



Government of Assam

# SCALING UP INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT IN ASSAM

Inauguration and Foundation Stone Laying  
Of  
Infrastructure Projects Worth

## ₹11,600 crore

Chief Guest

### Shri Narendra Modi

Hon'ble Prime Minister



### Project Highlights

#### INAUGURATIONS



**Four Laning of NH**  
from Biswanath Chariali to Gohpur

**₹ 1,451 cr**

Implemented by NHIDCL, GoI, the four lane road improves connectivity to Itanagar from Tezpur by providing an alternative route



**Four Laning of NH**  
from Dolabari to Jamuguri

**₹ 592 cr**

Implemented by NHIDCL, GoI, the new four lane road reduces traffic congestion in Tezpur town and improves the standard of highways in the North Bank region of Assam

#### FOUNDATION STONE LAYING



**Maa Kamakhya Access Corridor (Divyalok Pariyojana)**

To provide all-weather pedestrian connectivity and world class amenities for pilgrims

**₹498 cr**

Govt. of India Scheme under PM-DevINE

Infrastructure development of Gauhati Medical College and Hospital

To ensure better healthcare facilities with state-of-the-art infrastructure

**₹3,250 cr**

Govt. of Assam Project

**Upgradation of 43 roads including 38 bridges**

It will revolutionize Assam's road network so that no village is left unconnected

**₹3,444 cr**

Govt. of Assam Project



**Unity Mall**

A one-stop platform to showcase products and flavours of all states of India and all districts of Assam

**₹297 cr**

Govt. of India & Govt. of Assam Project



**Karimganj Medical College**

To provide better healthcare facilities to the region

**₹578 cr**

Govt. of Assam Project



**Widening of road connecting LGB International Airport, Guwahati**

To reduce traffic congestion by increasing the number of lanes

**₹358 cr**

Govt. of India & Govt. of Assam Project



**Chandrapur Stadium**

To provide international standard facilities with AstroTurf football stadium for emerging sports talents

**₹300 cr**

Govt. of Assam Project



**Upgradation of Nehru Sports Stadium**

To provide sports enthusiasts a world-class FIFA standard football stadium

Govt. of Assam Project

**₹832cr**



# THE WORLD

TOP OF THE  
WORLD



Malaysia ex-Prime Minister Najib Razak

**MALAYSIA**  
Ex-PM Razak's sentence in graft case halved

*Kuala Lumpur:* Malaysia's Pardons Board said Friday it has reduced ex-Prime Minister Najib Razak's 12-year jail sentence by half and sharply cut the fine imposed after he was convicted in a corruption case linked to the theft of billions of dollars from state coffers. With the sentence commuted, Najib will be freed by August 23, 2028, the board said in a statement. The board also cut Najib's 210 million ringgit (USD 44.5 million) fine to 50 million ringgit. It is unclear if Najib is still eligible for additional time off for good behavior. If so, he could be out as early as August 2026. AP

**SOUTH AFRICA**  
Poll body adds record number voters from jails

*Pretoria:* South African election officials have visited prisons across the country as part of an ambitious project to register at least 100,000 inmates to vote in this year's national election. The country's constitution guarantees every adult citizen the right to vote — meaning there are no restrictions on prisoners taking part in elections, a stark contrast to most other African nations. The date for the vote has not yet been announced, but it's expected to be held between May and August. AP

**UNITED KINGDOM**  
2 British Indians nominated for RPS awards

*London:* Two promising British Indian musicians are among 19 individual performers and composers shortlisted for this year's prestigious Royal Philharmonic Society (RPS) Awards in the UK. Billed by The Sunday Times as the "biggest night in UK classical music", the awards shine a light on brilliant musical individuals, groups, and initiatives inspiring communities nationwide. Alpesh Chauhan, Music Director of Birmingham Opera Company has been nominated in the Conductor category, and sitar player Jasdeep Singh Degun is in the Instrumentalist Award and the Large-Scale Composition Award categories. PTI

**KENYA**  
Massive fire set off by gas blast kills at least 3

*Nairobi:* A truck loaded with liquid petroleum gas cylinders exploded in a depot in the Kenyan capital and set off a late-night inferno that rapidly spread and burned homes and warehouses, killing at least three people and injuring 280, officials said Friday. The death toll was expected to rise. At least 24 people were critically injured, the Kenya Red Cross said, after a huge fireball erupted from the gas depot. Some gas cylinders were thrown hundreds of metres. AP

**EGYPT BORDER CITY PRESSURE COOKER OF DESPAIR, SAYS UN AGENCY**

## Gazans fear assault on last refuge as Israel shifts focus of offensive to Rafah

Mediators wait for response from Hamas on truce, hostage deal

REUTERS  
GAZA, FEBRUARY 2

ISRAELI FORCES shelled the outskirts of the last refuge on the southern edge of the Gaza Strip on Friday, where the displaced, penned against the border fence in their hundreds of thousands, said they feared a new assault with nowhere left to flee.

Tens of thousands more have arrived in recent days, carrying belongings in their arms and pulling children on carts, since Israeli forces launched one of the biggest assaults of the war last week to capture Khan Younis.

If the Israeli tanks keep coming, "we will be left with two choices: stay and die or climb the walls into Egypt," said Emad. "Most of Gaza's population are in Rafah. If the tanks storm in, it will be a massacre like never before during this war."

Israeli Defence Minister Yoav Gallant said late on Thursday that troops would now turn to Rafah.

The UN humanitarian office on Friday voiced concern over Rafah, describing the border town as a "pressure cooker of despair". "Rafah is a pressure cooker of despair, and we fear for what comes next," they said.

Meanwhile, mediators are waiting for a response from Hamas to a proposal drafted last week for the first long ceasefire.



Displaced Palestinians at food distribution camp amid heavy shortage of supplies in Rafah on Friday. AP

**EXPLAINED**  
**E** Rafah, tiny city of 1.9 million people

DR RIK Peeperkorn, WHO representative said Rafah used to be a town of 200,000 people. Now, the war has caused displacement of about 1.9 million of Gaza's 2.3 million people into Rafah, who live in buildings or sleeping in the streets without basic infrastructure or adequate supplies.

## Iranian Guards adviser killed in Syria; Iraqi group says will attack US forces

REUTERS  
DUBAI, FEBRUARY 2

AN IRANIAN Revolutionary Guards adviser in Damascus was killed on Friday in an Israeli missile strike that targeted a southern district of the Syrian capital, Iranian news sites reported.

Earlier, Syria's state news agency SANA, citing a Syrian military source, said the country's military had downed a number

of Israeli missiles launched from the Golan Heights at southern Damascus.

Iranian news sites identified the dead man as Saeid Alidadi. They did not give his rank.

Meanwhile, the Iran-backed Iraqi armed group Nujaba said on Friday it will continue launching attacks on US forces in the region until the Gaza war ends and US forces exit Iraq, days after another major Iran-backed group said it was suspending such attacks.

### FRESH U.S. SANCTIONS ON IRAN ARMS, OFFICIALS

Washington: The United States on Friday imposed sanctions targeting Iran's ballistic missile and drone procurement programs as well as officials it said were involved in hacking U.S. infrastructure, as Washington looks to increase pressure on Tehran. REUTERS

**TENSION HIGHLIGHTS CHALLENGES AHEAD**

## Biden meets Michigan workers but avoids Arab-Americans who oppose his Gaza policy

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
WARREN, FEBRUARY 2



Biden with supporters at Warren on Thursday. AP

PRESIDENT JOE Biden chatted with a friendly union crowd inside a United Auto Workers hall in Michigan Thursday as demonstrators held back by police with riot shields voiced their anger at the president's support for Israel in its war with Hamas.

The tension highlighted the challenges ahead for Biden in holding on to this critical battleground state in November.

Biden's visit with autoworkers ahead of the state's Democratic primary came just days after union President Shawn Fain announced their endorsement of him.

However, Biden's Michigan schedule did not include any meetings with Arab Americans, adding to increasing frustration over his support of Israel in its war with Hamas.

"Why not have a meaningful conversation for how you change

**RACE FOR THE WHITE HOUSE**

course with a community that has first-hand accounts of what it's like to live... where your decision-making is unfolding?" said Abdullah Hammoud, mayor, Dearborn, one of the largest Arab American communities in the nation.

Despite White House offering no details about Biden's planned meeting, close to 200 demonstrators were waiting for Biden near the UAW Region 1 building in Warren ahead of his event there.

The president's motorcade bypassed them using side streets.

Greek university students clash with riot police next to the parliament building, during a demonstration against a proposed bill which opens the way for the operation of private universities, in Athens on Friday. Reuters

## 'Open warfare': Philippines alliance between Marcos, Duterte crumbles

REUTERS  
MANILA, FEBRUARY 2

THE ALLIANCE between Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr and his predecessor Rodrigo Duterte disintegrated this week when they accused each other of using drugs — a rift that could threaten Marcos's reform agenda and risk fuelling instability.

The alliance that swept Marcos and Duterte's daughter, Sara, into power in 2022, was al-

ways expected to collapse, but analysts are surprised at its pace.



Sara Duterte and Ferdinand Marcos Jr in Manila in 2022

"It will be an open warfare this

year," said Ronald Llamas, a former presidential adviser, referring to mid-term elections in 2025 to choose half the Senate.

Sebastian Duterte, the former president's son and mayor of Davao city, called on Marcos to resign over his pro-US foreign policy, which he said "endangers lives of innocent Filipinos". Marcos was quick to play down tensions, saying that the coalition was intact.

There was no response on requests for comments from Marcos' office and the Dutertes.

"Russia made no immediate comment on the Ivanovets.

**ONLINE CRITICS LIKEN INITIATIVE TO 'STRAIGHTEN TOWER OF PISA'; PYRAMID WAS BUILT TO HOUSE KING MENKAURE'S TOMB**

## Plan to resurface a Giza pyramid in granite sparks heated debate

JULIA HALPERIN  
FEBRUARY 2

WHEN EGYPTIAN authorities released a video last week describing plans to resurface the Pyramid of Menkaure, the smallest of Giza's three main pyramids, with the granite blocks that once clad part of its exterior, the initial reaction was swift — and harsh.

Some archaeologists criticized the idea. An online comment that was widely picked up by news organizations likened it to trying to "straighten the Tower of Pisa." Others worried that covering the familiar limestone walls of pyramid with new cladding would have the effect of turning



Secretary-general of Egypt's Supreme Council of Antiquities, Mostafa Waziri, called it "the project of the century". NYT

**CHARGES OVER PROTEST AT OIL CONFERENCE**

### LONDON COURT AQUIT Greta Thunberg

A JUDGE on Friday acquitted climate activist Greta Thunberg of a charge that she had refused to leave a protest that blocked the entrance to a major oil and gas industry conference in London last year. Thunberg was acquitted along with four other defendants. AP

## Blasts, grenade attacks rock Pak's Balochistan ahead of Feb 8 elections

Police stations targeted a day after poll body holds security meeting

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
ISLAMABAD, FEBRUARY 2

AS AUTHORITIES in Pakistan scrambled to keep peace ahead of next week's general elections, the country's restive Balochistan province was rattled with at least 10 bomb and grenade attacks on Thursday, resulting in the death of one person.

Several police stations and deputy commissioners' offices were targeted in the attacks in which six persons, including a police officer and a jail warden, were injured, the Dawn newspaper reported. Pakistan will go to polls on February 8.

"At least 10 bomb and grenade attacks happened across Balochistan, including provincial capital Quetta," the senior official told the paper.

A bomb, placed along a footpath on the China-Pakistan Economic Cooperation (CPEC) road in the Spinney area of Quetta, went off, killing a passerby, according to Quetta SSP (operations) Jawad Tariq.

Hospital officials said the victim's body was mutilated due to his proximity to the bomb at the time of the blast.

Unknown attackers hurled a hand grenade at the Shaktoli police station, which exploded in the courtyard. The attack damaged the station's building and some vehicles in the parking area.

### U.S. SHARED SUSPICION OF BIN LADEN HIDING IN PAK IN 2008: GILANI

*Islamabad:* Former Pakistani Prime Minister Yusuf Raza Gilani has said that ex-US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice had shared her apprehensions with his government that Osama bin Laden was hiding in the country in 2008, much before US commandos killed him in Abbottabad in 2011. "Condoleezza Rice had visited Pakistan and her apprehensions were that he was in Pakistan," Gilani told Geo News in an interview on Thursday. PTI

The attacks came as the Election Commission of Pakistan on Thursday held a high-level meeting to discuss the security situation in Balochistan and Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa.

## MISSILE-ARMED IVANOVET SUNK, SAYS KYIV

### Ukraine's sea drones sank Russian warship, say military officials

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
KYIV, FEBRUARY 2

UKRAINE CLAIMED Thursday it used sea drones to sink a small Russian warship in the Black Sea.

Ukraine's military intelligence agency, known by its Ukrainian acronym GUR, published a video that it said showed naval drones assaulting the Russian missile-armed corvette Ivanovets on Wednesday night.

The footage released on GUR's social media purports to show multiple naval drones crashing into a vessel and exploding. According to GUR, the ship costing \$60 million-\$70 million was on patrol on Lake Donuzlav in western Crimea, when a GUR special unit struck it. The lake has been more of a bay since 1961, when a channel connecting it to the Black Sea was dug out. The GUR footage showed the ship was sinking.

Disinformation has been part of the grinding war, which marks its second anniversary on February 24, and it was not possible to independently verify either side's claims.

Russia made no immediate comment on the Ivanovets.

### RUSSIA NOT HANDING OVER BODIES OF PLANE CRASH VICTIMS: KYIV

*Kyiv:* A Kyiv official said that the country has repeatedly asked Russia to hand over the bodies of scores of prisoners of war who Moscow claimed were killed in the downing of a Russian military transport plane by Ukrainian forces. Andrii Yusov, Ukraine's military intelligence spokesman said Kyiv urged Moscow to hand over bodies of those who died in the January 24 crash, but it refused to do so. AP

### ICJ: Kyiv genocide plea can be ruled on

The United Nations' top court said Friday it has jurisdiction to rule on a request by Ukraine for a declaration that Kyiv is not responsible for genocide.

The ICJ said it did not have jurisdiction in two other aspects of the case: claims that Russia's invasion violated the 1948 genocide convention and that Moscow's recognition of two breakaway republics in east Ukraine amounted to a breach of the convention.

and the blocks on the ground is very useful," she said. If the team were to put the fallen blocks back in place in a way that is reversible,

The Pyramid of Menkaure was built to house the tomb of King Menkaure, who ruled Egypt more than 4,000 years ago. Scholars believe the pyramid was never completed after the king's death.

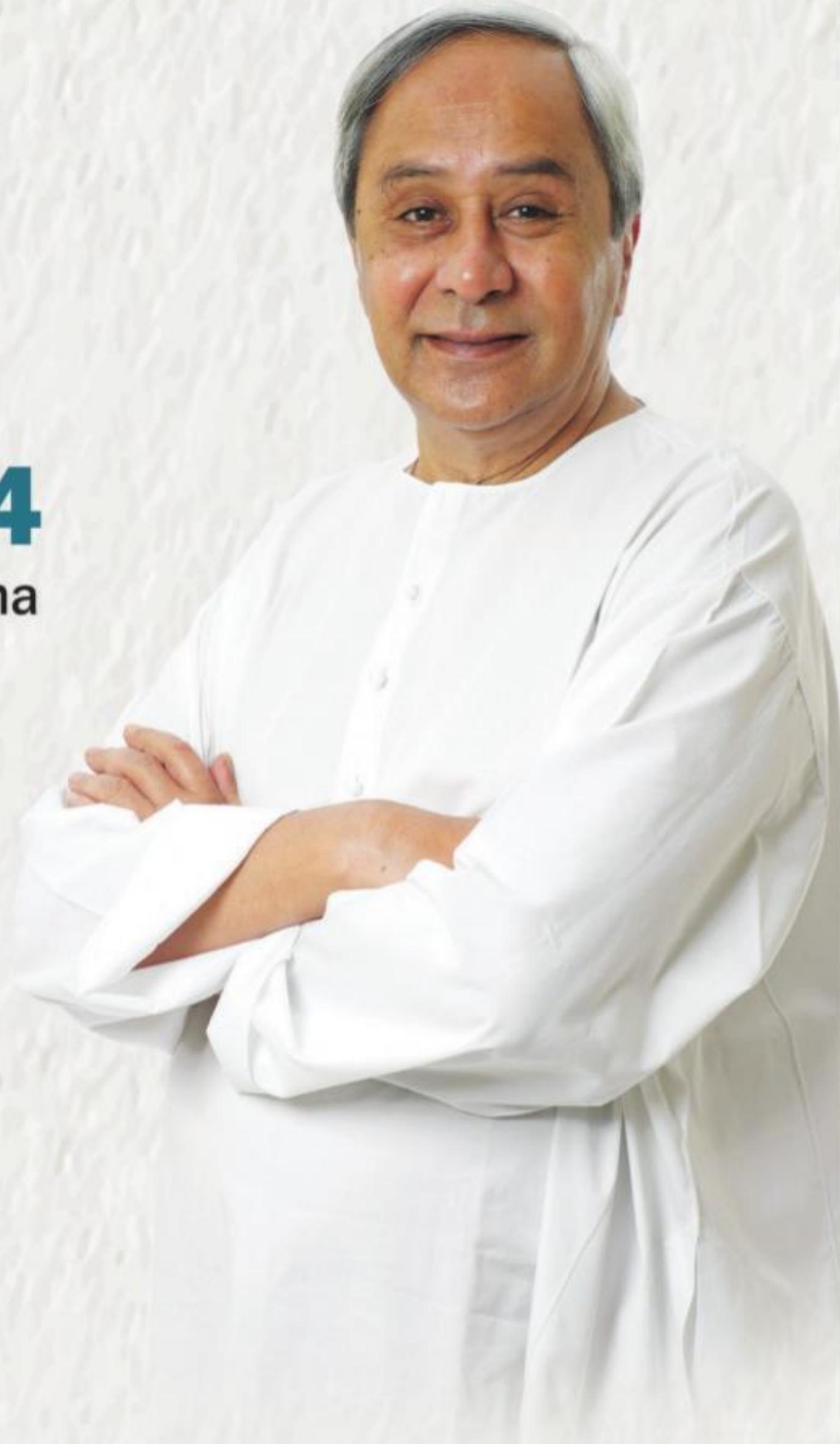
Over centuries, many granite stones fell off or removed from the site, according to Morgan Moroney, assistant curator of Egyptian, classical and ancient Near Eastern art at New York City's Brooklyn Museum. Salima Ikram, the head of the Egyptology unit at the American University in Cairo, is cautiously optimistic. "Scanning and documenting the pyramid

NYT



## FIRST WORLD ODIA LANGUAGE CONFERENCE 2024

3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> February | Bhubaneswar, Odisha



Grand Inauguration by  
**Shri Naveen Patnaik**  
Hon'ble Chief Minister of Odisha

February 3<sup>rd</sup>, 11 AM  
Janata Maidan, Bhubaneswar



### Highlights of the Conference

- Inaugural & Concluding Events
- Conference Rooms named after Five Eminent Poets of Odisha
- Diverse Academic Sessions: 16 Thought-Provoking Topics
- Global Perspectives: Esteemed International Scholars in Attendance
- Literary Confluence: A Gathering of Hundreds of Brilliant Minds
- Tribute to Eminent Litterateurs and Writers
- Thematic Exhibitions

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ଭାଷା ହିଁ ଭବିଷ୍ୟତ

## EXPLAINED ECONOMICS

# Multidimensional poverty: meaning, numbers

25 cr Indians have been raised from poverty since 2013-14, says Govt. MPI uses indicators covering three main areas: health, education, and standard of living

## UDIT MISRA

NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 2

IN HER Interim Budget speech, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said 25 crore Indians had been pulled out of poverty over the past decade. "With the pursuit of 'Sabka Saath' in these 10 years, the Government has assisted 25 crore people to get freedom from multidimensional poverty," she said.

## What is the basis for this assessment?

This number appeared in a discussion paper, *Multidimensional Poverty in India Since 2005-06*, published by NITI Aayog on Jan 15.

The paper, written by Ramesh Chand, Member, NITI Aayog, and Yogesh Suri, Senior Adviser, NITI Aayog, with technical inputs from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Oxford Policy and Human Development Initiative (OPHI), says:

"Multidimensional poverty in India was

found to decline from 29.17% in 2013-14 to 11.28% in 2022-23 with about 24.82 crore people escaping poverty during this period. At the States' level, Uttar Pradesh topped the list with 5.94 crore people escaping poverty followed by Bihar at 3.77 crore and Madhya Pradesh at 2.30 crore."

The table on the right, sourced from the same paper, shows poverty estimates for selected states in the last nine years (from 2013-14 to 2022-23). This period broadly coincides with the 10 years of the BJP-led government.

## What is the Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI)?

Traditionally, poverty is calculated based either on income levels or, if income data are not available, on expenditure levels. The so-called "poverty lines" are actually expenditure levels that are considered minimum enough for someone to be called poor.

The MPI approaches poverty differently. Globally, the MPI uses 10 indicators covering

## Escaped Multidimensional Poverty (2013-14-2022-23)

	Estimated in lakh
Bihar	377.09
Madhya Pradesh	230.00
Maharashtra	159.07
Odisha	102.78
Rajasthan	187.12
Uttar Pradesh	593.69
West Bengal	172.18
INDIA	2,482.16

three main areas: (i) health, (ii) education, and (iii) standard of living. These three dimensions have one-third weight each in the final index.

The health dimension includes nutrition and child & adolescent mortality indicators.

The education dimension includes years of schooling and school attendance indicators. The standard of living dimension includes six household-specific indicators: housing, household assets, type of cooking fuel, access to sanitation, drinking water, and electricity.

The Indian MPI has two additional indicators: maternal health (under the health dimension) and bank accounts (under the standard of living dimension). This has been done, according to the NITI Aayog, to align the MPI with India's national priorities.

## How is MPI calculated?

According to the MPI method, if a person is deprived in a third or more of 10 (weighted) indicators, they are identified as "MPI poor".

However, to calculate the index value, three separate calculations are needed.

■ The first calculation involves finding out the "incidence of multidimensional poverty" (denoted by the symbol H). The incidence essentially refers to the proportion

of multidimensionally poor in the population, and it is arrived at by dividing the number of multidimensionally poor persons by total population. More simply, it answers the question: How many are poor?

■ The second calculation involves finding out the "intensity" of poverty (it is denoted by the symbol A). This answers the question: How poor are they?

More technically, this refers to the average proportion of deprivation that is experienced by multidimensionally poor individuals. To compute intensity, the weighted deprivation scores of all poor people are summed and then divided by the total number of poor people.

■ Finally, the MPI is arrived at by multiplying the incidence of multidimensional poverty (H) and the intensity of poverty (A).

"The MPI value for a given population, therefore, is the share of weighted deprivations faced by multidimensionally poor individuals divided by the total population," states the paper.

## How were the data for 2013-14 and 2022-23 arrived at?

Typically, the health metrics depend on data from the different rounds of the National Family Health Survey (NFHS). The NFHS is conducted every five years; the last round refers to the 2019-21 period.

How then were the MPI for 2012-13 and 2022-23 calculated?

According to the paper, this required interpolation of estimates for the year 2013-14, and extrapolation for the year 2022-23.

"A better understanding of the impact of various initiatives launched during the previous decade on poverty and deprivation can be obtained by comparing the estimates of poverty and deprivation in year 2013-14 with year 2022-23 even though the actual estimates for 2015-16 and 2019-21 clearly point to acceleration in rate of reduction in MPI after 2015-16 compared to 2005-06 to 2015-16," it states.

**LONGER VERSION,**

indianexpress.com/explained

## EXPLAINED GLOBAL

## WHY ZUCKERBERG SAID SORRY TO YOUNG SOCIAL MEDIA USERS' PARENTS

## RISHIKA SINGH

NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 2



Mark Zuckerberg at the Senate Judiciary Committee hearing on Wednesday. Reuters

olds in the US say they use Instagram, far higher than the share among those 65 and older (15%).

The CEOs said they were doing their best to enforce existing policies, like not allowing children under age 13 on apps.

In India, a 2021 survey by the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) found that 37.8% and 24.3% of 10-year-old children have Facebook and Instagram accounts respectively, despite the age limit for account creation.

## Why the Senate's scrutiny now?

In recent years, the influence of social media apps has been questioned. In 2018, it was learnt that Facebook allowed around 87 million Facebook users' data to be shared with third parties. This included the political analysis firm Cambridge Analytica, which was linked to Donald Trump's election campaign in 2016.

Last year, 33 US states said Meta "misled" the public about the dangers of its platforms, and knowingly induced young children and teenagers into addictive and compulsive social media use. They have filed a lawsuit against the company.

**LONGER VERSION,**

indianexpress.com/explained

## EXPERT EXPLAINS

BISWAJIT DASGUPTA

PIRACY HAS existed for centuries in various forms. In recent years, waters off the west coast of Africa, Gulf of Aden, Horn of Africa, Bangladesh, and the Strait of Malacca have seen attacks by pirates.

## Why these areas and not elsewhere?

First, these sea areas are poorly policed. The coastal countries have weak maritime forces, or none at all.

Second, these areas normally have concentrations of shipping traffic, being either choke points where ships are forced to converge or slow down by geography, or anchorages where ships remain stationary for days before entering port.

Third, often poor governance or turmoil on land close to these areas leads to unemployment, poverty and consequently, crime.

Fourth, these areas are mostly international waters, international straits, or archipelagic waters which are long stretches of sea that fall within the maritime jurisdiction of several countries. This leads to legal complexities and difficulties in coordination.

## What constitutes the crime of piracy?

The term 'piracy' is used to describe a range of crimes from petty theft from ships at sea or anchorage to armed robbery and hijacking for ransom. The last is the biggest concern, since it causes panic in maritime business and leads to the establishment of high-risk areas, and a resultant increase in maritime insurance premiums. It also affects the safety of ships and seafarers, and disrupts global supply chains.

## How can the crime of piracy be tackled?

Since piracy is a maritime manifestation of instability and misgovernance on land, the lasting solution too must be negotiated on land.

While this is being done by the states concerned and through international diplomacy, the situation at sea has to be contained and stabilised by the world's maritime forces, since the disruption of mercantile peace — or peace that is conducive to maritime commerce — affects the economies of most countries.

## What role has the Indian Navy played in tackling the problem?



Captured pirates following the anti-piracy operation by INS Sumitra. PTI

The Indian Navy has been among the most proactive forces deployed in the troubled area off the Horn of Africa and the Gulf of Aden. Its anti-piracy patrol that started in 2008 continues to this day. The Indian Navy has never shied away from intervening in any developing situation, and has foiled several attempts by pirates at hijacking merchant ships.

The boundaries of the high-risk area that covered much of the Arabian Sea during the height of Somali piracy (2009-12) were pushed back westward primarily due to the efforts of the Indian Navy. Several recent intervention and rescue operations — including the rescue of a Sri Lankan fishing trawler, Lorenzo Putra, in a coordinated action with the Sri Lankan and Seychelles navies on January 29, and the rescue of two Iranian flagged boats with Iranian and Pakistani crew by the Offshore Patrol Vessel INS Sumitra in the space of 36 hours — are testimony to the professionalism and effectiveness of the Indian Navy in these waters.

## Who are the pirates, and what is their modus operandi off Somalia?

There are no Johnny Depps from *Pirates of the Caribbean* here. These are extremely distressed people driven by poverty to do desperate things at sea while their handlers sit ashore and rake in the spoils of the crime. The pirate mother ship is usually a large boat (or small ship) that carries resupplies, ammunition, and stores, and is accompanied by several skiffs, which are small, low-freeboard (portion of the ship side above the waterline) country fishing craft fitted with powerful outboard motors that give them speeds of more than 40 knots. A typical merchant vessel steams at 12-15 knots, making it easy for the skiffs to approach them.

The pirates zero in on a lone ship, preferably slow-moving, with a low freeboard. The skiffs are small, so they do not appear on the radar of the ship, and are visible only when very close. Merchant ships have small crews; a large ship may have only 15-20 personnel on board. Barely 5-6 are on watch at any time, sometimes resting in poor visual lookout, especially at night and in the stern (rear) sector.

The pirates embark using grapnels and ladders. They usually carry small arms or at best a rocket launcher, which are still enough to intimidate and overpower the small, unarmed crew of a merchant ship. The crew often have orders not to resist pirates to avoid damage to the ship and its cargo. Ship-owners prefer to pay the ransom for its release and to avoid legal issues. The crew normally lock themselves in a safe zone and send out a distress signal, which is monitored by piracy reporting centres and maritime safety agencies.

## How do maritime forces respond?

They essentially do four things.

First, they maintain a visible presence that seeks to deter pirates from carrying out attacks.

Second, their ships and aircraft undertake surveillance of the high-risk area, identify suspect vessels, and report them for further investigation. This is supported by information fusion centres ashore.

Third, they warn ships about suspect vessels and announce escort schedules, if any, so that vessels transiting the high-risk area can join convoys between designated points.

Fourth, they proactively or reactively intervene to manage a developing situation, foil a piracy attempt, or rescue a hijacked ship while ensuring minimum casualties and damage.

Hence, captured pirates are usually disarmed, and their boats are drained of fuel and set adrift so that they are unable to undertake further attacks. However, they often find their way back ashore to return to piracy another day. On occasion, they are handed over to a coastal state for legal proceedings.

The long-term solution to the problem of piracy lies in rooting out misgovernance and unemployment in nations ashore, which feed maritime criminal activities. Till that happens, piracy will recur periodically and maritime forces will have to work to ensure mercantile peace.

(Vice Admiral Biswajit Dasgupta retired as Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Eastern Naval Command, in July 2023)

## Hearing over in AMU minority status case: 3 key arguments before SC

## AOJY SINHA KARPURAM

NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 2

THE SUPREME Court on Thursday concluded hearings in the case to decide if Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) can claim minority status under Article 30 of the Constitution. The seven-judge Bench will also decide if the verdict in *Azeem Basha v Union of India* (1967), where the court held that AMU was not a minority institution, should be overruled.

