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NEET & IIT-JEE

# THE WORLD

TOP OF THE  
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Maldives President  
Mohamed Muizzu

MALDIVES

**SC reliefs for  
Muizzu against  
impeachment**

**Male:** In a respite for Maldives President Mohamed Muizzu, the Supreme Court Thursday ordered the suspension of a recent amendment to Parliament's standing orders that had made it easier for the opposition lawmakers to impeach the president and the vice president, local media reports said. The constitution declares that an impeachment motion against the president or vice president requires the vote of two-thirds of the members of Parliament. However, the House had recently amended its standing orders to make it easier to submit an impeachment motion by lowering the number of votes required for it. PTI

**JAPAN**  
**Fukushima plant  
leaked radioactive  
water, none hurt**

**Tokyo:** Highly radioactive water leaked from a treatment machine at the tsunami-hit Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant, but no one was injured and radiation monitoring shows no impact to the outside environment, the utility operator said on Thursday. A plant worker found the leak Wednesday morning during valve checks. The machine has been idled for maintenance work. An estimated 5.5 metric tonnes (6 tonnes) of radioactive water — enough to fill two ordinary backyard swimming pools — leaked out through an air vent, but no radioactive water escaped the compound. AP

**Russia**

**Officials reject  
poll bid of leader  
who flayed war**

**Moscow:** Russia's main election authority on Thursday refused to allow a politician opposing Moscow's military action in Ukraine on the ballot for the upcoming presidential election. Boris Nadezhdin, a local legislator in a town near Moscow, was required by law to gather at least 100,000 signatures in support of candidacy. The Central Election Commission declared more than 9,000 signatures submitted by Nadezhdin's campaign invalid. AP

**Taiwan**  
**US, Australia  
Japan conduct  
drills in SCS**

**Taipei:** Warships from the US, Australia and Japan have held joint drills in the South China Sea in defiance of Beijing, which claims sovereignty over virtually the entire strategic waterway. The US 7th Fleet that oversees most US Navy operations in the region said the guided-missile destroyer USS John Finn and combat ship USS Gabrielle Giffords carried out operations with navy ships from Japan and Australia on Wednesday and Thursday. Beijing objects to foreign naval operations in the area. AP



**FARMERS STEP UP PROTESTS**

**TRACTORS CHOKE SPANISH STREETS**

Spanish farmers drove tractors through city streets disrupting traffic Thursday as they stepped up their protest against soaring costs, bureaucracy and cheap competition from outside the European Union. The protests, which started spontaneously on Tuesday after spilling over from other EU countries, are backed by the country's three main farmers' associations.



Nikki Haley during a campaign stop at the Wild Goose Tavern in Costa Mesa, California, on Wednesday. AP

**RESULTS TO BE OUT TODAY**

## Pak polls: Sharif party in tough fight with candidates backed by Imran

Huge turnout despite violence during polling; mobile Internet services downed across country

**SAJJAD HUSSAIN**  
ISLAMABAD, FEBRUARY 8

**JAILED EX-PREMIER** Imran Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf party-backed independents were Thursday posing a tough challenge to candidates from three-time former prime minister Nawaz Sharif's party in the crucial Punjab province, according to initial trends of the general elections marred by sporadic violence.

The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) had deprived jailed 71-year-old former cricketer-turned-politician's party of the electoral symbol of 'bat', forcing it to field independent candidates.

The polling started at 8 am and continued without any break till 5 pm. The polling percentage is not yet known. In the 2018 elections, overall voter turnout across the nation was 51.7 per cent.

Private TV channels began reporting results on the basis of partial counting, which showed that Sharif's Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) and PTI-supported independent candidates were neck-in-neck in the most populous Punjab province, which sends almost half of the representatives to the National Assembly.



Voters at a polling station in Islamabad on Thursday. Former PM Nawaz Sharif casts his vote in Lahore. Reuters

Sharif and his younger brother Shehbaz were leading in their respective seats from Lahore.

In Sindh, the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) candidates were leading in most of the constituencies, with its leaders Bilawal Bhutto Zardari and Asif Ali Zardari ahead in their constituencies. But the situation in Karachi, the capital of Sindh with 22 National Assembly seats, was different and Muttahida Qaumi Movement and PTI candidates were performing

better. In Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa, independent candidates supported by the PTI were leading. Balochistan, which is the largest province but sends only 15 lawmakers to the parliament, showed mixed results and none of the party was in the clear lead.

Sharif has expressed confidence that his party would win elections. The ECP said it has resolved 76 poll-related complaints. Soon after the voting started, mobile services in Pakistan were

suspended due to the "deteriorating security situation".

Despite the suspension of cellular and internet services, a large number of people across Pakistan exercised their right to vote to elect lawmakers for national and provincial assemblies - on 855 constituencies.

At least 12 people, including 10 security personnel, were killed on the election day as the forces repulsed 51 terrorist attacks aimed at disrupting the polling. PTI



**EXPLAINED** **E** Magic number: 133 seats

TO FORM a government, a party has to win 133 seats in the 266-member National Assembly (NA). Election to one seat has been postponed following the death of a candidate.

**Xi dials Putin,  
urges 'close  
strategic  
coordination'**

**REUTERS**  
BEIJING, FEBRUARY 8

**CHINA'S PRESIDENT** Xi Jinping told Russian President Vladimir Putin that the two countries should pursue close strategic coordination and defend the sovereignty, security and development interests of their respective countries, state media said.

During a phone call with Putin on Thursday, Xi said both sides should resolutely oppose interference in internal affairs by external forces, state broadcaster CCTV said. The two countries should also cultivate new dynamics of cooperation and maintain the stability of the industrial chain and supply chain, Xi was quoted as saying.



