue for the DJB..."

Officials said the UD minister has issued directions to place the proposal before the Cabinet by February 14.

Atishi said to avail of the scheme, consumers are required to have functional water meters. Those with non-functional meters will have to get them replaced.

Explaining the process, Bharadwaj said: "It will be done scientifically and rationally; if the consumer pays the re-casted amount then arrears will be adjusted... For instance, say a consumer gets an inflated bill of Rs 1 lakh. Based on his consumption pattern, the bill is re-casted to Rs 7,000. Now, the consumer needs to pay a one-time settlement amount of Rs 7,000 only and the entire amount will be adjusted.

From the next billing cycle, he will get a fresh bill. If he doesn't pay the re-casted amount, he will have to wait for every election, but the benefits never reach the public. Most of these bills belong to properties whose owners have sold them and now it is a disputed amount that new property owners do not want to pay," he said.

The government also said the scheme is expected to unlock around Rs 2,500 crore of revenue for the DJB.

The main advantage of this scheme is that bills will be recast in an automated manner.

Therefore, customers will not have to individually get their bills



According to the government, 10 lakh consumers who have received inflated bills would stand to benefit. Archive

pay the entire amount of Rs 1 lakh."

According to the government, a lot of complaints regarding inflated bills have been received and due to this, several people have stopped paying them. "...in the absence of physical reading of water meters (during the Covid lockdown), bills were being generated based on an average reading (that is 25-kilo litre usage per month). Past arrears and Late Payment Surcharge (LPSC) added to the current bills was one of the main reasons for the high water bills.

This resulted in more than 10,000 complaints in October-November 2022 on the Delhi Jal Board portal..." it said in a statement.

The government also said the scheme is expected to unlock around Rs 2,500 crore of revenue for the DJB.

The main advantage of this scheme is that bills will be recast in an automated manner. Therefore, customers will not have to individually get their bills

Man rapes 3-yr-old girl, arrested after a gunfight

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NOIDA, FEBRUARY 9

GAUTAM BUDDHA Nagar police Friday arrested a man in a gun fight for allegedly raping a three-year-old girl and leaving her in a farm in Rabupura area of Greater Noida.

Police said the accused received a bullet injury after he allegedly snatched a pistol from a policeman and fired at the police team.

A person, who was passing through the area on Thursday, spotted the child lying in an agricultural field. He informed the child's family and the police.

"The accused named in the case of aggravated sexual assault registered in Rabupura police station was arrested by the police within a few hours. During interrogation, when the accused was taken to the field to recover clothes, he snatched the police pistol and fired at a policeman. After treatment, he is being sent to jail," said Ashok Kumar, Additional DCP, Greater Noida.

An FIR under 376 ab (Rape on woman under twelve years of age), 363 (kidnapping), and sections of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act (POCSO) has been registered at Rabupura police station. Police said information about the criminal history of the accused along with other legal action is being taken.

The child was admitted in a serious condition at a nearby hospital, where she is undergoing treatment. The survivor's family members and the villagers protested at the police station and demanded capital punishment for the accused.

HOW WILL IT WORK?

Under the scheme, a new bill with the recasted amount will be generated and sent to the consumer.

Consumers can accept the one-time settlement and pay the new bill, thereby clearing previous arrears in one go.

The water bill will be waived for those consumers whose consumption pattern is less than 20,000 litres.

rectified at DJB's offices, it added.

Meanwhile, Delhi BJP president Virinder Sachdeva alleged that fast running meters and corruption of DJB officials were behind lakhs of consumers being burdened with pending bills for many years. "Delhiites have seen that for the past few years, the Kejriwal government brings a scheme to settle water bills before every election, but the benefits never reach the public. Most of these bills belong to properties whose owners have sold them and now it is a disputed amount that new property owners do not want to pay," he said.

Sachdeva said if the Delhi government really wanted to give consumers an opportunity for settlement, it should introduce a plan where consumers can get relief from pending bills by paying 7% to 10% of the pending amount.



STATEMENT OF STANDALONE AND CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL RESULTS FOR THE QUARTER AND NINE MONTHS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2023

S.NO.	PARTICULARS	STANDALONE						CONSOLIDATED					
		QUARTER ENDED	NINE MONTHS ENDED	YEAR ENDED	QUARTER ENDED	NINE MONTHS ENDED	YEAR ENDED	QUARTER ENDED	NINE MONTHS ENDED	YEAR ENDED	QUARTER ENDED	NINE MONTHS ENDED	YEAR ENDED
		DECEMBER 31, 2023 UNAUDITED	SEPTEMBER 30, 2023 UNAUDITED	DECEMBER 31, 2022 UNAUDITED	DECEMBER 31, 2023 UNAUDITED	MARCH 31, 2023 AUDITED	DECEMBER 31, 2023 UNAUDITED	SEPTEMBER 30, 2023 UNAUDITED	DECEMBER 31, 2022 UNAUDITED	DECEMBER 31, 2023 UNAUDITED	DECEMBER 31, 2022 UNAUDITED	DECEMBER 31, 2023 UNAUDITED	DECEMBER 31, 2022 UNAUDITED
1	Total Income	9,965.77	9,693.72	8,214.18	28,648.93	25,827.11	34,370.81	10,031.43	9,741.17	8,300.28	28,849.15	26,055.57	34,727.39
2	Net Profit for the period before tax (before Exceptional items)	1,417.03	1,396.95	940.44	4,068.77	2,727.90	3,874.56	1,456.08	1,360.10	1,010.55	3,958.11	2,735.45	3,863.62
3	Net Profit for the period before tax (after Exceptional items)	1,417.03	1,396.95	940.44	3,908.78	2,727.90	3,874.56	1,456.08	1,360.10	1,010.55	3,798.12	2,735.45	3,863.62
4	Net Profit for the period after tax (after Exceptional items)	1,073.38	1,053.81	711.06	2,951.91	2,051.65	2,910.58	1,091.12	1,007.04	721.24	2,798.70	1,989.10	2,799.90
5	Total Comprehensive Income for the period (Comprising Profit for the period (after tax) and other Comprehensive Income (after tax))	1,070.92	1,051.35	709.64	2,944.53	2,047.37	2,901.21	1,078.02	1,008.93	723.17	2,777.72	1,959.68	2,765.03
6	Equity Share Capital (face value Rs. 2/- per share)	39.98	39.97	39.97	39.98	39.97							

THE CITY

Mayor's terms nears its end, AAP picks four potential contenders

SAMAN HUSAIN
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 9

WITH THE Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) budget now finalised, the term of current Mayor Shelly Oberoi nears its end. While dates for fresh mayor polls are yet to be announced, discussions surrounding potential candidates have begun. The ruling Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) has narrowed down its list to four names for consideration, sources said.

This year's Mayor seat is reserved for individuals from the Scheduled Caste (SC) and Scheduled Tribe (ST) category.

AAP with nearly 32 SC and ST candidates, has identified the following individuals as potential contenders, according to party insiders: Prem Chauhan, two-time AAP councillor representing Dakshinpuri and president of the party's youth wing; Mohini Jeenwal, councillor from Sunder Nagri and a member of the standing committee; Vikas Tonk, AAP councillor representing Civil Lines; and Sarika Chaudhary, Daryaganj councilor, president of AAP's Delhi women's wing, sources told *The Indian Express*.

These shortlisted candidates represent a diverse range of areas or wards within Delhi and bring varied experiences and perspectives to the table, sources said.

As discussions continue and the election date is awaited, AAP is likely to consider various factors before finalising its candidate for the Mayor position, as per insiders. Since current Delhi Mayor Shelly Oberoi was a woman candidate, the party is planning to narrow it down to a male candidate for the Mayor's post this time.

After picking a woman face for Mayor, and a minority pick for the role of Deputy Mayor last year, AAP also intends to include Sikh/Punjabi candidates in the forthcoming elections. Additionally, the party aims to provide representation for Baniya candidates in future elections, according to sources.

As per sources within the opposition BJP, they are yet to finalise their candidates. Discussions regarding potential candidates are anticipated to commence by the end of February.

On Thursday, the MCD passed its budget for the financial year 2024-25, totaling Rs 16,000 crore. In the previous financial year 2022-23, the corporation had recorded an income of Rs 9,506.58 crore. For the upcoming fiscal year, the corporation anticipates an increase in the tax collection, aided by geotagging of properties, with an aim to hit a Rs 2,000-crore boost.



MCD Mayor Shelly Oberoi

Questioned over car stunts, man tries to run over Gurgaon cop
ACP in hospital for 3 days; accused held

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 9



The vehicle had a black film on its windows, and a red number plate. Grab from video

front of a shop called Chauhan Communications.

"When I was asked to take photos, a man emerged from the shop and questioned us. We noticed a police cap inside the car and enquiry, the man said his father was Sunil, an officer in Haryana Police and that he used the cap to avoid checking.

By then, Sunil had reached the spot. ACP Dahiya asked officers to check the vehicle and question the accused about past videos. In a fit of rage, he (Sunil) got into the car and sped away," said complainant Inspector Kumar.

He said he tried to stop the vehicle but to no avail, adding that the accused hit Dahiya who was standing a few metres away. "The ACP fell and was saved by a hair's breadth as the wheels whizzed closely past him," stated the FIR.

The ACP was taken to Medanta Hospital later. An FIR was registered in the case under IPC sections 186, 332 and 353 at Sector 10 police station.

Police said that the accused has earlier been charged in another case related to a brawl in Gurgaon. The Scorpio used in the incident has also been seized from the possession of the accused, police said.

Another bureaucratic reshuffle, key postings expected in Delhi soon

JATIN ANAND
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 9

Sources said the move paved the way for changes at the helm of significant bodies such as the MCD, NDMC

IN ANOTHER bureaucratic reshuffle effected by the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), two senior Indian Police Service (IPS) officers were transferred out and a senior Indian Administrative Service (IAS) and IPS officer, each, were posted in the capital on Friday.

Sources said the move paved the way for changes at the helm of significant bodies such as the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD), the New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC), and multiple Delhi government departments over the coming days.

"Several senior IAS officers are scheduled to be empanelled at the Centre, making them eligible for postings in the Government of India, which will have a ripple effect on postings in the Delhi government and other bodies currently helmed by IAS officers whose tenure is coming to an end," a source said.

Prashant Goyal, an AGMUT cadre IAS officer of the 1993 batch who is presently Member,

Popular brands of country liquor in Delhi include 'Narangi', 'Bahubali', 'Empire no.1 Mota Santara' and 'Super Himmat Santara'. "The sale of country liquor is less in comparison to Indian Made Foreign Liquor (IMFL) but interestingly, smuggling and bootlegging of such liquor is higher in comparison to other forms of alcohol. The price jump is not very high... This will help the Excise Department in increasing revenue," said an official.

As per the revised price structure, the Excise Department stands to collect a total excise revenue of Rs 95.62 per case for

"It is informed that new wholesale rates for the procure-

ment of country liquor have been finalised for the year 2023-24. Following suppliers have been selected as per quota mentioned against each for supply of country liquor at the wholesale rate (Weighted Average Price) of Rs 451 per case for the tender year 2023-24..." said the Excise department, listing the name of suppliers, in an order to all the four corporations.

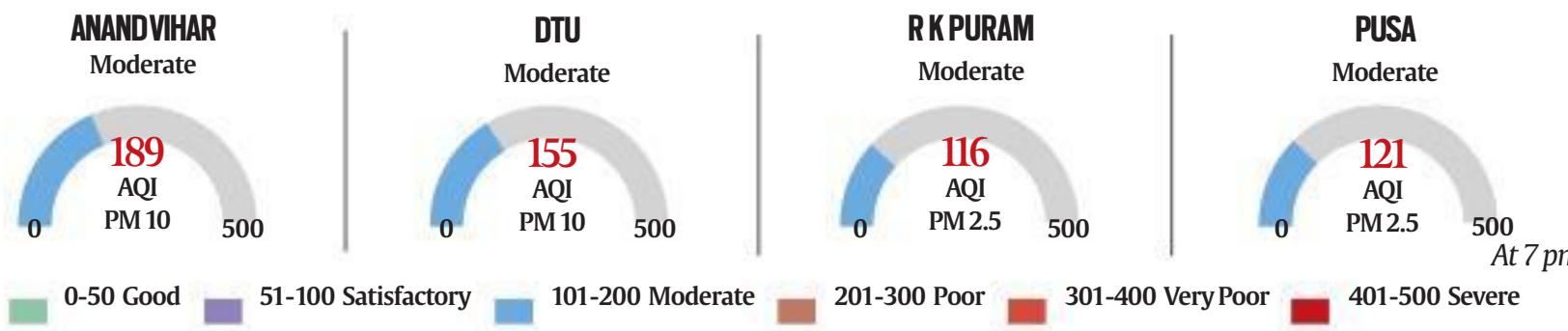
Officials said the price structure for four L-3/L33 licence holders have been approved by the department. Officials said the licence holders will be charged local transportation charges of Rs 2.50 per case by the

L-8 licensee in addition to the wholesale price.

Further, the corporation has been directed to change the MRP on bottles as per the new price structure by affixing stickers and also displaying the new price in front of all vends in both Hindi and English.

According to the Excise Department, there are 684 active vends in Delhi at present.

According to Excise Department data, between September 1, 2022 and November 30, 2023, the enforcement team filed 520 FIRs across all police stations in Delhi and arrested a total of 498 alleged boot-



S K Y W A T C H

FORECAST: February 10
Mainly clear sky.
Mist in the morning

MAX: 24
0.6°C below normal

MIN: 6
4.2°C below normal

SHARE DETAILS OF CONTRACTOR: POLICE TO METRO

Gokulpuri Metro wall collapse: Inspect all parapets on Pink Line, says DMRC

UPASIKA SINGHAL & ARNABJIT SUR
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 9

A DAY after a 53-year-old man was killed and four others injured when a portion of a wall at the Gokulpuri Metro Station in Northeast Delhi collapsed and fell on the road below, the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) Managing Director has directed a thorough inspection of parapets of elevated stations on the Pink Line.

The Delhi Police has also written to the Delhi Metro seeking details on when the slab was constructed and the contractor to whom the work was assigned.

When *The Indian Express* visited the Gokulpuri station on Friday, it found that the parapets had been sectioned off using caution tape and barriers. The portion of the station where the wall had collapsed had been covered with a green dust cloth and the section was cordoned off completely, with no passengers allowed there.

At Welcome station too, the parapets had been cordoned off using caution.

MD Dr Vikas Kumar con-



Sections of the Gokulpuri (top) and Welcome Metro stations were cordoned off. Tashi Tobgyal/Upasika Singhal

vened a meeting Friday that focused on assessing the incident

and ensuring preventive measures are in place.

DMRC's Principal Executive Director, Corporate Communications, Anuj Dayal, stated, "In case any corrective action is required at any station, the same should be carried out after making a detailed method statement depending on the situation at the sites concerned."

According to DMRC officials, the MD also underscored the importance of adhering to stringent safety protocols throughout any maintenance work.

Internal reviews have already been initiated by DMRC, with Dr Kumar visiting the Gokulpuri station Thursday accompanied by senior officials to assess the situation firsthand.

Following the mishap, two DMRC officials, a manager and a junior engineer of the civil department, were immediately suspended. Inspection of the station had taken place roughly a month ago, sources had told *The Indian Express*.

The DMRC also announced Rs 25 lakh compensation for the family of the deceased, Rs 5 lakh for those seriously injured, and Rs 1 lakh for those with minor injuries.

In a statement, DMRC said it is investigating the circum-

stances surrounding the incident and implementing necessary corrective actions to prevent similar occurrences in the future.

Meanwhile, the police's letter to the DMRC asked authorities to respond regarding safety precautions taken and enquiry checks carried out on the said structure on a weekly basis, the duration during which the construction took place, and whether it was "done hurriedly."

A senior police officer said, "The letter asks the Delhi Metro for details regarding the contractor to whom the tender for the construction of the structure was given and when the work took place."

The officer added, "We have asked the DMRC to submit the name of the contractor once their internal enquiry is concluded, following which the person will be called for questioning."

Police lodged a case under IPC section 304A (causing death by negligence) and 337 (causing hurt by act endangering life or personal safety of others) against Delhi Metro builders and contractors, and specifically un-

BRIEFLY

'Borders being fortified to prevent farmers' entry'

New Delhi: Bracing for another agitation by farmers, police are fortifying the Delhi-Uttar Pradesh and Delhi-Haryana borders with barricades and deploying more than 5,000 security personnel, a senior police officer said Friday. On Thursday, farmers from UP went on a sit-in demonstration on the Noida-Greater Noida Expressway, resulting in massive traffic snarls. Several farmer associations have called for another protest on February 13. PTI

CM: Pension amount of retired DTC employees deposited

New Delhi: CM Arvind Kejriwal announced that all outstanding pensions for retired DTC employees have been successfully transferred to their accounts. "... From the last 1-1.5 years, you're facing troubles in receiving your pensions... Since we assumed power, we started giving you pension from the Delhi government's budget.. Each work that we initiate is obstructed by the Centre. I'm doing everything that I can do to get Delhiites' work done," he said while addressing retired DTC employees. ENS



Polls nearing, AAP turns spotlight on govt schools — and its education push

ABHINAYA HARIGOVIND
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 9

LAYING THE foundation stone of four new school buildings, inaugurating a new School of Specialised Excellence, and unveiling an indoor swimming pool at a school — all in just the first nine days of this month: Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal is once again turning the spotlight on the Aam Aadmi Party's (AAP) education-related work with the general election round the corner.

Referring to the change in Delhi government schools, the CM on Friday said they have gone from being "bad shape" to "shaandaar (spectacular)" schools, which have elevators and labs. "A poor person could not think that their child would go to a government school and become a doctor or engineer.

Once the AAP government was formed, spectacular schools



The CM at an event to lay the foundation stone for a school in Mayur Vihar. Express

started being made in Delhi," he said on Friday, at an event to lay the foundation stone for a school in Mayur Vihar.

According to AAP sources, another such function is expected in the coming week. MLAs have been asked to get feedback from people in their areas based on which schools are

being constructed in different constituencies, they added.

Around 25% of the budget this year is likely to be dedicated to education, they said.

On Thursday, Kejriwal laid the foundation stone for a new school building in Mahavir Enclave near Dwarka, in an event that saw hundreds of people in attendance. Friday too saw a similar crowd. Earlier, on Sunday, Kejriwal laid the foundation stone for two new school buildings in the Pratap Vihar area of Kirari. This was followed by the inauguration of a new School of Specialised Excellence at Paschim Vihar on Tuesday, and an indoor swimming pool at the Delhi Sports School on Wednesday.

At these events, both Kejriwal and Education Minister Atishi referred to "children leaving private schools to join government ones".

Invoking his colleague Manish Sisodia, in jail in the Excise Policy case, Kejriwal said

on Thursday: "They say Manish Sisodia is a thief. Manish Sisodia made schools for the children of the poor of Delhi, and gave them a future."

Ahead of the election in Punjab in 2022, the AAP had reminded voters of education-related work in Delhi.

On Friday, Kejriwal said that except for Delhi and Punjab, "good schools are not being made anywhere else."

The CM said, "They (the BJP) don't want the children of the poor to get a good education. It is a political conspiracy that your children get a bad education... this is deliberate."

On summons by central agencies in the Excise Policy case, the AAP leader said, "The more you summon me, the more schools I will inaugurate."

He further said on Friday, "You do your duty... your duty is to make up false cases, mine is to build schools for the poor."

WILL GENERATE MORE REVENUE, SAYS DEPT; 684 ACTIVE VENDS ACROSS CITY

Country liquor to now cost more in Delhi, excise dept increases rates

GAYATHRI MANI
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 9

CONSUMERS OF country liquor in the Capital will now have to shell out a little more to lay their hands on their favourite 'desi daru' as the Delhi Excise Department, in a bid to increase revenue, has increased the prices with effect from Friday.

According to officials, the price of 750 ml country liquor has been increased from Rs 160 to Rs 180, while the rate of 375 ml has gone up from Rs 80 to Rs 90. A quarter, 180 ml, will now cost Rs 45 instead of Rs 40.

As per the revised price structure, the Excise Department stands to collect a total excise revenue of Rs 95.62 per case for



Popular brands of country liquor in Delhi include 'Narangi', 'Bahubali', 'Empire no.1 Mota Santara' and 'Super Himmat Santara'. Archive

leggers for smuggling, selling and supplying illegal liquors. Data also shows that a total of 14,776 liquor bottles were seized, of which 3,288 bottles were foreign liquor; 30,991 were IMFL, and the highest number — 13,498 bottles — was of country made liquor.

After the AAP government's ambitious New Excise policy was scrapped in 2022 and investigations by multiple agencies, the Delhi government brought back the old excise regime from September 1, 2022, under which only government shops were allowed to open in the city under four corporations.

According to Excise Department data, between September 1, 2022 and November 30, 2023, the enforcement team filed 520 FIRs across all police stations in Delhi and arrested a total of 498 alleged boot-

First-time voters, at 1.85 cr, up 23% from 2019: EC

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 9

THE FINAL COUNT*

TOTAL REGISTERED ELECTORS:
96,88,21,926

Male voters:
49,72,31,994
Female voters:
47,15,41,888
Third gender voters:
48,044
PWD voters: 88,35,449
Voters in 18-19 age group: 1,84,81,610
Voters in 20-29 age group: 19,74,37,160
Voters in 80+ age group: 1,85,92,918
Centenarian (100+) voters: 2,38,791
Gender ratio: 948 women per 1,000 men
(* As on 08.02.2024)
Source: Election Commission

NEARLY 97 crore people are registered to vote in the forthcoming Lok Sabha elections and around 1.85 crore of them are in the 18-19 age-group, the Election Commission (EC) said on Friday.

"As per the finally published electoral roll, a total of 96.88 crore voters are registered across the country," the EC said.

As per the statement, the electors include 49.7 crore male and 47.1 crore female and 48,044 third gender electors, and is 6% higher as compared to the 91.19-crore figure in 2019. The increase is even sharper in the number of electors in the 18-19 age-group, which increased by 23.3% to 1.85 crore in 2024 as compared to 1.5 crore in 2019. These young electors will vote for the first time in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections.

Of the total electors, 20.38% (19.74 crore) are in the 20-29-age group and about 2% (1.86 crore) are above 80 years. In fact, 2.38 lakh electors are above 100 years of age. The overall electors/population ratio stands at 66.76%. The total electors also include 88.35 lakh PWD voters.

As per the poll panel, the electoral roll gender ratio (the number of female electors per 1,000 male electors) has increased to 948 in 2024 from 940 in 2023. The elector gender ratio stood at 928 in 2019. More women have enrolled as new electors as compared to men, said the EC.

The Electoral roll gender ratio has surged positively, indicating the growing role of women in shaping the democratic fabric of the nation. Over 2.63 crore new electors have been included in the electoral roll, out of which around 1.41 crore are female electors which surpassed the newly enrolled male voters (1.22 crore) by over 15%, the statement said.

As per the statement, more than 2 crore young electors,

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 9

A DELHI court Friday granted interim bail to former Bihar Chief Minister Rabri Devi and her daughters Misa Bharti and Hema Yadav till February 28 in the Railways land-for-jobs case.

The trio had appeared before the Rouse Avenue Court in relation to the case, which is being investigated by the Enforcement Directorate (ED).

In January, the court had

taken cognisance of the first chargesheet filed by the ED in the case.

It had also named Hridyanand Chaudhary, a former railway employee, and Amit Katyal, director of A K Infosystems who was arrested in November last year in connection with the case.

Two private companies, A K Infosystems and AB Export, have been named.

The case pertains to Group-D appointments made in the West Central Railway Zone in



Former Bihar CM Rabri Devi leaves the court in New Delhi on Friday. PTI

Madhya Pradesh's Jabalpur when Lalu Prasad was the Railway Minister from 2004 to 2009, allegedly in return for land parcels transferred to his family and associates.

The ED has alleged that several such land parcels were acquired by Katyal, following which the shares of AK Infosystems were transferred to Lalu's family members.

The money-laundering case stems from a complaint lodged by the CBI, which filed a chargesheet in the case earlier.

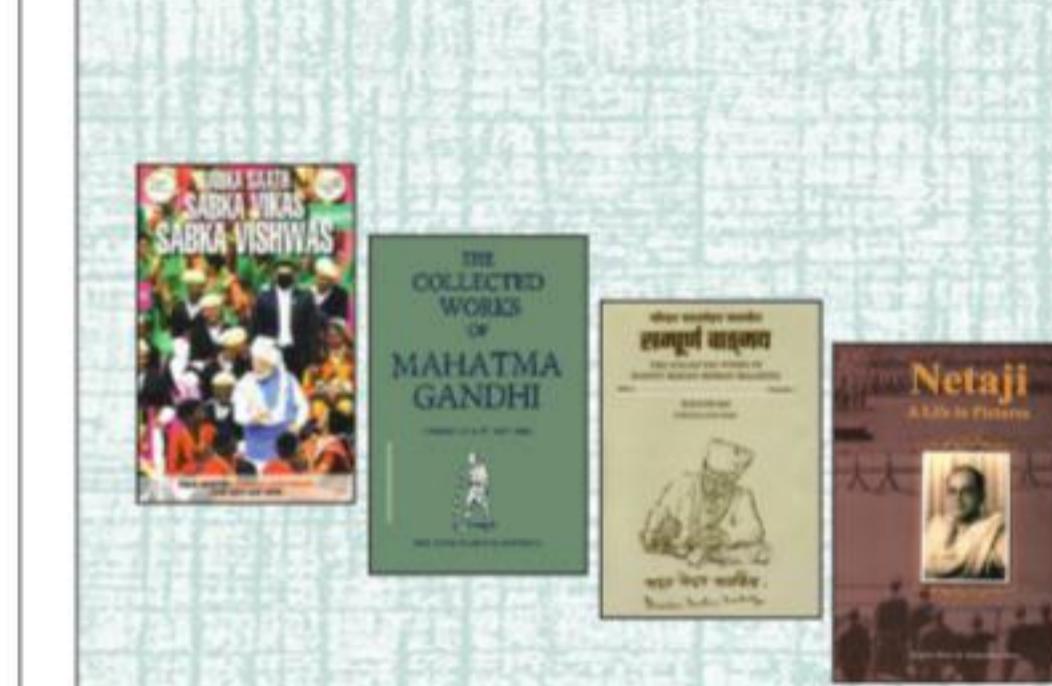
The CBI has alleged that Rabri and son Tejashwi Yadav took control of A K Infosystems in 2014 for just Rs 1 lakh, at Rs 10 per share.

A K Infosystems allegedly owned land worth Rs 1.77 crore. According to the CBI chargesheet, the company in 2017 "suddenly" paid back Rs 1.35 crore to the promoter-director at a time that coincided with an income tax raid on Lalu.

The CBI chargesheet further alleged that Lalu, by virtue of his status as Minister of Railways, exerted influence on West Central Railway (WCR) officers for a list of candidates to be appointed as "substitutes" in the Railways.

The CBI in its chargesheet had also pointed out that most of the candidates who were selected were from a few districts in Bihar "wherein Lalu had political/financial interest".

Of the 117 candidates that the CBI looked into, 113 were from Bihar. Of these, 108 were still working in the Indian Railways, the CBI said.



Highlights

*Wide variety of publications on Gandhian Literature, The collected works of Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya, Indian History, Personalities & Biographies, Rashtrapati Bhawan series, Speeches and Writings, Arts & Culture, Builders of Modern India and Children's Literature.

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Ministry of Health and Family Welfare
Government of India

MODI GOVERNMENT'S GUARANTEE

Quality Healthcare Services for Everyone

Ayushman Bharat
Pradhan Mantri
Jan Arogya Yojana



Guaranteed Free Medical Treatment of up to ₹5 Lakhs

30.7 More than Crore Ayushman Cards

Ayushman
Arogya
Mandir



Guaranteed Healthcare Services Near Residence

1.64 More than Lakh Ayushman Arogya Mandir

Pradhan Mantri
Bhartiya Janaushadhi
Pariyojana



Guaranteed Affordable and Good Quality Medicines

10 Thousand Jan Aushadhi Kendra

HAMARA SANKALP
VIKSIT BHARAT



"Aadi Mahotsav is taking our strength of unity in diversity to new heights. The pride with which the country is moving ahead with respect to the tribal society has never happened before."

Narendra Modi, Prime Minister

AADI MAHOTSAV

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

10th February, 2024

11:00 AM

Major Dhyan Chand National Stadium,
India Gate

Major Highlights

- Exhibition cum sale of handloom and handicraft products of tribal artisans from across the country
- Various types of forest products produced by PVTGs
- Cultural programs showcasing the rich Tribal diversity and vibrancy
- Tribal cuisines from across the country

17102413/006/1234

From 10th to 18th February, 2024
11:00 AM - 8:00 PM

Visit Aadi Mahotsav and further the 'Vocal for Local' movement
Connect with us @tribesindia #AadiMahotsav #Vocal4Local #BuyTribal

ENTRY FREE

IN PARLIAMENT

BUDGET SESSION

RS passes Bill
to curb exam
malpractices,
paper leaks

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 9

THE RAJYA Sabha on Friday passed the Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Bill, 2024. The law which aims to curb irregularities in public examinations was passed by the Lok Sabha on February 6.

Union Minister for Minister of State for Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions Jitendra Singh, replying to the debate on the Bill said the legislation will protect students who are the "architects of new India and who will also be determining the face of India in 2047."

Singh also said that the "first-of-its-kind in history" law will not penalise bonafide students.

The Bill penalises any person or persons resorting to unfair means with a minimum imprisonment of three years which may extend to five years and with fine up to Rs 10 lakh. The law also prescribes a higher sentence ranging from three to ten years if a company providing services for the exam is involved. For organised rackets involved in unfair means, the Bill prescribes a minimum sentence of five years which can extend up to ten years with a fine of up to Rs 1 crore. Unfair means under the proposed law is defined to include leakage of question paper or answer key, tampering with answer sheets including Optical Mark Recognition (OMR) response sheets, manipulation in seating arrangements, allocation of dates and shifts for the candidates among others.

Congress leader Digvijaya Singh who supported the Bill called for a review of online examinations. "Online examinations have become a platform for corruption. Companies that have been blacklisted in one place conduct their business elsewhere. I would request the minister to stop conducting online examinations and instead have offline exams," he said.

The Statement of Objects and Reasons of the Bill states that malpractices in public examinations lead to delays and cancellation of examinations adversely impact the prospects of millions of youth. Since technical education is in the concurrent list, a central legislation on the subject would mean that states have to adopt the legislation.

Govt imposing Hindi over English, regional languages: TMC MP

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 9

TMC MP Saket Gokhale on Friday said the Centre was imposing Hindi over English and regional languages in Government business, holding that this was against the federal structure.

Raising the issue during the Zero Hour in Rajya Sabha, Gokhale demanded that English be used for government business. He pointed out that, at the start of the current Budget session of the Meghalaya Assembly, it was announced that the Governor would deliver his address in Hindi. The BJP leaders in Meghalaya supported this announcement, saying Hindi is our national language, he said.

Nirmala keeps up attack on Cong: 'It put family first... Sonia was super PM'



Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in Lok Sabha. ANI

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 9

A DAY after tabling the White Paper on the Indian Economy in Parliament, Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman Friday launched a scathing attack on the Congress, saying the UPA government led by it from 2004-14 followed a "first family first" policy instead of "nation first". She said the 10-year UPA rule was marked by shortage of defence equipment, delay in environmental clearances, corruption and misgovernance.

And "at the heart of the problem", she said, was a "udderless and leaderless" UPA government, blaming Congress leader Sonia Gandhi and accusing her of acting as the "super Prime Minister".

"Sonia Gandhi acted as the Super Prime Minister" as Chairperson of the NAC (National Advisory Council). NAC had unaccountable and unconstitutional powers. Why did files go to such an unaccountable and unanswerable body for approval?" Sitharaman said in her reply to a discussion in Lok Sabha on the White Paper.

In the 59-page document tabled in the House on Thursday, the Union Ministry of Finance argued that the UPA rule had

DISCUSSION IN LOK SABHA ON GOVT'S WHITE PAPER ON ECONOMY

turned India "from a healthy economy in 2004 to a stagnant economy in 2014".

Continuing the attack a day later, the Finance Minister said the paper did not contain "any baseless allegation" and everything was "based on evidence". Comparing the handling of the economy after the two global crises – the 2008 global financial crisis (by UPA) and Covid-19 pandemic (by BJP-led NDA) – she said the difference in the "neeyat aur niyam" (intent and rule) showed better outcome this time around.

The comparison shown in this White Paper clearly says how if the government handles it with true sincerity, transparency and putting the nation first, the results are there for

everybody to see. Equally, when... you put your first family first... the results are out there for you to see," she said.

"So, what happened after 2008, when there was a global financial crisis, and what happened post-Covid shows clearly that if the intent of the government is sincere, if neeyat aur niyam dono sahi hai toh achcha result bhi milega (if the intent and rule are good, then you will also get good result)," she added.

Accusing the Congress of compromising on national security, Sitharaman said the UPA era was marked by "critical shortage of ammunition and defence ammunition". Citing the "AgustaWestland VVIP Chopper Scam in 2013" and the CAG's questioning of the Defence

Ministry "over delay in buying artillery guns", she said there was "rampant corruption in the defence sector during the UPA era".

"Bulletproof jackets... night vision goggles were not available, so in the night they couldn't do a thing and were exposing themselves like sitting ducks in pitch darkness," she said, adding the Defence Budget was doubled to Rs 6.22 lakh crore for 2024-25 from Rs 2.53 lakh crore in 2013-14.

She said the average delay in grant of environmental clearances increased from 86 days to 316 days between 2011 and 2014, which the NDA government had reduced to 70 days.

"During UPA, the cost of doing business increased, project implementation didn't happen, industrial growth stalled, and there were no job opportunities which hurt the youth the most. Big ticket projects were affected and as a result, the image of India as a business destination went for a toss," she said.

Sitharaman said Prime Minister Narendra Modi had in 2015-16, a year after coming to power, acted in "national interest" by not releasing a White Paper on the economy despite suggestions to do so. "Not one investor would have come to India. All the institutions had broken down... Citizens would've lost confidence," she said.

IMF says that India is a bright spot in the economy," he said.

"People rejected the Congress in 2014, then again in 2019 and now in 2024, we will win again with 400 seats..." he said.

BJP MP from Jharkhand's Godda constituency Nishikant Dubey said the time period between 1947 and 1990 can be dubbed as "licence-permit raj" while the period between 2004-2014 as "loot raj". The period between 2014 and 2024, when the BJP ruled the country for two terms, can be described as "Ram raj", said the MP. He also alleged that former prime minister Manmohan Singh was never

given a free hand to run the government and was at times not aware of decisions being taken by the government.

BJP MP Hazaribagh MP Jayant Sinha said, "We got the economy back on track. The Congress-led UPA government had the best economists in its Cabinet, which we don't even have at present, but still the way we fixed the economy has set an example..."

Shiv Sena MP from Kalyan in Maharashtra Shrikant Eknath Shinde said events like G20 and Chandrayaan reflect good health of economy. "We have grown multifold over the past 10 years as compared to UPA's," he said.



BJP MP Ravi Shankar Prasad speaks in Lok Sabha. ANI

BJP came to power) and what we have done to correct the economic scenario in the last 10 years... India has changed from 'fragile 5' to 'powerful 5'. And in the next few years, our economy will be in the top 3... Today the

MPs said that India is a bright spot in the economy," he said.

"People rejected the Congress in 2014, then again in 2019 and now in 2024, we will win again with 400 seats..." he said.

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HOUSE LUNCH

PM Narendra Modi having lunch with MPs – BJP's L Murugan, Heena Gavit, Jamyang Tsering Namgyal and S Phangnon Konyak; TDP's Ram Mohan Naidu; BSP's Ritesh Pandey; RSP's N K Premachandran and BJD's Sasmit Patra – at Parliament Canteen, Friday. The menu was rice, dal, khichdi, vegetables and til ka laddoo. The PM later asked his officials to pay the bill. PTI

went off well, the CM told reporters.

Jagan's meeting with Modi incidentally followed immediately after discussions between the PM, Union Home Minister Amit Shah and BJP national president J P Nadda in the new Parliament building.

The development would have been watched closely by TDP chief N Chandrababu Naidu, who has been in the national capital for a couple of days, and earlier met Shah. Sources from both sides indicated later that the BJP had clinched a deal with the TDP and its ally Jana Sena Party (JSP) for the simultaneous Assembly and Lok Sabha polls coming up in Andhra.

Under Jagan, the YSRCP has

extended support to the BJP at the Centre on its legislative initiatives on almost every critical occasion. However, a section in the BJP has reportedly been miffed with him for holding back on a formal alliance. The YSRCP, which enjoys the support of the minorities in the state, is believed to have been wary that an alliance could affect its prospects both in the state and national elections.

Sources said Jagan's remarks earlier this week that he wishes that no party comes to power with an absolute majority in the next Lok Sabha elections – as that left states with little bargaining power – also did not go down well with the BJP. Another black mark against the YSRCP

is believed to have been the dramatic arrest of Naidu in the alleged skill development corpora-

ration scam amidst the Modi government's showpiece G20 Summit last September.

A hatchet job,
white-lie paper:
Chidambaram
flays document



'Golden period of growth from 2005-2008'

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 9

CONGRESS LEADER P Chidambaram, who was the Finance Minister for six years between 2004 and 2014, Friday rubbished BJP's White Paper, calling it a hatchet job and a white-lie paper.

In his first comment countering the White Paper, Chidambaram said outside the House on Friday that the one number that sums up the state of the economy is the GDP growth rate, arguing that "never before in a period of five years had India achieved a growth rate of 8% as it did in 2004-2009 (and) never before in a period of 10 years had India achieved a growth rate of 7.5% as it did in 2004-2014."

"The Indian economy recorded the 'golden period of growth' in the three years between 2005-06 and 2007-08 when the GDP grew at 9% or more at an average of 9.5%. The Indian economy achieved its best fiscal performance in 2007-08 when the fiscal deficit was 2.5% and the revenue deficit was 1.1%," he said.

He slammed the BJP for targeting the Gandhi family and former Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru. "What gain do you derive from abusing a family and Nehru in every matter?... How would you have felt if another party comes to power and that party abused Atal Bihari Vajpayee and Modi ji?" he said.

Congress MP Manish Tewari called the White Paper a "political manifesto" and a "black brush" of the government. He said the UPA-enacted Acts such as the Right to Information, Right to Education, Right to Food, and MGNREGA strengthened the social, political, and economic foundation of the country.

DMK member V Kalanidhi said the Modi government in 2014 had made poll promises such as two crore jobs every year, and 6.6% at present.



Congress's Sonia Gandhi and Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury with other MPs at Parliament on Friday. ANI

Political manifesto, rhetoric, nothing on note ban: Opp tears into Paper

LALMANI VERMA
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 9

THE OPPOSITION in the Lok Sabha Friday questioned the content and objective of the Government's White Paper on economy, with the Congress calling it a political manifesto.

During a debate on it in the Lok Sabha, Congress leader Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury said that the White Paper was aimed at tarnishing the 10 years of UPA government and does not cut much ice.

"It is nothing but an electoral manifesto with an objective of scoring electoral brownie point that has prompted you to bring this kind of White Paper," he said.