The Bench led by Chief Justice of India (CJI) D Y Chandrachud heard both sides for eight days between January 10 and February 1. The arguments on three key issues:

## 1 What is the effect of a statute on minority status?

**BACKGROUND:** Under Article 30(1) of the Constitution, "all minorities, whether

based on religion or language, shall have the right to establish and administer educational institutions of their choice".

In *Azeem Basha*, the SC held that AMU was "established" through the enactment of a law, the Aligarh Muslim University Act, 1920. This meant that AMU does not qualify for minority status — as it was not established by the Muslim community.

**PETITIONERS:** Senior Advocate Rajeev Dhavan argued that there is a contradiction in *Azeem Basha*; the court had held that in order for degrees from a university to be valid, the university would have to be recognised by a statute (such as the AMU Act); however, the court had also held that recognition by a statute would strip AMU of its minority status.

Dhavan argued this would force every minority institution to seek recognition under a statute, and give up its minority status, thus making Article 30 ineffective, and subordin-

nating a fundamental right to a statute.

**RESPONDENTS:** Solicitor General Tushar Mehta argued that AMU surrendered its minority status to the British government and chose to be a "loyalist" institution, as opposed to "nationalist" institutions (like Jamia Millia Islamia University), which resisted and denounced the Raj. This surrender of rights, he said, was recognised in *Azeem Basha*.

**2 How does the administration of AMU impact its minority status?**  
**PETITIONERS:** Senior Advocate Kapil Sibal argued that it does not matter who is in charge of administration in a minority institution — even if members of the administration are not members of the minority community. Article 30(1) gives minorities the right to choose who is in charge of ad-

ministration without affecting the minority status of the institution in question.

**RESPONDENTS:** The administration must be considered in this case, as the British government had ultimate control of the university through the Lord Rector, when AMU was first established. Though the Court of the University handled the day-to-day administration, its decisions were subject to the approval of the Lord Rector under the AMU Act.

**3 Should the 1981 amendment be considered in this case?**  
**BACKGROUND:** The 1981 amendment to the AMU Act introduced multiple provisions stating that the university was established by the Muslim community, and highlighting the need to promote the cultural and educational advancement of Indian Muslims.

Allahabad HC struck down this amendment in 2005, holding that as per *Azeem Basha*, AMU was not a minority institution.

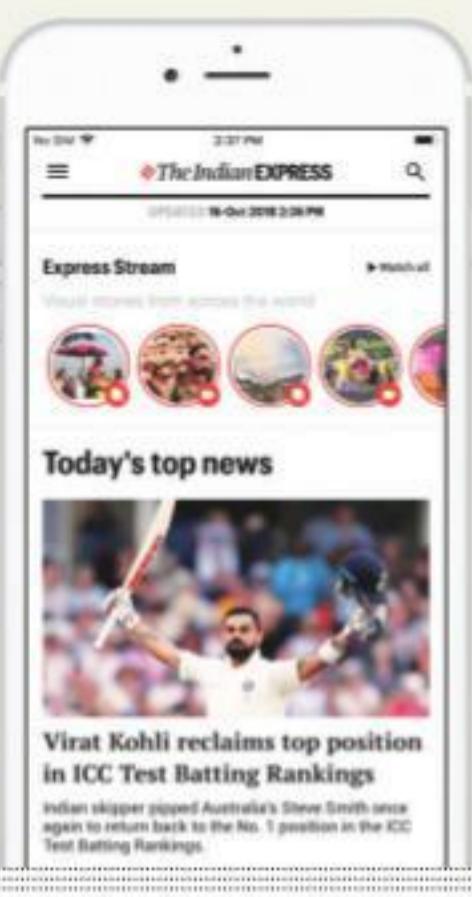
It also held that the 1981 amendment was enacted in order to override the *Azeem Basha* decision. This ruling was challenged at the SC, and was referred to a larger Bench by a two-judge Bench in 2006.

**PETITIONERS:** Sibal argued that there is no requirement to examine the validity of the 1981 amendment and the HC decision. If *Azeem Basha* is upheld, then the 1981 amendment becomes "redundant", as AMU's minority status would be recognised. If *Azeem Basha* is upheld, then the amendment will be considered along with the HC decision by a smaller Bench. Advocate Shadan Farasat argued that the 1981 amendment cannot be considered in this hearing as, without the Union of India defending it, there is no one presenting a de-

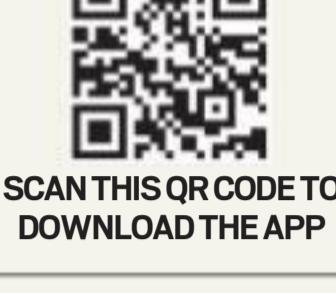
fence on behalf of Parliament. He also urged the court to decide if the Union has the option to not defend the amendment, despite being constitutionally obliged to do so.

**RESPONDENTS:** Mehta argued that the seven-judge Bench should





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### FROM JOGENDRA NATH MANDAL TO SAVEERA PARKASH: THE JOURNEY OF HINDUS IN PAKISTAN'S ELECTORAL POLITICS

Muhammad Ali Jinnah had envisioned Pakistan to be a state represented by people from all religions, a belief undermined by his decision to appoint a Hindu, Jogendra Nath Mandal as the country's first Law Minister.

### TECHNOLOGY



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Cook said India grew 'strong double-digits' in December quarter



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## EXPRESS AUDIO

### Unpacking the Interim Budget 2024

On 3 Things, Indian Express' Udit Misra joins us to discuss everything you need to know about the Interim Budget, presented by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, her sixth. PM Modi said the Interim Budget will build the future of the country and empower Viksit Bharat's main pillars

## Four medals merged into Kendriya Grihmantri Dakshata Padak: MHA

**New Delhi:** The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has introduced a new medal, Kendriya Grihmantri Dakshata Padak after merging four existing medals.

The four medals merged are Union Home Minister's Special Operation Medal, Union Home Minister's Medal for Excellence in Investigation, Asadharan Aasuchana Kushalata Padak and Union Home Minister's Awards for Meritorious Service in Forensic Science.

In a gazette notification on February 1, Additional Secretary Rakesh Kumar Singh said the

## BJP got Nitish to kill perception about INDIA bloc: Kishor

conversation with Anant Goenka, Executive Director, The Indian Express Group, and Vandita Mishra, National Opinion Editor, *The Indian Express*, Kishor said that without Nitish Kumar, the BJP would have contested more seats in Bihar and won more but its strategy was to "lose the battle to win the war."

He said the BJP under Narendra Modi is not invincible, but the Opposition has consistently missed opportunities to put him on the backfoot.

He felt that Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's move to embark on a yatra two months before the polls was the "worst decision" because "the commander of the Army doesn't leave headquarters when his battalion is at war" and "this is the time when he should be at the headquarters rather than in Manipur".

He was critical of the Opposition's decision to form an alliance just nine months before the Lok Sabha elections, saying the parties, if they intended to come together, should have done so at least two years ago.

On Nitish Kumar's switch back to the BJP, Kishor said the ruling party embraced him again not because he will get it more votes or seats. In fact, he said, the BJP is "going to lose seats in Bihar in Lok Sabha because they have to now adjust Nitish Kumar... so they will be fighting in a lesser number of seats".

"They have got Nitish Kumar because they wanted to kill this perception that there is an Opposition alliance called INDIA. By taking away one of the founders of INDIA, they have given a big psychological blow to the Opposition... It is not that they cannot win Bihar or do politics in Bihar without Kumar. The BJP knows the data and the facts. But it is a strategy where they have decided to lose the battle to win the war," he said.

According to Kishor, despite the pull of Hindutva and the party's organisational strength, the BJP has only 38% vote share.

"So, the challenge is how to get the rest of the 62% votes. Those who are lazy say that all those who got 62% must come together in a room and, hence, they will get 62% together. But it doesn't work like that. You also have to bring synergy among them in terms of narrative, grassroots effort and campaign on the ground. I would advise that the Opposition must devise a way to get 60% of the 60%. That will take them to 36-37% and then there will be a challenge," he said.

He suggested that the Opposition has been lazy. "You made the INDIA alliance nine months before the general elections. What prevented these wise men and women to do the same thing two years ago, immediately after the West Bengal polls, when chips were down for the BJP. Modi planned the Ram Mandir two years ago. Since June 2023, when it was formed, the INDIA alliance has not done one single public meeting. The total number of work hours for the INDIA alliance is six days including tea-breaks," he said.

He said the agenda for the Opposition should be the welfare of the vast majority of Indians that has not been fulfilled under the Modi government. On what gives him hope and despair, Kishor said, "Hope... I don't see the have-nots as intimidated as the haves. And the have-nots are still a majority. As far as despair is concerned, those who are blessed with education, resource... In India, the upper middle class is very insensitive to those at the bottom of the pyramid."

Officials said the Heritage City will draw inspiration from the legends of Lord Krishna and his life spent in the Braj region.

"Envisioned Heritage City shall encapsulate the ethos of the Braj region in coherence with the historical significance. The urban infrastructure will include walkways, ponds, parking spaces, green areas along with modern amenities such as luxury hotels, branded residences, etc," said the presentation.

## FROM PAGE ONE

### Ban polygamy, exempt tribals: UCC draft

marriage, for both men and women, uniform across religions.

The committee's report, it is learnt, also recommended the exemption of tribal communities, who have been voicing their dissent against the UCC, from the purview of the Bill. Tribals make up 2.9 per cent of Uttarakhand's population, and notable groups include the Jaunsari, Bhotiyas, Tharus, Rajis and Bokas.

To make adoption rights the same for all, recommendations have been made to uniformly follow the existing laws under the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act.

Mandatory registration for live-in relationships was also recommended.

Sources said the committee had "overwhelming suggestions" – from the stakeholders during the consultation process – that there should be uniformity in the number of children for a couple and other measures for population control. But the committee was told that the Centre would set up an expert committee to look into the matter.

Sources said the Central government is expected to announce a committee to propose legislative and policy measures to deal with the challenge of the rising popu-

lation.

In her Interim Budget speech Thursday, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman too said: "The Government will form a high-powered committee for an extensive consideration of the challenges arising from fast population growth and demographic changes. The committee will be mandated to make recommendations for addressing these challenges comprehensively in relation to the goal of Viksit Bharat."

In his annual Vijayadasami speech at the RSS headquarters in Nagpur last October, RSS Sarsanghchalak Mohan Bhagwat flagged the need for a "comprehensive population control policy" that would apply to all "equally", and said it was in the national interest to keep an eye on "population imbalance".

In his Independence Day address in 2019, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had also placed the issue of "population explosion" on the national frontburner, calling it a challenge and urging the Centre and States to devise schemes to tackle it.

The draft report is divided into four volumes. The first is the committee's report, the second is the draft code in English, the third is a public consultation report of the

committee, and the fourth volume is the draft code in Hindi.

Addressing the media, Chief Minister Dhami spoke of the "promise" the BJP had made before the Assembly elections in 2022 to implement the UCC. He said as per his promise, a committee, headed by retired Supreme Court judge Justice Ranjana Prakash Desai, was formed at the first Cabinet meeting. After examining the report, the government

would prepare a draft UCC law soon, he said. Later in the day, Dhami, who reached New Delhi, said the government would reach out to Opposition parties to have a "constructive debate" on the issue in the Assembly next week.

Sources said the Bill, once passed by the Uttarakhand Assembly, would be a "model" for other States to adopt. They said the Bill will immediately go to the Gujarat and Assam Assemblies for them to adopt their own Bills.

Sources in the Assam government said the State would adopt "more or less the same Bill".

Dhami too said: "We will make the law and implement it.

Our expectation is that other States will make it a model." He said the implementation of the UCC in Uttarakhand is not to target anyone or to oppose anyone, but

to fulfil the poll promise before the Assembly election in 2022.

The committee was expected to submit the draft earlier, but a last-minute decision for it to be tabled in Hindi led to a slight delay, with members of the panel translating it from English to Hindi. Sources said the committee made sure to avoid commonly used English and Urdu words in the Hindi draft.

Reacting to the draft report, Uttarakhand Congress chief spokesperson Garima Mehra Dasani said, "It will not be easy for the State government to implement the UCC."

"If the government had presented the draft, it would have been known on which subjects the government wants uniformity and equality. UCC is a subject of the Concurrent List, which means both the Centre and the State can make laws on this subject. But whenever the Centre makes a law, it will be an umbrella law, and then the laws made by the States will be ineffective or will be merged," she said.

Naeem Qureshi, president of Muslim Seva Sangathan, said he has not seen the draft so far, and the organisation will protest if it "affects personal and religious rights".

## FCRA case: CBI searches office, home of activist Harsh Mander

further strengthened in his resolve. "My life, my writings and my work are my only response."

In the FIR, complainant Inspector Vishal has said the preliminary enquiry was registered on April 13 last year on a written complaint dated March 21 received from Director (MHA) Jeetendar Chaddha against associations; Aman Bidarati Trust, Delhi; CES, Delhi; Oxfam India, Delhi and Action Aid Association, Delhi regarding violation of the FCRA.

"Enquiry has revealed that the CES was established in 2001 and registered as Trust with sub-registrar, Delhi for charitable purposes. The CES got FCRA registration in 2010 and enquiry has revealed

that it had transferred Rs 32.71 lakh other than salary/wages/remuneration from its FCRA account in the account of individual(s) during 2020-21 in violation of the provisions of FCRA, 2010," the FIR said. "Enquiry has also revealed that CES had diverted an amount of around Rs 10 lakh from its FCRA account through the firm(s) in violation of the provisions of FCRA, 2010," it said.

Following the searches, Supreme Court lawyer and activist Prashant Bhushan, in a post on X, said, "CBI is raiding Harsh Mander's house and office. He has been one of the most gentle, humane & generous activists who has worked tirelessly for the weak

& poor. He is being targeted only because he has been critical of this govt. All agencies are being bla-

tantly used to target critics."

Kavita Srivastava, of the Peoples' Union for Civil Liberties (PUCL) said, "We unequivocally condemn the continued victimisation and intimidation of Dr Harsh Mander. We are deeply disturbed by the raid at the residence of Dr Harsh Mander and ongoing raid on the Centre for Equity Studies. Mander is a widely re-

spected and internationally acclaimed human rights activist who has taken up issues of those most oppressed."

In 2021, the Enforcement Directorate (ED) had conducted

searches at offices and residential premises associated with Mander in connection with a case of al-

leged money laundering. The ED's

case is based on another case regis-

tered by Delhi Police's Economic Offences Wing against the CES.

The Delhi Police had registered

two cases against the CES – one under the Juvenile Justice (JJ) Act and another over alleged financial irregularities – following a raid

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## BRIEFLY

L-G nod to ACB to file case against PWD official

New Delhi: Delhi Lt Governor V K Saxena has accorded permission to the Anti-Corruption Branch for registration of a case against an executive engineer of the PWD for allegedly misusing his official position, Raj Niwas officials said on Friday. The L-G has accorded approval under Section 17A of the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988 (as amended in 2018) for registration of case against the executive engineer for allegedly causing undue loss to the government exchequer in the work of strengthening of road at the Guru Harkishan Marg from Britannia Chowk of the Outer Ring Road at West Enclave. The L-G had earlier granted permission to register case against four other officers of the PWD in the same matter. PTI

## Dwarka: Man sets wife on fire after spat

New Delhi: A man allegedly poured kerosene on his wife and set her on fire after a quarrel, in Dwarka, officers said. Police said they received a PCR call on Thursday regarding the incident following which a team was sent to the spot. Police said that the woman's statement was recorded where she stated that her husband had poured kerosene on her and set her on fire. A case of attempt to murder has been lodged and the accused, identified as Narender, 42, has been sent to judicial custody.

ENS

## PROCEEDINGS IN ACMM COURT

# Male authority in sports prone to harassment charges: Brij Bhushan

**NIRBHAY THAKUR**  
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 2



Singh at Parliament House complex during the Budget session, on Friday. PTI

INSISTING THAT the sexual harassment allegations by six women wrestlers against him were false, BJP MP Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh argued in court Friday that male authority figures in sports had become "very prone to" sexual assault allegations.

Representing Bhushan, Senior Advocate Rajiv Mohan, during arguments on charges against former WFI Chief Singh at the court of Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Priyanka Rajput, asked if the trial can be simply started "on the basis of whatever documents the prosecution submits". Mohan argued that the prosecution will have to explain under what provisions the complaints of the six wrestlers were clubbed into a single FIR since

one of the wrestlers, Mohan alleged there was no reason given for delay in filing her complaint other than the fact that she was "worried about her career". Mohan also alleged delay in reporting the offences and contradictions in the statements of the complainants. "There must not be a large amount of time between the incident and the complaint to concoct a false story," he added.

Mohan further said some of the cases mentioned by wrestlers were outside the territorial jurisdiction of the Delhi court, and that cases that occurred outside India cannot be tried by the court without a sanction from the Central government. It was also argued that for offences committed in a different state within India, the court can only proceed if the offence is a "continuing" one.

The court will hear further arguments on February 6 and 7.

there was "no link" between the alleged incidents.

Reading out the complaints of

## Pain of last 500 years ended with Ayodhya ceremony: Dhankhar

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 2



The V-P was speaking at the JNU convocation

COMMENTING ON Ayodhya Ram Mandir consecration ceremony on January 22, Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar Friday said the pain of last 500 years has been ended with the event.

At the Jawaharlal Nehru University convocation, he said, "The pain of 500 years has been undone with the consecration ceremony. What is significant is it was fructified with commitment and nerve centre to engage in this scrutiny and probe."

Exhorting students to "neutralise anti-national narratives", he said, "If you observe silence,

your silence will resonate in your ears for years to come. We are a country where iconic status is accorded on parameters that are baffling. We label someone as a great journalist, as a great lawyer. We do not ask questions. JNU is the right place, the epicentre and nerve centre to engage in this scrutiny and probe."

Over 800 students across 73 disciplines received their PhD degrees at the convocation.

Vice Chancellor Shantishree Dhulipudi Pandit said: "In its 54-year legacy, JNU proudly asserts that no post has been de-reserved. Today, faculty recruitment in the reserved category is at the highest point in the varsity's history."

Meanwhile, several students shared their bittersweet feelings on parting ways with JNU.

Speaking to *The Indian Express*, Ajit Kumar, 40, who has graduated with a PhD at School of Art and Aesthetics, said: "I joined JNU in 2012 for my Masters. I am a little sad at having to say goodbye to my 'home'." Pallavi Madhukar, 30, who was awarded her PhD in International Relations, said, "We will always be identified with this institution's name."

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### Publication of Notice regarding possession of property u/s 13(4) of SARFAESI Act 2002

Notice is hereby given under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (54 of 2002) and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(12) read with rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002, a demand notice was issued on the dates mentioned against each account and stated hereinafter calling upon them to repay the amount within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said Notice.

The Borrower/Guarantors having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrower/Guarantors and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of power conferred on him/her under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said Act on the dates mentioned against each account.

The Borrower/Guarantors in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealing with the property will be subject to the charge of the STATE BANK OF INDIA for an amount and interests thereon.

The borrower's attention is invited to provisions of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available to redeem the secured assets.

Name of Account/Borrower & Address	Name of Proprietor/Partners/Guarantors/Owner of property etc.	Description of the property mortgaged/charged	Date of Demand Notice & Date of Possession	Amount Outstanding
M/s Sri Krishna Traders, Prop: Shom Nath Sah (Now deceased), At Katar Chowk, Near Shiv Mandir, Hasan Bazar, Dist-Bhojpur, Bihar-802204 Legal heir deceased (Lt. Shom Nath Sah): i. Smt. Shanti Devi W/o Lt. Shom Nath Sah, ii. Sonu Kumar, iii. Monu Kumar, iv. Krishna Kumar, v. Madhu Kumari & vi. Vivek Raj Gupta, all At Katar Chowk, Near Shiv Mandir, Hasan Bazar, Dist-Bhojpur, Bihar-802204	Guarantor: Smt. Shanti Devi W/o Lt. Shom Nath Sah	Equitable Mortgage of residential landed property situated at Mauza-Kalar, Thana & Anchal-Piro, Thana cum sub registry office-Piro, Thana No.122, Dist. Registry office-Aara, Bhojpur, Bihar and other details are given below. Sale Deed No.3358 Dt. 23/08/2017 in the name of Shanti Devi W/o Sri Shomnath Sah, Khat No.538, Khesra no.2198, Land Area- 2.534 decimal. Boundary: North-Ramashankar Prasad, South-Suresh Prasad, East-Ramashankar Prasad, West-Gramin Rasta.	29/09/2023 & 01/02/2024	₹24,54,973.00 as on 31/08/2023 along with further interest at contractual rate and costs and other legally recoverable dues

AUTHORISED OFFICER  
STATE BANK OF INDIA, SARB, PATNA

Date : 01.02.2024

Place : Hasan Bazar (Bhojpur)

**कनारा बैंक** Canara Bank A Govt. of India Undertaking | सिंहिकेट Syndicate |

### Recovery & Legal Section, Regional Office, Patna - 1

4th Floor, Luv-Kush Tower, Exhibition Road, Patna - 800001, Ph. : 9789875975, Email : recopat@canarabank.com

### PROPERTY FOR E-AUCTION

E-AUCTION Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with provision to Rule 8 (6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged / hypothecated/ Pledged / charged to the Secured Creditor, the constructive / physical possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of Canara Bank will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is" and "Whatever there is" on 21.02.2024. Details are as under:

Sl. No.	Name / Add. Contact No. of the Branch	Name and Address of the Borrower(s) / Guarantor(s)	Outstanding in Rs.	Details of Property	Reserve Price (Rs.) /EMD/Bid Multiplier Amt./A/c No. / IFSC Code
1	RAJA BAZAR, PATNA BRANCH Mob. 8210998442	1. M/s S.K Enterprises, Proprietor - Sri Sushil Kumar S/o Sri Prahlad Singh, Flat No. 301, & 302, 3rd Floor, "Dhaneshwar Palace" Ward No. 40, at Abhimanyu Nagar, (Mauza-Jalalpur) PO, Danapur, Ps- Rupaspur, Distt.-Patna (Bihar)-801503, 2. Sri Sushil Kumar S/o Sri Prahlad Singh, 3. Sri Prahlad Singh, and 5. Sri Santi Singh S/o Sri Prahlad Singh, Address of the No. 2,3,4, and 5 is Flat No. 301, & 302, 3rd Floor, "Dhaneshwar Palace" Ward No. 40, at Abhimanyu Nagar, (Mauza-Jalalpur), PO, Danapur, Ps- Rupaspur, Distt- Patna (Bihar)- 801503	Rs. 1,09,73,520.18 as on 03.01.2024 + interest & Other Cost thereon till realization	All that Part and Parcel of the property consisting of Flat No. - 301 & 302 3rd Floor, "Dhaneshwar Palace" Situated in Mauza - Jalalpur, Mohalla - Abhirman Nagar, P.S- Danapur, Sub Registry Office Danapur, Distt- Patna, Land bearing Thana No.: 22, Thana Code-126, Taza No. - 5523, Khat No.: 133, Survey Plot No. 303(P). Area- Flat No. 301-1325 sqft, Proportionate share of land - 375.97 sqft, and Flat No.302- 1325 Sqft, Proportionate share of land - 375.97 sqft	Rs. 85,00,000/- Rs. 8,50,000/- Rs. 10,000/- A/c - 20272434 IFSC Code - CRNB002519
2	Sri Sushil Kumar S/o Sri Prahlad Singh, 3. Sri Prahlad Singh, and 5. Sri Santi Singh S/o Sri Prahlad Singh, Address of the No. 2,3,4, and 5 is Flat No. 301, & 302, 3rd Floor, "Dhaneshwar Palace" Ward No. 40, at Abhimanyu Nagar, (Mauza-Jalalpur), PO, Danapur, Ps- Rupaspur, Distt- Patna (Bihar)- 801503	Boundary: Flat No. 301- North - Flat No. - 302, South - set Back, East - Setback, West - Corridor + Flat No. - 303 + Stair Flat No. 302- North - Set back, South - Flat No. - 301, East - Set Back, West- Corridor + Stair + Lift + Flat No. 304. Boundary of the Land - North - Survey Plot No.-302, South - Dhevshwar Singh, East - Sri Kameshwar Singh, West - 20 feet wide Road + Sanjay Kumar Mishra	Last Date of EMD 19.02.2024 For Detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please refer to the link provided in www.canarabank.com	Date : 31.01.2024	Place : Patna

## Seized property must be returned if PMLA probe goes beyond 365 days without proceedings: HC

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 2

THE DELHI High Court has said that if an investigation under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) goes "beyond 365 days" without any proceeding related to the offence, the Enforcement Directorate has to return the "seized" property to the owner.

A single-judge bench of Justice Navin Chawla, in a January 31 order, made the observation

while directing the Enforcement Directorate (ED) to return forthwith with documents, digital devices, and properties among other material seized from Mahender Kumar Khandelwal, who was appointed the interim resolution professional (IRP) of Bhushan Power and Steel Ltd (BPSL). The ED made the seizure during a search operation on August 19 and 20, 2020.

The contention of the learned counsel for the respondents, that as Section 8(3)(a) of the Act does not provide for a

consequence of lapsing of 365 days, there can be no direction so far as the return of the property so seized, cannot be accepted," Justice Chawla underscored while allowing the plea.

The court also said the PMLA provisions have to be "reasonably read" in a "harmonious manner", with other provisions. It said that the power of attachment, seizure, and freezing of the properties and records is a "draconian provision" which has to be strictly construed, referring to a 2021 judgment of the Supreme Court.

In 2019, the CBI had registered a case against BPSL, its directors, and other key managerial persons on the allegations of offences committed under various IPC sections including 120B (criminal conspiracy), read 420 (cheating), among others as well as relevant provisions of the Prevention of Corruption Act.

However, Khandelwal was not named as an accused in the FIR or investigated by the CBI or summoned or asked to join the CBI investigation.

## Gurgaon: 3 held after raid on cafes 'serving hookah'

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
GURGAON, FEBRUARY 2

TWO OUTLETS allegedly serving hookah were raided and three people arrested in Gurgaon Friday following a joint operation by the Chief Minister Flying Squad and the Drug Control Department.

The Flying Squad carried out the arrests after they were informed that customers in cafés in Sector 53 were being served hookahs in different flavours. When the team arrived at the spot, they allegedly found two cafés in Central Plaza Mall operating a hookah bar. The premises were shared by two brands.

During the raid, police said they seized nine hookah pipes, along with other materials. A significant amount of tobacco flavours were also confiscated.

The raid was carried out as Section 144 is still in force on hookah consumption.

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**E - AUCTION SALE NOTICE**

(15 days E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of movable Properties)

E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Movable Properties under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 6 (2) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) that the below described movable property hypothesized or charged to the Secured Creditor, the Physical possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of Canara Bank will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is" and "Whatever there is" on 28.02.2024, Time: 11.30 am to 1.30 pm. Details are as under:

S. N.	Name/Address Contact No. of the Branch	Name of A/c/Guarantor/Mortgagor	Outstanding in Rs.	Details of Properties	Reserve Price /EMD/Bid Multiplier Amt.
1.	ARM Branch, Mob: 8102916048	M/s Magadh Dairy (Borrower			

**MLA BRIBERY CLAIMS**  
Crime branch visits CM house, returns without serving notice

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 2

A TEAM of the Delhi Police Crime Branch arrived at Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's house in Civil Lines to serve him a notice in connection with allegations that the BJP was offering bribes to AAP MLAs. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) had filed a complaint in the matter.

The AAP's national convenor last Saturday alleged that the BJP had made an offer of Rs 25 crore each to seven of his MLAs in an alleged bid to "buy them" into the party.

The team, however, returned as the CM was not present at his residence. "Our team went to his residence to serve him a notice for a preliminary probe initiated in the case, the complaint for which was earlier submitted by BJP leaders," a senior officer said.

According to police sources, the notice purportedly contains questions, asking Kejriwal to furnish evidence related to the allegations made.

A team also visited Delhi minister Atishi's residence to serve her a notice under the same case but she was also purportedly not present at her house.

An officer said that teams will again visit the residences of both AAP leaders on Saturday.



**Delhi excise policy scam: CBI opposes Sisodia's custody parole, bail pleas**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 2

THE CBI on Friday opposed two applications filed by senior AAP leader Manish Sisodia, seeking bail and custody parole respectively, in alleged excise scam case. The probe agency made the submissions before Special Judge M K Nagpal in its reply to the pleas filed by the politician and sought their dismissal.

"A common reply has been filed today on behalf of CBI to the application for regular bail as well as the other application seeking custody parole filed by the accused Manish Sisodia... As requested and agreed jointly, the above applications of the accused are now being listed for arguments at 2 pm on February 5, 2024," said the judge, while granting ED time till February 5.

"Some more time is being requested on behalf of ED for filing replies to the application for regular bail as well as the other application seeking custody parole filed by Manish Sisodia... The matter is now directed to be listed on February 5, 2024, for reply and arguments and it is made clear that no... opportunity for filing replies shall be given," said the judge.

The Delhi excise policy was scrapped in August 2022, and the CBI was roped in by the Lieutenant Governor to probe the alleged irregularities and corruption in it, involving government authorities, bureaucrats, and liquor traders among others. Based on the CBI FIR, the ED filed a case to probe the alleged laundering of the money generated through the scam.

## POLITICAL FACE-OFF

# Twin protests by AAP, BJP in the heart of Capital

## AAP says workers detained, placed under house arrest

Amid massive arrangements, 15 AAP supporters and 48 from BJP detained before being let off later, say police

ARNABJIT SUR,  
UPASIKA SINGHAL  
& NIRBHAY THAKUR  
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 2

THE 850-METRE stretch between the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) headquarters saw massive deployment of security personnel and a slew of arrangements to keep law and order under check as both parties took to the streets against each other on Friday.

