



## • Rajya Sabha polls today

Seth as its eighth candidate, a contest is on the cards for one of the seats. A former SP leader, Seth joined the BJP in 2019.

In Karnataka, there are four Rajya Sabha seats and five candidates in the fray. The candidature of Janata Dal (Secular) leader and real estate baron D Kupendra Reddy has made a contest inevitable for the fourth seat. As the numbers stand now, the Congress is assured of a win in three seats and the BJP is set to win one.

In Himachal Pradesh, the Congress has the numbers to win the one Rajya Sabha seat up for grabs but there is apparent resentment among some in the Congress about the candidature of senior party leader Abhishek Manu Singhvi. The BJP has fielded former Congress leader Harsh Mahajan, hoping to cash in on any division within the Congress.

## Uttar Pradesh

In UP, there are 10 seats and 11 candidates. The BJP has fielded former Union Minister R P N Singh, party general secretary Amarpal Maurya, former minister Sangeeta Balwant, spokesperson Sudhanshu Trivedi, former MLA Sadhna Singh, former Aga mayor Naveen Jain, former MP Chaudhary Tejveer Singh, and Seth. The SP, meanwhile, has fielded actor-turned-politician Jaya Bachchan, former state chief secretary Alok Ranjan, and Dalit leader Ramji Lal Suman.

The UP Assembly has 403 MLAs but the voting strength on Tuesday will be 399 as four seats are vacant. So, each candidate requires 37 first-preference votes. The BJP has 252 MLAs and its NDA allies account for 34 MLAs — 13 from the Apna Dal (S), nine from the Rashtriya Lok Dal (RLD), six each from the NISHAD Party and the Om Prakash Rajbhar-led SBSP. Strongman Raghuji Pratap Singh, popular as "Raja Bhaiya", who leads the Jansatta Dal Loktantrik — and is one of the two MLAs of the party — is backing the BJP.

If the BJP manages to get all of these 36 votes, it will have 288 in its bag but will fall short by eight votes to get its eighth candidate elected. The SP has 108 MLAs and its ally Congress has two legislators. The party needs 111 votes to get its three candidates elected but, compounding its problem, ally and Apna Dal (K) leader Pallavi Patel, who won in 2022 on the SP symbol, has said she won't vote for Jaya Bachchan or Alok Ranjan. CM Yogi Adityanath Monday convened a meeting of the NDA MLAs that was attended by Raja Bhaiya and RLD MLAs. He also hosted a dinner for them.

## Karnataka

There are four Rajya Sabha

Provide hostel  
to visually  
challenged  
student for free:  
HC directs JNU

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 26

WHILE UPHOLDING the entitlement of a 100% visually challenged master's student at Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) to hostel accommodation, the Delhi High Court directed the varsity to provide "free of cost" facilities to the student within a week, starting Monday.

The HC was hearing a plea by Sanjeev Kumar Mishra, a MA student in Sociology at JNU, in which he mentioned that he has not been allotted any hostel since his admission to the varsity on November 23, 2022. JNU had earlier argued that the provisions of the JNU Hostel Manual did not entitle Mishra to hostel accommodation as he was pursuing a second master's degree.

Underscoring "inclusivity" and "integration into mainstream of society" as the purpose of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act (RPwD), a single-judge bench of Justice CHari Shankar observed in its order, "Persons who suffer from disabilities, as recognised by the RPwD Act, are no different from you or me... The RPwD Act and all laws which strive to provide support to a person suffering from a disability, merely seek to neutralise the disability, so that the person's ability matches those of the rest of his peers, and they stand on an equal footing..."

Justice Shankar also observed that if an educational institution fails to provide facilities to enable a differently abled student to "utilise the educational opportunity in full measure", then it is a "clear and transparent breach" of the Act. "...A student who is pursuing a second Master's degree course with the JNU, having already pursued and completed one, is as entitled to a place to stay as a student who is joining JNU for the first time. The needs of one cannot be sacrificed at the altar of the needs of the other..." underscored Justice Shankar.

FULL REPORT ON  
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## CM LEADS SALUTE TO JAILED MINISTER IN ASSEMBLY

# Kejriwal skips ED's summons, goes to Rajghat to mark 1 year of Sisodia arrest

UPASIKI SINGHAL  
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 26

SKIPPING THE Enforcement Directorate's (ED) summons for the seventh time, Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal visited Rajghat on Monday to mark one year of the arrest of his former Deputy Chief Minister, Manish Sisodia, in the excise policy case.

While the ED has sought to question him in the same case, Kejriwal said he would appear before the agency only if a court ordered him to do so.

Senior Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leaders Atishi, Saurabh Bharadwaj and Durgesh Pathak were among those who accompanied Kejriwal to Rajghat. Earlier in the day, Kejriwal also led a salute to Sisodia in the Assembly, recalling that he would sit next to him in the House.

Speaking to reporters after his visit to Rajghat, Kejriwal reiterated his party's stand that the case against Sisodia, who also held the

education portfolio, was false and there was no evidence against him. "Manish Sisodiaji gave hope to the impoverished – that even their children can avail quality education and dream of a secure future... he gave impoverished children the right to dream. On the one hand, people like him are in jail, and on the other, those who face allegations of corruption worth thousands of crores of rupees... are still being assimilated into the party (BJP) and given plum positions," he said.

Besides Sisodia, two other senior AAP leaders, Sanjay Singh and Vijay Nair, have also been arrested by the ED in the case related to the now scrapped excise policy.

Atishi and Bharadwaj also addressed a press conference on Sisodia's arrest earlier in the day.

Stating that Sisodia was booked under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), Atishi said: "This law was made for counter-terrorism, to stop terrorism and drug trafficking. But this law being used to stop terrorism



Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal with senior AAP leaders at Rajghat on Monday. Tashi Tobgyal

or drug trafficking in our country? We all know it is being used to attack the Opposition instead."

Alleging "politics of vengeance", Bharadwaj said: "When he got arrested, we thought he would get bail within two-three months. We first thought the High Court would grant bail, then thought the Supreme Court would. The

Supreme Court would make big statements but would still not grant bail... Then we thought let the ED start the trial, but even that hasn't started yet."

Meanwhile, the BJP termed Kejriwal's visit to Rajghat as a "new excuse" to evade the ED's summons. Delhi BJP president Virendra Sachdeva said Kejriwal was not only "making a mockery

of the ED's summons", but had "created a new excuse" by visiting Rajghat instead.

"Today marks one year since Manish Sisodia went to jail in the excise policy case, and Arvind Kejriwal is the first Chief Minister to celebrate the anniversary of his Deputy Chief Minister's arrest," Sachdeva said.

"Kejriwal has been involved in corruption in the excise policy case and has looted crores of rupees. If he wants to atone by going to Mahatma Gandhi's samadhi, then he should also appear before the investigating agencies and confess his crime," Sachdeva added.

Responding to the BJP's remarks, Kejriwal said: "When the ED has gone to court, then the agency and central government should wait for the court's decision. On the one hand, the ED is going to court, and, on the other hand, summons are being sent. Don't the ED and the Centre have faith in the court? Their aim is to somehow break the INDIA bloc."

Appearing for the Delhi CM, senior advocate A M Singhvi pointed out that the original complaint was withdrawn and then filed once again after nine months by suppressing the facts about the withdrawal. "It's a case of defamation just for retweeting on X. This complaint is followed immediately by pre-summoning evidence being recorded. After this, the complainant is withdrawn. When it is refilled, nine months after the incident, it was suppressed that the original complaint was withdrawn," he submitted.

Justice Khanna said that two views are possible about retweeting. "When it comes to retweets, there may be two ways to look at it: One is an endorsement. If it is an endorsement, then it may have its own consequences. The other way to look at it is, you found something on the internet or the website, and you are just sharing that information," the judge observed.

Singhvi said, "That's the precise point to be decided".

He added that the "High Court, unfortunately, has taken

## KEJRIWAL DEFAMATION CASE

# CM to SC: Ready to say retweeting video was a mistake

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 26

Original complaint was withdrawn, then filed again after 9 months by suppressing facts about withdrawal: Advocate appearing for Kejriwal

the first view of retweets as endorsements."

Justice Khanna wondered if it would not be a matter of evidence. While stating that he would be able to satisfy the court about the legal position, Singhvi added, "There's no problem in admitting that this was a mistake if he had known that these would be the consequences."

The bench then asked Advocate Raghav Awasthi, appearing for the complainant, whether he would be amenable to closing the case in view of the submission that Kejriwal was willing to admit that retweeting it was a mistake. Awasthi sought time to seek instructions, following which the bench adjourned the hearing.

Commenting on the case, the HC had said, "When a public figure tweets a defamatory post, the ramifications extend far beyond a mere whisper in someone's ears."

"The background of the petitioner, being a Chief Minister, necessitates an acknowledgment of the inherent sense of responsibility that comes with such a significant political role. As a leader with political standing and maturity, the petitioner is presumed to be aware of the potential impact of his actions, including retweets on the public perception," it added.

The High Court further said that though "every retweet of defamatory imputation would ordinarily amount to 'publication' under IPC Section 499", it is ultimately for the aggrieved person to decide "which retweet caused more harm to his reputation, lowered his moral or intellectual character or credibility among the members of society".

## GURGAON: DUO SUMMONED, SAY COPS

# Husband, in-laws booked for 'poisoning' woman

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
GURGAON, FEBRUARY 26

A WOMAN was allegedly assaulted and "forced" to consume poison by her husband and in-laws in Gurgaon on Sunday, police said, adding that two accused have been booked.

Based on a complaint filed by the victim, a resident of Rewari's Jaunawas, an FIR has been registered against her husband, who is an Army officer, and his father at the Farrukhnagar police station. Police said the incident took place around 4 am on Sunday, when the victim was asked to make tea by her mother-in-law. They got into an argument over

this, and it escalated.

"My father-in-law threatened to... beat me to death. Then, my husband grabbed my legs, my father-in-law held my hands, and on my mother-in-law's instruction, my husband forced me to consume a liquid medicine. I swallowed some of it, but managed to spit out the rest. They then beat me... with a belt. I escaped somehow, and called 112 (police control room)...," she alleged in the FIR.

Sub-inspector Razak Khan, the investigating officer, said that further probe is underway, and the sample of the "poison" has been sent to FSL. "We have summoned the accused to the police station," he said.

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 26

CHIEF MINISTER Arvind Kejriwal on Monday once again pitched Delhi's governance model in two crucial sectors: education and health. Addressing the Delhi Assembly, he also called the Ayushman Bharat scheme a "big scam", a day after the L-G wrote to him to implement it.

"Our healthcare system aims to provide free treatment to people from all backgrounds, be it rich or poor. (We have) mohalla clinics for basic treatment and hospitals for larger issues. But these people (BJP) keep boasting about the Ayushman Bharat

scheme... It is nothing but a scam."

"Under the scheme which has a Rs 5 lakh cover, they give a health insurance card to people from EWS or BPL categories with a family income of up to Rs 2.5 lakh. Through this, people can only avail hospital admission for big diseases; they don't have access to basic medicines," he said, adding, "Ab wo hamare piche pade hain is scheme lagu karne."

Further, the Chief Minister said Delhi's "historic" government model provides a direction to the entire country. "I don't want to take names, but no party or government has done this much work to develop schools and colleges as AAP has done in the last 8 years..." he said.

He added, "This model... gives directions for development of the country... (Consider) education; several government schools have been redeveloped in Delhi. New classrooms and schools have been built. Around 4-5 lakh students from private schools have been admitted to Delhi government schools. This is a big thing."

He said theirs is the only government that provides free electricity, while states where BJP is in power face power cuts.

Meanwhile, Leader of Opposition Ramvir Singh Bidhuri alleged the condition of several sectors had declined: "There's a huge shortage of teachers... 75% posts of doctors... are vacant in hospitals..."

## ADVERTORIAL

# "Breath Unveiled: Navigating the Spectrum of Risk Factors in Lung Cancer"

## Introduction:

Lung cancer remains a formidable global health challenge, with its prevalence and mortality demanding continuous exploration of its multifaceted risk factors. This review embarks on a journey through the intricate tapestry of lung cancer risk, highlighting established contributors and emerging influences that collectively shape the landscape of this devastating disease.

## Tobacco Smoke: The Dominant Force

Undoubtedly, tobacco smoke stands as the primary catalyst behind lung cancer. Cigarette smoke, laden with carcinogens like polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons and nitrosamines, inflicts DNA damage and genetic mutations upon inhalation. The undeniable link between smoking and lung cancer underscores the need for anti-smoking campaigns and cessation programs as cornerstones for risk reduction.

## Secondhand Smoke and Environmental Susceptibility:

Inhalation of secondhand smoke places non-smokers at risk, illustrating the insidious nature of tobacco's influence. Furthermore, environmental exposure to carcinogens like radon, asbestos, and airborne particulates heightens vulnerability. Radon, a silent radioactive gas, infiltrates homes, necessitating awareness and mitigation measures to curb its impact.

## Genetics: A Predisposition to Vulnerability

Genetic predisposition plays a pivotal role in lung cancer susceptibility. Variations in detoxification enzymes and DNA repair mechanisms can influence an individual's capacity to metabolize carcinogens and rectify DNA damage, thereby altering their proneness to lung cancer. The clustering of lung cancer cases within families emphasizes the potential of inherited markers in enhancing susceptibility.

## Emerging Risk Factors: Pioneering Perspectives

While established risk factors hold prominence, emerging influencers

## Occupational Hazards: Professions at Peril

Occupational exposure to carcinogens in industries such as construction, mining, manufacturing, and agriculture significantly elevates lung cancer risk. Extended contact with substances like asbestos, silica, and industrial chemicals underscores the importance of robust workplace safety protocols and regular health assessments.

## Urbanization and Air Quality:

As urbanization progresses, air quality deteriorates, augmenting lung cancer rates. Traffic-related pollutants, volatile organic compounds, and industrial particulates collectively contribute to this phenomenon. Beyond exacerbating preexisting lung conditions, poor air quality fosters the ideal environment for malignant transformations within lung tissues.

## Diet and Lifestyle: Unveiling Nuanced Connections

Recent evidence suggests that diet and lifestyle intricacies impact lung cancer risk. Diets rich in antioxidants, fruits, and vegetables appear protective due to their mitigation of oxidative stress and inflammation.

Conversely, diets high in red meats, saturated fats, and sugars may heighten susceptibility. Sedentary behaviors and obesity emerge as additional risk indicators.

## Hormonal Dynamics: Estrogen's Enigma

Hormonal interactions, particularly involving estrogen, could influence lung cancer susceptibility. Recent studies point to estrogen receptors in lung tissue affecting tumor development. The role of hormone replacement therapy (HRT) in postmenopausal women as a risk modifier warrants deeper exploration.

## Conclusion:

The intricate interplay of lung cancer risk factors necessitates a holistic and collaborative approach to prevention. From confronting tobacco usage to addressing occupational hazards and refining air quality, collective efforts across disciplines remain pivotal. Adapting to emerging risk factors and their interconnectedness with genetics, lifestyle, and hormones will further refine our comprehension of lung cancer susceptibility. As science continually navigates this intricate landscape, empowering individuals with knowledge about these risk factors becomes paramount in the ongoing battle against lung cancer.



Dr. Arunesh Kumar  
Senior Consultant &  
Head in Pulmonology  
Gurgaon.

continue to intrigue researchers. Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), diabetes, and early-life exposure to air pollution have emerged as potential risk enhancers.

Furthermore, the rise of electronic cigarettes and vaping compels comprehensive investigation into their long-term pulmonary effects.

## Conclusion:

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LAST 3 DAYS

SHOW TIMINGS: 10 am to 8 pm

Open to General Public: upto 8 pm



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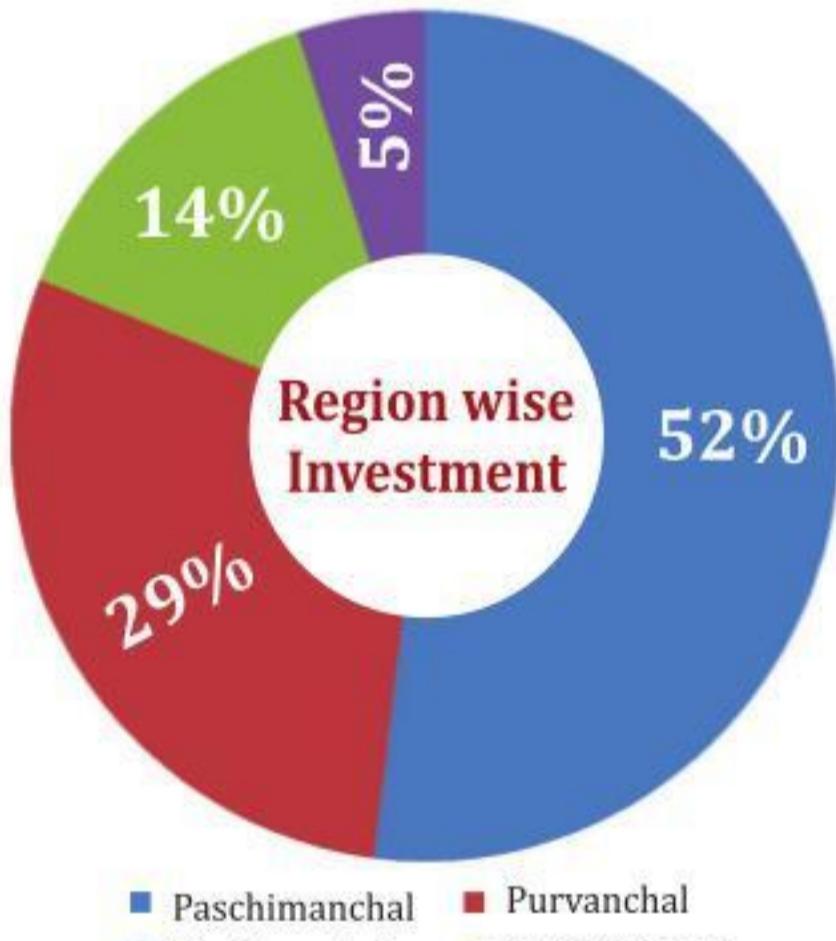
# GBC 4.0 to propel UP to \$1 trillion goal



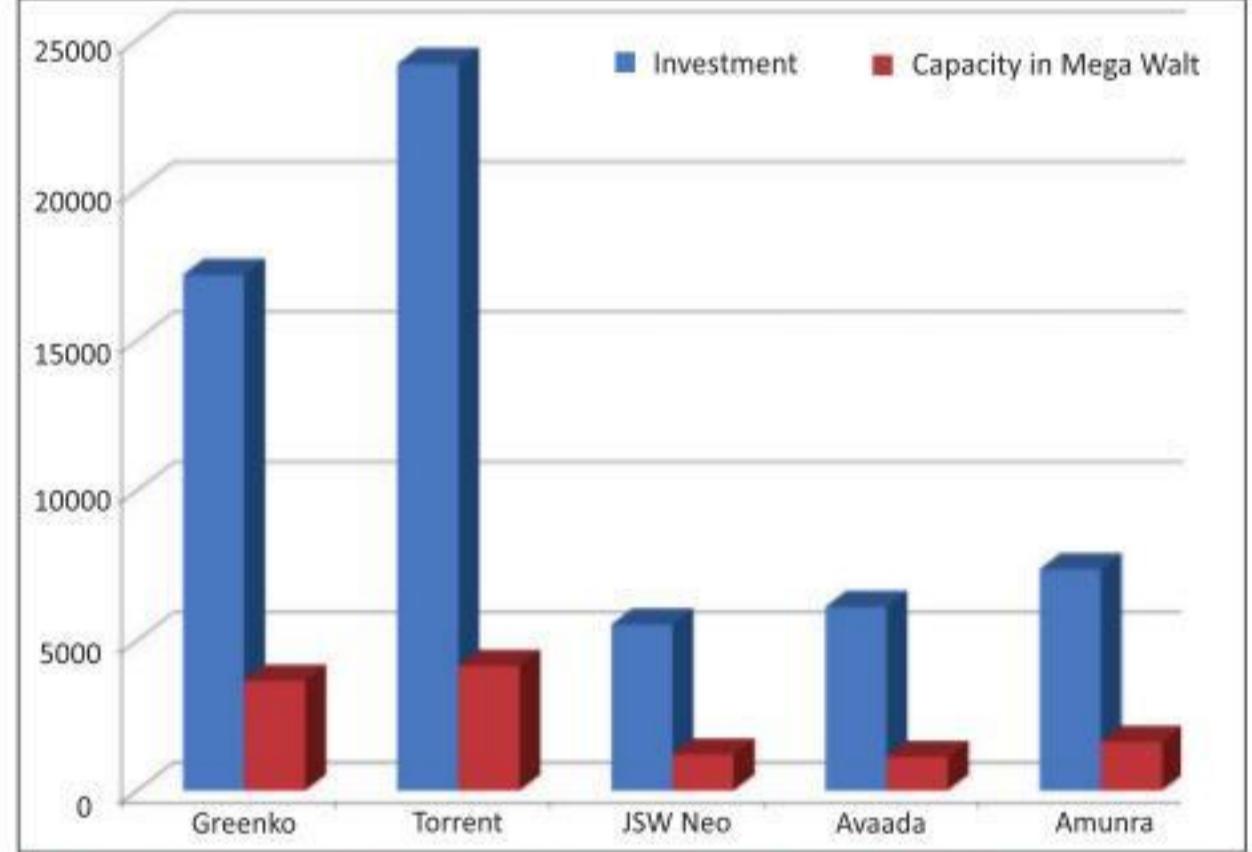
*In the last 7 years an atmosphere of business, development and trust has developed in Uttar Pradesh. The double-engine government has proven the inevitability of change if there is a genuine desire for it, doubling of exports from the state during this period. UP is a state with the maximum number of expressways, and international airports in the country. It is the state where the country's first rapid rail is running, along with presence of big chunk of Eastern and Western Peripheral Expressways. In Uttar Pradesh in the last 7 years of the "double-engine" government the culture of "red tape" has been replaced by the "red carpet" for investors.*

**Now UP means 'Unlimited Potential'. It is the result of the state's investment-friendly policy along with ease of doing business, Nivesh Mitra portal, and single window system that today every investor wants to come here.**

- **Yogi Adityanath**  
Chief Minister



Double Engine government, under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, Uttar Pradesh has experienced remarkable advancements in infrastructure, particularly in transportation. With its stellar rail, road, air, and waterways, the state has witnessed a noteworthy evolution, guaranteeing smooth transit of both commodities and individuals throughout its expansive territory. Moreover, the recent establishment of state-of-the-art airports and the expansion of inland water routes have further cemented its reputation as a vibrant transportation nucleus.



In a major push towards clean, green energy generation, Rs 1.3 lakh Cr worth projects unveiled. Almost 50% of these are Pumped Storage Power projects in Sonbhadra.

## Key Sectors

- Investment of more than Rs. 2 Lakh Cr. in the Manufacturing sector.
- The Renewable Energy Sector has got an investment of more than Rs. 1 Lakh Cr.
- IT boom! Over Rs. 90,000 Cr. invested in the sector, fuelling growth and innovation.
- The Food Processing sector has received investments exceeding Rs. 60000 Cr.
- The real estate sector receives a major boost with an investment exceeding Rs. 50,000 Cr.
- Mega investment of Rs. 25000 Cr. fuels growth in the Waste Management Sector, promising positive impacts.
- Over Rs. 10,000 Cr. flows into the Distilleries industry and more than Rs. 9000 Cr. in the Dairy Sector, marking a significant development.
- The education sector flourishes with a record-breaking investment of Rs. 25,000 Cr. raising optimism for improved learning outcomes.
- Healthcare gets a boost! Over Rs. 10,000 Cr. invested in the sector, promising improved access and facilities.
- The textile sector receives an investment exceeding Rs. 6,000 Cr. marking a significant development.
- The pharmaceutical and medical device industries receive a combined investment of Rs. 2,000 Cr.

## Major Investment

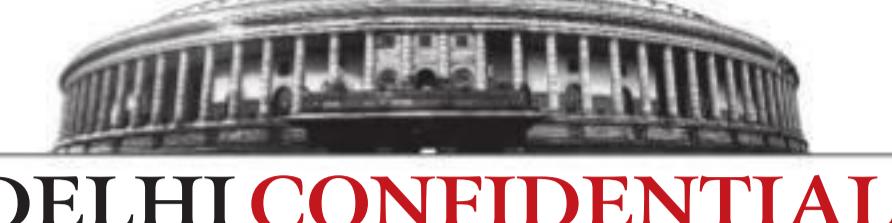
- With a massive investment of Rs. 30000 Cr. Yotta is setting up a capital-intensive Data Centre Park comprising 6 Data Centre buildings of approximately 40 MW Power each in Gautambuddha Nagar.
- Torrent Power is setting up 2-pumped Storage Plants in Sonbhadra with an investment of Rs. 22,800 Cr.
- Greenko is setting up Pumped Storage Project, with an investment of Rs.17181 Cr. which is envisaged as Off- a Stream Closed Loop Pumped Storage Project (OCPSP) of 3660 MW / 21960 MWH storage capacity, in Sonbhadra district.
- ACME Cleantech Solutions is paving the way for sustainable energy solutions with the Musakhand PSP Closed Loop Pumped Storage Project in Chandauli, boasting an installed capacity of 1680 MW and an investment of Rs. 9450 Cr.
- JSW is setting up a Pumped Storage Project (PSP) in Sonbhadra having a capacity of 1680 MW/10483 MWH, with upper and lower reservoirs boasting storage capacities of 13.30 MCM and 15.91 MCM with an investment of Rs. 8000 Cr.
- Tata Technologies is setting up or upgrading around 150 Government ITIS in Lucknow with an investment of Rs. 4174 Cr.
- The landscape of Greater Noida is set to evolve with the introduction of INGKA's IKEA Retail furniture store and shopping mall, supported by a significant investment of Rs. 4300 Cr.
- With a capital infusion of Rs. 4000 Cr, Air India SATS is initiating the development of an Air Cargo Terminal and Logistic Park located in Gautam Buddha Nagar.
- Century Pulp & Paper is setting up a Bagasse-based Paper Manufacturing unit in Moradabad with an investment of Rs. 4000 Cr.
- Across Prayagraj, Gorakhpur, Amethi, and Chitrakoot, Varun Beverages Ltd. is undertaking a substantial investment of Rs. 3500 Cr. to set up 4 advanced manufacturing plants. These facilities will focus on the production of fruit pulp, fruit juice-based drinks, carbonated soft drinks, beverages base soups, and packaging products.
- Dalmia Cement is setting up a cement production plant in Mirzapur with a capacity of 11 MTPA by acquiring and reviving sick units with a substantial capital infusion of Rs. 3000 Cr.
- In Ayodhya, the House of Abhinandan Lodha is embarking on an ambitious project for luxury housing and commercial real estate, committing a substantial investment of Rs. 3000 Cr.
- Adani Defence is setting up South Asia's largest manufacturing facility of small arms and ammunition in the Kanpur node of UP Defence Industrial Corridor with an investment of Rs. 1500 Cr.
- Fun Zoo Toys (India) is channeling Rs. 1052 Cr towards the development of a manufacturing hub within Gautam Buddha Nagar's Toy Park.
- Ashok Leyland is investing Rs. 1000 Cr to establish a new integrated commercial vehicle plant in Lucknow. The focus of this greenfield project will primarily be on manufacturing electric buses.