He slammed the BJP for targeting the Gandhi family and former Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru. "What gain do you derive from abusing a family and Nehru in every matter?... How would you have felt if another party comes to power and that party abused Atal Bihari Vajpayee and Modi ji?" he said.

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NCP (Sharadchandra Pawar)'s Supriya Sule called the White Paper a "politically coloured paper" in which only the paper was white. She said unemployment rate during UPA regime was 2.2% and 6.6% at present.

BCI powers should be restricted to eligibility for practising: panel

R RADHIKA
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 9

Calling for reforms in the role of the Bar Council of India (BCI), a Parliamentary panel report said that the apex legal education regulator should be restricted to granting "basic eligibility for practising at the Bar".

The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Personnel, Public Grievances, Law And Justice panel, headed by Sushil Kumar Modi, tabled its report titled "Strengthening Legal Education in View of Emerging Challenges Before The Legal Profession" in the Rajya Sabha.

Calling for measures to give priority to "quality over quantity", it said: "Many stakeholders have also raised serious concern about the manner in which the

Parliament, will not have medical and law colleges under its ambit. The panel also called for a uniform curriculum to replace the existing practice of adopting different syllabus prescribed by the affiliating universities by law colleges.

"This creates unevenness among the law students... The committee, therefore, recommends that the role of BCI should be redefined and the uniform curriculum should be laid by the BCI for undergraduate courses in all the law colleges/universities," the panel said.

The panel observed that premier law colleges have not implemented quota for SCs, STs and OBCs in undergraduate and post-graduate courses especially in all-India seats, and recommended that BCI consider withdrawing recognition if NLUs and other colleges fail to implement it.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi with Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy in New Delhi, Friday. PTI

is ready to share five to six seats with the BJP for the Lok Sabha polls, the BJP, which is keen to win the maximum seats on its own symbol, has demanded more, sources said. Talks have reportedly been on between the two parties for several months, and further discussions will now be held on the division of seats. Naidu may not put up much of a resistance as, sources said, he wants to regain the "trust and support of the BJP leadership" to "protect the interests of his party", while fighting to return to power.

In the case of the TDP, while it

where the party's prospects are otherwise seen as grim. In 2019, the YSRCP had won 22 of the seats and the TDP 3.

The state BJP unit, though, has had reservations regarding a tie-up. Many state leaders believe going it alone is better for the BJP to strengthen its cadre and spread its roots in the southern state.

The Congress, which had been reduced to a mere spectator in the previous Lok Sabha and Assembly polls in the state having won no seats, will be hoping that a friendly triangular contest between the BJP, TDP and YSRCP could come to its benefit. It is also pumped after its win next door in the Telangana Assembly polls last year.



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Chief Minister, Punjab

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Chief Minister, Delhi

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Bhagwant Singh Mann
Chief Minister, Punjab

Department of Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs, Punjab

Centre's policies greatest threat to macroeconomic stability: Kerala govt to SC

ANANTHAKRISHNANG
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 9

COUNTERING CENTRE'S criticism of its public finance management, the Kerala government told the Supreme Court that "the greatest threat to macroeconomic stability of the country is posed by the economic and financial policies pursued by the 'Centre' and not by the States..."

In its reply to a note submitted by Attorney General R Venkataramani, the state government said, "the note deliberately overlooks the fact that the Union has a dismal record of reining in its own debt" and "seems to present the debt of the states as the greatest vulnerability for 'sound public financial management' diverting attention from the fact that the Union has grossly underperformed in its management of public finances – even in comparison to several emerging countries".

The AG's note was in response to a suit filed by the Kerala government against the Centre imposing a ceiling on the amount it can borrow.

The AG's note had said that the debts of states would reflect on the national economic health and in turn, on the country's credit ratings.

On this, the state government said that "in fact, the credit-rating of the states and their SoEs (State Owned Entities), specially at the global level are adversely impacted by the rating of the Union itself. For instance, when the Kerala Infrastructure Investment Board (KIIFB) raised funds through External

management" and the Centre "cannot, albeit under the pretext of 'sound public financial management' violate or encroach upon the plenary powers of the States..." which "extend to all the necessary powers...both direct and incidental, guaranteed under the Constitution to define, approve and implement their Budgets".

"In a nutshell, in matters of fiscal discipline, the Constitution does not grant any policing powers to the Union to oversee and supervise the fiscal management by the States", it added.

The reply said that "the Central Government accounts for approximately 60% of the total debt or outstanding liabilities of India. All the states together account for the rest (approximately) 40 per cent of the total debt of the country" and that Kerala "accounts for a minuscule 1.70-1.75 per cent of the total debt of the Centre and the States put together for the period 2019-2023. Therefore, the premise that borrowings of the plaintiff state can destabilise the economy is clearly exaggerated".

The AG's note had said that the debts of states would reflect on the national economic health and in turn, on the country's credit ratings.

On this, the state government said that "in fact, the credit-rating of the states and their SoEs (State Owned Entities), specially at the global level are adversely impacted by the rating of the Union itself. For instance, when the Kerala Infrastructure Investment Board (KIIFB) raised funds through External

Commercial Borrowings, the rating that was given to it was with reference to the poor credit-rating that the Union has in the global market".

Citing IMF reports, the reply said that "India debt is the highest among its peer group in the emerging market economies of the world. On the other hand, the analysis... shows that states will maintain sound fiscal balance which is well below the 3 percent of GDP prescribed by the Finance Commissions".

It said that Moody's in its August 2023 report, had retained India's country rating at the lowest level in the 'investment grade' category without any upgradation of the rating previously assigned to it, reflecting the weakness of the Union's fiscal position.

"Even though the recommendation of the Fourteenth Finance Commission to transfer nearly 41% of Central Tax Revenues was accepted by the Union Government and the same figure recommended by the Fifteenth Finance Commission was also accepted, the actual share of resources transferred to the States, has never reached anywhere near this approved and mandatory level. It reached a peak of 36.6 per cent in 2018-2019, after which states' share fell and has since stagnated at around 29 per cent", the reply said.

The state government alleged that post 2017, the Centre "has deliberately destroyed the consultative mechanism of assisting states to manage their finances in a spirit of cooperative federalism".

HARIKISHAN SHARMA
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 9

SLAMMING PREVIOUS governments for failing to reduce poverty in the country, PM Narendra Modi Friday said for years, the formula for poverty alleviation was debated sitting in AC rooms with "wine and cheese" while the poor remained poor.

Modi said he does not want to go just by living a daily routine life, instead he wants to go after securing the future of the coming generations.

Modi said bigger decisions will be taken in his third term. "I have been preparing new schemes for the last one-and-a-half years to eliminate poverty in India and to give a new impetus to India's development... The work is going on and it will take its final form in the coming 20-30 days," he said.

Addressing ET Now Global Business Summit 2024, Modi said this is India's time.

"This period is really unprecedented...it's a time when our growth rate is consistently increasing and our fiscal deficit is decreasing. It's a time when our exports are increasing and



PM Modi during the ET Now Global Business Summit 2024 in New Delhi, Friday. PTI

the current account deficit is decreasing...it's a time when our productive investment is at a record high and inflation is in control...it's a time when the number of our critics are all-time low," Modi said, adding that the entire world's confidence in India is increasing.

"In Davos, too, unprecedented enthusiasm was witnessed towards India. An official said that

India is an unprecedented success story. The other one said that the digital and physical infrastructure is scaling new heights... Another official compared India to a rising bull. All this proves that the world trusts India. Such a sentiment regarding the capability of India was never seen or heard,"

Modi said.

Discussing the White Paper presented in the Lok Sabha on

hiyon ke prati bhi jawabdeh hoon. Mainstirf rojamara ki zindagi puri karane jaana nahi chahta hoon, main aane wale peedhiyon ka bhavishya surakshit karne jaana chaahata hoon. (I am not only answerable to the present generation but also to the many future generations. I don't want to go just by living a daily routine life, I want to go after securing the future of the coming generations)," he said.

Criticising political parties resorting to freebies, Modi said, "Khazaana khali karake chaar vote yaada pa lete ki rajneeti se main koson dur rehta hoon (I stay away from the politics of emptying the treasury and getting four extra votes)."

"Therefore, we have given top priority to financial management in policies and decisions. I give you an example. You are aware of some parties' approach towards electricity. That approach is to ruin the electricity system of the country. My methods are different. You know that our government has formulated a scheme of rooftop solar system for one crore families. Through this scheme, people would be able to bring down their electricity bills to zero and will earn money by selling surplus power," Modi said.

"So, he chose *rashtraneeti* (country's interests) over *raajneeti* (politics)." Modi said, adding he is answerable to the future generations.

"Main vartamaan pidhi ke saath hi, aane wale anekon peed-

Cong ex-MLA Siddique to join NCP today: Ajit

AJAY JADHAV
MUMBAI, FEBRUARY 9

FORMER CONGRESS MLA from Mumbai Baba Siddique will join the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) on Saturday. Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar said on Friday, adding that his party was open to everyone who wants to join them.

"Siddique will be inducted in the party on Saturday," Ajit Pawar, who is the president of the NCP faction that parted ways from Sharad Pawar, said.

With the Election

Commission allotting the NCP name and symbol to the party is now focused on strengthening itself by inducting political leaders from other parties.

"Now, we have got the name and the symbol. There is an open invitation to all interested political leaders and workers to join our party. This also includes those who are in the split faction of NCP," Ajit Pawar said.

State chief of the Ajit Pawar faction, Sunil Tatkare, also said that this was just the beginning. "There will be a setback to rival parties as our party has kept the

doors open to everyone interested to join," he said.

The Ajit Pawar faction of NCP has also decided to field a candidate for the Rajya Sabha elections.

Ajit Pawar also expressed shock over the murder of former Shiv Sena (UBT) corporator Abhishek Ghosalkar. "It is an unfortunate incident and the exact reason behind it is not clear. However, the Opposition should not defame the ruling alliance and seek the resignation of the home minister (Devendra Fadnavis). The recent incidents are mostly due to personal rea-

sons based on their strength in the state Legislative Assembly so that their candidate is elected unopposed to the Upper House of Parliament.

Ajit Pawar said.

"There are a few leaders who have expressed willingness to represent the party in the Rajya Sabha. Senior party leaders will discuss and declare the candidature for the Rajya Sabha seat from Maharashtra," Ajit Pawar said.

The state legislators elect members for Rajya Sabha from Maharashtra and political parties normally field candidates

Kerala HC on deflection: Elected representative can't go against will of electorate

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
KOCHI, FEBRUARY 9

AFTER GETTING elected by the people through a political party or political alliance, a person cannot change his stand against that political party or alliance without getting a fresh mandate from the electorate, the Kerala High Court has said, in a verdict that could have far-reaching implications.

The court made the observation while dismissing a petition connected with deflection in one of the local self-government bodies in Idukki district.

Justice P V Kunhikrishnan, in an order issued on February 5, said an elected representative should be the voice of the people of that constituency and cannot go against the will of the electorate and act according to his whims and fancies.

"After getting elected by the people through a political party or political alliance, a person cannot give up the political party or political alliance and act in accordance with his whims and fancies because the people elected him through a political party or political alliance.

"If he is an independent candidate, supported by a political party or political alliance, he is bound to follow the mandate of the electorate," the court said.

The court was hearing a matter in connection with a deflection case from Adimali Grama Panchayat in Idukki district. The court was considering multiple petitions including a plea against condoning the delay in filing the election petition in that matter.

The court said once a person is elected through the mandate under the banner of a political party or political alliance, he must see the intention of the electorate is spoken out by him in the council or other elected bodies.

The court, however, noted this principle may not be applicable in a case where the candidate himself is an independent contestant.

UP govt tables Bill to reduce Lokayukta, Uplokyukta terms

MAULSHREE SETH
LUCKNOW, FEBRUARY 9

THE YOGI Adityanath-led BJP government on Friday tabled the Uttar Pradesh Lokayukta and Uplokyuktas (Amendment) Bill, 2024, in the state Assembly, seeking to reduce the terms of the anti-corruption ombudsmen from the existing eight to five years or up to the age of 70.

In the statement of objects for placing the Bill, the government informed the House that the Uttar Pradesh Lokayukta and Uplokyuktas Act, 1975, was enacted to make provision for the appointment and functions of certain authorities for the investigation of allegations against ministers, legislators, and other public servants in certain cases.

While the term of the office of Lokayukta and Uplokyukta was five years initially, "the tenure was increased to eight years through the Uttar Pradesh Lokayukta and Uplokyuktas (Amendment) Act, 2012, due to special circumstances and in the interest of work", it further said.

Citing the reason behind bringing the present amendment, the government told the House that "it was found after due consideration that the current tenure of eight years of the Lokayukta and Uplokyuktas is excessive from the point of view of physical and mental health (of the incumbents holding the offices)".

It was also noted that the Lokpal and Lokayuktas Act, 2013, provides for the tenure of the Lokpal to be five years or the age of 70, whichever is earlier." Keeping this in mind, "it was decided to amend Section 5 of the Act.

SALUTE THE SOLDIER

Lt Col Paras Mehra
(17 Sep 68-10 Feb 07)

The gallant and fearless officer led a two directional advance on 10 Feb 2007 and flushed out the dreaded militants hiding in a village in Manipur (OP HIFAZAT), where he laid down his life in true traditions of the Indian Army.

Deeply remembered by entire family of 14 MAHAR

Rural Works Department
Short Notice Inviting Tender (No.-RWD/PMGSY/HQ/ET/-23-24/41)
Rural Works Department, Bihar invites Percentage rate Tender on behalf of Governor of Bihar (through e-procurement system) from bona fide, approved and eligible Contractors registered with RWD/RCD/CPWD/MES/ Railways/Other State/Central Govt. departments for the following PMGSY-III works including maintenance for five years after construction of roads and Bridges.

Sl. no.	District	Block	Package e No.	New Technology/ Bridge	Name of Road / Bridge	Length (in Km)	Package wise Amount (Rs. in Lakhs)	Ernest Money (Rs. in Lakhs)	Amount Payable to Works Division
1	Kishanganj	Pothia	BR18P 3K36	Panelled Cement Concrete/ Surface Dressing	MRL3-BIRPUR TO MOHAMMAD RAHIM TOLA	11.50	600.32	49.79	13.03
									EE, RWD, Works Division, Kishanganj-2
2	Kishanganj	Thakur ganj	BR18P 3K48	Panelled Cement Concrete/ Surface Dressing	MRL42-OLD MECH (MANGLI CHOWK) TO KARUAMAN	14.25	1297.5	54.70	27.11
									EE, RWD, Works Division, Kishanganj-2
3	Kishanganj	Thakur ganj	BR18P 3K55	Cold Mix Technology/ Panelled Cement Concrete/ Surface Dressing	MRL41-NH327E (PIRISTHANTO GOALDANGI BENGAL SIMA TAK)	14.91	1455.9	58.85	30.37
									EE, RWD, Works Division, Kishanganj-2

Date and Time for Downloading of Bidding Documents : From 16.02.2024 (09:30 AM) to 23.02.2024 (12:00 Noon)
Last date and Time of Online Bid Submission (including Scanned copy of affidavits) : 23.02.2024 up to 15:00 Hours.
Online Bid Opening Date and Time : 23.02.2024 at 15:30 Hours.
Place, date and time of Pre-Bid Meeting : 19.02.2024 from 15:00 Hours.
(Office of Respective Works Circle, RWD)

Details of tender related information can be viewed/ downloaded from the website <http://pmgsytendersbih.gov.in>. Interested Bidders will have to register with their DSC (Digital Signature Certificate) in the website <http://pmgsytendersbih.gov.in>. For further details please visit : www.state.bihar.gov.in/prdbihar
PR- 017084 (RWD) 2024-24

Neho se barchne ka ha ek hi upchar, dudh sankalp aur parivhar se phaar

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Email address: telecom@bsptcl.bihar.gov.in Mob. No. 7763818222
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Leasing of Dark Fiber of OPGW Network (Phase-II) of BSPTCL (Minimum 01 pair and maximum 08 pair) of existing link.	10 Lakhs	11,800.00	5900.00	As per Tender Document

Bid submission start date & time : From 15:00 Hrs of 17.02.2024
Date of Pre-bid meeting : On 11:00 Hrs. of 27.02.2024
Last date of Online Submission of bid along with Tender Cost & processing fee : Up to 15:00 Hrs. of 12.03.2024
Date of opening of Techno - Commercial Bid (Part-I) : After 16:30 Hrs. of 14.03.2024

1. Eligibility Criteria, tender documents along with General/Special condition, bids and any corrigendum/ addendum of the tender are available only at website www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in

For further details please visit : www.state.bihar.gov.in/prdbihar

Chief Engineer (Telecom & OPGW)

E-tendering introduced in BSPTCL for tenders above Rs. 25 lacs. For registration log in to www.eproc2.bihar.gov.inand e-Procurement Help Desk Toll free No: 1800 572 6571 , Email Id: eproc2support@bihar.gov.in

Working Hours: 8AM to 5PM (All days in week except few selected state holidays).

While participating in e-tendering process, the firm/contractor shall have to get them registered to get user ID, Passwords and digital signature. This will enable them to access the Website: www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in only.

GOVT & POLITICS



DELHI CONFIDENTIAL



MORALE-BOOSTING

MAYAWATI-LED BAHUJAN Samaj Party, which contested 106 seats in Telangana but failed to open its account, took an initiative to boost the morale of its party workers. It distributed letters of excellence to senior workers in 54 panchayat units where the BSP candidates got highest votes but could not win because of lesser votes in other units of their respective constituencies. Rajya Sabha member and party's central coordinator Ramji Gautam distributed the letters, which carried the photographs of party founder Kanshiram and party president Mayawati.

CONSERVATIVE CONNECT

THE INDIA Foundation of BJP leader Ram Madhav, who has been somewhat out of the news in recent times, has started an initiative to engage with conservatives across the world. The idea: a global framing of Hindutva within the key ideologies of the modern world is required, and the team feels that conservatism is one strand with which there are significant overlaps. They are in touch with Indian as well as foreign scholars, including Jaitirth Rao, who had written a book on Indian conservatism, and also intend to send a team of scholars to Israel later this year.

ACADEMIC PUSH

A GROUP of right-leaning academics has started holding talks across India under the banner of academics4namo, which will continue till elections, and push the narrative of Viksits Bharat. Academics like JNU professor Heeraman Tiwari, DU's Shri Prakash Singh, Sushma Yadav and Shamika Ravi have already delivered lectures on themes that are expected to spark a debate in support of the BJP's Lok Sabha pitch. The idea of the academics4namo group is that electoral hegemony has already been clinched, and what is now required is to aim at academic hegemony.

Can Preamble be amended without altering date, asks SC

Plea challenges legality of words 'socialist', 'secular' inserted in 1976

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 9

THE SUPREME Court on Friday wondered if the Preamble to the Constitution could have been amended while retaining the date when the Constitution was adopted.

It was referring to insertion of the words "socialist" and "secular" into the Preamble by the 42nd Constitutional Amendment Act, 1976. Although the change came 27 years after the Constitution was adopted by the Constituent Assembly, the Preamble retained the date "November 26, 1949".

The last part of the Preamble states, "...in our constituent assembly, this twenty-sixth day of November, 1949, do hereby adopt, enact and give to ourselves this Constitution."

The query came as a bench of Justices Sanjiv Khanna and Dipankar Datta took up a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) by BJP

leader Subramanian Swamy questioning the legality of the insertion of the two words by way of the constitutional amendment in 1976.

The PIL contends that the Preamble comes with a specific date and, thus, could not be amended without discussion.

Raising the query, Justice Datta said he was not implying that the Preamble cannot be amended but told Swamy and the other counsel appearing in the matter that it must be considered, at an academic level, whether a Constitution which has a date mentioned can be changed without also altering the date.

"That's precisely the question," the counsel said.

Swamy pointed out that the two words were added during the Emergency imposed by the then government led by Prime Minister Indira Gandhi.

The court then fixed the matter for hearing next in the week commencing April 29.

With Bharat Ratnas, Modi firms up a four-M mantra — Mandal, Mandir, Market, Mandi

Karpooori Thakur, L K Advani, Narasimha Rao and Chaudhary Charan Singh plus M S Swaminathan cover the ground for the BJP dispensation

him, but giving it a Modi touch.

Three of the leaders honoured by the Modi government are from the Opposition ranks — Bharatiya Lok Dal (now Rashtriya Lok Dal or RLD) leader Charan Singh, socialist ideologue Karpooori Thakur, and Rao, the first non-Gandhi family leader of the Congress to complete a term as PM. The BJP under Modi has been co-opting leaders from outside the party and adding them to its pantheon, whether Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel or Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose earlier, and these personalities now.

Swaminathan, the Father of the Green Revolution, is associated with Indira Gandhi. She initiated the process towards self-reliance on food production after she went to the US soon after becoming PM in 1966, and American headlines greeted her with 'An Indian PM comes with a begging bowl'.

Mandal in the Modi Mantra stands for the importance given to OBCs under his government, with the PM himself an OBC.

Karpooori Thakur and Charan Singh both belonged to backward classes, with Thakur really the father of the Mandal phenomenon. As chief minister of Bihar in 1978, he introduced 26% reservation for OBCs in government jobs, and when the decision was met with violent protests, he decided to set aside 3% for the EWS (economically weaker sections) and another 3% for women — a harbinger of things to come in later years.

A Bharat Ratna to Thakur also

gave a fig leaf to his protege and JD(U) supremo Nitish Kumar to walk back into the BJP fold. The Bihar CM claimed he had written to successive governments at the Centre to give the socialist icon award, and that it was the Modi government that finally did it.

The reaction of RLD chief Jayant Chaudhary was along the same lines, reacting to the Bharat Ratna to his grandfather Charan Singh with the remark, "Dil Jeet Liya (Won heart)!". This comes amidst talk of the RLD and BJP almost concluding their talks on an alliance, with the RLD getting at least two Lok Sabha seats and one in the Rajya Sabha.

With Charan Singh, Modi covered the 'Mandi' gap. The BJP has been worried about the dis-

affection among farmers, particularly Jats, in western Uttar Pradesh, and hopes that the entry of RLD — carrying the legacy of farmer leader Charan Singh — may stem that. West UP accounts for 29 of the 80 Lok Sabha seats in the state. Charan Singh was responsible for the downfall of the Congress in UP, amidst the rise of the OBCs, and was as much a leader of the Yadavs as Jats.

The late Jaipal Reddy, a minister in the UPA government, used to say that there were two main leaders in North India — Indira Gandhi and Charan Singh. And the late farmer leader is still a household name in western UP.

For the BJP, the UP fight is not so much winning the maximum seats in the state, which it is confident of doing, but of raising its

Come now to the 'Market', and that explains the nod to Narasimha Rao, the father of the

tally from 64 currently to beyond the 71 figure it reached in 2014.

The Mandir in the Modi mantra is exemplified by the Bharat Ratna to Advani. Given the sidelining and bitterness of the veteran leader under the Modi government, the honour was a surprise. A founder of the BJP along with Atal Bihari Vajpayee, Advani was also the man who led the Rath Yatra turning the Ayodhya Ram temple demand into a political movement.

With the Bharat Ratna to Advani, Modi sent a suitable signal of magnanimity to the party's workers, while also underlining his confidence in his own absolute unassailability.

Come now to the 'Market', and that explains the nod to Narasimha Rao, the father of the

economic reforms in India, who took tough decisions to open up the economy soon after taking over as PM in 1991. But Rao's importance also lies in him being from South India, a "Telugu bidda" from Andhra Pradesh, with the Modi government going out of its way to reach out to the region. (Swaminathan incidentally is a fellow South Indian, from Tamil Nadu.)

The BJP has seen many virtues in Rao since his death, underlining how the Gandhi family had shunned him, ostensibly for "letting" the Babri Masjid demolition happen under him in 1992. His body was not even allowed to be kept at the AIIC headquarters in Delhi for Congress colleagues to pay their last respects to him. The BJP

has made another stride towards owning Rao now, and acknowledging his achievement in stabilising the country when it was at a standstill.

These five men who have been honoured in the last couple of weeks were not flawless leaders, nor did the country become free of problems under their stewardship. Some of them even took decisions which deepened the existing fault lines. But they have all arguably been rat-

ed as Bharat Ratna recipients. The Indian Express, has covered the last 10 Lok Sabha elections.

She is the author of How Prime Ministers Decide

'CONCERN ABOUT QUALITY OF POLICE PROBE, EVIDENCE'

In 2023, HCs heard cases of 80 on death row, confirmed one

Second year when SC didn't confirm any death sentence: Project 39A report

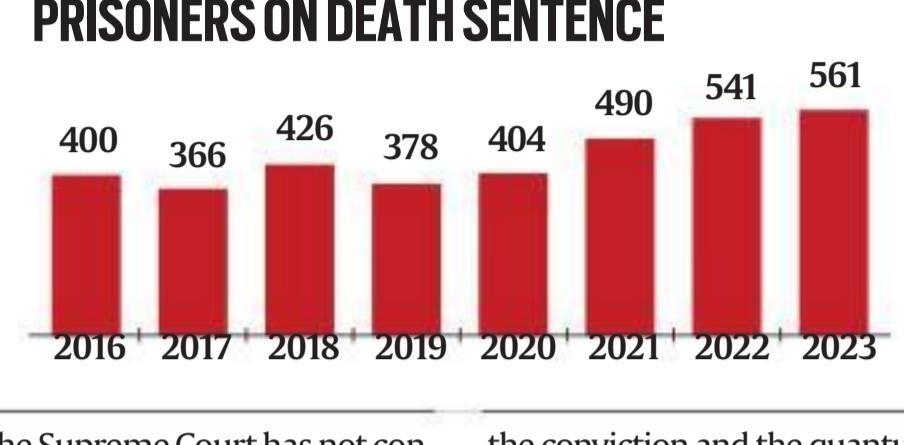
APURVA VISHWANATH
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 9

APPELLATE COURTS — Supreme Court and all the High Courts together — confirmed only one death sentence in 2023 while the rest were either commuted or saw the prisoners acquitted altogether, according to a new report by a criminal reforms advocacy group that has raised concerns about the quality of probe and evidence in such cases.

The Annual Death Penalty Report, 2023 was prepared by Project 39A, a criminal justice programme linked with the National Law University, Delhi. It will be released Saturday.

Appellate courts have over the past years confirmed fewer death sentences, but, according to the report, just one confirmation in a year signified further decline at the level of the high courts.

"Similarly, this is the second calendar year after 2021, where



the Supreme Court has not confirmed any death sentence," the report said.

In 2022, HCs confirmed the death sentences of four convicts, five in 2021 and three in 2020. The dip is steep after 2019 when HCs confirmed death sentences of 26 convicts. In the previous years, the numbers remained in a similar range: 23 in 2018, 11 in 2017 and 16 in 2016.

Under Section 366 of the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC), all death sentences awarded by trial courts are to be confirmed by the concerned HCs, although both

which, in May, agreed with the death sentence awarded in a murder case.

"Acquittal and remand by the Supreme Court and the High Courts in 2023 indicate significant concerns with the quality of police investigations and appreciation of evidence by lower courts in cases," the report said.

According to the report, the total number of death sentences awarded (in trial courts) last year had also seen a significant drop — from 167 in 2022 to 120 in 2023.

More than half (55%) of these 120 were in homicidal rape cases, it added. "In a trend continuing since 2019, crimes involving sexual offences formed the majority of death penalty cases at the trial courts," the report said.

The report said that in 2023, the HCs also disposed of fewer cases involving death sentences compared to 2022 (68 cases involving 101 prisoners), meaning the number of prisoners on death row went up.

Trinamool Congress MP Abhishek Banerjee

stay on the single-bench order. The state government had made a verbal appeal before the division bench, which admitted the petition.

A day later, Justice Gangopadhyay ordered that the CBI probe into the matter shall continue. He also said in the order that he "was told" by another judge, Justice Amitra Sinha, "some days back... that Justice Sen called her in his chamber on the last day before vacation and like a political leader, he dictated Justice Sinha three things: i) Mr Abhishek Banerjee has a political future, he should not be disturbed"; ii) live-streaming shall be stopped in Justice Sinha's court;

iii) the two writ petitions before Justice Sinha, where the name of Mr Abhishek Banerjee is involved, are to be dismissed".

On January 29, the SC which took suo motu cognisance of the developments, transferred the matter to itself. On Friday, the CJ asked senior counsel A M Singhvi who appeared for Banerjee "if you are aggrieved by the conduct of Justice Gangopadhyay, why should we be transferring something from Justice Amitra Sinha's bench?"

Singhvi said "Justice Gangopadhyay had alleged that Justice Sen spoke to Justice Sinha about Abhishek Banerjee's case".

On January 24, a single-judge bench of Justice Gangopadhyay had ordered a CBI probe into alleged irregularities in the admission of MBBS candidates in state-run medical colleges and hospitals in West Bengal. However, the state government moved the division bench of Justices Soumen Sen and Uday Kumar, which ordered an interim

significant rise in budgetary allocation. Women and Child Development Department, which got Rs 5,683 crore, saw a 112 per cent rise in its allocation, followed by the Public Health Engineering Department, which received Rs 5,048 crore allocation, a 97 per cent jump. The Mineral Resources Department received Rs 1,580 crore, an 80 per cent hike, and the Panchayat and Rural Development Department got Rs 17,529 crore, a 70 per cent rise.

On the Information Technology front, Rs 266 crore will be spent on advanced digital technologies and IT-enabled services at all administrative departments from state headquarters to gram panchayats.

A significant chunk of the Budget will be spent on fulfilling 11 "Modi ki guarantee" promises.

On the challenges faced by the state, Choudhary said, "The per capita income of Chhattisgarh is below the national average. The growth rate (of GSDP), too, is below national average, which is a worry and a challenge for us. We need to bring in private investment and stabilise the eco-system for the private sector."

Ex-CM Bhupesh Baghel said, "Modi ji went into the elections giving guarantees. Now, its burden is so much that a small state like Chhattisgarh is not able to bear it..."

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significant rise in budgetary allocation. Women and Child Development Department, which got Rs 5,683 crore, saw a 112 per cent rise in its allocation, followed by the Public Health Engineering Department, which received Rs 5,048 crore allocation, a 97 per cent jump. The Mineral Resources Department received Rs 1,580 crore, an 80 per cent hike, and the Panchayat and Rural Development Department got Rs 17,529 crore, a 70 per cent rise.

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Neerja Chowdhury, Contributing Editor, The Indian Express, has covered the last 10 Lok Sabha elections.

She is the author of How Prime Ministers Decide

SC no to notice on TMC MP's plea against HC judge

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 9

THE SUPREME Court on Friday declined to issue notice on Trinamool Congress MP Abhishek Banerjee's plea for "necessary action" against Calcutta High Court judge Justice Abhijit Gangopadhyay claiming he had been giving "politically motivated" interviews.

"Acquittal and remand by the Supreme Court and the High Courts in 2023 indicate significant concerns with the quality of police investigations and appreciation of evidence by lower courts in cases," the report said.

According to the report, the total number of death sentences awarded (in trial courts) last year had also seen a significant drop — from 167 in 2022 to 120 in 2023.

More than half (55%) of these 120 were in homicidal rape cases, it added. "In a trend continuing since 2019, crimes involving sexual offences formed the majority of death penalty cases at the trial courts," the report said.

According to the report, the sole confirmation was recorded at the Karnataka HC,

The court said it will tag the plea with the medical admissions scam matter, being heard by a five-judge bench headed by CJi Chandrachud, which had transferred to itself from the HC.

On January 29, the SC which took suo motu cognisance of the developments, transferred the matter to itself.

On Friday, the CJ asked senior counsel A M Singhvi who appeared for Banerjee "if you are aggrieved by the conduct of Justice Gangopadhyay, why should we be transferring something from Justice Amitra Sinha's bench?"

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(From left) PV Narasimha Rao with Manmohan Singh and Sonia Gandhi; Chaudhary Charan Singh with Atal Bihari Vajpayee and Devi Lal; Dr M S Swaminathan addresses a meeting in New Delhi in 1981. Express archive

BROUGHT IN LANDMARK INDUSTRIAL POLICY

Rao steered reforms but shunned spotlight

In a climate hostile towards economic liberalisation, P V Narasimha Rao spearheaded & backed his carefully-chosen team of ministers, officials

AGGAM WALIA

NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 9



Reforms necessitated after a sharp jump in oil prices in August 1990. Express archive

AFTER GOING through a one-page summary of the draft 1991 Budget, then Prime Minister P V Narasimha Rao reportedly told then Finance Minister Manmohan Singh, "If this is what I wanted, why did I select you?"

Rao's vision for the Budget was encapsulated in the reworked draft, which was later presented in the Parliament, ushering in an era of economic liberalisation. PM Narendra Modi announced Friday that the Bharat Ratna would be conferred on Rao.

Rao had carefully picked his team of ministers and officials, whom he resolutely backed despite the expected political backlash.

In a climate hostile towards liberalisation, Rao devised a strategy of not taking any credit for the reforms as he realised that being at the helm of affairs, he needed to safeguard his political legitimacy. On one hand he took a backseat during meetings and on the other hand backed his team to be the face of the reforms.

For instance, when 50 MPs from his own party sent a signed letter criticising the Budget, he left it to Singh to do the explaining. Similarly, he left the task of announcing the contentious industrial policy in the Lok Sabha to the Minister of State for Industry although he was himself the Industry Minister.

When Rao offered Singh the Finance Minister portfolio, Singh only had one condition: Rao's full political backing. "He replied, only half-jokingly, 'You will have a free hand. If the policies succeed, we will all take the credit. If it fails, you will have to go,'" Singh recounted in Vinay Sitapati's book, *Half Lion: How*

Narasimha Rao Transformed India

Rao kept his word. When Singh offered to resign following a political furore over the second round of devaluation of the Indian rupee by 11%, Rao refused. Besides exhibiting political courage to back his team, Rao chose those who shared his appetite for bold reforms. Among his team members were his principal secretary Amar Nath Varma and Cabinet secretary Naresh Chandra. Both were known to be fearless when it came to speaking their minds. Rao also brought Montek Singh Ahluwalia into his inner circle, who actively advocated for reforms.

At times, Rao attributed the reforms as part of the Nehruvian-Gandhi legacy to make it more palatable for the political establishment. His team followed a similar strategy. For example, when some ministers in Rao's government opposed the new industrial policy draft, Jairam Ramesh, who was then a part of the Finance Ministry, added a preamble linking the thinking behind the policy to Congress's

fundamental ideals and its leadership. The ministers withdrew their opposition.

The reforms were necessitated after a sharp jump in oil prices in August 1990, leading to an unmanageable balance of payment (BoP) situation, depleted foreign exchange reserves along with massive capital outflows, pushing India closer to the possibility of default.

The government devalued the Rupee on July 1, 1991 and the RBI transferred over 46 tonnes of gold from its reserves to the Bank of England for borrowing forex to manage liquidity resulting from the BoP crisis.

The rupee devaluation was done by the Rao-led government in two tranches of 9% and 11% in quick succession, taking the total downward adjustment to 17.38% in terms of pound sterling and about 18.7% in US dollar terms.

These steps were followed by the new industrial policy, a landmark document in accelerating India's economic liberalisation. The policy abolished industrial licensing for all projects barring a select few strategic industries, allowed the government to disinvest its shareholding in the public sector, and amended the Monopolies and Restrictive Trade Practices (MRTP) Act to allow for the setting up, expansion, and merger of businesses without prior approval.

Notably, it also allowed foreign direct investment of up to 51% foreign equity and removed bottlenecks to facilitate foreign technology agreements in high priority industries. The new industrial policy was presented on the same day as the 1991 Budget. Nearly 80% of the industry was taken out of the industrial licensing framework and the number of sectors reserved for public sector companies dropped from 17 to 8.

Charan Singh, the leader who always championed the cause of farmers

Singh started his political career in Cong, but left party to form the first non-Cong govt in UP in 1967

the village of Noorpur in UP's Meerut district in 1902. He was first elected to the UP Assembly in 1937 from Chhaprauli. In June 1951, he became a state Cabinet minister.

At the time, he was one of the Congress's main leaders in UP. But dissatisfied with direction of the party, Singh left the Congress to form the first non-Congress government in UP. He also formed the Bharatiya Kranti Dal (BKD).

Singh served as UP CM twice – first, from April 3, 1967, to February 25, 1968; and second from February 18, 1970, to October 1, 1970. After that, he became more involved in national politics.

In 1974, he merged his party with the Samyukta (United) Socialist Party to form the Bharatiya Lok Dal (BLD). At the time, Indira Gandhi was the PM. When Gandhi declared Emergency the following year, Singh, like other prominent Opposition leaders, was imprisoned for a year. Following the revocation of Emergency, the BLD emerged as a crucial component of the Moraji Desai-led Janata Party government that came to power in 1977.

"This exemplifies the Modi government's commitment to the agricultural sector, as reflected by the selection of two of three awardees, Chaudhary Charan Singh and Dr M S Swaminathan, who have significantly championed the cause of agriculture," said a source.

The source added, "... Narasimha Rao and Chaudhary Charan Singh come from non-BJP backgrounds, indicating Prime Minister Modi's belief in conferring national honours in a very party-agnostic manner."

The Bharat Ratna for Singh comes at a time when there are talks of RLD headed by Singh's grandson Jayant Chaudhary joining the BJP-led NDA. Though the RLD does not have a single Lok Sabha MP, the party has its base among farmers and the Jat community in west UP. Responding to the PM's announcement, Chaudhary said on X, "Diljeet liya (Won my heart)."

Singh was born in a family of farmers in

DECIDED TO STUDY AGRICULTURE AFTER THE 1942-43 BENGAL FAMINE

How Swaminathan helped India achieve food security

HARISH DAMODARAN

NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 9



Farmers can benefit from a good strain of a crop, he had said. Express archive

PRIME MINISTER Narendra Modi announced Friday that the late Indian agricultural scientist M S Swaminathan, as well as former Prime Ministers P V Narasimha Rao and Chaudhary Charan Singh, would be conferred the Bharat Ratna.

Called the 'Father of the Green Revolution', Swaminathan played a major role in the set of changes introduced in farming in the 1960s and '70s that helped India achieve food security.

In an interview published by the MS Swaminathan Research Foundation, Swaminathan spoke about how he first became inclined towards agriculture at a time when he was expected to follow his father into the medical profession.

"It was at that time, in 1942, that Gandhiji gave a call for the Quit India Movement. And, in 1942-43, there was the Bengal famine. Many of us, who were students at that time and were very idealistic, asked ourselves, what can we do for independent India?"

"So I decided, because of the Bengal famine, to study agriculture. I changed my field and went to the Agriculture College at Coimbatore, instead of going to a Medical College," he said. Swaminathan added, "And, I also decided, to go into agricultural research, and that too in genetics and breeding, for the simple reason that a good variety has the largest impact. A large number of farmers... can benefit from a good strain of a crop..."

In 1954, he started working at Central Rice Research Institute, Cuttack, on transferring genes for fertiliser response from japonica varieties to indica varieties. He described this as "the first attempt to develop high yielding va-

rieties which can respond to good soil fertility and good water management."

After Swaminathan's work on rice, he and other scientists would work on doing the same

to enhance productivity for wheat crop. "Wheat was a different story because we had to get Norin dwarfing genes from Norman Borlaug in Mexico," he said. Borlaug was an American scientist who was working on developing more productive crop varieties. He would go on to win the Nobel Peace Prize in 1970.