### ICELAND VOLCANO ERUPTS AGAIN

Lava spills onto the road at Grindavik, Iceland, on Thursday. A volcano in southwestern Iceland has erupted for the third time since December and sent jets of lava into the sky. The eruption on Thursday morning triggered evacuations. AP

## Israel intensifies strikes on Rafah, Blinken says civilian death toll in Gaza too high

**REUTERS**  
DOHA/TEL AVIV, FEB 8

**ISRAELI FORCES** bombed areas in the southern border city of Rafah where more than half of Gaza's population is sheltering on Thursday, a day after Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu rejected a proposal to end the war in the Palestinian enclave.

The rejection followed intense diplomacy to end the four-and-a-half-month conflict before a threatened Israeli assault on Rafah.

U.N. Secretary General Antonio Guterres said Wednesday that pushing into Rafah on the border with Egypt would "increase what is already



People block road as they protest delivery of humanitarian aid to Gaza and demand immediate release of hostages, at Kerem Shalom crossing, Israel, on Thursday. Reuters

a humanitarian nightmare with untold regional consequences."

Israel says it takes steps to

avoid civilian casualties and accuses Hamas militants of hiding among civilians.

**Zelenskyy removes top general: 'Move to ensure victory'**

**Kyiv:** President Volodymyr Zelenskyy of Ukraine said Thursday he had removed his top general in the most significant leadership shake-up since Russia invaded Ukraine almost two years ago. While praising Gen. Valery Zaluzhny, the commander who has led the nation's war effort for two years, Zelenskyy said "urgent changes" were needed to ensure victory.

"And that's especially true in the case of Rafah, where there are somewhere between 1.2 and 1.4 million people, many of them displaced from other parts of Gaza." He said he had suggested some ways to minimise harm in talks with Israeli leaders, but gave no details. Blinken returned to the US on Thursday afternoon.

Blinken also said that the civilian death toll was still too high and reiterated that Israel's military operation should put civilians first and foremost.

"Starting today, a new management team will take over the leadership of the Armed Forces of Ukraine," Zelenskyy said in an evening address to the nation, adding the he had met with General Zaluzhny and thanked him for his service. General Zaluzhny will be replaced by Gen. Oleksandr Syrsky. NYT

### BOLOGNA BECOMES FIRST ITALIAN CITY TO IMPOSE SPEED LIMIT, CITING SAFETY & LIVABILITY, BUT MANY ARE NOT HAPPY

## Land of Ferrari and Lamborghini has new speed limit: 30 km/hour

**ELISABETTA POVOLEDO**  
BOLOGNA (ITALY)

**WHEN BOLOGNA** became the first major Italian city to impose a speed limit of 30 kilometers, or 20 miles, an hour, Luca Mazzoli, a local taxi driver, posted a sign in his cab warning passengers of the change.

He had to, he said grumpily the other day, "to explain why I am driving so slowly."

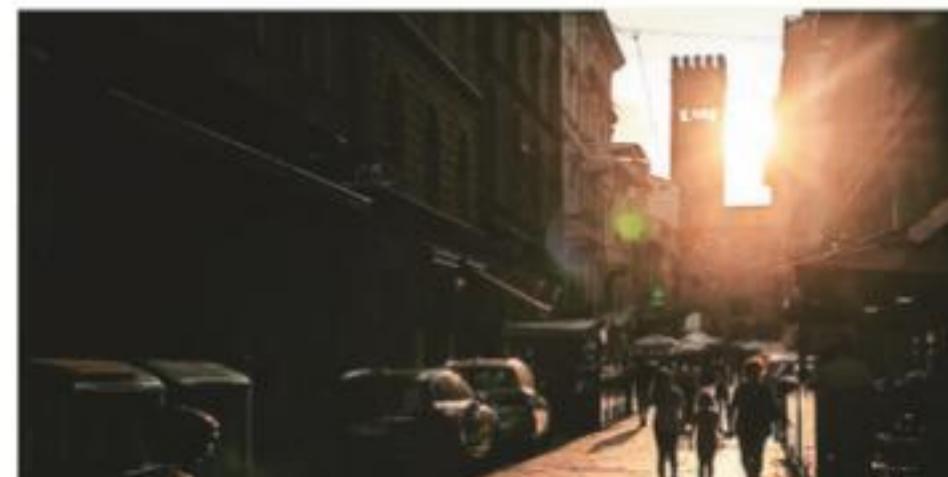
Since the limit became enforceable in mid-January, it has taken longer for Mazzoli to get from Point A to Point B, he

claimed, meaning that he has picked up fewer passengers and has found himself stuck in traffic more often.

"A city has to move," he said.

Critics of the measure say that Bologna risks slowing to a standstill since it became the first major Italian city to join a growing group of municipalities, including Amsterdam; Bilbao, Spain; Brussels; and Lyon, France, that have lowered speed limits from 50 kilometers per hour, about 30 miles per hour, in the belief that the change will lead to safer, healthier and more livable cities.

Bologna's mayor, Matteo



Near the Piazza Maggiore and the tower of the Palazzo del Podesta, Bologna, Italy. NYT

Lepore, included the new speed limit among the campaign promises that helped to get him elected in 2021. Referring to the lower limit, he said, "Driving at 30 is part of a vision of a more democratic and more sustainable use of public space," where neighborhoods put children and older people first, and investments favor bike paths and public transportation to work toward carbon neutrality.

What's more, he added during an interview in his art-filled office in City Hall, Italian cities had been built over centuries and were unsuited for a glut of automobiles.

There is also the question of

safety. Slower speeds made for fewer deaths, Lepore said, noting that there had been about 60 traffic-related fatalities in the greater Bologna area in 2022.