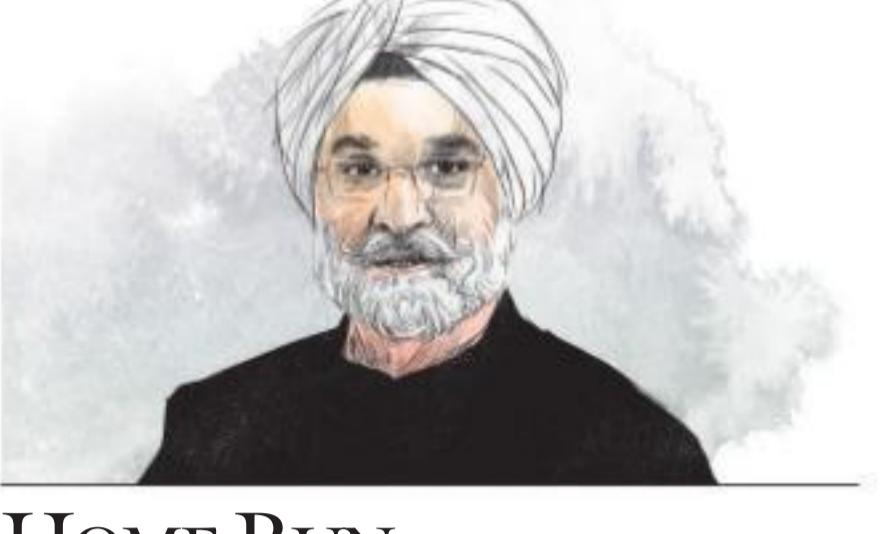
## Business Friendly Governance

The business-friendly governance spearheaded by Chief Minister Yogi has played a pivotal role in creating an environment conducive to attracting investors. Through strategic policy initiatives and proactive measures, the state has positioned itself as an attractive destination for both domestic and international investors. Chief Minister Yogi's emphasis on streamlining bureaucratic processes, improving infrastructure, and ensuring transparency has instilled confidence among businesses, leading to increased investments across various sectors. His unwavering commitment to economic growth and development has facilitated the establishment of new businesses, the expansion of existing ones, and the creation of employment opportunities, ultimately contributing to the overall prosperity of the state.

1 <sup>st</sup> Rank Good Governance Index 2021	2 <sup>nd</sup> Rank Export Preparedness Index (*Landedcost)	Achiever State (2020) Ease of Doing Business	Achiever State (2023) Logistic Ease Across Different States
481 Licenses services including Pre-Establishment/Pre-Operation/ Renewal & Additional Services available	2 <sup>nd</sup> Rank Export Preparedness Index (*Landedcost)		
41 Number of departments integrated			
13.26 lakh Number of license applications have been disposed (at 97% disposal rate) out of 13.67 lakh applications received			
4500+ Compliance minimized; 577+ decriminalised			
1000+ Unique reforms implemented under BRAP			
200+ Services included into Janhit Guarantee Acc for timely delivery of NOCs			



DELHI CONFIDENTIAL



## HOME RUN

THERE IS A BUZZ around former Ambassador of India to the US, Taranjit Sandhu, who is camping in Amritsar after superannuation from the foreign service last month, that he could be BJP's pick for the Lok Sabha election from the constituency. Monday, Sandhu interacted with farmers in the border area, and in the preceding days he had held meetings with entrepreneurs, professionals, and doctors in the city. He has also been visiting temples, gurdwaras, and popular eateries. Sandhu's grandfather Teja Singh Samundri was one of the founders of the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee, while his father Bishan Singh Samundri is former Vice-Chancellor of GNDU. In 2019, the BJP's Amritsar candidate was another ex-diplomat, Union Minister Hardeep Puri, who lost to Gurjeet Singh Aujla of the Congress.

## HEARTLAND ASPIRATION

THE TMC is mulling to contest at least one Lok Sabha seat in Uttar Pradesh. Though it lacks a proper organisational set up in UP, the party wishes to contest the elections in alliance with the SP to expand its footprints in the Hindi heartland. Sources said a few TMC leaders have spoken to SP chief Akhilesh Yadav and is waiting for his decision. Sources in the TMC said the party has identified the Mirzapur seat where its national spokesperson and former Congress MLA Lalithesh Pati Tripathi wishes to contest from. Tripathi was elected MLA from Marnian in Mirzapur in 2012. The SP recently firmed up the seat-sharing talks with the Congress in UP, and the Mirzapur seat has fallen in the SP kitty.

## POCKET GUIDE

INTERACTING WITH journalists recently, Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya asked if they had the ministry's pocket handbook with them. Mandaviya said they would find it handy while writing stories. He said that when he prepares his speeches, he uses the handbook as a ready reckoner. The small handbook has the facts and figures of the key schemes of the ministry.

## Karnataka govt mulls second attempt to get temple Bill passed

Also considering tabling Bill later when Congress has majority in the Council

## JOHNSON TA

BENGALURU, FEBRUARY 26

THE CONGRESS government in Karnataka is considering passage of its temple funds amendment Bill in the state Assembly for a second time after the Bill was defeated in the Legislative Council by the Opposition BJP-JDS combine Friday.

The Bill is also being considered for tabling at a later stage when the Congress has a majority in the Council, party leaders said.

Under the rules, as soon as possible, after a Bill which has once been passed by the House is received from the Council, with a message that it has not agreed to the Bill the House may pass the Bill again and transmit it as passed to the Council.

The Karnataka Hindu Religious Institutions and Charitable Endowments (Amendment) Bill, 2024 was intended to increase the common fund pool for managing the 34,563 temples under the state government's Muzrai (Religious and Charitable Endowments) Department. It was defeated 15:8, after it was put to vote by Legislative Council Deputy

Chairman MK Pranesh, even after the Siddaramaiah government agreed to make changes to it to meet some demands from the Opposition.

The BJP has 34 MLCs in the 75-member Upper House, while the JDS has eight and the Congress 30.

One seat is vacant while the two remaining seats involve an Independent and the Chairman.

In the 224-member Assembly, the Congress has a majority with 134 MLAs as against the BJP's 66 and the JD(S)'s 19.

If a Bill is rejected by the Council, the possibility of the Assembly passing it a second time is being considered," a state law ministry official said.

State Congress chief and Deputy CM D K Shivakumar, however, suggested the Bill could be considered a few months down the line (after the Lok Sabha polls), when the Congress expects its tally to rise in the Council. "Our Bill would have helped priests in our state, by spending around 10% of collections from high-income temples on the welfare of priests and other staff of all temples, but they [BJP-JD(S)] defeated it. We will get it passed when we have a majority in Upper House," he said.

## Jaishankar, Nirmala will fight LS polls: Pralhad Joshi



Both the Union Ministers are Raja Sabha MPs. File

## EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

BENGALURU, FEBRUARY 26

UNION MINISTER Pralhad Joshi said on Monday that his Cabinet colleagues and Rajya Sabha MPs Nirmala Sitharaman and S Jaishankar would contest the upcoming Lok Sabha elections but the constituencies are yet to be decided.

"More or less, it is certain that both will contest the upcoming Lok Sabha polls. But from where, Karnataka or other states, is yet to be decided," Union Minister of Parliamentary Affairs, Coal and Mines Joshi told reporters at Hubballi.

There were rumours that while one of the two Ministers would contest from a constituency in Karnataka's coastal districts, the other would fight from one of the three constituencies in Bengaluru. Sitharaman was elected to the Rajya Sabha from Karnataka for the second time in 2022, and Jaishankar from Gujarat in 2019.

On Mandya Independent MP Sumalatha insisting that she would once again contest from the seat, Joshi said the national leaders of BJP will discuss and take a call on the same. Sumalatha, riding on a sympathy wave following her actor-turned-politician husband Ambareesh's demise, won from Mandya in 2019. Though she is learnt to be inching towards the BJP, her candidature for the 2024 Lok Sabha polls has become complicated following the alliance between BJP and Janata Dal (Secular). JD(S) leaders have demanded the Mandya seat for the party.

From Thiruvananthapuram, being represented by Shashi Tharoor since 2009, the CPI will field Pannyian Raveendran. Former minister VS Sunil Kumar will be CPI candidate from Thrissur where BJP's Suresh Gopi is slated to contest. For Mavelikkara, the party candidate will be CA Arun Kumar.

Annie Raja hails from Irity in Kannur, born in a Christian family with a Left background. She is currently general secretary of the National Federation of Indian Women. Wife of CPI general secretary DRaja, Annie is also a member of CPI's national executive.



## FEEDBACK FOR MANIFESTO

BJP chief J P Nadda flags off 'Viksit Bharat Modi ki Guarantee' vans to seek people's suggestions for preparing the party manifesto for Lok Sabha polls, in New Delhi on Monday. Praveen Khanna

## CPI picks Annie Raja as Wayanad LS candidate

'What does Rahul or Cong gain in contesting from Kerala... I think good sense will prevail'

## EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, FEB 26

CPI LEADER Annie Raja will be the LDF candidate from Wayanad Lok Sabha seat, currently being represented by Congress leader Rahul Gandhi.

After a meeting of the party state executive here on Monday, CPI state secretary Binoy Viswanathan announced candidates for four seats, which it contests as part of the CPI(M)-led LDF, out of the 20 Lok Sabha segments in Kerala.

From Thiruvananthapuram, being represented by Shashi Tharoor since 2009, the CPI will field Pannyian Raveendran. Former minister VS Sunil Kumar will be CPI candidate from Thrissur where BJP's Suresh Gopi is slated to contest. For Mavelikkara, the party candidate will be CA Arun Kumar.

Annie Raja hails from Irity in Kannur, born in a Christian family with a Left background. She is currently general secretary of the National Federation of Indian Women. Wife of CPI general secretary DRaja, Annie is also a member of CPI's national executive.

The CPI, as also the CPI(M), are part of INDIA bloc. Now you are going to take on one of its frontline leaders.

In Kerala, it has been Left Democratic Front (LDF) versus the United Democratic Front (UDF) for several years now. In 2019 also, the CPI had contested the



**THE EXPRESS**  
INTERVIEW  
WITH  
ANNIE RAJA  
CPI LEADER

Wayanad seat. In the LDF alliance, the CPI has been given four seats and Wayanad is one of them... In Kerala, it is LDF versus UDF, and there is no INDIA (bloc) here.

When INDIA alliance parties... had meetings... that time itself they had made their stand

## JMM-CONG ALLIANCE LEFT WITH ONE MP

Geeta Kora, Cong's lone member from Jharkhand in Lok Sabha, joins BJP

## ABHISHEK ANGAD

RANCHI, FEBRUARY 26

IN A huge blow to the Congress, its lone MP from Jharkhand and the wife of former CM Madhu Kora, Geeta Kora, quit the party on Monday and joined the BJP.

Her exit has left the Congress-Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) ruling alliance with only one MP — Vijay Hansdak — from the state, as the BJP won 12 of the 14 seats in the 2019 Lok Sabha polls. Madhu Kora, who had been accused of irregularities to the tune of Rs 4,000 crore in the coal block allocation case of 2017 and convicted in a disproportionate assets case, has also joined the BJP.

BJP insiders said inclusion of Geeta, the Singhbhum MP, will boost the party's chances in Kolhan division, spread over three districts of East Singhbhum, West Singhbhum and Saraike Kharsawan. In the 2019 Assembly elections, the BJP had failed to open its account in the region.

Welcoming the Koras into the party, state BJP chief Babul Marandi implied that the Congress had mistreated Madhu Kora after making the CM.

Madhu Kora became CM of Jharkhand in 2006 while he was an independent MLA after he emerged as the consensus candidate of the UPA following the fall of the Arjun Munda-led NDA government. The Congress had extended outside support to his government.

However, in 2008, the JMM, which was one of the constituents of the UPA, withdrew its support, leading to the fall of the Madhu Kora government. It was widely believed that the Congress orchestrated the "coup".

Madhu Kora was later made in charge for Jharkhand, while the JMM's Shibu Soren became CM.

Congress leaders admitted shock at Geeta's switch. "We had

no clue about this. Most of the rumours surrounding her unhappiness with the party were false alarms. She even attended a party function on Sunday," a senior party leader said.

Geeta entered politics in 2009, winning the Assembly elections held that year as a candidate of the Jai Bharat Samanta Party — formed by Madhu after he quit the BJP — from Jagannathpur, a seat won twice earlier by her husband (2000 as a BJP candidate and 2005 as an independent).

Geeta was the party's sole leader who won in that election. She retained the seat in 2014, in face of the Modi wave. In 2018, the Jai Bharat Samanta Party merged into the Congress.

An active parliamentarian, with an attendance of 69% in the outgoing Lok Sabha, Geeta is a member of the Standing Committee on Social Justice and Empowerment and a member of the consultative committee on human resource development.

In December 2021, Geeta raised the issue of providing a separate column for the 'Sarna Religious Code' in the Census, questioning the Modi government's stand on the issue.

Madhu Kora was later made in charge for Jharkhand, while the JMM's Shibu Soren became CM.

Congress leaders admitted shock at Geeta's switch. "We had

very clear that... Left and secular, democratic parties should come together. Even at that time Kerala was made an exception.

## You will be up against sitting Congress MP Rahul Gandhi.

I think good sense will prevail. Since we have announced the candidates... what is the gain for the Congress or Rahul Gandhi in contesting from Kerala?

At the national level, the Congress and the Left parties are fighting against the fascist forces — the RSS and the BJP. So the Congress has many options for a safer seat for its leadership. It can be in Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Karnataka... so many places. What is the politics of the Congress... in terms of the larger picture? If they are really, sincerely fighting against these fascist forces... then they will have to think. It is their prerogative.

When you question the CPI... remember last time also the

CPI had contested. (The Congress has) many options. We are not contesting in hundreds of seats. We are contesting in only a handful of seats.

## So Rahul Gandhi should not contest from Wayanad?

I am not saying that. What I am saying is... Rahul or the Congress... I will not take individual names. The Congress should make clear, what is its politics? Do they want to see the RSS-BJP defeated or do they want to see the Left cornered and defeated? That is the question. It is not only the responsibility of the CPI. Even in the Telangana Assembly elections, they had promised us two seats. But at the last minute, they said somebody from the Bharat Rashtriya Samiti (BRS) or BJP joined and they took away one of the seats.

FULL INTERVIEW ON

www.indianexpress.com

## Road to 2024: BJP's target not just 370 seats, it is also seeking to touch 50% votes



Union Ministers and Chief Ministers of BJP-ruled states during the party's national convention in Delhi last week. PTI file

leaders say there is a method to this step-by-step collation — to not just win a comprehensive majority but also come close to 50% in terms of vote share. Incidentally, the Opposition's INDIA bloc often falls back on the fact that 64%-odd voters did not vote for the BJP in 2019, to justify its formation.

In fact, the BJP government has a specific figure that it hopes to surpass: the 46.86% votes the Congress got when it won 414 seats in the post-Indira Gandhi assassination election of 1984 (which remains the largest number of seats won by a party in the Lok Sabha).

In other words, to go up from the 37.36% votes it won in 2019

seats in Rajasthan, Haryana and Gujarat in 2019, lost just one in Madhya Pradesh and two in Chhattisgarh, even as the NDA alliance led by it had won all but one seat in Bihar. In Uttar Pradesh, the state with the largest number of Lok Sabha seats, the BJP had won 62 of the 80 constituencies, and is confident of maintaining — if not improving — the tally on the strength of the goodwill created by the Ram Temple consecration.

Even in Karnataka, the only Southern state where the BJP is a lead party, the BJP had claimed 28 of the 29 seats in 2019, with the only remaining MP, Sumalatha Ambareesh (Independent), lending her support to the Modi government in the Lok Sabha. Despite its decimation in the

Hindu heartland and other traditional bastions.

The BJP had picked up all the

2023 Karnataka Assembly elections, the BJP hopes to maintain its dominance after tying up with the JD(S) as an ally.

BJP leaders say the party will also increase its numbers in Odisha and Telangana, states where its efforts to improve its presence have not been very successful. However, even if all these numbers hold, the BJP tally may not cross 370.

Hence the push for alliances in states like Andhra Pradesh and Kerala, where even if the BJP does not win seats, it can pick up votes on strength of these tie-ups.

The BJP's National Convention held recently laid out specific tasks for its workers in the run-up to the polls, down to the booth level. The party will now hold state, district, block

and booth-level meetings to reinforce the message.

Party sources said the BJP will also modulate its "messaging", especially on Hindutva, with the Ram Temple inauguration having already accomplished half the job. It realises that while aggressive Hindutva might consolidate votes behind it in the northern states, it might alienate voters in the South, where the messaging will instead be focused on Modi's popularity.

Leaders said that apart from delivering a decisive message to the Opposition via a victory with a near-majority of the votes, Modi believes that such affirmative measures that he wants his next government to take.

# SC to Centre: Ensure women get permanent commission in Coast Guard or we will

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 26

DECLARING THAT women cannot be left out, the Supreme Court on Monday told the Centre to ensure that women are granted permanent commission in the Indian Coast Guard and said the court will do it if the government doesn't.

A bench comprising Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud and Justices J B Pardiwala and Manju Misra said this while taking note of submissions by Attorney General R Venkataramani that there were some functional and operational difficulties in granting permanent commissions to Short Service Commission Officers (SSCOs).

"All these functionality etc argument does not hold water in the year 2024. Women cannot be left out. If you do not do it, we will do it. So take a look at that," the CJI said.

The attorney general also apprised the bench that a board has been set up by the Indian Coast Guard (ICG) to look into

the issues.

"You must have women on board," the bench said, fixing the plea for hearing on Friday as the matter could not be taken up due to paucity of time on Monday.

Previously, the bench had said that the maritime force must come up with a policy which treats women "fairly".

The top court was hearing a plea filed by Indian Coast Guard officer Priyanka Tyagi seeking the grant of permanent commission to eligible women short-service commission officers of the force.

"You speak of 'nari shakti' (woman power). Now show it here. You are in the deep end of the sea in this matter. You must come up with a policy which treats women fairly," the bench had observed then.

It had also asked whether the Union was still adopting "a patriarchal approach" despite the judgments of the top court on the grant of permanent commission to women officers in the three armed forces - Army, Air Force and the Navy.

**SC fines petitioner ₹1 lakh for appeal against HC order adjourning his plea**

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 26

TO DISCOURAGE the Advocates-on-Record (AoRs) from appealing against mere issuance of or even brief adjournments granted by the high courts, the Supreme Court Monday imposed Rs 1 lakh on a petitioner for filing an appeal to challenge an order of the Allahabad High Court that adjourned his plea related to promotions.

Dismissing the plea, a three-judge bench presided by Justice B R Gavai, said "filing of such petitions not only wastes the time of

## EC ropes in banks, post offices for voter outreach

New Delhi: The ECI Monday signed a memorandum of understanding each with the Indian Banks' Association (IBA) and the Department of Posts to "amplify its voter outreach and awareness efforts" ahead of the forthcoming Lok Sabha polls. **ENS**

**THE TATA POWER COMPANY LIMITED**  
Corporate Identity No. (CIN): L28920MH1919PLC000567  
Regd. Office: Bombay House, 24, Hornby Mody Street, Mumbai 400 001.  
Tel: +91 22 6665 8282 e-mail: tatapower@tatapower.com Website: www.tatapower.com  
**POSTAL BALLOT NOTICE AND REMOTE E-VOTING INFORMATION TO MEMBERS**  
NOTICE is hereby given that the Tata Power Company Limited ('Company') is seeking approval of its Members on the following resolutions through postal ballot by voting only through electronic means (remote e-voting):

- | Sl. No. | Description of the Resolutions   | Type of Resolution |
|---------|--|--------------------|
| 1.      | Re-appointment of Mr. Ashok Sinha (DIN: 00070477) as an Independent Director for a second term                             | Special            |
| 2.      | Material Related Party Transaction(s) with PT Kalmi Prima Coal   | Ordinary           |
| 3.      | Material Related Party Transaction(s) with Tata Projects Limited   | Ordinary           |
| 4.      | Material Related Party Transaction(s) with Tata Steel Limited  | Ordinary           |
| 5.      | Material Related Party Transaction(s) with Tata Power Renewable Energy Limited   | Ordinary           |
| 6.      | Material Related Party Transaction(s) between Tata Power Trading Company Limited and Mahindra Power Limited                | Ordinary           |
| 7.      | Material Related Party Transaction(s) between Tata Power Delhi Distribution Limited and Tata Power Trading Company Limited | Ordinary           |
| 8.      | Material Related Party Transaction(s) between Tata Power Solar Systems Limited and TP Vardhaman Surya Limited              | Ordinary           |
| 9.      | Material Related Party Transaction(s) between Tata Power Renewable Energy Limited and TP Vardhaman Surya Limited           | Ordinary           |

The Postal Ballot Notice ('Notice') is available on the website of the Company at <https://www.tatapower.com/investor-relations/postal-ballot.aspx>, and on the website of National Depositories Limited ('NSDL') at [www.evoting.nsdl.com](https://www.evoting.nsdl.com). Additionally, the Notice will also be available and may be accessed from the relevant section of the websites of the Stock Exchanges i.e. BSE Limited and National Stock Exchange of India Limited at [www.bseindia.com](https://www.bseindia.com) and [www.seindia.com](https://www.seindia.com) respectively.

Pursuant to Section 110 read with Section 108 and other applicable provisions, if any, of the Companies Act, 2013 ('Act') (including any statutory modification or re-enactment thereto for the time being in force), read with Rules 20 and 22 of the Companies (Management and Administration) Rules, 2014 ('Rules'), Regulation 44 of the Securities and Exchange Board of India ('Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements'), Regulation 20 of the Listing Regulations, Secretarial Standard on General Meetings issued by the Institute of Company Secretaries of India ('Secretarial Standard') which is amended, and in accordance with the requirements prescribed by the Ministry of Corporate Affairs ('MCA') for holding general meetings/conducting postal ballot process through e-voting via various MCA Circulars, the Company is providing remote e-voting facility to all its Members to enable them to cast their votes electronically on all the resolutions set forth in the Notice instead of submitting the physical Postal Ballot form. The Company has, on Monday, February 26, 2024, completed dispatch of the Notice dated January 15, 2024 seeking approval of the Members of the Company by e-mail only to the Members whose names appear in the Register of Members / List of Beneficial Owners as received from NSDL, Central Depository Services (India) Limited ('CDSL') and Link Intime India Private Limited, the Company's Registrar and Transfer Agent ('RTA') and whose e-mail addresses are available with the Company as on Friday, February 9, 2024 ('Cut-off date'). The voting rights shall also be reckoned on the paid-up value of shares registered in the name(s) of the Members as on the Cut-off date. Accordingly, a physical copy of the Notice along with Postal Ballot form and prepaid business reply envelope, have not been sent to the Members for this postal ballot.

The Company has engaged the services of NSDL for providing remote e-voting facilities to the Members, enabling them to cast their vote electronically and in a secure manner. The remote e-voting will commence on Wednesday, February 28, 2024 at 9:00 a.m. (IST) and shall end on Thursday, March 28, 2024 at 5:00 p.m. (IST). The remote e-voting facility will be disabled by NSDL immediately thereafter and will not be allowed beyond the said date and time. Members are requested to record their Assent ('FOR') or Dissent ('AGAINST') through the remote e-voting process not later than 5:00 p.m. (IST) on Thursday, March 28, 2024. During this period, Members of the Company holding shares either in physical or electronic form as on the Cut-off date shall cast their vote electronically. The voting rights of the Members shall be in proportion to their share of the paid-up Equity Share Capital of the Company as on the Cut-Off Date. Once the vote on the Resolution is cast by a Member, the Member shall not be allowed to change it subsequently.

To facilitate Members to receive this Notice electronically, the Company has made special arrangement with the RTA, for registration of email addresses in terms of the MCA Circulars. Eligible Members who have not registered their email address with the Company may register the same with the RTA on or before 5:00 p.m. (IST) on Sunday, March 24, 2024 basis which NSDL will provide the Member with a copy of the Notice. The procedure to register email address with the RTA and the procedure of remote e-voting is provided in the 'Notes' section of the Notice.

The Board of Directors has appointed Mr. P. N. Parikh (Membership No. FCS 327, CP No. 1228) or failing him, Ms. Jigyasa N. Ved (Membership No. FCS 6488, CP No. 6018) or failing her, Mr. Mitesh Dhabilwala (Membership No. FCS 8331, CP No. 951) of Mr. Parikh & Associates, Practising Company Secretaries, as the Scrutinizer to scrutinize the postal ballot process in a fair and transparent manner.

The results of the e-voting conducted through Postal Ballot (through the remote e-voting process) along with the Scrutinizer's Report will be announced on or before Monday, April 1, 2024. The same will be displayed on the website of the Company: [www.tatapower.com](https://www.tatapower.com), the website of NSDL: [www.evoting.nsdl.com](https://www.evoting.nsdl.com) and BSE Limited and National Stock Exchange of India Limited, where the Company's Equity Shares are listed. The results shall also be displayed on the notice board at the Registered Office of the Company.

In case of any query, you may refer the Frequently Asked Questions ('FAQs') for Shareholders and e-voting user manual for Shareholders available at the download section of [www.evoting.nsdl.com](https://www.evoting.nsdl.com) or call on: 022 - 4886 7000 and 022 - 2499 7000 or send a request to Mr. Palayi Mhatre, Senior Manager - NSDL or Mr. Anil Vishal, Deputy Vice President - NSDL at [evoting@nsdl.co.in](mailto:evoting@nsdl.co.in).