Many researchers and scientists were involved in this work. But there isn't any doubt the basic strategic vision underpinning the Green Revolution in India came from Swaminathan. The problem with the traditional wheat and rice varieties was they were tall and slender. These 'lodged' – fell flat on the ground – when they grew and their ears were heavy with well-filled grains produced in response to high fertiliser doses.

Through Swaminathan's research on rice, a reduction in plant height was sought to make them less lodging-prone. But this was not easy. His strategy of developing semi-

dwarf wheat varieties using mutagenesis – exposing plants to chemicals or radiation to introduce desirable modifications in their DNA – did not, however, work.

The search for an ideal variety led him to contact American scientist Orville Vogel. He played a role in developing a 'dwarf wheat' called Caines, which had a high yield. It contained dwarfing genes from a dwarf wheat called the Norin-10.

Vogel agreed but was unsure of the wheat's potential in the Indian climate. He advised Swaminathan to approach Borlaug, who would also later visit India, after Swaminathan proposed so to the Indian Agricultural Research Institute, allowing for wheat breeding programme to begin. "We started working seriously on dwarf wheat breeding programme in 1963, and within 5 years, there was what was called the 'Wheat Revolution'. Indira Gandhi, then PM, released a special stamp," he said.

He would have been happy... but he didn't work for awards: Swaminathan's daughter

ARUN JANARDHANAN

CHENNAI, FEBRUARY 9

CHENNAI, FEBRUARY 9



Former WHO chief scientist Dr Soumya Swaminathan in Keralas Kasaragod on Friday. ANI

tor to thousands of young scientists," Swaminathan said in a statement Friday.

"Dr Swaminathan's life embodies selflessness and service to humanity. He believed in using the power of science and technology to solve societal problems. He was also a karma yogi, and the reward he sought was the happiness on the faces of rural and tribal men, women, and children. The recognition given to him now will serve to inspire and motivate the younger generation to believe

that through the thoughtful and humane use of science and technology, it is possible to solve the problems of society," she said.

During an interaction with the media, she also highlighted her father's lifelong dedication not just to agriculture, but to the welfare of farmers and the most vulnerable segments of society. She also highlighted her father's humility, and focus on impact over recognition. "I am sure he would have also been happy if the news had come during his lifetime, but he wasn't somebody who worked for awards or waited for recognition. They came to him, but he was motivated by the results of work he did on the ground, and the people's love and affection. He always used to remember the farmers he had met, wherever he went in India, the way they used to convey their gratitude and love. He would have definitely been happy, but he wasn't somebody who was waiting for this award," she said.

"I would like to convey my happiness and gratitude to the Government of India and Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi for having awarded the Bharat Ratna to my father, Prof M S Swaminathan, posthumously. It is a great honour, and recognition of the work he has done throughout his life to advance science to solve the problem of food and nutrition security in India and globally. He was also an institution builder and a man-

'Little delayed... he was ignored': Rao's daughter thanks PM for 'recognising' him

SREENIVAS JANYALA

HYDERABAD, FEBRUARY 9



BRS MLC Surabhi Vani Devi in New Delhi, Friday. ANI

Narasimha Rao was. Modi understands that the path of progress and economic reforms that India is on now was set by PV Narasimha Rao, and this is a great recognition for the services he provided to this nation," she said.

Without mentioning Congress, to which her father belonged, Devi said family members had been hurt that he was ignored and that his contributions to the nation were brushed aside for many years.

Rao's grandson, N V Subhash, who is a

member of the BJP, did not mince his words. "It is an emotional moment for me and the entire family. The Congress not only ignored him, but the Gandhi family made him the scapegoat for all the Congress party's failures. Leave alone giving him any award, he has been insulted and sidelined. All the benefits that the Congress accrued from him were attributed to the Gandhi family, while all the failures have been attributed to Narasimha Rao. Thanks to PM Narendra Modi, who understands the significance of his contribution to this nation," he said.

In Laknepally village in Warangal district's Narasampet, where Rao was born, residents burst firecrackers and distributed sweets. "We gathered at the PV Trust building, run by the family, and celebrated the great honour bestowed on the son of this village. It is a proud moment for all of us," said sarpanch Rambabu Godishala.

Slapping case: SC pulls up UP govt over delay in counselling students

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 9

THE SUPREME Court Friday pulled up the Uttar Pradesh government over alleged delay in providing counselling to the children involved in the 2023 Muzaffarnagar student slapping incident.

A bench of Justice A S Oka and Justice Ujjal Bhuyan asked UP Additional Advocate General Garima Prashad why was there a delay in carrying out the counselling as recommended by Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS) despite its earlier directions.

The August 2023 incident involved a schoolteacher allegedly asking students in her class to slap a fellow Muslim student for not completing his homework. She was later booked for the alleged act. The court had appointed TISS to provide coun-

selling to the children involved and also to extend assistance of expert child counsellors. In December 2023, the SC asked the state government to inform how it proposed to implement the TISS recommendations.

After perusing the state reply Friday, the bench said it reflected that the counselling process had not been done yet. "It is not reflected, it is not being done," said Justice Oka. He said, "TISS suggests in what manner they will be counselled... They have given you name of institutions also whose assistance should be taken... nothing has been done."

Prashad said though it may not reflect in the reply, the process has started. The court directed that its directions have to be implemented urgently in letter and spirit and sought a compliance report from the state.

The SC will hear the matter again on March 1.

HC says malicious parent syndrome increasing trend in child custody cases

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
BENGALURU, FEBRUARY 9

THE KARNATAKA High Court in a recent order lamented the increase of "malicious parent syndrome", observing that the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act was being used to settle scores between estranged parents.

The observations were made by a single-judge bench of Justice M Nagaprasanna in response to a petition filed by a man in response to criminal proceedings initiated by his wife's ex-husband in the wake of a custody dispute over their daughter.

The counsel for the petitioner argued that the case had been filed by the ex-husband only to settle scores and if the statement of the child was taken again, the truth would come out. The opposing counsel argued that in a POCSO case, the presumption is against the accused, and therefore

the truth should be ascertained in a trial. The bench observed that in a petition by the ex-husband seeking custody shortly before he made the criminal complaint, he had narrated the whole life history of the child but made no mention of any abuse allegations.

"Both the aforesaid contradictory contentions... would completely demolish the allegation against the petitioner," the bench said. "This cannot but be inferred that an innocent child is being used by the 2nd respondent, ex-husband of the child's mother to settle scores against the mother and the petitioner," the court said.

"It is unfortunate that the provisions of the POCSO Act, which are meant to protect the child from abuse, are being misused... Stories are twinned to retain the custody or to take custody of the child. This becomes a classic illustration of what is emerging as a trend called 'malicious parent syndrome,'" the court said and quashed criminal proceedings.

SC quashes Andhra HC order expressing disapproval of Collegium and castigating Jagan

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 9

THE SUPREME Court Friday quashed an Andhra Pradesh High Court order that voiced strong disapproval over the apex court Collegium transferring two Chief Justices and castigated Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy for his apparent attempts to undermine it.

A bench comprising Justices Bela M Trivedi and Pankaj Mital set aside the observations made in the order passed by a single-judge bench of the high court and disposed of the matter.

The top court was hearing an appeal filed by the Andhra Pradesh government challenging the December 30, 2020 judgment by Justice Rakesh Kumar of the high court. The observations were made while adjudicating a plea seeking the judge's recusal from a case involving a challenge to the auction of state land.

Justice Kumar had referred to the transfer of Andhra Pradesh Chief Justice Maheshwari by the Supreme Court collegium and said this could result in undue benefits for the government in the southern state.

"I am of the opinion that for a situation which is prevailing today, in which impartiality, integrity, honesty, unbiased etc. in the judicial system are being raised, to some extent, we are also responsible. Several instances we have noticed that immediately after demitting the office of judge, judges are provided with new assignments," Justice Kumar said. "One can infer how the government in the state of Andhra Pradesh is proceeding. Firstly, an attack was made on the Legislative Council, thereafter another constitutional body, that is, the State Election Commission, and now, the High Court of Andhra Pradesh and even the Supreme Court is under attack by persons who are in power," the judge wrote in his judgment.

UDDHAV SENA'S EX-CORPORATOR MURDER

Accused left Facebook live to fetch gun, fired five shots at Ghosalkar, says Mumbai Police

MOHAMED THAVER
MUMBAI, FEBRUARY 9

THE MUMBAI crime branch, investigating the murder of former Shiv Sena (UBT) corporator Abhishek Ghosalkar (41), on Friday said Mauris Noronha (49) had recently patched up and were at the live-streaming session in the ground-plus-one office used by the latter. The police suspect Noronha shot Ghosalkar dead over past enmity.

The police further said Noronha initially failed to kill himself as he ran out of bullets.

In the footage from the CCTV camera outside his office it can be seen that Noronha is looking at Ghosalkar in disgust. Once Ghosalkar died, Noronha tried to fire a shot at himself but there were no bullets in the pistol. He was then seen going back to the first floor where he re-

Borivali in suburban Mumbai on Thursday evening, allegedly by his old rival Noronha, who later killed himself.

Ghosalkar and Noronha, a businessman who resides in Borivali, had recently patched up and were at the live-streaming session in the ground-plus-one office used by the latter. The police suspect Noronha shot Ghosalkar dead over past enmity.

The police further said Noronha initially failed to kill himself as he ran out of bullets.

In the footage from the CCTV camera outside his office it can be seen that Noronha is looking at Ghosalkar in disgust. Once Ghosalkar died, Noronha tried to fire a shot at himself but there were no bullets in the pistol. He was then seen going back to the first floor where he re-



Amit Chakravarty



Abhishek Ghosalkar and Mauris Noronha

it to Noronha, said the police.

A senior officer said they went through the footage of the CCTV camera outside Noronha's office, in which no one was seen entering the room who could have handed over the firearm to Noronha. Mishra told the police that he had kept the firearm in the safe around 2.30 pm on Thursday. "We suspect Noronha got up from

the live feed, went to the first floor and got the firearm from the safe," the senior officer said.

Later during the Facebook Live, which was being shot on Noronha's iPhone, was about to end, five rounds were fired, four of which hit Ghosalkar. There were three exit wounds meaning one bullet was lodged in Ghosalkar's body. Soon after the attack, Ghosalkar tried to jump out by breaking the glass. He died just outside the office, said the police.

Nearly 25 seconds later, the footage captured the sound of another shot, which the police suspect was Noronha firing on himself, which led to his death. The pistol and Noronha's body were found on the first floor.

FULL REPORT
www.indianexpress.com

HC says malicious parent syndrome increasing trend in child custody cases

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
BENGALURU, FEBRUARY 9

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Mirwaiz put under house arrest ahead of sermon at Jamia Masjid in Srinagar

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, FEBRUARY 9

Mirwaiz Umar Farooq

MIRWAIZ UMAR Farooq, who was expected to lead congregational prayers at Srinagar's Jamia Masjid on Friday, was not allowed to leave his residence yet again. The management committee of the mosque had announced on February 7 that Mirwaiz would address people at the grand mosque on Friday.

His special sermon was meant to mark Shab-e-Mehraj at Jamia Masjid, an auspicious occasion in the Islamic calendar.

The Anjuman Auqaf Jama Masjid committee said that early Friday, a contingent of police vehicles was stationed outside his residence and he was detained.

Since his release from house detention after more than four years in September last year, Mirwaiz has been allowed to address Friday prayers only thrice.

Anjuman strongly denounces the repeated house arrest of Mirwaiz, the Auqaf said.

While he has been travelling around the city and also made a visit outside the state last month, his visit to Jamia Masjid in Nowhatta has been restricted.

Sources in the administration told The Indian Express that with the escalation in the Israel-Palestine conflict since October 7, there has been apprehension that he may address the issue in his Friday sermons, which is why he has not been allowed to lead prayers on Friday. "It has been conveyed to him that if he sticks to his religious duties, there is no issue in addressing the people at the mosque," the source added.

Anjuman strongly denounces the repeated house arrest of Mirwaiz, the Auqaf said.

PARTHA SARTHI BISWAS & CHANDAN HAYGUNDE
PUNE, FEBRUARY 9

Nikhil Wagle (centre), Vishambihar Choudhary (right) and Asim Sarode in Pune on Friday. Pavan Khengre

JOURNALIST NIKHIL Wagle, environmentalist Vishambihar Choudhary and advocate Asim Sarode were attacked while they were travelling in a car to a meeting organised by Nirbhay Bano Manch in Pune on Friday, police said. Wagle and Choudhary alleged that their vehicle was attacked at four different places by BJP supporters, and claimed that Pune Police did adequate measures to prevent the attack on them.

Police officials said that the process of lodging a case against the BJP workers was on.

The attack on Friday comes in the backdrop of Dhiraj Ghate, the BJP city chief, opposing the entry of Wagle to the city over his tweet against Prime Minister Narendra

Modi and senior BJP leader LK Advani. An FIR was registered against Wagle based on a complaint by BJP leader Sunil Deodhar over the tweet. "We were kept waiting at advocate Asim Sarode's home for four hours by senior police officers of Chaturshringi and Deccan Police station. They wanted me to go back to Mumbai but I said I will not do so without

attending the sabha," said Wagle.

Once they left the house of Sarode in the car of advocate Balkrishna Nidhalkar, Wagle said, some people pelted stones and threw ink on the vehicle.

"When our vehicle was near Dandekar bridge some people shattered the rear glass and stuck rods and sticks inside the vehicle. Sarode put my head down otherwise I would have been badly injured," Wagle said.

Besides, Wagle, Sarode and Choudhary, the vehicle also had three other people.

At the event venue, BJP supporters came face to face with members of Congress, NCP (Sharadchandra Pawar) AAP, Vanchit Bhajan Aghadi and other members of INDIA alliance.

However, the police personnel managed to get Wagle and others safely to the programme venue, where he later delivered his speech.

SHRI LAL BAHADUR SHASTRI NATIONAL SANSKRIT UNIVERSITY (Central University)
B-4, Qutub Institutional Area, New Delhi-110016

Date: 02.02.2024
E. 7(134)/LBNSU/UWD/2023-24
NOTICE INVITING TENDER

(1) Sealed item rate tenders are invited for the under mentioned work from the OEMs/OEs and the authorized distributors/dealers of DAIKIN/MITSUBISHI/TOSHIBA/FUJITSU GENERAL INDIA PVT. LTD. in two bid system NIT No. 07/2023-24/LBSU/UWD (T.I.D. No.2024_SLBS_744200_1) S/I/T/C of VRV/VRF type air conditioning system at 3rd floor of Swarna Jayanti Sadan & ground floor of Saraswat Sadan of the University during 2023-24 Estimated cost - Rs.96,16,008/-, Earnest Money - Rs. 1,92,320/-, Time Allowed - (40) Forty Days, Tender Fee - Rs. 1180/- (Non-Refundable)

Last date & time of receipt of applications : 13/02/2024 up to 4.00 P.M. Last date & time of issue of tenders : 14/02/2024 up to 4.00 P.M. For Serial No. 01 Last date & time of Submission of tenders : 15/02/2024 up to 3.00 P.M. Date & time of opening of Technical Bids : 16/02/2024 from 3.00 P.M. For Serial No. 02 Last date & time of Submission of tenders : 16/02/2024 up to 3.00 P.M. Date & time of opening of Tenders : 16/02/2024 from 3.30 P.M. For eligibility criteria, other details & corrigendum, if any, please visit websites : www.slbsrsy.ac.in & www.eprocure.gov.in

CBC 21371/12/0007/2324
REGISTRAR

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EXTRACT OF UNAUDITED FINANCIAL RESULTS FOR THE QUARTER AND NINE MONTHS ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

Particulars	Quarter ended		Nine months ended		Year ended
	31.12.2023	30.09.2023	31.12.2022	31.12.2023	
Total income	387.10	498.81	328.35	1519.72	1239.85
Net profit / (loss) for the period (before tax and exceptional items)	2.85	21.15	(0.96)	56.05	(7.79)
Net profit/(loss) for the period before tax (after exceptional items)	2.85	21.15	(0.96)	56.05	(7.79)
Net profit/(loss) for the period after tax (after exceptional items)	2.68	21.09	(0.13)	55.56	(6.96)
Total comprehensive income / (loss) for the period [comprising Profit / (loss) for the period (after tax) and Other Comprehensive Income (after tax)]	2.21	20.90	(1.30)	54.12	(8.64)
Equity Share Capital	14.48	14.48	14.48	14.48	14.48
Other equity (excluding revaluation reserves)					163.47
Earnings Per Share (of Rs.10/- each) (for continuing and discontinued operations) -					
1. Basic (Rs.) :	1.86	14.57	(0.09)	38.40	(4.81)
2. Diluted (Rs.) :	1.86	14.57	(0.09)	38.40	(4.81)
					13.71

Notes:

1. The above is an extract of the detailed format of Annual/Quarterly Financial Results filed with the Stock Exchanges under Regulation 33 of the SEBI (Listing and Other Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The full format of the Annual/Quarterly Financial Results are available on the websites of Stock Exchange(s) (www.bseindia.com, www.nseindia.com) and on Company's website (www.smlsruzi.com).

For and on behalf of the Board of Directors
(Junya Yamanishi)
Managing Director & CEO
DIN: 09174162

Place: New Delhi
Date: 9 February 2024

Journalist Wagle attacked in Pune, police say will book BJP workers

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
BHUBANESWAR, FEBRUARY 9

CORPORATE LEADER and former senior executive of Aditya Birla Group Santrupt Misra joined the Biju Janata Dal (BJD) in presence of party president and Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik at Naveen Niwas.

Hours after his induction, the party appointed him as the national spokesperson.

There are speculations that Misra could be one among the three nominees for the Rajya Sabha of the ruling dispensation in Odisha, but some sources said he may also be fielded from Puri for the Lok Sabha seat.

"He has left a very important job in the corporate world to help us in our good work in Odisha. We will decide on what position he will represent," said Patnaik.

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BECAUSE THE TRUTH INVOLVES US ALL

LET THEM LIVE

Uttarakhand code is flawed. Its measures on live-in relationships violate rights of citizens, they need to go

THE FRAMING of a common set of personal laws to regulate marriage and its annulment, adoption, succession and inheritance across religions in a diverse country is necessarily a fraught exercise. It has been complicated further, in recent years, by the insularity of identity politics and its demands for an imposed top-down homogenisation. This is why discussions on Uttarakhand's Uniform Civil Code (UCC), passed by the state assembly on Wednesday, that will spur similar legislation in other BJP-ruled states — common civil code being one of BJP's three "core" issues, along with the Ayodhya Ram temple and abrogation of Article 370, with the latter two accomplished — necessitated a layered consideration of the task at hand. It also required great sensitivity, to ensure that the concerns of minorities are heard, and heeded. In its espousal of equal property rights for men and women, striking down the concept of illegitimacy for children and raising the age for marriage for both men and women, the UCC shows foresight, even if these measures leave loose ends. Where it fails, completely and strikingly, is in its twisted vision on relationships that extend beyond marriage. In that, its policy framework shows a distressing lack of inclusivity and an unprecedented intrusion into the private lives of individuals by the state.

The attempt to institutionalise live-in relationships — interpreted by the Bill as a "relationship between a man and a woman" who "cohabit in a shared household through a relationship in the nature of marriage..." — through compulsory registration, shows a moralising highhandedness that arrogates to the state the power to police citizens' "bad intentions". Applicable to those living in Uttarakhand as well as residents of Uttarakhand elsewhere in the country, and with provisions of penalty, including jail term, for a failure to register the initiation and end of such relationships, it puts all couples at risk. A state official has argued that this is a safety measure to prevent heinous crimes committed in live-in relationships. That's a ridiculous argument — hard cases make bad law and, anyway, the new Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita has enough provisions to address crime in this context.

In an election year, the political messaging behind the UCC is hard to ignore. Yet, the government needs to, first of all, listen to itself. The dissonance between the ham-handed provisions of the Uttarakhand UCC and the Narendra Modi government's repeated stress on youth- and women-led development is jarring. As recently as December 2023, the PM had spoken of four "castes" that mattered the most: Poor, youth, women and farmers. At the launch of Vriksh Bharat@2047, he reiterated that "Yuva shakti is both the agent of change and also the beneficiaries of change". The provisions of the Uttarakhand UCC are out of step with that vision. The right of two consenting adults to decide if they wish to live together — without being married — is a foundational principle of a free society. It is liberating and empowering for women — and men — as they create their own safe personal spaces. The Uttarakhand law yokes their privacy, choice and freedom to a state-determined notion of acceptability. The UCC in Uttarakhand must be reconsidered urgently — as a first step, Section 378 that sets the terms for live-in relationships, needs to go.

EVERYONE IN

Enabling persons with disabilities to more easily access the cinema experience is a step in the right direction

EIHT YEARS AFTER a landmark piece of legislation enshrined the rights of all persons with disabilities (PWDs) "to participate in recreational activities equally with others", the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, on January 8, issued its draft "Guidelines of Accessibility Standards in the Public Exhibition of Feature Films in Cinema Theatres for Persons with Hearing and Visual Impairment". The guidelines, for which stakeholder comments are invited till February 15, constitute another welcome step towards ensuring that an experience that most movie buffs take for granted can be accessed by a section of Indians who continue to be largely excluded from it. They carry forward the spirit of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPWD) Act of 2016.

According to estimates of the World Health Organisation, approximately 84 million Indians are deaf and hard of hearing and 75 million are blind and visually impaired. There has long been a demand for making the movie-going experience more accessible to them. Efforts by organisations, such as the Delhi-based NGO Saksham, and a handful of willing collaborators in the industry, like actor-producer Aamir Khan, have resulted in some films in the last couple of decades, such as *Dangal* and *Munnabhai MBBS*, having features like audio description, subtitles and closed captions. The draft guidelines require producers to deliver two versions of a film for certification by the CBFC, including one with accessibility features enabled, and call on theatres to schedule special shows for PwDs and the use of special equipment and mobile apps. Such steps can help make accessibility the norm as is the case in countries such as the US and UK. In the UK, theatres have seats into which a visually impaired viewer's headphones may be plugged so that she can hear the audio description of the film being played.

In December 2022, the Supreme Court formed a committee to make the court more disabled-friendly and has recently released a handbook for combating stereotypes about PwDs. Last year, the government made it mandatory for digital offerings to meet the standards set under the RPWD Act. Enabling PwDs to more easily access and savour one of India's most beloved art forms, a globally exported cultural product and significant source of soft power — cinema — is yet another step in the right direction.

A MESSI THING

A no-show escalates into a global row. It's just another day in the life of a mega-star

HALF THE WORLD worships the five foot seven man in the pink jacket, leaning against the side of the wall in the Inter Miami dugout, in the exhibition game against Hong Kong XI. It seems as if the whole of Hong Kong has come to the stadium, to get a glimpse of Lionel Messi, arguably the greatest footballer ever. Every second, the spectators pray for him to stride onto the pitch and dazzle them. But he doesn't. He warms his heels on the bench for the duration of the game. The crowd can bear it no longer. Messi is booed. Refunds for ticket demanded. The Chinese government intervenes and demands a replay where Messi would play.

"A no-show" had escalated into a global hellfire. Miami's coach Gerardo Martino would later say that the Argentinian was unfit. Messi apologised, but the fire still rages. It's unlikely that Messi would have been booed anywhere in the world. Even in Brazil, the land of his country's bitter football rivals, or in Madrid, the home of El Clasico antagonists Real Madrid in his Barcelona days, he would not have been subject to such unkind behaviour. But Messi would know that all that is part of being Messi, the price of his excellence and fame. He would know, from experience, how cruel and fickle the world of fans is. It took him decades to win the love of his own countrymen, who regarded him as an outsider because he never played professional football in Argentina, joining Barcelona's La Masia Academy when he had barely reached adolescence.

Messi is neither the first celebrity to be booed, he will not be the last. Closer home, Sachin Tendulkar was jeered when he got out cheaply in a Test against England at the Wankhede in Mumbai, his home. He would return to a hero's welcome again. That's the nature of fandom. So if Messi ever returns to Hong Kong, he would receive a grand welcome, and he would hold no grudge either. Two decades of being a sporting celebrity have taught him better than to do that.



BINA AGARWAL

ON THE SURFACE, Uttarakhand's UCC Bill (herewith U-UCC), passed without public consultation or debate, appears to be a progressive document on some counts, such as succession/inheritance, even while being deeply problematic on other counts, such as its clauses on "live in" relationships. But, delving deeper, even the inheritance rules have serious flaws and silences.

The U-UCC has simplified inheritance rules to make them gender equal on all counts, doing away with prior distinctions between separate and coparcenary joint family property (JFP) in Hindu law, and the unequal shares for women under Muslim law. It thus deceptively appears to be the kind of "gender equal" code that many women's rights scholars and activists have been suggesting.

So what is the problem? It is multi-fold. First, take women's shares: Hindus (along with Sikhs, Jains and Buddhists) are governed today by the Hindu Succession Amendment Act 2005 (HSAA 2005), applicable across India. For those earlier governed by *Mitakshara* (covering over 80 per cent of Indians), the inheritance law differentiates between separate property and coparcenary joint family property. In the latter, the HSAA 2005 grants both sons and daughters (married or unmarried) equal rights by birth that cannot be willed away by fathers. This gives daughters protection from being disinherited due to male bias, at least for joint property, even if separate property were willed away to sons.

Under the U-UCC, however, all property can be willed away. Given biases against endowing daughters with property, even the limited protection they had will thus be lost. The right way forward would have been for the U-UCC to restrict testamentary rights on a part of the property, so that daughters could inherit at least something intestate. Several European countries have

Beneath veneer of reform, Uttarakhand's UCC is a bill passed in haste without due public feedback

restricted testamentary rights.

Two other points are notable. One, now class 1 heirs (those who are the first order of inheritors) include not only the intestate's son, daughter, widow and mother (as under HSAA 2005), but also the intestate's father (51:6). Both parents are entitled to one share "together". This means that the mother will get half of what she would have got under HSAA 2005. Two, a widow or widower of any predeceased relative of an intestate loses the right to inherit if s/he remarries. This is both unfair and regressive, since the person (say, a daughter-in-law) would have contributed to the intestate's family well-being prior to re-marriage. Simply remarrying cannot justify a disqualification. The HSAA 2005 does not do so.

For Muslim women, the U-UCC at one level brings gains, as it promises equal shares to daughters and sons, whereas under the law currently applicable (the Muslim Personal Law Sharia Application Act 1937), women get half the property shares of men, and their rights in agricultural land are subject to discriminatory land reform laws. However, the Sharia restricts testamentary rights, assuring women of at least some property and protection against male bias. The U-UCC provides no such protection, apart from the likely resistance from Muslims to implementing a law so contrary to the Sharia.

For Christian women, the widow who would have received half the intestate's property will get less under the U-UCC, since the property will be shared equally with children. Second, take religion and type of property. For Hindus, the U-UCC creates a conundrum. Many families hold land, houses, and even businesses as coparcenary JFP. What will happen to this property? Will it be de-recognised and partitioned off? And what about businesses

registered under the Hindu Undivided Family (HUF), which is recognised as a legal entity under Indian tax law, receives tax benefits, and is defined on the basis of Hindu personal law. The U-UCC ignores this issue altogether. How will Hindu business families in Uttarakhand, who have HUF property, react?

For Muslims, the U-UCC totally ignores the specifications on which eligible heirs and inheritance shares are decided under the Sharia. The latter recognises a complex order of heirs, depending on the presence or absence of particular categories of relatives. This order is quite different from the simple order listed in the U-UCC. Moreover, the Sharia draws from the *Koran*. Some 14 per cent of Uttarakhand's population is Muslim. The proposed changes thus have considerable potential to cause inter-religious divisiveness and conflict.

Third, take tribals: The U-UCC leaves them out of its purview. Tribals are today subject to gender-unequal customary laws in most states (possible exception being largely matrilineal Meghalaya, which favours women over men). Leaving out tribal communities from a system of codified law is an opportunity forgone.

Finally, the U-UCC, if ratified by the President of India, will become the law in that state, presumably overriding central government laws. If every state were to similarly enact its own UCC, then we will have 28 different UCCs — contradicting any claim to a "uniform" civil code for India.

Written with inadequate examination of existing laws and rights, and passed in haste without due public feedback, the U-UCC has created more confusion than it has offered solutions.

The writer is professor of Development Economics, GDI, University of Manchester; also affiliated to IEG (Delhi)



ARUSH KHANNA

WHILE PRESENTING THE interim Union budget, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman stated that India will be negotiating Bilateral Investment Treaties (BITs) with its trade partners to boost the inflow of foreign direct investment. This announcement comes at a time when India's bilateral treaties have dried up, more so, since the adoption of the Model BIT in 2016.

BITs are agreements between two countries for the reciprocal promotion and protection of investments in each other's territories by individuals and companies. It was in the mid-'90s that BITs were initiated by the Indian government. The pretext was to offer favourable conditions and treaty-based protection to foreign investors and investments.

The first BIT signed by India was with the UK on March 14, 1994. The BIT regime gained attention in the year 2010 with the settlement of the first-ever investor treaty claim filed against India, and in 2011, when India suffered its first adverse award in a dispute arising out of the Australia-India BIT — *White Industries v Republic of India* — where the government was ordered to pay \$4.1 million by the International Chamber of Commerce. By 2015, there were 17 known BIT claims contested by India. The most prominent of these was the one involving Cairn Energy Plc, a British oil and gas company, which secured a \$1.2 billion award against the Indian government in an investor-state dispute.

Given the burden that was being levied

BITS IN PIECES

Forward-looking approach to Bilateral Investment Treaties will attract foreign capital

In 2021, the Parliamentary Standing Committee on External Affairs made several recommendations to revise the existing BIT regime. This included the timely settlement of disputes through pre-arbitration consultations and negotiations. It has also called for the development of local expertise in the field of investment arbitration to not only ensure good representation in investor-state disputes but also to ensure timely review of treaties to align with the global best practices.

on the public exchequer, the government was compelled to revisit the 1993 BIT model. This led to the adoption of the 2016 model BIT resulting in the government terminating 68 of the 74 treaties it had executed until 2015 with a request to renegotiate terms based on the revised text.

The adoption of the 2016 model was seen more as a knee-jerk protectionist measure rather than a nuanced and calibrated approach to encouraging foreign investment. The well-recognised doctrines of public international law such as "fair and equitable treatment" and "most favoured nation" were conspicuous by their absence. Moreover, the 2016 model BIT (Chapter IV) provided that an investor must exhaust local remedies before taking recourse to international arbitration.

Given the extant situation, it is not surprising that India is finding it difficult to re-negotiate terms with other countries which is creating an impact of FDI. According to government data, FDI inflows in India declined 24 per cent to \$20.48 billion in April-September 2023. The total FDI — which includes equity inflows, reinvested earnings and other capital — contracted 15.5 per cent to \$32.9 billion during the period under review against \$38.94 billion in April-June 2022.

It is not without reason that India is making a significant departure from the 2016 model as it endeavours to conclude a free trade agreement (FTA) with the UK — an endeavour which has now seen over 14 rounds of negotiations. A major stumbling block in these negotiations has been

in relation to the settlement of disputes and the proposed FTA is likely to dispense with the requirement of exhausting local remedies by providing a mechanism for timely settlement of disputes through international arbitration.

In 2021, the Parliamentary Standing Committee on External Affairs made several recommendations to revisit the existing BIT regime. This included the timely settlement of disputes through pre-arbitration consultations and negotiations. It has also called for the development of local expertise in the field of investment arbitration to not only ensure good representation in investor-state disputes but also to ensure timely review of treaties to align with the global best practices. India's ranking in ease of contract enforcement is still abysmally low at 163 out of 190 and therefore, it is critical that these recommendations are implemented in letter and spirit.

Robust international trade and stable investments will be critical to India's pursuit of a \$5-trillion economy. A progressive approach to BITs will be an important component to attract and sustain long-term foreign investments. The government's renewed push is a step in the right direction. However, it must do away with its one-size-fits-all approach, while paving the way for rapid yet sustainable growth in cross-border flows.

The writer, a lawyer, is partner at Numen Law Offices



FEBRUARY 10, 1984, FORTY YEARS AGO

TERRORISM THREAT

THE GOVERNMENT IS concerned over reports from intelligence agencies of a spurt in the activities of extremists belonging to the Sikh Students Federation. The reports that Pakistan might send trained terrorists and infiltrators into Jammu and Kashmir and other parts of the country, including Delhi, to carry on subversive activities are also causing grave concern to the government.

BUTT TO BE HANGED

MAQBOOL BUTT WAS moved to phansi kothi (death row) from VIP ward number one

amidst tight security. The warrant for his hanging was issued by a special judge under the Enemy Agents Ordinance in Jammu following a rejection of Butt's mercy plea to the President. The special judge said: "Maqbool Butt be hanged from neck till he be dead, at 7.30am on February 11, at Tihar jail."

HISTORIC SPACE FLIGHT

INDIA WILL TAKE a giant stride on April 22 when the first Indian cosmonaut will undertake a space journey from Baikonur cosmodrome. India has tentatively chosen Sqn Ldr Rakesh Sharma for the historic flight, but the final choice will be known only a week prior

to the commencement of the space odyssey. Another candidate is Wg Cdr Ravish Malhotra.

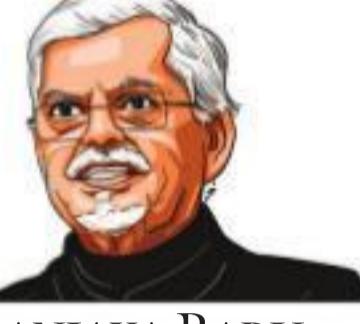
CM'S REASSURANCE

SIKKIM CHIEF MINISTER Nar Bahadur Bhandari left Delhi for Gangtok confident that he had convincingly demonstrated his majority support to Mrs Indira Gandhi and the Congress (I) high command. After a meeting with Mrs Gandhi, the chief minister sounded as if he had weathered the crisis created by 12 of his party MLAs, who signed a memorandum demanding his removal. "I will be the chief minister till the (Assembly) elections," he declared.

THE IDEAS PAGE

A political ratna

P V Narasimha Rao had to wait for 33 years after 1991 to secure national honour. On politicisation of Bharat Ratna, Modi government has proved no different from others



SANJAYA BARU

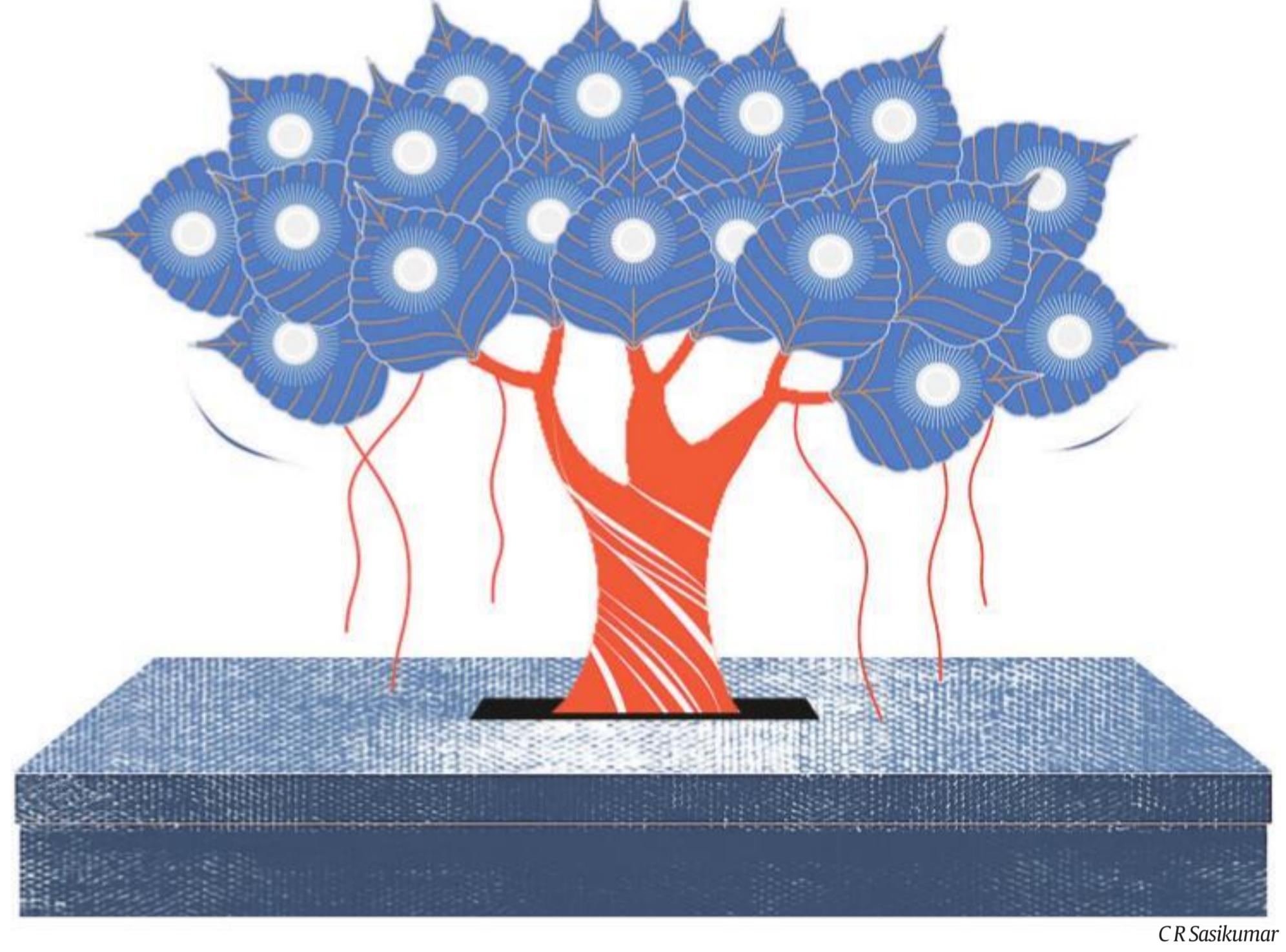
PRIME MINISTER NARENDRA Modi has devalued the country's highest national honour, the Bharat Ratna, by the manner in which he has sought to award it in the last months of his 10-year tenure. He is not the first PM, to be sure, to have politicised a national honour. However, with his weekly announcements in the run-up to an election, he has made the politicisation blatant.

Consider the five persons named week after week in this past month — Karpoori Thakur, Lal Krishna Advani, Charan Singh, P V Narasimha Rao and M S Swaminathan. If they were all regarded as worthy of the honour, they could all have been named on the very first Republic Day of the Modi government in 2015. After all, the achievements they are credited with go a long way back. In any case, all five names could have been announced on the eve of this year's Republic Day. Given the manner in which these names have been announced, it is possible there could be more names in the pre-election pipeline. Why not a Bharat Ratna to Biju Patnaik, NTRama Rao, H D Deve Gowda and J Jayalalithaa — all leaders of political parties that are potential allies?

Naming Narasimha Rao now and not during the year of his birth centenary in 2021, when the Telangana state legislature unanimously passed a resolution seeking the honour for Telangana's tallest political leader and a PM who made history turning India and the Indian economy around, smacks of political opportunism. In 2021, the electoral dividend would have been marginal. Today, it is perhaps hoped there would be more, as with Karpoori Thakur and Charan Singh.