But persuading the locals has been a bumpy ride. Bologna is the capital of a region that is home to the makers of some of the fastest and most glamorous cars in the world, including Ferrari, Lamborghini and Pagani.

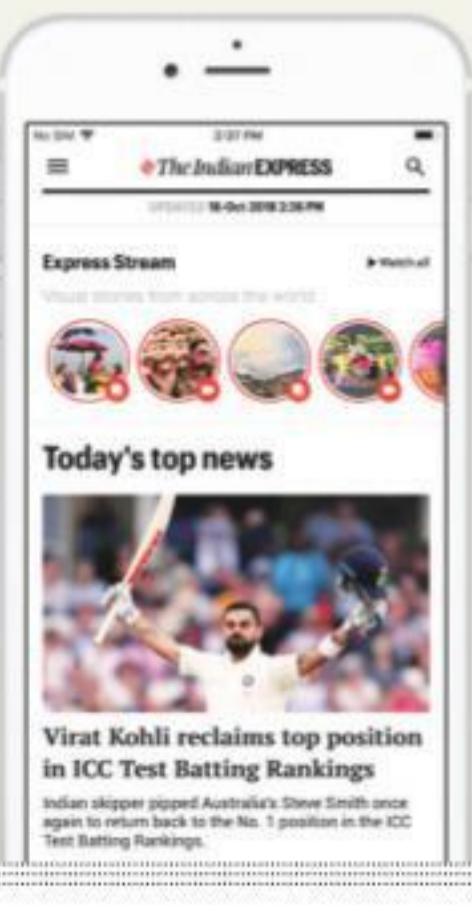
There have been protests, both on the streets and on social media (memes and all), and a petition to hold a referendum on the new speed limit has accumulated just over 53,000 signatures.

The petition was begun by Guendalina Furini, a student at the University of Bologna who was concerned that her daily 25-mile commute into the city would increase substantially. She said that the new limit was "difficult to maintain" and would eventually deter people from visiting Bologna. "The city risks losing out," she said. Other protesters said that the real safety risk was having to pay attention to the speed limit on the dashboard.

"People are very angry," said Giorgio Gorza, who heads a citizen's group that has been organizing protests.

NYT

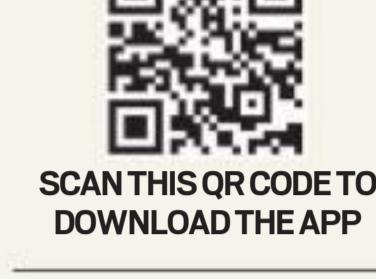




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## ORION AND THE DARK MOVIE REVIEW: GENIUS WRITER CHARLIE KAUFMAN PUTS HIS EXISTENTIAL STAMP ON NETFLIX'S ODDEST ANIMATED FILM YET

Written by the great Charlie Kaufman, Netflix's latest animated offering isn't entirely disposable

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## Uttarakhand Uniform Civil Code: All you need to know

In 3 Things, we discuss the changes that the law proposes, the concerns it raises, why the BJP chose Uttarakhand to implement it first, and how the BJP is framing the issue

## FROM PAGE ONE

FULL REPORTS ON  
WWW.INDIANEXPRESS.COM

# Polls ahead, Govt says economy turned stagnant in 10 yrs of UPA

UPA government inherited a "healthy economy ready for more reforms" in 2004 but made it non-performing in its ten years. Despite having taken the reforms earlier in 1991, the then government did not undertake reforms after coming to power in 2004, it said. It notes that the country was standing at the cusp of emerging as a powerful economy in 2004. "In the years between 2004 and 2008, the economy grew fast, thanks to the lagged effects of the reforms of the NDA government and favourable global conditions. The UPA government took credit for the high growth but did little to consolidate it," the White Paper said. It further said the UPA government's "policy inaction and missteps put off valuable private investment, which could have generated growth and jobs, at its own peril".

The White Paper has listed comparison of several macroeconomic parameters between the UPA and the NDA governments:

**Inflation:** The first macroeconomic data listed out by the Ministry of Finance in the white paper as having taken the hit in the aftermath of the global financial crisis of 2008 is inflation. Citing data from the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the ministry said inflation ranged between 2009 and 2014 and the common man bore the brunt. "High fiscal

deficits for six years between FY09 and FY14 heaped misery on ordinary and poorer households. Over the five-year period from FY10 to FY14, the average annual inflation rate was in double digits. Between FY04 and FY14, average annual inflation in the economy was 8.2 per cent," the ministry said.

**Banking:** The banking crisis was one of the most important and infamous legacies of the UPA Government, the white paper said. Stating that the high percentage of bad debts was an underestimation by the UPA government, the Gross Non-Performing Assets (GNPA) ratio in Public Sector Banks (PSBs) including restructured loans rose to 12.3 per cent in September 2013 from 7.8 per cent at the end of Vajpayee-led NDA government. The worsening of the banking crisis was "largely because of political interference by the UPA government in the commercial lending decisions of public sector banks", the white paper said.

Gross advances by public sector banks were only Rs 6.6 lakh crore in March 2004, which then increased to Rs 39.0 lakh crore in March 2012. "Further, not all problem loans were recognised. There was much under the hood. According to a Credit Suisse report published in March 2014, the top 200 companies with an interest coverage ratio of less than one

owed about Rs 8.6 lakh crore to banks," it said.

The White Paper went on to quote former Reserve Bank of India Governor Raghuram Rajan, from his written response to a Parliamentary Panel in 2018: "a larger number of the bad loans were (sic) originated in the period 2006-2008."