Multiple layers of barricading and heavy police presence punctuated the less than one-kilometre distance between the two offices with roughly five layers of security arrangements on the main Deen Dayal Upadhyay stretch along with a multitude of alleyways.

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and his Punjab counterpart Bhagwant Mann led the party's demonstration against the BJP's alleged manipulation of the Chandigarh mayoral elections earlier this week even as the BJP's senior leadership including MPs and office bearers dug in their heels on the other side.

The AAP alleged that several of its MLAs and councillors were placed under house arrest and thousands of its workers were detained by the Delhi police ahead of the protest; BJP supporters, meanwhile, confronted security officials, leading to preventive detention.

Several AAP leaders alleged detentions en masse by the Delhi police. "The police have been deployed on each inch of Delhi to stop our protest," said AAP Delhi convenor Gopal Rai.

"At the BJP's orders, the AAP's office has been turned into a cantonment; it's as if it's not the AAP which has come onto the street to protest, but police which is out to do so," said Rai.

Overall, the police said that 15 AAP supporters and 48 from the BJP were detained before being let off later.

Minutes after his party said that he would not present himself for questioning to the Enforcement Directorate (ED) after the agency served him the fifth summons in the liquor policy case, the Delhi CM sought to rouse a gathering of hundreds of AAP supporters to raise anti-BJP slogans.

On the other side of the stretch, BJP leaders addressed their own gathering of supporters accusing the AAP Delhi government of being steeped in corruption and its convenor Kejriwal an "absconder" and an "economic offender" who would soon find himself behind bars.

Taking to the dais, Kejriwal said what unfolded after the Chandigarh elections getting caught on camera indicated that the BJP's "vessel of sins and injustice" had reached a tipping point. "It was a very small election... but the world's biggest party was caught rigging it red-handed," he alleged.

Delhi BJP president Virendra Sachdeva, meanwhile, said, "Scams worth thousands of crores of rupees have been committed... Kejriwal issued a tender for making 7,180 classrooms, and when it came to constructing classrooms, the budget of the tender was increased 100 times, but only 4,126 rooms were built.. He (Kejriwal) gave the tender to the same company which had built its Sheesh Mahal," alleged Sachdeva, alluding to renovation of the capital on Friday.

Marking its national convenor and Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal's return to the helm of a political protest soon after refusing to present himself for questioning to the ED for the fifth time, the protest was staged outside the BJP headquarters on Deen Dayal Upadhyay Marg in spite of what the party alleged various obstacles, including house arrests and detentions of its leaders and supporters.



(Clockwise, left) Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal and his Punjab counterpart Bhagwant Mann address the public; the protest in Delhi on Friday over alleged manipulation by BJP to win Chandigarh mayoral polls; Delhi BJP chief Virendra Sachdeva, LoP in Delhi Assembly Ramvir Singh Bidhuri and other party members outside the AAP office in Delhi on Friday.  
Credit: Amit Mehra, ANI

## We are protesting because BJP used 'illegal methods', says Mann

UPASIKA SINGHAL  
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 2

CONDEMNING WHAT it alleged was "electoral fraud" in the Chandigarh Mayoral polls earlier this week, the Aam Aadmi Party sought to orchestrate a rousing show of strength in the heart of the capital on Friday.

For many years we've heard that BJP rigs elections to win. They steal votes, tamper EVM machines, add false names to the voter lists, remove people from voter lists... but we never had evidence," he alleged. "There is a shloka in the Gita that says that when there is too much injustice and sins on earth, then God comes down to earth to correct it. But it's not necessary that God itself comes down to earth. God can sit

Mann and senior AAP leaders from Delhi, Kejriwal leveled scathing allegations against BJP.

These revolved around the appointment of a BJP-affiliated individual as the Presiding Officer during the Chandigarh Mayoral polls on January 30, who allegedly invalidated votes cast by councillors aligned with the INDIA alliance which he decried as a brazen violation of democratic principles.

"For many years we've heard that BJP rigs elections to win. They steal votes, tamper EVM machines, add false names to the voter lists, remove people from voter lists... but we never had evidence," he alleged. "There is a shloka in the Gita that says that when there is too much injustice and sins on earth, then God comes down to earth to correct it. But it's not necessary that God itself comes down to earth. God can sit

in heaven and sweep the earth with a broom too," he added.

Mann and AAP National General Secretary Sandeep Pathak sought to underscore the gravity of the situation, emphasising the need for collective action to combat electoral misconduct and preserve the democratic process's sanctity. "This protest would not have been necessary if BJP hadn't used illegal methods. You saw on the video how the official hampered the mayoral elections. I don't know how BJP made this mistake, had they paid attention they would have switched off the video so that they wouldn't be caught red handed," said Mann.

After addressing the crowd in front of the AAP party headquarters, CM Kejriwal, along with party leaders and workers, made their way to the BJP headquarters in both liquor and water took place in the city.

"It is the result of all our hard work that Kejriwal had to withdraw the liquor policy, but he also has to answer for the scams he has committed... Kejriwal not ap-

pearing before the ED, despite being issued five summons, is a testimony to the fact that he has committed theft. He behaves like an... offender," said Sachdeva.

The protest was a counter to the AAP's demonstration outside the BJP's headquarters against the alleged manipulation by the saffron party to win the Chandigarh mayoral polls on Tuesday.

The BJP leaders and workers, who participated in the protest, attempted to march towards the ruling party's office, but were stopped by security personnel near a police barricade. Many BJP protesters were placed under "preventive custody", but released later in the day.

Ramvir Singh Bidhuri, Leader of Opposition in the Delhi Legislative Assembly, said, "Just as his Deputy CM Manish Sisodia and former minister Satyendra Jain have gone to prison, Arvind Kejriwal will also be in jail soon."

**'Delhi govt synonymous with corruption': BJP protests against AAP**

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 2

THE DELHI BJP on Friday accused the AAP government of being involved in corruption and murdering democracy in the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD), during a protest against Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal near his party's headquarters on DDU Marg.

The Kejriwal government has become synonymous with corruption. Every day, a scam of the government is exposed before the people," said Delhi BJP president Virendra Sachdeva. "Kejriwal was a chief minister under whose watch scams in both liquor and water took place in the city."

"It is the result of all our hard work that Kejriwal had to withdraw the liquor policy, but he also has to answer for the scams he has committed... Kejriwal not ap-

**Police: Four of family suffocate to death in Greater Noida**

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 2

THE GAUTAM Buddha Nagar Police on Friday recovered the bodies of four persons, members of the same family, from Tusana village, under the jurisdiction of the Ecotech-3 police station. Prima facie, it seems to be a case of "death due to suffocation", said police.

The four deceased – identified as one Chandresh, his wife Nisha, brother Rajesh, and sister Publi – were natives of Hathras, who lived in a rented accommodation in Gautam Buddha Nagar. Rajesh used to sell parathas on a cart, and Chandresh worked for a food delivery company, according to police.

**Stove, knob of cylinder were turned on, and gas spread to the house from there, say cops**



## BLINDING FOG IN CAPITAL

Vehicles make their way through dense fog over National Highway 9 on Friday. Praveen Khanna

**PRESIDENT MURMU INAUGURATES 16-DAY FAIR IN FARIDABAD**

# 'Tanzania as Surajkund fair partner highlights ties with African Union'

AISWARYA RAJ  
GURGAON, FEBRUARY 2

INAUGURATING THE 37th Surajkund International Crafts Fair in Faridabad on Friday, the President of India, Droupadi Murmu, expressed appreciation for the cultural exchange between Tanzania and India.

Murmu said that as Tanzania acts as the partner country of this year's fair, cultural exchanges would provide the opportunity for visitors to immerse themselves in the vibrant and colourful

arts and crafts of Tanzania, including wood carving, pottery, and weaving. "This is also a wonderful platform to showcase Tanzanian dance, music and cuisine in which we can also glimpse some Indian influence, thanks to the centuries of people-to-people contact between India and the East African coast," she said.

The participation of Tanzania as a partner nation in this fair highlights India's partnership with the African Union, she said.

President Murmu also commended the art and tradition of Gujarat, the partner state of the

fair. She said that the North Eastern Handicrafts and Handloom Development Corporation Limited is the cultural partner of this year's fair.

Murmu expressed appreciation for the craftsmen who have diligently preserved the artistic heritage of the country. During the inauguration, the President visited Haryana's Apna Ghar Pavilion, where she got information about the instruments showcasing Haryanvi culture.

Governor Bandaru Dattatreya said during the event, "This year's fair showcases Gujarat as the



President Droupadi Murmu with Haryana CM Manohar Lal Khattar and Governor Bandaru Dattatreya at the event. Express

theme state, renowned for its cultural diversity and rich civilisation, while Tanzania serves as the partner nation, which has deep-rooted ties with India. Such collaborative events would further strengthen bilateral relations between the nations."

He said that this year marks a milestone as the fair sees participation from over 40 countries for the first time, setting a new record. Between 15 and 20 lakh attendees are likely to visit the fair this year. "...PM Narendra Modi has made special efforts in this direction. This fair stands as a trinity of tradition, heritage, and culture, attracting tourists from around the world," he added.

"On being informed, a police team reached the door of the said house, which was locked from inside, and later recovered the bodies. It was revealed that something was put on the stove, with the knob of the cylinder turned on. The gas spread to the house from there. There was a smell in the room. Prima facie, the cause of death appears to be suffocation. The bodies have been sent for post-mortem... and further investigation is underway," said Suniti, deputy commissioner of police (Central Noida).

# Navy foils another piracy attempt, rescues crew of 19



Navy personnel intercept an Iranian-flagged vessel Omari during an anti-piracy mission along the coast of Somalia. PTI

**AMRITA NAYAK DUTTA**  
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 2

THE NAVY has foiled yet another piracy attempt on an Iranian-flagged vessel Omari and successfully rescued a crew of 19 – 11 Iranian and eight Pakistani nationals. This is the fourth anti-piracy operation carried out by the Navy this week.

In a statement released on Friday, the Navy said information regarding piracy attempt on Fishing Vessel FV Omari was monitored on January 31.

It said one of the Navy's drones undertaking surveillance in the area successfully located FV Omari and INS Sharada, which was deployed for anti-piracy mission in the region, was diverted to intercept the boat.

Seven pirates had boarded FV Omari and the crew was taken hostage. As per the Navy, INS Sharada intercepted the vessel in early hours of Friday and used her integral helo and boats to ensure safe release of the crew along with the vessel. It added that the ship also undertook confirmatory

boarding on FV Omari to sanitise and check on the well-being of the crew who had been held captive by the Somali pirates.

Earlier this week, the Navy rescued a crew of 19 Pakistani nationals from 11 Somali pirates in a successful operation on hijacked fishing vessel Al Naeemi.

The Navy, in collaboration with Seychelles Defence Forces and Sri Lanka Navy had also successfully rescued a hijacked Sri Lankan vessel this week.

On Friday, the government also told Parliament that seven incidents of hijacking of vessels on high seas by pirates have been reported during the last three years.

The government said the Navy has been proactively engaging with the regional and extra-regional navies/maritime forces to promote maritime security.

"Since 2008, Indian Navy has deployed units in Gulf of Aden and East Coast of Africa towards anti-piracy patrols," Ajay Bhatt, Minister of State for Defence, told the Lok Sabha.

He added that a total of 3,440 ships and over 25,000 seafarers have been safely escorted.

**Shah, Nadda to meet BJP's Telangana, Himachal panels to discuss polls**

**JATIN ANAND**  
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 2

FOR CONGRESS RULED Himachal Pradesh and Telangana, the BJP is banking on party chief J P Nadda and Union Home Minister Amit Shah to turn the tide in its favour in the upcoming general elections.

According to party sources, Nadda will chair the Himachal Pradesh BJP's core committee meeting on February 3-4, while Shah will do the same in Telangana on February 4-5. Out of 17 Lok Sabha seats in Telangana, the BJP currently holds only four, while the party has three of the four Lok Sabha MPs from Himachal.

"All seats and states are important as far as the Lok Sabha elections are concerned; the party would focus on Telangana, where we represent only four of the 17 Parliamentary seats. Himachal is significant for the Rajya Sabha elections," a source said.

"The fact that Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid foundation stones for projects worth Rs 13,000 crore in this southern state, and now the Home Minister has assumed responsibility for Lok Sabha elections indicate how important the state is to the party's national leadership," a party leader said.

BJP core committees include senior leaders from the party's state units, the RSS and leaders appointed by the party's central leadership.

The party had, on January 27, released a list of 35 election in-charges and co-incharges for 23 state units who are meant to function as a bridge between the party's state and national leadership for poll preparations.



Vijay has named his party Tamizhaga Vetri Kazhagam. X@actorvijay

## Tamil actor Vijay launches party: 'Wish to immerse self in politics'

**ARUN JANARDHANAN**  
CHENNAI, FEBRUARY 2

ONE OF Tamil cinema's biggest stars, Vijay, announced his entry into politics on Friday with the launch of his party, Tamizhaga Vetri Kazhagam (TVK). He also hinted that he would become a full-time politician "after completing my commitments to another film I have already committed to".

The announcement was made through a detailed statement released by the actor on social media platforms. It marks a new chapter in Tamil Nadu's long-prevailing tradition of its cinematic and political realms intertwining.

Regarding his vision for the party, Vijay's statement laid emphasis on a commitment to transparency, non-partisan governance, and adherence to the values of Tamil culture and the Indian Constitution.

Highlighting the challenges facing the state, including corruption and divisive politics, Vijay said, "On one side, there is a culture of politics tainted with corruption

and administrative malpractices, while on the other, there is a divisive political culture striving to fragment our people through caste and religious differences..."

He said the party would not take part in the coming Lok Sabha elections, and that it would instead focus on strengthening its grassroots presence and preparing for a meaningful political debut. He promised that TVK would contest in the 2026 Assembly elections in Tamil Nadu.

Unlike other actor-turned-politicians who continued their acting career even after entering politics, Vijay hinted that he would become a full-time politician.

"...as far as I am concerned, politics is not just another profession; it is a sacred service to the people... Therefore, politics is not a pastime for me; it is my deep passion. I wish to fully immerse myself in politics for public service after completing my commitments to another film I have already committed to, without causing any disruption to party activities. This is what I consider my gratitude and duty to the people of

Tamil Nadu," his statement said.

The statement also said that "the goal is to facilitate the fundamental political changes desired by the people".

"Taking into account the necessary time for the Election Commission's approval and party expansion activities, our application for party registration has been submitted now. It has also been decided in the general body and the executive committee that we will not contest in the upcoming 2024 parliamentary elections and that we do not support any party, which I humbly convey here," he said.

The announcement comes at a time when Vijay, at 49, aligns with a younger generation of politicians looking to make an impact in the state's political arena. His foray into politics is seen as a significant departure from his previously perceived reticence. When asked about his seemingly shy nature in personal transactions, a top source close to him said, "Such people can have a really aggressive face too."

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

## One nation, one election will boost economic development, says CII

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 2

PLEDGING ITS support to simultaneous elections, the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) on Friday told the One Nation, One Election committee that holding the elections together would improve governance efficiency and give a boost to economic development.

The high-level panel chaired by former President Ram Nath Kovind on Friday held its fifth meeting, where CII representatives gave a presentation, the

Law Ministry said in a statement.

"CII's view was based on the economic benefits of streamlining the electoral process, that would enhance governance efficiency, and foster economic development. CII has been recommending simultaneous elections in India since 2012. Asynchronous multiple elections lead to frequent disruption in policy making and administration... It also affects the working of the governments due to its officials being roped in for election duties. Investment decisions by the private sector tend to slow down prior to the elections," a CII statement said.

The high-level panel chaired by former President Ram Nath Kovind on Friday held its fifth meeting, where CII representatives gave a presentation, the

**NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY**  
Notification No.: DRM/C/AGRA/2024/1-10 Date : 30.01.2024

### Notification

On behalf of President of India Senior Divisional Commercial Manager, North Central Railway, Agra invites applications for selection of station ticket booking agent (STBA) on commission basis for issuing the unreserved Railway tickets through Computerised unreserved ticketing system (UTS) at 10 (NSG-4, NSG-5 & NSG-6) Category stations of Agra Division for the period of (NSG-6 & NSG-5) 03 years and (NSG-4) 01 year.

Date & Time for dropping the filled application form in the box & sealing the box : Date 22.02.2024 at 11:00 hrs. Date & time for the opening of applications : Date 22-02-2024 at 11:30 hrs.

1. Details of station proposed for Station Ticket Booking Agent (STBA):

Notification No. Name of Station/Category Code Shift

2024/01 KOSI KALAN Counter-No.-02, NSG-4 KSV For Two shift- First Shift-00:00 to 12:00 & Second Shift - 12:00 to 24:00 (Note - One person will be eligible for one Shift only.)

2024/02 MANDAWA MAHWA ROAD-NSG-5 MURD For One Shift- First Shift-00:00 to 12:00

2024/03 VEHU-NSG-6 BEHJ 24 Hrs.

2024/04 BAAD-NSG-6 BAD 24 Hrs.

2024/05 KITHAM-NSG-6 KXM 24 Hrs.

2024/06 GAZIKA-NSG-6 GZKA 24 Hrs.

2024/07 MANIA-NSG-6 MIA 24 Hrs.

2024/08 CHHALESAR-NSG-6 CHLR 24 Hrs.

2024/09 GHOSRANA-NSG-6 GOS 24 Hrs.

2024/10 FARAH-NSG-6 FAR 24 Hrs.

2. Office address from where Application form may be obtained – Applicant can obtain Application forms along with terms & conditions from the office of DRM (C/N.C.R.–Agra on cash payment of Rs. 1,000/-+(18% GST)=Rs. 1,180/- to the Chief Booking Supervisor, Agra Cantt. in any working day from the date 01.02.2024 upto 21.02.2024 at 17:00 hrs. The Application form is not transferable and its cost is Non Refundable.

3. Duration of year – (NSG-4) 01 year & (NSG-5 & NSG-6) 03 years.

4. Last date & time of depositing of Application form – Duly filled Sealed Application Form should be dropped in Tender Box upto 22.02.2024 till 11:00 hrs. and after that Tender Box will be sealed.

5. Date and Time of Opening of Application form/Tender box – Application forms will be opened on Dated 22.02.2024 at 11:30 hrs in the presence of applications. If the day of acceptance of Application form and the day of its opening is holiday the next working day will be the last day submitting and opening of Application form.

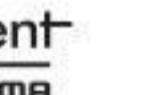
6. Place of Submitting & Opening of Application form – Office of the Divisional Railway Manager (Commercial), Agra Cantt.

7. Website description and Notice Board where full details can be viewed – The Notification inviting Application form, Terms and conditions are also available on the website of North Central Railway <https://ncr.indianrailways.gov.in> as well as on Indian Government portal [www.tenders.gov.in](http://www.tenders.gov.in) if the Notification documents are downloaded from the website, then, the applicant will have to attach the cost of Application form Rs. 1,000/- +(18% GST)=Rs. 1,180/- with Application form in the form of DD (in original) issued by any Nationalized/Scheduled Bank in favour of Sr. Divisional Finance Manager N. C. Railway - Agra, otherwise the Application will be rejected. Application received after the date and time and specified above will not be considered. Offer valid up to 60 days from the date of opening of Application form.

8. Railway Administration keeps its right reserved to Cancel any one or all the Application forms without assigning any reason.

206/24 (D)

North central railways @ [www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in](http://www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in) @northcentralrailway @CPRONCR



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Extract of Consolidated Financial Results

for the Quarter and Nine Months ended 31-Dec-2023

[₹ in crores, except as stated otherwise]

Particulars	Quarter Ended 31-Dec-2023	Quarter Ended 31-Dec-2022 (Restated, Refer note 2)	Nine Months Ended 31-Dec-2023	Year Ended 31-Mar-2023
	Unaudited	Unaudited	Unaudited	Audited
Total Income from operations (net)	2732	2491	7983	9620
Net Profit / (Loss) for the period before tax and exceptional items	543	419	1633	1847
Net Profit / (Loss) for the period before tax and after exceptional items	631	419	1721	1847
Net Profit / (Loss) for the period after tax and exceptional items	443	292	1207	1245
Total Comprehensive Income (after tax)	442	251	1223	1108
Paid up Equity Share Capital	169.23	169.23	169.23	169.23
Other Equity excluding Revaluation Reserve				6029
Net worth	7151	6342	7151	6198
Paid up Debt Capital	786	1273	786	1273
Debt Equity Ratio (in times)	0.53	0.86	0.53	0.85
Earnings per share (of ₹ 5/- each):				
Basic	13.10	8.63	35.67	36.79
Diluted	13.10	8.63	35.67	36.79
Debt Service Redemption Reserve	71	107	71	107
Debt Service Coverage Ratio (in times)	2.21	1.65	1.54	1.89
Interest Service Coverage Ratio (in times)	9.08	6.33	8.01	7.55

Notes :

1. Summary details of stand-alone audited financial results of Torrent Pharmaceuticals Limited :

Particulars	Quarter Ended 31-Dec-2023	Quarter Ended 31-Dec-2022 (Restated, Refer note 2)	Nine Months Ended 31-Dec-2023	Year Ended 31-Mar-2023
	₹ in crores	₹ in crores	₹ in crores	₹ in crores
Net income from operations				



## DELHI CONFIDENTIAL



Uttarakhand CM Pushkar Singh Dhami with retired Supreme Court judge Ranjana Prakash Desai (second from right) and others in Dehradun on Friday. PTI

## FIRST LOOK

THE FIVE-MEMBER committee that prepared the report and draft Bill on Uniform Civil Code in Uttarakhand submitted its report to Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami on Friday. The 780-page report in four volumes has some unique features, sources said. The Hindi version of the report does not have a single word of English or Urdu, and the illustration of the 'Goddess of Justice' on the cover page is not blindfolded. "It is to show that justice will be granted equally to everyone," sources said.

## SPECIAL EMPHASIS

WHILE MOVING amendments to the Motion of Thanks on the President's address, Rajya Sabha Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar laid special emphasis on the name of CPIM member John Brittas. When LoP Mallikarjun Kharge asked why so much stress was on Brittas' name, Dhankhar responded saying "because he is enormously talented". The Chairman also said the LoP was also his [Brittas'] 'vakeel', pointing out that Kharge was among those who advocated revoking suspension of 11 MPs, including that of Brittas.

## GYANVAPI ROW

# Muslim outfits question hurry in initiating puja, to approach President

LALMANI VERMA  
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 2

LEADERS of Muslim bodies, including All India Muslim Personal Law Board and Jamiat Ulama-i-Hind, on Friday expressed regret and concern over the "abrupt initiation" of puja in the cellar of Gyanvapi mosque in Varanasi. The leaders have sought time from the President to convey their concerns on the Gyanvapi situation and other such matters prevailing in different parts of the country.

Speaking to reporters, the leaders said that the swift initiation of puja despite the court granting a seven-day window to the administration for making necessary arrangements point to the "apparent collusion" between the administration and the plaintiff, aimed at foreclosing any effort by the Mosque Managing Committee to pursue remedies against the district court order.

"The District Judge's decision... is highly questionable, especially when it was the judge's last day in office. Equally concerning is the unilateral disclosure of the ASI report, causing turmoil in society. Importantly, this report is merely a claim," the leaders said in a joint statement.

Speaking to reporters, Maulana Syed Arshad Madni, President of Jamiat Ulama-i-Hind, said that mosques were embroiled in such issues right from Delhi's Jama Masjid to other places of worship in Ahmedabad, Sambhal, Mathura, etc.

**THE NEERJA CHOWDHURY COLUMN**

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

AT A family havan recently in Mumbai, among the chants, the pandit recited, "Raghukul reet sada chali aayi, pran jaye par vachan na jayi", going on to elaborate the importance of the proverb from the Ramayana – that it was better to sacrifice your life than to break your word. And then the priest added, "In other words, do not do what Nitish Kumar has done."

That the JD(U) supremo's flip-flop – the fifth in just over a decade – had now entered religious discourse had a poignancy about it. For here was a leader who started off as "Sushasan babu (good gov-

# Indian military personnel will start moving out of Maldives next month

Indian civilian replacements, Maldivian defence personnel for three air assets there

SHUBHAJIT ROY  
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 2

INDIA WILL withdraw its military personnel from the Maldives between March and May, but will continue to operate the two helicopters and a Dornier aircraft in the island nation with the help of Indian civilian replacements and Maldivian defence personnel.

This was the key takeaway from the second meeting of the high-level core group between Indian and Maldivian officials in New Delhi Friday.

The Maldives Foreign Ministry statement said "both sides agreed that the Government of India will replace the military personnel in one of the three aviation platforms by 10 March 2024, and will complete replacing military personnel in the other two platforms by

10 May 2024".

The Ministry of External Affairs did not spell out any timeline in its statement, but said both sides "agreed on a set of mutually workable solutions to enable continued operation of Indian aviation platforms" that provide humanitarian and medical evacuation services to the people of Maldives.

Sources said the only "workable solution" for continued operation of Indian platforms turned out to be replacing them with Indian civilian personnel and Maldivian defence personnel who are trained in operating the three platforms.

Around 80 Indian military personnel are stationed in the Maldives to operate these platforms. On January 14, after the first meeting of the core group, the Maldives government had set a March 15 deadline for India



Maldives President  
Mohamed Muizzu

to withdraw its military personnel from the country.

Sources said the two sides worked to enable continued operation of these three platforms which are the lifeline of Maldives' medical emergency services.

This withdrawal of Indian military personnel is being seen as Maldives President Mohamed Muizzu having his way on the 'India Out' plank on which he

rode to power last year.

The Maldives Foreign Ministry said it was "agreed that the third meeting of the high-level core group will be held in Male on a mutually agreeable date during the last week of February". This meeting will essentially take stock of the progress in the process of withdrawal of Indian military personnel.

The Indian statement, however, did not give any specific timeline for the next meeting and said, "It was agreed to hold the next meeting of the high-level core group in Male on a mutually convenient date."

The two sides, however, struck a congruent note on the issue of bilateral cooperation.

The Maldives Foreign Ministry said, "During the meeting held at the Ministry of External Affairs, both sides reviewed the existing bilateral co-

operation for improving and enhancing the partnership in the fields of defence and security co-operation, economic, and development partnership."

The MEA said, "During the meeting, both sides continued their discussions on wide-ranging issues related to bilateral co-operation towards identifying steps to enhance the partnership, including expediting the implementation of ongoing development cooperation projects."

The core group meeting in New Delhi Friday was primarily exploring ways to resolve the matter, over two weeks after the two sides deliberated over it in their first meeting in Male.

The two sides had decided to set up the core group following a meeting between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Muizzu on the sidelines of the COP28 summit in Dubai in December.

Second meet of high-powered panel for Ladakh on February 19

NAVEED IQBAL  
SRINAGAR, FEBRUARY 2

THE MINISTRY of Home Affairs has decided to hold the second meeting of its high-powered committee on February 19 in New Delhi.

The committee was formed in November 2023 following three years of agitation by socio-political groups in Leh and Kargil. The two main organisations leading the movement for statehood, among other demands, – Apex Body Leh (ABL) and Kargil Democratic Alliance (KDA) – had called for a "bandh" on February 3.

The committee had held its first meeting on December 4 under MoS Home Nitayanand Rai's chairmanship. The 15-member committee includes eight members from the government. Among them are Lt Governor Brigadier BD Mishra (retd), Ladakh MP Jamyang Tsering Namgyal, chairpersons of the Autonomous Hill Development Councils of both Kargil and Leh, and MHA officials.

# Law Commission suggests heavy fines, new laws to tackle damage to property

Modi to visit Odisha, Assam over weekend

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 2

PRIME MINISTER Narendra Modi will travel to Odisha and Assam over the weekend to inaugurate and lay the foundation stones of various projects.

He will be in Odisha Saturday to inaugurate and lay the foundation stones of infrastructure projects worth over Rs 68,000 crore in Sambalpur, a PMO statement said. The next day, he will unveil and lay the foundation stones of various development initiatives worth over Rs 11,000 crore in Guwahati.

"Compelling the offenders to deposit the estimated value of the public property as a condition for granting bail would definitely be a sufficient deterrent against destruction of public property," the 284th report stated.

Starting with the 2013 Muzaffarnagar riots, the Jat (2015) and Patidar (2016) quota agitations, Bhima Koregaon protests (2018), anti-CAA protests (2019), farm law stir (2020) to the violence following the remarks made on Prophet Mohammad (2022) and the large-scale clashes in Manipur last year, the report cites several incidents to underline the scale of loss and damage to public property.

The panel headed by former Karnataka High Court Chief Justice Ritu Raj Awasthi said "bearing in mind the gravity of the issue and the loss being borne by the state exchequer", it took up the issue suo motu and prepared the report.

The Commission recommended making amendments to the Prevention of Damage to Public Property Act, 1984. It also recommended the enactment of new laws to deal with "wilful obstruction of public property", either through a separate enactment, or via amendments to the Indian Penal Code, 1860 or the newly enacted Bharatiya Nyaya Sahita (BNS), 2023.

It alternatively suggested the

introduction of a comprehensive law to address "wilful obstruction and blockade of public spaces and roads for prolonged periods", to address the hardships they cause to the general public.

In the section titled "Inadequacies in Law to Deal with Destruction of Public Property", the report makes note of a 2007 case where the Supreme Court took suo motu cognizance of destruction of property during protests and ordered the formation of two committees to look into the issue.

The Commission, in a separate report Friday, recommended retaining the offence of criminal defamation. The 285th Report on criminal defamation said there is a need to balance "open discourse" with the need to protect individuals from "malicious falsehoods" that would irreparably damage a person's reputation.

The matter was referred to the law panel by the law ministry in August, 2017. The panel relied on the Supreme Court's 2016 decision in Subramanian Swamy v. Union of India in which the court upheld the constitutionality of the offence of criminal defamation. The court had said that the right to freedom of speech and expression under Article 19(2) of the Constitution is subject to certain reasonable restrictions, such as protecting the right to reputation.