Members are requested to carefully read all the notes set out in the Notice and in particular, the manner of casting vote through remote e-voting.

By order of the Board of Directors  
For The Tata Power Company Limited

Vispi S. Patel  
Company Secretary  
FCS No. 7021

Date: February 27, 2024  
Place: Mumbai

INDIAN INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE EDUCATION AND RESEARCH PUNE  
An Autonomous Institution of the Ministry of Education, Govt. of India  
Dr. Homi Bhabha Road, Pune - 411 008 | Website: [www.iiserpune.ac.in](http://www.iiserpune.ac.in)



Admission to Masters and Research Programmes - August 2024

IISER Pune invites online applications for admission to the M.Sc., Integrated Ph.D., Ph.D., International Ph.D. and externally funded Ph.D. programme for the August 2024 session.

Details of eligibility and application procedure are available at:

<https://www.iiserpune.ac.in/education/admissions>

**MUNICIPAL CORPORATION OF DELHI**  
ASSESSMENT & COLLECTION DEPARTMENT  
Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee Civic Centre  
(14th Floor), Jawaharlal Nehru Marg, New Delhi-110002.

No. Tax/HQ/MCD/2023-24/D-4859 Dt:26.02.2024

### PUBLIC NOTICE

For a more transparent & responsive property tax regime in Delhi and better provisioning of service delivery, MCD has launched a mobile App to geo tag properties. Considering that a large number of taxpayers are using iPhone (IOS version), due to some technical glitches or other reasons, taxpayers were unable to geo-tag their properties, therefore, the last date for geo-tagging has been extended till **29.02.2024**. The technical glitches have now been resolved and all taxpayers can download the Unified Mobile App (UMA) on both Adorid & IOS phones through play store/apple store or by visiting the website at <https://mcdonline.nic.in/mcdapp.html> and geo-tag their properties. The taxpayers/property owners, who have not geo-tagged their properties, are advised to do the same to avail 10% rebate on lumpsum tax payment during next FY 2024-25. Further, the taxpayers, who have not filed their property tax for the current financial year 2023-24 so far or could not file previous year's tax due some reasons are advised to pay tax to avoid last minutes rush at property tax offices or pay online by logging on to MCD website [www.mcdonline.nic.in](https://mcdonline.nic.in) or MCD App. All property tax offices will remain open on all Saturdays & Sundays till 31.3.2024.

Veer Singh Yadav, IRAS  
Assessor & Collector, MCD

RO. No. 90/DPI/MCD/2023-24

## SANT GADGE BABA AMRAVATI UNIVERSITY EMPLOYMENT NOTICE

No.SGBAU/1/103/1-149/2024 Date: 21/02/2024

Applications are invited for the post of Registrar and Director, Knowledge Resource Center of the University, on or before 27<sup>th</sup> March, 2024 (upto 5:00 P.M.).

Particulars of qualifications, pay-matrix, experience and other terms & conditions are available on the university website [www.sgbau.ac.in](http://www.sgbau.ac.in) Advertisement section.

Registrar  
Sant Gadge Baba Amravati University

By order of the Board of Directors  
Registrar

Sant Gadge Baba Amravati University

BANDA UNIVERSITY OF AGRICULTURE & TECHNOLOGY BANDA-21001 (UP)  
Advertisement No. 01/2024

Applications are invited from eligible candidates for the Teaching posts on Regular basis: Assistant Professor(04), Associate Professor(02) & Professor(05) in BUAT, Banda. Academic qualifications and other details are available on the University website [www.buat.edu.in](http://www.buat.edu.in). Last date for receipt of Application is 30 March 2024 (05:00PM).

Director, Administration & Monitoring

ग्रेटर नोएडा औद्योगिक विकास प्राधिकरण

प्लाट अंक्ष्या-01, सेक्टर नॉले यार्क पार्क-4, ग्रेटर नोएडा डिटी, लिला गोतम बुद्ध नगर (पट्टा)

सार्वजनिक सूचना

ग्रेटर नोएडा औद्योगिक विकास प्राधिकरण के अन्तर्गत M/s Prosper Buildtech Pvt. Ltd. बहुउद्दिष्ट अंक्ष्या-GH-04B, Sector-10, Greater Noida को दिनांक 17.11.2017 को मानविकी व्यापारिक प्राचीन की गयी थी। तबपेक्ष्यल विकासकार्यालय (Group Housing project) का पार्टी अधिकारी प्रशासन पत्र देते हुए दिनांक 13.12.2023 अंक्ष्यालैन के माध्यम से अंदर किया गया है। जिलाका आवेदन संख्या-CC-72 (Tower G) है। तकनीक विकास नियम अंक्ष्यालैन के अंतर्गत विकासकार्यालय द्वारा प्रदत्त विवरणों के अनुसार इसका नाम 'ग्रेटर नोएडा औद्योगिक विकास प्राधिकरण' है। अंक्ष्यालैन के अंतर्गत विवरणों के अनुसार इसका नाम 'ग्रेटर नोएडा औद्योगिक विकास प्राधिकरण' है।

अंक्ष्यालैन के अंतर्गत विवरणों के अनुसार इसका नाम 'ग्रेटर नोएडा औद्योगिक विकास प्राधिकरण' है। अंक्ष्यालैन के अंतर्गत विवरणों के अनुसार इसका नाम 'ग्रेटर नोएडा औद्योगिक विकास प्राधिकरण' है। अंक्ष्यालैन के अंतर्गत विवरणों के अनुसार इसका नाम 'ग्रेटर नोएडा औद्योगिक विकास प्राधिकरण' है। अंक्ष्यालैन के अंतर्गत विवरणों के अनुसार इसका नाम 'ग्रेटर नोएडा औद्योगिक विकास प्राधिकरण' है।

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NIA arrests 16 in Bengal Ram Navami violence case

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
KOLKATA, FEBRUARY 26

THE NATIONAL Investigation Agency (NIA) has arrested 16 people for allegedly conspiring and carrying out a communal attack during a Ram Navami procession in the Dalkhola area of West Bengal's Uttar Dinajpur district in March last year.

In a press statement, the central agency on Monday said the arrests were made on the basis of revelations made during its investigation and the identification of the accused from video footages of the violence that took place on March 30, 2023.

"The accused were among the perpetrators of the attack on members of a particular community participating in the procession," the agency said, terming their arrest as a "major breakthrough".

The state police had initially registered a case against 162 persons in the wake of the violence triggered by the attack at Dalkhola's Tajamul Chowk.

The Calcutta High Court had on April 27, 2023, ordered the transfer of cases related to violence to the central agency which took up investigation of six such cases.

## PROTESTS CONTINUE OVER ALLEGED SEXUAL HARASSMENT OF WOMEN

# Sandeshkhali: Another TMC leader's house targeted, strongman booked

RAVIK BHATTACHARYA & ATRI MITRA  
SANDESHKHALI, FEBRUARY 26



Security personnel outside the house of TMC leader Sankar Sardar at Bermajur village in Sandeshkhali, and (right) police register complaints from residents. Partha Paul

A MOB vandalised the house of a TMC leader Monday as protests and violence continued in the Sandeshkhali area of West Bengal's North 24 Parganas district over allegations of sexual harassment of women and land-grabbing against those associated with the state's ruling party.

The latest TMC leader to bear the brunt of the locals is Sankar Sardar, a panchayat member from Bermajur village.

Premises of at least four TMC leaders, including residences, two poultry farms and a fishery, besides a party office have been ransacked by the villagers since protests erupted in the area.

Ajit Maity, a TMC member whose house was vandalised on Friday, was arrested on Monday. He is the third leader from the party to be arrested after Uttam Sardar and Shibaprasad Hazra who were taken into custody on February 10 and 17, respectively.

Meanwhile, the police have registered an FIR against TMC strongman and zila parishad member Shahjahan Sheikh, who was arrested on January 5. Earlier, the ED had named Shahjahan in its complaint.

A large number of women from the area have accused Sheikh and his supporters of encroaching upon their lands and sexually assaulting them.

Basirhat SP Hosain Mehedi Rehman said, "We are repeat-

edly asking people not to take the law into their hands. I have visited the spot. We have detained villagers and if it is proved that they took part in the attack, they will be arrested."

"We have set up a complaint booth at Bermajur village. People have been asked to lodge their complaints there. We have received a complaint against Shahjahan Sheikh and are investigating it," the SP said.

In the Sandeshkhali police

station area, more than 150 complaints have been filed, sources said. "We have filed 35 FIRs, including the one against Sheikh, based on these complaints," said a police officer.

Monday's incident of vandalism took place around 11 am when a group of villagers, mostly women, barged into the house of Sankar Sardar before setting it on fire. "My husband was not in Sandeshkhali at the time of the incident," said Sankar's wife Shibani. He will have to be arrested."

**Stay on probe doesn't mean stay on Sheikh's arrest, says HC**

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
KOLKATA, FEBRUARY 26

THE CALCUTTA High Court on Monday said there was no stay on the arrest of absconding TMC leader Shahjahan Sheikh, clarifying that a stay on the investigation does not mean there is a stay on his arrest.

Hearing a suo motu case, a Division Bench of Chief Justice TS Sivagnanam directed the High Court registry to issue a public notice informing that Sheikh has been impleaded in the matter as he is on the run since January 5.

When the amicus curiae sought clarification on whether there is a restraining order from arresting Sheikh, the Bench said: "There is no stay on his arrest. A stay on investigation doesn't mean a stay on arrest. There is an FIR registered, he is branded as an accused. He will have to be arrested."

# Cong: Will scrap Agnipath scheme, revert to old set-up

Kharge writes to President Murmu: Scheme is 'gross injustice' to youth

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 26

SLAMMING THE Central government over the Agnipath military recruitment scheme, the Congress Monday alleged that "gross injustice" was meted out to the youth of the nation and asserted that it will revert to the old recruitment system if voted to power at the Centre and the party will also mention it in its manifesto.

The Congress demanded that appointment should be given to the nearly two lakh youths who had cleared the recruitment process but were not given joining letters after the scheme was launched in 2022.

Party president Mallikarjun Kharge wrote to President Droupadi Murmu Monday highlighting the "gross injustice" done to the youths seeking regular employment in the armed forces because of the Agnipath scheme and urged her to ensure justice for them.

The future of nearly two lakh young men and women is uncertain because the regular recruitment process in the armed forces has been scrapped, Kharge stated in his letter to the President, who is the supreme commander of the armed forces.

"There are many well-known issues with the Agnipath scheme. Former Chief of Army Staff General M M Naravane has written that the Army was 'taken by surprise' by Agnipath and that 'for the Navy and Air Force, it came like a bolt from the blue,'" Kharge stated in his letter to Murmu.



Cong chief Mallikarjun Kharge with Andhra Cong president Y S Sharmila in Anantapur. PTI

Tagging Kharge's letter, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi wrote on X: "We are with the military candidates, who are full of patriotism and bravery, in the fight for justice."

Party general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra said with the spirit of patriotism and service in mind, lakhs of youngsters across the country work hard day and night. "The BJP government crushed the dreams of lakhs of promising youth of the country by bringing Agniveer Yojana," she said in a post on X.

Addressing a press meet at the AICC headquarters, Congress general secretary Sachin Pilot said that in the long term, this scheme will not benefit anybody except saving some money for the government of India. "We, in the Congress party, feel that we should go back to the old recruitment system," Pilot said. If some changes are to be introduced to modernise the armed forces, that is very much possible in the current setup, but to eradicate the old system is not right, Pilot said.

# Down south, Tamil Maanila Cong joins NDA for LS polls

ARUN JANARDHANAN  
CHENNAI, FEBRUARY 26



TN BJP chief K Annamalai and Tamil Maanila Congress president G Vasan in Chennai on Monday. ANI

to explore the possibilities of bringing back AIADMK into the NDA fold. Palaniswami reportedly declined the invitation, which was extended on behalf of the BJP's national leadership.

Vasan, son of late Congress veteran G K Moopanar, has navigated the complexities of state politics with an eye toward national relevance. His decision to reaffirm the TMC(M)'s alliance with the BJP for the 2019 Lok Sabha elections, and his nomination to the Rajya Sabha under the NDA banner had already signalled his direction.

BJP sources said the TMC(M) may receive one or two seats in the NDA alliance and they would likely contest under the BJP symbol. The BJP's state leadership, represented by K Annamalai, welcomed the TMC(M) into the fold.

with the NDA for many years.

In the weeks leading up to the announcement, Vasan engaged in discussions with AIADMK General Secretary Edappadi K Palaniswami, aiming

# Jarange withdraws hunger strike, again targets Fadnavis

MANOJ MORE  
PUNE, FEBRUARY 26



Maratha quota activist Manoj Jarange Patil

run riot. I saved Maharashtra... It was Fadnavis who was behind the first lathi-charge in Antarwali-Saraati... Even now he is conspiring to repeat it. He is refusing to withdraw cases against Maratha protesters. I urge the chief minister and both the deputy chief ministers not to provoke the Maratha community," he said.

After the September 1 lathi-charge in Antarwali-Saraati, Jarange Patil has been repeatedly targeting Fadnavis, who also holds the Home portfolio.

Fadnavis has refused to meet the activist and has not visited Antarwali-Saraati yet. Jarange Patil said police have imposed curfew at some places. "I have decided to visit several villages in Maharashtra and interact with the people there. I am not going to back down till the law relating to 'sage-soyare' is implemented," the quota activist said.

Later in the evening, Jarange Patil was admitted to a hospital after his health started deteriorating. The doctors advised him rest for 4-5 days.

# Dangri village killings: NIA files chargesheet against five militants

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
JAMMU, FEBRUARY 26

THE NATIONAL Investigation Agency Monday filed a chargesheet against five militants, including three based in Pakistan, in a special court here in connection with the killing of seven civilians at Rajouri district's Upper Dangri village in January 2023.

A provisional order under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) has been issued to attach these properties.

"The immovable properties are in the form of flats owned by accused Upendra Rai located at Noida, Uttar Pradesh and movable properties are in the form of fixed deposits (FDs) and balance in savings account," the central agency said in a statement. PTI

New Delhi: The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Monday said it has attached flats in Noida and fixed deposits worth around Rs 2.18 crore in connection with a 2018 money laundering case against a journalist, Upendra Rai, and some others.

A provisional order under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) has been issued to attach these properties.

"The immovable properties are in the form of flats owned by accused Upendra Rai located at Noida, Uttar Pradesh and movable properties are in the form of fixed deposits (FDs) and balance in savings account," the central agency said in a statement. PTI

The Pakistan-based LeT handlers have been identified as Saifullah alias Sajid Jutt, Mohammad Qasim, and Abu Qatal alias Qatal Sindhi. While Sajid Jutt and Abu Qatal are Pakistani nationals, Qasim had gone to Pakistan from Jammu and Kashmir sometime around 2002.

The final report against a juvenile accused apprehended in the case will be submitted to the Juvenile Justice Board, Rajouri, in due course, an NIA spokesperson said in a statement here.

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handlers have been identified as Saifullah alias Sajid Jutt, Mohammad Qasim, and Abu Qatal alias Qatal Sindhi. While Sajid Jutt and Abu Qatal are Pakistani nationals, Qasim had gone to Pakistan from Jammu and Kashmir sometime around 2002.

The other two in the

chargesheet are Nisar Ahmed

alias Haji Nisar and Mushtaq Hussain alias Chacha of Poonch district's Gursai area in Mewat tehsil. The two worked as ground workers for the LeT and were arrested by the NIA during the course of the investigations.

It was found during investigations that after the Dangri attack, Nisar and Mushtaq, along with the juvenile, had provided logistical support to the militants

on the directions of Abu Qatal for nearly three months, the statement said.

Nisar had also received con-

signments of arms, ammunition

and cash sent by the Pakistani-based handlers for the militants.

Militants had attacked the houses of one community in Upper Dangri village on the evening of January 1 last year, killing four civilians and injuring nine others in indiscriminate firing.

The next morning, a powerful IED planted by militants in the house of one of the victims

of their previous evening's attack exploded, killing two minor sib-

lings and injuring five others.

## SALUTE THE SOLDIER

Head Constable Ram Niwas

ITBP salutes its braveheart Head Constable Ram Niwas of 27th Battalion, who laid down his life in the line of duty on this day in Chhattisgarh in 2018.

Resident of : Village: Mundhal Khurd,

Distt- Bhawanipatna, Haryana

INDO-TIBETAN BORDER POLICE (ITBP)

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Concrete laboratory of Civil Engineering Department of VSSUT, Burla.

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# Veteran DMK minister to stand graft trial as HC revisits discharge ruling

ARUN JANARDHANAN  
CHENNAI, FEBRUARY 26

along with two other accused persons.

The court's order mandates day-to-day proceedings, emphasising the urgency and significance of the case. The court has also given instructions for the accused to be remanded in judicial custody should they employ any dilatory tactic, with periodic reports on the trial's progress to be submitted to the High Court's Registrar General.

This High Court had itself initiated a review of the discharge of Periyasamy by a special court in 2023.

The Directorate of Vigilance and Anti-Corruption (DVAC) had originally filed the case against Periyasamy after AIADMK was elected to power in 2011. A prolonged legal battle that followed culminated in this latest development.

# EXPRESS NETWORK

Indian-origin man held over death of family on US-Canada border: reports



The family from Gujarat froze to death while trying to enter the US from Canada

DAKSH PANWAR  
ONTARIO, FEBRUARY 26

AMERICAN AUTHORITIES have apprehended an individual of Indian origin in connection with the death of a Gujarati family in a freezing blizzard while crossing into the US from Canada two years ago. CBC and Chicago Tribune have reported.

Harshkumar Ramanlal Patel – also known as ‘Dirty Harry’ – was held at Chicago’s O’Hare International Airport. He faces human smuggling and conspiracy charges in a US federal court. His detention hearing is scheduled for February 28.

The incident drew significant attention, underscoring the issue of rising illegal immigration between Canada and the US. Last year, nearly 190,000 individuals, often aided by human smugglers, either illegally crossed into the US or sought asylum at the border.

In this 2022 case, Jagdish Patel (39), his wife Vaishali, and their children Vihang (11) and Dharmik (3) arrived in Toronto before venturing to Manitoba to attempt crossing into the US. The family was supposed to meet Harshkumar Patel’s contact, Steve Shand, who was to pick them up from the border. Recent documents reveal that Shand had messaged Dirty Harry, instructing him to ensure the family was dressed appropriately for the blizzard. The family froze to death on January 19, 2022, near Emerson, Manitoba – just 12 metres from the US border.

Shand was arrested in connection with human smuggling and the family’s demise. Patel is the fourth individual held in the case – joining Rajinder Pal Singh and Fenil Patel – who faces charges in India. Court documents also unveiled Patel’s Canadian connection, detailing his previous custody by the Canadian Border Services Agency in 2018. He failed four times to secure a student visa to the US. After that, he illegally crossed the US-Canada border.

## ‘EU-India FTA talks are sending a signal to world in support of rules-based trade system’

FOREIGN MINISTER of Romania, LUMINITA ODOBESCU, who participated in the Raisina Dialogue last week, speaks to SHUBHAJIT ROY on a range of issues including strengthening bilateral ties in energy, defence and IT, and Russia’s war on Ukraine. Edited excerpts:

**How important is India in your economic and political calculations?**

India is an essential partner for Romania in the South Asia region, both bilaterally, as well as within the framework of the EU-India Strategic Partnership. 2023 was a special year in the history of our ties. We marked 75 years since the establishment of our diplomatic relations and 10 years of the Extensive Partnership. We have achieved great progress together during all these years and there is genuine and mutual interest to deepen our cooperation.

Together with (External Affairs) minister (S) Jaishankar, we adopted a Celebratory Joint Declaration last Friday (February 23), following the 10th

Anniversary of the Extensive Partnership between Romania and India, considering the current complex international context and focusing the cooperation in key areas of energy, IT&C, and manufacturing.

Further, in the field of trade, we made excellent progress: for the first 11 months of 2023 the bilateral exchanges reached \$1.6 billion, making India Romania’s second largest trading partner in the Asia-Pacific region.

Beyond the essential aspect of bilateral cooperation, India plays a vital role in the current geopolitical equation, not only within the Indo-Pacific area, but globally. And we are committed to working together for defending the international order based on the rule of law, with the UN at its core.

**Which are the sectors where Romania and India can work together?**

Romania’s and India’s work together should focus on a set of common goals: Firstly, we need to take advantage of both countries’ multiple investment op-



THE EXPRESS  
INTERVIEW  
WITH  
LUMINITA  
ODOBESCU  
FOREIGN MINISTER  
OF ROMANIA

ment projects in India – in conventional energy, renewable energy, oil and gas, infrastructure, metallurgy, mining, railways, defence, etc. We can also participate in different programmes by transferring technology, delivering products, and providing know-how.

Secondly, we need to promote enhanced bilateral economic cooperation on Energy, Information Technology and Communication (IT&C) and Manufacturing Industry.

Thirdly, India is a major trade and investment partner for the EU. There are ongoing negotiations for a balanced, ambitious, comprehensive and mutually beneficial EU-India trade agreement, as well as for an investment protection agreement.

These open the door for a new era, creating potential for increased trade and investment flows between our nations, promoting innovation and employment, and a level playing field for European and Indian businesses.

The EU-India negotiations are definitely sending an important

signal to the world in support of the rules-based trade system.

**What is the roadmap for peace in Europe? Are there any chances for all parties to come to a solution?**

Instead of talking about a war in Europe, we should describe it as what it really is – Russia’s illegal and unprovoked war of aggression... So, the conflict could end tomorrow if Russia decides to stop its aggression and to respect Ukraine’s sovereignty and territorial integrity...

**How can we expand the role of women in leadership at the global level?**

...there is no quick fix or one-size-fits-all solution to expand female leadership globally. It requires women’s involvement and empowerment, communication to dismantle gender stereotypes, as well as the understanding that inclusive foreign policy is in everybody’s interest, including at a wider organisational level. [FULL INTERVIEW  
www.indianexpress.com](http://www.indianexpress.com)

## MILAN-24 IN VISAKHAPATNAM

# Humanitarian aid and convoy protection in focus at meet

AMRITA NAYAK DUTTA  
VISAKHAPATNAM, FEB 26

THE MAIDEN tabletop exercise, which was conducted for two days as part of the mega multinational naval exercise MILAN-24, was structured around Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) operations and convoy protection from asymmetric threats, Vice Admiral Sameer Saxena, Chief of Staff at the Eastern Naval Command, told *The Indian Express*.

“The settings for the exercise were structured towards HADR and convoy protection from asymmetric threats,” Vice Admiral Saxena said in an interview to *The Indian Express* amid the ongoing exercise.

A range of asymmetric threats such as a series of drone and missile attacks on merchant vessels in the Red Sea, including a missile/drone attack on a Palau-flagged commercial vessel last week have come to the fore in the western Arabian Sea in recent months. The attacks have been reportedly perpetrated by Yemen’s Houthi rebels.

Earlier, Deputy Chief of Naval Staff Vice Admiral Tarun Subti had said that the current geopolitical situation and maritime challenges, including asymmetric threats, will be among the main topics to be taken up for discussion and exercises with the participating navies.

Other maritime diplomacy objectives that the Navy is looking to achieve through this large-scale exercise include enhancing interoperability and strengthening bridges of friendship with partner nations, showcasing of indigenous capabilities.



Vice Admiral Sameer Saxena is Chief of Staff of the Eastern Naval Command

played out during the exercise and valuable lessons were learnt and best practices shared amongst the participants,” he said.

The table top exercise was conducted on February 19 and 20 at the Maritime Warfare Centre in Visakhapatnam. Ships and aircraft of multiple friendly foreign nations, along with Indian naval assets, participated in the exercise.

Over 50 countries are participating in MILAN this year, which is being held from February 19 to 27 with a harbour and a sea phase.

According to Vice Admiral Saxena, some of the key diplomacy objectives which the Navy has sought to achieve through the ongoing exercise.

Vice Admiral Saxena said during the table top exercise, the participants were divided into joint multinational task forces. “The joint plans by the teams were

## Rape survivor shot at in Rajasthan; three arrested

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
JAIPUR, FEBRUARY 26

THE RAJASTHAN police have arrested three persons for firing at a 25-year-old rape survivor and attacking her with machetes. The woman’s brother was also injured in the attack and the two are undergoing treatment at a hospital in Jaipur.

Rajendra Yadav (33), who attacked woman, was arrested by the police in Jaipur on Monday while his aides – Mahipal Gujral and Rahul Gujral – were arrested on Sunday.

According to reports, the woman had filed a rape case against Yadav because of which he was jailed. When Yadav got bail, he started mounting pressure on her to withdraw the case which she did not. The woman had even sought protection from the police, but to no avail. Frustrated, Yadav, along with his associates, attacked the woman and her brother on February 24.

In response to a Vishwa Hindu Parishad petition, Calcutta High Court Justice Saugata Bhattacharya had on February 22 said his conscience did not support such naming. “It is not just

After the attack they all fled and Yadav got hit by a train in which one of his legs got severed. He is currently undergoing treatment at SMS Trauma Centre, Jaipur.

Rajasthan DGP U R Sahoo while talking to *The Indian Express*, said, “Police were conducting raids to arrest the accused when we got the information that he had suffered injuries and was being taken to hospital. We have placed him under arrest. Whether he jumped in front of the train or was it an accident, is not yet clear. Once he is released from the hospital, all the facts will become clear.”

The incident has even taken a political turn.

Former CM Ashok Gehlot reached the hospital on Monday to meet the woman’s family and said, “If the woman had got security on time the incident could have been avoided. This is negligence on part of the government and strict action should be taken against the accused.”

BJP MLA Rajyavarund Singh Rathore assured that strict action will be taken against the accused.

## Students protest suspension of 3 Rajasthan govt school teachers over conversion claim

One teacher says human error in form led to row that has no link to school

PARUL KULSHRETHA  
JAIPUR, FEBRUARY 26

DAYS AFTER a Rajasthan minister suspended three government school teachers in Kota district over conversion claims, one of them told *The Indian Express* that the controversy stemmed from a case of mistaken identity. His clarification came on a day when dozens of students from the Khajuri Odhpur government school in Sangod block marched to the

office of the Sub-Divisional Magistrate against the orders. In videos shared on social media, the students said there was no instance of religious conversion in their school and that their teachers should be reinstated.

The teacher, Mirza Mujahid, said there were three students of the same name, two of whom were Muslim. “In this confusion, the (third) student’s religion column was changed. But that was a human error,” he said.