Rajan's completed sentence, however, points to strong economic growth during that phase of the UPA government leading to mistakes by banks in their calculations. "A large number of bad loans were (sic) originated in the period 2006-2008 when economic growth was strong, and previous infrastructure projects such as power plants had been completed on time and within budget. It is at such times that banks make mistakes. They extrapolate past growth and performance to the future..." Rajan had said in the reply.

#### External vulnerability:

Over-dependence on external commercial borrowings (ECB) led to a surge in India's external vulnerability. During the UPA government's tenure, ECB rose at a compounded annual growth rate (CAGR) of 21.1 per cent (FY04 to FY14), whereas in the nine years from FY14 to FY23, they have grown at an annual rate of 4.5 per cent. "The UPA government had compromised external and

macroeconomic stability, and the currency plunged in 2013. From its high to low, against the US dollar between 2011 and 2013, the Indian rupee plunged 36 per cent," it said.

#### Mismanagement of public finances:

After the 2008 Global Financial Crisis, the UPA government announced a fiscal stimulus package which was much worse than the problem it sought to address, the paper said. "It was way beyond the capacity of the Union Government to finance and sustain," it said.

Run-away fiscal deficits led the economy to the fiscal precipice, the ministry said. For six consecutive years between FY09 to FY14, the ratio of India's Gross Fiscal Deficit (GFD) to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) was at least 4.5 per cent. The revenue deficit rose more than four times from 1.07 percent of GDP in FY08 to 4.6 per cent in FY09.

The fiscal deficit burden became too big to bear, for the economy, it said. "As a result of its fiscal mismanagement, the UPA government's fiscal deficit ended up being far higher than it had expected, and it subsequently ended up borrowing 27 per cent more from the market than what it had budgeted for in 2011-12," it said.

**Infrastructure and asset creation:** Stating that Public expenditure was geared towards

short-term populist measures, the white paper said capital expenditure -- which finances public investment in infrastructure -- was deprioritised in those 10 years, thereby creating long-term constraints for the economy and compromising its growth potential.

Capital expenditure as a percent of total expenditure (excluding interest payments) halved from 31 per cent in FY04 to 16 per cent in FY14. "The economy remained supply-constrained during the UPA government's tenure. Combined with the consistent boost to aggregate demand from excessive deficits, it resulted in higher inflation, higher current account deficit and an overvalued currency, all of which climaxed in 2013 when the Indian rupee buckled under the weight of such imprudent policies," it said. The government's prioritisation of unproductive spending meant that significant funds were allocated towards consumption rather than productive investment, it said.

**Wastage of public resources and scams:** The UPA government's period was marked by "policy misadventures and scams" such as non-transparent auction of public resources (coal and telecom spectrum), the spectre of retrospective taxation, unsustainable demand stimulus and ill-targeted subsidies and reckless

lending by the banking sector with undertones of favouritism, the white paper said. It cited the 2G spectrum scam involving 122 telecom licenses that sliced Rs 1.76 lakh crore off the exchequer as per the estimates of the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG), the coal gate scam costing Rs 1.86 lakh crore to the exchequer, the Commonwealth Games (CWG) scam, indicating an environment of "heightened political uncertainty and reflected poorly on India's image as an investment destination".

It also made a mention of the 80:20 gold export-import scheme launched by the UPA government showing how government systems and procedures were subverted to serve particular interests for "obtaining illegitimate pecuniary gains". In mid-2014, the then-government permitted select Premier Trading Houses (PTH) and Star Trading Houses (STH) to import gold even though the model code of conduct was in place and the counting of votes cast in the Parliament elections was due on May 16, 2014," it said.

The UPA government's term was replete with examples of decision stasis, the white paper said. The UPA government capitalised on the reforms brought in by the previous government but fell short of delivering on crucial reforms promised by them.

## • Kerala CM leads protest in Delhi

chief Farooq Abdullah, T Thirumavalavan of the CKK, Rajya Sabha MP Kapil Sibal, besides Left leaders Sitaram Yechury, D Raja and Binoy Viswan.

"Laws have been made by the Union in agriculture, education, power, cooperation and so on, crippling the states' rights. Even a Ministry for Cooperation has been formed. Multinational agreements are being entered into, on issues that affect the states, without seeking the states' opinion, let alone getting their consent. These are all telling examples of how the rights of states are being trampled upon and how India is being changed into an undemocratic 'Union over States,'" he said.

However, the body blow to India's federal structure, he said, is coming from the Centre "eating into the states' financial resources".

"The same people who wax eloquent about cooperative federalism have tried to undercut the resources to be allocated to the states by the Finance Commission. On top of that, we are seeing the Union's allocation for their own schemes coming down year after year, while the states are being forced to chip in more and more," he said.

"According to RBI reports, the states are having to cover a substantial 65 per cent of the country's total expenses, with the Union's contribution being only 35 per cent. But when it comes to revenue sharing, it goes in the reverse direction. The Union government pockets about 65 per cent and the states are left with only 35 percent... Despite the Union having a lower share than the states in many Central schemes, they are keen to brand them. They even go to the extent of saying that funds will not be issued if there is no branding. Branding is essentially labelling. By doing so, the self-worth of the beneficiaries of such schemes is being questioned. No responsible government that sees development and welfare as people's genuine rights can name and shame their own citizens," Vijayan said.

"The protest is against the denial of what is rightfully ours. Isn't it a fact that our borrowings have been limited and that our grants have been denied?" he said, decrying what he called attempts to depict the genuine demands of states as an issue of North-South divide.

Kerjirwal accused the Centre of waging a war against state governments led by Opposition parties, which he said represent 70 crore people in the country.