India has had many PMs but all have not made history. If Jawaharlal Nehru deserved his Ratna as India's first PM and Indira Gandhi for the creation of Bangladesh, Narasimha Rao had no option but to name Rajiv Gandhi, but he himself richly deserved the honour. It was Rao's political leadership of India's economic turnaround and subsequent rise that laid the foundations of a truly New and Rising India. He has had to wait for 33 years after 1991 to secure this national honour. For his part, Prime Minister Rao was the only PM to name an industrialist as Bharat Ratna when he named J R D Tata in January 1992. JRD's choice was significant not only because he was the first and only business leader to be so honoured but also because it was New Delhi's policy signal to Bombay in the wake of Rao's "New Economic Policies" and the liberalisation of the economy. His other two choices were Maulana Azad and Satyajit Ray.

The Bharat Ratna, India's highest civilian honour, is the one award that the President and Prime Minister have the power to personally name an individual for. There is a procedure for the selection of all other Padma awardees. A group of officials and non-officials, the latter being regarded as "reliable"



CR Sasikumar

by the government of the day, sit for days to put together a list of all Padma awardees. The President and PM can suggest names to this committee of officials before their list is forwarded to the PM for approval and subsequent forwarding to the President. This procedure has been made more elaborate over the past decade with the public at large being invited to name a person for a Padma "through proper channel".

There have been instances when the President took the initiative to select a name for the highest honour. The first such case was when in 1955 President Rajendra Prasad chose to name Prime Minister Nehru. Some may well argue that it was President Prasad who first politicised the award by naming an incumbent PM. Incidentally, since the announcement of the award and its handing over is by the Rashtrapati, Prasad had to wait till he was no longer Rashtrapati for Prime Minister Nehru to name him.

Nehru himself set a good precedent by giving the first few awards to persons of scholarship, barring the very first one to C Rajagopalachari. Nehru's jewels were physicist C V Raman, engineer M Visvesvarayya, Indologist P V Kane, educationist, social reformer and fighter for women's rights D G Karve, Gandhian P D Tandon and the philosopher S Radhakrishnan. The first overt politicisation of the honour that raised eyebrows was the naming of President V V Giri by Indira Gandhi in 1975. He was a prominent labour leader before becoming President but one could argue he was not in the same category of eminence as the first 10 awardees.

Perhaps the first time the Bharat Ratna became purely political was when Prime Minister Indira Gandhi honoured her former party President and Congress Party leader from Tamil Nadu, K Kamaraj. Kamaraj

Consider the five persons named week after week in this past month — Karpoori Thakur, Lal Krishna Advani, Charan Singh, P V Narasimha Rao and M S Swaminathan. If they were all regarded as worthy of the honour, they could all have been named on the very first Republic Day of the Modi government in 2015. After all, the achievements they are credited with go a long way back. In any case, all five names could have been announced on the eve of this year's Republic Day. Given the manner in which these names have been announced, it is possible there could be more names in the pre-election pipeline.

was undoubtedly a popular politician and a genial person, but his greater contribution was to his party rather than the country. Indira Gandhi redeemed herself in her second term naming Mother Teresa and the Gandhian Acharya Vinoba Bhave. After her, Rajiv Gandhi blotted the record further naming M G Ramachandran posthumously.

While Modi is not the first PM to politicise the Bharat Ratna, in recent years his predecessors have tried to salvage the honour's reputation. Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee made stellar choices naming M S Subbulakshmi, C Subramaniam, Jayaprakash Narayan, Amartya Sen, Gopinath Bordoloi, Pandit Ravi Shankar, Lata Mangeshkar and Ustad Bismillah Khan. Both Vajpayee and Rao steered clear of naming politicians for political benefit. Manmohan Singh followed their example, naming Bhimsen Joshi, Sachin Tendulkar and scientist C N R Rao.

Short-term PMs like Chandrashekhar used the opportunity to correct certain political distortions naming B R Ambedkar and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel posthumously. His decision to name Morarji Desai can be contested, but that of naming Nelson Mandela, the only non-Indian to be so honoured, was a wise one. That Patel and Ambedkar had to wait so long also underscores the politicisation of the honour. For all his pretensions to be different, Modi has been no different than the Gandhis in choosing his Bharat Ratnas. While Vajpayee and Madan Mohan Malaviya were great citizens deserving of the honour, and Bhupen Hazarika was a great artiste, Nanaji Deshmukh and Pranab Mukherjee were questionable political choices.

The writer was member, National Security Advisory Board (1999-2001) and Advisor to the Prime Minister of India

WHAT THE OTHERS SAY

"A dragon soars in the sky, but China's development must remain grounded, a truth deeply understood by all Chinese people. 2024 marks the 75th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China and is a crucial year for achieving the goals and tasks of the 14th Five-Year Plan (2021-25)." —GLOBAL TIMES, CHINA

He who rules the sea

With global power axis shifting to the Indo-Pacific, India is assuming a prominent role in addressing maritime concerns in Indian Ocean region

RAM RAJYA
BY RAM MADHAV

ANGUS MADDISON, RENOWNED British historian, in his monumental work *The World Economy: Historical Statistics* (2003), argued that India had been the largest economy in the world in the first millennium with a share of almost 33 per cent of the world's GDP. It began to decline with external invasions and colonisation and touched a low point during the British era in the 18th and 19th century.

Interestingly, the first to alert India about the importance of the Indian Ocean for its future was a renowned diplomat K M Panikkar, who served as India's ambassador to China and France. "So far as India is concerned, it should be remembered that the peninsular character of the country and the essential dependence of its trade on maritime traffic give the sea a preponderant influence on its destiny," he argued in his book *India and the Indian Ocean* (1945). His warnings fell on deaf ears. Indian leadership failed to fully appreciate the importance and potential of the region.

Although the Indian Ocean Rim Association was formed in 1997 at the insistence of Nelson Mandela of South Africa, the Indian response to it was lukewarm while its focus remained largely Westward.

As the US and European powers like Russia, Britain, France and Germany battled it out through World Wars and the Cold War, the Pacific-Atlantic region emerged as the epicentre of global power politics in the last century. But the dawn of the new century brought new realities. The global power axis has shifted away from the Pacific-Atlantic to the Indo-Pacific in India's neighbourhood now.

Indo-Pacific is a geo-political construct, whereas the Indian Ocean is a natural region. It is home to more than three dozen nations. From the Persian Gulf to the Straits of Malacca, this vast expanse of water is the world's third-largest ocean covering over 71 million square kilometres.

For India, the Indian Ocean is the lifeline. Eighty per cent of its external trade and 90 per cent of the energy trade happens through these ocean lines. Additionally, the Indian Ocean maritime trade routes are the crucial supply chains managing almost 70 per cent of the world's container traffic.

Moreover, the Indian Ocean, the only ocean to be named after a country, is not just a maritime geography but a civilisation. Over millennia, its waves reached the shores of many countries carrying India's cultural and civilisational imprint and created a vast sphere of Indic civilisational influence.

Realising the natural goodwill that India enjoys in this region, once described as the "British Lake", the Indian government has taken several proactive steps towards it. The 7th Indian Ocean Conference, taking place at Perth in Australia is one such initiative. It seeks to bring together nations of the region to address the non-traditional challenges that are common to all of them, such as climate change, ocean levels, natural disasters and supply chain disruptions, as against the traditional security-related challenges that divide and compel countries to take sides.

Unfortunately, the British, who were well-known seafarers, never bothered to develop a strong blue-water presence during their two-century rule over India. The Royal

Indian Navy that they established in the early 19th century was small and inconsequential for a country of India's size. They focused more on mobilising armies from local princes in their war efforts during World Wars I and II. This lack of attention to the seas, sadly, continued after Independence too, with the governments giving greater priority to land-based warfare, completely neglecting the oceans and their potential for the country. The result was that in areas like shipbuilding and naval vessels, India remained a laggard power in the last seven decades. As maritime competition between states picks up momentum, India remains at number 15 in maritime shipping. The Indian Navy has less than 200 combat vessels as against 400 of America and 500 of China.

Interestingly, the first to alert India about the importance of the Indian Ocean for its future was a renowned diplomat K M Panikkar, who served as India's ambassador to China and France. "So far as India is concerned, it should be remembered that the peninsular character of the country and the essential dependence of its trade on maritime traffic give the sea a preponderant influence on its destiny," he argued in his book *India and the Indian Ocean* (1945). His warnings fell on deaf ears. Indian leadership failed to fully appreciate the importance and potential of the region.

"He who rules on the sea will shortly rule on the land also," Hayreddin Barbarossa, admiral of the Ottoman Navy was famously quoted as telling emperor Suleiman. It perfectly applied to India of the first millennium, when the dominant Hindu rulers had developed powerful merchant and military navies and conquered the oceans around the peninsula. They established trade with the Arab lands in the West and ventured into South China Sea territories, crossing the Malayan Peninsula in the East.

From the earliest sea traders of south India like Manigramam Chettis and Nadanadesis to the latter-day South Indian kings like the Andhras, Pallavas and Cholas, they all had made significant strides into the oceans. Kautilya's *Arthashastra*, an authoritative work on statecraft written in the fourth century BCE, talks about the functions of officers like port commissioners and harbour masters, highlighting the importance attached to maritime activity in ancient India. The Board of Shipping was one of the six important departments of the Mauryan empire. Fa-Hien, a Chinese traveller, wrote in 415 AD that the ship that took him from Ceylon to Sri Vijaya (present-day Indonesia) had 200 merchants who professed the "brahminical religion".

India's economic decline coincided with its decline in naval power. The first millennium was more about trade as there was not much challenge from the seas. But things changed in the second millennium when European powers like the Portuguese, Dutch, French and finally the British conquered the seas. The Portuguese were the first to declare themselves as the "Lords of the Sea" and reached Indian shores by the 14th century. Building a navy to secure the coastline became imminent for the first time for Indian rulers, especially on the western coast. The Zamorins of Kerala were the first to respond, followed a century later by the Marathas. Between them, they were able to control the coast from Bombay to Calicut for three centuries.

Unfortunately, the British, who were well-known seafarers, never bothered to develop a strong blue-water presence during their two-century rule over India. The Royal

The writer, president, India Foundation, is with the RSS

If the sun doesn't shine

Meeting renewable energy goals will require developing storage capacities



RAKESH K SINGH AND SUDIP SURAL

INDIA ASPIRES TO become GHG neutral, or Net Zero, by 2070 through its nationally determined contributions (NDC) to the Paris Pact. Renewable energy (RE) will be a key driver of this mission — 500 giga-watt (GW) of RE is targeted to be added by 2030.

The country has added 72 GW of solar and 44 GW of wind as a part of this target. These have typically been characterised by long term 25-year power purchase agreements (PPAs) with state discoms. Commercial and industrial (C&I) capacities of 32 GW have also been added.

This remarkable growth in RE capacities has been helped with a must run status (evacuation of power from solar power plants and wind power plants should not be stopped except for safety related reasons) accorded to such energy projects. Favourable policies such as late payment surcharge, inter-state transmission system charge waiver and renewable purchase obligations have also helped. The reduction in capital costs has played a major role, as has higher competition amongst IPPs in the bidding process accompanied with entry of foreign investors.

However, 500 GW could be out of reach without robust storage capacities and deeper power exchanges. After the Covid pandemic ended in FY22, power demand has picked up and peak deficits have been growing, especially during the summer months. In addition to variations across seasons, deficits have also varied across times of the day — peaking primarily dur-

ing evenings. Peak demand is expected to grow from 240 GW in FY24 (year to date) to 285 GW in FY28 with peak deficits growing to almost 10-15 GW by that year, primarily during evenings.

With demands reluctantly going with must run RE, plain vanilla solar or wind with long term PPAs are increasingly being seen as the way to fulfil demands, especially during peak deficit hours. Recent bid announcements reflect the demand pattern — bids of increasing complexity as generators have been asked to do hourly demand matching to make RE comparable to firm and dispatchable sources (electricity repositories that can be programmed at the request of power grid operators, according to market needs). In some of these bids, demand fulfilment has to be at least 90 per cent (comparable to coal projects). Penalties for not meeting these demand patterns are high with 1.5 times the tariff for shortfalls.

The bids allow for excess power generated to be sold on the exchange to help IPPs bid at a lower tariff. For instance, in the recent firm and dispatchable RE (FDRE) bids invited by SECI, generators are required to match round the clock (RTC) demand of discoms on a 15-minute basis — demand varies across the day and across the months. Addressing this need requires a combination of solar and wind coupled with storage — either battery or pumped hydro. Storage capacities will be central to maintaining grid stability as we build more RE capacities.

To meet the time of the day demand in these bids, generators may have to combine solar and wind and manage intermittencies. They will need storage facilities to meet demand when wind and solar resources are not available. Accordingly, generators will over-size the projects so that the excess generation during the solar and wind hours can be stored. The choice of storage will depend on the demand profile of the discoms. Pumped hydro can be extremely useful especially because its capital costs are far lower than that of battery storage currently (Rs 6-8 crore per MW compared Rs 10-12 crore per MW). However, storage solutions can vary according to demand. Battery storage can prove to be a viable option going forward as and when capital costs reflect falling prices. The production linked incentive (PLI) scheme and viability gap funding (VGF) being provided for battery energy storage systems need to be seen in that light.

The other option of addressing the excess generation beyond demand fulfilments would be to sell it to commercial and industrial consumers or to power exchanges. C&I consumers especially those who would like to fulfil their green commitments have turned out to be a viable segment for RE generators. However, the country needs more vibrant and deep power exchange markets. Though India's power exchanges have certainly picked up over the last decade in terms of the percentage of energy being traded, they are still a far cry from developed economies.

As more complex dispatchable RE becomes the order of the day, the need to trade excess generation will grow. In some of these bids, merchant sales will need to be upwards of at least a quarter of overall generation if levelised cost has to meet the discom's current average power procurement costs. Higher merchant sales can impact the project's bankability and it is here that structures to ensure a guaranteed floor price and a certain volume can prove to be viable options. A central nodal agency backed by suitable backstops can provide this guaranteed floor to generators and also partake of the excess energy.

Excess power that can be sold on the exchange with a guaranteed floor realisation will improve bankability and may result in more competitive prices for the discoms. The excess capacity shall depend on the guaranteed floor rate for the extra power sold on the exchange, provided the exchange has an offtake at the time of generation.

Building capabilities for RTC green energy could also help meet the country's ambitious green hydrogen targets. Power cost is likely to be a key driver to make green hydrogen projects viable. Without the development of compelling storage solutions and a deeper exchange market, we will neither meet our ambitious RE capacity targets nor attain the five million tonne green hydrogen capacity.

Singh is Group Head and Sural is Senior Executive Vice President at HDFC Bank

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

CENTRE-STATE RIFT

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'Grand bargain 2.0' (IE, February 9). New Delhi witnessed a different kind of protest over the past two days. It was directed against the Union government and was staged by the state governments with their chief ministers, cabinets and legislators as participants. At a time when there is a need for greater freedom and flexibility for the states in matters of financial management, there has been a growing tendency to centralise powers, be it in the implementation of the GST regime or devolution of taxes to the states. As a result of such a skewed model, the consistently high-performing states suffer gross injustice. The 16th Finance Commission must objectively determine the tax devolution criteria with the objective of reducing interstate disparities.

Khokan Das, Kolkata

DUE PROCESS IN PAK

THIS REFERS TO the article, 'At stake in Pakistan' (IE, February 9). Election results in Pakistan indicate that a clear majority government may not emerge and the nation may continue to be politically unstable. Imran Khan's PTI

backed candidates have levelled complaints of malpractices, manipulation and rigging to change the outcome. The formidable challenges of internal unrest, inflation, weak economy and problems with neighbours are not likely to be resolved in this confusion. Such fluid conditions prevailed in 1970 when the then popular and majority party was not allowed to form the government. It will be in the nation's interest of Pakistan if due process is followed this time in picking the next government.

Subhash Vaid, New Delhi

ACRIMINAL ACT

THIS REFERS TO the article, 'Colonial habits die hard' (IE, February 9). The temple conservation is over and the nation must move on. But for argument's sake, it is inherently flawed to justify a majoritarian and overtly religious action by a modern, secular nation-state in 2024 by citing something carried out five centuries earlier in times that were very far removed from today. And while demonising Nehru is on expected lines, it is a novelty to see Gandhiji being selectively quoted to justify the mosque demolition, which was held a criminal act by the Supreme Court in their 2019 judgment.

Rahul Gaur, Gurgaon

PAYTM FOUNDER Vijay Shekhar Sharma has often spoken of Irish rock band U2's hit, *Where the streets have no name*, a song about wanting to break free and be in a world with no limitations, as his "life story in a way".

So far, the song has tied in well into Sharma's journey — from a small town in western Uttar Pradesh to helming India's most valued fintech unicorn. Born to a school teacher in Aligarh, Sharma first built and sold an online venture for \$1 million back in 1999 — when most Indians were still untouched by the Internet — before founding the fast-rising financial tech company Paytm in 2010.

Over a decade later, today, the company is deeply embedded in a number of digital infrastructure in India, ranging from FASTag to metro transit cards. One in three Indians who have access to the Internet currently uses the Paytm app. And though it ranks third in terms of UPI transaction volumes, after PhonePe and Google Pay, its payments bank is the largest beneficiary bank in the ecosystem, meaning that it has the biggest network of merchants who accept payments through its gateway.

But last month, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) dealt a body blow to its associate payments bank, ordering it to stop accepting new deposits in its accounts beginning March, citing supervisory concerns and non-compliance with rules.

The payments bank is an associate of One97 Communications Limited, Paytm's parent company. One97 Communications holds 49 per cent of the paid-up share capital of the payments bank while Sharma owns the remaining 51 per cent.

The RBI action all but stops operations of the payments bank, with the company anticipating an annualised impact of Rs 300-500 crore to its top line, a hit that's likely to severely jeopardise its profitability path. The company's scrip has also faced a rout at the bourses since then, having crashed more than 68 per cent in the last week.

With that, the big question for Sharma and his company is: where does Paytm go from here?

Demonetisation, a rising star

Paytm became the flagbearer and poster child of India's digital finance ecosystem in the aftermath of the demonetisation exercise in December 2016. It took out front page advertisements in all major newspapers the next day, thanking the Prime Minister and playing on its tagline to say, "Ab ATM nahin, #Paytm karo".

Paytm (and Reliance Jio which ran similar ads) had to later apologise for the ads since they allegedly violated a law which bars the use of the Prime Minister's name and photograph for commercial use.

But the job had been done and the classic move-fast-break-things methods employed by Paytm seemed to bear fruit. The company registered a 700 per cent increase in overall traffic and 1,000 per cent growth in the amount of money added to Paytm accounts a few days after demonetisation.

Just a little over a year before demonetisation, China's Alibaba and Ant Group had together made a 'strategic' investment of \$680 million in Paytm in September 2015, making them the largest shareholders of One97 Communications at the time. At one point in 2015, the Alibaba Group held close to a 40 per cent stake in Paytm.

Sharma's star was on the rise. Flush with capital, he started an ambitious expansion of the company, venturing into segments such as e-commerce. Demonetisation was a big bump for the company. Then came UPI — and with it, the signal that the Indian government was going to prioritise such payments through key policy interventions like the zero merchant discount rate (MDR), the fee charged to merchants for accepting digital payments).

A senior bureaucrat who has played a pivotal role in building India's digital public infrastructure told this paper that when he was leading a key regulator some years ago, there was a meeting to discuss interoperability of payments wallets — the kind that Paytm has pioneered. But the regulator felt that Sharma, who was at the meeting, was completely against the idea. At the time, the plan could not be materialised, but the RBI mandated wallet interoperability several years later, in March 2023. Following this, Paytm had to relent and allow wallet interoperability with UPI.

Then came 2020, and with it, skirmishes at the northern border. China became a bad word in India. TikTok was banned, and New Delhi revised its foreign direct investments rules, with funds coming in from "neighbouring countries" requiring a nod from the government. Given the significant ownership of Chinese investors in the company, Paytm too felt the heat.

As Paytm was headed towards a public offering the next year, the company needed



to pare down Chinese investments. Following Paytm's 2021 IPO, Alibaba has now completely exited Paytm — the company sold its remaining stakes in Paytm for \$167 million last February.

But somehow, the Chinese money, which was crucial in fueling Paytm's growth journey, also became its nadir. In 2022, as Alibaba exited Paytm Mall, Sharma's e-commerce venture, its valuation fell from \$3 billion to \$13 million.

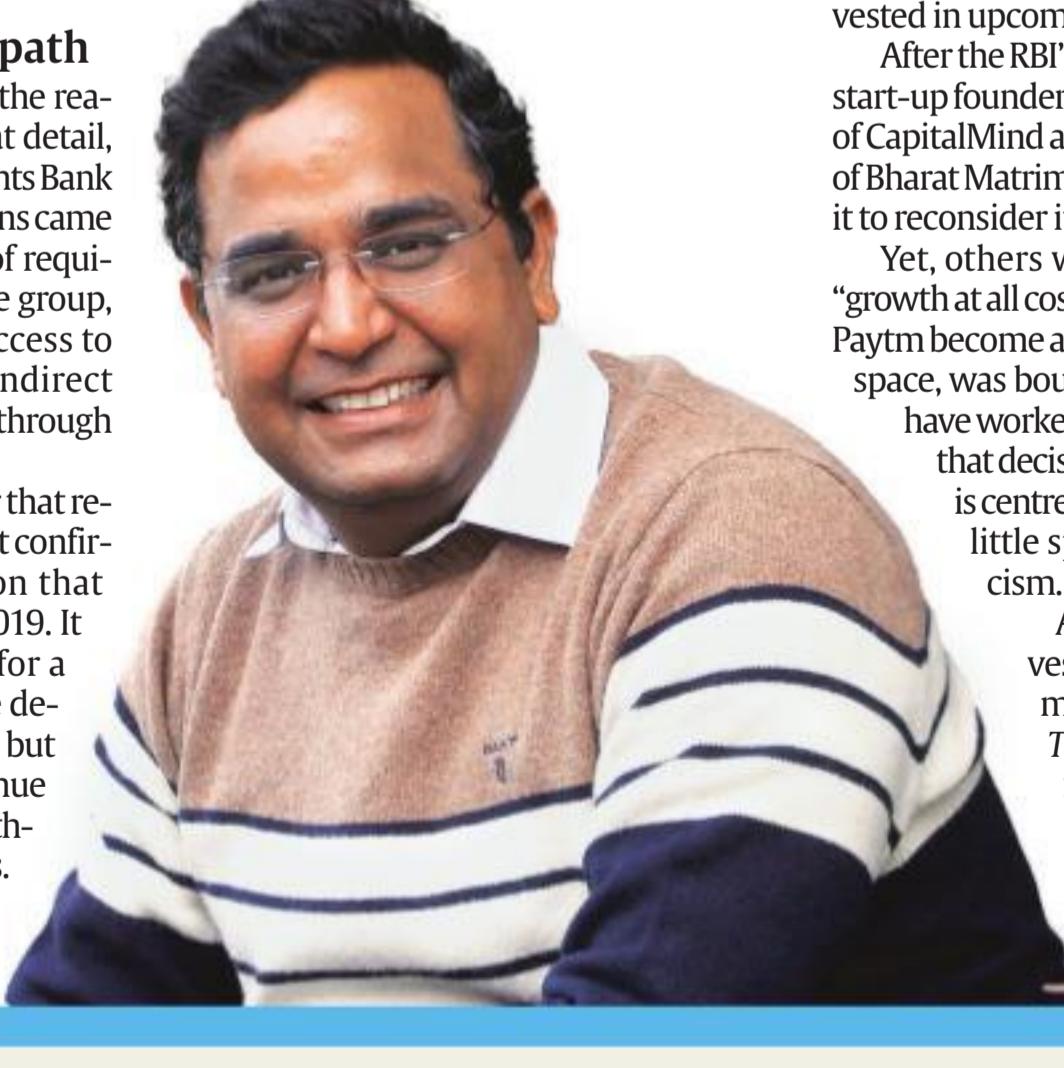
Crackdown, an uncertain path

While the RBI has not spelt out the reasons behind its latest action in great detail, sources have said that Paytm Payments Bank and its parent One97 Communications came under scrutiny for purported lack of requisite information barriers within the group, and for allegedly allowing data access to China-based entities that were indirect shareholders in the payments bank through their stake in the parent company.

The UPI soundbox — the speaker that retailers use for instant audio payment confirmation — was a major innovation that Paytm brought to the market in 2019. It sold the device to its merchants for a monthly subscription of Rs 99. The device was appreciated by merchants, but it also allowed Paytm to add a revenue stream to UPI payments, which are otherwise free for users and merchants.

However, in the days following

The payments bank is an associate of One97 Communications Limited, Paytm's parent company, which holds 49% of the paid-up share capital of the bank. Vijay Shekhar Sharma (pic below) owns the remaining 51%



the RBI's crackdown on the group's payments bank, a number of merchants across Delhi NCR had taken the soundbox out of display, fearing the future of their money with the company since a number of them are customers of the payments bank.

Yet, Sharma continues to command respect in the Indian start-up community given the sheer size of the business he managed to build despite his humble origins. He is also a prolific angel investor known to have invested in upcoming start-ups.

After the RBI's action, a dozen prominent start-up founders, including Deepak Shenoy of CapitalMind and Murugavel Janakiraman of Bharat Matrimony, wrote to the RBI asking it to reconsider its decision.

Yet, others who know Sharma say his "growth at all costs mentality", which helped Paytm become a behemoth in the payments space, was bound to backfire. People who have worked with him in the past claim that decision-making at the company

is centred around Sharma, with very little space for constructive criticism.

A senior executive at an investment firm, which holds a minority stake in Paytm, told *The Indian Express* that the VC firm sees three major chinks in its India portfolio. "Of these, Paytm is the most complex one because

Sharma can be unpredictable," the executive said, requesting anonymity.

Government officials who have interacted with Sharma also paint the picture of a man who seemed to command considerable clout.

"He is a one-man army. If he believes something is right, it is very difficult for those around him to change his mind," a person who has previously worked at Paytm said, requesting anonymity.

Though Paytm and its payments bank are two separate, even if "associate", entities, Sharma's influence over the decision-making process is immense.

Since the RBI order, Paytm got the analysts on a videoconferencing call, and even there, the conversation, say those who were part of it, was led by the leadership of Paytm — Sharma and CFO Madhur Deora — not anyone from the board of the payments bank.

This, despite the Paytm Payments Bank boasting of an "illustrious board coming from a diverse background", according to its website.

While Sharma is the part-time chairman of the Paytm Payments Bank Ltd, the other members on the board include A K Jain, former Executive Director (ED) of Punjab and Sind Bank; Manju Agarwal, former Deputy MD of SBL; and Srinivas Yanamandra, former compliance official with the New Development Bank and ICICI Bank. Pankaj Vaish, former MD of Accenture India, and Ramesh Abhishek, former bureaucrat, are also on the board. The bank's MD and CEO is Surinder Chawla.

Experts have questioned the role of the board, which, despite being aware of the red flags raised by the RBI, is said to have turned a blind eye to dealings between Paytm and the payments bank and KYC compliance issues, among other things.

"What were they (board members) doing in the board meeting? Why were they not asking relevant questions when the RBI's inspection report was brought to their attention? They didn't bother to check and control the default," said an expert who specialises in corporate governance practices.

In response to a detailed questionnaire, a Paytm spokesperson said, "We believe this query is pertaining to Paytm Payments Bank which is a separate entity. You may please coordinate with them directly for information". However, so far, all communications related to the payments bank were being handled by the same communications team.

The Indian Express reached out to the bank's two independent directors — Jain and Agarwal — and its MD & CEO Chawla, to seek comments, but did not receive a response.

Other fintechs feel the heat

For now, the Paytm saga has made other founders in the fintech space anxious. As start-ups already deal with a funding winter owing to global headwinds and geopolitical tensions across the globe, they see the RBI's action as a signal that start-ups may no longer enjoy the leeway they once did.

"The Paytm issue reduces public trust in fintech companies. Investors and users may think that if a big entity like Paytm can fall prey to missteps, what is stopping smaller firms from not repeating the same pattern," a fintech founder said.

"The irony is that India embraced and celebrated Paytm when it had big Chinese money. And blew a death blow to it when it had ostensibly become a lot more Indian," a second fintech executive said.

Other experts said the Paytm Payments Bank crisis will have an impact on the valuation of all fintech players.

"Just as holding companies see HoldCo discounts in their valuations, we are going to see fintech discounts for some time. Thanks to Paytm, the trust issues around fintech will need more confidence building by the fintechs. They have now become collateral damage to non-compliance of a large fintech player," said Srinath Sridharan, author, policy researcher and corporate advisor.

Sharma, meanwhile, will have to take a new approach with the company, and steer Paytm in a new direction, probably where the streets have no name.

after about two weeks of first curbing operations at the bank.

"Bilateral relationship" was a term that was used a number of times by RBI officials when they were posed questions by the media about Paytm's future.

In fact, even during its past action against the payments bank, the regulator has rarely offered insight into what triggered its action. Only in 2023, when it had imposed a penalty of Rs 5.4 crore on it, had the regulator offered limited commentary, saying it was because of a breach of KYC guidelines.

Since 2017, Paytm payments bank penalised at least five times by RBI

SOUMYARENDRA BARIK & HITESH VYAS
NEW DELHI, MUMBAI

"NO FEAR. No greed. No entitlement. India's most sincere bank is here". That is how Paytm Payments Bank markets itself.

On January 31, citing non-compliance, the RBI all but shut down operations of the bank by ordering it to stop accepting new deposits in its accounts beginning March.

The payments bank, which commenced operations in May 2017, is not new to con-

troversy and has had run-ins with the RBI on multiple occasions — in the seven years of its existence, the bank has been penalised over compliance issues at least five times by the RBI.

While the central bank's recent crackdown has made users, merchants and its investors anxious, the RBI is yet to give specific details on what necessitated the action and what the severity of violation at the payments bank was, adding to the travails of users and merchants.

Paytm Payments Bank has been barred from offering almost all of its key services

— accepting deposits or top-ups in any customer account, prepaid instruments, wallets, FASTags, National Common Mobility Card (NCMC), etc., after February 29 in the wake of "persistent non-compliances and material supervisory concerns".

The payments bank had over 7 lakh point of sale (PoS) terminals, 3,52 crore UPI QR codes and 3,23 crore debit cards as of December 2023, RBI data shows. According to the bank's website, it has over 30 crore wallets and 3 crore bank accounts. It has over 10 crore KYC customers, with 4 lakh users added every passing month. The bank

is the largest issuer of FASTags, with over 80 lakh units issued so far.

Allegations of money laundering and foreign exchange violations have also been made against the company. However, Paytm has denied these accusations. "We are not in a position to comment on the issue as Paytm Payments Bank Limited is under the supervisory engagement of the regulator," a Paytm Payments Bank spokesperson said.

"This is a supervisory action on a regulated entity for persistent non-compliance. Such supervisory actions are invariably pre-

ceded by months and, at times, years of bilateral engagement where we not only point out deficiencies but also provide more than adequate time for them to take corrective action," RBI Deputy Governor Swaminathan J told reporters.

Beyond that, the RBI is yet to offer granular details on what exactly went wrong at the payments bank and has, so far, not offered any commentary on the next course of action. After some prodding from the Finance Ministry, the RBI has, however, said that it will release FAQs about questions surrounding its action sometime next week —

after about two weeks of first curbing operations at the bank.

"Bilateral relationship" was a term that was used a number of times by RBI officials when they were posed questions by the media about Paytm's future.

In fact, even during its past action against the payments bank, the regulator has rarely offered insight into what triggered its action. Only in 2023, when it had imposed a penalty of Rs 5.4 crore on it, had the regulator offered limited commentary, saying it was because of a breach of KYC guidelines.



Classifieds

PERSONAL

It is for general information that I, MEENAKSHI SHARMA W/O SH. OM PRAKASH R/O GREEN VIEW APARTMENT, FLAT NO. 442, DDA SFS FLATS, SECTOR-19, POCKET-2, DWARKA, AMBERHAI, SOUTH WEST DELHI, DELHI-110075 declare that name of mine has been wrongly written as MEENAKSHI in my son's VEDANT KUMAR class 10th & Class 12th Marks Statement cum Certificate. The actual name of mine is MEENAKSHI SHARMA, which may be amended accordingly.

0070888004-1

I, hitherto known as KIRAN BALA alias KIRAN JARIAL W/O SATISH CHAND JARIAL R/O-829, Sector-23-A, Near-I.T.M University-Gurgaon, Carterpuri, Haryana-120017, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as KIRAN JARIAL. 0040713059-8

I, hitherto known as Divyanshu, S/o Late Narendra Singh Tariyal, R/o-1005, Tower C-3, Greater Noida West, Spring Meadows GH-07A Techzone-4, Bishrakhan, Ambedkar Buddha Nagar, Uttar Pradesh-201306, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as Divyanshu Tariyal.

0040713093-2

I, Sulakhni Kaur D/o, Harvinder Singh R/o-A-27, East Uttam Nagar, Indra-Park Extension, New Delhi-110059, inform that Sulakshni Kaur and Sulakshni Kaur both are one and same person.

0040713100-1

I, Sana James, W/o Biju Verghese Kutikat, R/o-101, First Floor, Building 319, Tuhi Marg, Sector-43, Gurgaon (Haryana)-120009, have changed my name to Sana James Kannampuzha.

0040713093-5

I, SUKHDÉV SINGH, S/O INDER SINGH, R/O-GURUDWARA SANT BABAHIMMAT SINGH JI 7531 TELMILL GALI-RAM NAGAR, PAHARGANJ, DELHI-110055, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO SANT SUKHDÉV SINGH.

0040713059-2

I, SIMRAN CHAWLA W/O MANANGAD SINGH MAKHIJA R/O HNO.42, ROAD NO.43, WEST PUNJABI BAGH, WEST-DELHI-110026, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO SIMRAN MAKHIJA.

0040713096-1

I, SHREE KRISHAN S/O GHISU RAM R/O M-489-90, SHAKURPUR, J.J.COLONY, SRI NAGAR, DELHI-110034, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO SHRI KISHAN.

0040713043-3

I, SAKSHI W/O-SOMESH KUMAR, R/O-71, JAGDAMBA APARTMENT, SECTOR-13 ROHINI DELHI-110085, have changed my name to SAKSHI JAIN.

0040713093-3

I, SANTOSH S/O GANGA SAHAY, R/O 46-AMBEDKAR BASTI JHUGGI, R.K.PURAM, SECTOR-1, SOUTH DELHI-110022, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO SANTOSH KUMAR.

0040713059-3

I, Rakesh Lalwani, S/o-Sampat Lal Lalwani, R/o-106, 3rd Floor, Pocket-4 and 5 Sector-23, Rohini, Delhi-110085, have changed my name to Rakesh Kumar Lalwani.

0040713092-2

I, Rajesh Kumar, S/o-Dinesh Kumar Sinha, R/o-BH-103, Classic Residence Tower-B, Rajnagar Extension, Ghaziabad UP-201017, have changed my name to Rajesh Kumar Sinha.

0040713092-1

I, Radha Kumar, D/o-Banke Lal Vishwakarma, R/o-B-271, 62/10, Krishna Colony, Prahlaad Pur Bangar, Delhi-110042, have changed my name to Radha Vishwakarma.

0040713092-2

I, PRITI PRIYA, wife of PURUSHOTTAM KUMAR, presently residing at Village- Dhondri, Post-Ramla, District-Godda, Jharkhand-814133, have changed my name from PRITI PRIYA to KUMARI PRITI PRIYA, video-Affidavit-Dated-08-Feb-2024, At-New-Delhi.

0040713100-11

I, POONAM BHARTI, W/O BISHAMBER NATH, R/O-C-64 SEEMA-APARTMENT PLOT-NO.7 DWAKA DISTRICT COURT-COMPLEX,DWAKA,DELHI-110075, have changed my minor daughter name, from SANVI BHARTI to SANVI CHAUDHARY.

0040713059-5

I, Bhagwati Giri W/O, Dhyaneesh Giri R/o 4 Plot No 51 Vaishali Sector 6 Ghaziabad Uttar Pradesh Pin 201012 have mention my name as Bharti Giri in my childrens schooling documents. I here by declares that Bhagwati Giri and Bharti are same person which me.

0040712954-1

I, PAROMITA, wife of, NANU DEEPAK, Presently residing at, Village-Dundas Point-P.S. Ograbraj, South-Andaman & Nicobar Islands, have changed my name, from PAROMITA & PAROMITA NATH to PAROMITA N DEEPAK, for all future purposes.

0040713100-10

I, Neha W/o Arvind Kumar, R/o-Flat no.303, Tower-29, Lotus Panache, Sector-110, Noida, Gautam Budh Nagar, U.P. 201301, have changed my name, from Neha to Neha Malik, for all future purpose.

0040713059-1

I, NEKHAT ALI, W/O MOHAMMAD ALI, ADD-F-227/2, SECOND FLOOR, SHAHEEN BAGH OKHLA, SOUTH EAST DELHI H-110058, changed my name to NIKHAT ALI, for all future purpose.

0040713093-2

I, NEERAJ S/O DHARMARVIR SINGH R/O 27/VILLAGE BAKKARWALA, DELHI-110041, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO NEERAJ SEHRAWAT.

0040713043-5

I, NAVEEN KUMAR, S/O- RATTAN SHARMA, R/O-FLAT NO-6, PLOT NO-50/3, E-BLOCK DEEP VIHAR, PANSLI DELHI-110042, have changed my name to NAVEEN KUMAR SHARMA.

0040713092-3

I, NANU DEEPAK, father of, AALIYA, Presently residing at, Village-Dundas Point-P.S. Ograbraj, South-Andaman, Andaman & Nicobar Islands, have changed my minor daughter's name from AALIYA to AALIYA N DEEPAK, for all future purposes.

0040713100-9

I, Manju Devi/Manju Dahiya, W/O Shri Anil Kumar Dahiya, R/O-Flat No.245, Unity Apartment, Pocket-23, Sector-24, Rohini, Delhi-110085, have changed my name to Manju for all further purposes.

0040713109-1

I, AJAYA LAKSHMI W/O-JC-673962K SUB/PA MURALI M B R/O-VILL MUDHUKUDA, P.O.-PATTUVAM, TEH TALIPARAMBA DISTT-KANNUR, STATE-KERALA-670143, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO JAYALAKSHMI A.

0040713109-3

I, hitherto known as GANPAT CHEETA RAWAT S/o DEVA CHEETA currently residing at H.No. A-358/12, Fourth Floor, Front Side Street No.5, Bhagat Singh Gali, Near Shiv Mandir Mandawali, Fazalpur, Delhi, 110092 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as GANPAT RAWAT. It is certified that I have complied with other legal requirements in this connection.

0040712962-1

I, Tej Prakash R/o-A-117, Laxmi Park, Nangloi, Delhi-110041 have changed my daughter name from Udit to UDIT MATHUR for future.

0040712961-1

I, Surender Kumar Aggarwal S/o, Darshan Dayal Aggarwal R/o BL-125, L-Block, Hari-Nagar, New Delhi-110064, have changed my name to Surendra Kumar Aggarwal.

0040713092-3

I, LAXMI Singh, W/o No.15436248P, NK/NA Mahaveer Singh, R/o-Vill Andhri Ki Garhi, Post-Naujihili, Teh-Mant, Distt-Mathura, Uttar Pradesh-281203, declare that in my husband service records my name has wrongly-written as Laxmi Singh. My correct name is Laxmi Kumari, for all future purposes.