On concerns over misuse of criminal defamation law, the Commission underlined that the BNS, by introducing community service as a punishment for the offence, has "safeguarded the interest of the victim and has also neutralised the scope of misuse by giving an alternate punishment".

The Commission recommended making amendments to the Prevention of Damage to Public Property Act, 1984. It also recommended the enactment of new laws to deal with "wilful obstruction of public property", either through a separate enactment, or via amendments to the Indian Penal Code, 1860 or the newly enacted Bharatiya Nyaya Sahita (BNS), 2023.

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# SC agrees to hear AAP plea on Chandigarh mayoral election

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 2

THE SUPREME Court on Friday said it will look into AAP councilor Kuldeep Kumar's petition challenging the Chandigarh mayoral election which was won by BJP's Manoj Kumar Sonkar.

Senior Advocate A M Singhvi mentioned the petition before the bench presided over by Chief Justice of India D Y Chandrachud and requested an urgent hearing.

The CJI said he will look into it.

Kumar had moved the SC after the Punjab and Haryana HC refused to grant an interim stay on the notification appointing Sonkar as mayor. Kumar contended in his petition that the HC erred in not granting an interim stay.

"This is not a case of election dispute, but a case of abuse of public office, which destroys the very essence of faith reposed in the officer and is a constitutional wrong and breach of the doctrine of public trust. The case was so egregious

that the High Court ought to have passed interim orders," he said and sought stay of the notification that would be issued for appointment of Sonkar as mayor of Chandigarh Municipal Corporation.

On January 30, soon after the results were out, Congress and AAP fought the polls in alliance and were expecting an easy victory and accused presiding officer Anil Masih of rigging the polls at BJP's behest. Kumar, AAP's mayoral candidate, also challenged the mayoral elections in the HC.

transition towards zero-emission technology. Volvo and its partner VECV focused on electrification, both displaying electric trucks. Vinod Aggarwal, MD & CEO, VECV, said the firm is in advanced trials for e-trucks in express cargo movement. **WITHPTI/INPUTS**

ready technologies such as hydrogen-powered internal combustion engines, twin-cylinder CNG, efficient fuel delivery systems, battery electric powertrains and hydrogen fuel cell. Girish Wagh, executive director, Tata Motors, said the company is leading India's

move towards zero-emission technology. Volvo and its partner VECV focused on electrification, both displaying electric trucks. Vinod Aggarwal, MD & CEO, VECV, said the firm is in advanced trials for e-trucks in express cargo movement. **WITHPTI/INPUTS**

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## जोहार,

झारखण्ड अलग राज्य होने के 20 वर्षों बाद, विषम परिस्थितियों में भी हेमन्त बाबू के कुशल नेतृत्व में जो कामकाज और योजनाएं यहां के आदिवासियों-मूलवासियों की बुनियादी जलदतों को पूरा करने हेतु चलायी गयी हैं, यह गठबंधन सरकार, उस काम को और तेजी से आगे बढ़ाने का काम करेगी।

यहां के सभी कर्गों, जैसे युवा, बच्चे, बुजुर्गों, महिलाएं, किसानों और मजदूरों को हक-अधिकार देने तथा शिक्षा, स्वास्थ्य, कृषि जैसे क्षेत्रों को ध्यान में रखते हुए जनहित में हम काम करेंगे।

झारखण्ड में जल-जंगल-जमीन को लेकर वर्षों से संघर्ष हुआ है। यहां के आदिवासियों-मूलवासियों के अस्तित्व और अस्तित्व को संरक्षित करने का काम हमें करना है।

हमारा प्रयास होगा कि भगवान बिस्मिल मुंडा, सिदो- कान्हू और बाबा तिलका मांझी समेत सभी वीर शहीदों के आदर्थों को धरातल पर उतार कर, राज्यवासियों के जीवन स्तर में सकारात्मक बदलाव ला सके।

यह बहुत बड़ा दायित्व मुझे मिला है जिसे मैं पूरी लगन से निभाऊंगा।

जय हिन्द !  
जय झारखण्ड !



**चंद्रसेखर सारंगी**  
मुख्यमंत्री, झारखण्ड

# Three of family shot dead in Lucknow over land dispute

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
LUCKNOW, FEBRUARY 2



A video grab of the incident in Lucknow on Friday.

IN A broad daylight murder in the Uttar Pradesh capital on Friday, three members of a family were shot dead by a group of men over a dispute related to measurement of land in Lucknow's Malihabad area.

The accused and the victims are related and one of the assailants was arrested, police said.

A 50-second video – CCTV footage – of the incident surfaced on social media. Police identified the deceased as Munee Khan (54), his nephew Hanzal (17) and Hanzal's mother Farheen (40), all residents of Mohammed Nagar area in Malihabad.

According to police the skirmish on Friday started after an argument between Faraz, his son Siraj with the opposite party represented by the deceased after a land measurement process in the presence of Lekhpal.

"The accused fired multiple rounds at Munir, Hanzal, and Farheen, killing them instantly," said a police officer.

In a statement from the spot of the incident, Lucknow Police Commissioner SB Shrikardar said, "There was a dispute between two sides... The ones accused in the case fired with their licensed

VACANCY OF STAFF AT AIR FORCE SCHOOL SUBROTO PARK, HQ WAC(U), NEW DELHI  
THE VACANCIES OF THREE TUTORS (PERMANENT), ONE SPECIAL EDUCATOR AND ONE HELPER (BOTH ON CONTRACT) ARE AVAILABLE IN AF SCHOOL SUBROTO PARK, HQ WAC(U). ELIGIBLE CANDIDATES CAN APPLY ON BEHALF OF 23 FEET FOR THE SAID POSTS. DETAILED INFORMATION REGARDING ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA AND APPLICATION FORM ARE AVAILABLE ON SCHOOL WEBSITE AT [www.afschoolsubroto.com](http://www.afschoolsubroto.com). APPLICATION FORMS MAY BE DOWNLOADED FROM SCHOOL WEBSITE. CANDIDATES PHYSICALLY DROPPED INTO BOX KEPT AT MAIN GUARD ROOM OF HQ WAC, SUBROTO PARK. CANDIDATES ARE TO BE AVAILABLE IN SCHOOL AT 1000 HRS ON 27 FEB 2024 FOR THEIR EDUCATIONAL DOCUMENT VERIFICATION.

## NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY E-TENDER NOTICE

DRM / Electrical, North Western Railway, Jodhpur for & on behalf of the President of India, invites E-Tender for the following work.  
**Tender No.: 23/2023-24.**  
**Name of Work:** Provision of IOT devices/Intelligent Field Devices (IFDs) for monitoring & control (Indian Railways Native IOT based Yield Analysis Telemetry, Recording and Control-IRIN-IRIYANTRAC) of electrical general assets like pump, platform (30/70%) lighting, street lighting, lifts, Escalators, Substation etc at NSG-5 & above category stations over JU Division. **Approx. cost of the work:** Rs. 3,31,98,543.82/-  
1. Complete details of tenders can be seen on Website: <http://www.ireps.gov.in>  
2. Date & time of closing of E-Tender: 26.02.2024 up to 15.00 hrs. 3. Date & time of opening of E-tender:- After 15.00 hrs. on 26.02.2024. For detailed information visit <http://www.ireps.gov.in>

143-AK/24

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## WEST CENTRAL RAILWAY

Corrigendum  
Electrical Department (TRD Branch), Jabalpur  
e-TENDER NOTICE: No. TRD/JEP/2x25/V  
2023-7-04 date: 29.12.2023  
Senior Divisional Electrical Engineer (TRD) West Central Railway Jabalpur for and on behalf of the President of India invite sealed tenders from the reputed and experienced contractors having valid Electrical License issued in the name of firm by State Government as required under IE rules, 1956 with one of the partners or in his own name if sole proprietor. **Name of work -** Design /Modification, Supply, Erection, Testing and Commissioning of Up-gradation work of Electric Traction System from 1 x 25 kV to 2x25 kV Traction System consisting aluminum feeder wire along the UP & DN track and AEC and BEC earthing along the main UP & DN track from GAJB (Incl.) to MHDA (Excl.) (km : 1295/1,2 to 1334/14) between KTE-SGR Section of Jabalpur Division W C Railway to meet 3000 MT loading target. **Place of work -** Jabalpur Division. **Completion period -** 18 months . **Tender value (Cost of the work)** - Rs. 26,42,55,634.54/- (Rs. Twenty Six Crore Forty Two Lakh Fifty Five Thousand Six Hundred Thirty Four and Fifty Four Paisa only) **Ernest Money- Rs. 14,71,300.00,- Revised Date & Time for submission / opening of tender -** 21.02.2024 15:00 Hrs./ 21.02.2024 15:30 Hrs., **Website address** <https://www.ireps.gov.in> Tenderers are advised to regularly visit IREPS website "http://www.ireps.gov.in" to note any changes /corrigendum. Minimum eligibility criteria as per tender form shall be applicable for this tender.

153-AK/24

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## NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY

E-TENDER NOTICE  
DRM (TRD & GSU) NWR Ajmer on behalf of The President of India invites E - Tenders for the following work up to 15.00 Hrs. on the mentioned date. **1) Tender No. : DRM-TRD-20-2023-24.**  
**Name of work:** Replacement of Porcelain Insulator with Composite Insulator over Ajmer division. **Approximate cost of work:** Rs. 1,01,54,626.20/- **Bid Security:** Rs. 2,00,800.00/- **Date & time of closing E-tender:** 22.02.2024 at 15.00 Hrs. **Date & time of opening E-tender:** 22.02.2024 at 15.30 Hrs. **Tender No.:** DRM-TRD-21-2023-24. **Name of work:** OHE modification related to the Vande Bharat Train operation in Single line and Double line section over Ajmer division. **Approximate cost of work:** Rs. 3,24,25,580.00/- **Bid Security:** Rs. 3,12,100.00/- **Date & time of closing E-tender:** 22.02.2024 at 15.00 Hrs. **Date & time of opening E-tender:** 22.02.2024 at 15.30 Hrs. **The details of above E-tender are available on website** [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in)

142-AK/24

Follow us on:

## 2015 POLICE FIRING CASE

# HC quashes Punjab IGP's suspension, says state can't pick and choose rules

JAGPREET SINGH  
CHANDIGARH, FEBRUARY 2



IGP Paramraj Singh Umrangal

HOLDING THAT the "state cannot pick and choose the rules of their suitability", the Punjab and Haryana High Court Friday quashed three suspension orders of Inspector General of Police (IGP) Paramraj Singh Umrangal – an accused in the police firing cases of 2015 following the sacrifice incidents. The order paves way for reinstatement of Umrangal who has remained suspended for five

years with first suspension orders issued against him on February 26, 2019, November 20, 2020, and March 22, 2021.

Umrangal had moved the high court in February 2023, seeking quashing of a Central Administrative Tribunal order dismissing his plea for reinstatement.

A Division Bench of Justices Sureshwar Thakur and Sudeep Sharma quashed both the CAT order and the suspension orders. "The respondents are directed to allow the petitioner to join the services forthwith," the bench said.

The Bench, after perusing the suspension orders and the procedure to be followed for suspension of All India Service Officers under AIS (D&A) Rules, 1989, observed that "the state government did not bother to follow the procedure which is mandatory in the case of the petitioner for the reasons best known to the state".

## Ist from Odisha to win national award for best actor, Sadhu Meher dies at 84

SUJIT BISOYI  
BHUBANESWAR, FEBRUARY 2

EMINENT ACTOR and director Sadhu Meher, who had made a mark in both Hindi and Odia industries, passed away in Mumbai Friday. He was 84.

A native of Manamunda in Odisha's Boudh district, Meher began his career in 1969 with Hindi films like 'Bhuvan Shome', 'Ankur', and 'Mrigaya' before shifting focus to Odia cinema.

Five years later in 1974, he became the first from Odisha to

win a national award for best actor, for his role in Shyam Benegal's Hindi film 'Ankur'. Meher was also known for his role in other Hindi films like '27 Down' (1974), 'Manthan' (1976) and 'Inkaar' (1977).

He gained prominence in parallel cinema in mid-1980s after his focus shifted to Odia cinema. Meher's acting is critically acclaimed in 'Bhukha', a 1989 Sambalpuri-language film by Sabayasachi Mohapatra.

Some of the Odia films directed by Meher include 'Abhimaan', 'Aparichita', 'Abhilasha'

and 'Copa Re Badhuchi Kala Kanhei'. He also directed the first children's sci-fi (science fiction) Odia movie 'Babula' in 1985.

For his lifetime contribution, the Odisha government had conferred the Jaydev Samman on Meher in 2011. Meher also received the Padma Shri in 2017.

Odisha CM Naveen Patnaik said Meher has left an indelible mark with his flawless performances in both Hindi and Odia cinema. Patnaik said his demise is an irreparable loss to the film industry and expressed his condolences to the bereaved families.

## E-TENDER NOTICE

### EAST CENTRAL RAILWAY

#### CUDDALORE CORPORATION

##### Open Tender (Two Cover System) Notice

###### ROC NO. 5642/2020/E1

###### Date: 01.02.2024

###### Sl. No.

###### Name of the work

###### Approx. value of work Rs. in Crores

###### E.M.D. (Rs.)

###### Eligible class

###### I & II Fund 2023-24

###### Construction of New Iru stand at Antisiperiyankuppam village in Cuddalore Corporation.

###### Rs. 36.52

###### 36,52,000/-

###### As per Technical standard

###### Date & time of pre bid meeting

###### 09.02.2024 3:30 pm, Cuddalore Corporation Office.

###### Bid documents availability (at free of cost)

###### Can be downloaded from [https://tenders.gov.in](http://tenders.gov.in) website at free of cost to 19.02.2024 up to 3:00 pm

###### Due date and time of submission of bids

###### 19.02.2024 up to 3:00 pm in the Office of Cuddalore Corporation

###### Date, time and place of opening of bids

###### 19.02.2024 at 3:30 pm in the Office of Cuddalore Corporation

###### Any Other important criteria by tender inviting authority

###### Can be seen in the tender document. Any clarification required may be sought from the office of Cuddalore Corporation during office hours on all working days. Only one original copy/one copy of documents shall be submitted before 3:00 pm on 19.02.2024

###### DIPR/640/Tender/2024

###### Commissioner, Cuddalore Corporation

CUDDALORE CORPORATION			
Open Tender (TWO COVER SYSTEM) Notice			
Date: 01.02.2024			
Sl. No.	Name of the work	Approx. value of work Rs. in Crores	E.M.D. (Rs.)
1	Construction of New Iru stand at Antisiperiyankuppam village in Cuddalore Corporation.	Rs. 36.52	36,52,000/-

**E-TENDER NOTICE**  
Divisional Railway Manager, N.W. Ry. Bikaner for and on behalf of President of India invites sealed open tender for the following works on the date shown as below:  
**E-Tender No: S&T-BKN-ET-280.**  
**Name of Work with its location:** Replacement of defective patches of Quad cable and Patch laying of Quad cable inside railway boundary in lieu of cable laid outside the Railway Boundary over BKN division. **Approx. cost of work:** Rs. 4,12,96,845.95. **Bid Security Amount:** Rs. 3,56,500.00. Date & time for submission of Tender & opening of tender : **Up to 15:00 Hrs of 23.02.2024.** Website from Which complete Tender details can be seen & download [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in) **151-AK/24**  
Follow us on:

**TAMIL NADU WATER SUPPLY AND DRAINAGE BOARD**  
NOTICE INVITING TENDER THROUGH E-TENDER NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING  
NCB No.28/F.UGSS to Aruppukottai (STP)/ KFW/ DO II/ 2024/ (E-Submission)

E-bids are invited from the eligible bidders (Registered Class I Contractors-Civil) for the following works as per the procedure of TWAD Board under two cover system (DBOT Basis) conforming to the Tamil Nadu Transparency in Tenders Act, 1998 and Rules 2000.

NCB No.	Name of work	Approx. Value (Rs. in Crore including GST)	Bid Security	Pre bid meeting Date	E-Bid Submission closing Date	E-Bid Opening Date
28	Providing UGSS to Aruppukottai Municipality in Virudhunagar District - Design, Engineering, Build, Operate and Commissioning of 13.24 MLD Capacity Sewage Treatment Plant at Municipal Compost Yard in Sukkilaitham With Sequential Batch Reactor (SBR) Technology (DBOT Basis) for a Construction Period of 18 months and performance Trial run 3 months followed by 10 years of Operation and Maintenance	Rs.34.00 Crore	Rs.0.34 Crore	01.03.2024 at 11.00 Hours	27.03.2024 upto 15.00 Hours	28.03.2024 at 15.30 Hours

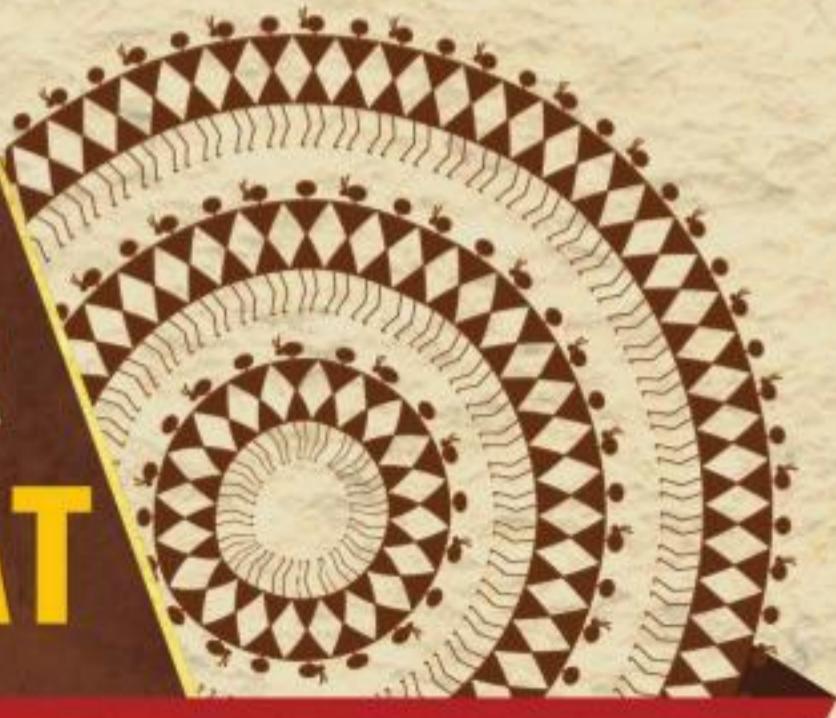
**SBM 2.0, KFW & CGF**

EMD by online transfer only through NIC Portal. The tenderer shall submit scanned copy of online transaction statement towards EMD as part of Technical bid.

Availability of tender documents and e-bid submission is permitted through tender portal / website: "<https://tenders.gov.in>". For all other details refer tender schedule in the website from 09.02.2024.

**Chief Engineer (i/c), TWAD Board, Madurai**

## VIKSIT ODISHA FOR VIKSIT BHARAT



Inauguration, dedication to nation and foundation stone laying ceremony  
of 18 ground-breaking projects, worth over ₹68 thousand crores

by

**Honourable Prime Minister Narendra Modi**

On Saturday, 3rd February, 2024 at 10:00 AM

### Inauguration

- 4-laning of Rimuli-Koida Section of NH-520
- 4-laning of Birmitrapur Brahmani bypass Section of NH-143
- 4-laning of Brahmani bypass to Rajamunda Section of NH-143
- IB-Valley Washery (10 MTPA), Lakhnupur
- Lajkura CHP – RLS
- Bhubaneswari Ph-I CHP-SILO
- Dhamra - Angul Pipeline Section (412 Km) of Jagdishpur-Haldia & Bokaro-Dhamra Pipeline Project
- Permanent Campus of IIM Sambalpur

### Dedication To The Nation

- NTPC Darlipali Super Thermal Power Project (2x800 MW)
- NSPCL Rourkela PP-II Expansion Project (1x250 MW)
- Doubling of Sambalpur– Talcher Railway Line
- Jharterbha Sonepur New Railway Section
- Doubling of Jharsuguda-Barpali-Sardega Rail Line
- Renovated Jharsuguda Head Post Office Heritage Building

Flagging off  
Puri-Sonepur-Puri  
Weekly Express

### Foundation Stone Laying

NLC Talabira  
Thermal Power  
Project (3x800 MW)

Nagpur – Jharsuguda Pipleine Section  
(692 Km) of Mumbai –Nagpur –  
Jharsuguda Pipeline Project

Redevelopment of  
Sambalpur Railway  
Station

NTPC Talcher Thermal  
Power Project, Stage-III  
(2x660 MW)

In the august presence of

**Shri Raghubar Das**  
Governor, Odisha

**Shri Naveen Patnaik**  
Chief Minister, Odisha

**Shri Dharmendra Pradhan**  
Union Minister of Education; and  
Skill Development and Entrepreneurship

**Shri Ashwini Vaishnaw**  
Union Minister of Railways; Communications; and  
Electronics and Information Technology

**Shri Bishweswar Tudu**  
Union MoS of Tribal Affairs; and Jal Shakti

**Shri Nitesh Ganga Deb**  
Member of Parliament

**Shri Nauri Nayak**  
Member, Odisha Legislative Assembly

WATCH LIVE ON DD NEWS

10

THE INDIAN EXPRESS, SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 2024



# THE EDITORIAL PAGE

## The Indian EXPRESS

FOUNDED BY

RAMNATH GOENKA

BECAUSE THE TRUTH INVOLVES US ALL

### IN THE DOCK

Mark Zuckerberg has apologised to parents of children victimised on Meta platforms. It is not enough

**I**N HIS EIGHTH appearance before the US Congress, Mark Zuckerberg — CEO of Meta, the parent company of Facebook, Instagram and WhatsApp — finally said sorry. Turning to the gallery filled with parents of children who had faced abuse on and through social media — some even committed suicide — Zuckerberg said: "No-one should have to go through the things that your families have suffered." An apology is never wasted. In this case, though, it is far from enough. Earlier this week, the CEOs of Meta, TikTok, Snapchat and Discord appeared before a bipartisan committee of the US Senate to answer for how these platforms are used by predators against children. The issue, however, does not concern the US alone but parents, policy-makers and society, including especially in India.

Between 2021 and 2023, at least two whistleblowers — Frances Haugen and Arturo Bejar — revealed that Meta has long been aware of the fact that its products cause harm to children and young people. An investigation by The Guardian in 2023 found in Meta's internal documents that 1 lakh minors, a majority of them female, face some form of harassment on its platforms every day. Platforms and apps are used by predators to "groom" minors and as a tool for human trafficking. Two companion Amnesty International reports published in 2023 highlighted "the abuses experienced by children and young people using TikTok, and how these abuses are caused by TikTok's recommender system and the underlying business model". Time and again, studies, reports and leaked documents have shown that social media platforms, reliant as they are on "engagement" and "attention", have not done enough to address the harms caused by their amoral algorithms.

India has over 600 million smartphone users, and teenagers are among the fastest-growing segments within this category. These figures, along with data from the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), present a chilling picture of the potential scale of minor abuse. According to the NCRB, about 28 per cent of the entire minor population has faced some form of sexual abuse, but many victims do not come forward to register a complaint. Despite this, in 2022 alone, 38,911 child rape and nearly 3,500 cases of sexual exploitation online were reported. Given these figures, it would be naïve at best and negligent at worst for social media platforms not to hold themselves to account. India, despite being the largest market for Meta, has fewer content moderators — both proportionally and in absolute numbers — than the US or Europe. This must be addressed. It is also important to have mass awareness and education campaigns on safe and responsible smartphone use for parents and children, in schools and beyond, especially in non-metro towns and villages. Law enforcement too needs the requisite resources and training to deal with crimes online — even as the police finds its feet on social media misuse, AI-created deep-fakes are becoming increasingly common. The Big Tech bosses in Silicon Valley have often used the excuse that their products are "platforms, not publishers" to escape accountability for their misuse. That argument is increasingly wearing thin.

### LANGUAGE & LEARNING

CBSE's new plan has possibilities for improving skill acquisition.

But it must ensure that old faultlines are not reopened

**A**CCORDING TO A report in this newspaper, the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) has proposed a major overhaul in the academic framework for secondary and higher secondary education. Students will be required to study three languages — instead of two — till Class X, at least two of which must be native Indian languages. At the higher secondary level, students will have to study two languages instead of one, at least one of which must be a native Indian language. Secondary-level students will now have to clear 10 subjects, as opposed to the current requirement of five. Graduating from high school will require clearing six subjects, instead of five. The shift is in accordance with NEP 2020's objective of doing away with the rigid separation between academic and extracurricular streams. A credit bank system will ensure that the student is rewarded for skills obtained outside the classroom. The CBSE's plan gives the learner the space to combine academic training with vocational education. It is, therefore, a welcome departure from pedagogic strategies that have contributed to the country's skill deficit by devaluing hands-on training. The examination authority must, however, make sure that the new system does not impose an extra burden on already stretched students.

A wealth of scholarship has underlined that knowledge of multiple languages improves learning outcomes and helps skill acquisition. At the same time, the three-language formula remains a politically fraught issue, especially in South India, which has a long history of language-based sub-nationalism. The Tamil Nadu government, for instance, has opposed the NEP even though the policy does not require non-Hindi-speaking states to include the language in school curricula. Linguistic activists in the state fear the implementation of the three-language formula could push schools to teach Hindi because of the scarcity of teachers in other languages. When it was first framed in 1968, the formula envisaged teaching a modern Indian language, apart from Hindi and English till Class VIII in schools in North India. But Hindi-speaking states have never had more than a handful of schools with teachers who can teach Malayalam, Kannada or Tamil — or, for that matter, Bengali, Marathi or Gujarati. The CBSE's proposal should occasion conversations on finding a greater play for the country's linguistic diversity in school curricula.

The CBSE has not specified a time-frame for rolling out the new system. The agency must hold wide consultations before finalising its plan. It must ensure that all sensitivities are respected and old faultlines are not reopened.

### ART OF REACHING OUT

Fairs dispel the notion of art as an elitist pursuit.

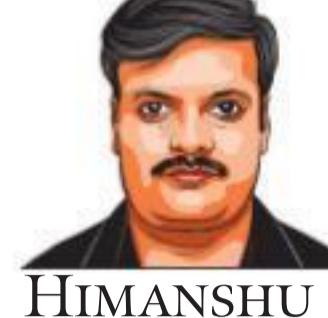
It is enough to be curious

**A**CTIVISTS MAY THROW soup at the *Mona Lisa* or mashed potato at *Les Meules*, and ask if art is more important in the time of climate change, but the truth remains that the two need not be at odds with each other. Indeed, an appreciation of art might make one aware that it is more than an elitist pursuit. Taken out of the museum space, where it can often be intimidating for the uninitiated, it can be liberating; a marketplace, but also with room for new ways of seeing.

Take, for instance, the ongoing India Art Fair (IAF), where Goa-based new media artist Afrah Shafiq has a surprise waiting for her audience. She invites them to play a game — *The Bride Who Could Not Stop Crying* — that builds on her years of research on children's books from the erstwhile Soviet Union and their vibrant images of bridal attires and South Asia's history of dowry deaths. In Shafiq's game, the wedding day is one of mourning, and how much the bride will cry will depend on the choices the audience makes. In another booth, a 320x1320 cm Ai Weiwei in Woma blocks holds centrestage, a rare opportunity to see the dissident Chinese artist's work up close. A third has a set of works by Gulammohammed Sheikh on the politics of language. In between, there are art tours for children and interactions with buyers. It is a world of expansive imagination, both evocative and provocative.

Every two years, the Kochi biennale draws in the city as a participant, converting streets and warehouses into venues to showcase a range of art. The IAF is more niche, with its emphasis on business, but its basic tenet is similar: At its core, art is democratic and one need not be a buyer or a connoisseur to appreciate it. It is simply enough to be curious.

# A reality check for budget



HIMANSHU

It does not reflect the real state of the economy, nor provides ideas on the future of governance

BUDGETS IN PRE-ELECTION years are technically a vote on account. However, they are important politically as most governments use the opportunity to state their achievements and also outline the challenges for future government. While Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has used this opportunity to highlight her government's achievements, however contested they are, the budget has failed to offer clarity on the spending priorities to deal with these challenges. More so, when the Indian economy is facing severe issues, especially a sagging rural economy leading to subdued demand.

Unlike the previous vote on account budget in 2019 when the then finance minister announced several expenditure schemes including PM-KISAN with retrospective effect, this budget stayed away from making any major announcements. The spending priorities of the government suggest a conservative outlook as far as major social welfare spending is concerned. This has certainly helped the finance ministry to reduce the fiscal deficit. But has it done enough to address some of the glaring issues facing the Indian economy?

Notwithstanding the grand claims of 25 crore persons moving out of poverty and an economy rebounding from the crisis of slowdown and the pandemic, the reality is that the Indian economy is facing its worst crisis of rural distress, decelerating private investment and the challenge of providing decent employment. Although the reality of what happened to poverty after 2011-12 is clouded by a deliberate attempt to hide crucial data on consumption expenditure, the general consensus suggests a deceleration in pace of poverty reduction, if not an increase.

The most important indicator of deepening rural distress is the data on real wages from the labour bureau which suggests that in the last five years, agricultural wages in real terms have grown at only 0.2 per cent per annum (until November 2023), and non-farm wages have declined at 0.9 per cent per year. Compared with the level of real wages in May 2014 when this government took over, non-farm wages have declined at 0.4 per cent per

year with agricultural wages rising at a modest 0.5 per cent per year.

Even regular workers, the backbone of the middle class, have seen real wages decline since 2011-12. While real earnings of regular workers in rural areas declined at 0.3 per cent per year between 2011-12 and 2017-18, it declined faster at 1.7 per cent per annum for urban workers. This trend continues after 2017-18. Real wages of regular workers in rural areas declined by 0.5 per cent per year between 2017-18 and 2022-23, whereas it remained the same for urban regular workers.