"The BJP has waged a war against the Opposition-led states. They have created an India-Pakistan situation with us. The Centre is using all the tactics to harass the Opposition governments," he said.

The Chief Ministers, he said, were not "here to beg or ask for anything for our families".

The Congress in Kerala has accused Vijayan of using the issue of "discrimination" by the Centre to craft a narrative to hide his government's economic mismanagement.

Vijayan, incidentally, mentioned the protest by Karnataka, where the Congress is in power.

"It is not just Kerala that is protesting against the political discrimination against states. Karnataka has also come out in protest. They say that they suffered losses to the tune of Rs 1,87,000 crore, a loss that is similar to that of Kerala's," he said, maintaining that his protest was not "politically motivated".

Vijayan said the fight was for maintaining a balance in the Centre-State relations. Vijayan, Kerjirwal and Mann spoke about "overreach" and "meddling" in the day-to-day affairs of the state governments by Governors and Lt Governors and unleashing Central agencies on the Opposition leaders.

Vijayan said the Central government too had been making laws that "encroach upon the judiciary against such undemocratic high handedness," he said.

On delay in payment of GST compensation to states, he said the Centre started disbursing the arrears after many of the state governors approached the Supreme Court together. On the functioning of Governors, Vijayan mentioned instances of what he called "gubernatorial excesses" in Punjab, West Bengal, Odisha, Telangana and Tamil Nadu.

"In many states including Kerala, we have seen Governors trying to overreach their Constitutional mandate by meddling with the autonomy of the Legislature. Assent to Bills passed by Assemblies have been indefinitely delayed... The Supreme Court did warn the Governors that they were playing with fire. Yet Governors continue to play their political games. Multiple state Governments have had to approach the judiciary against such undemocratic high handedness," he said.

The injured were identified as Ajit Kumar, 21, a resident of Pilibhit, and on July 13, three labourers were injured in an attack by militants in the Bagh area of the Shopian district.

Condemning Wednesday's attack, the Peoples Democratic Party called it a "clear manifestation and frustration aimed at disrupting the peace and tranquillity in Kashmir". People's Conference president Sajad Lone called it a reprehensible attack.

National Conference vice-president Omar Abdullah condemned the killings and added that the continued incidents in the heart of Srinagar city are proof that the situation in Jammu and Kashmir is not the same as what the Centre claims. "Earlier they said that guns will fall silent post abrogation of Article 370, but even areas like Srinagar, Rajori and Poonch which had almost become militancy-free are now continuously witnessing incidents of militant attacks," he said.

The DMRC suspended two officials and ordered a safety inspection of the entire network. "Two DMRC officials, a Manager and a Junior Engineer from the civil department, have been suspended pending inquiry," said Anuj Dayal, Principal Executive Director, Corporate Communications, DMRC.

## • White Paper red-flags NPAs, scams and policy freeze

Federal Reserve's taper tantrum or sudden decision to stop flushing the market with more money and the high prices of crude oil.

From meeting the mandate of the Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management Act in 2007-08 – the only time so far – to the resilience during the global financial crisis of 2008, the UPA government's economic management kept India safe.

The 2008 crisis was a key turning point for most big economies during the first decade of the new millennium, and barring the US, none seem to have fully recovered from that shock even now. India, on the other hand, barely lost a step in terms of GDP growth rate.

However, the white paper quotes from then Finance Minister Pranab Mukherjee's 2011 speech – where he said, "India, unlike most other economies, was not seriously affected by the financial turmoil of 2008 in the developed world" – to downplay the effect of the GFC. But in that very speech, Mukherjee also stated: "(India) was not completely immune from the crisis and the post-crisis developments in the real economy. The timely fiscal stimulus measures implemented by the Government helped in moderating the impact on economic growth and facilitated a rapid recovery." The very next year, India's GDP grew by 8.5 per cent.

In fact, the White Paper credits the growth years during 2004-2008 to the lagged effects of the previous NDA government's reforms, and favourable global conditions. The Ministry has cherry picked data to tell the truth of UPA's failures and the NDA government's successes without touching upon UPA's successes or its own failures.

For instance, Morgan Stanley did assess India as one of the "fragile five" global economies in 2013. And it is also a fact India is currently ranked among the top five based on the size of its GDP, as the White Paper notes. But the economy was not among the 'fragile five' right through UPA's 10 years from 2004 to 2014.

Moreover, while the policy paralysis during the fag end of UPA's tenure and the economic mismanagement is well-documented, it is also true that the reason for high inflation was the US

rate of 8.5 per cent.

These include reforms like the GST and IBC, the push towards increased capital expenditure, and the clean-up of the commercial bank balance sheets to name just a few. However, it is also true that there is employment-related stress too.

Yes, the unemployment rate improved progressively during the UPA government's tenure as the White Paper notes, with the rate sliding down to 3.2 per cent in 2022-23 from 6 per cent in 2017-18 (as per the available Periodic Labour Force Surveys). The figure, however, understates the concern of a surge in the number of unpaid workers and a deterioration in the quality of jobs. PLFS data reveals that the share of unpaid workers in the labour force of the country has gone progressively up to 18.3 per cent in 2022-23 from 13.6 per cent in 2017-18. The share of salaried workers, meanwhile, reduced to 20.9 per cent in 2022-23 from 22.8 per cent in 2017-18.

For instance, as their equated monthly instalment (EMI) will not increase.

Das said the monetary policy will continue to be disinflationary to align inflation to the target of 4 per cent on a durable basis. The government has mandated the RBI to keep inflation in the 2-6 per cent band.

Retail inflation, after moderating to 4.9 per cent in October, rose to 5.7 per cent in December 2023, mainly due to food inflation, mostly vegetables.