0040713043-8

I, Kautilya Prakash Sharma, S/o-Late Sh.Ved Prakash Sharma, R/o-H.No.56-B, Gali No.5, Prem Nagar, Darshan-Medicos, Karawali-Nagar, Delhi-110094, Have Changed My Name, Form Kavitha Prakash Sharma to Kautilya Prakash Sharma, for all future purposes.

0040713096-2

I, Jasmeet Singh, S/o -Sh. Manjeet Singh, R/o-C-174, Near Jai Road, Fateh Nagar, Tilak Nagar, West DELHI-110018, Have Changed My Name From Jasmeet Singh to Jasmeet Singh Gulati Both are one and same Person.

0040713109-4

I, Hitesh GUSAİN S/O ANAND SINGH R/O C-81, Gali No.2, Anchal Sant Nagar, Burari, Delhi-110084, have changed my name to Hitesh GOSAIN.

0040713092-10

I, Gulshan S/o Jyoti swaroop, R/o HNo 600/8, Gali No.2, Dayanand Nagar Bahadurgarh, Jhajjar Haryana-124507, have changed my name to Gulshan Satija.

0040713043-7

I, Rajesh Kumar, S/o-Surinder Kumar, Bhandari, R/o-A-100, Second-Floor, Sudershan Park, New Delhi-110015, also known as Raj Kumar Bhandari. Both are same person.

0040713059-7

I, Radha Kumar, D/o-Banke Lal Vishwakarma, R/o-B-271, 62/10, Krishna Colony, Prahlaad Pur Bangar, Delhi-110042, have changed my name to Radha Vishwakarma.

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0040713059-5

I, Bhagwati Giri W/O, Dhyaneesh Giri R/o 4 Plot No 51 Vaishali Sector 6 Ghaziabad Uttar Pradesh Pin 201012 have mention my name as Bharti Giri in my childrens schooling documents. I here by declares that Bhagwati Giri and Bharti are same person which me.

0040712954-1

I, DEEPAK, son of, PN Jayasen, Presently residing at, Village-Dundas Point-P.S. Ograbraj, South-Andaman, Andaman & Nicobar Islands, have changed my name, from DEEPAK & PAROMITA N DEEPAK to NANU DEEPAK, for all future purposes.

0040713100-8

I, Arvind Kumar, R/o- Flat.no.303, Tower-29, Lotus Panache, Sector-110, Noida, Gautam Budh Nagar, U.P. 201301, have changed my name to Jitendra Singh for all future purposes.

0040713059-1

I, NEKHAT ALI, W/O MOHAMMAD ALI, ADD-F-227/2, SECOND FLOOR, SHAHEEN BAGH OKHLA, SOUTH EAST DELHI H-110058, changed my name to NIKHAT ALI, for all future purpose.

0040713093-2

I, Anil Kumar, S/o-Shri Maha Singh Dahiya, R/O-H.No.7, Ward No.1, Ambekar Chowk, Rohtak Road, Kharkhoda, Distt-Sonipat, Haryana, have changed my name to Anil Kumar Dahiya for all further purpose.

0040713109-2

I, Ashish Gusaín S/o HITESH CHANDRA GOSAIN R/O-C-81, Gali No.2, Parvatiya, Anchal Sant Nagar, Burari, Delhi-110084, have changed my name to ASHISH GOSAIN.

0040713043-5

I, Anil Kumar, S/o-Shri Maha Singh Dahiya, R/O-H.No.7, Ward No.1, Ambekar Chowk, Rohtak Road, Kharkhoda, Distt-Sonipat, Haryana, have changed my name to Anil Kumar Dahiya for all further purposes.

0040713093-1

I, Chhavi Sharma Mittal W/o Sandeep Kumar Mittal R/o Villa No-A-93, Type-A Plot No-BGH A, Extn Phase-1 UPSIDC Housing Sector Surajpur Site-C, Greater Noida, Dist-Gautam Buddha Nagar, Uttar Pradesh-201310, have changed the name of my minor daughter Manya Minhas aged about 17 Years and she shall hereafter be known as Manya Mittal.

0040713088-1

I, Chhavi Sharma Mittal W/o Sandeep Kumar Mittal R/o Villa No-A-93, Type-A Plot No-BGH A, Extn Phase-1 UPSIDC Housing Sector Surajpur Site-C, Greater Noida, Dist-Gautam Buddha Nagar, Uttar Pradesh-201310, have changed the name of my minor daughter Manya Minhas aged about 17 Years and she shall hereafter be known as Manya Mittal.

0040713092-8

I, Birma Devi W/o Charan Singh R/o Tuksa, Bhojpur, Khetsi, Hathras, U.P.-204101, have changed my name to Virma Devi. D.O.B.-16/04/1962.

0040713100-2

I, Beer Singh Dobriya S/o Suresha Singh R/o-53, Gadaakot Develi, Garakot, Tehri Garhwal, Uttarakhand-249122 have changed my name to Beer Singh

0040713059-9

I, Archanika Kumari W/o No. JC67920W RANK HONY/SUB MAJOR MANOJ KUMAR PATHAK R/o/WZ-1273A, NANGAL RAYA, SOUTH WEST DELHI, DELHI-110046 HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO ARCHANAKA PATHAK VIDAE AFFIDAVIT DATE 8.2.2024 BEFORE DELHI.

0040712989-1

I, hitherto known as Ganpat Cheeta Rawat S/o Deva Cheeta currently residing at H.No. A-358/12, Fourth Floor, Front Side Street No.5, Bhagat Singh Gali, Near Shiv Mandir Mandawali, Fazalpur, Delhi, 110092 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as Ganpat Rawat. It is certified that I have complied with other legal requirements in this connection.

0040712957-3

I, Shikha Sharma W/o Sh. Mata Parshad R/o-27-D, Pocket-A, Mayur Vihar Ph-1, East Delhi, Delhi-110091 have changed my name to Shikha Sharma for all purposes.

0040712959-1

I, Sanjana D/o, Ramesh Kumar R/o E2/208 Street No.4 Shastri Nagar New Delhi-110052 have changed my name to Sanjana Kumar.

0040712959-1

I, Pawan Chaddha S/o Late K.L.Chaddha R/o No.257, Model Town, Sonipat, Haryana-131001 is also known as

NORTHERN RAILWAY	
Tender Notice	
Sr. Divisional Mechanical Engineer, Northern Railway, Trainset Depot, Shakurbasti; for and on behalf of President of India, invites IREPS (www.ireps.gov.in) for the under noted work.	
Name of Work	Comprehensive Annual Maintenance Contract for the Computerised Numerical Controlled under Floor Pit Wheel Lathe Machine (make-Hegescheidt-MFD's) installed at Trainset Depot, Shakurbasti in DLJ division for a period of 05 years.
Approximate Cost	Rs 2,04,06,170.70 including GST
Earliest Money	Rs.2,52,000/- (Note: It should be in the form of net banking or gateway only. Note: FDR not accepted as EMD for tender invited on IREPS as per Railway Board letter no. 2015/CR-I/CT/5/1 dated 31.08.2016)
Completion period of the work	05 year
Date and time for opening of tender	Opening of Tender at 15:00 hrs on 01.03.2024
Website particulars notice board location complete details of tender can be seen	Above tender is available on IREPS site i.e. www.ireps.gov.in w.e.f. 07.02.2024
No. 258834DSLSSB DL. 07.02.2024	435/2024
Serving Customers With A Smile	

दि मध्यप्रदेश स्टेट माइनिंग कॉर्पोरेशन लि.
(मध्यप्रदेश शासन का उपक्रम)
पंजीकृत कार्यालय : पायांगास भवन, ब्लॉक नं. 1 (ए)
द्वितीय तल, जेल रोड, अंगरा हॉल्स, भोपाल-462011
दूरभाष : 2763391, 2763392, 2763393, फैस्ट 0755-2763394
ई-मेल : info.mpsmc@mp.gov.in
Web : www.mpsmcl.mp.gov.in, CIN : U01410MP1962SGC000937
क्रमांक-पंजीकृत/क्र.-172(IV)/2023-24/28 दिनांक 09.02.2024
पायांगासफिलाइट/डायस्पोर खनिज के उत्खनन एवं विक्रय हेतु माहन डेवलपर कम ऑपरेटर (एम.डी.ओ.) के चयन बाबत निविदा मूल्याना दिम.प्र. स्टेट माइनिंग कॉर्पोरेशन लि., इच्छुक एवं पात्रता रखने वाले निविदाकर्ता से जिता टीकमाल के ग्राम कारी में 5,000 हे. रक्का में स्थित पायांगासफिलाइट/डायस्पोर खनिज से पायांगासफिलाइट/डायस्पोर खनिज के खनन एवं विक्रय हेतु एम.डी.ओ. के चयन बाबत अंगरालाइन निविदाएं आमंत्रित करता है। विस्तृत विवरण <https://mptenders.gov.in> पोर्टल पर तथा नियम की वेबसाइट www.mpsmcl.mp.gov.in पर दिनांक 10.02.2024 से उपलब्ध होता है।
प्रबंध संचालक

ODISHA RENEWABLE ENERGY DEVELOPMENT AGENCY
(Under Energy Department, Government of Odisha)
S-59, Mancheswar Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010
Ph: 91-674-2588260, Fax: 2586368
Web site: www.oredaorissa.com, E-mail: coreeda@oredaorissa.com
Letter No: 520 /OREDA/PD-50/2021 Dated: 05.02.2024

Notice for time extension

Extension of date of bid submission to the e-tender notice no- 2135 dated 04th July 2023 regarding request for proposal (RFP) for the selection of Solar Power Generator (SPG) for implementation of Grid-Connected Rooftop Solar Power Plants on Government Buildings in BMC area under Bhubaneswar RE City Programme on RESCO Mode.
It is for information of all concerned that, the due time for submission of online copies of the Technical Bid has been further extended up to 26.02.2024, Time 5:30 PM. Also, due date and time for submission of hardcopies of the technical bid has been further extended up to 27.02.2024, Time 5:30 PM. The Technical bid shall be opened on 28.02.2024, Time 3:00 PM.
All the prospective bidders are advised to kindly keep referring www.tenderwizard.com/OREDA and www.oredaorissa.com website for further update.

SD/- Chief Executive

GOVERNMENT OF ARUNACHAL PRADESH
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF POLICE
POLICE HEADQUARTERS:: ITANAGAR
NOTICE
With reference to the declaration of final result notice of Arunachal Pradesh Staff Selection Board (APSSB) vide No. APSSB-13/6/2023 dated 7th Feb/2024, available on the APSSB website, all the provisionally selected candidates of Constables and Multi Tasking Staff (MTS) of Civil Police, AAPBn and IRBn of Arunachal Pradesh Police under the Department of Home, Govt. of AP are directed to report at PTC, Banderdewa, Arunachal Pradesh at 0930 hours on 18/02/2024 for completion of formalities.
All candidates are directed to download from Arunachal Pradesh Police website www.arunpol.nic.in, and submit the duly filled Attestation Form (Annexure-I) (Hard copy) for Character and Antecedent verification at the time of reporting at PTC.
All are to informed check the Arunachal Police Prade website www.arunpol.nic.in for any further updates.

Asst. Inspector General of Police (E)
Police Headquarters, Itanagar,
Arunachal Pradesh.

DIPR/ARN/ 1027-10

PUBLISHING OF VACANCY NOTICE					
1. One post of Accountant (Officer's Mess) is vacant in Officer's Mess (Non Public Fund) of, 03 Wing Air Force Station Palam. The post is purely temporary and applicant will not claim for Permanent employment in the Indian Air Force at any stage. The employment will be governed by the terms and conditions issued by Air HQ from time to time. The candidates fulfilling the following criteria may collect Application Form from Officer's Mess office, 03 Wing Air Force Station Palam* on all working days from Monday to Saturday between 0900 hrs to 1700 hrs from 10 Feb 24 to 29 Feb 24 Recruitment.					
(a). RECRUITMENT FOR ACCOUNTANT Officer's MESS NON PUBLIC FUND VENTURE PVT.					
(i) Educational Qualification : Minimum 12th pass with commerce stream					
(ii) Professional Qualification : Undergone basic course in computer Application					
(iii) Experience : Worked as an Accountant for 1-2 years (Preferably)					
(b) Age : 18-35 years as on 01 Jan 2024					
(c) Salary : Rs 21,215/- per month (for Accountant) (Wages as per Delhi Govt -Minimum wages wef 01/10/2023).					
(d) Working hours : Six days in a week from 0900hrs to 1700hrs.					
2. Duly completed application forms along with photocopies of educational, professional and experience certificates and recent passport size photograph duly signed by a Commissioned / Gazetted Officer to be deposited at Officer's Mess, Air Force St Palam between 0900hrs to 1700hrs from 10 Feb 24 to 29 Feb 24. All the applications will be scrutinized and eligible candidates will be called for written test followed by interview. Intimation will be given to the candidates well in time. No TA/DA will be admissible to the candidates for the same.					
3. This is for your information and necessary action.					
(Neha Chaudhary) Wg Cdr Mess Secretary Officer's Mess					

GOVERNMENT OF HARYANA TENDER NOTICE

SH. NO. NAME OF BOARD/CORP/AUTH NAME OF WORK NOTICE TENDER OPENING DATE CLOSING DATE (TIME) AMOUNT/ EMD (APPROX.) IN RUPEES WEBSITE OF THE BOARD CORP/AUTH NODAL OFFICER/CONTACT DETAILS/EMAIL

1	MICAD DIVISION FATEHABAD	REMODELING OF WATERCOURSE AT OUTLET RD 54987-L RATTANGARH DISTY. + WORKS	CLOSING DATE 16.02.2024	885.42 LACS	https://tenders.hry.nic.in	9215041185 xenfatehabad1@gmail.com
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FOR FURTHER INFORMATION KINDLY VISIT: www.haryanaprocurement.gov.in or www.etenders.hry.nic.in**HARYANA STAFF SELECTION COMMISSION**Bays No. 67-70, Sector-2, Panchkula-134151 Website: www.hssc.gov.in**EXAMINATION NOTICE****NOTICE TO THE CANDIDATES FOR WRITTEN EXAMINATION (OMR BASED) OF CET GROUP-C POSTS (2ND PHASE) UNDER GROUP 01, 02 & 49-B AGAINST ADVT. NO. 3/2023**

It is notified for the information of all concerned that Haryana Staff Selection Commission will conduct the written examination (OMR Based) of CET Group-C posts (2nd Phase) on 18.02.2024 (Sunday) under Group 01 (all categories except Cat. No. 17), Group 02 (all categories) & Group 49-B (Cat. No. 300, 301, 302, 305, 306 & 307) against Advt. No. 03/2023, as per following schedule:-

Sr. No.	Group No.	Advt. No.	Date, Session & Time of Examination	Place of Exam
1.	Group - 01 : Sectional Officer (Civil), Junior Engineer (Civil), Assistant Manager (IA), Junior Engineer (Civil/Electrical) & Supervisor		18.02.2024 (Morning Session) from 10:15 A.M. to 12:00 Noon Reporting Time 08:30 A.M. (No Entry after 09:30 A.M.)	
2.	Group - 02 : Junior Engineer (Electrical), Junior Engineer (Electrical/Civil), Assistant Project Officer, Junior Engineer (Electrical & Civil), Operator Grade-1 Electrical & Operator (Hydel)	3/2023	18.02.2024 (Evening Session) from 03:15 PM. to 05:00 PM. Reporting time 01:30 P.M. (No Entry after 02:30 P.M.)	As per Admit Card
	Group - 49 B : Laboratory Assistant & Laboratory Technician			

Selection Criteria and other Important Instructions

Selection Criteria for the above mentioned posts has already been mentioned in Advt. No. 03/2023 dated 27 March, 2023.

Admit Cards for written examination of the candidates will be uploaded on the Commission's website i.e. www.hssc.gov.in from 14.02.2024 onwards. All the shortlisted candidates (Group wise list) shall be notified shortly on Commission's website i.e. www.hssc.gov.in who are appearing in the exam in above mentioned Groups may download their Admit Cards from 14.02.2024 onwards. Candidates must read the instructions on the Admit Card and important instructions below carefully before coming for examination and follow the same strictly.**NOTES:**

- Important instructions for the candidates for written examination are available on website of the Commission i.e. www.hssc.gov.in which should be thoroughly read by candidates before coming for examination.
- If any candidate who has applied under these Groups but doesn't find his/ her Roll No. uploaded by Commission, then candidate may report in Commission Office with all relevant documents on 16.02.2024 till 02 P.M.

3. Category No. 17 in Group 01 (Municipal Engineer) has been excluded from the Group in view of decision dated 05.06.2023 in CWP No. 13048 of 2023. Examination will be conducted separately for this Category.

No separate information will be sent to the candidates by the Commission through post.

Sd/- Secretary,

Haryana Staff Selection Commission, Panchkula.

24914/HRY.

Place: Panchkula
Dated: 5th February, 2024

उ.प्र. पावर ट्रान्समिशन कारपोरेशन लि.

ई-निविदा सूचना सं. 68-ईसीटीसी/मुद्राबाद/2023-24 ई-टेंडर, चार माह की विद्युत केन्द्रों से विद्युत पारेशन मण्डल मेरठ के अन्तर्गत निम कार्यों हेतु मोहर बन्द ई-निविदायें ई-पोर्टल (www.etender.up.nic.in) पर दो भागों में आमंत्रित की जाती है। 1. टी-42/2023-24- विद्युत पारेशन मण्डल मेरठ के अन्तर्गत विद्युत पारेशन मण्डल, धोरेहर राशि एवं ई-निविदा प्रस्तुत करने के दिनांक तक विद्युत जमाने वाले अंगरेजी भाषा द्वारा दिया गया खुलने की दिनांक 26.02.2024, धोरेहर राशि रु. 13,59,000/-, निविदा प्रस्तुत का शुल्क-रु. 2950.00/- (कर सहित), कार्य की अनुपातिक लागत-रु. 135.83 लाख। अंगरेजी अभियन्ता विद्युत पारेशन मण्डल, मेरठ के अन्तर्गत विद्युत उपकरणों का द्विवारीकारण आधार पर विद्युत पारेशन मण्डल मेरठ के अन्तर्गत लागत-रु. 135.83 लाख। अंगरेजी अभियन्ता विद्युत पारेशन मण्डल, मेरठ। (मो.सं. 9412756009) “गृहित में ऊर्जा बचावे” प्राकृति/एसीटी/मेरठ/ MT/Tender द

SENSEX: 71,595.49 ▲ 167.06 (0.23%) NIFTY: 21,782.50 ▲ 64.55 (0.30%) NIKKEI: 36,897.42 ▲ 34.14 HANG SENG: 15,746.58 ▼ 131.49 FTSE: 7,602.78 ▲ 7.3 DAX: 16,972.15 ▲ 8.32



GOLD

₹63,300



USD RATE

₹83.07



OIL

\$80.58



SILVER

₹75,000

Note: Gold, silver rates at Delhi spot market, gold per 10g, silver per 1 kg; Crude oil (Indian basket) as of February 8

International market data till 1900 IST

AS UKRAINE WAR ENTERS ITS THIRD YEAR

Engineering goods export to Russia hits record high

Despite lack of a smooth payment mechanism between India and Russia

RAVI DUTTA MISHRA
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 9

INDIA'S EXPORT of machines, auto parts, steel and aluminum products, internal combustion (IC) engines, pumps and other items to Russia are on the rise, with outbound shipments in the 'engineering goods' category doubling in 2023 to cross a record \$1-billion mark. This comes as demand continues to remain weak in key markets including Europe and the US, where India's exports in the same category slipped over 10 percent last year.

Requirements of engineering goods in Russia have been rising. Orders are coming in large numbers and the rupee trade is taking place. But not the way we wanted. The quantum continues to remain small as some banks are executing the order and some refinancing from it. Exporters are bullish on demand from Russia and exports by the end of the financial year could jump by 100-120 per cent compared to FY22," Arun Kumar Garodia, Chairman, Engineering Export Promotion Council of India told *The Indian Express*.

Official data from the commerce and industry ministry showed that India's total exports to Russia in 2023 surged 40 per cent to cross the \$4-billion mark, largely driven by engineering goods which nearly doubled to \$1.32 billion in 2023 from \$680 million in 2022. Sharp gains were seen in the drugs and pharmaceu-

While India's exports to Russia have surged, it has only been able to cater to a minuscule portion of the demand due to lack of a

smooth payment mechanism. While India and Russia suspended talks to settle bilateral trade in rupees last year due to trade imbalance, Russia's trade with China has skyrocketed surpassing a record \$200 billion, with 95 per cent of the trade taking place in Russian ruble and China's yuan.

On the contrary, India's engineering goods export to Europe fell 11 per cent to \$24.58 billion last year compared to \$27.66 billion in 2022. Outbound shipments in the same category to the US slipped over 13 per cent to \$17.27 billion last year compared to \$19.56 billion. This was broadly in line with the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) assessment that said that global trade slipped by a massive \$2 trillion in 2023.

Russia's annual growth accelerated to 5.5 per cent in the third quarter from 4.9 per cent sequentially, which was the fastest pace of growth in more than a decade aside from a spike when Russia exited Covid lockdowns, exceeding the expectations of economists. *Bloomberg* reported.

India's export growth to Russia comes after the near collapse of Moscow's trade with the West and Ukraine. Sanctions and counter-sanctions meant closer trade ties with China and India, the countries that are receiving bulk of the Russian oil that was redirected from the West. Sourcing from India and China comes after Russia

banned import of over 200 goods from the West, including telecoms equipment, medical, vehicle, agricultural, electrical equipment, and timber products. Prior to the war, Russia imported a range of industrial items including electrical, electronic equipment, machinery, nuclear reactors and boilers among other items from Ukraine worth nearly \$4 billion.

Interestingly, Russia's banking sector has also shown resilience from the western sanctions. *Bloomberg* reported that the largest Russian bank, state-owned Sberbank PJSC, which was cut off from the SWIFT international payments system, recorded record profit in 2023.

Gardia said exports could take a hit in 2024 due to the disruption in the Red Sea route.

"There is also a shortage of containers and shipping lines, facing capacity issues, are raising prices and adding extra charges during busy times. Many member-exporters have reported lower profit margins, leading to holding back on orders until things improve. The exporting community is worried that exports might decrease in the coming months because of these challenges," he said.

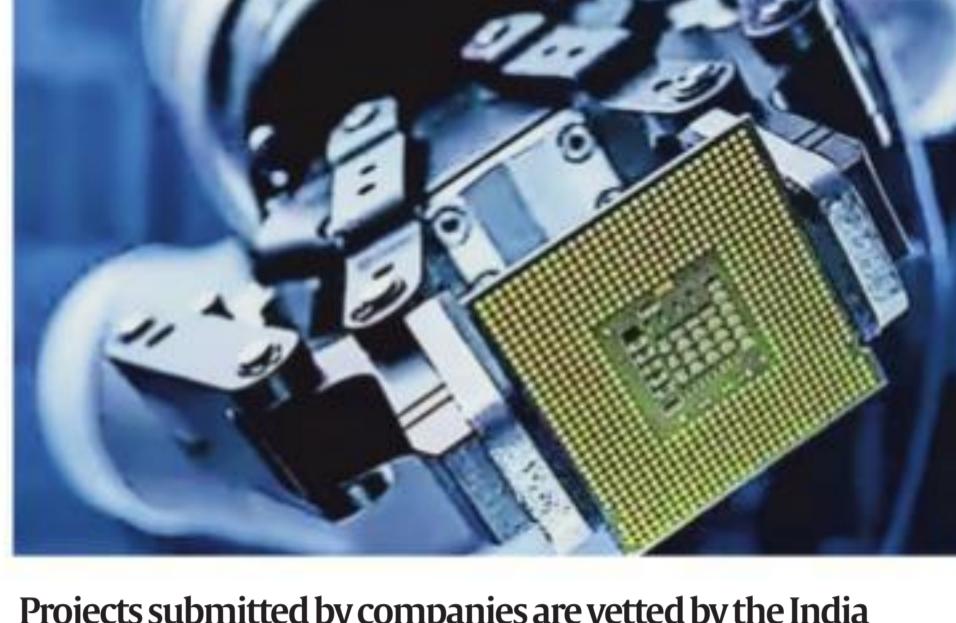
JATIN GROVER
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 9

SEVERAL SEMICONDUCTOR assembly and packaging projects are expected to be approved by the government before the dates for the parliamentary elections are announced.

Sources said that clearances need to be expedited as the approved projects are entitled for a 50 per cent subsidy by the government on the project cost. Once the election dates are announced, the model of code of conduct will come into force and the disbursal will have to wait for a couple of months, which may delay the projects.

Currently, four proposals for setting up semiconductor fabrication units and thirteen for setting up compound semiconductor fabs and assembly, testing, marking and packaging (ATMP) units by firms such as Kaynes Technology, CG Power, Foxconn-HCL JV, Hirandani group, among others, are at the evaluation stage by a government-appointed committee. Projects submitted by companies are vetted by the India Semiconductor Mission (ISM) and approved or rejected based upon its recommendations.

Going by the disclosed investments by some of the companies, the proposals add up to around ₹13,000 crore. This is over and above US-



Projects submitted by companies are vetted by the India Semiconductor Mission (ISM) and approved or rejected based upon its recommendations. File

based Micron's ₹22,516-crore ATMP project, which was approved by the government last year and will roll out the first made-in-India chip by the end of the current calendar year.

"We have submitted our application, which needs to be approved by the government. The moment we have clearances from our prospective technology partners we will share more details with the government," N Srinivasan, managing director at CG Power and Industrial Solutions, said during the October-December earnings call with analysts.

On Friday, CG Power announced a joint venture with Japan-based Renesas America and Stars Microelectronics (Thailand) Public, for its outsourced semiconductor assembly and test (OSAT) unit. The company is yet to finalise the location of the unit, but is expected to invest \$791 million (₹6,570 crore) for a period of five years on the project.

Jairam Sampath, chief financial officer at Kaynes Technology, said, "The process of vetting projects for approval is underway. We are quite confident that our proposal would get approved and because general elections are a couple of months away, the approval should happen shortly," he said.

Kaynes has started preliminary construction work in Telangana for its ₹2,800-crore OSAT project. File

CG Power-led venture to set up semiconductor facility in India

New Delhi: CG Power and Industrial Solutions has entered into a joint venture (JV) agreement with Renesas Electronics America and Thailand-based Stars Microelectronics to set up a semiconductor assembly and testing plant in India, the company said in an exchange filing on Friday.

CG Power, Renesas and Stars are to invest, in one or more tranches of up to \$205 million, \$15 million and \$2 million, respectively, as equity capital of the JV, which will represent around 92.34 per cent, 6.76 per cent and 0.9 per cent, respectively, the exchange filing stated.

The venture would have to apply for the central government's \$10-billion chip manufacturing scheme to set up an Outsourced Semiconductor Assembly and Test (OSAT) plant. The scheme promises a 50 per cent capital expenditure subsidy to successful applicants.

FULL REPORT ON
www.indianexpress.com

FinMin, banks mull over SOP to return funds to cyberfraud victims

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 9

THE FINANCE Ministry on Friday discussed plans with banks to develop a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) to help the latter return money to customers siphoned off in cyber financial frauds. The review meeting on issues related to cybersecurity and financial frauds, which was



The meeting was held on issues related to cybersecurity and financial frauds. File

and financial institutions for preventing financial frauds, Joshi said.

Banks have also been asked to ensure round-the-clock availability of nodal officers to promptly address complaints related to frauds, he said. He further added that the government is working with the banks towards standardising the sharing of information by banks or financial institutions.

"For instance, if a bank is sharing information it has to be in a particular format... I4C is getting it done," he said.

According to the ministry's statement, the meeting took stock of the action points which emerged during the last meeting. It was noted that the Department of Telecom (DoT) has developed an AI/ML based engine to detect mobile connections taken on fake/ forged documents, it said.

"About 1.40 lakh mobile hand-

sets either linked to the disconnected mobile connections or misused in cyber-crime or financial frauds have been blocked. The DoT analysed 35-lakh principal entities sending bulk SMSs. Out of these, 19,776 involved in sending malicious SMSs are blacklisted and 30,700 SMS headers and 1,95,766 SMS templates have been disconnected," the statement read.

Pratibimb portal, on which SIM and IMEI of the suspected fraudster are plotted on a real time basis, has enabled the law enforcement agencies to utilise it to identify and locate the suspects, the government said, adding that to date, more than 500 arrests have been made, around 3.08 lakh SIMs, 50 thousand IMEI, and 592 False Links or Android Package Kit (APK) and 2,194 Uniform Resource Locator (URLs) blocked since April 2023.

Joshi on Friday chaired a review meeting with stakeholders from 12 departments/ organisations including Department of Economic Affairs, Department of Revenue, Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology, DoT, Reserve Bank of India, Unique Identification Authority of India, Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C) and top public sector banks among others. This was the second such meeting after the first one in November last year.

The panel will work closely with the board and will induct additional members if necessary.

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU
MUMBAI, FEBRUARY 9

HIT BY the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI's) regulatory action, the board of One 97 Communications Ltd, which owns the Paytm brand, has formed a three-member group advisory committee chaired by former Sebi Chairman M Damodaran, to work with the board in further strengthening compliance and regulatory matters.

The panel will work closely with the board and will induct ad-

The other committee members will be: Mukund Manohar Chitale, who is the former president of Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI), former chairman of the National Advisory Committee on Accounting Standards (NACAS), a former governing council member of Banking Codes and Standards Board of India nominated by the RBI, and a member of the Primary Advisory Market Committee of Sebi, and Ramachandran Rajaraman, who is the former chairman and MD

of Andhra Bank, a former director of Syndicate Bank and a member of the advisory board at the Central Vigilance Commission.

Damodaran brings extensive experience in corporate governance, restructuring and regulatory leadership. He has previously served as chairman of the Sebi, and has chaired high-powered committees for the Government of India and Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and was also elected Chairman of the EMC of the International Organisation of Securities Commission (IOSCO).

Paytm forms 3-member advisory panel headed by former Sebi chief

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HPCL's ₹73,000-cr Rajasthan refinery likely to start operations by Jan 2025

The project will also be the first refinery to come on stream since Prime Minister Narendra Modi last year announced that India aims to increase its total refining capacity to 450 mtpa from 254 mtpa. India is among the top economies that are driving global oil demand growth. According to the International Energy Agency's projections, India will overtake China in 2027 to become the biggest driver of oil demand growth globally.

HPCL's Rajasthan refinery is expected to operate at 75-80 per cent of its 9-mtpa capacity in the first year—2025—as units will get commissioned in a phased manner.

The refinery has achieved 76 per cent mechanical completion and the first refined products are likely to start flowing from the unit by December or January next year, HPCL's Director, Refineries S Bharathan told reporters on the sidelines of the India Energy Week in Goa. It will be the first refinery to be commissioned in India since Indian Oil Corporation's (IOC) 15-mtpa unit in Odisha's Paradip.

The Rajasthan facility's petrochemicals unit is likely to be commissioned around three months after the refinery comes on stream, Bharathan said. The refinery

will process crude oil produced in Rajasthan, apart from using imported crude.

Bharathan said that the facility is a highly complex one and will be able to process nearly all types of crudes. The complex will produce Bharat Stage VI (BS-VI) grade petrol, diesel, apart from other fuels and various petrochemical products.

Apart from robust fuel demand, demand for petrochemicals in India is slated to rise rapidly in the years to come. Despite its large size and population, the per-capita petrochemical consumption in India is significantly lower than developed economies.

Vedanta Resources makes upfront payment of \$779 mn to bondholders

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The upfront payment to the bondholders was made on Wednesday, Vedanta Resources Ltd (VRL) said in a statement.

The company plans to file regulatory papers by May or June, Reuters

EPFO to stop claims made through Paytm Payments Bank from Feb 23

Labour and Employment.

Paytm shares tank 9%

Shares of One97 Communications Ltd, which owns the Paytm brand, tumbled about 9 per cent on Friday as investors continued to dump the stock.

Extending its previous day's decline, the stock dived 8.67 per cent to Rs 408.30 on the BSE.

Shares of One97 Communications Ltd fell 10 per cent to hit lower circuit limit on Thursday, after a two-day rally in the stock fizzled out. AGENCIES

NATIONAL TEXTILE CORPORATION LIMITED, (WRO), MUMBAI
NTC House, 15 N. M. Marg, Balaiji Estate, Mumbai - 400 001
Tel. No. : +91 22 22686600 Fax : +91 22 22686631,
Website : www.ntcltd.org

TENDER NOTICE FOR SALE OF TRANSFERABLE DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS (TDR)

NTC invites e-tender cum e-auction through MSTC under two bids system from reputed bidders for "SALE OF TDR." Interested bidders may please visit website for detailed tender document – <https://www.mstccommerce.com> or www.ntcltd.org & <https://eprocure.gov.in>

Chief General Manager (Task Force)

RAJASTHAN URJA VIKAS AND IT SERVICES LIMITED

(Formerly known as Rajasthan Urja Vikas Nigam Ltd.) (A Government of Rajasthan Undertaking)
Regd. Office - Vidyut Bhawan, Janpath, Jyoti Nagar, Jaipur - 302005
Work Office at: 1st Floor, HUDDCO Building, Jyoti Nagar, Jaipur - 302005
E-mail: rjvnl@rajasthan.gov.in; Website: [www.energy.rajasthan.gov.in/RUVNL](http://energy.rajasthan.gov.in/RUVNL)

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

Online bids are invited to procure Round the clock (RTC) power up to 1000 MW in the month of March 2024 & April 2024 on short term basis from various Generators/ State Utilities/ CPPs/ Distribution Licensees/ SEBs/ Trading Licensees as per specification under TN-24/RUVNL/FY 2023-24. May visit website www.mstccommerce.com, www.energy.rajasthan.gov.in/RUVNL for further details.

Raj.Samwad/C/23/12851 RUVNL/PR-67 (2024) Superintending Engineer

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Seiji Ozawa

JAPAN

Emmy-winning conductor Seiji Ozawa dies

Tokyo: World-renowned conductor Seiji Ozawa has died of heart failure at his home in Tokyo, his management office said Friday. He was 88. The acclaimed Japanese maestro led the Boston Symphony Orchestra from 1973 to 2002, longer than any other conductor in the orchestra's 128-year history. From 2002 to 2010, he was music director of the Vienna State Opera.

Ozawa exerted enormous influence over the BSO during his tenure. His celebrity attracted famous performers like Yo-Yo Ma. He won two Emmys for television work.

AP

NEPAL

Everest climbers must bring back excreta: Admin

Kathmandu: In its bid to tackle the increasing environmental impact on Mount Everest, Nepal has announced a regulation requiring climbers to manage their own excreta and bring it back to the base camp for proper disposal. The Pasang Lhamu rural municipality, which covers most of the Everest region, has introduced the new rule as part of wider measures being implemented to combat the persistent problem of waste accumulation on the world's highest peak, the BBC reported. "Our mountains have begun to stink," the report quoted Mingma Sherpa, chairman of Pasang Lhamu rural municipality, as saying.

AP

JAPAN

Govt OKs new foreign trainee programme

Tokyo: The Japanese government adopted plans to scrap its current foreign trainee programme, which has been criticised as a cover for importing cheap labour, and replace it with a system it says will teach skills and safeguard trainees' rights as Japan seeks more foreign workers to supplement its ageing and shrinking workforce. Under the new program, people on a three-year trainee visa will be able to upgrade to a skilled worker category that would allow them to stay up to five years and possibly obtain permanent residency.

AP

UNITED KINGDOM
Prince Harry settles UK hacking claim

London: Britain's Prince Harry will receive a "substantial" payout after he settled the remainder of his phone hacking claims against the Mirror Group Network of newspapers, it emerged at a hearing in the High Court in London on Friday. The lawyer for Duke of Sussex, who is now based in the US with wife Meghan and kids, said at the hearing that the newspaper publisher had now accepted it would pay "a substantial additional sum" by way of damages.

AP

WANT CORDIAL RELATIONS WITH NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES: SHARIF

Imran party claims victory, says poll results being delayed to rig outcome

Respect mandate, says Sharif, calls for unity govt; will meet PPP's Zardari

SAJJAD HUSSAIN
ISLAMABAD, FEBRUARY 9

FORMER PRIME minister Nawaz Sharif Friday called for a unity government as the cash-strapped Pakistan appeared to be heading towards a hung parliament, with independent candidates backed by jailed ex-premier Imran Khan's party springing a surprise by winning 92 out of the 226 seats for which results were declared so far.

Addressing the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) supporters in Lahore, 74-year-old Sharif said his party respects the mandate of all parties, including the independent candidates backed by Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party.

Votes are still being counted after Thursday's general election which was marred by allegations of rigging, sporadic violence and a countrywide mobile phone shutdown. Changing his stance of not forging any alliance with any party, Sharif Friday said that there is a need for all the political parties to sit together and form a government to pull Pakistan out of its difficulties.

He also said he wanted to develop cordial relations with neighbouring countries.

Sharif announced that he has tasked his younger brother and PML-N president Shehbaz Sharif to reach out to the Pakistan Peoples Party's Asif Ali Zardari, Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (F) chief Fazlur Rehman and Muttahida Qaumi Movement's Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui for the formation of a coalition government.

Meanwhile, PPP Co-chairman Zardari has reached Lahore and is likely to meet PML-N leadership.

A coalition government led by PML-N had served for 16 months after the ouster of Imran Khan from office in April 2022.

Earlier, PTI chairman Barrister



Supporters of Imran Khan's party protest against the delay in results in Peshawar on Friday. AP

"We can't hold elections again and again," he said.

Without naming Imran Khan, Sharif said: "Those who are in a mood to fight, I want to tell them that Pakistan cannot afford this fight. Pakistan needs stability for at least 10 years as this is a matter of the lives of Pakistanis."

Sharif announced that he has tasked his younger brother and PML-N president Shehbaz Sharif

Gohar Khan ruled out forging an alliance with the PPP and PML-N, saying his party is in a position to form a federal government on its own.

The ECP started updating results at a faster pace after facing a barrage of criticism by the parties, especially the PTI which accused that its mandate was being stolen.

PTI claimed that it won the elections while alleging that results were being delayed to rig the outcome.

Earlier, PTI chairman Barrister

ward to "timely, complete election results" from Pakistan. "The US is prepared to work with the next Pakistani government, regardless of political party, to advance our shared interests," it said.

PTI

RACE TO 133

Independents
(mostly supported by PTI)

92



264+1

Total elected seats in National Assembly
(Election to one seat was postponed)

169 seats

are needed to secure a simple majority out of its total 336 seats, which include reserved slots for women and minorities



Russian President Vladimir Putin during an interview with US television host Tucker Carlson in Moscow. Reuters

Not interested in wider war, ready for dialogue on Ukraine: Putin

REUTERS
FEBRUARY 9

RUSSIAN PRESIDENT Vladimir Putin said in an interview that aired on Thursday that Russia will fight for its interests "to the end" but has no interest in expanding its war in Ukraine to other countries such as Poland and Latvia.

In his first interview with an American journalist since before Russia's invasion of Ukraine nearly two years ago, Putin said Western leaders had come to realise it was impossible to inflict a strategic defeat on Russia and were wondering what to do next. "We are ready for this dialogue," he said.