Mujahid said: “The girl who eloped had passed out from the school and we have never met her. This incident has no link to the school. We are waiting for the truth to be revealed in the probe.”

The action against the teach-

ers came after a religious group in Sangod block, Sarva Hindu Samaj, sent a complaint to the Education Minister Madan Dilawar. According to the complaint, a former girl student, who was Hindu, was mentioned as Muslim in the school register. The girl, after passing school, had eloped with a Muslim man from the village, which triggered the controversy over the school allegedly marking her religion as Muslim.

Mujahid said: “The girl who eloped had passed out from the school and we have never met her. This incident has no link to the school. We are waiting for the truth to be revealed in the probe.”

While it may seem exaggerated in today’s times, after *Chitthi aayi hai*, there were several stories those days of people returning home from abroad, while many others were steered towards a feeling of yearning to see their loved ones. It was this ‘*Chitthi aayi*

break this cage, O bird, come back’, many wept, their tears of longing taking them to homes and memories they had left behind.

Pankaj Udhas, who poured his heart into these lyrics by Anand Bakshi in Mahesh Bhatt’s *Naam* (1986), passed away after months of battling pancreatic cancer, at Mumbai’s Breach Candy Hospital on Monday. He was 72. Udhas is survived by his older brothers Manhar and Nirmal, wife Farida, and daughters Nayaab and Rewa.

“With a very heavy heart, we are saddened to inform you of the sad demise of Padmashri Pankaj Udhas on 26th February 2024 due to a prolonged illness,” his daughter Nayaab wrote in an Instagram post. The singer’s last rites will be

held Tuesday.

President Droupadi Murmu and Prime Minister Narendra Modi were among those who mourned the singer’s death.

“He was a beacon of Indian music, whose melodies transcended generations. I recall my various interactions with him over the years. His departure leaves a void in the music world that can never be filled. Condolences to his family and admirers. Om Shanti,” Modi wrote on X.

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## Lion name row: Tripura suspends top forest officer

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
AGARTALA, FEBRUARY 26

THE TRIPURA government has suspended its top forest official after the controversy over a pair of lions named Akbar and Sita being sent to West Bengal.

The lion and lioness arrived at the North Bengal Wildlife Park in Siliguri from Tripura’s Sepahijala Zoo and Wildlife Sanctuary on February 12.

In response to a Vishwa Hindu

Parishad petition, Calcutta High Court Justice Saugata Bhattacharya had on February 22 said his conscience did not support such naming. “It is not just

Sita. I also do not support naming a lion as Akbar,” he said.

A Tripura government source confirmed that Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (PCCF) Praveen Agarwal had been suspended. In a notification dated February 22, Tripura government Under-Secretary Tapas Bhowmik said disciplinary proceedings against Agrawal, who is also Chief Wildlife Warden, were contemplated and pending.

The notification also directs the PCCF to stay put at state capital Agartala.

The Calcutta HC on February 22 verbally asked the West Bengal state government to give new names to the lions.

According to reports, the woman had filed a rape case against Yadav because of which he was jailed. When Yadav got bail, he started mounting pressure on her to withdraw the case which she did not. The woman had even sought protection from the police, but to no avail. Frustrated, Yadav, along with his associates, attacked the woman and her brother on February 24.

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## Voice of longing and heartache, his melodies transcended generations

SUANSHU KHURANA  
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 26

IN THE 1980s, when ghazal, one of the most popular expressions of Urdu poetry, rose to the Indian musical stage, a poignant nazm describing a father’s emotions after receiving a letter from home plumb the depths of a nation’s heart.

*Chitthi aayi hai* moved millions, especially the diaspora, to tears. When they heard the lines “Tune paisa bohot kamaya, iss paise ne desh chhudaya... (You’ve earned a lot of money, it made me leave your country)”, “Desh paraya, chhad ke aaja, panchhi pinjara tod ke aaja... (Leave this strange country and come back,

break this cage, O bird, come back)”, many wept, their tears of longing taking them to homes and memories they had left behind.

President Droupadi Murmu and Prime Minister Narendra Modi were among those who mourned the singer’s death.

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## MORE IN STORE

New grain storage plan would almost double existing capacity, help farmers in more ways than one

**L**AST WEEK, PRIME Minister Narendra Modi launched the world's largest grain storage plan in the cooperative sector. PM Modi, who was speaking at the inauguration of a pilot project being carried out in 11 states by primary agricultural credit societies under this plan, said that the government is looking to "set up a storage infrastructure of 700 lakh metric tons". Expected to fructify over the coming five years, this is likely to cost Rs 1.25 lakh crore. The government's plan is ambitious. To put it in perspective — the Food Corporation of India currently has a storage capacity of 361.62 lakh tonnes and state government agencies have capacities of another 400.74 lakh tonnes as reported in this paper. This would imply that the government aims to almost double the existing storage capacity in the country.

This sharp increase in storage facilities would help at multiple levels — it will cut down losses due to lack of adequate infrastructure, and enable farmers to sell their output at an opportune time in terms of prices. At the same time, the framework of this new storage plan also points towards the increasing emphasis the government is placing on cooperatives. It had previously outlined a plan to establish two lakh primary agricultural credit societies (PACS), dairy and fisheries cooperatives in the country. The Union Budget 2023-24 flagged the initiation of the process of computerisation of 63,000 PACS with an investment of Rs 2,516 crore. The formation of a Ministry of Cooperation under Amit Shah is also indicative of this priority. The appeal of PACS rests in these societies serving as the last, but vital, link in the cooperative credit structure. A report by the Reserve Bank of India had pegged the number of such societies in the country at 1.02 lakh at the end of March 2021. These societies, which have a sizeable presence in the western part of the country, served "13.7 crore members and 5.4 crore borrowers", it said. The disaggregated data shows that small and marginal farmers and others accounted for 81 per cent of these 13.7 crore members. Around 60 per cent of lending of district central cooperative banks is through these societies. However, as the study pointed out, of these one lakh plus PACS, only 47,297 were in profit.

This increasing reliance on cooperatives stems from the prime minister's belief in their critical role in solving farmers' problems "through group/collective strength". PM Modi, while also outlining the expanding role of these societies, said, "As chief minister, I experienced the strength of cooperatives. The world knows Amul and Lijjat Papad." This emphasis may also be an indication, though, of receding expectations of large-scale investments from the private sector in agriculture infrastructure and marketing.

## A TRAGIC ANNIVERSARY

The longer the war in Ukraine goes on, the worse it is for the region — and the world

**I**T IS SAID that swift wars are about strategy, long ones are about stamina. But the longer a conflict goes on, the worse it is for all the parties involved. As the war in Ukraine enters its third year, it is clear that Russia's original assessment of a quick capitulation was a gross miscalculation. It is equally clear that while it has the means to engage in a prolonged conflict — Russia has regained lost ground recently — a decisive "victory" for either side is a chimera. Moscow's relationship with Europe is at its lowest ebb, NATO has expanded into its neighbourhood and Russia is now a junior partner in its alliance with China.

Behind the jargon of geopolitics lies the tragic human cost of the war. According to President Volodymyr Zelensky, 31,000 Ukrainian soldiers have been killed so far (the Russians claim the figure is higher). The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights places civilian deaths at about 10,500 while US officials put the total number of dead and wounded at over 5,00,000. Nor is the fallout of the conflict limited to the region. Global supply chains — of energy, food and even capital — have been disrupted, disproportionately affecting people in developing and less developed countries. The fact is that Ukraine and Russia share a cultural, historical and even religious heritage. These could have been built upon had the relationship not been soured by revisionist notions of empire and geopolitical insecurity. Fatigue with the war is setting in, particularly in the West. At the two-year anniversary of the war on February 24, many Western leaders did join Zelensky in Kyiv, including the leaders of Italy, Belgium, the European Commission and Canada. However, notable absences included US President Joe Biden and the leaders of the UK, France and Germany — Biden had attended the same ceremony last year.

For much of the early part of the war, there was criticism in some quarters of New Delhi's stance. The crux of it was that India did not take a clear stand against Russia's violation of its smaller neighbour's sovereignty. Two years on, Delhi's principled pragmatism stands vindicated, even as the West grows more divided on the issue: A large chunk of US aid, for example, has been stuck in the legislature. India has consistently called for peace while maintaining its historical ties with Moscow, even as its engagement with the US in particular and the West as a whole has widened and deepened. It is now more important than ever for both sides in the conflict to negotiate in good faith. February 2025 must not bear witness to another tragic anniversary.

## FORM IS THE STORY

Kumar Shahani's films matched minimalism with neo-realism, formalism with quiet flamboyance

**O**NE OF THE hallmarks of Indian New Wave cinema was the interconnectedness of the arts even as it told stories of churn. Satyajit Ray's films roped in Ravi Shankar or Birju Maharaj, Mrinal Sen had KK Mahajan giving shape to his cinematic vision, Ustad Bahadur Khan's soundtrack formed the backdrop in many Ritwik Ghatak films. They left a quiet imprint, inalienable from the narrative. In Kumar Shahani's *Maya Darpan* (1972), though, the flute of Hariprasad Chaurasia or the performance of the Mayurbhanj Chhau troupe stood out amid the structural formalism and slow tension of a feudal and patriarchal system caught in the throes of change. Like a poetic aphorism, these interludes cut through the film's politics or its slow narrative pace, becoming a leitmotif in later films such as *Khayal Gatha* (1989), *Kasba* (1990), and *Char Adhyay* (1997).

Despite his excellent credentials — FTII graduate and Ghatak acolyte who apprenticed with French filmmaker Robert Bresson — Shahani's road to success was long-drawn. But the delay owed as much to the filmmaker's perfectionism as to the failure of critics and others to do justice to his cinematic idiom. Distinct from those who came before him in the genre, it matched minimalism with neo-realism, formalism with quiet flamboyance.

In an essay in *Our Films, Their Films*, an anthology of film critiques, one of the pioneers of Indian New Wave cinema, Ray, wrote, "To me Maya Darpan seems a combination of poor psychology and poorer stylisation. Even the sophisticated response to colour goes for nothing in a film that is so gauche in its handling of the human element". Yet, for Shahani, who died on Sunday in Kolkata, the form, replete with digressions and asymmetry between plot and action, is what lay at the heart of the story. It spoke of change, incremental and insidious, creeping up on a society neither prepared for it nor understanding it, except in hindsight. Quite like his films and the place he holds in Indian cinema.



SANJAY SRIVASTAVA

# Fast food education

Byju's fall is a cautionary tale, opportunity to question quick-fix and technocratic attitudes towards education

THERE IS AN episode in Kashinath Singh's fictionalised Hindi language memoir, *Kashi Ka Assi* (2004), that goes something like this. It is 1953 and the author has recently arrived in Kashi, having left his village. The young Kashinath has high hopes that the city will be a site of enlightenment and deliverance from the debilitations of rural existence, marked by the dead hand of custom and the economic and cultural dead ends that smother aspirations. Kashinath is staying with an elder brother, another supplicant for the city's imagined capacities for improving blighted lives.

The brother suggests that the first step to secure an alternative future lies in acquiring expertise in the English language and offers an immediate lesson. The teacher leads the pupil to the banks of the Ganges and, facing a peepal tree, orders attentiveness. Standing a little distance away — "to attention" — the brother addresses the tree: "What is your name?" Then, moving closer to the tree, he responds: "Sir, my name is Ramji Singh". He then moves even further away and asks the tree: "What is your father's name?" and, then, moving closer to it, answers, "Sir, my father's name is Sri Nagar Singh". The self-appointed mentor repeats his actions till he is exhausted and drenched in sweat. He orders young Kashinath to repeat the exercise. "The truth to tell", the perplexed narrator of the tale notes, "I didn't learn any English but understood that there is some connection between knowledge and perspiration".

There is a sad seriousness to the novel's comedy that is a commentary on the futile attempts at social mobility that — rather than providing an avenue for it — bind many to the sterile hopes of rote learning. What Kashinath Singh means to point to is that in milieus of desperation, imagined techniques of salvation only condemn supplicants to never-ending cycles of hopelessness. The younger brother comprehends the pointlessness of the exercise the befuddled elder one carries out with mechanistic reverence. An uneven and poorly designed education system, he realises, cannot simply be overcome by occultic

conversations with a tree, notwithstanding its sacred status.

This pithy episode from *Kashi Ka Assi* could serve as a cautionary tale regarding the ongoing controversy over the edtech firm, Byju's. The company, as we know, has gone from being (as one media report put it) "India's hottest tech startup" to its most troubled. Over the past six to eight months, it has been raided by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) over suspicions of foreign exchange violations; accused of financial mismanagement; faced attempts by major investors to oust its founder and allegations of breaching corporate ethics; and had its market worth slashed to a fraction of its earlier value. The Byju's case is, however, mainly discussed as an instance of poor corporate strategy rather than — as Kashinath Singh's warning-offered-as-bemusement might suggest — an instance where education has been converted to a five-minute noodle dish. In this process, education — that process of making us genuinely human — has been converted to a machine for profit-making without much proof that it produces any public good.

The pervasiveness of rote learning as an educational strategy is, not of course, new and has a relatively long and, by now, well-established modern history. It is serviced by urban dystopias — consisting of coaching institutes, accommodation and allied industries — that have taken deep root. Here, failure and success are measured primarily through success in examinations that privilege rote learning. These are, as might be expected, also landscapes of bereavement. The calculus of success and failure pioneered by this system produces grim statistics of youth suicides at its epicentre. Through narrowing the capacity for human thought as well as the possibility of adjusting to changes in economy and society — when, for example, the nature of jobs changes because of dramatic technological interventions — this model severely handicaps those who have been entangled in its net.

And yet, public commentary on the Byju's phenomenon continues to be in the

The capacity for thinking broadly derives from learning to engage with human complexity. One of the hallmarks of fast-food education is the withdrawal of students from normal schooling — an indispensable period of learning the skills of social interaction — and their insertion into the abnormal milieu of the coaching institute. This produces both under-socialised young people and dysfunctional adults. And, yet, we hear almost nothing about what the 'edtech' model means for human capacities and creativity.



BRIJ KOTHARI

Akshat Baldwa, a young law student at the National Law School of India University (NLSIU), happens to be blind. He is "passionate about pushing for constructive change to help the disabled lead more dignified lives". Baldwa and others — three of them blind and one deaf — have mounted a legal challenge in the Delhi High Court to ensure that all films in theatres, on TV, and OTT provide accessibility features like Audio Description (AD) for the visually impaired and Same Language Captions (SLC) for the hearing impaired. Interim orders have empowered citizens to write directly to film producers or the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (MIB) to demand that any new film be made accessible, in case it is not.

Baldwa shot off an email to Yash Raj Films (YRF), one of India's biggest film production houses, requesting AD and SLC on their film *Tiger 3*, starring Salman Khan and Katrina Kaif. Within four days, Baldwa received a positive response. The YRF team agreed to provide both the accessibility features in *Tiger 3*'s release on Amazon Prime Video and the film's distribution on satellite TV.

From YRF's alacrity and response to a citizen email, we know a tectonic shift has taken place in the Indian film industry. This stems from four legislative policy and judi-

## UNLOCKING CLOSED DOORS

Notifying accessibility standards for TV can pave way for policy in film

cial interventions in 2016, 2019 and 2023.

One, the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPWD) Act, 2016 enshrines every person's right to entertainment. Two, MIB's Accessibility Standards (AS, 2019) for TV stipulates accessibility on half the entertainment content on TV. Three, the Delhi High Court ordered YRF in 2023 to deposit AD and SLC files of their blockbuster film, *Pathaan*, with the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC). Four, the court recently ordered MIB to "designate a special officer to deal with representations" asking for accessibility features on specific films.

Accessibility in films is ready to traverse from a handful of projects to around 2,000 films that CBFC certifies every year across Indian languages. The *Pathaan* and *Tiger 3* precedents are pointing to a policy at MIB and CBFC to mandate AD and SLC files for all the films they certify. To its credit, MIB has also framed draft accessibility standards for films.

A policy is as good as the quality of its implementation. The implementation of the Accessibility Standards (AS, 2019) on TV is a case in point. TV networks have begun the implementation of SLC on serials. However, four years after the standards were framed, SLC on TV serials in the top five languages averaged just over 8 per cent. In the other Indian languages, and content genres, it is near zero.

content genres, it is near zero.

The primary reason for the low compliance of media accessibility on TV is that AS, 2019 is yet to be notified. MIB's gentle persuasion of the entertainment industry has got the ball rolling but TV network compliance is low. Star TV leads the networks with an estimated 26 per cent of TV serials with SLC. It has also set a quality benchmark. Zee and Sony are distant second and third, while Colors has barely made a beginning with one SLC programme. Doordarshan is notably missing from the implementation of the government's own accessibility policy.

Unsurprisingly, therefore, private networks like Sun, Gemini, and Udaya do not yet have accessible programmes. The number of accessible TV serials, across all languages, has plateaued at around 60, but needs to grow more than tenfold.

Cajoling got us this far, but system acceptance and compliance require MIB's leadership in notifying the long overdue AS, 2019 for TV. That will pave the way for speedier framing and notification of the accessibility standards for films, and most importantly, quality implementation.

The writer is an adjunct professor at IIT-Delhi's School of Public Policy and leads the Billion Readers (BIRD) initiative



## FEBRUARY 27, 1984, FORTY YEARS AGO

### DELHI BANDH

THE BJP STOOD by its call for a Delhi bandh and the Akali Dal reaffirmed its resolution to burn a copy of Article 25 of the Constitution outside Parliament. Despite appeals from all sides, both the parties said it was too late. In view of these threats, the Delhi administration is gearing up to prevent any breach of law and order. Elaborate security arrangements have been made at all sensitive points.

### DALAI LAMA INTERVIEW

TWO QUESTIONS ARE currently engaging the attention of the Dalai Lama, who soon com-

pletes 25 years in exile. One is a possible visit he may make to China, including Tibet, some time in the summer of 1985. The other is how the next Dalai Lama should be chosen. The Dalai Lama shared his thoughts in an exclusive interview to this paper.

### LOK DAL RESOLUTION

THE NATIONAL COUNCIL of the Lok Dal demanded the resignation of the central government because it has failed to restore law and order in the country. A resolution adopted by the council also said that the government should seek a fresh mandate from the electorate. It expressed grief at the

massacre of innocent people in Punjab and Haryana and sympathised with the bereaved families.

### US FIRES ON LEBANON

US WARSHIPS OFF the Lebanese coast opened fire for the second time in two days, in response to an attack on an unarmed American reconnaissance plane. A Pentagon spokesman said the battleship New Jersey fired 16 rounds and the destroyer Caron fired 50 rounds from its five-inch guns. The latest naval bombardment began within an hour after the departure of the last marines from the Beirut airport.

# THE IDEAS PAGE

## It starts with the district

Lack of high-quality data can obscure the full picture of progress. Initiatives like the District Development Index for Maharashtra can help plug the gap to craft effective policies



V ANANTHA NAGESWARAN

INDIA'S DIVERSITY IS embodied in its districts. To the policymaker, understanding the full scale of this diversity is key to crafting policies. In this context, a multidimensional and localised index like the District Development Index for Maharashtra will prove invaluable. The index captures a district's progress by giving equal weightage to its potential for socio-economic development and its existing levels of socio-economic development. In addition to providing an immediate picture of district performance, the index is also built for the long term, so policymakers can tap into the potential presented by various districts.

The average district in India has nearly 1.86 million people, larger than the population of countries like Singapore (0.56 million) and UAE (0.94 million). This figure shows the gamut of governance required at the district level, and when socio-economic indicators reveal strides made at the district level, they are to be applauded. For example, a recent study by Sekhar Bonu and Anirudh Krishna looks at the inter-generational developments in education at the district level. Using NFHS-5 data, they reveal that the average level of the mother's education equals or exceeds that of the father's in as many as 195 districts (out of 707 districts studied). A generation previously, only 11 districts had more educated mothers than fathers. This points to the presence of intergenerational mobility at the district level.

Other metrics of achievement, such as financial access, show steep gains. For instance, over 15 per cent of districts have more than 90 per cent of women who own and operate savings accounts. Similarly, health metrics also show visible improvements. For instance, over 91 per cent of districts have had more than 70 per cent of births in the last five years in health facilities. However, it is also essential to understand how progress is scattered across different districts. Bonu and Krishna's study shows that some states, such as Karnataka, Arunachal Pradesh and Telangana, have both high-performing and poor-performing districts in terms of educational outcomes.

Additionally, while the education leaders are clustered around the southern region, this does not preclude their existence in states such as Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Maharashtra and Jammu and Kashmir. At the state level, across indicators, such as per capita consumption, nutrition and child mortality, there exist clusters of districts with similar performance, along with islands of underdevelopment.

There is also evidence of significant disparities in the income concentration across districts, as highlighted in the Harvard Business School-led 'Competitiveness Roadmap for India'. For example, urban districts, which constitute 30 per cent of all districts in India, account for more than 55 per cent of all wages paid and close to 45 per cent of all jobs. Similarly, the average wage in the top 70 prosperous districts is three times higher than the average wage of the bottom 305 districts.

What concerns the policymaker is whether improvements result from a top-down trickle effect or bottom-up growth. The presence of a contiguous set of districts within the same state indicates that the top-down policies play a role. However, "islands" point to



C R Sasikumar

the need for specific intervention.

Thus, an ideal set of policies should be a bouquet of varied measures for different localities and regions, tailored to their culture, urbanisation, development and demography. These should be bolstered by uniform interventions in infrastructure, public goods, livelihoods, policy enablers and good governance.

Top-down policies continue to help address socio-economic issues at the district level in areas such as improved sanitation and hygiene (Swachh Bharat), provision of healthcare services (Ayushman Bharat), reducing malnutrition (POSHAN Abhiyaan) and rural job guarantee (MGNREGS). For instance, the Swachh Bharat Mission has led to 75 per cent of villages being defecation-free. Bottom-up policies are founded on three key pillars — data collection, best governance practices and incentivised collaboration between different departments.

In this context, a commendable effort has been made through the Aspirational Districts Programme, launched in 2018. It has been instrumental in addressing critical gaps and fostering collaboration among diverse stakeholders to target efforts in the pockets of deprivation in crucial areas of health and nutrition, education, agriculture and water resources, etc.

In the last six years, the programme has transformed the lives of about 25 crore people in 112 districts, with visible improvements in key indicators, such as health, financial inclusion and education, as tracked by NITI Aayog. For example, the percentage of pregnant women registered for ante-natal care within the first trimester rose from 68 per cent in 2018 to 89 per cent in 2023, and the percentage of underweight children below the age of six years declined from 20.6 per cent in 2018 to 9.2 per cent in 2023. Similar progress has been observed in the education sector, where transition rates of school children have improved significantly, and basic infrastructure is nearing saturation.

As the size of the pie grows, the benefits of growth can be expected to percolate down to the district level. However, we need districts not just to become receptacles of growth but also the drivers of growth themselves.

A typical district in India is not usually associated with a significant underlying productive activity. As the Harvard-led competitiveness report notes, national value creation is

### FOR THE RECORD

What concerns the policymaker is whether improvements result from a top-down trickle effect or bottom-up growth. The presence of a contiguous set of districts within the same state indicates that the top-down policies play a role. However, "islands" point to the need for specific intervention. Thus, an ideal set of policies should be a bouquet of varied measures for different localities and regions, tailored to their culture, urbanisation, development and demography. These should be bolstered by uniform interventions in infrastructure, public goods, livelihoods, policy enablers and good governance.

dominated by a small share of leading districts in India. Schemes such as the One District One Product (ODOP) have begun making amends for this situation. Since its launch in 2020, the programme has seen the development and promotion of 1,000-plus unique products, across 767 districts, encompassing sectors such as textiles, agriculture, food processing and handicrafts.

Going by American academic Michael Porter's theory of clusters, district-level productivity and value-creation can be catalysed by creating linked industries and institutions in proximity. Developing industrial clusters that leverage the district's geography, culture and institutional structure is a possible route to improve district-level value creation exponentially.

To create districts that are clusters of growth, a one-size-fits-all policy does not work. For example, the healthcare and education priorities of Kerala and Tamil Nadu are vastly different from those of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. The key to effective administration is realising that India is composed of many Indias, and a top-down approach alone will not work. While top-down policies can act as enablers, the critical thrust should be on tailored responses. This requires coordination across all levels of government, agency and autonomy at the local level and a pervasive presence of account-based accountability.

Moreover, a significant gap in the effective implementation of programmes has been the limited availability of timely and high-quality data at the district level. This limitation severely hampers policymaking, particularly in identifying the segments of the population that need immediate government assistance.

In such a scenario, initiatives such as the District Development Index prepared for Maharashtra bring about transparency and ensure accountability of stakeholders. They will go a long way in tracking and supporting the contemporary socio-economic and infrastructure development at the district level, ensuring that districts emerge as growth drivers of Viksit Bharat.

*The writer is Chief Economic Advisor to the Government of India. Excerpts from the keynote address delivered at Loksatta Jilla Nirdeshank (District Development Index) awards in Mumbai on February 15*

## Single window challenges

Key to CUET's success is collaborative approach, alignment with diverse curricula



SHILPI BANERJEE

THE DILEMMA BETWEEN exit and entry exams is a perennial issue in the Indian education system. It leads to multiple problems including teaching to the test, perpetuating inequality, and causing undue stress and anxiety. This dilemma is further exacerbated when students are compelled to prepare and appear for multiple entrance examinations while exploring admission opportunities in various universities across the country. The introduction of the Common University Entrance Test (CUET), then, is seen as a silver bullet to resolve this issue. The CUET 2024 is scheduled from May 15-31 and aims to establish a common entrance examination for undergraduate and post-graduate admissions in all central universities and affiliated colleges.

By replacing multiple entrance exams with a single-window CUET, students can now concentrate their energy and attention on one exam, thus reducing mental stress and enabling them to perform better. Furthermore, the CUET intends to provide equal opportunities to students from diverse backgrounds, including rural and urban areas, as well as students from national, international, and state boards by providing better access to higher educational institutes. This ensures standardisation and fairness in

the selection process for higher education. However, the CUET also poses a potential threat to the higher education system. It may add to the already rampant coaching culture and dummy schools in the country. Students from privileged and urban backgrounds who have access to coaching centres and dummy schools may have an advantage in terms of exam preparation and familiarity with the exam format, resulting in higher success rates. On the other hand, students from marginalised backgrounds who cannot afford coaching may be at a disadvantage. Similar to other entrance exams like the IIT-JEE and NEET, CUET too will face the challenge of inclusivity due to an uneven social structure and the digital divide in India.