The uncertainties in food prices, however, continue to impinge on the headline inflation trajectory," Das said.

The MPC also decided by a majority of 5 out of 6 members to remain focused on the withdrawal of accommodation to ensure that inflation progressively aligns to the target, while supporting growth.

Our stance of withdrawal of accommodation should be seen in the context of incomplete transmission and inflation ruling above the target of 4 per cent and our ef-

forts to bring it back to the target on a durable basis," Das said.

The real GDP growth for FY25 is projected at 7 per cent, with Q1 at 7.2 per cent; Q2 at 6.8 per cent; Q3 at 7 per cent; and Q4 at 6.9 per cent. He said domestic economic activity continues to remain strong and the momentum is expected to continue in the next financial year (2024-25).

At the current juncture, India's potential growth is propelled by structural drivers like improving physical infrastructure; development of world class digital and payments technology; ease of doing business; enhanced labour force participation; and improved quality of fiscal spending," he said.

The RBI's multi-pronged,

proactive, and calibrated policies on the monetary, regulatory and supervisory fronts have worked well to maintain and strengthen macroeconomic and financial stability, he said.

For FY24, the RBI retained CPI

inflation projection at 5.4 per cent.

## • Free movement along Myanmar border being suspended

Affairs (MHA) has decided that the Free Movement Regime (FMR) between India and Myanmar will be scrapped to ensure the internal security of the country and to maintain the demographic structure of India's North Eastern States bordering Myanmar. Since the Ministry of External Affairs is currently in the process of scrapping it, MHA has recommended the immediate suspension of the FMR.

The announcement was welcomed by Manipur Chief Minister N Biren Singh and Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Pema Khandu. In a



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Hamara Sankalp  
Viksit Bharat



ONE KILLED, 4 INJURED AS METRO STATION WALL COLLAPSES IN GOKULPURI

# 'Daughter got engaged 2 days ago': How celebrations turned into grief for family

ANKITA UPADHYAY  
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 8

SHIVAM PANDEY, 22, is inconsolable. Only a couple of days ago, his family was celebrating the joyous occasion of his sister's engagement. But on Thursday, their world came crashing down as they learnt that the head of their family, 53-year-old Vinod Kumar Pandey, was killed after a portion of the wall at the Gokulpuri Metro Station fell on him.

"My father was just crossing the road like any other person. He didn't know this would happen out of the blue," said Shivam, who, after receiving information about the accident, reached the Guru Teg Bahadur (GTB) Hospital in Dilshad Garden where he was told about his father's demise.

"I got to know about my father after reaching the hospital," said Shivam while waiting to receive

his father's body.

A resident of Shaheed Bhagat Singh Colony of nearby Karawal Nagar area, Vinod was headed to work when the incident took place at 11am. He worked as a rice delivery agent, according to his family members.

Hailing from Uttar Pradesh's Sultanpur, Vinod had been working in a wholesale shop for years now. Back from his hometown only two days ago following his younger daughter's engagement, he was busy preparing for her wedding scheduled in April.

He is survived by his wife and three children — two daughters and son Shivam, who has studied till Class 12. His elder daughter is married and stays with her husband in Karawal Nagar here.

His elder son-in-law, Vikas Mishra, said Vinod was driving a battery scooter when "an entire block of metro wall" fell on him.

Shivam's mother still lives in



(Clockwise from top) Mohd Tahir, Monu, Ajit and Sandeep at the GTB Hospital. Express

Sultanpur and hasn't been told about the incident yet.

GTB hospital officials said Vinod was brought dead while

four other persons injured in the accident are being treated for leg

injuries at the Department of Orthopaedics.

According to police, those injured are out of danger. Two motorcycles and as many scooters were damaged in the collapse.

The survivors said they were grateful they were wearing helmet at the time of the incident. One of them is 24-year-old Mohammed Tajir who said his helmet broke into two parts. "I was passing through the area after picking up medicines for my mother from a nearby pharmacy when suddenly, a huge boulder fell on my head and I lost consciousness for some time. Then, a PCR van came and took me inside. I then regained consciousness and saw my broken helmet and scooter lying on the road," said Tajir, who underwent a CT scan to assess the impact of the collapse on his head.

Other survivors are Sandeep Kumar, Monu and Ajit who sell

chains and zips near Gokulpuri and play drums at wedding ceremonies. They were passing by on a bike when they saw a huge chunk of debris falling.

"We were on the bike on our way home after doing some chores when suddenly, a huge slab collapsed. When we saw it, we tried to dodge it and ended up ramming into the divider," said Ajit. Sandeep said he is having difficulty in sitting and standing but is happy that doctors have assured him that his health would gradually get better.

Ajit, 21, has suffered a fracture and will undergo a surgery to get an implant inserted in his right leg.

Sandeep and Monu are residents of Gokulpuri while Ajit lives in Balram Nagar in Ghaziabad. All three are distant relatives.

Speaking with *The Indian Express*, Ajit's cousin Deepak Kumar said he is the sole earning

member of the family and that the accident will hamper his income.

Lying on a stretcher at the GTB Hospital, Monu said as soon as the incident happened, police officials arrived from the nearby police station and picked them up.

According to Sandeep, Monu had a helmet on while Ajit, who was sitting in the middle, was not wearing it.

The helmet, though, could not save Vinod's life. "What can a helmet do if such a huge concrete slab falls on a person..." questioned Shivam, surrounded by loved ones trying to console him.

Meanwhile, the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) has announced Rs 25 lakh as compensation to the family of the deceased. It also announced Rs 5 lakh as compensation for the grievously injured and Rs 1 lakh for those who received minor injuries.