Putin also said he believed it was possible to reach an agreement to free US journalist Evan Gershkovich of the *Wall Street Journal*, who has been detained in Russia for nearly a year and is awaiting trial on spying charges.

Putin made the comments in a more than two-hour interview with conservative talk-show host Tucker Carlson that was conducted in Moscow on

Tuesday. Asked if he could imagine a scenario in which he would send Russian troops to Poland, a NATO member, Putin replied:

"Only in one case, if Poland attacks Russia. Why? Because we have no interest in Poland, Latvia or anywhere else. Why would we do that? We simply don't have any interest."

Putin devoted a substantial part of the interview to complaining that Ukraine had been on the verge of agreeing a deal to end hostilities at talks in Istanbul in April 2022, but backed away, he said, once Russian troops withdrew from near Kyiv.

"Well now let them think how to reverse the situation," he said. "We're not against it. It would be funny if it were not so sad that. This endless mobilisation in Ukraine, the hysteria, the domestic problems, sooner or later it will result in an agreement."

The Russian leader said the US had pressing domestic issues to worry about. "Wouldn't it be better to negotiate with Russia? Make an agreement," Putin said.

Carlson is considered to have close connections to Trump.

Maldives key partner in ensuring free, secure Indo-Pacific region: US

LALIT K JHA
WASHINGTON, FEBRUARY 9

DESCRIBING THE Maldives as a key partner in ensuring a free, open, secure, and prosperous Indo-Pacific region, a State Department spokesperson told PTI on Thursday when asked about the assistant secretary's visit from January 29-31.

The remarks come at a time when there is an ongoing diplomatic row between the Maldives and India following a demand by President Muizzu to withdraw all 88 Indian military personnel from his country. There have been growing global concerns over China's increasing military muscle-flexing in the Indo-Pacific region.

PTI

Malaysia top court strikes down dozen Islamic laws

REUTERS
KUALA LUMPUR, FEBRUARY 9

MALAYSIA'S TOP court Friday declared unconstitutional more than a dozen Islamic laws enacted by the state of Kelantan, in a decision that could affect similar laws in other parts of the Muslim-majority country. Malaysia has a dual-

track legal system with Islamic criminal and family laws applicable to Muslims running alongside secular laws.

A nine-member

law

US special counsel report puts Biden age in spotlight, he says memory is fine

REUTERS
WASHINGTON, FEBRUARY 9



Biden will not face charges for taking classified papers when he left the vice presidency in 2017



A Palestinian cleans up his house after an Israeli strike in Rafah on Friday. AP

Biden says Israel response 'over the top' as Bibi draws Rafah plan

REUTERS
DOHA/JERUSALEM, FEB 9

PRIME MINISTER Benjamin Netanyahu ordered Israel's military on Friday to draw up a dual plan to evacuate Palestinian civilians from the crowded southern Gaza city of Rafah and defeat the last Hamas fighters there.

His office announced the move as pressure mounted on Israel over its threat to launch a ground assault on Rafah, the last refuge for hundreds of thousands of Palestinians who are trapped in the city after fleeing fighting elsewhere.

US President Joe Biden said on Thursday Israel's response to the Oct. 7 attacks by Hamas militants was "over the top" and Washington said it would not support any military operation launched in Rafah without due consideration for civilians.

Meanwhile, former UN Ambassador Nikki Haley has said that the US would have a "female president in 2024", and it would be either her or Kamala Harris, both of them Indian-origin.

and re-establish the Jewish settlements that were dismantled in Israel's 2005 withdrawal from Gaza. "The minute the war is over, we'll build our homes there," said Yair Cohen, 23, a reserve soldier, who said his family was evicted from Gaza in 2005.

To Palestinians, the settlers' plans would most likely end in mass displacement and an end to their dream of a Palestinian state — a dream that much of the world would like to see realized. "Israel wants the Palestinian people to choose between destruction and displacement," the Palestinian ambassador to the UN, Riyad Mansour, told the body last month.

The movement to settle Gaza is driven by nationalist fervor, religious zeal and security concerns after Oct. 7. NYT

After four months of war and a death toll that Gazan officials say exceeds 27,000 killed, international pressure is mounting on Israel to withdraw from Gaza. But a small group of Israelis is pushing for the opposite: They want Israel to retain control of the territory

PAOLO BENANTI ADVISES CHURCH AND GOVT ON NAVIGATING TRICKY QUESTIONS RAISED BY ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Holy Ghost to ghosts in machines: Meet the Vatican's AI whisperer

JASON HOROWITZ
ROME



Paolo Benanti in a church in Rome, in January. NYT

about the Holy Ghost and the ghosts in the machines.

In recent weeks, the ethics professor, ordained priest and self-proclaimed geek, has joined Bill Gates at a meeting with Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni, presided over a commission seeking to save Italian media from ChatGPT bylines and general AI oblivion, and met with Vatican officials to further Pope Francis's aim of protecting the vulnerable from the coming technological storm.

At a conference organised by the ancient Knights of Malta order, he told a crowd of ambassadors that "global governance is needed, otherwise the risk is so-

Condition) and a fixture on international AI panels, Father Benanti, 50, is a professor at the Gregorian, the Harvard of Rome's pontifical universities, where he teaches moral theology, ethics and a course called 'The Fall of Babel: The Challenges of Digital, Social Networks and Artificial Intelligence.'

For a church and a country looking to harness, and survive, the coming AI revolution, his job is to provide advice from an ethical and spiritual perspective. He shares his insights with Pope Francis, who in his annual World Day of Peace message on January 1 called for a global treaty to en-

tire professional fields will be left doing menial jobs, or nothing, stripping people of dignity and unleashing floods of "despair." This, he said, raises enormous questions about redistributing wealth in an AI dominant universe.

Those concerns reflected those of Father Benanti, who does not believe in the industry's ability to self-regulate and thinks some rules of the road are required in a world where deep fakes and disinformation can erode democracy. He is concerned that masters of the AI universes are developing systems that will expand chasms of inequality. He fears the transition to AI will be so abrupt that en-

INDIAN INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE

Bangalore - 560012.

Corrigendum II to Advertisement
No. R(HR)308-2024 dated 10/01/2024
for the post of Financial Controller

It is hereby notified that the last date for submission of application for the post of Financial Controller is hereby extended till 16.02.2024.

The eligibility criteria and other terms and conditions remain the same.

Date: 10.02.2024 Sd/-, REGISTRAR



Asset Recovery Branch :

1st Floor, Steel House, Near Police Check Post, Boring Road, Patna-800001, Email: arb.patna@unionbankofindia.bank

15 Days SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTY (Appendix IV A)

E-auction Sale Notice for sale of immovable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and proviso to the rule 8 (6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor, the Possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of Union Bank of India the Secured Creditor, will be sold on "As is where it is", "As is what is" and "Whatever there is" on 28.02.2024 for recovery of Rs 66,11,583.76 (Rupees Sixty Six Lac Eleven Thousand Five Hundred Eighty Three and Paise Seventy Six Only) as on 31.10.2022 with further interest, cost & expenses due to Union Bank of India Asset Recovery Branch, the Secured Creditor from Borrower, Co-Applicant and Guarantor -1) The Borrower/s - 1a) M/s Sipada Foods Solutions Pvt Ltd, Plot No. B-28(P), Industrial Area, Donar, Darbhanga, Bihar - 846004. Also At: 18 kitab Bhawan Road, North S K Puri, Noida, Boring Road, Patna, Bihar-800001, 1b) Mr. Binit Kumar S/o Late Sh. Rabi Bhushan Prasad, Flat 602, Tower 10 to close South Nirwan Country, Sector 50, South City-2, Gurgaon, Haryana-122018. 1c) Mrs. Bipasha Kumar W/o Mr. Binit Kumar, Flat 602, Tower 10 to close South Nirwan Country, Sector 50, South City-2, Gurgaon, Haryana-122018, 1d) Mr. Satya Priya Madhu S/o Late Devendra Prasad Sinha, Narayani, West Boring Canal Road, Patna, Bihar, 800001. 1e) Mr. Kaushikendra Narayan Shrivastava, S/o Late Devendra Prasad Sinha, Bawaliyan, Near Imambar Post Office, Darbhanga, Bihar, 846001. 1f) Mr. Brajendra Narayan Banhu, S/o Late Devendra Prasad Sinha, Kansi, Simri, Singhwara, Darbhanga, Bihar, 847123.

The Reserve Price will be Rs. 18,16,000/- (Rupees Eighteen Lakh Sixteen Thousand only) and Earnest Money Deposit will be Rs. 1,81,600/- (Rupees One Lakh Eighty One Thousand six Hundred only) with bid increment of Rs. 10,000/-

Brief Description of Property :- All that piece and parcel of Leasehold Land admeasuring an area of 4000 sq ft situated at Plot No. B-28(P), Industrial Area Donar, Thana No. 503, P.S & Anchal - Sadar Darbhanga, Village-Malpati, Pragana - Purabbhihi, Darbhanga, Bihar, lease in the Name of the Company and **Boundary - North - Survey Plot no- 2(P), 3(P), South - Survey Plot No- 2(P), East - Survey Plot No- 15 Industrial Road, West - Survey Plot No- 2(P), 3(P)**

For detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please refer to the link provided in Union Bank of India's website i.e. <https://www.unionbankofindia.co.in> and <https://www.mstcecommerce.com/auctionhome/bapi/index.jsp>

Date: 08.02.2024 Place: Patna Authorised Officer

यूको बैंक **UCO BANK**
Honours your trust
Zonal Office : 75/4, Siddh Sadan, Halsey Road Near Badshahi Naka Police Station, Kanpur - 208001
e-mail : zokanpur.rec@ucobank.co.in

POSSESSION NOTICE (for immovable property) APPENDIX-IV [Rule – 8(1)]

Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorised officer of the UCO Bank under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002 (54 of 2002) and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(12) read with rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued Demand Note dated (details mentioned here in below) calling upon the borrower(s)/guarantor(s) (details mentioned herein below) within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice. The borrower(s)/guarantor(s) having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower(s)/guarantor(s) and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/her under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said rules on this (details mentioned here in below) of the year (details mentioned here in below). The borrower(s)/guarantor(s) in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of the UCO Bank. Bada Bazar Jhansi (0310) for an amount of (details mentioned herein below). The borrower's, legal heir's and/or guarantor's attention is invited to provisions of sub-section 8 of section 13 of the act in respect of time available to redeem the secured assets.

S. No.	Name & Address of Borrower(s)/Guarantor(s) and Name of Related Branch	Description of Property & Possession Date	Balance O/S (Rs.) & Demand Notice Date
1.	Borrower(s): Smt. Sharda Gupta W/o Late Shri Hari Ram Gupta Legal Heirs of Late Shri Hari Ram Gupta S/o Late Munna Lal (Deceased) 1. Shri Sachin Gupta S/o Late Shri Hari Ram Gupta, 2. Shri Ravindra Gupta S/o Late Shri Hari Ram Gupta 3. Shri Rahul Gupta S/o Late Shri Hari Ram Gupta, 4. Shri Shailendra Gupta S/o Late Shri Hari Ram Gupta Guarantor : 1. Shri Sachin Gupta S/o Late Shri Hari Ram Gupta, 2. Shri Ravindra Gupta S/o Late Shri Hari Ram Gupta All Address : 106, Pasrat, Daru Bholdea-2, Purani Pasrat, Jhansi, UP-284002 All Address 2 : Arazi No. 356, Mauza-Dadiyapura, Satyam Colony, Jhansi, UP-284002 Branch Name : Bada Bazar, Jhansi (0310)	All that part and parcel of the property consists of residential Land & Building measuring area 1156.25 Sq. ft./107.45 sq. mtr. as per Bahi No. 1, Zild No. 2401, Page No. 195 to 212 Sl. No. 2566 registered on 17.06.2003 at Sub-Registrar Jhansi situated at Arazi No. 356, Mauza Dadiyapura, Satyam Colony outside Badagaon Gate, Jhansi Uttar Pradesh standing in the name of Smt. Sharda Devi Gupta W/o Late Shri Hari Ram Gupta resident of 106, Pasrat, Daru Bholdea-2, Purani Pasrat, Jhansi, UP-284002 Details of Boundaries (As per deed): East: Plot of Seller, West: Road 15 ft. wide, North: Plot of Rajput, South: Plot of Ghansoll	Rs. 4,95,488.25 (Rupees Four Lakh Ninety Five Thousand Four Hundred Eighty Eight & Paisa Twenty Five Only) as on 09.11.2023 (inclusive of interest upto 30.06.2023) plus further interest thereon at the contractual rate, costs, charges and Expenses etc. till date of Payment.

Date of Possession : 05.02.2024

Place : Jhansi

Authorized Officer (UCO Bank)

Date : 10.02.2024

Place : Jhansi

Authorized Officer (UCO Bank)



Asset Recovery Branch :

1st Floor, Steel House, Near Police Check Post, Boring Road, Patna-800001, Email: arb.patna@unionbankofindia.bank

15 Days SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTY (Appendix IV A)

E-auction Sale Notice for sale of immovable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and proviso to the rule 8 (6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor, the Possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of Union Bank of India, the Secured Creditor, will be sold on "As is where it is", "As is what is" and "Whatever there is" on 28.02.2024 for recovery of Rs 12,85,63,655.00 (Twelve Crores Eighty Five Lakh, Sixty Three Thousand Six Hundred Fifty Five only) as on 04.10.2016 with further interest, cost & expenses as on 31.01.2018 Outstanding Demand Rs. 10,29,97,499/- (Ten Crore Twenty Nine Lakhs Ninety Seven Thousand Four Hundred Ninety Nine only) with further interest, cost & expenses, due to Union Bank of India Asset Recovery Branch, the Secured Creditor from No. 1- Borrower - M/s Rammundi Estate Pvt. Ltd., Unit at Gaya Dobhi Road, Near Airport, Beside, Pareena Motors, Gaya, Registered Address, Mape Villa, M-34 Ashiana Woodland, Asanbani, Chandil, Jharkhand - 832102, Represented by its Director Mr. Akhouri Gopal. No. 2 - Guarantor : a) Mr. Akhouri Gopal S/o Akhouri Bansidhar, R/o Bansi Sadan, Chand Chaura, Gaya, Bihar-823001, b). Mr. Akhouri Nitesh S/o Sri Akhouri Gopal R/o Bansi Sadan, Chand Chaura, Gaya, Bihar-823001, d) Mrs. Sangeeta Akhouri, W/o Mr. Akhouri Gopal, R/o Bansi Sadan, Chand Chaura, Gaya, Bihar-823001. The Reserve Price will be Rs. 31,00,000/- (Rupees Thirty-One Lakh Only) and Earnest Money Deposit will be Rs. 3,10,000/- (Rupees Three Lakh and Ten Thousand Only) with bid increment of Rs. 10,000/-

Brief description of Property :- Residential flat Bearing No E-378, in the 3rd Floor of the building known as Emerald, Area 1390 sq. ft., (Undivided Share or Interest of Land 273.61sq.ft or 0.62 Decimal), in the portion of Plot No. - 667 and 668 under Khata No. - 7 situated at Ashiana Brahman and, in Mouza - Tamulia, Halka No. - II, Thana No. - 333 within P.S. - No-Chandil, Dist-Saraikella, Kharaswan, Jharkhand in the name of Akhouri Nitesh S/o Mr. Akhouri Gopal R/o Moh - Chand - Chaura, Bansi Sadan, Gaya - (As per Sale Deed No. : 4371 Dated : 30.10.2013)

For detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please refer to the link provided in Union Bank of India's website i.e. <https://www.unionbankofindia.co.in> / english / TendelViewAllAuction.aspx and <https://www.mstcecommerce.com/auctionhome/bapi/index.jsp>

Date: 08.02.2024 Place: Patna Authorised Officer



Asset Recovery Branch :

1st Floor, Steel House, Near Police Check Post, Boring Road, Patna-800001, Email: arb.patna@unionbankofindia.bank

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For detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please refer to the link provided in Union Bank of India's website i.e. <https://www.unionbankofindia.co.in> and <https://www.mstcecommerce.com/auctionhome/bapi/index.jsp>

Date: 08.02.2024 Place: Patna Authorised Officer

Date : 10.02.2024

Place : Patna

Authorized Officer

Advertisement No. 13/2024

Government of India

Public Enterprises Selection Board Invites applications for the post of

Director (Production)

in

Braithwaite & Co. Ltd.

Last date of submission of application by the applicant is

06th March, 2024

Last date of forwarding of applications by the Nodal Officers to PESB is

15th March, 2024

For details login to website <http://www.pesb.gov.in>

INDIAN AIR FORCE

AIR FORCE SPORTS

CONTROL BOARD

RECRUITMENT OF OUTSTANDING SPORTSMEN

APPLICATIONS ARE INVITED FROM OUTSTANDING UNMARRIED MALE SPORTSMEN TO JOIN INDIAN AIR FORCE AS AGNIVEERVAYU (SPORTS) INTAKE 01/2024

DETAILED ADVERTISEMENT AVAILABLE ON

<HTTPS://AGNIPATHVAYU.CDAC.IN>

ONLINE APPLICATIONS ARE TO BE SUBMITTED AT

<HTTPS://AGNIPATHVAYU.CDAC.IN/CASBSPM>

FROM 1000H ON 13 FEBRUARY 2024 TO

1700H ON 22 FEBRUARY 2024

CBC-10803/11/0011/2324

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF A PERSON ACCUSED

(See Section 82 Cr. PC)

Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused person namely Sumit S/o Sh. Ram Singh R/o H.No. 783, Gali No.3, Subhash Nagar Bahaduragh Haryana has committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence in case FIR No. 147/2019 U/s 457/380/411/34 IPC at PS: Mundka, Delhi and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said accused Sumit can not be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said accused Sumit has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant). Proclamation is hereby made that the said accused Sumit of FIR No. 147/2019 U/s 457/380/411/34 IPC of PS: Mundka, Delhi is required to appear before this court to answer the said complaint on or before 27.03.2024.

By order

Swati Bhardwaj

Metropolitan Magistrate-06, West Delhi, Room No. 355, Third Floor, Tis Hazari Courts, Delhi

DP/1598/OD/2024

INFORMATION

RECRUITMENT OF OUTSTANDING SPORTSMEN

APPLICATIONS ARE INVITED FROM OUTSTANDING UNMARRIED MALE SPORTSMEN TO JOIN INDIAN AIR FORCE AS AGNIVEERVAYU (SPORTS) INTAKE 01/2024

DETAILED ADVERTISEMENT AVAILABLE ON

<HTTPS://AGNIPATHVAYU.CDAC.IN>



UJJVN LIMITED

H.O.: "UJJWAL", Maharan Bagh, G.M.S. Road, Dehradun-248006
Telephones: 0135-2763808, Fax: 0135-2763508
CIN No.U40101R2001SGC025866, Website:www.ujvnl.com

Letter No: 204 Date: 08/02/2024

Office of the Executive Engineer, (M&G) Pathri Power House, Bahadrapur, Hardwar invites sealed tenders from interested parties. Brief summary of tenders are given below:-

Tender No.: 43/EE/(Pathri)/2023-24 – Annual Contract for operation & maintenance of 500 KWp Solar PV Plant Pathri.

Estimated Cost: Rs. 7,27,608/- (GST extra)

Date of availability of bid document on website: 09.02.2024

Last date for submission of tender: 01.03.2024, up to 16:00 Hrs.

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

Executive Engineer

"AVOID WASTEFUL USE OF ELECTRICITY"

(M&G)

UJVNL LIMITED

(An Uttarakhand Govt. Enterprise)
H. O. "UJJWAL" MAHARANI BAGH, G.M.S. ROAD, DEHRADUN - 248006, CIN No: U40101UR2001SGC025866

Tele: 0135-2763808, Fax: 0135-2763808, website: www.ujvnl.com

RO No. 217

Tender Notice Date : 09.02.2024

Office of the Executive Engineer (Civil-I), Tiuni-Plas, UJVNL Ltd, Dakpathar (Dehradun), invites bids from interested parties. Brief summary of tender is given below:

Tender No.: 05/EE(Civil)/Tiuni-Plas/2023-24

Name of work: Construction/Repair of reference pillars along with land alignment/boundaries & making footpath on Tiuni-Plas HEP at

Tiuni, District, Dehradun

Estimated cost: Rs 11,71,410.50 (including GST)

Date of availability of bid document on website: 09.02.2024 from 17.00Hrs

Last date for submission of Tender: 01.03.2024 at 15:30 Hrs

For fuller & further details, kindly visit our website "www.ujvnl.com"

Executive Engineer (Civil-I)

Tiuni-Plas, Dakpathar

"Avoid wasteful use of Electricity"

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA

Department Of Water Resources

OFFICE OF THE ADDITIONAL CHIEF ENGINEER,
NORTHERN MINOR IRRIGATION CIRCLE,
SAMBALPUR.

A-1474

E-Mail Id. - sennicspr@yahoo.co.in

No. 199/Dated- 08.02.2024

1st Corrigendum of Bid Identification No: ACENMIC, SBP - 03/2023-24

Due to unavoidable circumstances as well technical deficiencies the following changes are made to Bid ref No: ACENMIC, SBP - 03/2023-24

Name of Work:- Improvement to Distribution system of Girischandrapur MIP in Naktideul Block of Sambalpur District under ERM 2023-24

The date are changed as follows.

SI. No	Original as per Tender Call Notice	Modification to original Tender Call Notice
1	Date & Time of Availability of Bid Document in the Portal: From 11.00 A.M. of Dt. 09.02.2024 Up to 5.30 P.M. of Dt. 19.02.2024	Date & Time of Availability of Bid Document in the Portal: From 11.00 A.M. of Dt. 16.02.2024 to 5.30 P.M. of Dt. 26.02.2024
2	Last Date & Time for Receipt of Bids in the Portal: Up to 05.30 P.M. of Dt. 19.02.2024	Last Date & Time for Receipt of Bids in the Portal: Up to 05.30 P.M. of Dt. 26.02.2024
3	Date of Opening of Technical Bid (Cover-I): Dt. 20.02.2024 at 11.00 A.M. onwards	Date of Opening of Technical Bid (Cover-I): Dt. 27.02.2024 at 11.00 A.M. onwards

All other terms and condition shall remain unchanged.

Sd/-
Additional Chief Engineer
Northern Minor Irrigation Circle, Sambalpur
OIPR-32208/11/0005/2324

GOVERNMENT OF JHARKHAND

WATER RESOURCES DEPARTMENT

LOCAL/NATIONAL TURNKEY COMPETITIVE BIDDING

(Complete Job with Ten Years OM&M)

NIT No. :- WRD/Water Ways Division, Medinigar/

TURNKEY-01/23-24 Date :- 07.02.2024

Name of Work	Palamu Pipeline Irrigation Scheme (Package-I) on Turn Key basis with 10 (Ten) years Operation, Maintenance and Management (OMM) (Complete job)
Estimate Cost. (Rs.)	Rs. 190,79,25,302.58 (One Hundred Ninety Crore Seventy Nine Lakh Twenty Five Thousand Three Hundred Two Rupees and Fifty eight Paise Only)
Time of Completion	02 Years (Two Years), 730 Days
Period of availability of Bidding document on website	From 12.02.2024 at 4:00 PM to 11.03.2024 upto 5:00 PM
Time and Date of Pre-bid Conference. (Physical as well as On-line)	23.02.2024 at 02:00 PM at 1 st floor, Conference Hall, Nepal House, Doranda, Ranchi.
Period of online submission of Bids	From 12.02.2024 at 4:00 PM to 11.03.2024 upto 5:00 PM
Date and Time of opening Pre-Qualification Bid.	15.03.2024 upto 2:00 PM
Date and Time of opening of Technical Bids	To be announced after Pre-Qualification Bid
Date and Time of opening of Financial Bids	To be announced after Technical Bid
Place of opening of Bids	Chief Engineer, WRD, Medinigar
Officer Inviting Bids and his Mobile No. and E-mail id.	Executive Engineer, Water ways division, Medinigar Mob. No.- 725009057 E-Mail ID- waterwaysdiv.003@gmail.com
Helpline Number of e-Procurement	06562-240841

Executive Engineer

PR 318388 District(23-24).D Water Ways Division, Medinigar.

HIMACHAL PRADESH; PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

e-Procurement Notice

INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB)

1. The Executive Engineer HP PWD Jubbal Dist Shinda HP on behalf of Governor of HP invites the online bids on Percentage rate, in electronic tendering system, in 2 Cover System for the under mentioned work from the eligible and approved contractors/Firms registered with HP PWD Department.

Job No	Name of Work	Estimated Cost (Rs.)	Earnest Money (Rs.)	Cost of Tender Form (Rs.)	Time Allowed	Class
1	Construction of 24.00 Meter span RCC bridge over river kawali Tehsil Jubbal Dist,Shinda HP (SH-C/O Sub structure and Superstructure of bridge)	15264707/- only	3,03,300/-only	Ru500/-	2 Months	Ia/C

Tender document and other instructions can be downloaded or viewed online from the portal <http://hpitenders.gov.in> by the firm individual registered on the website which is free of cost.

Key Dates:

1. Date of Online Publication	09.02.2024 11:00 HRS
2. Document Download Start and End Date	09.02.2024 11:30 HRS upto 18.02.2024 17:30 HRS
3. Bid Submission Start and End Date	09.02.2024 11:30 HRS upto 18.02.2024 18:00 HRS
4. Physical Submission of EMD and Cost of Tender Document	On line Mode
5. Date of Technical Bid opening.	19.02.2024 11:00 HRS
6. Evaluation of Technical Bid followed by Opening of Financial Bid.	Date to be announced

Executive Engineer, Jubbal Division HP PWD, Jubbal

5749/HP

कार्यपालक अभियंता का कार्यालय
ग्रामीण विकास विशेष प्रमंडल, राँची।

ई-निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना

अंतिम अल्पालान ई- निविदा सूचना संख्या - RDD/SD/RANCHI/22/2022-23 Re-tender (3rd Call) P.R No. 294255 (Rural Development) 22-23 D

1. कार्य की विस्तृत विवरणी :

क्र०सं०	कार्य का नाम	परिमाण विप्रत्र की राशि (लाख में)	अग्रधन की राशि (रु० में)	परिमाण विप्रत्र का मूल्य (रु० में)	कार्य पूर्ण करने की अवधि
1	बेडो प्रखंड में प्रखंड विकास पदाधिकारी-सह-अंचलाधिकारी / पर्यावरणी / तुरीय / वर्चुअल कार्यालय आवास एवं प्रखंड परिवार का विकास का नाम एवं पता :- कार्यपालक अभियंता, ग्रामीण विकास विशेष प्रमंडल,	606.30893	12,12,700.00	10,000.00	12 माह

2. वेबसाइट में निविदा प्रक्रम की तिथि :- 12.02.2024

3. ई-निविदा प्राप्ति की तिथि :- समय - दिनांक 13.02.2024 से दिनांक 20.02.2024 को अपराह्न 5:00 बजे तक

4. ई-निविदा खालीन की तिथि :- एवं तारीख - कार्यालय अभियंता, ग्रामीण विकास विशेष प्रमंडल, राँची।

5. ई-निविदा खालीन की तिथि :- एवं तारीख - कार्यालय अभियंता, ग्रामीण विकास विशेष प्रमंडल, राँची।

6. ई-निविदा आमंत्रित करने वाले पदाधिकारी का नाम एवं पता :- कार्यपालक अभियंता, ग्रामीण विकास विशेष प्रमंडल, राँची।

7. ई-निविदा प्रक्रोक्त का दूरभास सं० - 9122180770

8. परिमाण विप्रत्र की राशि घट-वृक्ष संकेत है तबनुसार अग्रधन की राशि देय होगी।

9. निविदा शुरू कर एवं अग्रधन की राशि घट-वृक्ष के लिए Online Mode द्वारा संचालित होगी।

10. निविदा शुरू कर एवं अग्रधन की राशि घट-वृक्ष के लिए वेबसाइट www.jharkhandtenders.gov.in एवं कार्यालय की सूचना पढ़ पर देखा जा सकता है।

विस्तृत जानकारी के लिए वेबसाइट www.jharkhandtenders.gov.in एवं कार्यालय की सूचना पढ़ पर देखा जा सकता है।

PR 318400 (Rural Development) 23-24 (D)

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PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF A PERSON ACCUSED

See Section 82 Cr. P.C.

Regional Office Samastipur :	यूनियन बैंक  Union Bank of India Panchvati Complex, Mohanpur Road, Samastipur (Bihar)-848101	POSSESSION NOTICE (For immovable property)
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Whereas:
The undersigned being the authorised officer of **Union Bank of India**, under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(12) read with rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a demand notice calling upon the following borrowers and guarantors to repay the amount mentioned in the notice and as stated below. The borrower/guarantor having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrower/guarantor and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/her under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with rule 8 of the said rules.

The borrower/guarantor in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of the **Union Bank of India**, for an amount mentioned as stated below and interest thereon. The borrower's attention is invited to provisions of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.

Branch Name	Name of the Borrower Name of the Mortgagor/Guarantor	Description of the Secured Assets	1. Amount of Demand Notice 2. Date of Demand Notice 3. Date of Possession
Madhubani Branch	1. Mr. Bipin Kumar Jha (Borrower) S/o Mr. Surya Narayan Jha, At- W a r d - N o . 1 , 0 , Pilakhbar, Madhubani, Bihar- 847211	All that piece and parcel of Land and Building in the name of Mr. Bipin Kumar Jha S/o Mr. Maiza- Pilakhbar, Pargana-Hati, Thana- No-59, Taizi No.6424, PS and Anchal-Rajnagar, Dist. Madhubani, Bihar, Khesra No.- 2229, 2232, 2233,2235 (O), 2059(N), Area 1 Kattha 10 Dhur. Boundary : N- Self Vendor, S- Self Vendee, E- Road, W- Baidyanath Jha & Bimlanand Mishra	1. Rs. 4,28,434.63/- 2. 21.11.2023 3. 06.02.2024

Place : Madhubani Date : 09.02.2024

Authorised officer
Union bank of India

Regional Office Samastipur :	यूनियन बैंक  Union Bank of India Panchvati Complex, Mohanpur Road, Samastipur (Bihar)-848101	POSSESSION NOTICE (For immovable property)
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Whereas:
The undersigned being the authorised officer of **Union Bank of India**, under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(12) read with rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a demand notice calling upon the following borrowers and guarantors to repay the amount mentioned in the notice and as stated below. The borrower/guarantor having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrower/guarantor and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/her under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with rule 8 of the said rules.

The borrower/guarantor in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of the **Union Bank of India**, for an amount mentioned as stated below and interest thereon. The borrower's attention is invited to provisions of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.

Branch Name	Name of the Borrower Name of the Mortgagor/Guarantor	Description of the Secured Assets	1. Amount of Demand Notice 2. Date of Demand Notice 3. Date of Possession
Jhansi/Jhajhpur Branch	1. M/s Shashi Enterprises (Borrower) Prop. Maharaj Surendra, Situated at In front of Shantinath Mandir, Behat Jhanjharpur RS. Madhubani, Bihar-847403, 2. Sri Mahara Surendra (Borrower) Prop. Of M/s Shashi Enterprises S/o- Sri Ganesh Mahajar, 3. Smt. Anita Devi (Guarantor/ Mortgagor) W/o-Maharaj Surendra both (2 & 3) al Villi+ Post- Sangi, Block- Ghoghardha, Madhubani, Bihar-847403	All that piece and parcel of Land & building in the name of Smt Anita Devi W/o- Sri Maharaj Surendra Sashikant Ji situated at Mauza- Behat South, Mohalla- Shivpuri, PS- Madhepur . Dist.-Madhubani, Bihar bearing land detail as under:- Thana No.239, Taizi No. 6424, Khesra No. 70 (OLD) 101(NEW) 71 (OLD) 102(NEW), Area 15 dhur. Boundary : N- Tarakant Mishra, S- Smt. Nirmala Mishra, E- Rajesh Jha & Others, W- Pramila Devi	1. Rs. 5,79,355.17/- 2. 25.07.2023 3. 06.02.2024

Place : Madhubani Date : 09.02.2024

Authorised officer
Union bank of India

NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY G2

E-TENDER NOTICE
No.: SNT-JP-38-2023-24, Dt: 07/02/2024
DRM (S&T) North Western Railway, Jaipur, and for and on behalf of The President of India, invites E-Tenders from registered tenderers/bidders for the following work
Name of work with its location: Provision of CCTV surveillance system at ARMORY, having coverage over space meant for ARMORY at Jaipur Station of Jaipur Division. **Tender Value:** ₹ 4,89,643.07/- **Bid Security:** ₹ 9,800/- **Tender submission & closing Date & Time on website:** 01/03/2024 at 15.00 Hrs. **Website Particulars & Notice board location:** www.ireps.gov.in. DRM office/NWR/Jaipur. Follow us at [Facebook](#) [Twitter](#) [Instagram](#) [NWRailways](#) [NWRailways](#)

NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY G2

NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER
DRM (ENHM& Power) Jaipur, acting for and on behalf of The President of India invites E-Tender for the following work having closing date 04.03.2024 at 15.00 Hrs. Bidders will be able to submit their original/ revised bids upto closing date and time only. Manual offers are not allowed against this tender and any such manual offer received shall be ignored. **E-Tender Notice No.:** NWR-JPOEnHM (GRNT)/1/2023- O/S DENHM/JP/NWR (Comp 150605) Date : 08.02.2024
Name of work with its location : Renewal/Recertification of Green rating certificate of Divisional Railway Managers office building Jaipur (Approximate area 9778.68 Sqm) of Jaipur division. **Approx. cost of the work :** ₹ 1,87,493.00/- **Earnest Money to be deposited :** ₹ 38,000/- **Date and time for submission of tender:** 04.03.2024 upto 15:00 Hrs. **Website Particular:** www.ireps.gov.in 174-DP/24

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"IMPORTANT"

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The Tata Power Company Limited

Bombay House, 24 Homi Mody Street, Mumbai 400 001

Website: www.tatapower.com CIN : L28920MH1919PLC000567

EXTRACT OF CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL RESULTS FOR THE QUARTER AND NINE MONTHS ENDED 31ST DECEMBER, 2023

Sr. No.	Particulars	Quarter ended			Nine months ended		Year ended
		31-Dec-23 (Unaudited)	30-Sep-23 (Unaudited)	31-Dec-22 (Unaudited)	31-Dec-23 (Unaudited)	31-Dec-22 (Unaudited)	
a.	Total Income from Operations	14,651.00	15,738.03	14,129.12	45,602.32	42,655.32	55,109.08
b.	Profit / (Loss) before Exceptional items and tax	1,488.76	1,230.68	1,864.02	3,960.31	4,298.93	5,457.00
c.	Profit / (Loss) before Tax	1,488.76	1,230.68	1,864.02	4,194.99	4,298.93	5,457.00
d.	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period / year	1,076.12	1,017.41	1,052.14	3,234.51	2,870.86	3,809.67
e.	Total Comprehensive Income	1,181.12	1,190.40	1,140.35	3,484.15	3,731.18	4,651.17
f.	Paid-up Equity Share Capital (Face Value: ₹1/- per share)	319.56	319.56	319.56	319.56	319.56	319.56
g.	Reserves (excluding Revaluation Reserve)	30,652.67	29,589.72	26,156.95	30,652.67	26,156.95	28,240.84
h.	Securities Premium Account	3,107.54	3,107.54	3,107.54	3,107.54	3,107.54	3,107.54
i.	Networth	32,667.08	31,575.00	26,889.55	32,667.08	26,889.55	30,121.93
j.	Capital Redemption Reserve	514.47	514.47	515.08	514.47	515.08	514.47
k.	Debenture Redemption Reserve	363.81	443.23	438.55	363.81	438.55	433.23
l.	Outstanding Debt	52,768.78	53,053.89	54,026.84	52,768.78	54,026.84	53,547.78
m.	Earnings Per Equity Share (of ₹1/- each) (not annualised)						
	Basic and Diluted: (In ₹)						
(i)	Before Net Movement in Regulatory Deferral Balances	2.57	2.93	2.50	9.00	6.18	8.09
(ii)	After Net Movement in Regulatory Deferral Balances	2.98	2.74	2.95	8.77	8.00	10.43
n.	Debt Equity Ratio (in times)	1.43	1.48	1.74	1.43	1.74	1.57
o.	Debt Service Coverage Ratio (in times) (not annualised)	0.91	0.78	1.12	0.88	1.24	1.08
p.	Interest Service Coverage Ratio (in times)	2.47	2.11	2.78	2.21	2.42	2.33
q.	Current Ratio (in times)	0.75	0.76	0.71	0.75	0.71	0.74
r.	Long Term Debt to Working Capital (in times)	(13.00)	(24.06)	(11.39)	(13.00)	(11.39)	(27.89)
s.	Bad Debts to Account Receivable Ratio (%) (not annualised)	1.17%	0.75%	1.71%	2.69%	3.29%	6.23%
t.	Current Liability Ratio (in times)	0.44	0.45	0.49	0.44	0.49	0.47
u.	Total Debts to Total Assets (in times)	0.39	0.40	0.44	0.39	0.44	0.42
v.	Debtors' Turnover Ratio (in number of days)	78	70	81	70	71	67
w.	Inventory Turnover Ratio (in number of days)	58	52	60	66	59	67
x.	Operating Margin (%)	13%	14%	19%	14%	16%	15%
y.	Net Profit Margin (%) including exceptional item	7%	7%	7%	7%	7%	7%

Notes:
1. The above results were reviewed by the Audit Committee and approved by the Board of Directors at its meeting held on 9th February, 2024.
2. The above is an extract of the detailed format of Quarterly Consolidated Financial Results filed with the Stock Exchanges under Regulation 33 of the SEBI (Listing and Other Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The full format of the Quarterly Consolidated and Standalone Financial Results is available on the Stock Exchange websites www.nseindia.com and www.bseindia.com and on the Company's website www.tatapower.com.

For and on behalf of the Board of Directors of
THE TATA POWER COMPANY LIMITED

PRAVEER SINHA
CEO & MANAGING DIRECTOR
DIN 01785164

Date: 09th February, 2024
Place: Mumbai

Bahadur Chand Investments Private Limited

Registered office :- The Grand Plaza, Plot No.2, Nelson Mandela Road, Vasant Kunj- Phase-II, New Delhi- 110070

Correspondence Address: 37, Community Center, Basant Lok, Vasant Vihar, New Delhi – 110 057

Fax: 011-26152453, Tel. No: 011 - 47619310, Website: www.bahadurchandinvestments.com, E-mail: info.bcipl@gmail.com; CIN: U65921DL1979PTC331322; PAN: AACAB6706F

EXPLAINED CLIMATE

WHY TAYLOR SWIFT'S PRIVATE AIR TRAVEL IS A PROBLEM FOR THE PLANET

ARJUN SENGUPTA
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 9

TAYLOR SWIFT'S legal team has threatened legal action against Jack Sweeney, a 21-year-old University of Central Florida student, who runs social media accounts sharing publicly available information about private jet landings and takeoffs.

In a cease and desist letter sent to Sweeney in December, Swift's lawyers said his social media accounts cause "direct and irreparable harm, as well as emotional and physical distress", and that unless he stops the "stalking and harassing behaviour", the artist would "have no choice but to pursue any and all legal remedies", *The Washington Post* reported.

Sweeney and critics of Swift, however, have pointed out that this is an attempt to stifle criticism about the pop icon's massive carbon footprint.