Additionally, since the CUET is a multiple-choice question (MCQ) exam, it may have limitations in terms of the types of competencies that can be assessed. This may influence the teaching-learning process, with teachers prioritising what will be tested in the exam over focusing on the core material of subjects. In such a scenario, the educational focus may shift from being holistic and well-rounded to solely preparing students for an objective exam, which inherently has a limited scope for creativity and expression.

Most importantly, in a country as diverse as India, each state possesses unique social, cultural, and political characteristics that also influence the learning process. Different state boards consider this when designing curricula, textbooks, and examination systems. But given the diversity of state board curricula, students from such boards may find themselves at a disadvantage. It may be unfair to evaluate their learning using a single benchmark like CUET, which is based on a national-level curriculum. So far in India, central universities have had autonomy in matters related to their administration, academic decision-making, curriculum design, admissions, faculty appointments, and overall functioning. Since every state university offers specialisation in a variety of courses, these universities were earlier given absolute autonomy in designing selection tests for their courses by taking into account the desired prerequisite knowledge, skills and dispositions for each of the courses. Thus, the move towards a centralised single-window entrance to the higher education world undermines the crucial role of ensuring equity in the process of designing selection tests.

CUET has been introduced to address grave issues within the education system,

and it can only be successful if certain larger principles and quality considerations are kept in mind. Key stakeholders, including teachers across the country, practitioners working in the area of education and policymakers, should be involved in the design and review of the examination. This collaborative approach will ensure a more comprehensive and well-informed assessment that will accommodate the diversity of state board curricula. Also, each of these stakeholders should be well-informed about subject-specific competencies. The classroom pedagogy and assessment need to be well-aligned with subject-specific competencies, equipping students to critically apply their subject knowledge as required, irrespective of the examination format — and without requiring additional coaching to perform well in the CUET entrance examination. In conclusion, the implementation of the CUET must be carefully navigated to mitigate potential challenges by engaging all stakeholders in the design and review process, prioritising subject-specific competencies, and ensuring alignment with diverse state board curricula.

*The writer is faculty, Azim Premji University. Views are personal*

## WHAT THE OTHERS SAY

"There is a need to integrate the urban poor in development programmes and keep a record of those in need of immediate help... Poverty anywhere — rural or urban — is a big threat to a country aiming to achieve middle-income status and Sustainable Development Goals by 2030."

— THE KATHMANDU POST

## Instead of electoral bonds

After Supreme Court judgment on the scheme, it is now up to the legislature to bring a law that does it justice



ASHOK LAVASA

"MURDER WILL OUT" is a saying, the origin of which is in contention. What is not is that with the Supreme Court (SC) verdict on the Electoral Bonds Scheme (EBS), the "truth will be out", uncovering the transactions through an arrangement termed "unconstitutional". Let us hope there are no sudden clouds that thwart the SC's strike.

The judgment establishes that corporate funding allowed under the Companies Act since inception permitted political funding with several riders, which meant that companies could donate for political purposes to a limited extent, with appropriate board resolutions only when they generated profits. However, in no circumstances was full disclosure ever relaxed nor were corporates allowed to donate unlimited amounts even if they didn't make profits in the business for which they were incorporated. The changes made per the impugned law tampered with the cardinal tenets of disclosure and perpetuated "the pre-existing inequality in power between shareholders and the Board/ Promoters/management".

Now, let us ponder over the larger issues raised in the judgment. In fact, we will all lose if it is seen merely as victory or defeat and not as another opportunity to refine the system.

A few issues stand out. The motive behind a piece of legislation is as important as the statement of purpose. The EBS was designed to encourage a culture of secrecy while claiming to bring about transparency in electoral funding. The law cannot pretend to serve a purpose while providing for exactly the opposite. In his separate order, Justice Sanjiv Khanna says that "retribution, victimisation or retaliation cannot by any stretch be treated as a legitimate aim".

The institutions created to guard larger public interest cannot allow themselves to be assimilated with a government cause. The RBI initially said the EBS "will not leave any trail of transactions" and the Election Commission said that the amendments introduced by the Finance Act, 2017, will have a "serious impact on transparency of political finance/funding of political parties" and that in the absence of reporting "it cannot be ascertained whether the political party has taken any donation in violation of provisions under Section 29B of the Representation of the People Act 1951 which prohibits the political parties from donations from Government Companies and Foreign sources". The reasons for change in the stand are unfathomable.

Moreover, a significant gap in the effective implementation of programmes has been the limited availability of timely and high-quality data at the district level. This limitation severely hampers policymaking, particularly in identifying the segments of the population that need immediate government assistance.

In such a scenario, initiatives such as the District Development Index prepared for Maharashtra bring about transparency and ensure accountability of stakeholders. They will go a long way in tracking and supporting the contemporary socio-economic and infrastructure development at the district level, ensuring that districts emerge as growth drivers of Viksit Bharat.

Finally, will this turn out to be a case of closing the stables after the horses have bolted? What would be the nature and fate of funds raised under an "unconstitutional" scheme? Is the violator entitled to enjoy the fruits of the violation?

While the annulment of EBS by itself cannot restore a level playing field, the scope of state support in queering the pitch for parties not in power might reduce. The SC has expounded on the role of money in influencing voter behaviour and observed, "Money creates an exclusionary impact by reducing the democratic space for participation for both candidates and newer and smaller political parties". Will this judgment lead us back to the dark alleys of cash funding? The government must consult all stakeholders to come up with another alternative with strong sunshine clauses to address the rot in political funding.

March 13 is expected to lift the veil but will those blinded by the blaze of self-discovered glory see anything pernicious? Let not the outcome of the impending elections cast a shadow on the SC judgment. The Attorney-General argued, "The influence of contributions by companies to political parties ought not to be examined by this Court. It is an issue of democratic significance and should be best left to the legislature".

Let us hope the new Parliament will bring about a law showing full respect to the findings of the SC so that India can justifiably hail itself as the mother of democracy without being accused of giving democracy a step-motherly treatment.

*The writer is a former election commissioner*

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### NECESSARY DATA

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'Ways of spending' (IE, February 26). The consumer expenditure survey is the first to be published in 11 years. In 11 years, rural consumption in inflation-adjusted terms grew at an average annual growth rate of 3.1 per cent. Urban consumption growth rate was 2.7 per cent, slower than the rural growth.

India's consumption growth has been lagging behind its output expansion. Two consequences of this are dissatisfaction among groups such as farmers and a tilt towards welfareism by political parties. Fiscal impact of welfare is a hot topic. But to what extent did welfare transfer boost the average rural MPCE? A mere 2 per cent.

*Sanjay Chopra, Mohali*

### THE RIGHT TEST

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'An open book' (IE, February 26). Though the experiment in 2014 along the same lines was withdrawn, a relook at the open book format is welcome. Exams framed to gauge critical thinking will create students capable of independent thought. The test then will be of devising answers to questions rather than an anxiety-fuelled attempt to regurgitate learnt concepts. A relaxed and alert mindset can be cultivated through this new format. It will help

students realise their true potential.

*Anany Mishra, Bhilai*

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'An open book' (IE, February 26). Open book examinations could offer an assessment approach that goes beyond rote learning — fostering critical thinking, and problem-solving skills. These are essential for success. In many professional settings, individuals have access to reference materials to aid decision-making. Open book exams simulate that environment, preparing students for real-world challenges where the focus is directed at solving the problem.

*Sudip Kumar Dey, Barasat*

### NO MORE DYNASTY

THIS REFERS TO the article, 'No family business' (IE, February 26). Rahul Gandhi was correct in pointing out that most mainstream parties in India indulge in dynastic politics, including the BJP, which is the most vocal against it. This normalisation of dynastic politics has serious negative consequences. The logic of dynastic politics is the logic of patronage. Economist Mancur Olson has described it as stationary bandits versus roving bandits. Dynasts are the former. Dynasty politics is a blot on India and it has to be abolished at the earliest to make democracy more vibrant and meaningful.

*SS Paul, Nadia*



## EXPLAINED TECHNOLOGY

# 3 proposals, 3 policy responses in India's EV push

Tesla, China's BYD, Vietnam's VinFast all have plans for India. Incentives for Tesla are under discussion; BYD, the bigger carmaker, has found the going tougher

**ANIL SASI**  
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 26

OVER THE past year, three of the world's top electric carmakers have announced their India entry plans. The policy response of the Indian government has been different in each case: potential tweaks in tax norms to accommodate the American company Tesla; clear disincentives for China's BYD; routing of the proposal through the regular dispensation for VinFast of Vietnam, which is now seeking sops on a par with the package being worked out for Tesla.

India is pushing for rapid adoption of electric vehicles, with a focus on replacing petrol/diesel vehicles with battery EVs. Here is how the three proposals have progressed.

#### Tesla's market entry plans

Elon Musk's company is learnt to be in talks with the government to finalise a package of incentives that could include lower import duties for EVs for at least a couple of years in return for guaranteed financial commitment of around \$2 billion in a proposed EV facility in India.

Lobbying for lower duties is a market en-

try strategy employed by Tesla in other geographies as well, and comes after the Union government had turned down an earlier demand for import duty cuts, leading the Texas-based company to shelve its India debut plans in mid-2022.

Details of the renegotiated deal are not known, but the government seems to have changed its earlier stance that it would not discuss import duty cuts as a precondition, and that tax cuts could be offered only as part of a larger package that would apply to all companies.

This is seen as even more crucial given that India is negotiating free trade agreements with other countries and trading blocs, including the European Union and the United Kingdom, which have a competitive car manufacturing sector, and negotiations include a demand for lowering import duties.

In 2021, Tesla had written to nodal central ministries seeking a reduction in import duties on fully assembled cars. Currently, the customs duty on cars imported as completely built units (CBUs) is 60% or 100%, depending on engine size and whether the cost, insurance, and freight (CIF) value is higher or lower than \$40,000. Where the car costs \$40,000 or more, the duty is 100%; a cheaper car at-



(From left) EVs manufactured by China's BYD, Vietnam's VinFast, and the American company Tesla. Reuters, Wikimedia Commons

tracts 60%. Tesla had asked for these duties to be cut to 40-15% depending on the price.

#### VinFast's manufacturing plans

On Sunday, VinFast Auto, a part of Vingroup, the largest private corporation in Vietnam, began the groundwork for its proposed integrated EV manufacturing site in Thoothukudi, Tamil Nadu. The project entails an intended commitment of up to \$2 billion, and \$500 million for the first five years. This is a major landmark in VinFast's global expansion strategy, and marks its entry into India.

VinFast came through the existing route – in which EVs are eligible for a significant

GST incentive – without seeking any upfront import duty concessions as a precondition. But with incentives being discussed for Tesla, VinFast on Sunday asked the government to reduce import duties on its cars for about two years so that potential customers get familiar with its products while a local manufacturing plant comes onstream, the company's India CEO Pham Sanh Chau said.

VinFast's demand is in line with what is said to be under discussion for Tesla.

#### The struggles of BYD Auto

BYD Auto, which started out as a cell phone battery maker and continues to have

strong backward integration into the battery value chain while diversifying into automaking, sold 5,26,409 EVs globally in the final quarter of last year, more than Tesla's sales of 4,84,507 units.

BYD has a presence in more than 70 countries on six continents, and has established itself as a key player in the global new energy sector. The Chinese carmaker was listed among the global top 10 in car sales in 2023, with 3.02 million units sold that year.

In July last year, the Centre was reported to have turned down BYD's proposal to build a \$1 billion EV plant in partnership with Hyderabad-based Megha Engineering and have tied up with BYD for battery supplies.

Infrastructures Ltd. The rejection was likely on "national security" grounds, although an official confirmation was not available, and the companies did not comment.

However, the move was in line with restrictions placed on other Chinese carmakers: Great Wall Motor Company failed in an attempt to buy General Motors' shuttered plant, while SAIC Motor Corp's local unit MG Motor India was investigated for alleged financial irregularities. MG has since started the process of diluting its 100% share of the business.

What Indian policymakers seem to have overlooked is that BYD is a leader in battery technology. In 2020, it launched a "blade battery" based on lithium iron phosphate (LFP) chemistry which cost less than the lithium ion batteries used in EVs, and was more compact and safer. Toyota is among the companies that have tied up with BYD for battery supplies.

"From a strategic point of view, it does make sense for India to tap a technology leader such as BYD, irrespective of whether it's Chinese. In a partnership with an Indian company, there can always be a precondition of tech transfer, a provision that Chinese automakers and EV companies have exploited in their startup phase," an official involved in discussions told *The Indian Express*.

## EXPLAINED EDUCATION

## WHY MAHARASHTRA IS EXEMPTING SOME PVT SCHOOLS FROM RTE QUOTA

**AJOY SINHA KARPURAM**  
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 26

MAHARASHTRA RECENTLY became the latest state to dilute private schools' obligations under The Right Of Children To Free And Compulsory Education Act, 2009 (RTE Act). The state has passed rules that make it possible for some schools to not reserve 25 per cent of seats for "weaker section" and disadvantaged group in the neighbourhood."

**The rule**  
The amendment brought in by the Maharashtra Legislative Assembly states that the "local authority shall not identify the private unaided school, for the purposes of 25 per cent admission of disadvantaged groups and weaker sections... where government schools and aided schools are situated within one-kilometre radius of that school."

Instead, students in these neighbourhoods will be considered for admission into said government or aided schools first. This exemption will also apply to private schools established in the future, as long as they are within a 1 km radius of a government or aided school.

With this rule, Maharashtra joins Karnataka and Kerala as states that have provided private schools with exemptions from providing RTE admissions.

Karnataka introduced the rule in December 2018, and specifically referenced the Kerala rules introduced in 2011. In Kerala, the fee concession for students is only made available to RTE quota students if there are no government or aided schools "within walking distance", which is 1 km for students joining in Class 1.

**Rationale behind the rule**  
There are two reasons for certain states to make this move. First is the drop in enrollment in government schools. While introducing the amendment in 2018, Karnataka law minister Krishna Byregowda had said: "Till date, Karnataka had allowed parents to admit children in private schools despite having government schools in the same neighbourhood. This has resulted in the enrollment ratio [in government schools] dropping drastically."

Private schools have also highlighted that states have often failed to reimburse the fee for students admitted through the RTE quota. According to Section 12(2) of the RTE Act, state governments are bound to reimburse expenses incurred by the school per-child, or the fee amount, whichever is less. In Maharashtra, the Maharashtra English School Trustees Association threatened to boycott RTE admissions last December citing pending payments of Rs 1800 crore in reimbursements. This figure has now risen to Rs 2000 crore.

**Diverging responses**  
Private unaided schools have welcomed the new rules. "This is a good decision and we welcome it. The number of RTE admissions in private schools will considerably reduce... the number of students in government schools will also increase," Rajendra Chorge, the vice president of the Independent English Schools' Association in Maharashtra, previously told *The Indian Express*.

Others, however, have been critical. "Section 12(1)(C) of the RTE Act that mandates 25 per cent reservation of seats to children from disadvantaged backgrounds is in the direction of contesting the education apartheid in the country, and bringing parity and equality of opportunity for all children. Maharashtra government's amendment is unjustified" Shantha Sinha, a member of the sub-committee of the Central Advisory Board of Education, which played a crucial role in drafting the RTE Act, said.

**History of railways in J&K**  
The first railway line in the former princely state of Jammu and Kashmir was built by the British in 1897 over a distance of 40-45 km between Jammu and Sialkot in the plains.

In 1902 and 1905, a railway line was proposed between Rawalpindi (now in Pakistan) and Srinagar along the course of the Jhelum river, which would have connected the Kashmir Valley with the railway network of undivided India.

But Maharaja Pratap Singh of Jammu and Kashmir was in favour of a Jammu-Srinagar line via Reasi, and neither project progressed.

After Partition, Sialkot went to Pakistan, and Jammu was disconnected from the rail network of India. Until the inauguration of

**ARUN SHARMA**  
JAMMU, FEBRUARY 26

PRIME MINISTER Narendra Modi last week inaugurated the Banjhal-Sangaldan section of the railway line that connects Baramulla in north Kashmir to Udhampur in Jammu.

He also flagged off the first electric train in Jammu and Kashmir, from Sangaldan to Srinagar and Baramulla.

#### Banjhal-Sangaldan section

More than 90 per cent of the 48-km railway line between Banjhal to Sangaldan passes through tunnels in the mountainous Ramban district, including the country's longest 12.77-km tunnel (T-50).

This section also has 16 bridges. For the safety and rescue of passengers in emergencies, the stretch has three escape tunnels with a combined length of 30.1 km. It has been built at a cost of Rs 15,863 crore.

#### Significance of railway line

**Travel option to Valley when roads not usable:** With the train reaching Sangaldan, people now have a way to travel between Jammu and Kashmir even when National Highway-44 is closed for vehicular traffic between Ramban and Banjhal due to landslides. One can travel 30-35 km to Sangaldan by road from Ramban, and then board the train to Kashmir.

**Promotion of tourism and boost to the economy:** The train route also opens far-off areas of Jammu division for tourists, and thus for more economic activity.

Hot water springs are situated around 5 km from Sangaldan, and the picturesque Cool Valley is nearby. These areas have largely remained unexplored so far for want of better road connectivity.

#### History of railways in J&K

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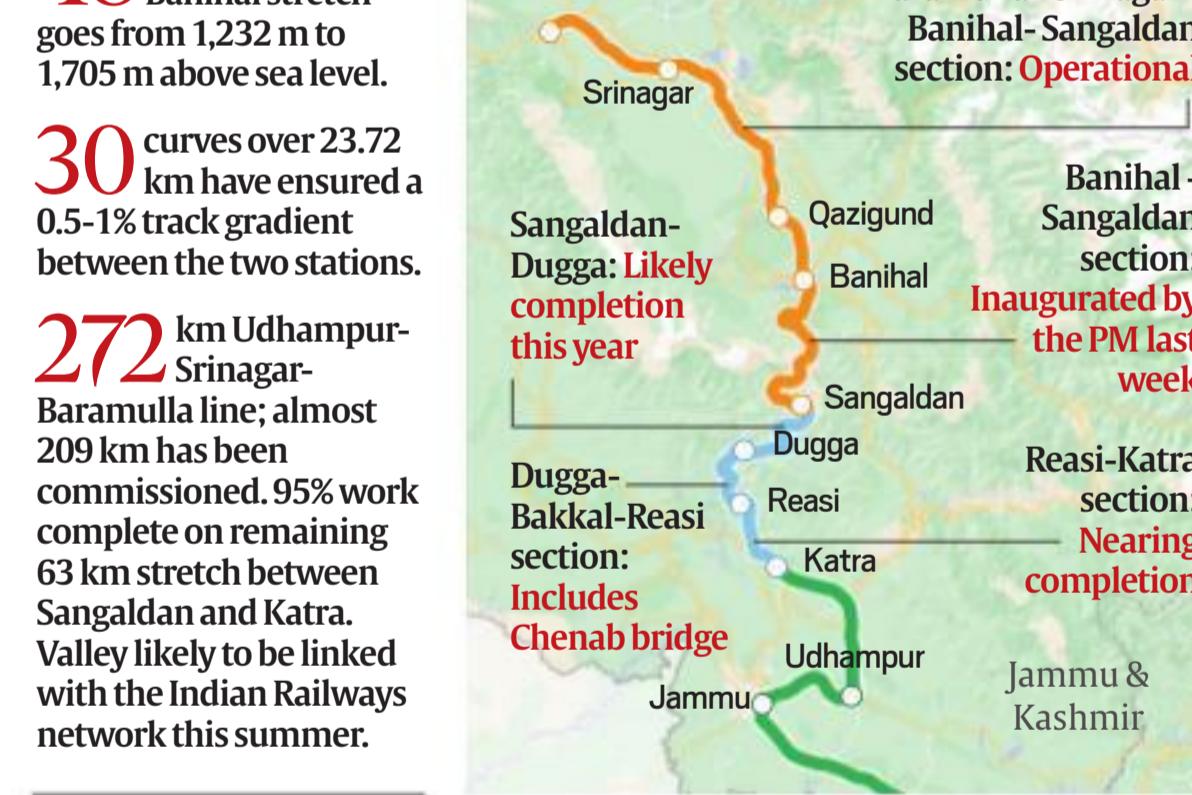
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## Connecting Valley to rest of India



(Above) The first electric train in Jammu and Kashmir at Sangaldan station; the Chenab Bridge and the Anji Khad Bridge near Reasi. Express photos



the Pathankot-Jammu line in 1975, the railway station nearest to Jammu and Kashmir was Pathankot in Punjab.

In 1983, work began on a railway line between Jammu and Udhampur. The 53-km

line, estimated to cost Rs 50 crore, was supposed to be completed in five years, but ultimately took 21 years and Rs 515 crore. The project, which was completed in 2004, has 20 major tunnels, the longest of which is 2.5

km long, and 158 bridges, the highest of which is 77 m high.

With work underway on the Jammu-Udhampur line, the Centre in 1994 announced the extension of the line from Udhampur to Srinagar, and then Baramulla. This was the Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Railayline (USRL) project, which was approved in March 1995 at an estimated cost of Rs 2,500 crore.

The project got momentum after 2002, when Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee declared it a national project on account of its being among the most challenging works undertaken by the Indian Railways after Independence. The project cost has now ballooned to more than Rs 35,000 crore.

Once complete, the line will connect Srinagar and Baramulla with the rest of the country by train, and will provide a reliable and cost-effective all-weather alternative to the Jammu-Srinagar national highway that is frequently shut down by landslides.

#### Challenges and innovations

The Himalayas are young, and the geologically unstable Shivalik Hills and Pir Panjal mountains lie in the seismically most active Zones IV and V. The terrain is difficult and sees heavy snow in winter, and presents serious challenges in the construction of bridges and tunnels.

In view of this, Railways engineers devised a novel Himalayan Tunneling Method (HTM), in which horseshoe-shaped tunnels were constructed instead of the usual D-shaped ones. In this method, the site comes down in a curve, giving strength to the structure where the soil above it is loose.

#### Benefits for the Valley

The train will bring down the travel time between Srinagar and Jammu to 3-3.5 hours from the six-seven hours that it takes by road currently. According to Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw, Vande Bharat trains will allow people to travel from Jammu to Srinagar and return that same evening.

The train will benefit the people of Kashmir by facilitating hassle-free transport of goods such as apples, dry fruit, pashmina shawls, handicrafts etc, to other parts of the country in the shortest possible time and at lesser cost.

The cost of transporting items of daily use to the Valley from elsewhere in the country is also expected to go down significantly.

Four cargo terminals will be built between Banjhal and Baramulla; land has been identified for three of these.

**LONGER VERSION**

indianexpress.com/explained

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## Gyanvapi case: Why HC called govt order restraining puja in cellar 'illegal'

**AJOY SINHA KARPURAM**  
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 26

THE ALLAHABAD High Court Monday allowed Hindus to continue offering worship in the southern cellar of the Gyanvapi mosque, dismissing an appeal by the Anjuman Intezamia Masjid Committee against the Varanasi district court order that first allowed this.

The cellar is called 'Vyasji ka tekhkhan' (Vyasji's cellar), after the Vyas family who claim to own the property. In 1993, the Uttar Pradesh government under Mulayam Singh Yadav had orally ordered the Vyas family to stop conducting puja (prayers) in the cellar.

The Allahabad HC said the state order "restraining Vyas family from performing religious worship and rituals and also by the devotees was a continuous wrong being perpetuated."

#### How the case ended up in Allahabad HC

In connection with the ongoing dispute over the religious character of Varanasi's Gyanvapi mosque, which abuts the Kashi Vishwanath Temple, the Vyas family filed a suit in September 2023. The family claims that the 'Vyasji ka tekhkhan' (the mosque cellar) has been in the possession of the family since 1551 and prayers were being offered here routinely until the 1993 UP

government order. On January 31 this year, the District Court in Varanasi allowed worship to take place in the cellar.

#### What the mosque committee argued

The management committee of the mosque challenged this order at the Allahabad HC. They argued that the civil court in *Din Mohammed v. The Secretary of State for India* (1937) had already declared that the mosque was a Hanafi Muslim Waqf property and Muslims were entitled to the land. This, they claimed, included the land underneath the mosque, such as the cellar.

## NEPAL

Microfinance debt victims protest in Parliament

Kathmandu: Denied justice for months despite government assurance, more than four dozen victims of debts from microfinance companies on high interest rates trespassed into the complex of federal parliament to draw the attention of the government and the opposition parties today. Altogether forty-nine people, forty-eight of them women, entered the complex jumping police barricades, but they all were arrested to stop them from getting inside the parliament hall, police said. There have been series of protests in the country for months, mainly from three kind of victims – one from the microfinance institutions in high interest and another loanees from the co-operative bodies – with many forfeiting their land and other assets mortgaged for the loans. The third category belong to people from different parts of the country who have been borrowed loans from private money lenders.

ENS

## JAPAN

SLIM Moon lander survives lunar night

Tokyo: Japan's space agency said on Monday its SLIM moon lander has unexpectedly survived a freezing lunar night and re-established communication with the earth, more than a month after the spacecraft made a historic "pinpoint" touchdown on the moon. Shortly after landing within 55 m (180 ft) of its target just south of the moon's equator, SLIM ran out of power because it had tipped over and its solar panels were at the wrong angle.

AP

## CAMBODIA

Hun Sen set to be Senate chair after big win

Phnom Penh: The long-ruling Cambodian People's Party has won an expected landslide victory in the election for the country's Senate, the National Election Committee has confirmed. The vote paves the way for Hun Sen, who is the ruling party president, to become Senate President, allowing him to hold an official position in government after stepping down last year after serving for 38 years as prime minister. He was succeeded as prime minister by his son, Hun Manet. The Senate's duties are largely ceremonial, focusing on ratifying measures passed by the National Assembly. But the Senate President serves as active head of state when the king is absent from the country.

AP

## AFGHANISTAN

Taliban conduct week's third public execution

Islamabad: The Taliban held a public execution on Monday of a man convicted of murder in northern Afghanistan as thousands watched at a sports stadium, the third such death sentence to be carried out in the past five days. The execution took place in heavy snowfall in the city of Shibirghan, where the brother of the murdered man shot the convicted five times.