Perhaps a better indicator of the distress in the rural economy is the reversal of the structural transformation in the workforce after 2017-18. While Sitharaman was quick to take credit for the rise in female employment, a close look at the data would have also shown an increase in self-employment, worsening employment quality and declining earnings for women workers. Similarly, the fact that employment in agriculture has increased at a faster pace after 2017-18, compared to the rate of decline after 2004-05, would have also pointed out the seriousness of the employment challenge. With 42 million workers moving back to agriculture between 2017-18 and 2022-23, the number of workers is higher than the level in 2011-12. With agriculture becoming the refuge for those unable to find employment elsewhere, it has also meant declining cultivation income per worker. Forget about the promise of doubling farmer incomes, the Indian farmer is facing a stagnation in farm incomes.

Withdrawal of essential spending at a time when the rural economy is yet to recover, incomes of the majority of wage earners and the self-employed declining in real terms, and the threat of inflation looming large, is a double whammy for the majority of the population.

Budget estimates for major heads such as agriculture, rural development, nutrition, education and health have either remained stagnant or declined in real terms. But even for existing expenditures, a larger part goes for cash transfers or subsidies with virtually no increase in real investment in the last five years.

While agriculture is a good example, the situation is no better in case of rural development, education and health. At a time when the agricultural sector faces multiple challenges of uncertain prices, rising input costs and equally uncertain weather shocks, the need was to raise expenditure on investment in agriculture with focus on insulating the farmers from price as well as weather shocks. Similarly, existing social sector schemes such as NREGA have proven to be a lifeline during the slowdown and pandemic but needed to be boosted to contribute to increasing rural wages.

Despite an increase in government transfers during the last five years, direct as well as indirect, consumption demand has failed to respond with real incomes staying lower than levels in 2018-19. The worry of sluggish consumption growth is obvious even from national accounts. But even in investments and exports, the Indian economy faces challenges. While private investment is yet to pick up and export growth remains uncertain due to global uncertainties, the government's fillip to capital expenditure and export promotion is likely to remain crucial for sustaining the growth momentum. On both these fronts, spending priorities appear to be more of long-term promises than actual provisioning in the budget.

These budget estimates are vote on account and are likely to be revised when a full-scale budget is presented by the new government. But, the broader political message appears to be an acceptance of the limitations of public expenditure. The cutback in social-welfare spending, including on agriculture and rural development, is likely to push the rural economy back into distress. These are as crucial in reviving demand in the economy as they are for pushing private sector investment. Similarly, investment in human capital is necessary for the economy to create jobs. Unfortunately, this budget is neither a true reflection of the real state of the economy nor does it provide any idea of the future agenda of governance.

The writer is associate professor, Jawaharlal Nehru University



SHUBHRA GUPTA

COMING OF AGE is one of the most overused phrases attached to films featuring teenagers. It is perhaps the toughest subject to deal with in the conservative Indian context. Because a teenager, by definition, is an authority-averse bundle of confusing contradictions: Yo-yoing between attention-seeking and wanting to disappear; knowing everything and nothing, feeling loved and hated, all gangly limbs, embarrassing acne rashes, uncontrolled growth spurts.

For filmmakers addressing Indian audiences still conflicted about sex and passion, any depiction of rawness can be a Herculean task — we may have moved past two swans necking, but we haven't really crashed through the bars that imprison real teenagers, with their aches and aspirations, joys and fears.

Sixteen-year-old Mira is an ace student at her co-ed boarding school. She revels in being the best, and naturally is a teacher's pet. But — and this is where Shuchi Talati's acutely observed debut feature *Girls Will Be Girls* veers away from the way teens have been largely depicted in mainstream Bollywood — she is sexually aware, curious about her body, and has no qualms in acknowledging it. At the recently-concluded Sundance Film Festival, the film won the Audience Award, and a special jury nod for lead actor Preeti Panigrahi, making it a perfect "Winter of '24" for thrilled producers Richa Chadha and Ali Fazal.

Watching Mira, neat and contained on the outside and roiling with feelings inside, trying to make sense of the tumult, is like experiencing what it is like to be a 16-year-old. How does it feel to be kissed on the inside of a wrist?

### SKETCHED FROM THE INSIDE

Messy, raw realities of young adulthood come of age in 'Girls Will Be Girls'

Watching Mira, neat and contained on the outside and roiling with feelings inside, trying to make sense of the tumult, is like experiencing what it is like to be a 16-year-old. How does it feel to be kissed on the inside of a wrist?

Close your eyes and imagine the very first time a touch so intimate happened to you. Or, wait, did it happen to you at all? The scene, potent and powerful in its fleetingness, opens up the door of possibilities, and you can imagine the unease of the adults who've never gone down that path, to expose their progeny to what they would automatically term "shameless".

Imagine what would Mummy and Daddy and Bua and Mausi and Dada have to say to such brazen behaviour? How could filmmakers write a character like Mira's and expect to get away with it, in a society where the mingling of the opposite sexes has still not been normalised in so many parts of the country?

Mira's attraction for Sri, a new worldly-wise classmate, is the tipping point in the little domestic unit she creates with her mother, Anila, who appears to have raised Mira on her own, the husband a largely absent figure. You understand Mira's newly-minted desires easily; witnessing Anila's longing for intimacy which is as strong as her sense of deprivation, is queasier. It also becomes, conversely, the most powerful binding force between the mother and daughter.

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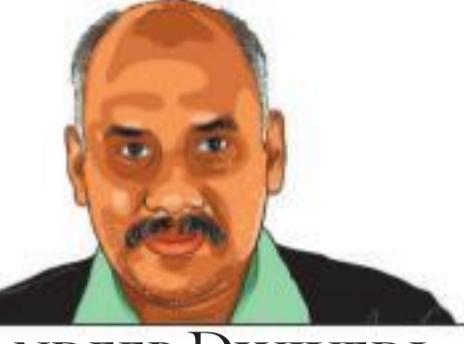
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# THE IDEAS PAGE

## Verdict on Novak Djokovic

It is tough to foretell what fate awaits Djokovic after his Australian Open loss. At 36, he is still playing tennis like no one before him, only the brave or the flippant can write him off



SANDEEP DWIVEDI

STADIUMS ARE KANGAROO courts, infamous for their hasty judgements. Sports fans are instant opinion-makers. They are also the judge and jury. So, last weekend at the Australian Open, after his loss to 22-year-old Jannik Sinner in the semifinal, the verdict on Novak Djokovic was diligently passed. The greatest ever tennis player was past his prime at 36; the 20-something Gen-Next had finally caught up and it was curtains for the Djokovic era.

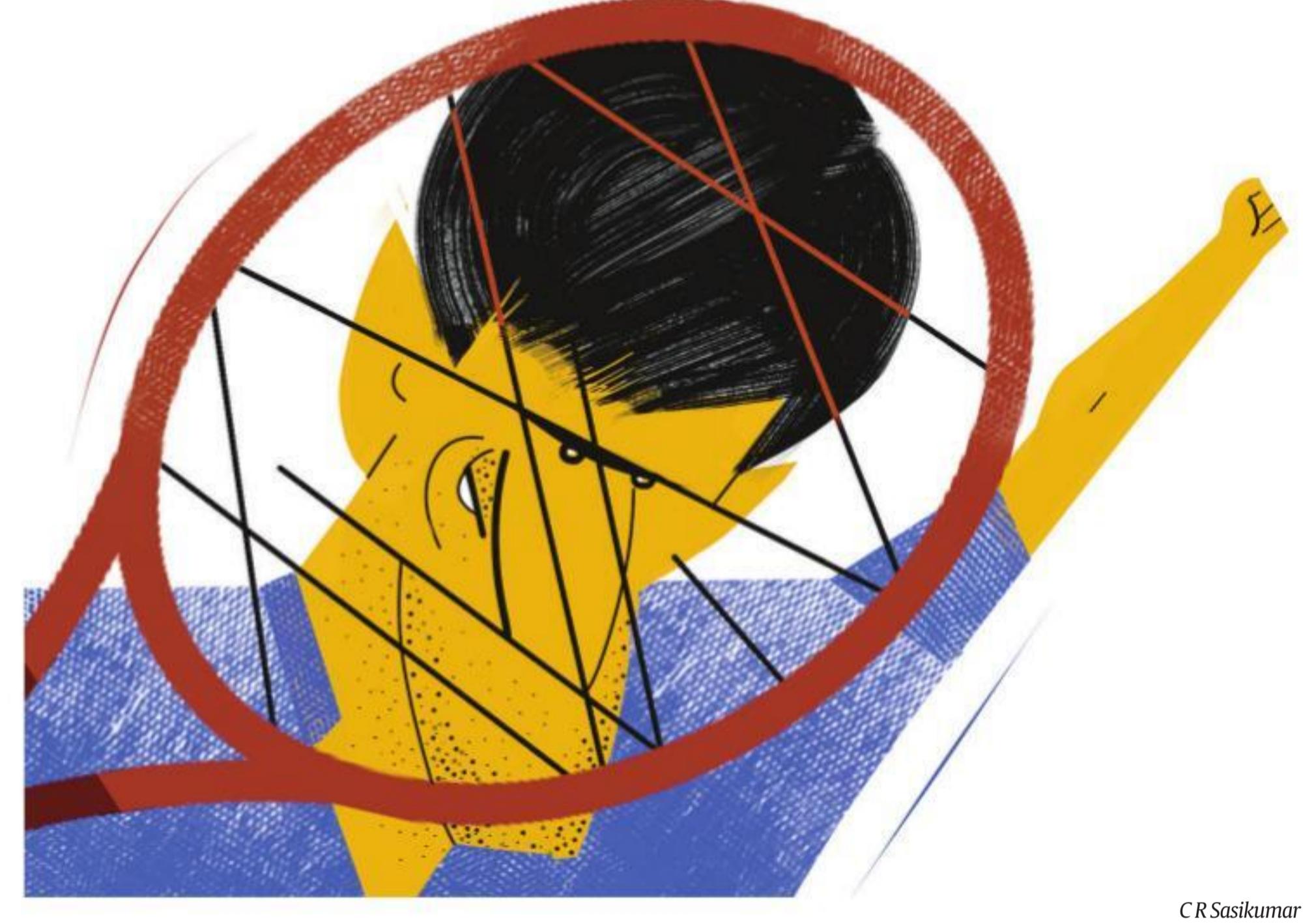
The undisputed World No.1 would call the face-off with Sinner his "worst Grand Slam match ever". Statistics too indicated so. The man known to play a flawless percentage game had 54 unforced errors. One of the best returners in the history of the sport didn't have a single break point on Sinner's serve. It was the darkest day of Djokovic's sparkling career.

Thankfully, there was the ageless champion of her time, Martina Navratilova, to put a rational frame of perspective around the rattled Djokovic statement after the shocking loss. "When you get older, the bad days get worse," she would say. And be it the GOAT or a 9-to-5 mortal, who doesn't have a bad day at the workplace? Having witnessed many false dawns and dusks, Navratilova wasn't jumping the gun. She was normalising tennis' latest big upset, a regular feature at Grand Slams over the years.

Djokovic himself had to confront the "age question". At press conferences, reporters are generally guarded when asking questions of superstar athletes in their mid-30s who have been annihilated by younger opponents. At Melbourne, towards the end of the media interaction, an Australian reporter, not one on the tennis beat, dared to ask the Serb, father of a nine-year-old son, if age was catching up. Scribes taking notes looked up to check Djokovic's expression. Would he fume, would there be a meltdown or just a smart snub? They were surprised. Djokovic would give a headline-making answer. "I hope not, but I don't know, time will tell," he said.

Was this an acknowledgement of the looming shadow of Father Time falling on him or another of those clever Djokovic mind games? The ultra-competitive champion is known to take well-timed injury breaks during crunch games. Many times in his career, especially when the opponent is running away with a match, Djokovic would start to grimace, complain to the chair umpire about some mystery niggle or strain. This would end up giving his rivals a false sense of superiority. They would no longer be in the present. They would prematurely start dreaming of an easy win, bouquets and silverware. Invariably, after the break, there would be a change in momentum. The sly Serb, magically cured and running around like a gazelle, would go on to seal the match.

In a sport of a million vagaries, it is tough to foretell what fate awaits Djokovic, but the smart money will always be on the hardened



CR Sasikumar

survivor weathering another storm. It was just last year that Carlos Alcaraz, 19, had blown him off the Wimbledon turf. Even then, the stands had passed the "beginning of the end" judgement. Djokovic, on that day, gracefully accepted the loss, and praised the young champion — but away from the public eye, he switched to beast mode.

Months later, his coach, the great Goran Ivanisevic, was asked about Djokovic's mood at the first training session after the Alcaraz loss. "Was he cranky?" a reporter had queried. Ivanisevic let out a chuckle to say, "At training, he is always cranky". In the past, Djokovic has said that to remain toe-to-toe with the youngsters pursuing him, he has to reinvent his game every month, every week. Within months of losing to Alcaraz, Djokovic would beat him at the Cincinnati Masters. He would tear his shirt, roar like a lion, sounding out to the world that the Djokovic story was far from over. As you read this, in some part of the world, a cranky Djokovic and the wise old Ivanisevic would be plotting Sinner's fall.

While it will be too early and unwise to see him as a player in decline, there have been some subtle changes in him. He isn't the Djokovic of old when not hitting the tennis ball. Back in the day, in the Roger Federer-Rafael Nadal era, he was the "unloved" and "uncheered" No.3 of the Big 3. He was bitter, he was driven, he desperately wanted to knock them down from the podium and beat them in the historic race for the Slams.

He did all that and after achieving all those lofty goals, Djokovic has looked relaxed. He no longer smashes racquets or picks fights with umpires. "I have tried not to be too harsh with myself because I did earlier in my career. I was my biggest critic," he

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said at the end of last year.

These days, he is friends with his young rivals and as an ageing champion, he is also the darling of the crowds. Maybe, the Australian Open loss will reawaken him, fuel that old anger, make him feel about Sinner and Alcaraz the way he did about Federer and Nadal.

It wouldn't be a tough task to do for the player who from his very first day on the tennis court has believed in being prepared for every eventuality. Growing up in Belgrade in the 1990s, the erstwhile Yugoslavia's decade of violent disintegration, ethnic cleansing, deaths and mass migration; young Novak pursued his passion while disregarding the screaming NATO fighter planes overhead. Every day, his childhood coach Jelena Gencic would second-guess the bombing target to decide which courts her favourite student would train on.

She once heard a charming story about the six-year-old Djokovic's initiation into tennis. One morning, Gencic spotted a young boy intently observing other kids playing from the other side of the fence skirting the court. She told him that if he wished to play, he could join them in the afternoon. Djokovic did return, lugging a heavy kit bag over his baby shoulders.

Gencic recalled that on his first day on court, Djokovic was carrying a racquet, towel, water bottle, extra T-shirt, wristband, cap and one banana. "Did your mother prepare your bag?" she asked. The boy with the angelic face replied almost angrily, "No, I am playing tennis." At 36, he is still playing tennis like no one before him. And only the brave or the flippant can dare to write him off.

sandeep.dwivedi@expressindia.com

## Framing India in the world

Foreign policy is likely to play an important role in the election campaign

RAM RAJYA  
BY RAM MADHAV

THE PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS to Parliament traditionally showcases the achievements of the government. President Droupadi Murmu's first address in the new Parliament building this week was no exception. The Opposition's criticism that it was like an election address lacks merit. The address aptly summed up the achievements of the government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

The President highlighted the economic achievements of the government, which are likely to be the mainstay of the ruling party's upcoming electoral campaign. One of the most spectacular achievements, according to the President, was in the area of poverty alleviation. She referred to the recent NITI Aayog report, which claimed that in the last decade, a whopping 250 million Indians have been lifted out of poverty. "Since childhood, we have been hearing the slogan of 'Garibi Hatao'. Now, for the first time in our lives, we are witnessing eradication of poverty on a massive scale", she averred.

A day later, presenting the interim budget in the last session of the 17th Lok Sabha, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman supplemented the President's statement by adding that the average real income of the people of the country has increased by 50 per cent. "People are living better and earning better with better expectations for the future", she insisted.

Besides the Modi government's economic and developmental success stories, one new feature that is likely to play an important role

in the election campaign will be foreign policy. Foreign policy was always considered niche and elitist, "confined to the corridors of Delhi". But, in the last 10 years, that conventional approach has been given a go-by by the PM and his colleagues. Foreign policy is a popular subject with the masses. This democratisation has not happened instantly. It is a result of deliberate efforts. President Murmu alluded to that in her speech by referring to the G20-related events last year. "My government has ensured direct participation of the public in this also. We saw a great example of this during India's G20 presidency. The way India connected the G20 with the public was unprecedented", she stated.

We can find a glimpse of this new foreign policy enthusiasm on social media. There are dozens of YouTube channels dedicated to discussing international issues and an often cacophonous discourse happens on social media platforms. This heightened interest is also a result of certain tectonic shifts in the geopolitical world. The US is facing a challenge to its supremacy with its influence declining, coinciding with the rising economic, technological and diplomatic heft of China. Many middle powers are too rising and forming multilateral groupings that appear to be replacing already dysfunctional multilateral organisations like the UN, UNSC and WTO. The growing influence of heteropolar forces like big tech, MNCs, global NGOs, religious organisations and terror outfits is another important development of our times. An increasing number of flashpoints indicate

the return to an era of cold war, while a new wave of nationalism is sweeping across nations in the West.

This evolving geostrategic scenario has become fodder for the foreign policy wonks on social media platforms who churn out commentaries, often uninformed. This new foreign policy fad is throwing up a challenge to the establishment. Fortunately, India's foreign policy leadership understands the distinction between the romanticism of the masses and the cold-blooded realism needed to deal with international issues. It is aware that to become "vishwaguru", the government has to tread with extreme caution. It likens its efforts to Vishwa Mitra — friend of the world — as a more realistic proclamation. The cautious, realist approach can be seen in the reluctance to get involved in the disputes raging in different parts of the world. The President's address intelligently articulated this position stating that "in this era of global disputes and conflicts", the government has "firmly placed India's interests before the world".

The new-age social media experts are gung-ho about the leadership's ability and India's "civilisational responsibility" in resolving every conflict — from the Israel-Hamas dispute to the Ukraine-Russia war to the latest Red Sea conundrum. There is no denying that Modi enjoys enormous goodwill among the leaders of many countries. However, the foreign policy establishment knows well the redlines that shouldn't be crossed.

Otto von Bismarck, the great German

general, had once said that "the German Nation has had enough of principles and doctrines of literary greatness and theoretical existence. But what it demands is Power, Power, Power!" It will give more honour than can be imagined "to him who gives it power", he added. India's leadership is vigorously pursuing the mobilisation of that comprehensive national power. Its continued insistence on strategic autonomy and refusal to take sides in an increasingly polarised world, much to the chagrin of many big powers, and its attempt at mobilising countries of the developing world under the banner of Global South are a manifestation of that national power.

Derision and dismissal of some analysts notwithstanding, the Modi government's success is in creating a larger consensus in the country over this cautiously ambitious foreign policy.

Delivering an important address in the British Parliament about India's independence on March 15, 1946, Prime Minister Clement Attlee predicted that "in the mass of Asia ravaged by war, we have one country that has been seeking to apply the principles of democracy. I have always felt that political India might be the light of Asia".

Unprecedented popular support, coupled with a mature foreign policy leadership can help India realise its ambition of emerging as "the light of the world".

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

## WHAT THE OTHERS SAY

"There is only so much that relief work can do to ameliorate such a catastrophe... every day that funding is suspended, that aid is impeded, and that bombs fall, will make it worse. Not only Israel, but those who continue to supply it with weapons while cutting off UNRWA funding, must be answerable." — THE GUARDIAN

## The future of water

It must be treated as a constitutionally protected natural resource for the people — not as a commodity to be traded

OPENING ARGUMENT  
BY MENAKA GURUSWAMY

Constitution as well as the judges of the Supreme Court. Water disputes were constitutionally envisaged during the founding of our Republic. Article 262 of the Constitution provides that Parliament may by law provide for the adjudication of any dispute or complaint with respect to the use, distribution or control of the waters of any inter-State river or river valley. Hence, Parliament enacted the Inter-State Water Disputes Act, 1956 which provides for the constitution of Water Disputes Tribunals that will hear complaints by various state governments against each other. Such disputes may arise out of the use, distribution, or control of water that flows between states.

States have triggered this water disputes statute such as the dispute between Tamil Nadu and Karnataka which resulted in the Cauvery water disputes tribunal being established in 1990. This tribunal delivered its final verdict in 2007. Not satisfied with the outcome, the parties were soon at the SC which arrived at a distinct verdict using different parameters to determine water allocation for each state.

The Court has often engaged issues of distribution of water. In *Narmada Bachao Andolan v Union of India* (2000), the Court concluded that water is part of the right to life enshrined in Article 21 of the Constitution. Subsequently, in *AP Pollution Control Board II v Prof. M.V. Nayudu* (2001) the apex court declared that it is the duty of the state under Article 21 to provide clean drinking water to its citizens. What the Court and the Constitution did is that they established a fundamental right for every Indian to access safe and clean water. This may be the eventual bulwark against pricing water outside the reach of the average Indian.

In India, water pricing is determined by states in terms of the mandates of their respective municipality frameworks. There is no central authority for the regulation of water pricing. What we do have is a Constitutional principle regarding the distribution of natural resources. Water would fall within this category of natural resources. Article 39 of the Constitution in the Directive Principles of State Policy chapter provides that the state shall direct its policy towards securing that the ownership and control of material resources of the community are so distributed to serve the common good.

There is a strong movement to privatise water supply calling it "water sector reforms". In 2010, Manthan Adhyayika Kendra in its report Water: Private Limited noted that "water sector reforms" would involve "processes like unbundling, independent regulatory authority to free the sector from 'political interference', increasing tariffs, retrenchment, full cost recovery, elimination of subsidies, cutting off supplies for non-payment, removal of public standposts, public-private partnerships, allocation of water to highest value use through market mechanism." The future of water must not be that it is simply unaffordable to many of our species. For when water is traded or privatised out as a scarce commodity and not treated as a constitutionally protected natural resource to be distributed for the larger common good, then thirst will be the norm and quenching it unaffordable for many.

*The writer is a senior advocate at the Supreme Court*

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### HOPE IN BUDGET

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'About popularity, not populism' (IE, February 2). The last and interim budget of the Modi-led NDA government before the Lok Sabha elections has some unique features. If the NDA government is defeated in the polls, PM Modi will bequeath an economy in a much better shape than he inherited in 2014. India has moved from the 10th to the fifth largest economy in the world. The income taxation reforms regarding tax return submission and tax assessment have enhanced tax collection considerably.

The fiscal deficit has been utilised more for infrastructure buildup than consumption and yet the deficit is being gradually reduced to bring it within the specified target. It has also spent a lot for the welfare of the poor, farmers, women and the youth without affecting investment in critical areas.

**Y G Chouksey, Pune**

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'About popularity, not populism' (IE, February 2). The idea of walking the tightrope of fiscal consolidation while maintaining the status quo on the recurring subsidy bill in its present form has its perils. The final private consumption numbers are still worrying impacting private investment in the economy. The recent advances in generative artificial

intelligence on the job market are going to be the next big challenge that the highly digitised economy will face. But fiscal policymakers shouldn't get overwhelmed by the headline GDP numbers, as their numbers can be misleading in capturing the grassroots dynamics.

**Sudip Kumar Dey, Barasat**

### AGENDA FOR LATER

THIS REFERS TO the article, 'Basket of empty promises' (IE, February 2). I would like to congratulate Derek O'Brien. The article is an objective analysis of the President's budget session speeches every year for the last nine years. But the President cannot be faulted for making such promises as he is only expected to read out the speech — the onus of carrying out the promises is on the Prime Minister. We all remember the promise made by our present PM in 2013-14, which was to create at least two crore jobs every year. O'Brien has depicted the plight we are in with regard to unemployment, especially among our youth. The government should have created at least 18 crore jobs by now. Also, we have not forgotten the other promise to put Rs 1 crore in the account of every Indian. I am still awaiting that.

**Peter Mundackal, New Delhi**

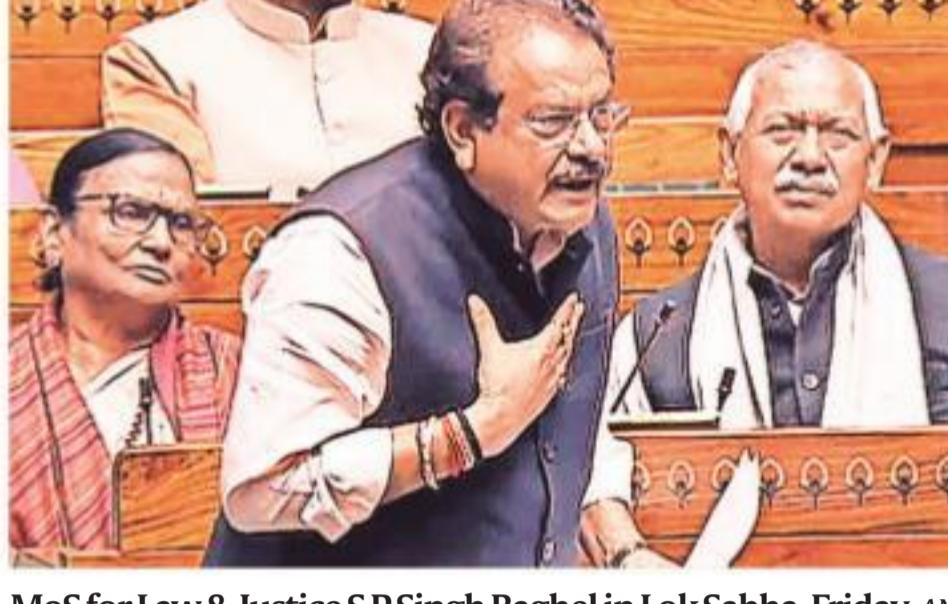
# IN PARLIAMENT

BUDGET SESSION

## Optics in place, BJP MPs target Opp in last pre-poll speeches

LALMANI VERMA &amp; DIVYAA

NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 2



MoS for Law &amp; Justice S P Singh Baghel in Lok Sabha, Friday. ANI

MONTHS BEFORE the Lok Sabha elections, the debate on the reply to President Droupadi Murmu's address acquired the tone of pre-election optics in Parliament on Friday with ruling party members setting the tone for the imminent polls in their speeches.

Labelling the INDIA bloc as an alliance lacking leadership, policy and principle, Union minister and BJP Dalit leader S P Singh Baghel said that people in his Lok Sabha constituency (Agra) were saying that if Opposition members were allying, all castes – from Valmikis to Brahmins – have also come together to offer a protection shield to Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

The statement comes in the wake of the Opposition making caste census its key demand, which, many believe, has weakened with the shift of Bihar's caste survey architect Nitish Kumar to the NDA.

Baghel likened Modi's 10-year rule to the Gupta period of ancient India, considered by some historians as the "golden age". He said a former PM had cheated the people of the country by giving "garibi hatao" slogan, drawing protests from the Opposition benches. He wondered if poverty had been eradicated, who were the 80-crore people to whom Modi was providing 5-kg free ration, and 4.5-crore people getting houses? Before Baghel, the BJP's first

with the passage of the Nari Shakti Vandana Adhiniyam or the Women's Reservation Bill.

"In this new Parliament Building, built at the beginning of Amrit Kaal, President Droupadi Murmu, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge once again called for a caste census Friday.

"We are pressing for this, not because of politics, but because if a caste census is done, we will

know how many graduates are

there; how many jobs are there,

and how much land is owned by

different communities... you can

make policies. You (government)

think about it again. If you don't

do it, we will come and do it,"

Kharge said in the Rajya Sabha.

In her 15-minute address, she mentioned key steps taken by the Centre towards women empowerment over the last 10 years – be it building of toilets, Ujjwala scheme, Jan Dhan accounts,

Lakshmi Didi scheme, Drone Didi

scheme, and loans for women

self-help groups.

Patidar said not only the PM but many members of his cabinet and the Madhya Pradesh CM are

from the OBC category and the

schemes of the government are

OBC-friendly. "We are committed

to Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas" in

this path of development. We

thank the President for giving us

this joint address and for guiding

us to achieve the goal of 'Ek Bharat,

Shreshtha Bharat'," she said. While

Patidar moved the motion, Congress MP Digvijay Singh raised a

point of order, saying the amend-

ments on the Motion of Thanks on

the President's address be taken

up before her speech. However,

Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar re-

jected his objection.

Kharge also said the new Jhar-

khand CM Champai Soren was

made to wait to take oath while

Bihar CM Nitish Kumar resigned,

staked claim and took oath again

on the same day. The same charge

was repeated in the Lok Sabha by

Congress MP Gaurav Gogoi.

Kharge pointed out the Presi-

dent's address did not men-

tion issues like "unemployment"

and "inflation". Prices of tomatoes,

onions, milk, groundnut, flour and

rice have doubled since the gov-

ernment came to power. "Growth

is in single digits and inflation is in

double digits," Kharge said.

"When an Israeli agency in-

vited applications for jobs, our

youth said it's better to die work-

ing in Israel than being unem-  
ployed here". This is what the youth

is saying. A youth from UP said if

I get a well-paying job here, I will

never go to Israel... The public is

saying this," Kharge said and

claimed that the public sector was

being "finished off", leading to

job loss. "There are 30 lakh vac-

ancies in aided and govern-  
ment institutions. You recruit 10,000-

12,000 and have the PM hand

over the applications... If you want

to offer jobs, recruit 30 lakh peo-

ple and then distribute certifi-

cates," he said.

Kharge also wondered why

the PM was silent when women

wrestlers were fighting for justice

and violence engulfed Manipur.

"Why were convicts of the Bilkis

Bano case garlanded in Gujarat?

It's as if the fight was between

Bilkis Bano and the BJP. The PM

should condemn it," he said. Hit-

ting out at the government over

alleged Chinese incursions across

the LAC, he said. "The truth is that

we are giving our land to China...