Problem with private jets

Private jets, on a per capita basis, are amongst the biggest polluters in the world.

A 2023 report by Transport and Environment, a European climate NGO advocating for cleaner transportation systems, estimated that private jets were 5 to 14 times more polluting, per passenger, than commercial planes, and 50 times more polluting than trains.

The report said that private jets could emit about 2 tonnes of carbon dioxide (CO2) every hour, roughly a quarter of the yearly carbon emissions of an average European. A report by British media outlet *Yard* estimated the average amount of CO2 produced by celebrities and billionaires — only by their private jets — to be roughly 3376.64 tonnes each in 2022.

Private jet use, however, has consistently gone up over the years. A *Reuters* report from May 2023, quoting a Greenpeace study, said private flights in Europe had increased by 64% in 2022, and emitted more than 5.3 million tonnes of CO2.

World's worst CO2 emitter

Taylor Swift, often hailed by fans as an 'ethical billionaire', has routinely copped criticism for her widespread use of private jets, even for distances that could easily be covered by road.

For instance, her January 30 flight from St Louis to St Louis. She took off from St Louis Downtown Airport in Illinois, and landed 13 minutes later at the Spirit of St Louis Airport in Missouri, only 45 km (and 40 odd minutes) away by road.

In 2022, *Yard* carried out a study listing celebs with the worst private jet CO2 emissions using data collated from Sweeney's Celebrity 'Jets Twitter' (now X) page. Despite not being on tour at the time, Swift came out on top, amassing a whopping 22,923 minutes, or 15.9 days, in air. This, *Yard* estimated, resulted in CO2 emissions of 8,293.54 tonnes — 1,184.8 times more than the average person's total annual emissions.

Other famous persons on the list are boxing superstar Floyd Mayweather, hip-hop legend Jay-Z, baseball star Alex Rodriguez, country singer Blake Shelton, and director Steven Spielberg, socialite Kim Kardashian, actor Mark Wahlberg, media personality Oprah Winfrey, and rapper Travis Scott.



Taylor Swift at the 66th Annual Grammy Awards in Los Angeles on February 4. *Reuters*

Private jets, on a per capita basis, are amongst the biggest polluters in the world.

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A much larger problem

Private jet travel is but one example of how the rich and powerful disproportionately contribute to CO2 emissions and climate change.

As the world begins to suffer from global warming's catastrophic effects, there has been an ever-increasing focus on the question of culpability.

The United Nations' website on climate change says: "Our lifestyles have a profound impact on our planet. The wealthiest bear the greatest responsibility: the richest 1 per cent of the global population combined account for more greenhouse gas emissions than the poorest 50 per cent."

At the level of nations, this can be seen in the vast gulf in carbon footprints between the rich and the poor. Analysis by *The New York Times* found that 23 rich industrialised countries are responsible for 50% of all historical emissions and more than 150 countries are responsible for the rest.

This gulf persists even today. For example, the US records a per capita annual carbon emissions of 15.32 metric tonnes, while India reports only 1.89 metric tonnes annually, according to the *Global Carbon Atlas*, 2021.

At the same time, it is the poorest who are bearing the brunt of global warming's impact. "People who have contributed least to the climate crisis are right now suffering its worst impacts," Elizabeth Wathuti, a Kenyan climate activist, told Oxfam.

This is why climate justice is intrinsically linked to socio-economic justice. The announcement of the Loss and Damage Fund in last year's Conference of Parties (COP) of the UNFCCC in Dubai is aimed towards addressing this issue. But more needs to be done.

THE INDIAN EXPRESS, SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2024

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If there are questions of current or contemporary relevance that you would like explained, please write to explained@indianexpress.com

EXPLAINED POLITICS

The message in the Ratnas

Along with recognising the contribution of the recipient to the nation and its people, the Padma and Bharat Ratna awards have long been used as vehicles to deliver political messages — and the Narendra Modi government has been particularly astute in making its choices for the honours

DEEPTIMAN TIWARY
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 9

PRIME MINISTER Narendra Modi on Friday announced that former Prime Ministers P V Narasimha Rao (1991–96) and Chaudhary Charan Singh (July 1979–January 1980), and the pioneer of the Green Revolution Dr M S Swaminathan, would be conferred the Bharat Ratna, the country's highest civilian honour.

The Prime Minister had announced the Bharat Ratna for veteran BJP leader L K Advani on February 3, and for OBC reservations pioneer and former Bihar Chief Minister Karpoori Thakur last month.

The guidelines of the Ministry of Home Affairs on the Bharat Ratna say the number of awards must be "restricted to a maximum of three in a particular year". This ceiling has been breached once earlier — in 1999 when Atal Bihari Vajpayee was Prime Minister.

BJP's signals for elections

Friday's announcements are especially significant because they have come barely a couple of months ahead of Lok Sabha elections. By conferring the Bharat Ratna on Dr Swaminathan and Charan Singh, the government appears to be signalling it cares about farmers and agriculture.

Charan Singh is also among the tallest Jat leaders the country has seen. While Jats have stood firmly behind the BJP in Uttar Pradesh since 2014, the community is said to be unhappy with the party in Haryana.

The honour for Charan Singh coincides with the BJP's successful outreach to the RLD, the party that is led by Jayant Chaudhary, the grandson of Charan Singh. The RLD is part of the opposition INDIA alliance, but is now set to contest the Lok Sabha elections with the BJP. Jayant said on X (formerly Twitter) that the Prime Minister's announcement had "won his heart", and later told reporters that he no longer has the face to deny the possibility of the RLD joining the NDA.

The honour for Narasimha Rao is even more significant. It rubs in the message that the Congress had for years ignored one of its most able administrators, the man who pulled the country out of a deep financial crisis and set it on the path of economic reforms and growth, only because he had differences with Sonia Gandhi.

It also underscores the point the Prime Minister sought to make in Parliament this week — that while the BJP puts the nation above all else, for the Congress, the Nehru-Gandhi family always comes first.

The Ratna for Rao is also significant for coming soon after the consecration of the Ram Temple in Ayodhya. The Congress has been accused of putting the blame for the demolition of the Babri Masjid on Rao, who was Prime Minister at the time, by his alleged miscalculation of the situation on the ground.

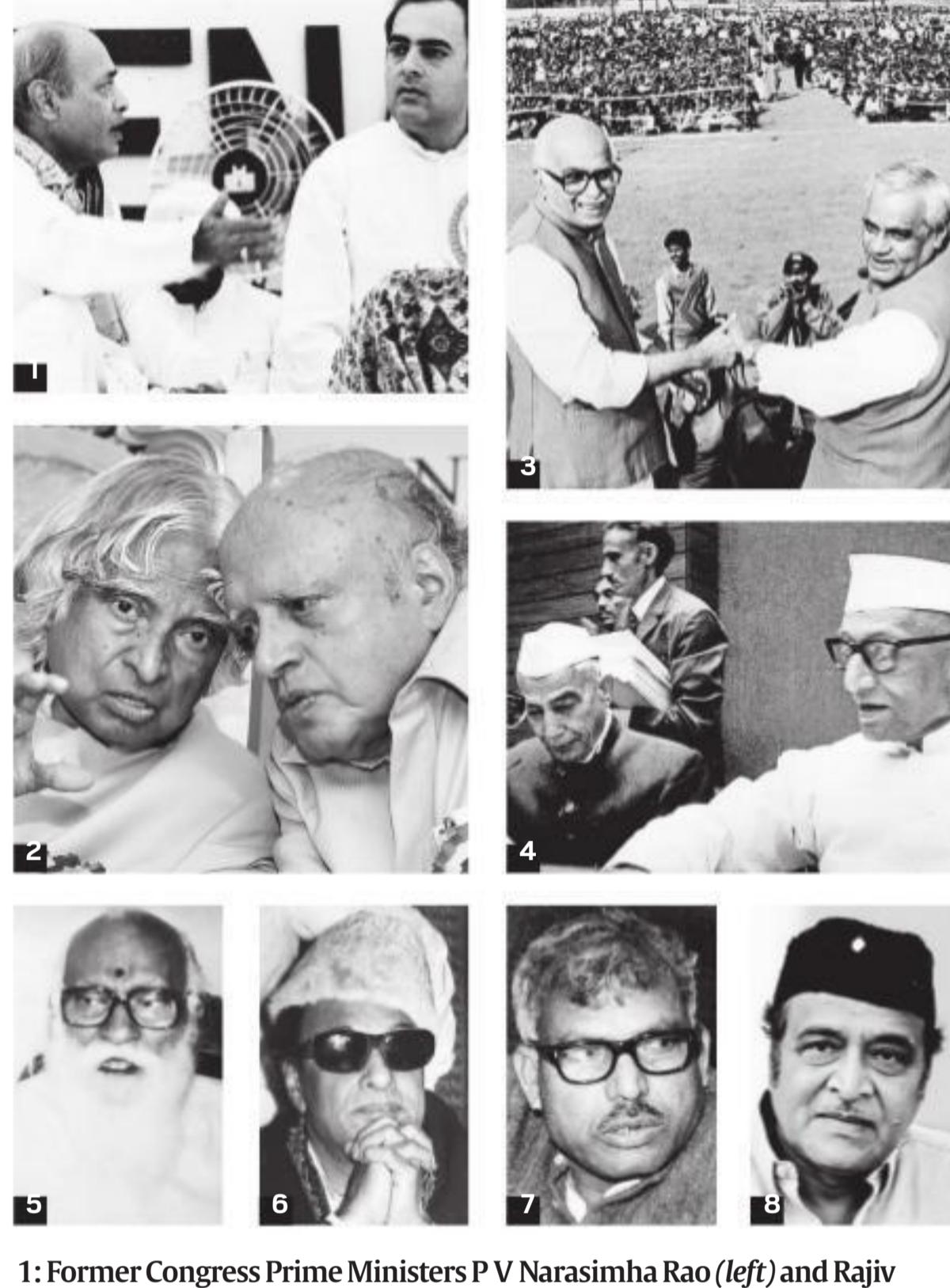
Eye on Temple and Mandal

The Bharat Ratna for Advani was noteworthy given the complicated relationship that Prime Minister Modi has shared with the 96-year-old leader who was once considered his backer in the BJP but who later tried to thwart his rise.

But it was also a recognition of Advani's role in making the Ram Temple a reality — as BJP president at the time, it is Advani who put the Ram Janmabhoomi movement at the forefront of the party's agenda. The highest civilian honour for Advani is likely to contribute to the BJP's narrative on the temple in the run-up to the elections.

The honour for Karpoori Thakur has come at a time when the Opposition has

Recipients of highest honour



1: Former Congress Prime Ministers P V Narasimha Rao (left) and Rajiv Gandhi; 2: Scientists A P J Abdul Kalam (left) and M S Swaminathan; 3: BJP stalwart L K Advani (left) and former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee; 4: Janata government Prime Ministers Chaudhary Charan Singh (left) and Morarji Desai; 5: RSS leader Nanaji Deshmukh; 6: former Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M G Ramachandran; 7: former Bihar Chief Minister and social justice icon Karpoori Thakur; 8: music legend Bhupen Hazarika. Archive photos

been hoping to build its demand for a caste census into a plank that might be able to reduce the post-Ram Temple Hindutva fervour in favour of the BJP.

Recognition for the man whom Nitish Kumar and Lalu Prasad consider their political guru — but whose contribution to social justice has never been recognised by the Congress — was intended to signal the BJP's empathy and concern for the backward castes, especially in Bihar and UP. Days after the announcement of the Ratna, Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, who had spearheaded the demand for a caste census and carried out a survey of castes in his state, shifted his allegiance to the NDA.

A history of astute choices

Along with recognising the contribution of the recipient, the Padma and Bharat Ratna awards have always been tools for political messaging — and the Narendra Modi government has been particularly astute in making its choices.

Before the announcement of these five Bharat Ratna, the Modi government has conferred the honour on five others over its two terms in power.

They are educationist, freedom fighter, and former Congress president Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya, former Prime Minister Atal

Bihari Vajpayee, former President and Congress leader Pranab Mukherjee, the legendary Assamese musician Bhupen Hazarika, and RSS leader Nanaji Deshmukh.

The honour for Malviya and Vajpayee came in 2015, within a year of the Modi government coming to power.

Malviya, who was elected Congress president in 1909, 1918, and 1932, was always to the Hindu right in the ideological spectrum that the party represented before Independence. Malviya founded the Akhil Bharatiya Hindu Mahasabha in 1907 and the Banaras Hindu University in 1916, and served as its Vice Chancellor from 1919 until 1938. The Sangh Parivar has always claimed the legacy of Pandit Malviya, and the Ratna was an assertion that he did not get his due from the Congress — and that it took a BJP government to correct that injustice.

Vajpayee, of course, was a towering political stalwart who had friends across parties. In his four-decade career in Parliament, Vajpayee served nine terms in Lok Sabha and two in Rajya Sabha, and took oath as Prime Minister thrice. In 2004, he became the first non-Congress Prime Minister to complete a full five years in power.

The acknowledgement of Vajpayee's achievements by Modi sent a powerful signal down the BJP ranks. In Modi's early years as

Chief Minister of Gujarat, he was seen as occupying the hardline end of the BJP's ideological spectrum while Vajpayee, who was then Prime Minister, stood at the opposite liberal end. A low point of Modi's political career was when Vajpayee frowned upon his government's role in the communal riots of 2002.

In 2019, the Modi government picked Mukherjee, one of the Congress's most senior leaders, for the Bharat Ratna. A year previously, Mukherjee had accepted an invitation to deliver a lecture at the RSS headquarters in Nagpur.

The honour for Mukherjee was seen, again, as the BJP 'correcting' the Gandhis' "sidelining" of a man who had played a central role in the party for decades. In his five-decade political career, Mukherjee occupied top positions under Congress governments, including Minister for Finance and Home — and making him President in 2012 was seen as a way to "retire" him as Rahul Gandhi came to the fore in the party.

Bhupen Hazarika, who was honoured in 2019, was one of the foremost cultural icons of the Northeast, and the award fulfilled a long-standing demand from his fans and the region as a whole. It also fit in nicely with the BJP's political push — which was ultimately successful — in Hazarika's Assam, and in the rest of the Northeast.

Chandikadas Amritrao Deshmukh, better known as Nanaji Deshmukh, who also received the Ratna in 2019, worked in the fields of education, health, and rural self-reliance, but his greatest contribution was seen as building the Bharatiya Jana Sangh, the precursor of the BJP, into a formidable force.

As treasurer of the BJS, Deshmukh's efforts brought the party the support, political and financial, of the big business community of Bombay and Gujarat. It has been argued that PM Modi has followed in the footsteps of Deshmukh in shaping the BJP.

Bharat Ratna before Modi era

Under Congress governments, the choices for Bharat Ratna were more conventional — and included sitting Prime Ministers Jawaharlal Nehru (1955) and Indira Gandhi (1971, after the Bangladesh War), and Lal Bahadur Shastri (1966) after his sudden death.

In 1988, the government of Rajiv Gandhi conferred the Ratna on former Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M G Ramachandran ahead of Assembly elections in that state.

In 1990, the Janata Dal government headed by V P Singh and supported by the BJP picked Dr B R Ambedkar for the honour. That same year, the Ratna was awarded to Nelson Mandela.

In 1991, the Narasimha Rao government gave the award to former Prime Ministers Rajiv Gandhi (who had been assassinated recently) and Morarji Desai, and Sardar Patel.

In 1992, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, stalwart of the freedom movement, and industrialist JRD Tata were honoured.

Under the short-lived coalition governments after 1996, Gulzarilal Nanda, who served as acting PM twice, freedom fighter Aruna Asaf Ali, and scientist Dr A P Abdul Kalam (who would later become President) were among those who were honoured.

The Vajpayee government gave the Ratna to socialist icon and social reformer Jayaprakash Narayan, economist Amartya Sen, and musicians Ravi Shankar and Bismillah Khan among others.

Under the Manmohan Singh government from 2004 to 2014, only three Bharat Ratna were conferred: to Hindustani classical musician Bhimsen Joshi, cricketer Sachin Tendulkar, and scientist C N R Rao.

TELLING NUMBERS

Polygamy in India: What the data show

ZEESHAN SHAIKH
MUMBAI, FEBRUARY 9

THE UTTARAKHAND LEGISLATIVE Assembly Wednesday passed the Uniform Civil Code (UCC) Bill, 2024 after a two-day discussion. The Bill brings uniformity in personal laws, governing things such as marriage, divorce, and inheritance, across communities in the state (excluding tribals).

Among other things, it extends the rule of monogamy to the Muslim community. One of the conditions for solemnising a marriage is that "neither party has a spouse living at the time of the marriage". This clause already existed in the Hindu Marriage Act of 1955, but Muslim personal law hitherto allowed men to have upto four wives.

Limitations of the data

Government data on polygamy can be obtained from two main sources — the decadal census and the National Family Health Survey (NFHS). Both have certain limitations.

The census does not directly collect data on polygamy. Rather its incidence is inferred from the difference in the number of married men and the number of married women in the country. More married women than men points to prevalence of situations where men have married more than once.

However, polygamy alone may not be responsible for this gap — it can also be explained by men going abroad to work, leaving their spouses back at home.

Moreover, the most recent census was held in 2011, more than a decade back.

The NFHS has been held more recently, and asks women a more direct question: "Besides yourself, does your husband have other wives?" Unlike the census, however, it does not look at the whole population. The most recent NFHS-5 (2019-21) sampled ap-

proximately 6.1 lakh households, less than 1% of the total number of households in India.

The last major government study on polygamy was conducted in 1974. It had found that Buddhists, Jains and Hindus had higher rates of polygamy than Muslims.

What the census data say

According to the census of 2011, there are 28.65 crore married men in India, compared to 29.3 crore married women. The difference between the two numbers — 65.71 lakh — can be explained either by the incidence of polygamy or men gone abroad.

The highest discrepancy in the population of married men and women can be found among Hindus (who make up the largest number of Indians), followed by Muslims, Sikhs, Christians, Sikhs, and Buddhists. However, when compared to

their respective shares in the total population, Muslims and Christians report the greatest difference (*Table 1*).

What NFHS data say

The NFHS-5 showed the prevalence of polygamy (the percentage of women who reported their husbands had other wives) was highest among Christians (2.1%), followed by Muslims (1.9%), and Hindus (1.3%), looking at religion. Overall, Scheduled Tribes reported the highest incidence at 2.4%.

A June 2022 study by the International Institute of Population Sciences (IIPS) titled *Polygyny in India: Levels and Differentials* analysed data from the NFHS-3 (2005-06), NFHS-4 (2015-16) and NFHS-5 (20

STREAMING WATCH LIST

BY ALAKA SAHANI



ONE DAY
NETFLIX
The series, based on David Nicholls's bestselling novel, tells the decades-spanning love story between Dex (Leo Woodall) and Em (Ambika Mod) as they reunite on the same day every year. Each of the 14 episodes find Dex and Em one year older on this particular date as they move together and apart, and experience joy and heartbreak.



CAPTAIN MILLER
PRIME VIDEO
Set in the pre-Independence era, the film focuses on Analeesan (Dhanush), also known as Eesa. He spends time idly, while his brother, Sengola (Shiva Rajkumar), is part of the Independence movement. After a conflict with the villagers, Eesa joins the British Indian army, where he is named Miller. Disturbed after being part of a battalion that brutally attacks local protesters, he leaves the army and transforms into the revolutionary 'Captain Miller'.



PUPPY LOVE
LIONSGATE PLAY
Experience a tail-wagging romantic comedy in *Puppy Love*, featuring Lucy Hale as Nicole and Henry Golding as Max. After a disastrous first date, they vow to part ways until their dogs play matchmaker. Forced into the world of co-parenting their furry companions, Nicole and Max discover that love can bloom in the most unexpected places. With charming performances, *Puppy Love* proves that sometimes fate has a fury twist.



THE MARVELS
DISNEY + HOTSTAR
Captain Marvel, Ms Marvel, and Captain Monica Rambeau come together in *The Marvels*. A sequel to the 2019 box office phenomenon *Captain Marvel*, *The Marvels* sees Carol as Captain Marvel reclaiming her identity from the tyrannical Kree and take revenge from the Supreme Intelligence. She teams up with her estranged niece Rambeau (Teyonah Parris) and Jersey City super-fan Kamal Khan (Iman Vellani). The movie is directed by Nia DaCosta.



SHUBHRAGUPTA

SHAHID KAPOOR makes a good lover. His act may be practised and rehearsed but when it comes to doing the *pyaar-vyaar* thing, you still go ahhh. And that goes even when he is with the latest object of his adoration, Kriti Sanon's Sifra, a super-intelligent robot who looks and feels human.

But, and this is the thing, this holds true only some of the times because large tracts of *Teri Baaton Mein Aisa Uljha Jiya*, a long-winded title of a film which feels even longer, is just such a confused mish-mash of genres, filled with tropey characters: sci-fi meets mushy romance meets loving *Indian parvaar* *Kya yaar*.

Cool cat Aryan (Kapoor) and best pal Monty (Verma) float around a plush office

Differently Wired

TERI BAATON MEIN AISA ULJHA JIYA ★★

Director: Amit Joshi, Aradhana Sah

Cast: Shahid Kapoor, Kriti Sanon, Dharmendra, Dimple Kapadia, Ashish Verma, Anubha Fatehpuria, Rakesh Bedi, Grusha Kapoor

talking robotics until it's time for the former to meet-cute Sifra, somewhere in the US, under the benign eye of his super-creator *maasi* (Kapadia). This is the kind of film which feels comfortable labelling a generic scene 'USA', just in case we find names of specific cities too weighty.

So here we are, in America, with a *shaadi-*

phobic male and a stunning 'female' robot in close confines. So, of course, there's song and sizzle, with sheets getting nicely rumpled. Aryan aka Aaru knows the truth and yet finds himself hopelessly smitten, as Sifra goes about being a potential dutiful Indian wife, saying *beinge hai* to everything he says.

Ooh, you think, could we be in for a grown-

up relationship movie, with existential questions about men and machines, the ethics involved in creating robots with human feelings, and the whole question of control. Haha, gotcha, the filmmakers retort, as they plonk us back in *Hum Aapke Hain Koun* territory with a collective gathering of mummyji, daddyji, dadaji (Dharmendra), bua, phooja, and the

statutory scenes filled with *sagaai*, *sangeet*, and *Manyavar* suittings. Sigh.

For a film which wants to be a family entertainer, there are risible sequences featuring men peering down low-cut blouses and bosoms, and tasteless wife jokes. Monty, the hero's best friend, does exactly what BFFs have done for decades, make the hero look good: when will this oldest, creakiest device be dumped?

Some of the snappiest lines in the movie are reserved for Kapoor, and when he is not being mannered and conscious of his hero-status — just a guy standing in front of a gal — he reminds you that he can be something to look at, like he did back in *Jab We Met*. And then the movie is taken away from the strengths he plays to, and starts swinging wildly: is it a robot-com, or a robot-horror, or just another stab at this, that and the other?

Bloodline in the Ring

THE IRON CLAW ★★★

Director: Sean Durkin

Cast: Zac Efron, Jeremy Allen White, Harris Dickinson, Stanley Simons, Holt McCallany, Lily James, Maura Tierney

SHALINI LANGER

WHAT FRITZ Von Erich, or rather Jack Adkisson (McCallany), has is a family that shimmers like gold — four strapping, good-looking, blonde men, all rippling muscles in the field, and quiet, church-going and unquestioning off it.

What Jack is after though is what comes closest to gold in the real world: success. Like many stories, his too begins with a sense of denial of glory to him, an inheritance that he passes on to one, not two, not three, but four of his sons, constantly pushing them on to achieve recognition — and then some more — in the field of professional wrestling. (There was a fifth son, but *The Iron Claw* doesn't include him; more on that later.)

It would make the Von Erichs among the world's biggest professional wrestling families. It would also make them among the most tragic, which *The Iron Claw* seeks to show here — though with only half a heart.

Jack's parenting style has no pretensions in a film that spans the 1980s. At the breakfast table, he lists out his "favourite" among his sons, and then goes on to say that "the rankings can always change".

The sons are left with no illusions about how.

There once was a Jack Jr, who died in infancy, leaving Kevin (Efron) bearing the burden first of carrying forward his father's still-

formidable legacy. A buffed-up, almost unrecognisable Efron, is a profile in suppression — deftly conveying a man struggling to keep things inside his bursting body.

And there is a lot that Kevin sees. First, his father's casual disposal of him as the family's prime contender for World Heavyweight Champion title after one painful loss, so as to promote his brother David (Dickinson). That ends in an entirely preventable tragedy. Jack then moves on to another son, Kerry (Allen), a potential Olympian discus thrower who is reeled into the wrestling ring after the US decides to boycott the 1980 Games held in Moscow.

That has its own sad ending, but Jack is still not deterred, and Kevin is now roped in to beat into shape his third brother, Mike (Simons), a talented musician who is clear about his dislike for the rink. Clearly, that too won't end well.

The tragedy of what befalls the Von Erichs is astonishing, even as it is heartbreaking — in both the souls being crushed here (wonderfully depicted by Dickinson and Simons in particular, and Allen briefly) and the baffling silence of those around them.

The talented Tierney plays their mother Doris but the film offers no insight into why she doesn't protest even as her dedication to the family that eats, prays and plays together is obvious. James as Kevin's wife Pam is even more shallow, starting with no clarity on what she sees to fall so quickly for him.

Raising champions is not easy, and that is why the sporting world is replete with stories of athletes and their falling out with their parents. But the problem is that writer-director Durkin can't decide between being in awe of the Von Erichs for their success, or being in pain for their real losses in a sport that is, at the heart of it, make-believe.

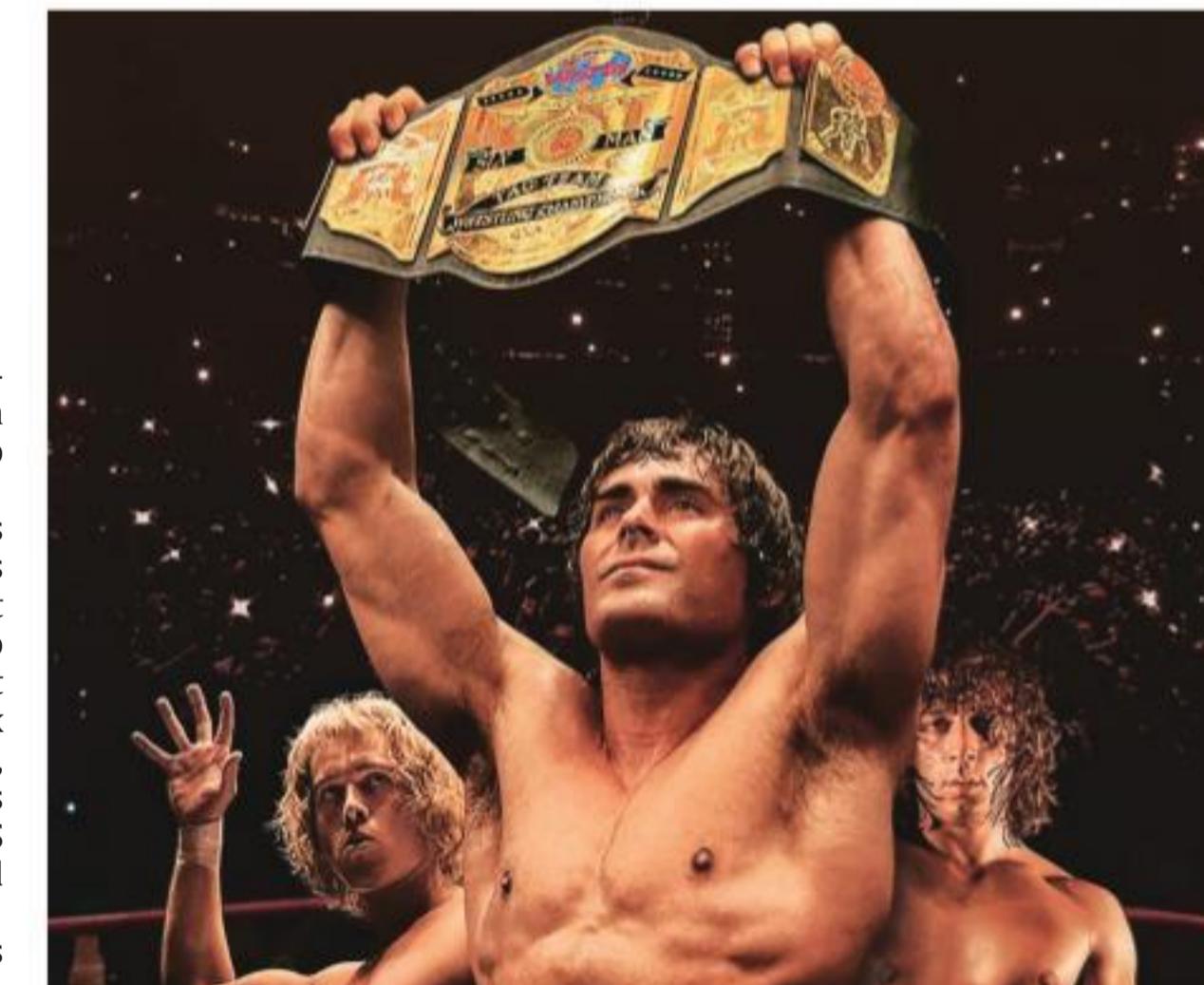
Choosing Kevin as the focus also comes from this indecisiveness, as he is the one Von Erich who has seen both those sides up close. So, Durkin chooses to move too quickly away from the tragedies, not reflecting at all on what it costs Doris — or even Jack, who has no shades to his character at all.

Durkin also drops some crucial details

from the real Von Erich story, and it seems to serve the tale he is choosing to tell — such as the fact that there was a sixth son who also paid a price ("too much tragedy than the film could handle", Durkin has explained in interviews); or the telling detail that, after all this, Kevin's sons also followed him into professional wrestling. (The postscript rather is about the big, happy family that Kevin and Pam have gone on to raise.)

From the moment Jack comes on, flaunting Nazi insignia and taking on a German name for the ring, it is clear that his famous 'Iron Claw' grip is as befuddling for his opponents as choking for his family.

If only Durkin did not give it a velvet glove.



Struggling At the End

ARYA SEASON 3, ANTIM VAAR

★

Creator: Ram Madhvani

Cast: Sushmita Sen, Ila Arun, Aarushi Bajaj, Viren Vazirani, Pratyaksh Panwar, Vikas Kumar, Geetanjali Kulkarni, Maya Sarao, Vishwajeet Pradhan, Shashwat Seth

ARYA RETURNS, one final time, and all we can say is, good riddance. The final four episodes of Season 3 fritter away all the goodwill this web series — about a woman who will battle demons to protect her chil-



dren — had amassed since it began in 2020. Based on the Dutch show *Penoza*, and created by Ram Madhvani, the first season of *Aarya* was a cracker. The second season was

equally absorbing as it kept its focus on a wife-and-mother-of-three turning into a badass drug supplier, while giving us flavourful characters as her supporters and

antagonists. The first four episodes of the final season, buoyed by a stirring act from Indraneil Sengupta as a vengeful husband, and the arrival of Ila Arun as the canny high priestess Nalini Sahiba, had left us nicely poised on that what-next point: how would it all end?

Sadly, it's all downhill from the time it starts. Everything feels loose and contrived, and it looks like the actors can't wait for it to end, forget about us. The weak spots we had managed to overlook in the pace and slickness of the earlier seasons are now glaringly to the fore: the strands which has Aarya's children (Bajaj, Vazirani, Panwar) turning against her, each for reasons of their own, are more annoying than anything else. We just want their whininess to stop, a huge slide from the earlier seasons when they seemed like likeable, relatable young peo-

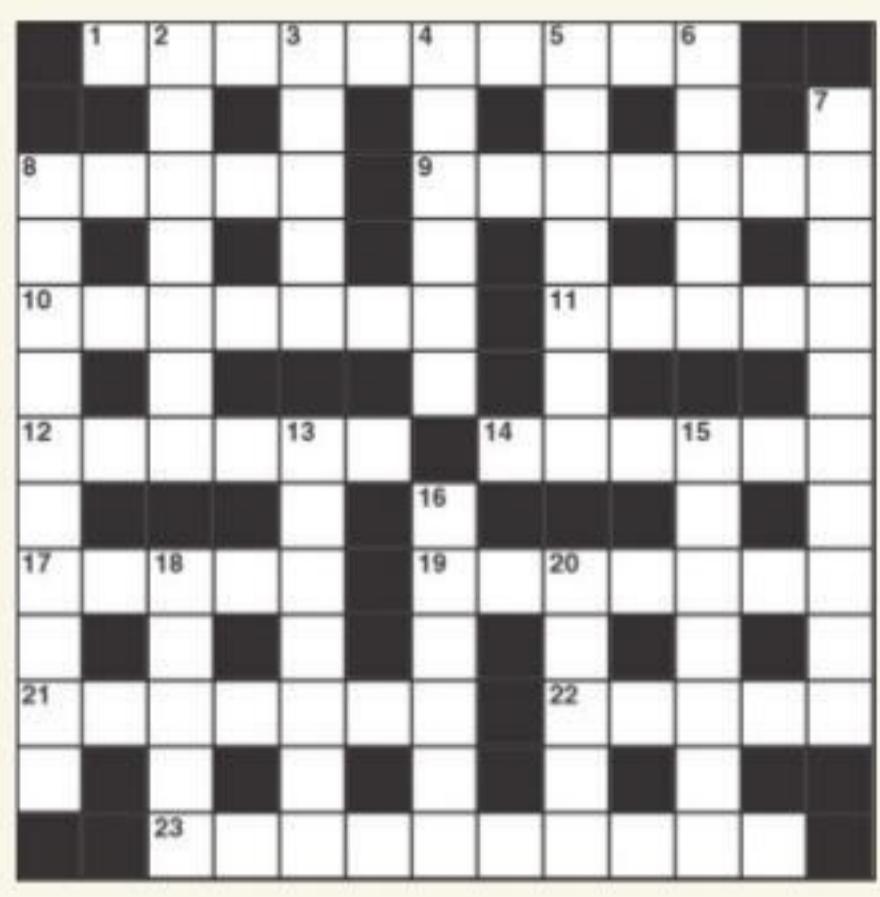
ple who made us care for them.

As Kulkarni's dodgy policewoman is given short shrift by a plot which feels adrift, the cop (Kumar) who has been dogging Aarya's footsteps, is left little to work with. The other characters — Arun in her eye-catching ethnic Rajasthani outfit and her manic son (Seth), as well as Pradhan and Kher as Aarya's conflicted loyalists, are left to flounder. The Russian mobsters are joined by Nigerian ones, all laughably trying for menace.

It is Sen, playing the titular character, who is let down the most. From the Aarya who commands the screen with her composed demeanour and her carefully put-together looks, she is down to a single breakout moment when she makes you really see her. In the rest, she comes off flat, as does this finale.

SG

CROSSWORD 5284



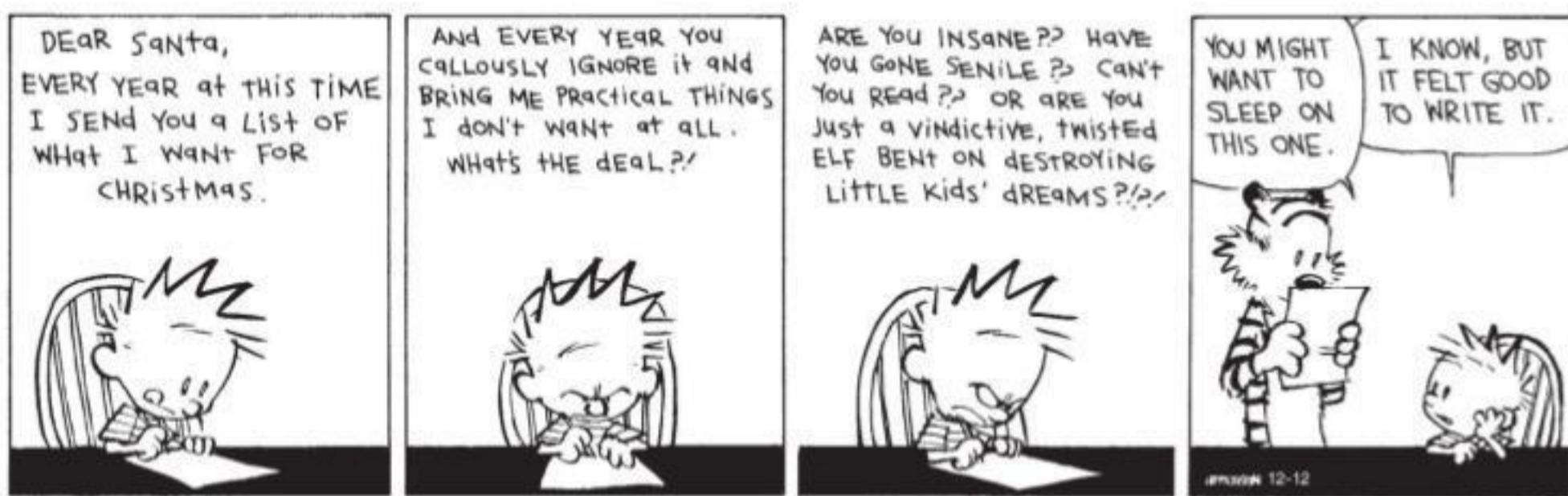
- ACROSS**
- Gin cocktail is a constituent of happy party (10)
 - Pride oneself on having a pair even shorter (5)
 - Cut a favourite piece from a paper (7)
 - Showed surprise when a good man began a new trade (7)
 - Dad's brother Sam is in the US (5)
 - A form of assurance (6)
 - One who picked a winning ticket returns for the prize (6)
 - Famous Indian; he comes back in having run out (5)
 - Stop in a few bars (7)
 - Puzzle no more (7)
 - Spring among the Pharisees (5)
 - As Samson was when shorn of his locks? (10)
- DOWN**
- Everything considered, it appears best (7)
 - The up-and-down principle (5)
 - The rugby game's finished lacking players (2,4)
 - Man of taste might rue alteration to long poem (7)
 - It's talked about among potato-pickers (5)
 - Those present two hours before midnight at a ball (10)
 - Having an adjournment but stopping on perhaps (10)
 - Partners who dance up in close formation (7)
 - Caviare might produce such greed (7)
 - One is often led to use it by mistake (6)
 - Put on edge (5)
 - Declines in standards (5)

Solutions Crossword 5283 Across: 1In-laws, 4Abbeys, 9Minimum, 10Upper, 11Troll, 12Liberty, 13Presumption, 18Rundown, 20Acre, 22Doors, 23Express, 24Ernest, 25Beckon Down: 1Inmate, 2Lingo, 3Wimples, 5Blurb, 6Esparto, 7Strays, 8Small-minded, 14Rangoon, 15Traipse, 16Bridge, 17Edison, 19Oasis, 21Check

OVER THE HEDGE by Michael Fry & T Lewis



CALVIN & HOBBS by Bill Watterson



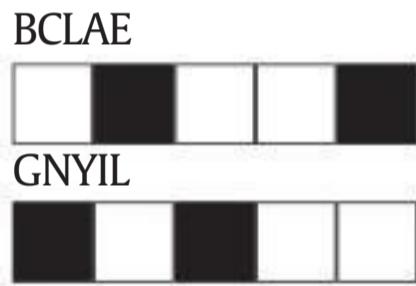
MARVIN by Tom Armstrong



JUMBLE WORDS

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

A drawing is simply a going for a walk - Paul Klee (4,4)



NILGAI



ANSYKW

Answers: A drawing is simply a walk for a walk - Paul Klee

SUDOKU 5468

Difficulty Level 1s

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.