PTI

## SYMBOLIC SHIFT TO ENSURE PA'S PRIMACY IN PALESTINE'S AFFAIRS

# Palestinian PM resigns to usher in US-backed reforms in post-war Gaza

REUTERS

RAMALLAH, FEBRUARY 26

PALESTINIAN PRIME Minister Mohammad Shtayyeh announced his resignation Monday, as the Palestinian Authority looks to build support for an expanded role following Israel's war against the Islamist group Hamas in Gaza.

The move comes amid growing US pressure on President Mahmoud Abbas to shake up the Authority as international efforts intensify to stop the fighting in Gaza and begin work on a political structure to govern the enclave after the war. Shtayyeh's resignation must still be accepted by Abbas, who may ask him to stay on as caretaker until a permanent replacement is appointed.

Shtayyeh's departure marks a symbolic shift that underlines Abbas' determination to ensure the Authority maintains its claim to leadership as global pressure grows for a revival of efforts to create a Palestinian state. In a statement to cabinet, Shtayyeh said the next stage would require "the extension of the Authority's authority over the entire land, Palestine".

Abbas is expected to name Mohammad Mustafa, a former World Bank official who is chairman of the Palestine Investment Fund (PIF) as Shtayyeh's successor.



Palestinians at a cemetery in Rafah, amid Israel's assault on the city, on Monday. Reuters

## Israelis, Hamas in Qatar for talks

REUTERS

JERUSALEM, CAIRO, FEB 26

ISRAELI OFFICIALS headed on Monday to Qatar, where the ruling emir separately met the chief of Hamas, as the enemies in the Gaza war closed in on a ceasefire, hostage deal that Washington says is now within reach.

The presence of both sides for so-called proximity talks – meet-

ing mediators separately while in the same city – suggested negotiations were further along than at any time since a big push at the start of February, when Israel rejected a Hamas counter-offer for a four-and-a-half-month truce.

In public, both sides continued to take positions far apart on the ultimate aims of a truce, while blaming each other for holding up the talks.

Israel says it will agree only

to a temporary pause in fighting to secure the release of hostages. Hamas says it will not free them without an agreement that leads to a permanent end to the war.

After meeting Qatar's Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, the elusive head of Hamas, Ismail Haniyeh, said his group had embraced mediators' efforts to find an end to the war, and accused Israel of stalling at while Gazans die under siege.



## FARMERS CLASH WITH COPS IN BRUSSELS

Police barricades at a farmers' protest site in the European Quarter amid a meeting of EU agriculture ministers in Brussels on Monday. The ministers discussed the crisis in the farming sector after weeks of angry demonstrations. On the margins of the Brussels protest, riot police fired water cannon at protesters throwing bottles and eggs, while about 900 tractors jammed parts of the Belgian capital. AP photo with Reuters inputs

## Trump appeals \$454 mn verdict in New York civil fraud case

ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW YORK, FEBRUARY 26

DONALD TRUMP has appealed his \$454 million New York civil fraud judgment, challenging a judge's finding that Trump lied about his wealth as he grew the real estate empire that launched him to stardom and the presidency.

Trump's lawyers filed notices of appeal Monday asking the state's mid-level appeals court to overturn Judge Arthur Engoron's Feb. 16 verdict in Attorney General Letitia James' lawsuit and reverse staggering penalties that threaten to wipe out Trump's cash reserves.

Trump's lawyers wrote that they're asking the appeals court to decide whether Engoron "committed errors of law and/or fact" and whether he abused his discretion or "acted in excess" of his jurisdiction.

The paperwork did not address whether Trump was seeking to pause collection of the judgment while he appeals by putting up money, assets or an appeal bond covering the amount owed to qualify for an automatic stay.

The appeal ensures that the legal fight over Trump's business practices will persist into the thick of the presidential primary season, and likely beyond.

### GOP CHIEF QUILTS AFTER PRESSURE FROM TRUMP

Washington: Republican Party leader Ronna McDaniel said on Monday she was stepping down in a power shakeup that followed weeks of public pressure from the party's likely 2024 nominee Donald Trump. Following a February 5 meeting with McDaniel, Trump wrote on social media that he would be pushing for changes at the Republican National Committee after South Carolina's primary. REUTERS

## EUROPE'S LARGEST ECONOMY AIMS FOR 'NET ZERO' EMISSIONS BY 2045

# To fight climate change, Germany plans to store CO<sub>2</sub> underground offshore

ASSOCIATED PRESS

BERLIN, FEBRUARY 26

"hard to abate," said Robert Habeck, who is also the economy and climate minister.

Germany, which is home to many energy-intensive industries, aims to cut its emissions to "net zero" by 2045.

Habeck's proposed "carbon management strategy," which still needs to be turned into detailed legislation, foresees enabling the transport of carbon dioxide and its storage under the sea in Germany's exclusive economic zone, except in marine conservation areas. It doesn't foresee allowing storage sites on land, but Habeck said that could be considered later if German



Opponents maintain that so-called carbon capture and storage are unproven at scale and have been less effective than other alternatives in decarbonising energy sector. AP

## 32ND MEMBER OF U.S.-LED ALLIANCE

# Sweden clears final hurdle to join NATO as Hungary approves bid

Sweden is leaving 200 years of neutrality behind, says PM

REUTERS

BUDAPEST, STOCKHOLM, FEBRUARY 26

HUNGARY'S PARLIAMENT approved Sweden's NATO accession on Monday, clearing the last hurdle before the historic step by the Nordic country whose neutrality lasted through two world wars and the simmering conflict of the Cold War.

Hungary ended months of delay to complete Sweden's security policy shift and followed a visit by Swedish Prime Minister Ulf Kristersson Friday, at which the two countries signed an arms deal.

"Sweden is leaving 200 years of neutrality and military non-alignment behind," Kristersson told a news conference.

"We are joining NATO in order to defend what we are and everything we believe in even better. We are defending our freedom, our democracy and our values, together with others."

Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban's government has faced pressure from NATO allies to fall in line and seal Sweden's accession to the alliance. NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg immediately welcomed the move.



Sweden's PM Ulf Kristersson in Stockholm; Hungary's PM Viktor Orban in Budapest, on Monday. Reuters

### SWEDEN'S PATH TO ALLIANCE

**FEB 24, 2022:** Russia invades Ukraine. Swedish PM rules out joining NATO citing regional peace

**MAY 18:** Finland and Sweden hand official applications to NATO. Canada, Iceland, Norway & Denmark become first members to approve on July 5

**MARCH 22, 2023:** Centre-right coalition comes to power in Sweden. Lawmakers approve joining NATO.

**APRIL 4:** Finland becomes 31st member

**JAN 23, 2024:** Turkish parliament approves Sweden's bid

**FEB 26** Hungary votes to ratify Sweden's bid to join NATO

Maldives Opp party leader says can't muddy ties with India



Maldivian Democratic Party chief Abdulla Shahid



Protesters hold posters of Alexei Navalny in front of the Russian Embassy in Malta. Reuters file

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA**

MALE, FEBRUARY 26

VETERAN MALDIVIAN diplomat Abdulla Shahid, the new leader of the main opposition Maldivian Democratic Party (MDP) has defended Male's close ties with New Delhi, emphasizing that "muddying ties with India is impossible" regardless of the foreign policy changes made by the new government here.

In an interview with Sun Online, the former president of the UN General Assembly said, "India is tied to us historically, culturally, and in several other ways." The

Maldives cannot distance itself from the geographical and historical significance of India as an ally, he was quoted as saying during the interview held last week.

The relations between the two neighbours have deteriorated ever since President Mohamed Muizzu rode to power on anti-India posturing. Muizzu, widely seen as a pro-China leader, in his first speech earlier this month said the first group of Indian military personnel will be sent back from the Maldives before March 10.

Shahid also quashed rumours that his appointment as the main opposition leader was backed by India. Officials of the Muizzu administration have alleged that his posting was backed by India.

## Ukraine's Zelenskyy urges 'fight' for Crimea after 10 years of 'occupation'

Kyiv: Ukraine and its international partners must continue fighting to restore Ukrainian control over Crimea, President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said on Monday as Kyiv marked a decade of Russian occupation of the Black Sea peninsula.

Moscow's troops seized control of Crimea in 2014 through a covert invasion, and then used it to help launch its assault on Ukraine.

"This cruel war... was spawned

by Russian revanchism precisely when it felt that the world could turn a blind eye to such crimes," Zelenskyy said in a video address.

He urged Ukraine's partners to "fight for the full renewal of international law". Ukraine on Monday marked the 10th anniversary of a rally in Simferopol against a Russia-backed movement that paved way for the annexation.

REUTERS

international goal of trying to limit future warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius since pre-industrial times.

Environmental group Greenpeace complained that the German plans "bear the mark of the energy industry and heavy industry" and would allow even industries for which there are "climate-friendly solutions" to carry on as they have to.

"That is expensive, not sustainable and encumbers future generations with further long-term liabilities," Karsten Smid, an energy expert with the group's German branch, said in a statement.

Neighboring Denmark last year launched an ambitious

project that aims to bury vast amounts of carbon dioxide beneath the North Sea.

"Time has run out," Habeck said at a news conference in Berlin. "In the 2000s, you could perhaps say, 'let's wait and see what might happen'; today we see that we haven't found any technological solution for cement and other areas that ensures climate neutrality."

"We are heading toward exceeding 1.5 degrees, which means that we are no longer in a luxury or comfort zone where we can somehow wait," Habeck added. "We have to use what we have." He was referencing the

SENSEX: 72,790.13 ▼ 352.67 (0.48%) NIFTY: 22,122.05 ▼ 90.65 (0.41%) NIKKEI: 39,233.71 ▲ 135.03 HANG SENG: 16,634.74 ▼ 91.12 FTSE: 7,683.33 ▼ 22.95 DAX: 17,429.72 ▲ 10.39

GOLD

₹62,950

Note: Gold, silver rates at Delhi spot market, gold per 10g, silver per 1 kg; Crude oil (Indian basket) as of February 23

USD RATE

₹82.89

OIL

\$82.43

SILVER

₹74,600

International market data till 1900 IST

**VESSELS OWNED BY RUSSIAN SHIPPING MAJOR SANCTIONED BY THE US**

## Three of 14 sanctioned tankers slated to deliver Russian crude oil to India

**SUKALP SHARMA**  
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 26

AT LEAST THREE tankers scheduled to deliver crude oil to Indian refiners over the next few weeks are among the 14 vessels that were sanctioned along with Russia's state-owned shipping major Sovcomflot by the United States (US) on Friday for purportedly transporting Russian oil priced above the West's \$60-per-barrel cap, as per ship tracking data and shipping fixtures. According to the US Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC), the 14 vessels are ultimately owned by Sovcomflot.

One of the tankers—Georgy Maslov—is scheduled to reach Sikka port later this week. ship-tracking data shows. India's largest private sector refiner Reliance Industries (RIL) uses the Sikka port for importing crude. Another sanctioned tanker—Anatoly Kolodkin—is scheduled to deliver crude at the Sikka port in April.

Earlier this month, Anatoly Kolodkin had delivered crude at the Vadinar port, close to the Nayara Energy (NEL) refinery. Both NEL and state-owned refining giant Indian Oil Corporation

One of the tankers—Georgy Maslov—is scheduled to reach Sikka port later this week.  
Reuters

(IOC) use the Vadinar port for taking crude oil deliveries. NS Captain—another tanker among the 14 that were sanctioned on Friday—is scheduled to deliver oil at the Vadinar port in March and April.

While industry insiders do not anticipate any major problem with these specific deliveries as Washington has allowed 45 days for the newly-sanctioned tankers to offload crude oil, it is being seen as a signal that the US is getting stricter about the price cap, which was imposed in December 2022 by the Group of Seven (G7) countries and their allies. The stated objective of the

price cap is to limit Russia's oil revenue while keeping the international oil market adequately supplied, and prevent supply and price shocks. Given that India takes delivery of nearly four dozen cargoes of Russian crude a month and a large number of tankers involved in Russian oil trade, the actual impact of the latest sanctions on Russian oil flows may be limited.

RIL and IOC did not respond to requests for comments on the matter till press time, while NEL said: "We would like to clarify that the oil tankers mentioned in the query are not scheduled to deliver any crude oil to Nayara

Energy. Nayara Energy is an Indian company and remains committed to be strictly in compliance with all relevant and applicable regulations."

According to industry sources, once the 45-day period is over, Indian refiners are likely to be unwilling to accept crude oil hauled on sanctioned tankers and Indian banks are unlikely to process payments for such cargoes.

To be sure, Russian oil is bought by Indian refiners on a delivered basis, which means that freight and insurance are managed by the seller, and the Indian buyers pay the all-inclusive landed price of crude. Also, India is not a signatory to the price cap regime, and has even voiced its opposition to the cap being selective and aimed at specific buyers, given that it applies only to seaborne Russian crude and not to oil supplied through pipelines to other geographies.

Nevertheless, the government does not want Indian refiners to brazenly flout the G7 price cap or accept deliveries on sanctioned tankers in order to avoid secondary sanctions themselves, sources said.

Over the past couple of months, there have been instances of tankers headed for

India being sanctioned by the US for price cap evasion, leading to Indian refiners refusing to accept the cargoes.

But beyond that, the Indian government has maintained that buying discounted Russian crude has been in the interest of India's energy security and should not be looked at from a geopolitical lens. In fact, Petroleum Minister Hardeep Singh Puri and External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar have even

said that India's purchase of large quantities of Russian crude brought balance and stability in the global energy markets and eased extreme price and supply volatility internationally.

Indian refiners ramped up Russian oil purchases in the aftermath of Moscow's February 2022 invasion of Ukraine. As the West started weaning itself off Russian energy supplies, Russia began offering deep discounts on its crude oil, which Indian refiners began lapping up.

Prior to the war in Ukraine, Russia was a marginal player in India's oil imports, but is now New Delhi's biggest source of crude. India is the world's third-largest consumer of crude oil and depends on imports to meet over 85 per cent of its requirement.



MoSPI has been working on back-to-back surveys for 2022-23 and 2023-24. File

this issue did not elicit an answer.

The Ministry has been working on the 2022-23 and 2023-24 surveys in a row after a significant gap of 11 years from the last survey of 2011-12 given that the survey for 2017-18 was junked by the government citing quality issues. Studies based on leaked findings of that survey had pointed to a rise in poverty levels in 2017-18.

On February 5 this year, in a written reply to a question in Rajya Sabha, Minister Rao Inderjit Singh had said field work for Household Consumption Expenditure Survey 2023-24 started in August 2023.

"MoSPI is conducting back-to-back surveys (HCES 2022-24), each of one-year duration, on Household Consumption Expenditure. Field work for the first year of the HCES 2022-24 has been completed and post survey activities for preparation of survey results have been commenced. Further, field work for the second year of HCES 2022-24 has been initiated from August 2023."

The intent behind conducting back-to-back surveys for 2022-23 and 2023-24 was to assess the robustness of the revised methodology, officials said.

FULL REPORT [www.indianexpress.com](http://www.indianexpress.com)

## Vijay Shekhar Sharma steps down as Paytm Payments chairman

**ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU**  
MUMBAI, FEBRUARY 26

Vijay Shekhar Sharma. File

ONE 97 Communications (OCL) on Monday said Vijay Shekhar Sharma has stepped down as part-time non-executive chairman and board member of Paytm Payments Bank (PPBL).

The moves come ahead of the March 15 deadline of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) for PPBL to wind up its operations.

The Paytm Payments Bank has also reconstituted its board with the appointments of two former bureaucrats and two ex-bankers.

"OCL withdraws its nominee from the Paytm Payments Bank Board and Vijay Shekhar Sharma steps down as part-time non-executive chairman and board member," the company said in a BSE filing.

One 97 communications, which owns Paytm, said it supports PPBL's move of opting for a board with only independent and executive directors by removing its nominee. Sharma has resigned from the board of PPBL to enable this transition.

The bank will commence the process of appointing a new chairman, Paytm said.

PPBL has reconstituted its board of directors with the appointment of ex-Central Bank of India Chairman Srinivasan Sridhar; retired IAS (Indian

## Sitharaman urges RBI to hold monthly meetings with startup, fintech firms for concern addressal

**ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU**

NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 26



Finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman chairs the meeting @FinMinIndia

UNION FINANCE Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Monday exhorted the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to hold monthly meetings with start-ups and fintech companies to address their concerns, officials said. At a meeting with top executives of about 50 start-ups and fintech firms, the minister also asked the Department of Financial Services (DFS) to conduct a workshop with law enforcement agencies for fintech ecosystem partners to voice their issues and concerns, they said.

The RBI, the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) and the Finance Ministry will also look at

the change of ownership holding/control of listed fintech companies to enable them to be in sync with regulatory compliance, an official statement said.

The RBI, the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) and the Finance Ministry will also look at

The meeting with start-ups comes after the RBI's action against Paytm Payments Bank that has resulted in concerns about regulatory compliance in the fintech industry.

"During the deliberations, Sitharaman exhorted the regulators, including RBI, that they may hold meetings via virtual mode once a month to discuss any questions/queries/concerns of the startups and fintech companies," an official statement said.

An official, after the meeting, said that no Paytm-related anxiety or concerns were shown by the start-up founders and fintech entities during the meeting. The meeting was attended by representatives from Policybazaar, MakeMyTrip, Razorpay, CRED, and venture capital firm PeakXV.

DFS Secretary Vivek Joshi, DPIIT

and the Reserve Bank of India (RBI)

in January 2018. The company

also completed its one-time settlement (OTS) with its 17 lenders in March 2023 using organic collections. As part of the Upside

Sharing Agreement with its lenders, RFL had to share the proceeds of recovery from two of its non-core assets viz. corporate loan book (CLB) and fixed deposit with Laxmi Vilas Bank (now DBS) with its lenders as

and when, and if recovered. The Burmans recently made an open offer to buy 26 per cent stake.

This is being stoutly opposed by

the current management of Religare.

The company was put under

Corrective Action Plan (CAP) by

the Reserve Bank of India (RBI)

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# 16 CLASSIFIEDS & TENDERS

WWW.INDIANEXPRESS.COM

THE INDIAN EXPRESS, TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 2024

## Classifieds

### PERSONAL

I, Nirmal Sharma S/o Keshav Dev Sharma R/o Ward No.9, Sardarshahar Churu Rajasthan, have changed my name to Nirmal Kumar Sharma 0040716533-2

I, LACHO DEVI, W/o HARENDRA NATH YADAV, Mother of No.15437182(W/N) JITENDRA KUMAR YADAV, R/o Village-Udho Daway, P.O.-Daway, Tehsil & District-Ballia, Uttar Pradesh-27203, have changed my name and corrected date of birth from LACHO DEVI (DOB-02.06.1966) to LACHIYA DEVI (DOB-01.07.1972), vide affidavit IN-DR4685094420139W dated 26/02/2024 before Notary Advocate: Rajkumar, Regd.No.-6535, New Delhi. 0070891058-1

I, Khalida Begum D/o Salahuddin Ahmed R/o C-11, 4th Floor, Street No.8, Shaheen Bagh, Jamia Nagar, New Delhi-110025, declare that my father name wrongly written as SHEIKH SALAH UDDIN in my passport No. PS8930735. Actual name of my father is SALAHUDDIN AHMED. 0040716543-1

I, Khagesh Kumar Narisinghdas Sharma S/o Narisingh Das Sharma R/o B-1303, Steller Jeevan, Sector-1, Noida, UP-201306 have changed my name to KHAGESH KUMAR for all future purposes. 0070891047-1

I, Emmanuel Franklin Lal S/o Franklin Lal, R/o-H-No-Plot.No-C280/281, Portion-3A Ground-floor, Gali-No.39, Vipin-Garden,Dwarka Mor, west-delhi, delhi-110059,have changed my name to Emmanuel Lal,for all future purposes 0040716533-1

I, Deepak Narwat S/o Mohar Singh R/o-3, Gali-No.4 Hanuman-Nagar,Bharat colony, Faridabad have changed my minor Daughter name yashika to yashika Narwat 0040716542-2

I, DEEPAK KUMAR CHAUDHARI,S/o DEVENDRA KUMAR CHAUDHARI, residing at,KM02110040,10TH-FLOOR, TOWER-KOSMOS, JAYPEE WISH TOWN, SECTOR 134,NOIDA,U.P-201304,have changed my name to DEEPAK CHAUDHARY. 0040716614-9

I, DAMBER SINGH CHAHAR RAJKUMAR, S/o DAMBER SINGH CHAHAR,R/o-64,SECTOR 1-RADHAPURAM ESTATE,MATHURA,UTTAR PRADESH-281001,changed my name to RAJ KUMAR CHAHAR. 0040716626-1

I, Chhavi Sood, W/o Hemant Pareek R/o 1197, Sector-A, Pocket- A, Vasant Kunj, South West Delhi, Delhi-110070, have changed my name and shall hereafter be Known as Chhavi Pareek 0070891002-1

I, Chetna Vasist D/o Mr. Harikesh Vasist,R/o F3/30 first floor vatiKa city sector-82, Gurgaon (Haryana)-122004,have changed my name to Chetna. 0040716552-2

I, It is for general information, that I,TANISHA KUMAR,D/o ANIL KUMAR,R/o-R-247,GALI NO.17A, SWATANTRA NAGAR, NARELA, DELHI-110040,declare that name of mine,has been wrongly-written as TANISHA in my 10th, and 12th-class educational documents. The actual name of mine is TANISHA KUMAR,which may be amended accordingly. 0040716625-9

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**JAWAHARLAL NEHRU PORT AUTHORITY**  
(PORT PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT)  
ISO 9001:2015, ISO 14001:2015, ISO 45001:2018, ISO 27001:2013 CERTIFIED

**SHORT E-TENDER NOTICE**  
PPD/DGM/PMC-CISF Canteen Mess/T-57/2024 Dated - 22.02.2024

Jawaharlal Nehru Port Authority invites e-Tenders "ONLINE" in two Bid system (Technical and Price Bid) from 27.02.2024 to 18.03.2024 from experienced consultant fulfilling the Minimum Eligibility Criteria (MEC) as stipulated in the Tender for the Work of "Project Management Consultancy (PMC) for Construction of Canteen/Mess building in CISF Complex at JNPA Township." Detailed Notice Inviting Tender and Tender Document is available on JNPA website [www.jnport.gov.in](http://www.jnport.gov.in) and <https://eprocure.gov.in>

Chief General Manager (PP & D)

**UTTARAKHAND POWER CORPORATION LTD.**  
(A Govt. of Uttarakhand Undertaking)  
Office of the Superintending Engineer,  
Electricity Distribution Circle (R), 18 E.C. Road, Dehradun

"ई-निविदा सूचना"

अधोलिखित कार्ये हेतु केंद्रीकृत प्रणाली में पंजीकृत लेकर्डोंसे अन्त लाइन निविदा अमांत्रित की जाती है। निविदा का विस्तृत विवरण बेसाईट <https://www.mptenders.gov.in> पर देखा जा सकता है।

1. निविदा प्रत्र बेसाईट <https://www.mptenders.gov.in> पर दिनांक 24.02.2024 समय 10:30 से दिनांक 11.03.2024 समय 17:30 बते तक अंतिम तारीख करने पर प्राप्त हो सकता है।  
2. निविदा से संबंधित किसी भी प्रकार के संशोधन का प्रकाशन बेसाईट पर ही किया जावेगा, पुस्तक से समाचार पत्र में प्रकाशन नहीं किया जावेगा।

Sd/-  
कार्यपालन वर्ती  
नगर पालिका विषय  
सत्ता (म.प्र.)

1. निविदा प्रत्र बेसाईट <https://www.mptenders.gov.in> पर दिनांक 24.02.2024 समय 10:30 से दिनांक 11.03.2024 समय 17:30 बते तक अंतिम तारीख करने पर प्राप्त हो सकता है।  
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1. निविदा प्रत्र बेसाईट <https://www.mptenders.gov.in> पर देखा जा सकता है।

उपरोक्त निविदों की अधिक जानकारी हेतु बेसाईट [www.uktenders.gov.in](https://www.uktenders.gov.in) पर देखें।  
पत्रांक: 522 / विविदम्‌ग्राहोदै० / उपाकालि  
दिनांक : 26.02.2024 (अधीक्षण अभियन्ता)  
"SAVE ELECTRICITY IN THE INTEREST OF THE NATION."  
(Customer Care Toll Free No. 1800 419 0405)

## SEARCH FOR MISSING



Priyanka  
1.Rahul, 2.Preeti

General public is hereby informed that a female with two children namely **Priyanka, W/o Radhey Kumar with two children 1. Rahul, Age 04 years, 2. Preeti, Age 5 years, R/o H. No. 22, House of Haripal Kumhar Basti Gharoli Village, Delhi** has been missing since **12.02.2024 at about 07:00 PM** from her home. In this regard DD No. 82 A, dated **19.02.2024**, has been lodged at Police Station Gazipur, Delhi. The description of missing female is as under:

**Name: Priyanka, Age: 21 Years, Height: 5'4", Complexion: Fair, Face: Round, Built: Thin, Wearing: Red Colour Suit & Yellow Colour Pajami and Red Colour Chappal in Feet.**  
If anyone has any information about this missing female with two children please inform P.S. Gazipur, Delhi.  
Web: <http://cbi.nic.in>, Email: [cic@cbi.gov.in](mailto:cic@cbi.gov.in)  
Ph.: 011-24368638/24368641, Fax: 011-24368639 SHO

Police Station, Gazipur, Delhi  
Ph: 011-22610068, 8750870625  
**Malkapur Municipal Council, Dist-Satara Sanitation Department**

### E-Tender Notice B-1 Year 2023-24-25

To carry out various city beautification works and work under IEC (Information, Education and Communication) component for Swachh Survekshan and Majhi Vasundhara Abhiyan from the incentive fund received in Swachh Survekshan 2020 under Malkapur Municipal Council Sanitation Department. E-tendering is being invited for the work. The said e-tender is on Main Portal <https://maharashtra.etenders.in>. Available for viewing from dt. 27/02/2024 at 10.00 AM to dt. 05/03/2024 at 5.00 PM. The deadline for submission of e-tender will be on dt. 06/03/2024 till 3.00 PM. Tender received it will be opened on dt. 07/03/2024 at 11.00 AM in front of the present Monopoly. Also all the terms and conditions are available in the concerned department during office hours and on the website <https://maharashtra.etenders.in>.