First become a Guru in India, then

Vishwa Guru."

Countering BJP's claim that

"nothing was done" by Congress

governments, Kharge said the lit-

eracy rate went from 18.3% in 1951

to 74% in 2013-2014, and today it

is 77%. He said life expectancy

## Opp corners Govt on caste census, inflation & lack of jobs

VIKAS PATHAK &amp; DAMINI NATH

NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 2



Mallikarjun Kharge during the Budget Session, Friday. PTI

INITIATING the discussion from the Opposition on the Motion of Thanks on the address of President Droupadi Murmu, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge once again called for a caste census Friday.

"We are pressing for this, not because of politics, but because if a caste census is done, we will know how many graduates are there; how many jobs are there, and how much land is owned by different communities... you can make policies. You (government) think about it again. If you don't do it, we will come and do it," Kharge said in the Rajya Sabha.

Kharge also said the new Jharkhand CM Champai Soren was made to wait to take oath while Bihar CM Nitish Kumar resigned, staked claim and took oath again on the same day. The same charge was repeated in the Lok Sabha by Congress MP Gaurav Gogoi.

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being "finished off", leading to

job loss. "There are 30 lakh vac-

ancies in aided and govern-  
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First become a Guru in India, then

Vishwa Guru."

Countering BJP's claim that

"nothing was done" by Congress

governments, Kharge said the lit-

eracy rate went from 18.3% in 1951

to 74% in 2013-2014, and today it

is 77%. He said life expectancy

went up from 32 years to 70 years, and it had now reduced to 69.27 years. Infant mortality rate had reduced from 165 per 1,000 births to 38 per 1,000 in 2013-14, and it had further reduced to 29 per 1,000 births now.

In the Lok Sabha, Gogoi alleged that the central government was weaving a *mayaqaa* (a web of illusion) to divert people's attention from realities. He raised the issues of Indians in hordes trying to cross over illegally into the US, human trafficking, army jawans worried about their future due to Agniveer, and students forced to enrol in universities of Russia, Ukraine and the Philippines unable to afford high Indian medical college fees.

Gogoi also accused the government of sending investigative agencies after opposition leaders who questioned it.

DMK's TR Baalu accused the Centre of not providing any aid for the devastation in the aftermath

of massive rain and floods recently. He said the Centre set up a panel and he met the PM and Home Minister, who promised a package but nothing was given.

ENS



Derek O'Brien at Parliament House complex on Friday. PTI

Cooling-off period for retd CEC, CAG & judges: TMC MP introduces Bill in RS

New Delhi: TMC MP Derek O'Brien Friday introduced a Bill in the Rajya Sabha to



**HIMACHAL PRADESH PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT****INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB)**

1. The Executive Engineer, Mandi Division No. I, HPPWD, at Padhar, Distt. Mandi (H.P.) on behalf of Governor of H.P. invites the percentage rate bids, in electronic tendering system, from the eligible class of contractor registered with HPPWD for the works as detailed in the table.

Sr. No.	Name of Work	Estimated Cost (in Rs.)	Starting Date of downloading Bid	Earnest Money (in Rs.)	Deadline for submission of Bid
1	Additional work in the office cum Residential accommodation for Deputy Director Treasury Inspection Centre Zone at Khatiyar Distt. Mandi (H.P.)	20,75,839.00	12.02.2024 at 11:00 A.M.	41,500/-	22.02.2024 upto 11:00 A.M.

The tender shall be awarded to the lowest bidder without any negotiation if his tendered amount is within limit of (+/- 5% of the amount put to tender, otherwise the tender will be cancelled and recalled.

The bidders are advised to note other details of tenders from the department website [www.htptenders.gov.in](http://htptenders.gov.in).

Executive Engineer, Mandi Division No. I, H.P.P.W.D., at Padhar Distt. Mandi (H.P.)

On behalf of Governor of Himachal Pradesh.

**Himachal Pradesh Public Works Department****NOTICE FOR CORRIGENDUM**

In continuation of this office Notice Inviting Tender No. SEIX/WS/ E-Tender/2023-24- 8379-88 dated 27/01/2024, the following corrigendum has been made for the below mentioned work:-

Sr. No.	Name of work:-
1.	Construction of link road from Ambara to Kiri Km. 0/0 to 3/00 in District Kangra HP (SH:- Formation Cutting, Passing Places, R/walls , CD work, GSB, WBM-II, WBM-III, tarring work side drain, Cement Concrete Pavement, Parapets & Road side furniture including five year maintenance) under NABARD RIDF-XXIX.

**A. CORRIGENDUM (in respect of Terms & Condition).**

Sr. No.	Item	Existing	Corrected As
1.	Estimated cost	426.63 lacs.	430.65 lacs.
2.	Earnest Money	8.53 lacs.	8.62 lacs.
3.	Starting date for downloading Bid.	02/02/2024 (10.00 AM), 12-02-2024 (10.00 AM).	
4.	Deadline for submission of Bid.	09/02/2024 (5.00 PM) 19/02/2024 (5.00 PM).	
5.	Bid opening date.	12/02/2024 (11.00 AM) 20/02/2024 (11.00 AM).	

Other terms and conditions of the bid shall remain unchanged.

Superintending Engineer,  
9th Circle, HPPWD, Nurpur.

5434/HP

**कार्यपालक अभियंता का कार्यालय**  
**ग्रामीण कार्य विभाग, कार्य प्रमण्डल, पाकुड़****ई- निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना**

ई-निविदा संख्या :- 23/ 2023-24/R.W.D/EE/ PAKUR दिनांक- 02.02.2024

कार्य का विवरण- मुख्यमंत्री ग्राम संसद को जारी करने अनुमति-

कार्यपालक अभियंता, ग्रामीण कार्य विभाग, कार्य प्रमण्डल, पाकुड़ द्वारा निम्न विवरण के अनुसार e-procurement पद्धति से निविदा आमंत्रित की जाती है।

कार्यपालक संख्या / पैकेज संख्या

कार्य का नाम

प्रकाशित राशि (रुपये में)

कार्य समाप्ति की तिथि/अवधि

अंक में

अब्द में

कार्य की अवधि

दो करोड़ अठासौ लाख तेरहार हजार नीं सी मात्र

09 माह

2,88,73,900.00

R.W.D./ PAKUR/ 188 / 2023-2024

दमनपुर नदी उच्च स्तरीय झुक से मुख्य सड़क पीछेपुरु तक कार्य प्रमण्डल, पाकुड़ (प्रखंड-पाकुड़)

2,22,87,900.00

R.W.D./ PAKUR/ 189 / 2023-2024

लखनपुर बहलतां आरझूइओं रोड से पाकुड़ अंडर ब्रीफ तक पीछेपुरीपी तक (प्रखंड-पाकुड़)

3,93,99,800.00

R.W.D./ PAKUR/ 190 / 2023-2024

लखनपुर बहलतां आरझूइओं रोड से पाकुड़ अंडर ब्रीफ तक पीछेपुरीपी तक (प्रखंड-पाकुड़)

2,31,90,000.00

R.W.D./ PAKUR/ 191 / 2023-2024

लखनपुर बहलतां आरझूइओं रोड से पाकुड़ अंडर ब्रीफ तक पीछेपुरीपी तक (प्रखंड-पाकुड़)

1,21,80,700.00

R.W.D./ PAKUR/ 192 / 2023-2024

लखनपुर बहलतां आरझूइओं रोड से पाकुड़ अंडर ब्रीफ तक पीछेपुरीपी तक (प्रखंड-पाकुड़)

1,44,97,400.00

R.W.D./ PAKUR/ 193 / 2023-2024

लखनपुर बहलतां आरझूइओं रोड से पाकुड़ अंडर ब्रीफ तक पीछेपुरीपी तक (प्रखंड-पाकुड़)

2,05,07,400.00

R.W.D./ PAKUR/ 194 / 2023-2024

लखनपुर बहलतां आरझूइओं रोड से पाकुड़ अंडर ब्रीफ तक पीछेपुरीपी तक (प्रखंड-पाकुड़)

1,40,17,000.00

R.W.D./ PAKUR/ 195 / 2023-2024

लखनपुर बहलतां आरझूइओं रोड से पाकुड़ अंडर ब्रीफ तक पीछेपुरीपी तक (प्रखंड-पाकुड़)

2,15,22,100.00

R.W.D./ PAKUR/ 196 / 2023-2024

लखनपुर बहलतां आरझूइओं रोड से पाकुड़ अंडर ब्रीफ तक पीछेपुरीपी तक (प्रखंड-पाकुड़)

98,20,300.00

R.W.D./ PAKUR/ 197 / 2023-2024

लखनपुर बहलतां आरझूइओं रोड से पाकुड़ अंडर ब्रीफ तक पीछेपुरीपी तक (प्रखंड-पाकुड़)

79,69,500.00

R.W.D./ PAKUR/ 198 / 2023-2024

ग्रामीण विभाग बहलतां आरझूइओं रोड से पाकुड़ अंडर ब्रीफ तक पीछेपुरीपी तक (प्रखंड-पाकुड़)

1. बेबसाईट में निविदा प्रकाशन की तिथि :- 15.02.2024

2. ई- निविदा प्राप्ति की अंतिम तिथि एवं समय :- 23.02.2024 अपराह्न 5:00 बजे।

3. निविदा खोलने की तिथि एवं समय :- 26.02.2024 अपराह्न 3:30 बजे।

4. निविदा आमंत्रित करने वाले प्राधिकारी का नाम एवं पता— कार्यपालक अभियंता, ग्रामीण कार्य विभाग, कार्य प्रमण्डल, पाकुड़।

विवरण अंतिम तिथि एवं समय के अनुसार जारी किया जाता है।

कार्यपालक अभियंता

ग्रामीण कार्य विभाग, कार्य प्रमण्डल, पाकुड़

PR 317685 (Rural Work Department)23-24\*D

e-Procurement Notice

**INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB)**

1. The **Executive Engineer , B&R Division HPPWD Karsog Distt Mandi H.P** on behalf of Governor of H.P invites the online bids on **percentage rate**, in electronic tendering system, in 2 Cover System for the under mentioned work from the eligible and approved contractors/Firms registered with HPPWD Department.

2. The **Executive Engineer , B&R Division HPPWD Karsog Distt Mandi H.P** on behalf of Governor of H.P invites the online bids on **percentage rate**, in electronic tendering system, in 2 Cover System for the under mentioned work from the eligible and approved contractors/Firms registered with HPPWD Department.

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12. The **Executive Engineer , B&R Division HPPWD Karsog Distt Mandi H.P** on behalf of Governor of H.P invites the online bids on **percentage rate**, in electronic tendering system, in 2 Cover System for the under mentioned work from the eligible and approved contractors/Firms registered with HPPWD Department.

13. The **Executive Engineer , B&R Division HPPWD Karsog Distt Mandi H.P** on behalf of Governor of H.P invites the online bids on **percentage rate**, in electronic tendering system, in 2 Cover System for the under mentioned work from the eligible and approved contractors/Firms registered with HPPWD Department.

14. The **Executive Engineer , B&R Division HPPWD Karsog Distt Mandi H.P** on behalf of Governor of H.P invites the online bids on **percentage rate**, in electronic tendering system, in 2 Cover System for the under mentioned work from the eligible and approved contractors/Firms registered with HPPWD Department.

15. The **Executive**

## Classifieds

## PERSONAL

I, Rishipal S/O Gyan Chand, R/o Flat No 301 3RD Floor B2/162, Ekta Marg Vijay Enclave, South West Delhi- 110045, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as Rishipal Singh. 0070886623-1

I, Ranvir Prasad Singh S/O Brij Bhari Singh R/o Thathia, Jasauli, Muzaffarpur Bihar-843141, have changed my name to RANVIR SINGH for all future purposes. 0070886606-1

I, Rajat S/O Rajkumar Gajre, R/o 674/B-9, Adarsh Colony, Nai Basti, Devli Village, South Delhi- 110062, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as Rajat Rajkumar Gajre 0070886657-1

I, MZ BEHRING HUTEN Son of Maza Ahoo Huter, R/o House.no-355, Third floor Pocket-N Janta Flats Sarita vihar, New Delhi- 110076, Have changed my name to Maza Behring Huten, Permanently. 0040711719-8

I, MALLAM SINDHU,W/O ANGAD MALLAM, R/O H.NO.4-187, SRI SATYA SAJAGAR-COLONY, JILLELAGUDA SAROOGANAGAR-RANGAREDDY TELANGANA-500097, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME, FROM MALLAM SINDHU TO DAVINA SINDHU, VIDE AFFIDAVIT IN- DL3710496939743W, DATED- 02/02/2024 BEFORE NCT-DELHI. 0040711735-5

I, M SUDHAKAR, FATHER OF, ANGAD MALLAM, R/O,H.NO-5-38/5, plot.NO-4 PS RAO-NAGAR DAMMAGUDA-NAGRAM KV RANGAREDDY NAGRAM, TELANGANA-500083, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME FROM M SUDHAKAR TO MALLAM SUDHAKAR, VIDE-AFFIDAVIT IN- DL3710515783240W DATED- 02/02/2024 BEFORE NCT-DELHI. 0040711735-3

I, LAXMI KESARI,W/O LALJI, R/O,H.NO-58A/3/110E MOHALLA-KATKHAR DISTT- PRAYAGRAJ UTTAR PRADESH- 211003, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME FROM LAXMI KESARI TO LAXMI, VIDE-AFFIDAVIT IN- DL37103515783240W DATED- 02/02/2024, BEFORE NCT- DELHI. 0040711735-2

I, Kamal Kakar S/o Indur Kumar R/o 23/25 A, Tilak Nagar, Delhi- 110018 have changed my name to Kamal Kumar Kakkar 0070886617-1

I, Dharmender Kumar S/o Amil Siroha R/o-72-D/42A, Dabri-Extension, Palam-Village, Delhi-110045, have changed my name to Dharmender, for all future purposes. 0040711573-1

I, Dharmender Choudhary S/o Sh. Mahender Choudhury residing at E-12, Ansals Villas Complex, Satbari, Delhi- 110074 have changed the name of my minor son Samrat Choudhury aged 17 years and 03 month and he shall hereafter be known as Samrat Choudhury for all future purposes. 0040711421-2

I, Dharmender Choudhary S/o Sh. Mahender Choudhury residing at E-12, Ansals Villas Complex, Satbari, Delhi- 110074 have changed the name of my minor son Samrat Choudhury aged 13 years and he shall hereafter be known as Samrat Choudhury for all future purposes. 0040711421-1

I, Devesh Tomar S/o Manoj Tomar R/o 736A, VMP School, Karkar Model, Sahibabad have changed my name to Devesh Singh Tomar. 0070886609-1

I, BAROT VISHALBHAI CHAMPAKALR./R.O-83,ILA SOCIETY INDIA-COLONY BAPUNAGAR AHMEDABAD 382350, HAVE CHANGED MY MINOR DAUGHTER'S NAME AVANI VISHALBHAI TO AVANI BAROT VIDE-AFFIDAVIT IN- DL3710472125344W DATED- 02/02/2024,BEFORE,NCT-DELHI. 0040711725-10

I, Pradip Kumar Agrawal S/o L.N. Agrawal residence N-26, Sector-11, Noida, G.B.Nagar, have changed my name Pradeep Kumar Agrawal to Pradip Kumar Agrawal for all future purposes. Both are same person. 0040711654-1

I, Anjana Chauhan S/o Sahab Singh residence 395, Gali No.1, Chhalera, Sector-44, Noida-201303, have changed my name Anjana to Anjana Chauhan for all future purposes. Anjana and Anjana Chauhan both are same person. 0040711654-1

I, Anil Garg S/o Beli Ram R/o L-135 Upper Ground Floor, Front Position, Gali-17 Vijay Vihar Phase-2 Rohini Delhi-110085 have changed my name from Anil Garg to Anil Kumar permanently. 0040711593-1

I, ABDUL SALIK KHAN, S/O,ABDUL AHAD KHAN,ADD-1640,CHOWK ROAD GRAN LAL KUAN,DELHI-110006,changed my name to SALIK KHAN,for all,future purposes. 0040711725-7

I, SHAMSAD AHMED S/O MOHAMMAD YUNUS R/O H.NO. RZ-26/P, INDRA PARK, PALAM COLONY, DELHI-110045 hereby solemnly affirms and declares as under:-1. That name of my father has been wrongly written as MOHAMMED YUNUS in my 10TH class marks-sheets and certificate. The actual name of my father is MOHAMMAD YUNUS, which may be amended accordingly. 0070886678-1

I,Vinod Kumar Singh Alias Vinod Kumar S/o Suresh Pal Singh R/o House No-134, Rithala, Rohini Sector-14, Delhi-110085, have changed my name to Mihir Dev Singh 0070886637-1

I, Syed Habibur Rehman S/o Sh. Abdul Rahim R/o 10059, First Floor, Gali Zamir Wali, Nawab Ganji, Puri Bangash, Delhi- 110006 have changed my name to Habibur Rehman for all purposes. 0040711566-4

I,Sunita Kumari W/o Rakesh Mahindru R/o D-36, First Floor, Greater Kailash Enclave-2, New Delhi, Greater Kailash, South Delhi, Delhi-110049 have changed my name to Sunita Mahindru. 0040711718-1

I,Samita Diwan Alias Samita Dang D/o Anwant Singh Dang and W/o Ayyush Dewan Khuranna R/o A- 144, First Floor, Defence Colony, New Delhi- 110024, have changed my name to Samita Khuranna 0070886634-1

I,SREREKHA V.D/W/O.Mr. Chandu Nair R/O.H.No B-13/14, Flat No.1, Rama Vihar, Begumpur, Delhi-110086 (Mob. No. 981875677) have changed my name from SREELEKHA V. D to SREREKHA V. D. for all future purpose. 0040711571-1

I,TRILOCHAN MALHOTRA,S/O TRILOK NATH MALHOTRA,R/o Flat.No.G-2,SAGRAD APARTMENT,Pilot.No.113, I.P Extension,Patparganj, Delhi-110092,have Changed my Name to TRILOCHAN KUMAR MALHOTRA,for all Purposes. 0040711571-6

I,Sunaria Agarwal W/o Shiv Bhagwan Agarwal R/o 69, Inder Enclave, Rohtak Road, Delhi have changed my name to Sunaria Agarwal 0040711586-1

I,T,Sonu S/O Zahir Ahmad,R/o H.No-125A, Street-No.03,New Kardampuri,Delhi-110094,have changed my name to SHAN MOHD,Permanently. 0040711703-5

I,T,Shams Afroz(Aadhaar.No.86604542997 7),father of Zara Afroz,resident of House,No.237,Ground Floor,Near-Sidheshwar School, Sector-9,Gurugram, Haryana,That Zara Afroz and Mishkat Afroz is one and the same person. 0040711710-5

I,T,Ramesh Chand S/o Baldev Krishan R/o H. No. A-15 G F Chhattarpur Enclave Phase-2 New Delhi 110074 have changed my name from Ramesh Chander Arora S/o Baldev Krishan Arora to Ramesh Chand S/o Baldev Krishan for all future purposes 0040711583-1

I,T,Rajesh Irur S/o Mahadevappa R/o Vill- S/o-Po-Basavanal, Dist-Haveri, Karnataka- 581126, have changed my name to Raju Shirur 0070886642-1

I,T,Anjali C/o G. Natarajan R/o A-52, Ram Nagar, Om Vihar, Near Metro Pillar No.704, Uttram Nagar, West Delhi, Delhi- 110059 have changed my name to Anjali Christy Natarajan for all purposes. 0040711566-5

I,T,VINODA,MOTHER OF, ANGAD MALLAM,R/O,H.NO-5-38/5,plot.NO-4 PS RAO-NAGAR DAMMAGUDA-NAGRAM KV RANGAREDDY NAGRAM, TELANGANA-500083, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME, FROM M VINODA TO MALLAM VINODA, VIDE-AFFIDAVIT IN- DL37105315783240W DATED- 02/02/2024, BEFORE NCT- DELHI. 0040711735-2

I,T,LAXMI KESARI,W/O LALJI, R/O,H.NO-58A/3/110E MOHALLA-KATKHAR DISTT- PRAYAGRAJ UTTAR PRADESH- 211003, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME FROM LAXMI KESARI TO LAXMI KESARI , VIDE-AFFIDAVIT IN- DL37103515783240W DATED- 02/02/2024 BEFORE NCT-DELHI. 0040711735-3

I,T,Jasleen Kaur W/o Onkar Singh Dhillion R/o Barayal, Gebua Khas, Gabuwa, Nainital, Uttarakhand- 263140, have changed my name to Ravneet Kaur Dhillion. 0070886640-1

I,T,Ramesh Chand S/o Baldev Krishan R/o H. No. A-15 G F Chhattarpur Enclave Phase-2 New Delhi 110074 have changed my name from Ramesh Chander Arora S/o Baldev Krishan Arora to Ramesh Chand S/o Baldev Krishan for all future purposes 0040711583-1

I,T,Rajush Irur S/o Mahadevappa R/o Vill- S/o-Po-Basavanal, Dist-Haveri, Karnataka- 581126, have changed my name to Raju Shirur 0070886642-1

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I,T,Pradip Kumar Agrawal S/o L.N. Agrawal residence N-26, Sector-11, Noida, G.B.Nagar, have changed my name Pradeep Kumar Agrawal to Pradip Kumar Agrawal for all future purposes. Both are same person. 0040711654-1

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I,Vimy Juneja w/o Vijay Juneja r/o,A-37 2nd flr East of Kalash N.D.65,have change my name to Vimmi Juneja,for all,future purposes. 0040711703-4

I,T,Vijay Kumar Juneja,S/o Harbhajan Lal Juneja r/o,A-37 2nd flr East of Kalash N.D.65,have change my name Vijay Juneja,for all,future purposes. 0040711703-3

I,T,PREETI Devi,W/o Sh.Raghuvir, R/o E-84/86-T-Huts,Chitra Vihar,Gujrat vihar,East Delhi,Delhi-110092,inform that in my,son's(Raj Kanjojiya) school,records my.name Preeti Kanjojiya and his father's.name Raghuvir Kanjojiya wrongly-written.My correct name is Preeti Devi and his father's.name is Sh.Raghuvir,for all,future purposes. 0040711710-7

I,T,TARUN, S/o Rattan Lal, R/o 1822, Sher Singh Bazar,Kotla Mubark Pur,New Delhi-110003,have changed my name to Tarun Baisla, for all purposes. 0040711703-9

I,T,TRILOCHAN MALHOTRA,S/O TRILOK NATH MALHOTRA,R/o Flat.No.G-2,SAGRAD APARTMENT,Pilot.No.113, I.P Extension,Patparganj, Delhi-110092,have Changed my Name to TRILOCHAN KUMAR MALHOTRA,for all Purposes. 0040711571-6

I,T,Sunaria Agarwal W/o Shiv Bhagwan Agarwal R/o 69, Inder Enclave, Rohtak Road, Delhi have changed my.name to Bajrang Lal Agarwal 0040711722-8

I,T,Bajrang Lal Aggarwal S/o Jagdish Prashad Aggarwal R/o-69, Inder Enclave, Rohtak Road, Delhi have changed my.name to Bajrang Lal Agarwal 0040711722-8

I,T,Anil Rana,S/o Babbir Singh Rana,R/o,H.No-2, Village & Post office-Khera Kalan,Delhi-110082,have changed my name Anil Kumar Rana. 0040711722-4

I,T,Abhishek Gupta S/o Shailesh Kumar Gupta R/o 64, Vigyan Vihar, Delhi-110092, have changed my name to MOHD AREEFEN,.Permanently. 0040711710-6

I,T,PRASHANT KUMAR GOSWAMI,S/o Shri SURENDRA MOHAN GOSWAMI,ADD-A-14 ALPHA-1,GREATER NOIDA GAUTAM BUDDHA-NAGAR UP-201308,have changed my name to PRASHANT KUMAR GOSWAMI,for all,future purposes. 0040711710-1

I,T,Abhishek Gupta S/o Shailesh Kumar Gupta R/o 64, Vigyan Vihar, Delhi-110092, have changed my minor son's name Akshay Gupta to Abeer Gupta. 0040711722-7

I,T,PANKUL,D/o DINESH JUNEJA JUNEJA,R/o M-336,Ground-Floor,Guru Harkishan Nagar Pachim Vihar New-Delhi-110087,have changed my minor daughter's name from LAKSHITA SEHGAL. 0040711715-4

I,T,NIHILA ADARSH,W/o ADARSH BABU B/R O/FLAT.NO.15-DIVIDHATA APARTMENTS VASUNDHARA ENCLAVE,DELHI-110096, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO NIHILA ADARSH TO NIHILA A MALIK,VIDE-AFFIDAVIT IN- DL3710385820060W,DATED 02/02/2024,BEFORE NCT-DELHI. 0040711725-3

I,T,Abhishek Gupta S/o Shailesh Kumar Gupta R/o 64, Vigyan Vihar, Delhi-110092, have changed my minor son's name Akshay Gupta to Abeer Gupta. 0040711722-6

I,T,TASHOK KUMARS/O SHYAMLAL GUPTA R/o YP-22B, PITAMPURA,DELHI-110088.HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO

## 7 NEW ARRIVALS AT KUNO

# It takes a forest to get these cubs ready

The recent arrival of seven new cubs in Kuno is a high for India's cheetah programme. ANAND MOHAN J travels to the park, where the excitement over the newborns is tinged with nervous anticipation of what lies ahead for the cubs. The first challenge: surviving the harsh summer months

**N**EWBORN CHEETAH cubs, blind and vulnerable, find protection in a surprising guise. The silvery-grey mantle on their backs mimics the fur of aggressive honey badgers, deterring leopards and hyenas that stalk Kuno National Park's dry forests.

Yet, the guise may never have to be employed. For, Kuno's precious cheetah cubs are, for now, safely hidden away in the den site their mothers have prepared for them, deep behind the tall grass and vitex plants of the enclosures they are in at the park.

Though the park has over 100 dedicated individuals – from animal trackers to forest guards – to keep a watchful eye on the cubs, the crucial task comes with a strict boundary: the staff has to stay as far as they can from the den itself.

Sitting outside his home in Shivpuri, minutes after returning from a gruelling assignment inside the forests, Kuno National Park Director Uttam Sharma counts off the co-predators inside Kuno that can potentially kill the cub if it is released into the wild:

"Leopard, striped hyena, jackal, Indian fox and jungle cat. When we were conserving tigers, it was easier... the tiger has no predators. Who will teach it (the abandoned cheetah cub) to avoid them?"

As a senior wildlife official at the park explains, "The mother cheetah is incredibly sensitive to stress. If she feels threatened, she might abandon or even harm her cubs. A small mistake can cost them their lives."

Despite the deaths of seven adults and three cubs since the project's launch in September 2022, park officials are ecstatic about the arrival of seven new cheetah cubs – four born to Jwala and three to Asha – in January. Pavan, a "friendly" cheetah among the lot from Namibia, has fathered all seven cubs. On the wobbly limbs of these newborns, along with Jwala's 10-month-old cub from an earlier litter, rest the future of India's cheetah programme.

The recent births, officials say, suggest acclimation to Indian conditions, a crucial step towards long-term success. However, challenges remain.

Summer's scorching heat, responsible for last year's death of three cubs, looms large. Park officials are preparing to mitigate the impact of the upcoming summer on the 21 cheetahs, including the cubs, while also determining the timing for releasing 14 adults from the enclosures into the wild.

The cheetahs have been housed in the larger enclosures since August 13, 2023, after three cheetahs "died of septicemia" in July. This was a major setback for the project and the 15 cheetahs, which had by then been released into the wild, were brought back to their enclosures.

But the bigger question that park officials are grappling with is whether to raise the cheetahs cubs in the wild or inside a protected enclosure.

**A close watch on the cubs from a distance**

Next door to her abandoned cub's boma is Jwala's enclosure – most of these range from 50 to 150 hectares – where she is with her four newborns, all of them tucked away safely in dens.

The mother cheetah makes these 'den sites' – the first one, after a 93-day gestation, when she hides herself in thick bushes to nest and give birth. After birth, the cubs live in the den for the next six to eight weeks, with the mother regularly moving them from one den to another to avoid predators.

In another part of the park is Asha, in a similar enclosure with her three cubs.

Senior wildlife officials say the cubs – all born between January 3 and 23 – are currently feeding on their mothers' milk. They say that the mothers have "been able to hunt without assistance" and that they have been supplementing the enclosures with a steady chital

population. "Our job is to make a list of all the kills the cheetah makes inside these enclosures and spot the chital carcass. We take one compulsory photograph of the cheetahs every day. This helps us maintain the belly score (a way to look at the belly to see if it has eaten)," says a monitoring team official.



(From top to below) Monitoring teams in Kuno; the newborn cubs in their den; Jwala's abandoned 10-month-old cub in her boma. Kuno National Park

## From captivity to the wild

Here's how the cheetahs translocated from South Africa and Namibia are being prepared for release into the wild



**THE CHEETAHS ARE** initially housed inside a quarantine boma, with provisions for water, shade and cover for two-and-a-half months. Only one cheetah – Jwala's abandoned cub – is in a quarantine boma in Kuno now.

**NEXT, THE CHEETAH** are released to larger enclosures. Chitals are released into these enclosures for the cheetahs to hunt down. There are no co-predators. In Kuno, 19 cheetahs, including cubs, are in these enclosures.

**ONCE THEY ARE** acclimated to Indian conditions, cheetahs are released into the 748 sqkm forest area. Here they are exposed to predators and other wildlife species. At present, two cheetahs in Kuno are in the wild.

eaten by the predators," says an official.

Each cheetah has three dedicated monitoring teams, each with 15 people and with a forest watcher, forest guard and researchers. The tracking teams relay the information to the Control Room at Palpur, a remote location in the centre of Kuno which serves as the central hub for monitoring and controlling all activities related to the cheetahs.