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

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

SOLUTION SUDOKU 5467

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

SOLUTION-CARIE, LINTING, SWALING, SWANLY

ANSWER: A drawing is simply a walk for a walk - Paul Klee

GOVERNMENT OF ASSAM

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER, PWD (ROADS), CITY ROAD CIRCLE, BAMUNIMAI DAN, GUWAHATI-21

PRESS NOTICE/IFB

The Superintending Engineer, PWD, (Roads), City Road Circle, Ghy-21 on behalf of the Governor of Assam invites Retender in item rate Bid from approved and eligible Contractors registered with Assam PWD (Roads) for 2 (two) nos. of work under SOPD(G). Details may be seen at website <http://assamtenders.gov.in> and also at the office of the undersigned during office hours in due course of time.

Schemes are not yet sanctioned by the competent authority. In the event of non-sanctioning of the schemes, the bids may be treated as cancelled and no claim what so ever on this account shall be entertained.

Superintending Engineer, PWD (Roads)
JANASANYOG/CF/5420/23/10-FEB-24

City Road Circle, Guwahati-21

GOVERNMENT OF ASSAM

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ENGINEER, PWD (ROADS) ASSAM, CHANDMARI, GUWAHATI-3

No. CE/STBR/ SOPD-G/R&R/09/2023-24/11

PRESS NOTICE INVITING TENDER

The Chief Engineer, PWD, (Roads), Assam, Chandmari, Ghy-3 on behalf of the Governor of Assam invites Bids online for Bridge projects in Bihpuria, West Guwahati and Majuli LACs of Assam from eligible registered Contractors for 3 (three) Nos. of Repair/ Rehabilitation of Bridges under Mukhya Mantrik Path Nabikaran Achani (MMPNA) for 2023-24 for an amount of Rs. 99,385 Lakhs (approx). Details may be seen at website <http://assamtenders.gov.in> and also at the office of the undersigned (State Bridge Design Branch) during office hours.

Note: 1. The Scheme is not yet sanctioned from competent authority. In the event of non-sanction of the Scheme, the bids may be cancelled and no claim what so ever on this account shall be entertained from the bidders.

2. The approximate N.I.T. Value is inclusive of GST, L.C. etc.

Chief Engineer PWD (Roads),
Assam, Chandmari Guwahati-3,
JANASANYOG/CF/5415/23/10-FEB-24

KARNATAKA INDUSTRIAL AREAS DEVELOPMENT BOARD

(A Government of Karnataka Undertaking)
49, East Wing , 4th & 5th Floor, Khanija Bhavan, Race Course Road, Bengaluru – 560 001. Phone No. 080-22265383. Website: www.kiadb.in

No. IADB/ENGG/ETND-EP-56/685/2023-24 Date:09.02.2024

SHORT TERM NOTICE INVITING TENDER

(Through GOK Karnataka Public Procurement Portal Only)

Item rate Tenders under two cover system are invited as per the Karnataka Transparency in Public Procurement Act 1999 and Rules 2000 through electronic procurement from eligible Contractors who have got adequate financial resources & sufficient past experience for the following works as per the schedule given below:

Name of the work : (1) Providing Basic Electrical Infrastructures and LED street lights facilities to left out portion of the Masthenahalli Industrial area phase-2, Chintamani Taluk, Chikkaballapura Dist. (2) Providing Power Infrastructure & street lights at Sub layout-1 Thandy Industrial area, Mysuru. (3) Providing Power Infrastructure & street lights at Sub layout-3, Adakanahalli Industrial area, Mysuru. (4) Providing Street lights to the Doddaballapur-Devanahalli General Industrial Area (ITIR), Devanahalli & Doddaballapur Taluk, Bengaluru Rural District. (5) Providing Power Infrastructure & street lights at balance roads formed in Hi tech sector, Aerospace sector & IT/BT sector of Devanahalli Industrial area, Bengaluru Rural Dist. (6) Providing Power Infrastructure to Averahalli Industrial area, Sub-layout & Left out roads 4th & 5th phase, Bengaluru, Rural District.

Last date for submission of bids is: 21.02.2024 upto 04:30 pm.

Applicants May Download Bidding Documents from the Karnataka Public Procurement Portal <https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in>

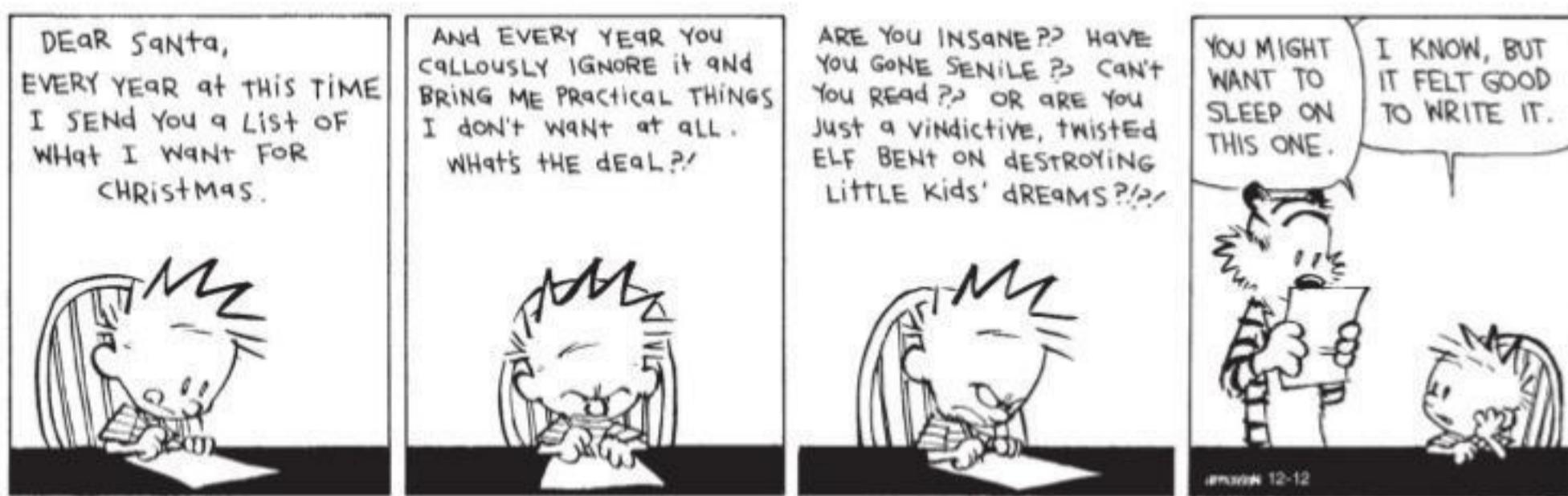
Sd/-
Chief Engineer - 1

DIPR/CP/JA/3523/2023-24
epaper.indianexpress.com

OVER THE HEDGE by Michael Fry & T Lewis



CALVIN & HOBBS by Bill Watterson



MARVIN by Tom Armstrong



DAY TODAY

BY PETER VIDAL

ARIES (Mar 21 - Apr 20)

Conditions at work may have been confusing and your mind may be working overtime trying to fathom why colleagues are behaving as they are. Certainly someone close does have something to explain to you.

TAURUS (Apr 21 - May 21)

The Moon has now intervened to remind you that you must not delude yourself about a particular relationship any longer. As a naturally down-to-earth person you must focus on the facts, not your fantasies. It's also a perfect moment for a family party, just as long as everyone leaves their worries at the door.

GEMINI (May 22 - June 21)

What transpires over the next few days is likely to have quite a dramatic influence on your ideas. In particular, you may be concerned that you are losing control of the debate, a fear which is far from the truth. The answer to your current question lies in your family background.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov 24 - Dec 22)

It is perfectly human to find fault and entirely reasonable to be irritated by people who are acting out of character. Yet given that your personal life is thriving, a fear which is far from the truth. This is a splendid day for making shrewd investments.

CAPRICORN (Dec 23 - Jan 20)

These are hectic and rather turbulent days, ones when you must come to terms with your anger and resentment and learn how to deal with aggression. This doesn't mean going off the deep end, but standing up for yourself and being crystal clear about your rights.

AQUARIUS (Jan 21 - Feb 19)

There is no point in trying to hold on to the past or dwelling on what might have been. Such attitudes will hinder you from acknowledging all the social, emotional and romantic advantages which are now coming your way. It's a secretive day, a time for discreet flirtations.

PISCES (Feb 20 - Mar 20)

Over the coming week negotiations will be tough and concerned with practical details. You'll be forced back down to earth, perhaps finally realising the seriousness of your situation. Begin the process of reassessment today; consult friends and partners who have been there before. And learn from their experience.

JABALPUR MUNICIPAL CORPORATION FIRE DEPARTMENT

Ref. No. : F.D./2024/ 39/PRO/ 640 Notice Inviting Tenders Jabalpur, Date : 09/02/2024

Issuing Office Designation Organization Location Date of Issue

Fire Department Fire Officer Jabalpur Municipal Corporation Jabalpur, Madhya Pradesh February 9th, 2024

Project Overview

Title of Work Description: Agency Selection for Manpower Provision Services : Jabalpur Municipal Corporation (JMC) is inviting e-Tenders From qualified Manpower Agencies to supply personnel across various skill levels for various works under Fire Department. The e-Tender details are available for download at <https://www.mptenders.gov.in/>

Initial Duration of Work Probable Contract Value: One Year : ₹ 7,00,00,000/- (Rupees Seven Crores Only)

Earnest Money Deposit: ₹ 3,00,000/- (Rupees Three Lacs Fifty Thousand Only)

Tender Cost: ₹ 20,000/- (Rupees Twenty Thousand Only) (To Be Paid Online)

Final Date of Submission: 09th of March, 2024

Contact Information: e-mail: firenjabalpur@gmail.com

Fire Officer

Jabalpur Municipal Corporation

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

No. CE/Comm/Asom Mala 2.0/21/2023-24

PRESS NOTICE INVITING TENDER (RE-BID)

The Chief Engineer, P.W.D (Roads), Assam, Chandmari, Guwahati-03 invites re-bid on behalf of the Governor of Assam from approved and eligible contractors registered with PWRD, Assam for "Improvement and Upgradation of Road from Sarbari to Nagaon from Ch. 0.000 Km (sarthebari) to Ch. 14.420 Km (nagaon) under Asom Mala 2.0 for the year 2023-24" amounting to Rs. 4449.443 Lakhs (approx.) in Barpeta districts of Assam.

Details along with packages for

BRIEFLY

Sheoran gets 8-year ban for second strike

New Delhi: India's quartermiler Nirmala Sheoran has been handed an eight-year ban by National Anti-Doping Agency's (NADA) Disciplinary Panel after she returned positive for a banned substance in a test conducted last year. The 28-year-old Sheoran had returned to competition during the National Inter-State Championships in June last year in Bhubaneswar after serving a four-year ban for a dope offence in 2018. PTI

Lakers unveil first of three Kobe statues

Los Angeles: Kobe Bryant was known for exceeding expectations, so it should have come as no surprise that on the day the late star's statue was unveiled outside of the Los Angeles Lakers' home arena, it was revealed that three statues will ultimately don the downtown LA property. In a private ceremony outside of Crypto.com Arena on Thursday, the biggest names in Lakers history were in attendance -- from Jerry West to Magic Johnson, Kareem Abdul-Jabbar and former head coach Phil Jackson. Pau Gasol was there, as was Norm Nixon, Michael Cooper and Robert Horry. REUTERS

Nagai in last four of Chennai Open

Chennai: India's top-ranked tennis player Sumit Nagal defeated unseeded Dominik Polan of the Czech Republic 6-3 6-3 to advance into the semi-final of the Chennai Open here on Friday. The second-seeded Nagal will face third seed Dalibor Svirina of the Czech in his semi-final on Saturday. Nagal earlier beat SD Prajwal Devad and Giovanni Fonio of Italy en route to the last-eight. Svirina overcame India's Mukund Sasikumar 6-7(6) 6-2 6-4. PTI

Fraser-Pryce to retire after Paris 2024

Kingston: Three-time Olympic champion sprinter Shelly-Ann Fraser-Pryce will retire after the 2024 Paris Olympics, saying she owes it to her family. Fraser-Pryce was the first 100m sprinter to win individual medals in four consecutive Olympic Games. The Jamaican began her journey in Beijing 2008, which saw her become the first Caribbean woman to win gold in the women's 100m. She held on to her 100m title in London 2012, joining a select few to have done so. Despite battling a toe injury, she won bronze in 2016 Rio Olympics and a silver in relay. REUTERS

Wrestling trials on March 10-11

Delhi: The selection trials for picking the Indian wrestling team for the upcoming Olympic Qualifiers and Asian Championships will be held on March 10-11 in Patiala and Sonipat respectively, the ad-hoc committee managing the sport said on Friday. The trials were initially planned for February 27-29 but got postponed after a delay in hosting the senior national championships due to "unavoidable circumstances". The trials for women wrestlers will be held at NSNS Patiala, while the trials for greco roman and freestyle grapplers will be held at SAI Sonipat. "The ad-hoc committee will be organizing the selection trials for selecting the Indian wrestling team for the upcoming Olympic Qualifiers & Asian Championships on March 10-11, 2024," the ad-hoc committee said in a statement. PTI

RANJI ROUND-UP**Prithvi slams ton on return**

Prithvi Shaw marked a spectacular return to competitive cricket by smashing a century in his second innings for Mumbai to put them on top against Chhattisgarh in their Ranji Trophy Group B fixture.

Brief scores: Mumbai 310/4; 86 overs (Prithvi Shaw 159, Bhupen Lalwani 102; Ashish Chouhan 3/84) vs Chhattisgarh.

Baby leads Kerala

Rohtak: Sachin Baby struck an unbeaten 110 not out off 220 balls in an unbroken 153-run partnership with Akshay Chandran (76 not out) to steer Kerala to safety against Bengal.

Brief scores: Kerala 265/4; 90 overs (S Baby 110 not out, A Chandran 76 not out; Suraj Sindhu Jaiswal 1/40, Akash Deep 1/55) vs Bengal.

Pujara shows class

Veteran batter Cheteshwar Pujara slammed his second hundred of the ongoing Ranji Trophy season, guiding Saurashtra to a comfortable 242 for four against

Iyer likely to miss last 3 Tests due to stiff back, groin pain

DEVENDRA PANDEY
MUMBAI, FEBRUARY 9

INDIAN MIDDLE-ORDER batsman Shreyas Iyer is in danger of missing the last three Test matches against England due to an injury.

The Indian Express has learnt that Iyer has complained of stiffness in the back and pain in the groin area while playing forward defence, putting his participation in doubt. More so, because while the playing kits of the entire squad for the second Test was flown from Vizag directly to Rajkot, the

venue of the third Test that begins on February 15, Iyer's equipment was sent to his home in Mumbai.

The Ajit Agarkar-led selection committee is likely to name the India squad for the remainder of the five-match series, which is tantalisingly poised at 1-1, on Friday.

Sources said Iyer will be sent to the National Cricket Academy (NCA) in Bangalore for further tests but the batsman hopes to return to competitive cricket by the time the Indian Premier League begins next month. Last year, Iyer had undergone surgery following a back injury.

"Iyer has informed the Indian team



Shreyas Iyer will be sent to the NCA in Bangalore for further tests. PTI

management and the medical staff that his back gets stiff after playing more than 30 balls and he feels pain in his groin while playing forward defence," a source told The Indian Express. "Post surgery, he is facing this issue for the first time so he has been advised to rest for a few weeks. He will head to NCA later." If he does miss out, the selection committee will have to take a call on his replacement as KL Rahul and Ravindra Jadeja, who missed out on the last Test due to injury, are expected to be back for the Rajkot Test. In such a scenario, it will be interesting to see if Rajat Patidar -- who made his debut in Vizag -- gets another op-

portunity.

The selection committee was scheduled to pick the team on Thursday but decided to wait for one more day to confirm the availability of former captain Virat Kohli.

Kohli's participation in the third Test looks doubtful but the selectors wanted to know whether he will be available for the last two Test matches. The Indian ace had withdrawn from the ongoing series citing personal reasons.

The rest of the squad, which is on a short break, has been asked to assemble in Rajkot on February 11 and training will resume the following day.

From Rewa, boy who could be next Jadeja

With his control, intent and wicket-taking knack, left-arm spinner Saumy has already elicited comparisons with star all-rounder

PRATYUSH RAJ
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 9

THE RUN-UP is brisk and measured. The action is fluent and simple. The ball travels the perfect line and lands where he wants it to. The ball often skids off the surface, some break away from the right-handed batsman. Combine his wiry frame and the fiery attitude, little wonder that Saumy Pandey is likened to Ravindra Jadeja, his idol. Like Jadeja in the 2008 U-19 World Cup, he is enjoying a breakout campaign -- his 17 wickets have come at an average of 8.47; the economy rate is a thrifty 2.44.

The comparison is unfair, says his father Krishna Kumar Pandey, a Hindi teacher in a government school in Madhya Pradesh's Sidhi district. "I teach Hindi literature, so I am a bit strict on giving good grades. If people are comparing him with Ravindra Jadeja, it is not fair. Jadeja has played fifteen years of cricket, he has earned 100 marks in his career. He has done the hard yards, worked hard to reach at this level and has won so many games for India," he explains to this paper.

His son, on the other hand, "has yet to earn that first mark in his career". "Mujhe lagta hai Saumy abhi shunya pe hai" (At present Saumy is on a zero), he says.

But his coach Aril Anthony, while endorsing Saumy's father's views, says Jadeja's body language and intent on the field fascinated him. So he tried every single day to emulate him. "He is from the IPL generation. He has grown up watching Jadeja, so one can't blame him for trying to copy his idol. I also feel he will have to grind to reach Jadeja's level," says Anthony.

Doctor to spin doctor

Saumy's parents, both teachers, wanted him to be a doctor. "We wanted him to become a doctor. Like my daughter (Apurva Pandey), whose aim from the beginning was to clear the UPSC exams. She is preparing for it in New Delhi. On the other hand, this boy used to eat only if he had a bat in his hands," he recollects.

"I have tried my way by telling him that you have to score this much then only we will allow you to join an academy. He was sharp and used to get good marks," Pandey Sr says, laughing. He now wants him to clear at least the intermediate exam.

But after seeing his son's passion for the game, the Pandey family moved to Rewa, which is 35km from their village Bharatpur so that he could get proper training. "When he was eight, we rented accommodation in Rewa and took him to Aril sir's academy. Since then he has never looked back," says Pandey Sr.

The family were not to rue the decision. From a young age, he showed spark and talent. "Right from a very young age, I had observed one thing that he is a very practical bowler. He is excellent in matches and that you can see in his bowling. He uses the crease very well, varies his pace and always tries to spin the bowl. People think he keeps bowling on one spot, but I disagree, he hits the good length more often," says Anthony, who calls him a thinking bowler.

Watch his spunk and aggression, and Anthony proudly says: "Ek spinner mey fast



Saumy Pandey's 17 wickets so far at the U19 World Cup have come at an average of 8.47; the economy rate is a thrifty 2.44. ICC media zone

bowler ki aatma hai (He has got the soul of a fast bowler)."

"Intent has always been there. He prepares well before the game. He reads the pitch nicely. You don't need to tell him things twice. I find him a street-smart cricketer. He knows how to execute his plans," he adds. Just like Jadeja, you could add.

In the first two matches, Pandey bagged seven wickets but Anthony said his ward was not quite happy. "Sir chott team ke khilaf wicket le kar kya fayda (What's the point of taking wickets against smaller teams?)" he would ask his coach.

"I also don't praise him often. I also told him 'I will see how you will bowl against big teams like New Zealand, Australia, Pakistan and South Africa.' His test of mind will be the final. He has had an excellent World Cup so far and I want to see whether he has in it him to finish on a high," says Anthony.

IPL attention

The performances, though far away in Benoni, has grabbed the attention of IPL scouts. After his match-winning 4 for 24 in the opening game against Bangladesh, he received a call from a franchise to be their net bowler. The 19-year-old, also the team's vice captain, turned it down, saying his pri-

ority is to "play Ranji Trophy first."

"After the first match, he called me and said 'sir, IPL se call aa raha hai, mujhe kya karna chahiye?' (I have received a call from the IPL team, please tell me what should I do?). I asked what his aim was in the larger scheme of things, he immediately said, 'sir Test cricket khelna hai' (I want to play Test cricket). He had the answer, he just wanted my nod," remembers Anthony. The coach always had a piece of advice to him: "Don't run after money." "I have told him specifically that IPL is just for entertainment. Instead, he should focus on his cricket and if he does well in first-class cricket, there will be more teams who would be interested in signing him. You are just 19, don't run after money," explains Anthony.

Saumy always sets "small, small goals," the coach says. "The first was to get selected for India U-19. It's done, now he wants to play Ranji Trophy for Madhya Pradesh and then for India A. I am not saying he doesn't want to play in the IPL but if he would do well for Madhya Pradesh and Central Zone he will be an automatic pick in the IPL auction," says Anthony.

"I feel IPL is not a good platform for any youngsters. One bad over and your confidence will be shattered. A young cricketer must go step by step," adds Anthony. His ward, though, is leaping up the stairs.



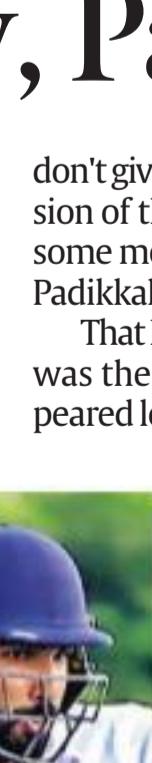
Callum Vidler (Australia)
M - 5, W - 12

Inspired by fellow Queenslanders Mitchell Johnson and Ryan Harris, Callum Vidler went from backyard cricket through the ranks at Queensland, picking the brains of former Australia star Andy Bichel along the way. He is determined to not compromise on his pace. "If anyone ever tells me to slow down, I am not listening to them. Pace is my point of difference, my best attribute," he was quoted saying by the ICC.



Maruf Mridha (Bangladesh)
M - 5, W - 8

Maruf Mridha has modelled himself on Mustafizur Rahman. There is an uncanny similarity in how Maruf bowls. Just like his childhood hero, Maruf can bowl cutters at a brisk pace & the incoming yorkers to the right-handed batters are equally menacing.



Ali Raza (Pakistan)
M - 3, W - 9

The 15-year-old pacer from Pakistan took his country agonizingly close to the final. Raza's splendid spell of 4 for 34 was not enough as Australia pipped Pakistan by a solitary wicket. Despite the loss, in Raza, Pakistan has unearthed a gem that Ian Bishop feels if nurtured carefully can become a superstar in the future.

The teenager had also played a pivotal role in Pakistan's five-run win over Bangladesh in the Super Six. It was his spell that shifted the momentum towards Pakistan.



Kwena Maphaka (SA)
M - 6, W - 21

At 17, Kwena Maphaka played his second U-19 World Cup and ended the tournament with the most number of scalps. The left-arm quick came close to equalling the record of most wickets at one edition but fell just one short of the mark of 22 wickets which was set by Bangladesh's Enamul Haque Jr in 2014. The youngster caught the eye in his home U-19 World Cup with his fiery inswinging yorkers and quick bouncers. He has already been called a left-handed Rabada. Given that Maphaka went to the same school, the comparisons with fellow St Stithians alumnus Rabada are expected. Maphaka is not as tall as Rabada but is more explosive and there is certainly more aggression in his bowling.

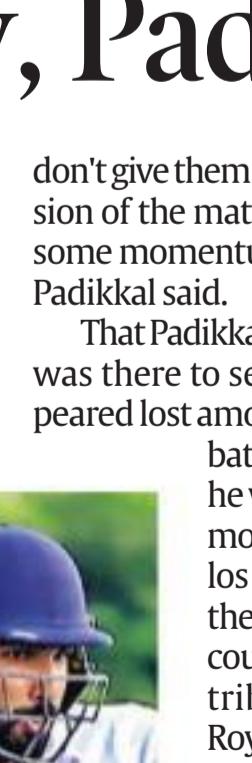
Raj Limbani is not a tearaway quick but with the new ball he has done more in ten games on the dry surface of Bloemfontein than any other pacers.

Most of the time he has bowled in the afternoon when there is little to no help for the seamers. Before the World Cup, Limbani was not the first-choice seamer for India. He was fourth in line after Naman Tiwari, Aradhya Shukla, and Dhanus Gowda. But it was his incisive spell of 7/13 against Nepal in the Asia Cup that helped him jump ahead of the rest.

Tom Straker (Australia)

M - 5, W - 12

Tom Straker's 6 for 24 against Pakistan are the best bowling figures in a semi-final or final of the U-19 World Cup, as he bettered Kagiso Rabada's 6 for 25 against Australia in the 2014 semi-final. Straker has been Australia's workhorse in the tournament. "He just keeps going all day, doesn't matter what end he bowls from, doesn't matter how hot it is, he just keeps coming," Australia captain Hugh Webley said.



I'm really happy I'm back scoring runs as well," he said.

"I don't mind batting at No.3 and I don't mind opening either. So that doesn't really make a huge difference. As you play more and more cricket and as you gain experience, at this level you will naturally be able to play more shots because you will be more confident about your areas," he added.

Aggressive play

Once he got his eye in, Padikkal didn't allow R Sai Kishore and S Ajith Ram to settle into a rhythm. He went after them, and was even dropped at 77, but not once did Padikkal shed his intent. Primarily an opener, he has demoted himself to No 3, a position that seems a perfect fit for him.

There is an effortless ease with which he is now scoring these runs, a clear sign of a batsman in need of big challenges. With each of his centuries this season, Padikkal is showing he can blend aggression and caution at No 3 and score the clucky centuries that tend to carry the team.

Brief scores: Karnataka 288/5 (Devdutt Padikkal 151 batting, R Samarth 57; R Sai Kishore 3/94) vs Tamil Nadu.

Armed with consistency, Padikkal steps up

VENKATA KRISHNA B
CHENNAI, FEBRUARY 9

AS DEVDUKT Padikkal stroked his way through for an unbeaten 151, you could well hear him knocking on the national selection doors again. Watched by the chairman of selectors Ajit Agarkar from the stands, the left-hander's third century of this Ranji Trophy season took Karnataka to 288/5 against Tamil Nadu on Day 1 of the sixth round fixture at the MA Chidambaram Stadium in Chennai.

On a day where the temperatures flirted between early to mid-thirties, in testing conditions against a bowling line-up that has taken 60 wickets in the last three matches, it was Padikkal's knock that flattened Tamil Nadu. And it was a timely one too, as it also gives the national selectors another option to consider for the Test team -- that has plenty of batting concerns to address -- going forward. That Padikkal is making all these runs at No 3 and offers something different by virtue of being a left-hander means there is an in-form batter waiting in the wings in case India are to look beyond Shubman Gill.

After starting the Ranji season with 193 against Punjab, he scored 103 against Goa.

Before taking the trip to Chennai, Padikkal also scored 105, 65 & 21 in his three innings for India A in the two unofficial Tests against England Lions. The consistency that was missing in his game in the last couple of seasons is very much back.

From the time he walked in the middle of the first session at No 3, Padikkal was all purpose and intent. On a red-soil pitch that has variable bounce, for Karnataka to make their decision to bat first productive, they needed Padikkal to shine. Tamil Nadu, who have two left-arm spinners in their ranks, were bound to cause trouble to Karnataka's batting unit, which has five right-handers in their top six. Under the

Crucial home stretch

Eight games over the next fortnight in Odisha will be key in deciding India's squad for Paris 2024

MIHIR VASAVDA
FEBRUARY 9

THE DOSSIERS are getting thicker. And training drills are being designed basis that. As much time is spent indoors – in the meeting rooms of hotels, stadiums, and training centers, plotting the downfall of every opponent – as the minutes spent on the field, where the plans will be put into motion.

Every move will be analysed and each match will be an audition. "It's test matches now. Home stretch," says coach Craig Fulton. "We are looking to confirm our Olympic squad."

With that, the South African laid down the marker for India's hockey players. Over the next fortnight, the eight games that India play against the Netherlands, Australia, Spain, and Ireland in the FIH Pro League in Odisha will, in essence, be the selection trials for the Paris Olympics squad.

The matches later this year, Fulton adds, will be used to build the bench strength so that if there are injuries then we have depth.'

This gives the Pro League matches, otherwise seen as glorified exhibition games, an edge. And for the players who have been on the periphery of the national team, a final chance to impress the coach.

Especially the quartet that has made the progression from juniors to senior side in the last couple of years.

Drag-flicker Sanjay, midfielders Vishnukant Singh and Rabichandra Moirangthem, and forward Arai Jeet Hundal have been seen as good enough to be included in a bloated 24-man squad for the matches in Bhubaneswar and Rourkela. The next two weeks will determine if all or any of them have taken enough strides to displace some of the established names, Olympic medalists no less, for a place on the Paris-bound flight.

Each one has something unique to offer.

With drag-flicker and defender Varun Kumar out of the squad for the Pro League after he was accused of rape, Sanjay – who has featured consistently in Fulton's sides including the Asian Games – has a chance to cement his spot. Sanjay has a reputation of being one of the hardest hitters of the hockey ball in the country and has an uncanny knack of finding the corners with his flick. Although his drag-flick conversion rate might need improvement, Sanjay can be a reliable back-up to designated penalty corner specialist Harmanpreet Singh who needs an able ally, something he missed at the World Cup last year.



At 6'3, Arai Jeet Hundal is already one of the tallest strikers to play for India. HI

If Sanjay is all about power, his junior teammate Vishnukant is all skill. Although drafted as a defender in this tournament, Vishnukant has mostly operated as a midfielder where his fast hands and stick skills are on full display. At the junior level, he's impressed the coaches with his decision-making skills on the ball.

However, with India spoilt for options in this area, Vishnukant will have to play out of his skin to get Fulton's attention. And even that might not be enough. He is competing for spots with the likes of Hardik Singh, the vice-captain, Manpreet Singh, the former captain and Vivek Sagar Prasad. How he operates in the defensive role will be interesting to see as that could open a door for him to the national team. Like Vishnukant, Moirangthem too will have to do something exceptional to sneak into the team as a midfielder.

Can Arai Jeet stand tall?

One of the players to watch out for from

this group will be the tall forward Hundal. At 6'3, he is already one of the tallest strikers to play for India. He has a powerful shot both on his forehand and the backhand, and his height gives him a big advantage in terms of reach.

Fulton has already underlined goal-scoring as one of the key areas that he would like to see India improve. Hundal has chance to plug that gap. "We have been watching them for six-seven months since I joined. It is always important to look out for talent. Not saying we don't have talent in our group. But it's also to try and get them playing our way," Fulton said. "It's about development for them. To understand tactically, technically what we are looking for. If there's an opportunity they can make the (Olympic) squad, we want to give them that fair opportunity. That's why they are here."

But as much as within the group, the focus will also be on the other teams. Two of India's pool-mates at the Olympics, Australia and Ireland, are here and they could well meet the

Varun rape case a 'distraction': Fulton

THE NEWS of Tokyo Olympics bronze medallist Varun Kumar being accused of rape is a 'distraction' and is 'challenging', chief coach Craig Fulton said. Varun was supposed to be a part of the team for the Pro League matches starting Saturday in Odisha but left the group after an FIR was filed against him in Bengaluru last Tuesday. The defender, who is a drag flick option too for his side, is exploring legal options to tackle the allegation, which he described as a "calculated attempt to extort money" from him, reported PTI. Speaking on the issue on the eve of India's first match of the competition against Spain, Fulton said: "If you take it from the outside-in, of course it's a challenging situation but at the same time, you've got a level of professionalism. From a staff point of view, we have to have our plans in place. So, if you took it as an injury, someone now is injured. What would you do? So we're going on the level of professionalism we have in the group, the values that we hold. It's a distraction, it's challenging, it's not great. But we have to move forward." ENS

Netherlands or Spain in the knockouts.

Captain Harmanpreet said they'll be keeping a watchful eye on their opponents. "Each team is analysing the other. Meetings are being held to discuss teams we'll be playing (in Paris) and according to that, training drills are being held. It's very important to us to have the knowledge and details of each team – how they play with the ball and without it. We have to be ready with these things before the Olympics." They have a little more than five months to get ready, starting Saturday.

India women outwit USA 3-1

PTI adds: Indian women produced a flawless effort to outwit United States 3-1 and end this leg of the Hockey Pro League on a winning note here on Friday. Vandana Katariya (9th), Deepika (26th), and Salima Tete (56th) scored for the home side, while Sanne Caars (42nd) netted the consolation goal for the USA.

SAFF U-19 COIN TOSS DRAMA

Situation was simmering, so decided to agree with organisers' request: AIFF

ANIL DIAS
FEBRUARY 9

THE "SIMMERING situation" and security concerns forced India to share the SAFF U-19 Women's Championship title with hosts Bangladesh after the final on Thursday.

A top official of the All India Football Federation (AIFF), while explaining the rationale behind the decision, also raised serious security concerns when the country's age-group teams travel abroad for tournaments.

India's U-19 women's team faced Bangladesh in the final of the championship at the BSSS Mostafa Kamal Stadium in Dhaka. Despite being intimidated by the huge home crowd, the Indian girls did well to take the lead. Bangladesh, however, equalised in injury time at the end of the second half, and the referee told the teams that the match would be decided in a penalty shootout.

Stunningly, all 11 players from both teams converted their kicks. The referee was about to continue the penalties in the sudden death situation when, after speaking to the match commissioner, suddenly decided that the title should be decided via a coin toss. The two captains were called, and the toss of the coin went in India's favour. However, that wasn't the end of the story as the Bangladeshi players refused to leave the field in protest and the unruly fans intimidated the Indian contingent.

There were also reports of fans throwing stones and bottles on the ground, in a huge embarrassment for SAFF officials and tournament organisers.

As the protests were getting louder and even more unruly, the match commissioner changed his decision once again and India and Bangladesh were declared joint winners.

"Despite being declared winners after the spin of the coin, we decided to accept the officials' request for sharing the trophy as the situation was simmering and a section of the home fans was creating disturbances," acting AIFF secretary M Satyanarayana told *The Indian Express*, adding that it was only because of security reasons that they decided to share the trophy. "Since the security of the players and other team officials is our utmost priority, the AIFF decided to agree to the request of the organisers," he said.

The decision by the match officials to first have a toss and then declare both teams as joint



India shared the title with Bangladesh by a controversial coin toss after penalty shootouts. X/IndianFootball

winners was baffling, because no football match has yet been decided by the spin of a coin. FIFA and AFC match commissioner Arunava Bhattacharya, who was present at the venue, but not in any official capacity, said that the penalties should've continued.

"I cannot comment on the match in any official capacity. However, as per rules, penalties/sudden death should continue till there is a result," Bhattacharya, who was the match commissioner for the U-23 South-East Asia (SEA) Games final between Thailand and Indonesia last year which saw four red cards and two brawls, said.

While Thursday's incident has shocked the footballing fraternity and SAFF officials will most likely be pulled up, the AIFF has yet to register an official complaint and are waiting for detailed feedback about the contingent that went to the competition. "With regards to a formal protest, we will wait for a thorough report from our team manager and head coach on their return, before we take a call on the matter," Satyanarayana said.

The young team returned to New Delhi on Friday to a grand welcome. They were garlanded by senior AIFF officials while hundreds of supporters - drums in tow - showed up at the airport.



Gujarat Mineral Development Corporation Ltd.

(A Government of Gujarat Enterprise)

CIN: L14100GJ1963SGC001206

Khanji Bhavan, 132 Feet Ring Road, Near University Ground, Vastrapur, Ahmedabad – 380 052

(See Regulation 47(1) (b) of the SEBI (LODR) Regulations, 2015)

Unaudited Financial Results

For the Quarter / Nine months ended on December 31, 2023

(₹ in Lakh)

Sr No.	Particulars	STANDALONE					
		Quarter ended on		Nine Months ended on		Year ended on	
		31-12-2023 (Unaudited)	30-09-2023 (Unaudited)	31-12-2022 (Unaudited)	31-12-2023 (Unaudited)	31-12-2022 (Unaudited)	31-03-2023 (Audited)
1	Total Income from Operations (net)	56,426.66	38,273.63	85,541.08	1,71,260.56	2,54,969.20	3,50,144.75
2	Net Profit for the period (before Tax and Exceptional items)	16,100.57	11,114.20	36,939.04	55,995.67	1,03,981.92	1,65,717.18
3	Net Profit for the period before tax (after Exceptional items)	16,100.57	11,114.20	36,939.04	55,995.67	1,03,981.92	1,65,717.18
4	Net Profit for the period after tax (after Exceptional items)	11,747.79	7,646.21	26,510.43	40,946.62	76,060.99	1,21,247.53
5	Total Comprehensive Income for the period [Comprising Profit for the period after tax and Other Comprehensive Income (after tax)]	16,636.16	11,620.59	24,178.14	55,300.85	70,753.10	1,11,017.15
6	Equity Share Capital	6,360.00	6,360.00	6,360.00	6,360.00	6,360.00	6,360.00
7	Reserves (excluding Revaluation Reserve as shown in the Balance Sheet)						5,69,581.18
8	Earning Per Share (of ₹2/- each) (for continuing and discontinued operations) (not annualised) -						
1.	Basic: (₹)	3.69	2.40	8.34	12.88	23.92	38.13
2.	Diluted (₹)	3.69	2.40	8.34	12.88	23.92	38.13

Sr No.	Particulars	CONSOLIDATED					
		Quarter ended on		Nine Months ended on		Year ended on	
		31-12-2023 (Unaudited)	30-09-2023 (Unaudited)	31-12-2022 (Unaudited)	31-12-2023 (Unaudited)	31-12-2022 (Unaudited)	31-03-2023 (Audited)
1	Total Income from Operations (net)	56,426.66	38,273.63	85,541.08	1,71,260.56	2,54,969.20	3,50,144.75
2	Net Profit for the period (before Tax and Exceptional items)	16,100.56	11,097.34	36,989.52	55,985.54	1,04,045.87	1,65,799.02
3	Net Profit for the period before tax (after Exceptional items)	16,100.56	11,097.34	36,989.52	55,985.54	1,04,045.87	1,65,799.02
4	Net Profit for the period after tax (after Exceptional items)	11,682.61	7,458.71	26,611.65	41,011.55	76,228.30	1,21,573.46
5	Total Comprehensive Income for the period [Comprising Profit for the period after tax and Other Comprehensive Income (after tax)]	16,570.98	11,433.09	24,279.36	55,365.78	70,920.51	1,11,343.08
6	Equity Share Capital	6,360.00	6,360.00	6,360.00	6,360.00	6,360.00	6,360.00
7	Reserves (excluding Revaluation Reserve as shown in the Balance Sheet)						5,73,468.11
8	Earning Per Share (of ₹2/- each) (for continuing and discontinued operations) (not annualised) -						
1.	Basic: (₹)	3.67	2.35	8.37	12.90	23.97	38.23
2.	Diluted (₹)	3.67	2.35	8.37	12.90	23.97	38.23

Note: The above is an extract of the detailed format