Date : 23/02/2024  
Sd/-  
(Pratap Koli)  
Chief Officer/ Administrator  
Malkapur Municipal Council, Dist-Satara

## WESTERN RAILWAY-VADODARA DIVISION

### ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT "E" TENDER NOTICE

#### VARIOUS ENGINEERING WORK

e-Tender Notice No. DRB-BRC 124 to 128 of 2023-24. Sealed Tenders for and on behalf of the President of India are invited by Divisional Railway Manager (WA/C), Western Railway, Pratapnagar, Vadodara-390004 for the following works. Sr. No. 1 Tender No. & Name of Work: DRB-BRC 124 of 2023-24. Vadodara (P) -- Improvement of Service building and other civil works in station area (Re-invited) (R-1). Approximate cost of the work (in ₹) : 52,97,565.85 Bid Security to be deposited (in ₹) : 1,06,000.00 Sr. No. 2 Tender No. & Name of Work: DRB-BRC 125 of 2023-24. Pratapnagar and Vishvamitri - Annual Maintenance Contract of under ground drainage system and manholes under the jurisdiction of Sr. Section Engineer (Works) PRTN. Approximate cost of the work (in ₹) : 11,18,604.12 Bid Security to be deposited (in ₹) : 22,400.00 Sr. No. 3 Tender No. & Name of Work: DRB-BRC 126 of 2023-24. Vadodara Division: Improvement of various staff amenities i.e. Kitchen, flooring, etc. in Staff Quarters Under the Jurisdiction of ADEN (N) BRC. Approximate cost of the work (in ₹) : 2,27,94,843.58 Bid Security to be deposited (in ₹) : 2,64,000.00 Sr. No. 5 Tender No. & Name of Work: DRB-BRC 128 of 2023-24. NAIR & Pratapnagar NAIR colony: Disinfection by chlorination of drinking water supply under the jurisdiction of SSE(W) NAIR. Approximate cost of the work (in ₹) : 3,56,340.08 Bid Security to be deposited (in ₹) : 7,100.00 For All Above Tenders : Date and time for submission of tender and opening of tender : Tender is to be submitted on 14.03.2024 before 15.00 Hrs., and is to be opened on same date at 15.30 Hrs. Website particulars and notice for location where complete details can be seen & Address of the office from where the tender form can be purchased: Website @ [www.reps.gov.in](http://www.reps.gov.in) Divisional Railway Manager (WA/C), Western Railway, Pratapnagar, Vadodara-4. W/623/NIT of 2023-24 dated 21.02.2024

Like us on: [facebook.com/WesternRly](https://facebook.com/WesternRly) Follow us on: [twitter.com/WesternRly](https://twitter.com/WesternRly)

### GOVERNMENT OF RAJASTHAN OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER AND PROJECT MANAGER

#### Watershed Cell cum Data Centre Jodhpur

S. No. F/WDSC/PMKSY 2.0/Bids/2023-24/7359-61 Date: 19-02-2024

#### NOTICE INVITING BID

Bids for the execution of "Construction of various watershed development structures under PMKSY 2.0 Projects of estimated value as mentioned below are invited from interested bidders up to 27.02.2024, 06:00 PM Other particulars of the bid may be visited on the procurement portal (<https://eproc.rajarshitan.gov.in> or <https://sppprajasthan.gov.in>) of the state, and (<https://watershedcellcumdatacenter.gov.in>) departmental website.

S. N. NIB No. Bid No. Block Cost, Rs. In lakhs UBN No.

1	JODHPUR/ 12/23-24	RB/PD/06/12/01	Mandore	43.68	WSC2324WSOB00870
2		RB/AAU/01/13/01	Aau	267.64	WSC2324WSOB00876
3		RB/AAU/01/13/02	Aau	268.60	WSC2324WSOB00877
4	JODHPUR/ 13/23-24	RS/BAP/02/13/03	Bapini	274.41	WSC2324WSOB00878
5		RB/DEC/03/13/04	Dechu	274.66	WSC2324WSOB00879
6		RB/LOH/05/13/05	Lohawat	274.75	WSC2324WSOB00880
7		RB/OSI/07/13/06	Osiyan	275.65	WSC2324WSOB00881
8	JODHPUR/ 14/23-24	RB/PD/03/14/01	Dechu	44.83	WSC2324WSOB00882
9		RB/PD/04/14/02	Ghantiyali	26.61	WSC2324WSOB00883
10		RB/PD/04/14/03	Ghantiyali	39.30	WSC2324WSOB00884

Sd/-  
Superintending Engineer and Project Manager  
Watershed Cell cum Data Centre Jodhpur

DIPR/C/1339/2024

**"IMPORTANT"**

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[epaper.indianexpress.com](http://epaper.indianexpress.com)

कार्यालय नगर पालिका निगम सतना (म.प्र.)					
सतना, दिनांक 23.02.2024					
/ / अल्पकालिक-निविदा सूचना / /					
निविदालिखित कार्ये हेतु केंद्रीकृत प्रणाली में पंजीकृत लेकर्डोंसे अन्त लाइन निविदायें अमांत्रित की जाती हैं। निविदा का विस्तृत विवरण बेसाईट <a href="https://www.mptenders.gov.in">https://www.mptenders.gov.in</a> पर देखा जा सकता है।					
01. 21 2024_UAD_336903_1					

शर्त-

1. निविदा प्रत्र बेसाईट <https://www.mptenders.gov.in> पर दिनांक 24.02.2024 समय 10:30 से दिनांक 11.03.2024 समय 17:30 बते तक अंतिम तारीख भूलान करने पर प्राप्त हो सकता है।

2. निविदा से संबंधित किसी भी प्रकार के संशोधन का प्रकाशन बेसाईट पर ही किया जावेगा, पुस्तक से समाचार पत्र में प्रकाशन नहीं किया जावेगा।

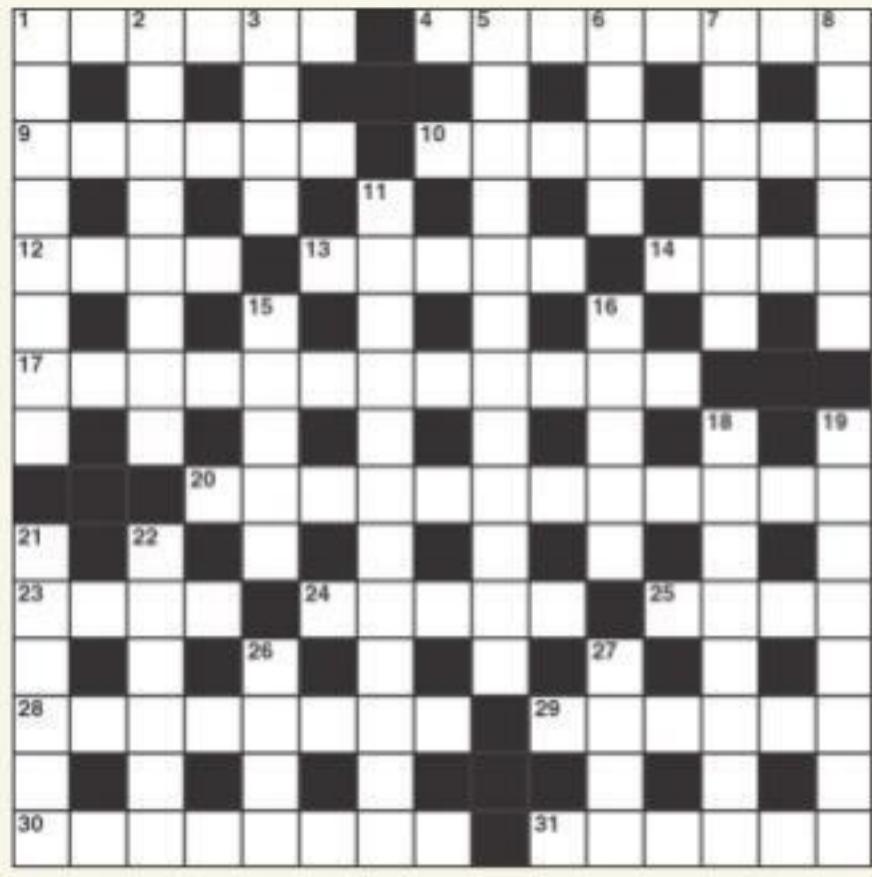
Sd/-  
कार्यपालन वर्ती  
नगर पालिका निगम  
सतना (म.प्र.)

Chief General Manager (PP & D)

22/02/24, 10:30 Am to 07/03/24, 5:30 Pm

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER, Gwalior Municipal Corporation (NIT)							
Date : 23/02/2024							
No.-416/23/3/3/PIU/ Gwalior Municipal Corporation, Gwalior Invites online for the following work:							
S. No.	E-Tender No.	Tender Name	Probable Amount of Contract (Rs.)	EMD (Rs.)	Tender Fee (Rs.)	Period of completion	Date & Time
01	2023_UAD_300951_2	Selection of Agency for Design, Engineering, Supply, Erection, Installation, Commissioning and Testing of shed mounted 400 KW Grid connected solar photovoltaic power plant for Compressed Biogas (CBG) plant along with 05 years of Operation and Maintenance Gwalior in 15 F.C. (2nd Call)	1,66,10,170/-	83,051/-	15,000/-	06	

## CROSSWORD 5298



**ACROSS**

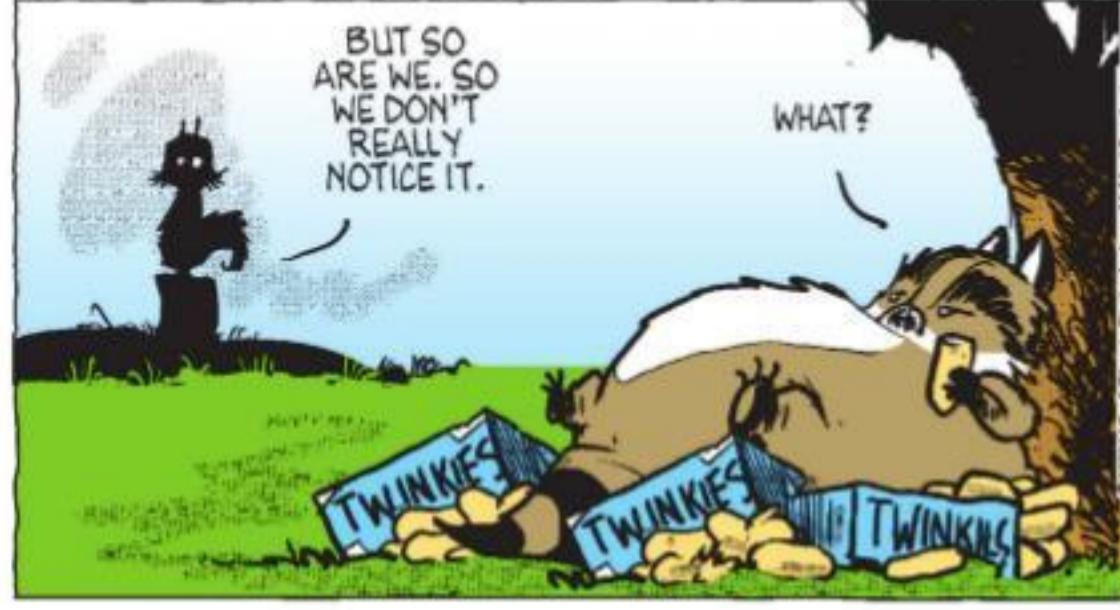
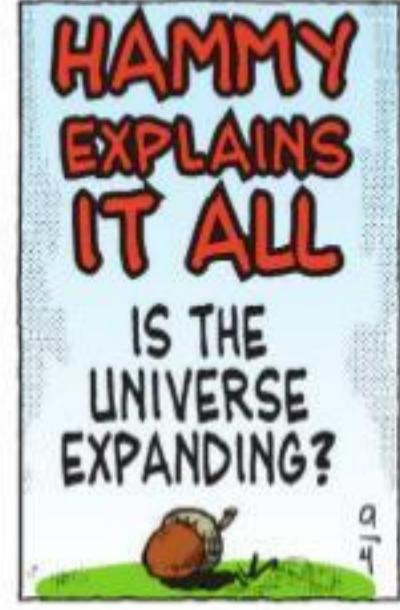
- A coming occasion in the calendar (6)
- Opening for a photographer (8)
- It sounds alarmingly like poison (6)
- Friend goes to States for talks (8)
- Departed behind time (4)
- Light cutting instrument (5)
- The great archer is made to reveal all (4)
- Prone to drop, I trained to get in proper shape (12)
- General or private trial perhaps (5-7)
- Eye-catching gadget (4)
- Band parts put out (5)
- Hand over the church keys (4)
- Uniformed footmen (8)
- Paper required, the first edition (6)
- Truss support for royal male say (8)
- It's bound to go on foot (6)

**DOWN**

- Bet a long striding gait is natural to it (8)
- Break with Virginia gets accountant into trouble (8)
- An elevating Kipling poem of simple innocence (4)
- Meal made with soft pate; not a vegetarian dish (6,2,4)
- Bring up; or what you may bring up (4)
- 7 Odd vigil held by distraught nun (6)
- They play a supporting role in the studio (6)
- Senior NCO on board is a weapons expert (6-2-4)
- Small firms get together over a drink (5)
- Feature of barley used to make bread (5)
- In poor health and expired taking the waters (8)
- Sad beautiful woman reportedly making a bloomer (8)
- Recoil from a psychiatrist (6)
- Sounds like respiratory trouble in the chest (6)
- A winter break? (4)
- Roman road goes round southern pass (4)

Solutions Crossword 5297 Across: 1 Fewer, 4 Library, 8 Yet, 9 Inventory, 10 Address, 11 Hopes, 13 Travel, 15 Feline, 18 Ounce, 19 Clement, 21 Inanimate, 23 Irc, 24 Elapses, 25 Title Down: 1 Flypast, 2 Withdrawn, 3 Raise, 4 Lavish, 5 Banshee, 6 Ado, 7 Yo-yos, 12 Pricelist, 14 Eyelids, 16 Extreme, 17 Scraps, 18 Opine, 20 Event, 22 Ada

## OVER THE HEDGE by Michael Fry &amp; T Lewis



## CALVIN &amp; HOBBES by Bill Watterson



## MARVIN by Tom Armstrong



## SUDOKU 5485

## Difficulty Level 3s

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



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

## SOLUTION SUDOKU 5484



## DAY TODAY

BY PETER VIDAL

## ARIES (Mar 21 - Apr 20)

Continue to play for time and don't let anyone else force the pace. This is a very special moment for you as far as your personal creativity is concerned and the last thing you want to do is let anyone else dictate your movements for you, especially if they've made a mistake.

**LIBRA (Sep 24 - Oct 23)**  
The day seems to be divided into two halves, and you can swing to extremes either favouring self-indulgence or putting the emphasis on work. Certain people are convinced that you have a lazy streak, and now may be time to listen to them.

## TAURUS (Apr 21 - May 21)

You are now officially in a period of maximum domestic uncertainty. Let me tell you now that friction will only develop if you battle to keep things as they are. If you accept and even initiate change over the next two months, things could improve.

**SCORPIO (Oct 24 - Nov 23)**  
Don't complain if you have been disappointed financially. There will be plenty of chances to make up for it later on, perhaps within a few days. Actually, self-indulgence should be a priority, perhaps because it's when you're enjoying yourself that you come up with the answers.

## GEMINI (May 22 - June 21)

Get down to some serious work as soon as you can. By serious, I don't mean that it shouldn't be fun, but that anything you do now will be tied to your destiny. I'd also advise a spot of day-dreaming if required. You might think that this is wasting time, but it's not. You can generate new ideas.

**SAGITTARIUS (Nov 24 - Dec 22)**  
It's bound to be some time before you can fully recover from past disturbances, but, in almost exactly one week, you should be able to more than make up for one particular mistake. In fact, it's an astrological law that we learn from our mistakes.

## CAPRICORN (Dec 23 - Jan 20)

Others may make extravagant gestures, but you ought to be the one to call time on reckless financial adventures. Every single penny, cent, rupee or peseta you spend must be designed to earn two back in the future. You can't guarantee success, but you can do your best.

**CANCER (June 22 - July 23)**  
Once you've dealt with financial matters, probably no more than routine shopping, you'll be free to let your mind wander. Overseas contacts seem to be important, which means that a family member far away is waiting to hear from you. Plus, an adventure may come up.

## LEO (July 24 - Aug 23)

To be forewarned, as they say, is to be forearmed. It's therefore important to point out that even though you are entering a phase of unparalleled optimism, some of your hopes may be unrealistic. You must sort out what is possible from what is not.

**VIRGO (Aug 24 - Sep 23)**  
While one very important planet, Saturn, urges you to dig your heels in, this could be a risky strategy. For the next twelve weeks, compromise and total flexibility must be an essential part of your strategy. Follow the Jupitrian path, the way of hope and optimism.

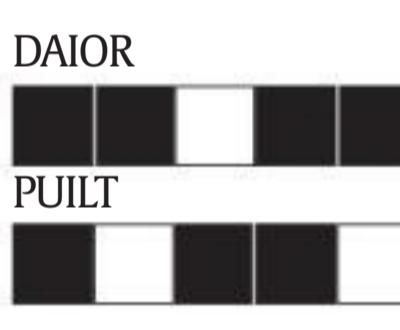
## PISCES (Feb 20 - Mar 20)

The following applies to your life over the next two months, so don't forget it: you are increasingly likely to feel exploited or undermined and will tend to blame other people, yet the cause, and hence the solution, lies with you. Once you've taken that on board then you'll be on the way to finding a solution.

**AQUARIUS (Jan 21 - Feb 19)**  
Slowly but surely, your confidence is starting to return. You should soon feel strong enough to make important arrangements and plot the next stage of a health and fitness programme. You also need to keep your mind in trim, so you might be seriously investigating a new interest.

## JUMBLE WORDS

Below are four jumbled words. Solve the jumbles to make proper words and move them to the respective squares below. Select the letters in the shaded squares and jumble them to get the answer for the given question.  
Boredom is the legitimate kingdom of the \_\_\_ - Virginia Woolf (13)



Answers: MUOT = OIL INDIA LIMITED, PUILT = PNB, HOOCPN = REC, ENYHHP = PNB

SOLUTION: MUOT = OIL INDIA LIMITED, PUILT = PNB, HOOCPN = REC, ENYHHP = PNB

## FOUNDATION STONE—POWERGRID

The foundation stone for POWERGRID Vishram Sadan at AIIMS Bilaspur was laid by JP Nadda, MP (RS) in presence of Dr. Mansukh L. Mandaviya, M/o Health & Family Welfare, Chemical & Fertilizers, AS Thakur, M/o I & B & Youth Affairs & Sports & Jairam Thakur, Leader of Opposition & Former CM, HP, RK Tyagi, CMD, POWERGRID, Dr. Y Dwivedi, Dir (Pers) POWERGRID, Dr. (Prof.) Vir Singh Negi, ED, AIIMS, Bilaspur were also present.

## MoU—OIL INDIA LIMITED

OIL signed a MoU with The Fertilisers & Chemicals Travancore Limited, a public sector company, recently at its Corporate Office, Noida. The MoU was executed by SK Saikia, GM (BD) on behalf of OIL and R Manikuttan, ED (Production Co-ordination) on behalf of FACT in presence of CMD, Directors of OIL, Director (Finance) of FACT and other senior officials of OIL and FACT.



## WORKSHOP—REC

REC hosted a workshop titled 'Integrated Digital Platform for Power Distribution Sector' at its Corporate Office, Gurugram on Thursday. The workshop was focused on highlighting the importance of the Integrated Web platform, primarily developed to operationalize the Revamped Distribution Sector Scheme & to familiarise with the usage of the platform to regularly update & monitor the progress under the scheme.



## MoU—PNB

PNB has entered into a significant partnership with IoTech World Aviation Private Ltd., by signing a MoU, for financing Agriculture Drones under Agriculture Infrastructure Fund scheme. The signing ceremony witnessed exchange of agreements between KS Rana (PNB GM-Agriculture Division) & Deepak Bhardwaj (Director - IoTechWorld Aviation Private Limited).



## AWARD—BANK OF BARODA

Bank of Baroda, Dehradun has awarded the Baroda Achievers Award to meritorious students of Govt. Doon Medical College, Dehradun. This award was presented to the meritorious students by Dhan Singh Rawat, Health Minister, Uttarakhand Govt., & Netra Mani, Regional Head of BoB. Ms. Sarah Saeed, Ms. Vartika Goyal, & Vikram Singh were honoured among the meritorious students.



## SAATE 2024—INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL SHOW

South Asia's leading travel show SATTE 2024, organized by Informa Markets in India was held at the India Expo Mart, Greater Noida. The three-day event was inaugurated by V. Vidyavathi, Secy. Tourism GoI, Alhasan Ali Aldabbagh, President Asia Pacific, Saudi Tourism Authority & Yogesh Mudras, MD of Informa Markets. SATTE 2024 theme was 'Inclusive & Sustainable Tourism', marking its 31st edition as a pivotal milestone in the global tourism industry.



## MEETING—HEMKUNT SAHIB TRUST

In a significant meeting held Chairman of Gurudwara Shri Hemkunt Sahib Management Trust, Narinder Jit Singh Bindra, met with Chief Secretary Smt Radha Raturi to discuss & finalize the schedule for the much-anticipated Shri Hemkunt Sahib Yatra 2024. After a thorough discussion, it has been decided that the Yatra will commence on 25th May 2024 & conclude on 10th October 2024.



## MoA—REC

REC, through its CSR arm - REC Foundation, has demonstrated unwavering support for the welfare of Ex-Servicemen & their dependents by making a contribution of Rs 15 Crs to the Armed Forces Flag Day Fund, which will be used for the education of 12,500 children of ex-servicemen. The commitment was sealed by way of a MoA signed by Smt. T Gupta, ED (CSR), REC & Commodore HP Singh, Secy, KSB, in New Delhi.



## CORPORATE BRIEFS

## AWARD—POWERGRID

Neelam Yadav, Manager (PR), POWERGRID has been conferred with the prestigious Media Federation of India Award for the 'Best Women Communicator of the Year' at 18th, Media Excellence Awards, 2024 held at New Delhi. This award presented by Media Federation of India as acknowledgement of her outstanding achievement in obtaining various PR strategic campaigns for awareness among stakeholders & masses, brand development, media relations & Creativity & writings for various media platforms. Furthermore, her academic journey had been remarkable, as evidenced by her receipt of a University Gold Medal for topping her Masters & Post Graduate Diploma in Mass Communication & Journalism. She has been recognized with numerous awards, including PRSI National Awards for her unwavering dedication to innovation & excellence in the Public Relations Field.



## CONFERENCE—GRID-INDIA

G015 is the association of the Very Large Power Grid Operators, which serves more than half of the world's electricity demand. The association was created in 2004 with a view that transmission grid & a resilient power system are key to energy transition. G015 is dedicated to high level exchanges among industry leaders & offers opportunity to address major strategic & technical issues affecting the safety, the reliability & the sustainability of power systems.



## MoU—POWERGRID, NR-I

POWERGRID, (Northern Region-I) signed a MoU on recently with The Central Institute of Petrochemical Engineering & Technology at RHQ, Faridabad Office for imparting skill development training programme for underprivileged/unemployed youth of the Society, at CIPET, Murtala, Haryana under CSR initiatives of POWERGRID. The Estimated Project cost is approx. Rs. 1.5 Crs . Powergrid, CSR Dept. has always been working in line with the nation's plan for developing skills opportunities, self-employment as well as development of entrepreneurs.



## THE EMBASSY OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

Recently the Russian Embassy in India hosted a reception on the occasion of Defender of the Fatherland Day which is celebrated on 23 February. The evening was graced with the presence of Air Vice Marshal of India Prashant Mohan as the Chief Guest. The event was attended by senior officials of the Indian government bodies, military attaches of friendly countries, representatives of the diplomatic corps, including ambassadors of the CIS member states, & Russian compatriots. The solemnity of the moment was added by the performance of the Indian Air Force Band that played Russian & Indian compositions.



## RTX'S COLLINS AEROSPACE INAUGURATES INDIA DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY CENTER

Collins Aerospace, an RTX business, has recently announced the inauguration of the India Digital Technology Center, designed to spearhead advancements in digital technology and innovation. The India Digital Technology Center, located in Bengaluru, is strategically positioned to play a pivotal role in Collins Aerospace's global innovation ecosystem, bringing value through digital initiatives across the globe. The center will specialize in enterprise resource planning, artificial intelligence & machine learning, data engineering & analytics & digital enablement of the product lifecycle. These capabilities set the center apart as a dynamic hub for digital transformation within the company.



## MOSCOW PRESENTS ITS TOURISM POTENTIAL AT THE SATTE 2024

Moscow Tourism is taking part in the largest international travel & tourism trade fair SATTE. The delegation was one of the largest at the event. It included representatives of the Moscow City Tourism Committee, the Made in Moscow project team, & other representatives of the city's tourism industry. Representatives of the Moscow City Tourism Committee took part in several business sessions & presented the capital's flagship projects like the cultural heritage, the tourism committee highlighted the Moscow Estates festival, which had already gained popularity among foreign tourists last summer & this winter. Moscow is among the world leaders in terms of the number of historical mansions. More than two thousand architectural monuments have been restored in Moscow over 12 years.



## ANNUAL SPORTS DAY—RITES

RITES Ltd. organised its Annual Sports Day 'Spardha' with enthusiasm and zeal at Tau Devi Lal Stadium, Gurugram, recently. The event, hosted by the RITES Sports Association, drew active participation from employees and their families.

**NTPC** has signed a Land Lease Agreement in order to realize the green energy & green hydrogen objectives of NTPC & the GoI's efforts towards energy transition. The agreement was signed on 20th Feb., 2024 between NTPC Green Energy Limited & Andhra Pradesh Industrial Infrastructure Corporation for development of "Integrated Green Hydrogen Hub" on 1200 acres land near Pudimadaka village of Atchutapuram Mandal, Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh. The Land Lease Deed was exchanged between Sivakumar VV, Chief General Manager, NGEL & Pravin Kumar, Vice-CMD, APIIC at Secretariat, Govt. of AP, Amaravati.

**NBC** announced its partnership in the development of the permanent campus of the esteemed National Institute of Technology, Sikkim. This monumental endeavour underscores NBC's commitment to fostering educational excellence and infrastructural development across the nation. The campus site is situated amidst the serene landscapes of Khamgongdong village located 45 kms away from Gangtok. The sprawling 100-acre campus will see the development in 50 acres as permanent campus of NIT Sikkim & serve as a beacon of innovation & academic brilliance.