# Last inspection a month ago, no problem was reported



At the site of the accident on Thursday. Tashi Tobgyal

MALLICA JOSHI  
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 8

DEDICATED STAFF to monitor maintenance at each station, regular inspections around once in two months, and daily visual assessments — the portion of the wall at Gokulpuri metro station that collapsed escaped all these checks, only to fall on the road below and kill a 53-year-old man on a scooter, late Thursday morning.

Sources told *The Indian Express* that inspection of this station was done roughly a month ago, but no issues were reported.

Each station has dedicated staff to monitor operations and maintenance, which includes the maintenance of civil infrastructure

at appropriate levels.

The Gokulpuri Station falls on the DMRC network's Pink Line, which, at over 57 kilometres, is the longest in the city and traverses 38 stations between Majlis Park near Azadpur and Shiv Vihar in Northeast Delhi.

The station was opened for passengers in 2018 and the average daily footfall is approximately 15,000, DMRC said.

"The incident is very unfortunate. No report has been made about any infirmity in the structure," an official said.

From Friday, DMRC officials have been ordered to conduct "vigorous safety checks" across the entire network.

Delhi Transport Minister Kailash Gahlot has also ordered the constitution of a committee to inquire into the incident.

Meanwhile, operations on the line were stopped between 11.12 am and 11.23 am, minutes after the incident.

"Train services were restored from 11.23 am through a single line working between Majupur and Shiv Vihar, a small section comprising three stations only. Normal services were restored... after barricading the affected platform area from 2.53 pm onwards. Gokulpuri station, which was closed during this period, was also reopened at 2.53 pm with access... towards the affected area remaining closed," DMRC said.

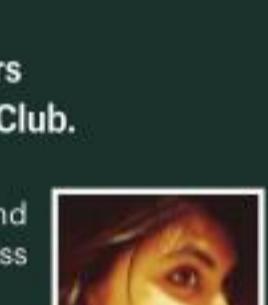
"Since the commencement of operations in 2002, DMRC has maintained an impeccable safety record. The exact reasons behind this mishap are being analysed and a thorough investigation is being carried out," DMRC said, adding that a prescribed and scheduled inspection procedure is laid down for civil structures with detailed checklists, which are reviewed

The Indian EXPRESS FILM CLUB  
In association with  
13 February 2024  
07:00 PM  
Gulmohar Hall, The India Habitat Centre

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Shubhra Gupta  
Advertising Professional

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Pulkit Gupta,  
Doctor

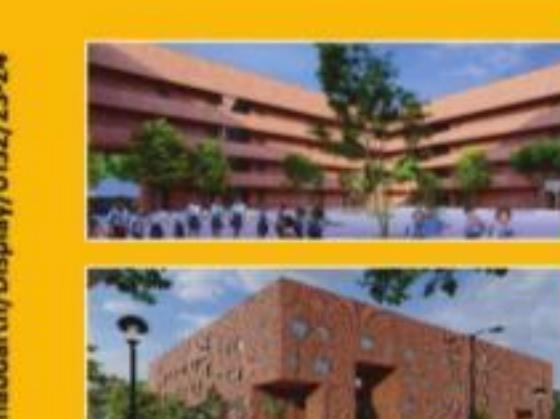
The Indian EXPRESS  
JOURNALISM OF COURAGE



Laying the foundation stone of

# NEW SCHOOL BUILDING

of Government Girls/Boys Senior Secondary School, Mayur Vihar, Phase III



## Highlights

- School to benefit more than 2700 children of Kondli-Gharoli area of East Delhi
- More than 50 Classrooms
- 5 state-of-the-art Labs, 3 Libraries with rich collection of books
- Office & staff rooms & Activity rooms
- Toilet blocks on every floor and lift