Currently, there are four veterinarians who are the only ones authorised to enter the den site in case of an emergency.

Stressing on the need for this "minimal intervention", park Director Sharma says they have been using technology to

observe the cheetahs and the cubs. "The mothers are tracked with the help of the satellite collars. The mothers leave the den site every few days to hunt. Over time, when you look at the GPS data, you can see that the cheetah's movements form a star-shaped pattern. This pattern shows that the mother is going out to hunt and then returning to the den. Which means that at least one of her cubs is alive. If the cubs die, then the mother doesn't return to the den after hunting," he explains.

Park officials have been planning summer survival measures for the cheetahs in larger enclosures, starting with steps to improve water availability both for the cheetahs and their prey population in the larger enclosures.

"We are mostly setting up sacks filled with sand across the Kuno river, which will increase water retention and percolation in Kuno. Even sustaining the flow of the water bodies by a month is a huge advantage for the prey population," says a senior official.

Keeping the cheetahs' unique cooling needs in mind, park officials are planning to build shade structures and small water bodies. Currently, these enclosures are equipped with water saucers and water guzzlers, with refilling arrangements from overhead tanks constructed outside the enclosure. "Unlike a tiger, a cheetah doesn't immerse itself in a water body to cool itself," says Sharma.

Senior wildlife officials at the park say they are also up against geographical constraints – Kuno receives only around 70 mm rainfall, because of which water bodies end up dry in the summer months.

"Because of low rainfall, we don't have perennial streams in the park. The prey population decreases over time because of this and leaves the park in search of water," an official says.

A chital enclosure is also in the works to augment the prey base.

"We are constructing a chital boda (enclosure) which will be spread across 80 hectares. This should be ready in two months. We will source chitals from Pench tiger reserve, breed them and release them. We hope to artificially increase the prey density to over 37 prey per sqkm in the park; currently it is around 18-20 prey per sqkm," says another wildlife official.

All of this circles back to the old debate – by artificially providing for the mothers, and thereafter their cubs, are they being turned into "soft cheetahs"? But will releasing them into the wild expose them to bigger threats?

### From the park to the wild

A senior South African cheetah expert, who played a key role in India's Project Cheetah, says, "There is a 90 per cent chance the cubs don't survive due to the predators once they are released into the wild. For example, research in Tanzania's open Serengeti system showed cheetah cubs were estimated to have only a 4.8 per cent survival rate from birth to adolescence. So the Kuno officials will try to increase survival by keeping the cubs safe in enclosures, away from hyenas and leopards. They are going to artificially protect the cubs

from danger and you are not protecting the best genetics... India should be aiming for an ecologically strong cheetah that can survive in the wild without human interference. These are soft cheetahs, which will constantly need vets and medication."

Petro van Eeden, General Manager at the Ann van Dyk Cheetah Centre - De Wildt in South Africa, says though the preference is always for a "free cheetah mom raising her cubs, however, this comes at a high risk".

Eeden says it is "difficult to raise the cubs in the wild. If other predators share the same space, there will always be conflict over food and space".

Kuno Director Sharma says they have considered both options and are "waiting for senior officials to take a call." "It would be best if the cheetahs were free-ranging and in the wild. But under the circumstances, they have a better chance of survival in an enclosure... Our management of cheetahs is different from that of the South Africans. They have fenced enclosures unlike our park, which is open. Our cheetahs venture into villages and travel long distances. We have to think differently," he says.

With the South African experts warning that there has "never been a successful rewilding project in an unfenced area", a lot rides on the 450 cheetah *mitras* living in 80 villages around Kuno to ensure the protection of these animals if they ever venture out of the park.

### The cheetah mitras

Madhya Pradesh Forest Minister Nagar Singh Chouhan made his first visit to the park on January 27 and attended a meeting of cheetah *mitras* at Sesai pura village.

Man Singh Ravat, a farmer from Shyampur village, has turned up in his yellow cheetah *mitra* uniform. "I travel to villages and tell people that a cheetah doesn't kill humans. A cheetah once came into our village and people were upset that it would kill their sheep. I offered Rs 10,000 for each sheep it killed. The animal left peacefully," he says.

The park, spread across an area of 748 sqkm, is devoid of human settlements and forms part of the larger Sheopur-Shivpuri forest landscape. People from the Sahariya tribe, besides pastoral communities of Gurjars and Yadavs, were relocated to the periphery of the park to make space for the cheetahs.

At Lahroni village, Ramesh Sikarwar, a former dacoit, brandishes his old rifle as he talks of how he had once sworn to protect the cheetah "at all cost" from poachers. He is now a disillusioned man. Wanted in over 70 murder cases, Sikarwar dominated the Kuno landscape until his surrender in 1984. "I was acquitted in all the cases. I later became a cheetah *mitra*, but left due to lack of monetary incentives," he says.

At Tiktoli village, villagers have managed to find jobs as animal trackers and drivers. One of them, Brijmohan 'Adiwas', who works as a tracker, says, "We are paid around 9,000 a month... But tourism has not yet picked up. If you keep cheetahs in cages, who will come to see them?", he says.

SENSEX: 72,085.63 ▲ 440.33 (0.61%) NIFTY: 21,853.80 ▲ 156.35 (0.72%) NIKKEI: 36,158.02 ▲ 146.56 HANG SENG: 15,533.56 ▼ 32.65 FTSE: 7,657.99 ▲ 35.83 DAX: 17,002.16 ▲ 143.12



GOLD

₹63,650



USD RATE

₹82.98



OIL

\$81.04



SILVER

₹76,500

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

International market data till 1900 IST

**IT'S AN ONGOING PROCESS OF SIMPLIFICATION, RATIONALISATION, IMPROVEMENT: MALHOTRA**

## 'To expect major changes on taxation every year in the Budget is not correct'

TAX CERTAINTY is important and to expect major changes every year in the Budget on the direct tax side is "not correct", Revenue Secretary SANJAY MALHOTRA said.

In an interview with AANCHAL MAGAZINE and ANIL SASI, Malhotra said while the corporation tax cut in 2019 has resulted in about 57 per cent of the corporation tax mop up now coming from the reduced bracket, he is hopeful of a similar traction from the new personal income tax regime that was tweaked last year. Edited excerpts:

**Is there a thought process for tax restructuring or rationalisation of taxes, both direct and indirect taxes?**

Goods and Services Tax is done by the (GST) Council, that is an ongoing exercise. Similarly, Customs is an ongoing exercise. Nothing to do with the Budget. It is only direct taxes primarily (in Budget).

We introduced major changes in the personal income tax last year. Major change in corporation tax in 2019. So, tax certainty and stability is also very important. Keeping that in mind, to expect major changes every year in the Budget on the taxation side is not correct. But yes, rationalisation, simplification, like the scheme we have brought in, these are on-going things.



Customs is not the primary source of revenue, said Revenue Secretary Sanjay Malhotra. File

we improved it last year. What the off-take will be, it will be known next year because the returns start getting filed after the end of the financial year. But we are hopeful that a substantial number will shift to the new regime.

**Is there scope to sweeten the new tax scheme further?**

It is not good, you know, to change the rates too often. There

As I mentioned, there should be, as far as possible, certainty in tax policy. So, if it was to end on March 31, 2024, it should end (there) because these pertain to investment decisions which have a long gestation period. The investments take a long time... from the conceptualisation, planning, financial closures and putting them on ground and then starting the operation... that is why a long period had been given, which was announced in 2019. It was extended earlier, it gave the hope that it will be further extended because it was extended last year. I don't think that this expectation was justified.

**When it comes to new Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) that are being signed, are the revenue implications of these deals being taken into consideration?**

Customs is not the primary source of revenue... And neither is revenue the primary reason for customs... we (have to take) a balanced view on these factors that go beyond revenue

**So is there disappointment on the side that corporation tax cuts and concessions did not result in a perceptible private sector investment push?**

Tax is only one of the factors, a very small factor. I think there are more important factors which determine as to whether or not investments are made, whether in a particular state, because of certain taxation rules... there are other things and the government has taken cognisance of and taken steps to improve the investment climate to make it easier for doing business. Then there are PLI (production-linked incentive) schemes, where the government feels that there is good potential for investment. We are already

seeing benefits of some of those gains for example, mobiles, the exports of mobiles doubled last year.

**What is the general feeling that income tax, like some of the other agencies, is quite proactive in doing searches, seizures, raids etc. And perhaps some of these actions don't reach a logical conclusion?**

There are time limits, given in the (Income-tax) Act, for them to reach a logical conclusion. So, it is not possible that they will not reach a logical conclusion. Beyond three years, demand cannot be raised unless the demand is more than Rs 50 lakh. Then once you have raised that demand, there is a time limit to finalise the assessment... any search or any survey has to conclude. It is provided in the Act within a particular period.

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



THE EXPRESS  
INTERVIEW  
WITH  
SANJAY  
MALHOTRA  
REVENUE SECRETARY

## ANATOMY OF A FALL ★★★★

Director: Justine Triet

Cast: Sandra Huller, Milo Machado Graner, Swann Arlaud, Samuel Theis

## STREAMING WATCH LIST

BY ALAKA SAHANI



## SWEET DREAMS

MUBI

Italian Marxist auteur Marco Bellocchio's *Sweet Dreams*, which was screened in the Directors' Fortnight at Cannes Film Festival (2016) is a moving study of loss and maternal love. Starring Valerio Mastandrea and Bérénice Bejo in key roles, the film begins in Turin in 1969, and follows young Massimo, whose idyllic childhood is shattered by the mysterious death of his mother.



## BAIPAN BHARAT DEVA

DISNEY+ HOTSTAR

Six estranged sisters decide to take part in a Mangalagauri competition and reunite at their childhood home to practice. They must overcome their past and face their struggles head-on. The film, directed by Kedar Shinde and written by Vaishali Naik, follows their attempt to rebuild their lost connection. The ensemble cast of this Marathi-language sleeper hit includes Rohini Hattangadi, Vandana Gupte, and Sukanya Kulkarni.



## AFTER EVERYTHING

NETFLIX

Heartbroken and suffering from a writer's block, Hardin heads to Lisbon to make amends with his past so he can focus on building a future with Tessa. *After Everything*, which is the fifth film in the 'After' series, wraps up the bitter-sweet love story between Hardin and Tessa. The series is based on Anna Todd's novel and is directed by Castille Landon. It features Hero Fiennes Tiffin and Josephine Langford as Hardin and Tessa respectively.



## MR &amp; MRS SMITH

PRIME VIDEO

*Mr & Mrs Smith* follows two lonely strangers who work for a mystery spy agency that promises them a glamorous life of espionage, luxury, international travel, and a dream brownstone in Manhattan. John and Jane Smith are navigating a high-risk endeavour while approaching a new relationship milestone. Their cover story becomes much more complicated when they develop genuine feelings for each other.



## The Knots of a Marriage

## SHALINI LANGER

AMERICAN HUMORIST and TV host Sam Levenson once noted: "Love, at first sight, is easy to understand; it's when two people have been looking at each other for a lifetime that it becomes a miracle." And, that's not the only miracle that sustains a marriage, as two people in this union will tell you.

So what happens when one of them meets a bloody, unnatural death, and the only one around at the time is the spouse?

That's at the heart of this deeply intelligent film, taking the cynicism of courtroom dramas and turning the same on its head, by French screenwriter-director Justine Triet.

*Anatomy of a Fall* speaks in multiple languages, in a way reinforcing the multiple lev-

els it operates on. Sandra is German, who has come to live in this remote, snowbound French chalet via London, where she met her French husband Samuel. Now, English is the common ground on which the two and their son Daniel meet, especially in navigating the tension between them since their pre-teen boy met with an accident leaving him visually impaired.

The death of Samuel happens against this background, soon after he has ensured that Sandra's interview with a journalist is cut short mid-talk as he plays raucously loud, incongruously catchy music – which happens to be the instrumental version of the song *P.I.M.P.* by 50 Cent.

There is a clear undertone to that interview, Sandra's laughter as she finally puts it off to another date a little too giddy. The "acci-

dent", of Samuel's fall, out of the chalet onto the snow, the blood spreading around the body, Daniel stumbling on it returning from a walk, leading to its discovery, follow within the next few minutes.

Triet won't let it go easy, forcing us to choose and re-choose sides as she tells the story of the lives together of Sandra, a successful writer; Samuel, who has tried and given up on a lot of things, including writing; and their son Daniel, with acutely honed senses in the absence of proper vision.

We glimpse their life in snapshots – as testimonies of others in court, as physical evidence in a possible homicide, as secretly recorded videos of a marital fight, as off-camera sounds, as Sandra's books, as statements exposed as lies, and others taken as truths. Sandra, who is directed to speak in court

in French, a language she struggles with, especially in this totally foreign situation, points out that what meets the eye can sometimes be too blinding for the truth.

Triet raises questions about relationships and the daily nurture they require, the traditional roles in a marriage, especially caregiving of the child, the unintended biases towards a woman who doesn't fit that mould, and the process of justice.

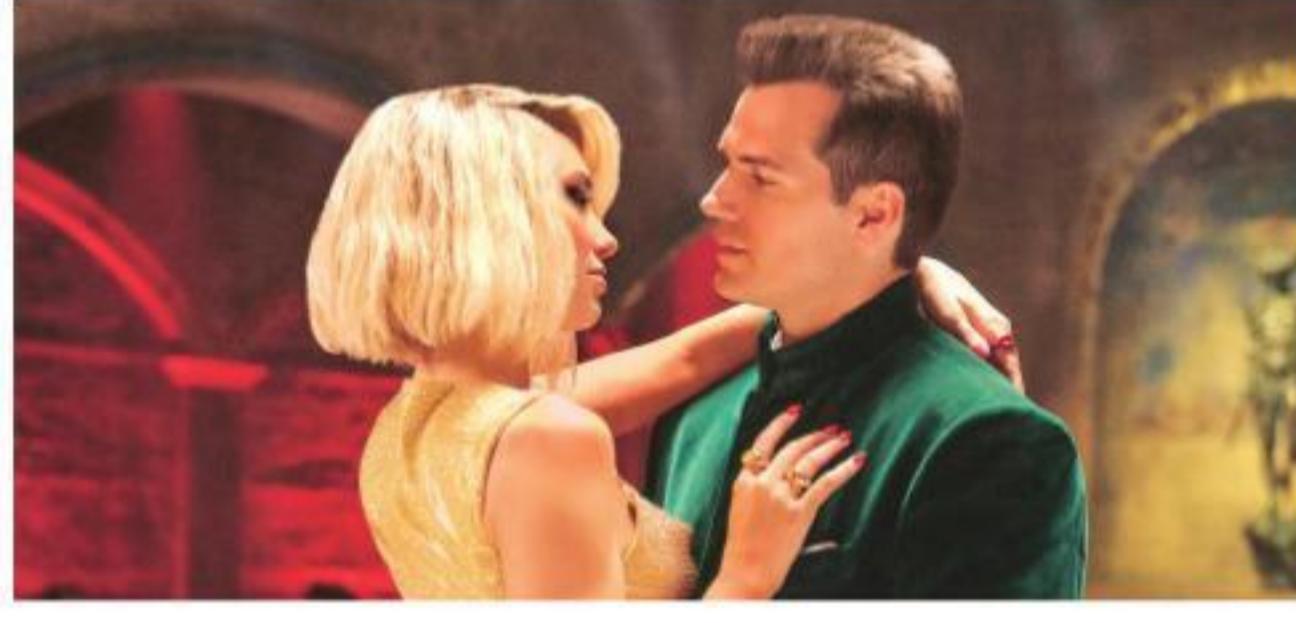
Huller, who is nominated for an Academy Award for Best Actress for *Anatomy of a Fall* – with several awards under her belt already for it, is phenomenal. She stands so rock solid in her brutal honesty that it is difficult to suspect her, even against your best intentions.

Huller also dexterously walks the thin line between coming across as cold and refusing to be apologetic for her choices, sexual

and otherwise.

Her relationship with her son is one of the more subtly delicate ones on screen, with both realising the shadow coming up between them as the investigation proceeds. Can Sandra really stay away from "influencing" Daniel, the sole eyewitness in the case, knowing she can? For this to work, Daniel has to be in perfect step – and misstep – with Sandra, as he and she deal with the suspicions about her. And Milo Machado Graner is that perfect, his uncertainty, fears, and love for the dead parent and the one left behind, as tactile.

Theis as Samuel has a short, impactful role and Arlaud chews deep into his, to give a meaty performance as Sandra's lawyer. However, the film belongs to Huller and Graner, that chalet in snow and the anatomy of an (un?)fall.



## No Great Shakes

## ARGYLLE ★★

Director: Mathew Vaughn Cast: Bryce Dallas Howard, Sam Rockwell, Henry Cavill, Bryan Cranston, Catherine O'Hara, John Cena, Samuel L Jackson, Dua Lipa

ARGYLLE is a good example of why just a long list of stars, spies, lies and plot twists does not make a good film. Even if you have Dua Lipa come waltzing in inside of two minutes, and flooring a short, seductive turn.

The James Bondesque promise of that initial start is never matched, with the film clearly too pleased with its own storyline involving a boring woman writer of successful spy novels (Conway, played by Howard) whose fiction has started coming true. Thus it is that she finds herself mixed up in real-world spycraft – though craft would be an exaggeration for the shoot-and-smash method adopted by the deliberately de-glamourised Aidan (Rockwell), who pops up by her side.

In Conway's books, spies are more like the Henry Cavill kind – handsome, slick hair, sharp jaw – she has dreamed up for her Argylle character. For some reason, as Aidan fights the mean guys, Conway keeps seeing Cavill, which doesn't do the film, nor her, and certainly not Rockwell, any good. It's also hard to understand the logic of it, when you already have so many wheels within wheels, all moving apparently in the same direction – towards proof against some very bad guys.

There is at least one surprise: super spy Argylle does his super spy things dressed in a Nehru suit. Which is made of green velvet. But then again, if the world was perfect, who would need spies?

## The Pursuit of Happiness

## NEXT GOAL WINS

## ★★★

Director: Taika Waititi

Cast: Michael Fassbender, Elisabeth Moss, Kaimana, Oscar Kightley, Taika Waititi

TAIKA WAITITI is perhaps trying to pack too much into a film that is about the length of a football game. There is the underdog story, of the American Samoa football team that carries the tag of being "the world's worst" for losing a game 31 goals to nil. There is the coach story, of the kind who needs to redeem himself having had one tumble too many. And there is the Waititi story, which must now make itself felt in his every venture – a blend of funny, absurd, and on-the-nose White Man vs The Rest theme.

It's perhaps not the best way to tell this tale, based on the real-life American Samoa team, which suffered the ignominy of that loss. The jokes come at the expense of digging into the individual stories of the players, some of whom hold multiple jobs to continue playing. At the cost of looking deeper into the small island of just over 50,000, which is on the face of it a paradise, but which is fast losing its young for lack of jobs.

Waititi, who has adapted this film from a documentary on the team by the same name, is insistent on keeping it light and fun. All its cathartic energy is rather spent on the Danish-American coach Rongen,



(Fassbender), who finds himself sent to the island against his wishes, to whip the team into shape in three weeks, in time for the World Cup qualifiers. Rongen comes in carrying the baggage of a long string of meltdowns on the field, as well as the breakdown of his marriage off it (Moss in the unnecessary role of the wife), and he wears his anger on his sleeve.

Rongen expectedly has a hard time understanding the perennially positive Samoan team football manager Tavita (a convincing Kightley), the team's rag-tag and hopelessly out-of-shape players, and, most of all, the fact that they carry on regardless.

A teammate, Jaiyah, who would be the world's first openly trans player to compete in a FIFA World Cup qualifier, leaves the deepest impression on Rongen. Jaiyah is beautifully played by newcomer Kaimana, who is fragile against the (meant/unmeant)

biases of foreigners like Rongen, but gets her amazing sense of security from the Samoan society, which has space in it for the entire spectrum from he to she.

We have seen too many underdog sports stories to know the template – anger, passion, injuries, and heartbreaks, on the way to that promised glory.

Waititi, for all the unevenness of *Next Goal Wins*, gives us another – un-American – retelling of this tale. Where winning is important, but not everything; where happiness is something, if not everything; where fun and time out have a space; and where life is not just about a series of goals hitting the back of the net.

Rather, as Tavita keeps telling Rongen, all they hope for is "one goal", so as to move on. Or, as Rongen's wife reminds him, football is not "only sport"; it can also be "just a game".

## Top of the Pops

## SUANSHU KHURANA

ONCE, A charity single boomed a plea to save lives amid a famine in Ethiopia. In 1985, with no social media and a lack of noise, came *We are the world* (Columbia Records), an appeal in the form of a song written by Michael Jackson and Lionel Richie.

Here were some of the most influential names in the history of pop music – Ray Charles, Bob Dylan, Harry Belafonte, Stevie Wonder, Bruce Springsteen, Diana Ross, Tina Turner, and Billy Joel among others – crooning a gentle ballad together like they were in a church choir, standing in front of



a banner that read 'USA for Africa'. All heart, it felt comforting and dazzling at the same time.

Modelled on punk legend Bob Geldof's *Do they know it's Christmas?* which had many significant British pop icons at the helm of the charity piece, here were the biggest American popstars, the most elite, Black and White, who joined forces for Africa and a piece that would go on to be an artistic and social triumph. Here was music, lyrics in tune like

*There's a choice we're making/We're saving our lives*, that felt significant; especially coming from the enigma that these popstars were.

While critics felt it was jingle-esque, the song stuck, with more than 20 million copies sell-

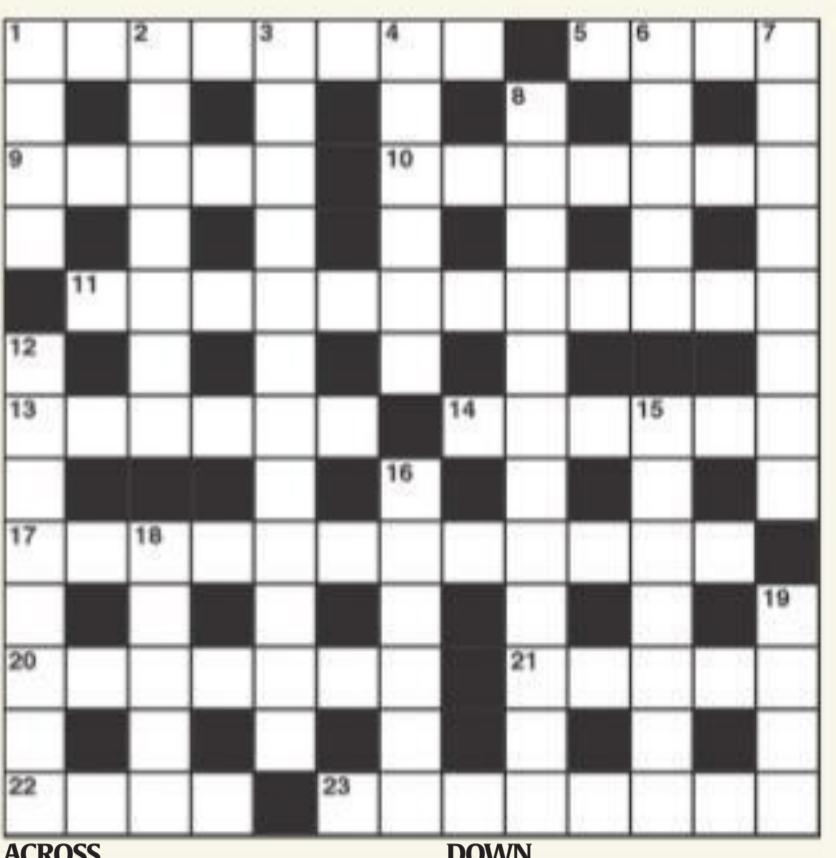
ing in Swahili. Imagine that. Check your ego at the door, the one line taped to the door of A&M Studios by Jones, didn't work. Until it did. At one point, musicians had other musicians sign each other's sheet music, a trend started that night by Diana Ross who walked upto Daryl Hall, calling herself his "biggest fan". As for the music itself, the carefully interwoven solos, especially Cindi Lauper's phenomenal rendition, stood out. And to think that she almost didn't show up as her boyfriend felt the song wasn't going to be a hit.

The anecdotes are plenty and perky, and lead to the larger idea that *We are the world* continues to stand the test of time. Told succinctly mainly through Richie, Lauper, Kenny Loggins, Huey Lewis, and voices of Jackson and Belafonte, *The Greatest Night in Pop* harks back to a time when this brilliant generation of musicians existed and where music was political and attempted to change the world.

sung in Swahili. Imagine that.

"Check your ego at the door", the one line taped to the door of A&M Studios by Jones, didn't work. Until it did. At one point, musicians had other musicians sign each other's sheet music, a trend started that night by Diana Ross who walked upto Daryl Hall, calling herself his "biggest fan". As for the music itself, the carefully interwoven solos, especially Cindi Lauper's phenomenal rendition, stood out. And to think that she almost didn't show up as her boyfriend felt the song wasn't going to be a hit. The anecdotes are plenty and perky, and lead to the larger idea that *We are the world* continues to stand the test of time. Told succinctly mainly through Richie, Lauper, Kenny Loggins, Huey Lewis, and voices of Jackson and Belafonte, *The Greatest Night in Pop* harks back to a time when this brilliant generation of musicians existed and where music was political and attempted to change the world.

## CROSSWORD 5278



ACROSS

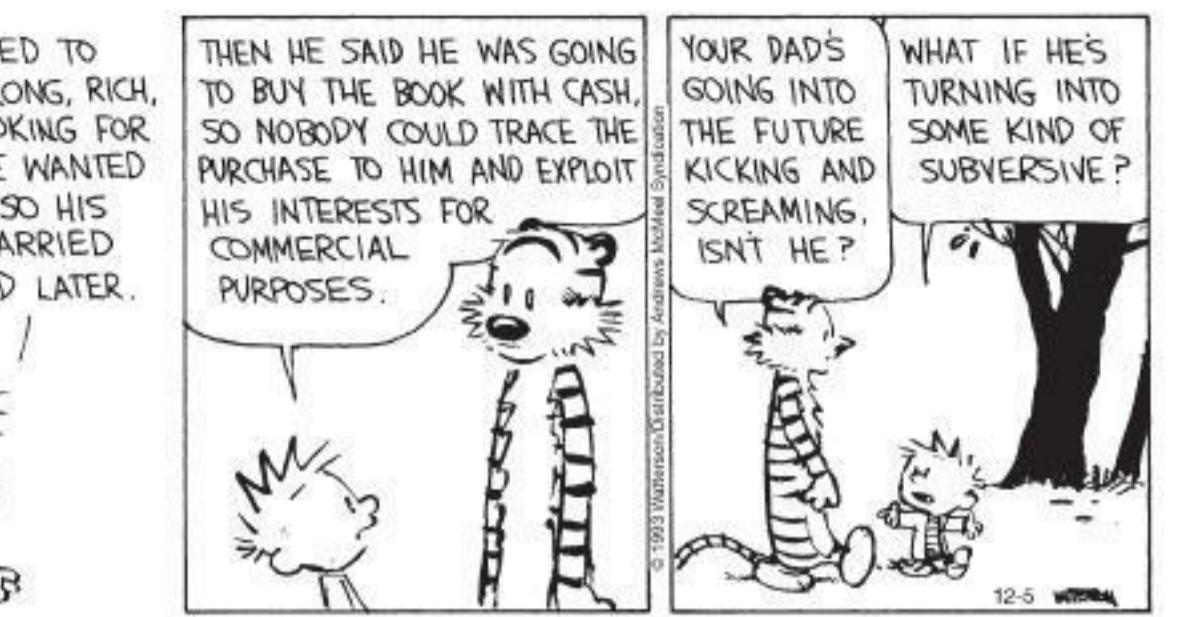
- Formidable fellows giving outstanding service (8)
- Smart man dressed in lace (4)
- The length of the links? (5)
- A bad-tempered pet (7)
- Skilful manoeuvre once used to discipline a pupil? (12)
- Fabulous victim of soaring ambition (6)
- Struggle when various results are not right (6)
- Kind of talk more cordial than a tete-a-tete? (5-2-5)
- Sack a priest. Result of wild fun and beat music? (7)
- Rests awkwardly on a girl's head (5)
- Foreign flag bearer (4)
- Lets it break to a point that could be lethal (8)
- So come up and see the capital (4)

**Solutions Crossword 5277 Across:** 1. Hedonists, 8. Torch, 9. Steeple, 10. Debtor, 11. Baboon, 12. Diamonds, 15. Nocturne, 18. Routed, 20. Leeway, 21. Diverge, 22. Since, 23. Spin ayem Down 2. Extra, 3. Oregon, 4. Islanders, 5. Stream, 6. Gratting, 7. Cherished, 11. Boundless, 13. Aversion, 14. Screens, 16. Usages, 17. Surety, 19. Elgar

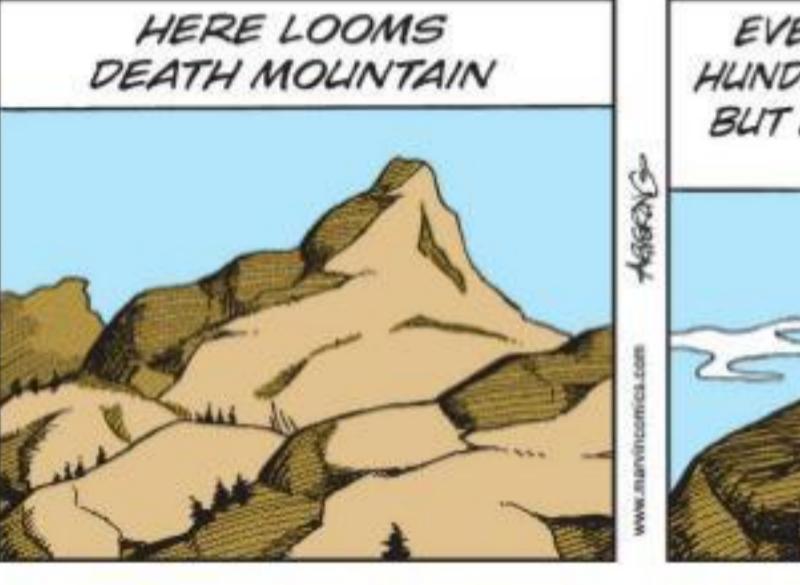
## OVER THE HEDGE by Michael Fry &amp; T Lewis



## CALVIN &amp; HOBBS by Bill Watterson



## MARVIN by Tom Armstrong



## DAY TODAY

ARIES (Mar 21 - Apr 20)

Sometimes it does take an enormous amount of energy to walk away from unpleasant situations. However, disagreeable encounters must now be defused with wisdom. If you tackle a long-standing moral question, you'll find that your views have changed.