**NTPC REL** at Chhattisgarh in Rajasthan

**Home comfort:**  
India continue to  
be chase masters

**33** India have never lost a Test chasing a target under 200 at home, extending their record to 33 Tests, with 30 wins and three draws.

**190** This is the first instance of India chasing down a 190-plus target successfully at home since August 2012 (262/5 v New Zealand, Bengaluru).

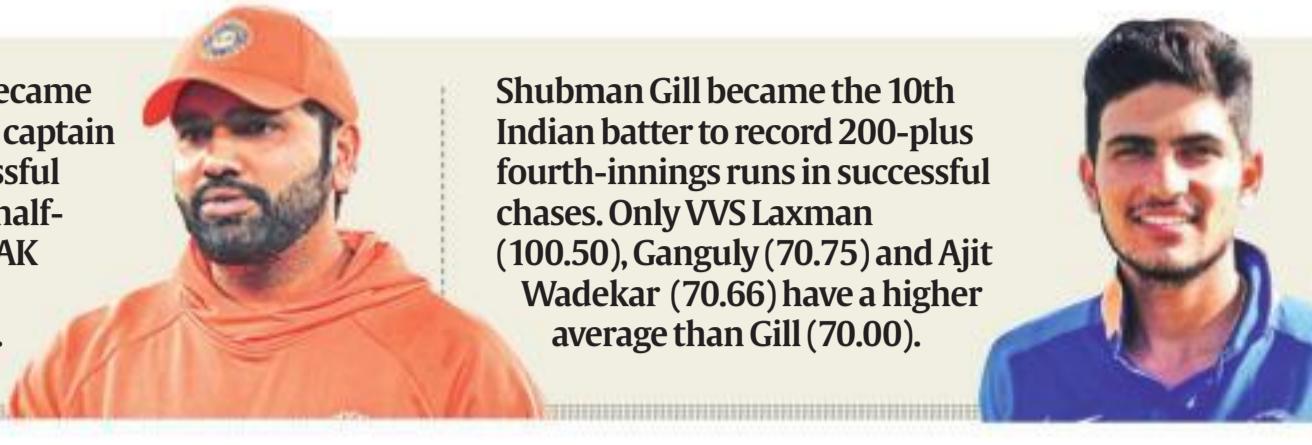
During this period, India have lost three matches chasing a 200-plus target at home (once v Australia, 2017 and twice against England in 2021 and 2024 respectively).

Rohit Sharma became the third Indian captain to score a successful fourth-innings half-century after MAK Pataudi and Sourav Ganguly.

Shubman Gill became the 10th Indian batter to record 200-plus fourth-innings runs in successful chases. Only VVS Laxman (100.50), Ganguly (70.75) and Ajit Wadekar (70.66) have a higher average than Gill (70.00).

## MURRAY DROPS RETIREMENT HINT

*Dubai:* Andy Murray hinted that this could be his last season after he recorded his 500th hardcourt win with a 4-6 7-6(5) 6-3 victory over Canada's Denis Shapovalov in the first round of the Dubai Tennis Championships on Monday. **REUTERS**



# THE KIDS ARE ALRIGHT

Pushed into a corner, Jurel and Gill keep their calm to lead an inexperienced Indian side to a famous series win as they take unassailable 3-1 lead

**SANDIP G**  
RANCHI, FEBRUARY 26

TURNING BACK for the double, Dhruv Jurel raised his bats and jumped in the air. His partner Shubman Gill roared in joy. He was just halfway through the second run. But he knew he would complete it and that India would wrap up the series 3-1 in Ranchi.

No one perhaps deserved to hit the winning run more than Dhruv Jurel, whose 90 and 39 not out are invaluable contributions to the five-wicket win. The first effort gave India a foothold in the match, the second finished the game, in the company of Shubman Gill, his maturity swelling manifold this series.

In the dressing room, their teammates, tense until an hour ago, heaved a sigh of relief. Rohit Sharma, his hands folded as though in a silent prayer, embraced his teammates. Coach Rahul Dravid, flashing a broad smile, kept applauding their effort. The rest would just barge into the ground to congratulate Gill and Jurel, whose 72-run stand defined the day, and completed India's 17th straight series triumph at home.

This seemed the sweetest of India's series wins in recent times. Without Virat Kohli and Mohammed Shami, a batting line-up in transition, a game down in the series, they fought back surviving several scares and mini heartbreaks.

Here on Monday, they found themselves 120 for 5 two balls into the second over after lunch. But with icy veins and steely nerves, Gill and Jurel steered India past the grenades and mines the pitch threw.

As the target drew closer, England's hopes withered. There was less chatter, less mid-pitch brainstorming. In desperate tones, they appealed for anything and everything.

Then, they stopped appealing altogether, as though the fate was irrevocable. The frontier that is India is daunting. It's for the dearth of talent or ideas that teams lose in India. It's because India are simply unbreakable at home.

A grand ambition lay in tatters for England. But the 3-1 scoreline betrays. England teased and tested India harder than most other teams that had landed on these vast and hostile shores dreaming of winning a series in the last decade. Perhaps, Steve Smith's Australia had come the closest. But inevitably, like sunrise and sunset, like sun and moon, India fight back.

Ben Stokes's brave men tried as best as they could to resist the unavoidable. They tried, they thrilled, they fought, but India remained unconquered, as it had to Steve Smith and Pat Cummins, Kane Williamson and Joe Root, Faf du Plessis and Hashim Amla. Only four England captains could brag about winning a series in India—only two among them are alive—and Stokes would not be the fifth.

The match, though, would not refuse to end without drama, an hour either side of lunch. It was progressing smoothly for India until Yashasvi Jaiswal perished before the drinks break in the first session. Like often, James Anderson provided the moment. He, standing at short third man, sprung his 41-year-old frame at the plung-



In only his second Test, Jurel rescued India in the first innings by scoring 90, and backed it up with a measured 39 on Monday.

Sportzpics/BCCI

## SCORECARD

### INDIA VS ENGLAND

JSCA STADIUM, RANCHI

Toss: England won, chose to bat

**ENGLAND 1ST INNINGS** 353

**INDIA 1ST INNINGS** 307

**ENGLAND 2ND INNINGS** 145

**INDIA 2ND INNINGS (O/N)** 40/0

R Sharma c Faoles b Hartley 55 (8lb, 5x4, 1x6)

Y Jaiswal c Anderson b Root 37 (44b, 5x4)

S Gill not out 52 (124b, 2x6)

R Patidar c Pope b Bashir 0 (6b)

R Jadeja c Bairstow b Bashir 4 (33b, 5x4)

S Khan c Pope b Bashir 0 (1b)

D Jurel not out 39 (77b, 2x4)

■ Extras (b 4, lb 1) 5

■ Total (61 overs) 192/5

Fall of wickets: 1-84 (Yashasvi Jaiswal, 17.3 ov),

2-99 (Rohit Sharma, 25.1 ov), 3-100 (Rajat Patidar, 26.2 ov), 4-120 (Ravindra Jadeja, 38.1 ov), 5-120 (Sarfraz Khan, 38.2 ov)

■ Bowling: J Root 7-0-26-1; T Hartley 25-2-70-1; S Bashir 26-4-79-3; J Anderson 3-12-12. India won by 5 wickets

ing catch, off Jaiswal's bat, to give England the first breakthrough of the morning. As content as they would have been to see the scorer of 655 runs stagger to the pavilion, India had already piled up 84 runs. England needed more such moments to ignite the flickers of hope.

But it seemed nothing more than a stray wicket against the run of play. The pitch was yet to throw a demon of deadly nature. Batting was hard but not torturous. Then it would all change. The first ball that really misbehaved came in the second over after the drinks break, Hartley's stock ball sneezed past his forward defensive push off Shubman Gill. The dropping voices picked up. A fuse of hope emerged. Sometimes, it takes just a ball to change perceptions, to move from being utterly confident to totally sceptical.

In his next over, in a single splendid note of bowling, Hartley transformed the mood of his colleagues, the crowd and the game. Rohit wandered out, as he often does. But this time he telegraphed his intentions prematurely—perhaps the Gill ball was playing in his mind, perhaps Jaiswal's departure had pressured him.

He struck off Jaiswal's bat, to give England

"A lot of challenges thrown at us but we responded and were quite composed. These guys want to be here, growing up in the domestic circuit, local club-cricket, and coming here. It's a big challenge, but the responses I get are encouraging. We have to give them the environment they want to be in, we can't just keep talking to them, they are very clear in what they want to do"

— ROHIT SHARMA,  
INDIA TEST CAPTAIN

This time, he was hastier, the feet not-so-twinkling. The ball, imparted with massive revs, deceived him in the air, dragged him into a nowhere zone and the turn invariably beat his off-balanced defensive push. Ben Foakes whipped off the bails in a flash and ran in glee.

Foakes needn't have stumped him, for

Rohit has nicked the ball ever-so-slightly and the 'keeper had pocketed the catch before initiating the stumping.

A run later, Rajat Patidar didn't prolong his ordeal further as he thrust his hard hands at a ball that spun hard and bounced to take the edge to Ollie Pope at short-leg. Test cricket has been unkind to him, rather it has exposed the glaring inadequacies of Patidar, his technique woefully short of Test standards.

A batsman raised on turners showed little aptitude in dealing with the spinning ball. Ravindra Jadeja and Shubman Gill rode India to safety till lunch.

Upon resumption, it all went awry for India. In the second over, Jadeja clipped a benign full toss from Shoaib Bashir to mid-wicket and walked back cursing himself. Sarfraz Khan, in a tribute to Patidar, pressed his bat blindly at a Bashir off-break that spun and bounced and feathered the ball to short-leg. Hard hands, leaden feet.

It was an hour of frenzy. But England could not defy the inevitability of India winning another series at home, as inescapable as day and night, the sun and moon.

## DEBUTANT REPORT CARD

With Virat Kohli, Mohammed Shami and KL Rahul out of action, here's how the four debutants fared in the ongoing series against England

### RAJAT PATIDAR IN VIZAG

With KL Rahul out injured, India handed a debut to the right-hander. In his maiden innings, he made a promising 32 but since then he hasn't been able to live up to the expectations. In the following five innings he has scores of 9, 5, 0, 17 & 0 with all pointing to Patidar going back to domestic fold. It would be a surprise if he gets to start in the fifth Test.

### SARFARAZ KHAN IN RAJKOT

For the last two years, every time his name was missing in the Test squad, there has been plenty of noise. And with Shreyas Iyer dropped, Sarfraz walked into the side and through the course of the Test vindicated his call-up. A counter-attacking 62 in the first was followed by an unbeaten 68 in the second as a promising career took off.

### DHRUV JUREL IN RAJKOT

With KS Bharat struggling and the batting line-up thin on runs, India turned to Jurel.

Coming in at 8, he started off with 46, looking assured in the middle. And at Ranchi, he rescued India from 177-7 to 307 with 90 valuable runs. His temperament stood out, and his unbeaten 39 under pressure in the chase on Day 4 ensured Jurel would be the Player of the Match.

### AKASH DEEP IN RANCHI

For a side that is already without Shami, resting Jasprit Bumrah for the Test meant they were thin on experience on the pace bowling front. With Mukesh Kumar ineffective, in walked Akash, who didn't waste any time to land the punches. On the first morning of the fourth Test, he accounted for the in-form England top-order.

# How Gill rediscovered himself in time to save his spot & win the series

**SANDIP G**  
RANCHI, FEBRUARY 26

AFTER THE bear-hugs and high-fives, Shubman Gill retreated to a quiet corner on the dressing room balcony, scrambled on a chair and wrapped his face in his arms. It might have been a moment when he was re-living his own comeback story, from the edge of being shown the way out after failures in the first three outings before rediscovering himself with a hundred, 91 and the unbeaten 52 on Monday. It was the series in which he lost and found himself, a series and a string of innings that he would revisit in difficult times in the future, seek answers and courage from, and hold close to his heart for a long time.

All three aforementioned innings were valuable, all three had distinct qualities and meanings. But this one, the lowest score among the three, could be the most special to Gill. For this was the kind of setting he is predisposed to fail in; that would pose questions not just to his technique and temper, but his ambition and mettle, one that would confirm his desire and determination to be a great of the game.

The challenges were unique—a wearing



After a lean patch, Shubman Gill returned to form with a hundred, 91, and an

unbeaten 52 on Monday. Sportzpics/BCCI

When Shoaib Bashir served him a bit of width, he just opened the bat face and dabbed the ball through third-man for three runs. Bashir was the biggest challenge, but Gill forensically dissected him.

In Dhruv Jurel's company, he kept the chase simple. "You have to see the situation

and play accordingly—they were bowling well and protecting the boundaries, also not giving maidens and keep picking the singles (was the mindset). I just told him (Jurel), 'you batted beautifully in the first innings' and to have the same mindset, try to use the feet to negate the off-spinner. The way he came down and played was beautiful," Gill said.

The target in sight, he heaved two sixes and wrapped up the chase without any drama. It could be an innings that would soon be forgotten, but could be an innings that he keeps close to his heart. An innings that reaffirmed that he has the heart and hunger to be a batting great. And in the end, he deserved his quiet moment in the corner of the dressing room to reflect on a coming-of-age-on-a-turner knock.

weight-transfer was considerably smoother. The hard slog in the nets is paying off.

Sometimes, he defended with a semi-vertical bat. A short-arm defensive shot, one could call. He used feet more than he usually

does. "In the first innings, the ball was not turning much. So I didn't use my feet. In the second innings, I decided to take the LBW out of the equation by using my feet," he told the broadcasters.

It was a battle between Gill and Gill. He

## BRIEFLY

FIBA Asia Qualifiers:  
India lose to Iran

New Delhi: India put up a strong show against 27th-ranked Iran but went down 53-86 in their Group E match of the ongoing FIBA Asia Cup qualifiers, on Monday. The 81st-ranked India made an impressive start trying to counter the visitors with fast-paced runs, counteracting over 40 per cent of their two-pointers. Yet, they struggled on the rebounds and trailed 32-42 at half-time. Iran players took their time to find rhythm but once they did, they used their superior physicality to get past the Indian defence. India head coach Veselin Matic said, "We need more experience. We have some gap now before the next qualifier in November, and the national team will be participating in club championship and multiple other exposure trips." PTI

## Asian Cycling: India finish with 18 medals

New Delhi: India wrapped up its campaign at the Asian Track Cycling Championships with an impressive haul of nine gold, six silver and three bronze, though the para athletes won the bulk of the country's medals, here on Monday. Para cyclists contributed eight gold and four silver to the Indian medal tally. Malaysia topped the medal tally with 19 gold, 11 silver and 7 bronze, followed by Japan with 17 gold, 5 silver and 2 bronze. Korea finished with 9 gold, 8 silver and 6 bronze. On the final day of the championships, India's Harshita Jakhar and Dhanyadha JP won a bronze medal in the Madison event of junior women's category. PTI

## Everton win appeal to reduce deduction

Liverpool: Everton have had their points deduction for a breach of the Premier League's profitability and sustainability rules reduced to six points from 10, the Premier League said. Everton were docked points in November after being found to have breached profitability and sustainability rules (PSRs) relating to losses. "An independent Appeal Board has concluded that the sanction for Everton FC's breach of the Premier League's Profitability and Sustainability Rules (PSRs), for the period ending Season 2021/22, will be an immediate six-point deduction," the Premier League said in a statement. REUTERS

## Tamore steps up for Mumbai

Makeshift opener helps hosts to a 415-run lead, likely semi-final spot over Baroda

DEVENDRA PANDEY  
MUMBAI, FEBRUARY 26

AS THE Mumbai's second innings against Baroda was about to resume, the dressing room was in two minds about who should open after Prithvi Shaw suffered a bruise on his nails while taking a catch. It was indeed Shaw who recommended Hardik Tamore's name to face the new ball. The latter was a regular opener in junior cricket, but had to bat lower down the order for the senior side.

He hadn't had a great season so far, but came to the party with a hundred as Mumbai put one foot in the Ranji Trophy semi-finals courtesy a 415-run win with one second-innings wicket in hand going into the final day.

"Captain (Ajinkya Rahane) and coach asked me whether I will be able to open, especially after fielding for more than 110 overs. I said yes. I didn't want to let go of the opportunity. After all, I was an opener before," Tamore said.

Coming into this game, he had a highest score of 22 against Assam in three Ranji Trophy games. Time was running out and so was the patience in the Mumbai dressing room.

He had scored a 248-ball 57 in the first innings which had boosted his confidence but Tamore knew if he had to cement his place in the side, he needed big runs, and couldn't say no to the offer to open the innings.

By the end of the fourth day of the quarter-final against Baroda, Tamore had repaid the team's faith. He hit 114 as Mumbai all but secured a semi-final spot. His innings, along with Shaw's 87 off 93 balls, have put Mumbai in the driver's seat.

Mumbai started the day on 21 for 1 and lost nightwatchman Mohit Avasthi soon. Musheer Khan and Tamore ensured that Mumbai didn't suffer more immediate damage before left-arm spinner Bhargav Bhatt got rid of Khan.

It was Shaw and Tamore, who have played together since their under-14 days, who cemented Mumbai's position. They added 124 runs for the fourth wicket. Shaw, especially, was tough to handle for Baroda bowlers. He managed to find gaps at will and scored at a pace which caused Baroda to go on the back-foot. As long as he was around, the Mumbai dressing room knew that runs would come at a decent pace.

Bhatt, who had a seven-wicket haul in the first innings, snared as many in the second as well, and had a plan for Shaw. He bowled slowly, gave the ball air and let it turn after landing. He knew Shaw would try to play



After an injury to Prithvi Shaw, Hardik Tamore was asked to open Mumbai's innings where he ended up scoring a vital ton. Sportzpics/BCCI



across the line and the batsman fell into the trap, Baroda skipper Vishnu Solanki taking a running catch. Bhatt would have got Rahane on the first ball had Shashwat Rawat managed to take one low to his left.

But it didn't matter. Three balls later, Rahane went back to bat but the ball eluded the bat to hit the timber, as the former India captain's lack of runs continued. He has had only one fifty in the last seven Ranji games.

Shams Mulani hung around with Tamore, before the latter was trapped in front by Mahesh Pitiya and five overs later Suryansh Shedge was dismissed by Bhatt.

Shardul Thakur slammed a four over mid-on but was caught going for a repeat. Mulani, who batted beautifully for his 54, was the last wicket to fall on the day.

**BRIEF SCORES:** Mumbai 384 & 379 for 9 (Hardik Tamore 114, Prithvi Shaw 87, Shams Mulani 54; Bhargav Bhatt 7 for 142) vs Baroda 348.

## Karnataka pacers shine

**PTI ADDS:** Karnataka batsmen set up a fascinating final day with a determined effort after pacers Vidwath Kaverappa and Vysakh Vijaykumar gave them a foothold against Vidarbha with splendid spells on the fourth day of their Ranji Trophy quarterfinals match here on Monday.

Chasing a massive 371 to win, Karnataka were 103 for one at close with captain Mayank Agarwal (61) and KV Anil (1) at the crease. The visitors further need 268 runs on Tuesday for a remarkable victory.

**BRIEF SCORES:** Vidarbha 460 & 196 all out in 57.2 overs (Dhruv Shorey 57, Karun Nair 34; Vidwath Kaverappa 6/61, Vysakh Vijaykumar 4/81) vs Karnataka 286 & 103/1 in 26 overs (Mayank Agarwal 61 bat, R Samarth 40)

## Vihari says he will 'never play for Andhra again' due to political interference

LALITH KALIDAS  
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 26

OUT OF favour India Test player Hanuma Vihari has announced he "will never play for Andhra again". In an Instagram post, on the day Andhra's Ranji Trophy campaign ended with a close loss to Madhya Pradesh, Vihari blamed political interference in team selection for his decision. Within hours, his social media outburst would snowball into a controversy with the entire Andhra squad backing Vihari and the son of a local politician, who was part of the team earlier in the season, alleging him of using "vulgar language".

At the centre of the Andhra dressing room drama is a chat that Vihari, skipper back then, had with the player during the first game against Bengal. In the post, Vihari said, "I was the captain in the first game against Bengal, during that game I shouted at the 17th player and he complained to his dad (who is a politician), his dad in return asked the Association to take action against me. Although, we chased 410 against last year's finalists Bengal I was asked to resign from captaincy without any fault of mine."

The Andhra Cricket Association (ACA) denied Vihari's claims. In a statement, the ACA said: "In January 2024, following the first Ranji Trophy game, an email from the Chairman of the Senior Selection Committee proposed a new captain due to Vihari's status as an Indian prospect affecting his season-long availability. Vihari, in response, expressed appreciation for the decision, leading to Ricky Bhui being announced as the new captain."

The associated added it would conduct a "thorough inquiry into all the complaints" before deciding on the further course of action.

Though Vihari didn't make the 17th player's name public, Andhra wicket-keeper batter KN Prudhviraj, a cricketer yet to make his first-class debut, responded. "I am that guy you are searching in that comment box. Whatever you guys heard is absolutely false, no one is higher than the game and my self-respect is much bigger than anything. Personal attacks and vulgar language is unacceptable in any platform. Everyone in the team knows what has happened that day. Play this sympathetic games, however you want," wrote Prudhviraj, whose father is Kuntrapakam Narsimha, a YSRCP politician.

One of the Andhra squad players, on the condition of anonymity, gave details about the day Vihari gave Prudhviraj a dressing down during the game against Bengal. "We had conceded over 100 runs in the first session and the

I was the captain in the first game against Bengal, during that game I shouted at the 17th player and he complained to his dad (who is a politician), his dad in return asked the Association to take action against me."

HANUMA VIHARI  
ON WHAT STARTED THE CONTROVERSY

entire team was distraught. I did not see what exactly happened, but apparently, Vihari shouted at Prudhviraj when he got back into the dressing room," he said.

"He was the 17th member of the Ranji squad, and the association secretary (Gopinath Reddy) had initially wanted Vihari and the selectors to include him in the 15 as he is a wicket-keeper and could substitute for Ricky Bhui if he was injured. Vihari did not like interference in team selection. It was just a typical Telugu expletive. There was nothing casteist or anything on those lines from Vihari."

Following the incident, Vihari, it is learnt, was put under pressure to explain his words. "Vihari was asked to hand an apology to the player. However, he refused, and that aggravated the situation," the player, who was part of Andhra's quarter-final XI said.

Vihari then stepped down as captain. It is unlikely that Vihari will represent Andhra again. The entire squad of 15 that was part of Andhra's last Ranji game of the season threw their weight behind Vihari, saying they wanted him as their captain. In a letter addressed to the president, secretary and CEO of the associations - posted by Vihari on Instagram - they wrote: "A complaint has been issued by a fellow teammate in the Ranji squad that Vihari has used foul language and has approached him aggressively, but the truth is he has not approached him aggressively and this sort of language has been a very common thing in our team atmosphere."

Ahead of the 2023-24 season, Vihari had expressed his desire for a switch to Madhya Pradesh. However, he was denied an NOC by the Andhra Association, and Vihari decided to stay on as captain for another season.

**BRIEF SCORES:** Madhya Pradesh 234 & 107 beat Andhra 172 & 165 in 69.2 overs (Hanuma Vihari 55; Anubhav Agarwal 6/52) by 4 runs.

## Shafali, Lanning smash fifties in thumping win for Capitals

VINAYAK MOHANARANGAN  
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 26



Shafali Verma steered the Delhi Capitals chase, scoring 64 runs off 43 balls in the victory. Sportzpics

## Klopp puts faith in kids to win 'most special' trophy of career

REUTERS  
LONDON, FEBRUARY 26

THE OLD saying that you can't win anything with kids was thrown out of the window on Sunday as Juergen Klopp put his trust in a host of youngsters who repaid his faith in spades as Liverpool beat Chelsea 1-0 after extra time to lift the League Cup.

Klopp, facing an injury crisis so severe it threatened to derail Sunday's plans at Wembley, turned to a group of young players with barely a handful of first team appearances between them to dig him out of a hole.

As the game edged towards extra time with Chelsea on top, a flagging Liverpool were in need of an injection of energy to wrestle momentum back in their favour.

The Liverpool manager brought on 19-year-olds James McConnell and Bobby Clark and Jayden Danks, 18, before also throwing on 21-year-old Jarell Quansah off the bench. All four looked calm on the ball and unruffled by the occasion as Liverpool found the decisive breakthrough in extra time when Virgil van Dijk headed the winner in the 118th minute.

"I got told outside that you don't win trophies with kids. Write it new. In my more than 20 years (as a manager), this is easily the most special trophy I have ever won," Klopp told reporters. "Sometimes I get asked if I am proud of this or that, I wish I could pride more often, but I was proud of absolutely everything today. Seeing the faces of the kids after the game, Jayden Danks, can you create stories in football that nobody would ever forget - this tonight if you find the same story with academy players coming on against a top, top side, and winning it, that's how we do it."

The Liverpool manager had already started the game with 20-year-olds Conor Bradley and Harvey Elliott in a lineup that was largely dictated by the players they had missing.

## SCORELINE

Chelsea		Liverpool
0		1
Virgil Van Dijk 118'		

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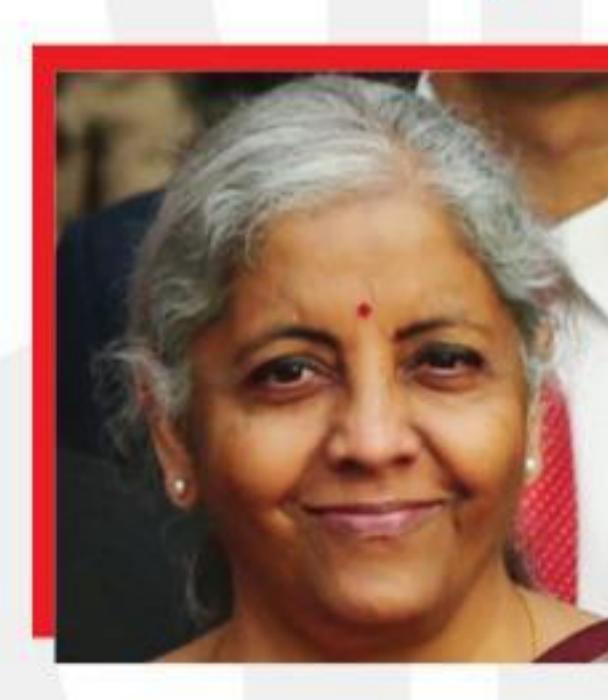
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