TAURUS (Apr 21 - May 21)

You may now be forced to differentiate between what you think you need and what is good for you. Your expectations of what a person can contribute to your life are unrealistic. In that case, leave controversial questions until next week.

GEMINI (May 22 - June 21)

Your own emotional well-being will be strengthened by giving partners the support and guidance they need. Please do not allow vague fears or imaginings to disturb your equilibrium. You see, much of what happens this week will appear to be much bigger in your imagination than it really is.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov 24 - Dec 22)

There is something

you are too astute to give way without first making it clear to everybody that you know you are right. You may, though, still have to count the cost of a financial blunder. Never mind - you have unlimited time to make up for it.

SCORPIO (Oct 24 - Nov 23)

A particular emotional tie is now more important than you realise. You may make your feelings plain, so that other people can respond on a level which you find more meaningful. Cash questions now require one hundred and ten percent attention if you're not to throw your money down a hole.

CAPRICORN (Dec 23 - Jan 20)

With a group of planets conspiring to awaken your creative aspirations, someone, or something, must now fire your imagination, encouraging you to spread your wings and liberate yourself from the past. You will eventually discover that you were right all along.

AQUARIUS (Jan 21 - Feb 19)

You are now entitled to go into battle and fight for what you believe to be your rights. What is due to you now is recognition for all you have done for family members and all the effort you have put into home improvements. You must, though, acknowledge that partners may be equally convinced that they are right.

LEO (July 24 - Aug 23)

You should not be

reluctant to air

grievances, even

though partners are

initially likely to turn a deaf

ear if you raise issues such as

your hopes at work or your

desires and needs at home.

However, if you persevere, you

are likely to get your ideas

across eventually.

VIRGO (Aug 24 - Sep 23)

Your loyalty and

devotion are not in

question, but you

must realise that

you can set yourself free without

necessarily letting anybody

down. What you are aiming for

is a relationship based on

mutual trust rather than

dependency. And that has to be

a noble ideal.

PISCES (Feb 20 - Mar 20)

What you must do now is pay your dues, honour past commitments and do what you know is proper. Then nobody will be able to get the better of you or imply that you have not done your best. You're a disciplined person in many ways, much more so than many people believe, and therein lies the key to your success.

## Difficulty Level 1s

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

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

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

## SOLUTION SUDOKU 5460

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

## JUMBLED WORDS

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

Work is the meat of life, \_\_\_\_ the \_\_\_\_\_. - B.C. Forbes (8.,7)

RVEEE

UYLSSST

NAERR

EIDPSU

Answers: Work is the meat of life, RESTURE, REVERA, STWUS, UPSIDE

## SUDOKU 5461

**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**

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3s = Medium; 4s = Hard;

5s = Very Hard;

6s = Genius

6	9	8	4					
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## SOLUTION SUDOKU 5460

5	1	7	2	4	6	3	8	9
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GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA  
DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES  
OFFICE OF THE ADDITIONAL CHIEF ENGINEER,  
DRAINAGE CIRCLE, CUTTACK, GANDARPUR-753003  
"e" Procurement Notice No. ACECD-CTC-08/2023-24  
email Id : [sdredainagecircle@gmail.com](mailto:sdredainagecircle@gmail.com)

- Name of Works
- Total number of works
- Bid Identification No.
- Estimated Cost
- Period of completion
- Availability of Tender On-Line.
- Date of Opening of Technical Bid.
- Class of Contractor
- EMD required
- Cost of Tender paper
- Procurement Officer

\* Tender will be accepted if registered in the CDMS Portal.

Further details can be seen from the Govt. web site [www.tendersorissa.gov.in](http://www.tendersorissa.gov.in). Addendum / Corrigendum / Cancellation if any required will be published only in Govt. web site [www.tendersorissa.gov.in](http://www.tendersorissa.gov.in)

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Drainage Circle, Cuttack  
OIPR-32518/11/008/2324

For further information contact the concerned authority.

Rahul sir and Rohit bhai kept giving me the confidence and told me to convert this into a big innings and stay till the end. I would love to double this up."

**YASHASVI JAISWAL**, ON HIS CAREER-BEST KNOCK OF 179 NOT OUT

# Jais by the bay

Young batsman's unbeaten 179, a perfect blend of aggression and wariness, keeps India afloat

**VENKATA KRISHNA B**  
VISAKHAPATNAM, FEBRUARY 2

ON MOST nights before a game Yashasvi Jaiswal listens to Celine Dion's chartbuster soundtrack from the movie *Titanic*, "Every Night in My Dreams." Whether he stuck to his tradition the night before the Visakhapatnam Test or not, he certainly composed a knock straight out of his dreams. It was near flawless and pivotal to his team's cause, helping them from crashing onto an iceberg and drowning into the seas, steering them to relatively safe shores with an undefeated 179, more than half of India's first-day total.

It is his most influential knock yet. The pitch was flat, but the slowness made stroke-making difficult. England's spinners were callow; one was a debutant, the other two had a combined experience of three games, but they bowled diligently, to keep India's progress under check. The total of 336 for six is not formidable on this pitch, but the reason India reached this far only due to the 22-year-old's application and hunger for runs. Every partner of his got a start, but departed without even a forty. The second highest score was Shubman Gill's 34. But Jaiswal waged a lonely battle, repelling the waves and playing his strokes, ensuring that India remained in the game, and in the series, having lost the first Test in Hyderabad.

There is an arc of redemption too. In the first Test at Hyderabad, his first at home, Jaiswal squandered a hundred-scoring chance. Until he remained in the crease, Jaiswal seemed to have an edge over Bazball. With his aggressive white-ball influenced approach, the left-hander had all the answers to what England threw at him. But he spilled his wicket on 80 runs, rather than kicking on to score a hundred and taking the game away from England.

He did not let the opportunity go in Visakhapatnam. Jaiswal was as aggressive, but he ensured that he batted long. His strike-rate wasn't as lofty as it was in the first Test. But the aggression and the intent were all intact.

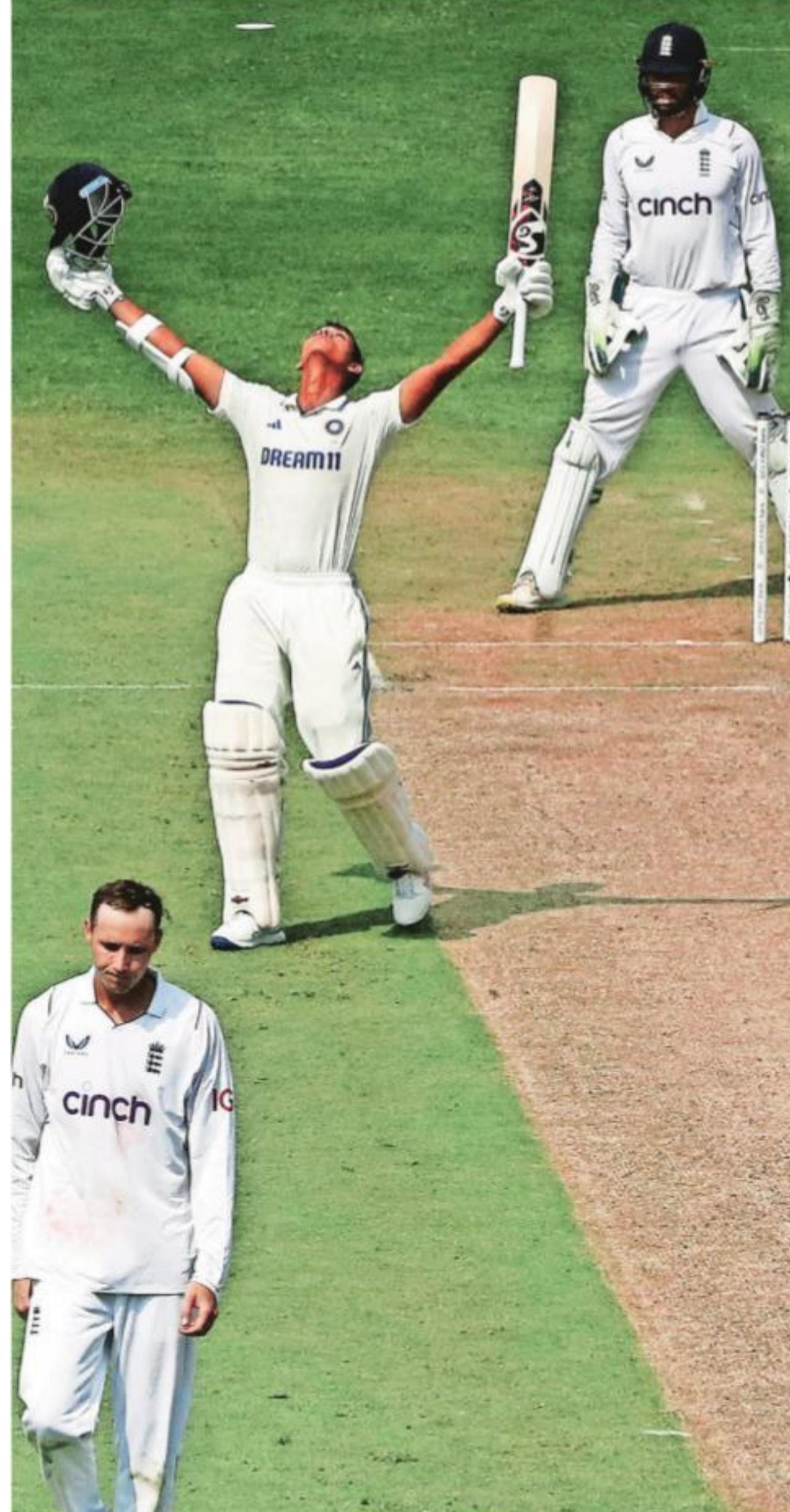
Having got out for 80, one thought he would slow down with three-figure mark in sight. But he went from 73 to 100 in just 20 deliveries, playing just 8 dot balls in the period and completing his hundred with a six. Like Virender Sehwag to cap an innings that was Sehwagian in nature.

This streak of intent was visible from the time Jaiswal walked into the national side during the tour of the Caribbean. So much so that in the lead up to the World Cup, he was in contention to make the cut. It looks a matter of time as the 22-year-old has all the making of a modern day all-format opener, one who can fit into any format without altering his game.

## Years of sweat

It's the reward of his hard work and determination to dream on against the odds. Packing his bags from the remote town of Suriyawan in Uttar Pradesh to Mumbai to chase his cricketing dreams as a raw teenager, staying in tents on pitches, selling paani puris and climbing walls of cricket clubs to watch matches, Jaiswal knows the value of sweat. And he continues striving for more success.

He is on a perennial quest to get better. He has bought a sprawling new apartment, has expensive cars in his garage and is a celebrity.



Yashasvi Jaiswal celebrates after completing his second Test hundred. Reuters

But he remains committed to his first love, which is cricket. During the off-season, he packed off to the Rajasthan Royals academy in Talegaon, surrounded by wilderness. With the academy coach Zubin Bharucha, Jaiswal spends his time alternating between practising with red ball and white balls on tracks with different soil textures.

In the middle, depending on the format, Jaiswal is given the license to choose the shots he plays, without altering his game. There is still some work to be done on the leg-side game. But for now, it is not troubling him. With his elbow being ramrod

straight, he isn't as effective off his legs as other sub-continental batsmen, particularly southpaws.

But he has other strokes prescribed in his textbook. Here, he brought out two kinds of drives that involved a lot of wrist-work. If the ball is pitched in the line of stumps, he would use his wrists to send it to the boundary between the bowler and the mid-on fielder. At other times, when offered the slightest of width, he would create room and use the wrists to drive with full force to the right of mid-on fielder. When they deliver it short and offer width, he would cut them fiercely.

This was also an innings Jaiswal showed signs of coming of age. At a time where India's batting line-up is going through a transition, nothing calms the dressing room as much as a young batsman assuming responsibility and translating talent into runs. Having watched the likes of Rohit Sharma, Shubman Gill, Shreyas Iyer, Axar Patel, KS Bharat squander their starts, Jaiswal never relented. It is a format that Jaiswal enjoys more than T20s. "I'd always say to myself that if I'm set, I make sure that I'm making it big and taking responsibility for the team. That's why we enjoy red ball cricket a lot. Playing the longer format helps me improve my mental toughness which is really important because you are going to be tested in different situations against different bowlers. It's a lot of fun," Jaiswal once told The Indian Express Idea Exchange.

Fun he definitely had. Of course, there were moments where Jaiswal lived dangerously, offering a couple of half-chances while trying to cut close to the body. But those risks are part of his package. When the situation demands, his maturity, picking the right deliveries to attack on a placid track. It was an innings where Jaiswal found the perfect mix between attacking and defending, and picking the right bowlers to go after. And an innings that he might dream of playing every day.

Coming of age

If Jaiswal's innings was all about application and how to construct an innings, the same cannot be said of the rest. Skipper Rohit, who opened a new chapter in his Test career as an opener at the same venue in 2019 by scoring a century, on Friday casually flicked one that turned from Shoaib Bashir to the leg-slip fielder for his first Test wicket. Having spent 40 deliveries patiently, during which time he didn't show any signs of going for a boundary, the first mistake that Rohit did was not attack the debutant straightaway. Up next was Gill, who played every bit like a batsman whose spot was under threat. Despite showing signs of revival in

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**BRIEFLY**

**Davis Cup:** India look to make most of rankings mismatch

**New Delhi:** A huge rankings mismatch between the two sides and a venue with capacity to accommodate 500 fans has taken the shine off the rare Indian team's tour of Pakistan. While the attention-grabbing aspect of this tie may be the frosty sporting relations between the two countries, India will hope to ride their status as heavy favourites to go back into World Group I. Following tough ties against Casper Ruud-led Norway and Holger Rune-led Denmark, India found themselves in the humbling position of being demoted to World Group 2, but favourable ties against lower-ranked Morocco at home, and now Pakistan away, should give them a chance to go back up one division. The Indian team does not feature either Sumit Nagal or Sasikumar Mukund, but instead will be led by World No. 461 Ramkumar Ramanathan and N Sriram Balaji, who last played a professional singles match in October 2022. Pakistan's highest-ranked player will be 24-year-old Muzammil Mortaza, who is currently the World No. 1681. **ENS**

**Lack of drag flickers concerning: Coach**

**Bhubaneswar:** The Indian women's hockey team's woeful penalty conversion rate is due to the lack of drag flickers in the side, according to chief coach Janneke Schopman, who stressed on the need to have a more effective talent development programme in the country. Penalty corner conversion has been a thorn in the flesh for the Indian women's team of late. The inability to convert was one of the reasons the side struggled at last month's Olympic Qualifiers, eventually missing the bus for the Paris Games. "We need potentially more depth in our penalty corner. That's a concern in women's hockey in India," Schopman said on the eve of India's FIH Pro League match against China. "If you look at any other country in the top 10, they have 5-6 drag flickers and we do not. So there's work that needs to be happening in talent development." **PTI**

**Rising star Hemrajani wins U-12 sailing title**

**Mumbai:** Rising sailing star Zahaan Hemrajani has emerged triumphant by winning the first place at the U-12 category of the prestigious O'pen Skiff Nationals held in Mandwa. He was also declared the overall winner across the Open Category. Previously, he finished a commendable 19th position in the Under-12 World Championship in Italy in July 2023. Zahaan, who is a student of Oberoi International School, trains under the 24Seven Sailing Team led by Umesh and mentored by Amish Ved and started formally sailing only in March 2023. "Having started at an early age, Zahaan's love for the sport comes from his father Ashish Hemrajani's (Founder & CEO, BookMyShow) passion for sailing over the years. As he develops further, we expect him to perform at this very high level, internationally," said his mentor Amish Ved. **ENS**

**PRATYUSH RAJ**

NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 2

A COUPLE of years ago, while playing an invitational U-19 tournament in Pune, the organisers were amazed by the six-hitting prowess of Sachin Dhas and checked the bat's size to ensure that he was not cheating.

"He is not a muscular guy and back then he was not this tall as well. So him hitting big sixes caught the attention of the organisers and they checked the width of his bat. After a few minutes, they cleared him but they were in shock," Sachin Dhas' coach Sheik Azhar narrates the story to *The Indian Express*.

Cut to the present, Dhas, who will turn 19 on Saturday, scored a match-winning 116 as India trounced Nepal by 132 runs at Mangaon Oval in Bloemfontein and secured their semi-final spot in the U-19 World Cup.

Before Friday, Dhas had never played more than 20 balls in an inning in the tournament. In the last four matches, he has scored 26 not out (20b), 21 not out (9b), 20 (16b), and 15 (11b). He was given the role of a finisher. Against Nepal, India lost three quick wickets and were in a spot of bother, when Dhas joined forces with skipper Uday Saharan (110) and put on a match-winning 215-run stand for the fourth

# Wrestlers, the priority at 'official' Nationals

At Jaipur nationals, there seems to be a world of difference at an event that has the blessings of the Sports Ministry

**NIHAL KOSHIE**  
JAIPUR, FEBRUARY 2

NOT FAR from the competition venue of the Senior National Wrestling Championships here, under a large shamiana, is a lavish buffet spread at lunchtime. There is a well-stocked non-veg counter and also a salad station. Earlier the participants were escorted to the hotel by officials who were there to receive them at the airport or railway station. Few days back another wrestling 'Nationals' was held at Pune, it was organised by the president of the suspended WFI Sanjay Singh, a loyalist of the erstwhile president Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh who faces sexual harassment charges against him. The Sports Ministry had called it illegal. At Pune wrestlers had to go hungry as there were no eating options at the venue and among the 'reception party' at the venue were an army of mosquitoes.

The Jaipur event has the blessings of the Ministry and is conducted by the Indian Olympic Association-appointed ad-hoc committee. It's the first step for grapplers dreaming of qualifying for the Paris Olympics. Intriguingly, the man in the thick of things in organising the event is the Secretary general of the suspended WFI Prem Chand Lochab. However, for this Nationals he is wearing the hat of the secretary of the Railway Sports Promotion Board which is the host.

Pointing to the lunch tables, Lochab says, "The spread is like there is a wedding in the family". Top railway officials, including Arjuna awardees, have been roped into various committees. "This is a prestigious championship and we want everything to be perfect," says organising secretary Anuj Kumar Talyal. Lochab insists that they have set high standards for the championship. "The wrestlers are a priority at these nationals. Meals are being provided to all the wrestlers, we have put them up at hotels, they don't have to pay a paisa from their pocket for anything," Lochab said.

Meanwhile, at the field of play, a temporary mega tent is put up on the outfield of the railway cricket stadium; hired hands, officials are busy giving the finishing touches. Wrestling mats are being laid out on an elevated platform, a giant screen is being in-



Wrestlers train on the eve of the 2023 Senior National Wrestling Championships at the railway stadium in Jaipur. **Nihal Koshie**

stalled at one end, referees are inspecting the warmup area and preparations are being made for an opening ceremony programme.

Manager and coach of the 19-member Odisha team Santosh Das was one of the first to reach Jaipur. Das said the state did not field a team in Pune. "The past year has not been great for the sport but wrestlers are looking forward to participating in these nationals

because it is the official one. The top wrestlers will be included in the national camp and can then appear for Olympic qualification trials too. Now there is clarity on the path

ahead," Das said.

There is a world of a difference between the Pune nationals and the one in Jaipur, Arjuna awardee and 2002 Commonwealth Games medalist Shokinder Tomar said. "The certificates issued at Jaipur nationals will have value because this event is recognised by the sports ministry and the Indian Olympic Association. When wrestlers apply for jobs these certificates will be counted. The quality of the competition at these nationals will be far superior because the top wrestlers in the country are here," Tomar said.

Some states have fielded teams at both the nationals because of factions in the association. "The VN Prasoon (former secretary general of WFI) faction sent a Kerala team to Pune. We are fielding our team for the Jaipur nationals," Deepu Kumar SV, the secretary for the breakaway group said.

The return of Vinesh Phogat, a two-time world championship medalist, after undergoing a knee surgery will be keenly watched. Phogat was one of the prominent faces of the protest against former WFI president Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh, who is accused of sexual harassment by six women wrestlers. Vinesh skipped the Asian Games because of an injured knee. But qualifying for Paris has got tougher for Vinesh, 29, as the younger Antim Phangal has earned a quota place for the country in the 53kg category.

By Friday evening, the eve of the championships, there were a bevy of wrestlers training on the mats to cut weight. In front of a hoarding with images of India's Olympic medal winners - from KD Jadhav to Ravi Dahiya - young wrestlers flocked to click selfies and group photos hoping to emulate their feats one day.

There is no ambiguity as to which of the two nationals is recognised, says secy of suspended WFI

**NIHAL KOSHIE**  
JAIPUR, FEBRUARY 2

**PREM CHAND LOCHAB** (in pic), the secretary of the Railway Sports Promotion Board is also the Secretary General of the suspended Wrestling Federation of India. Lochab had the support of wrestlers when he threw his hat in the ring for the WFI polls. In Jaipur, Lochab spoke to *The Indian Express* on two nationals being held back-to-back. Excerpts from the interview:

**The Railway Sports Promotion Board is hosting the senior nationals two days after the WFI's. Where does this leave wrestlers?**

At these nationals, wrestlers will get medals and certificates that are valid, and then job opportunities open up for them too. The Olympics are around the corner and wrestlers were waiting for these nationals. We didn't want to delay it further. The mandate has been given to the Indian Olympic Association appointed ad-hoc committee to conduct the nationals and they approached the Railway Sports Promotion Board. We have many wrestlers too. So we agreed to conduct it.

**What must be done by WFI to ensure the safety of women wrestlers?**

This is a big issue. The key is to get the right people in the Internal Complaints Committee so women wrestlers are assured that their voices will be heard and solutions will be provided. If you have an internal complaints mechanism but people are appointed for the sake of it then it won't work. If there is a complaint action must be taken immediately.

**As secretary general of the suspended WFI have you been getting calls from wrestlers about the two nationals?**

The sports ministry's instructions are very clear that Pune nationals conducted by the suspended WFI are not recognised. There is no ambiguity as to which of the two is recognised.

## Chaliha shows off leftie flair to reach first-ever Super 30 semifinal

**VINAYAK MOHANARANGAN**  
FEBRUARY 2

THERE IS something special about watching left-handers in sport, especially one where they wield rackets. Indian badminton doesn't have too many of these lefties, and that's why Ashmita Chaliha has always stood out. When she is in good touch, she is a delight to watch, as her leftie elegance combines well with a naturally attacking mindset. The jump smash is not a familiar sight in the women's singles field, and Ashmita is one of those who has a flair for it.

But to go with all this aggressive brilliance, consistency has eluded the shuttler from Guwahati. The frustrations have outnumbered the opportunities she has had to make the most of her undoubted talent. Oftentimes, it's been the inability to rein in the unforced errors but physical and mental toughness to last the distance on the gruelling badminton World Tour have been found wanting too.

On Thursday in Bangkok, the 24-year-

old prevailed against Ester Nurumi Tri Wardoyo 21-14, 19-21, 21-13 in a 57-minute quarterfinal contest at the Thailand Masters, reaching the last four stage at a Super 300 event for the first time in her career. In the process, she also became the first Indian not named PV Sindhu or Saina Nehwal to reach the women's singles semifinal of a World Tour event not held in India. It's been a long time coming, but this is arguably Ashmita's best run of results in an international event.

In the quarterfinal against the Indonesian teenager, who is a Junior World bronze medalist, Ashmita showed both sides of her game. In the opener, she trailed 10-14 after a fairly tight start. When it looked like Ester was pulling ahead, Ashmita pulled off a stunning run of 11 straight points to pocket Game 1. The world No. 61 then had the finish line in sight to close this out in straight games as she led 19-15 but it was now Ester's turn to go on a run as she won the next six points to force the decider. In those phases, the two extremes of Ashmita's game were evident.



Ashmita Chaliha beat Ester Wardoyo 21-14, 19-21, 21-13 in the quarters. **BAI**

She can delight just as she can frustrate even when seemingly in control.

To her credit, Ashmita quickly regrouped at the start of the decider to open up a mas-

sive lead and despite the world No 44 threatening a late fightback, managed to close the match out.

A few years back, when she played Tai Tzu Ying at the PBL in Chennai, she lost in straight games but as a 20-year-old up against one of the best ever, she showed the courage to go at the Taipei magician. Often she would try to beat Tzu Ying at her own game of deception and clever angles and didn't hide on the court. For someone with such promise, big wins on the tour have been few and far between. But by beating Pai Yu Po and Ester, both ranked higher, in back-to-back three-game battles, she's given a reminder of the skillset she has. Three International Challenge titles don't do justice to her talent but she now has a massive chance to make that long-awaited breakthrough at the World Tour level.

In the semifinals, she will take on Supanida Katethong on Thailand, in what promises to be a clash of two aggressive lefties who possess a solid jump smash. The world No 17 will pose a stiff test for the Indian, but if Ashmita can channel her flair with some consistency, an elusive first World Tour final is not out of her reach.

Ashmita, however, is the last Indian standing after defeats for Mithun Manjunath in men's singles and Treesa Jolly and Gayatri Gopichand in women's doubles quarterfinals. Mithun lost to Mark Caljouw of Netherlands 19-21, 15-21 in 43 minutes, after being locked at 19-19 in the opening game.

It was a heartbreaking 12-21, 21-17, 21-23 defeat for sixth seeds Treesa and Gayatri against fourth seeds Febriana Dwipuji Kusuma and Amallia Cahaya Pratiwi of Indonesia.

The Indians recovered from an ordinary opening game to dominate large parts of the remainder of the match but while they controlled most of the rallies, they paid the price for errors from their own rackets too. In the decider, Treesa and Gayatri did well to save two match points and then to have a chance of their own, but the Indonesians prevailed while the Indian youngsters were left frustrated by a missed opportunity in Bangkok.

difficult for Azhar.

"Water crisis is acute in Beed. Every second or third day, I used to call up a water tanker (2000 litre). We used to collect money and thus those wickets have survived till now. Around 50 kids from different age groups used to train under me, the numbers have doubled since Azhar was picked for India U-19," says Azhar.

Sanjay says there is a celebration at the academy but Sheikh Azhar hasn't stopped crying since he scored the century.

"Mere se jyada unka beta hai (He is more his (Azhar) son than mine. If not for Azhar, my dream would have died, and Sachin would never have reached this level. He has looked after him like his own son and whenever he talks about Sachin, there will be tears in his eyes. Mere bete ko ek achha insaan banaaya hai (He has made my son a good human being)," says Sanjay.

During the tournament, Sachin showed great game awareness and did the most difficult job for his team. The boy from Beed understands the meaning of a team because it took one to get him to this level.

**BRIEF SCORES:** India U-19 297-5 in 50 overs (Sachin Dhas 116, Uday Saharan 110; Gulsan Jha 3/56) bt Nepal U-19 165-9 in 50 overs (Dev Khana 33, Durgesh Gupta 29; Saumy Pandey 4/27).



Sachin Dhas scored 116 as India beat Nepal by 132 runs to cement their place in the semifinals of the U-19 World Cup.

nect with him. Abhi iska generation Gavaskar sir kyo samjhega (This generation might not understand Sunil Gavaskar). He wears No 10 because he adores Tendulkar," says the proud father. Sanjay's wife Surekha Dhas is an

Assistant Police Inspector (API) in Maharashtra Police and was an athlete in her time. They were state-level Kabaddi players, while Sanjay also played cricket till the University level.

"I had decided before he was even born that

he would become a cricketer. His training started when he was only four and a half years old. My wife initially opposed this idea, but once he started playing age-group cricket with the state, she also joined the partnership. Our daughter Pratiksha is preparing for UPSC in Pune and my wife is happy that at least one kid is good at studies," laughs Sanjay.

**Water crisis in Beed**

Sanjay recalls how every other year life almost comes to a halt in Beed due to drought and he credits coach Azhar, who not only trained his son but went beyond to make him the cricketer he is today. "In Beed, there was never a turf wicket. It was in 2011, after India won the World Cup, we were celebrating at the academy and Azhar bhai came to me and said if we want Sachin to be seen on the big screen, we must build turf wickets. 'Bhau ye mat pe khel kar humare jaisa reh jayega (He will become like us if he continues to play on the matting wicket)'," recalls Sanjay.

From the next morning, Azhar with the help of Sanjay started preparing turf wickets. The duo borrowed money to get a roller and in three months, prepared six turf wickets.

"We did it against all odds," says Azhar.

But the problem was how to keep it in good shape. The drought in the region made things



Government of Haryana

“केंद्र और राज्य में डबल इंजन सरकार की ताकत हरियाणा को तेज़ी से आगे बढ़ा रही है। कोई भी सेक्टर हो, जैसे ही उसमें सामूहिक शक्ति जुटती है, सबका प्रयास नजर आने लगता है, तो परिवर्तन की गति भी बढ़ जाती है।”

- नरेन्द्र मोदी



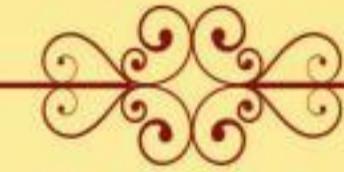
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