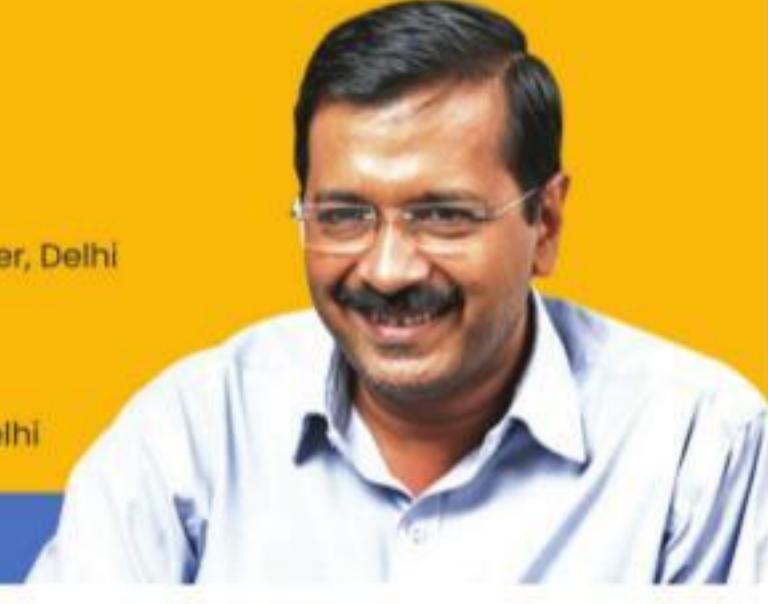
Friday, 9th February 2024

Chief Guest

Arvind Kejriwal, Chief Minister, Delhi

Guest of Honour

Atishi, Education Minister, Delhi



DIP/Shabdarth/Display/0132/23-24

Directorate of Education, Government of NCT of Delhi

Form No.15  
Before The Debts Recovery Tribunal  
Wing A,B & F (2<sup>nd</sup> Floor) Karpuri Thakur Sadan, Kendriya Karmchari Parishar (GPOA), Near Rajiv Nagar Thana, Ashiana Digha Road, Patna-800025.  
O.A.No. 313 of 2023  
Punjab National Bank ..... APPLICANT  
VS  
M/s Ankit Rice Mill..... DEFENDANTS  
SUMMONS  
ISSUED UNDER RULE 23(VII) OF THE DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL  
(PROCEDURE) RULE,1993.  
To,  
1.M/s Ankit Rice Mill through Prop. Gopal Chaubey S/o Late Suresh Chaubey R/o at Katipura ,PO+PS-Barahat, District-Banks, Pin-813103.  
2. Gopal Chaubey S/o Late Suresh Chaubey R/o at Katipura , PO+PS-Barahat, District-Banks, Pin-813103.  
Whereas, the applicant has instituted an Application U/S 19 of the Recovery of Debts and Bankruptcy Act, 1993, against the Defendants for the Recovery of a sum of Rs.75,30,665.00 (Rs. Seventy Five Lakh Thirty Thousand Six hundred Sixty five Only).  
The Above mentioned Defendants are, therefore, hereby directed to appear before this Tribunal in person or through an Advocate or duly authorised Agent in support of their defence to show cause within 30 days from the date of publication or on 15<sup>th</sup> March 2024 10:30 AM, (Forenoon) as to why Reliefs Prayed for by the Applicant Should not be granted.  
Take Notice that in case of default of your appearance on the day mentioned herein before, the proceeding will be heard and determined in your absence.  
Given under my hand and seal of this Tribunal on this 02nd day of February, 2024.  
Registrar  
Debts Recovery Tribunal, Patna

**IRCON INTERNATIONAL LIMITED**  
NARAVATA COMPANY  
(A Govt. of India Undertaking)  
Website: www.ircon.org, CIN - L45203OL1976GOI008171  
e-Procurement Notice  
e-Tender No.: IRCON/J&K CELLUTAT/14/014K-B/0.Tender/Water/583 Dt.07/02/2024  
e-tender for and on behalf of Northern Railway is invited from bidders meeting qualifying requirements for the work of "Supply, installation and commissioning of raw water treatment system for potable water supply in Khari Yard. (Package: Raw Water Treatment/Khari)".  
Estimated Cost of the Work ₹34.80 Lakh (including all taxes)  
Last Date and Time of e-Bid Submission 27.02.2024, 15.00 Hrs. (IST)  
For further details, visit website: <https://etenders.gov.in/eprocure/app>. Correspondence, if any, would be hosted only on the website. Chief General Manager/Banilal, USBR Head Office, Satyan Complex, Marble Market, P.O. Sainik Colony, Jammu, J&K-180011

**भारतीय कंटेनर कॉर्पोरेशन**  
Container Corporation of India Ltd.  
(एक भारतीय सरकारी उद्योग)  
NSIC New MDB Building, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Okhla Indl. Estate  
(Opp. NSIC Okhla Metro Station), New Delhi-110020  
(E-Tendering Mode Only)

Online bidders in Single Bid mode, are invited for "Supply, Installation, Testing and COMMISSIONING OF 01 NO. FULLY AUTOMATIC PITLESS LORRY WEIGHBRIDGE 80MT CAPACITY PLATFORM SIZE 18 X 3M AT ICD/DADRI, GAUTAM BUDDH NAGAR, U.P only through e-tendering mode. The tender document can only be downloaded after paying Rs. 100/- through online mode from the website ([www.tenderwizard.com/CCIL](http://www.tenderwizard.com/CCIL))".

E-Tender No. CONA-A-1/TECH/WB/BMTC/D/DER/2024  
Name of the work Supply, Installation, Testing & Commissioning of 01 no. Pitless Fully Electronic Lorry Weighbridge & 80MT capacity platform size 18M x 3M at ICD/Dadri, Gautam Buddha Nagar, U.P.  
Estimated Value of contract Rs. 24.07.200/- (inclusive of GST)  
Earnest Money Deposit (\*) Rs. 48,144/- (through e-payment)  
Cost of Tender Document (\*) Rs. 1000/- (inclusive of all taxes and duties) through e-payment  
Tender Processing Fee Rs.1420/- (inclusive of 18% GST) through e-payment which is Non-refundable  
Date of Sale (On Line mode) From 09.02.2024 at 16:00 Hrs. to 29.02.2024 up to 17:00 Hrs.  
Last Date & Time of Submission of tender (On Line mode) 01.03.2024 up to 18:00 Hrs. (E-Tendering Mode Only)  
Date & Time of opening of tender 04.03.2024 at 15:30 Hrs.

\*Through e-Payment CONCOR reserves the right to reject any and all the tenders without assigning any reasons thereof. For complete details logon to [www.tenderwizard.com/CCIL](http://www.tenderwizard.com/CCIL)

Group General Manager/Technical (Area-1)

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Group General Manager/Technical (Area-1)

E-Tender No.



# SRI LANKA

Celebrating 76 Years Of Independence

## Land Of Endless Opportunities

Sri Lanka's commitment to open trade makes the island nation one of the most promising business destinations in Asia

Sri Lanka's central location in the Indian Ocean, straddling trade routes from the East to the West, made it a popular trading hub in ancient times and acts the same today. Sri Lanka's export sector is led by dynamic business leaders who are steadfastly committed to safeguarding the island's reputation as a reliable supplier in the international marketplace. Sri Lanka's export sector is mainly comprised of merchandise exports and export of services.

Sri Lanka has entered into Free Trade Agreements with India, Pakistan, Singapore, and Thailand. Additionally, the Economic and Technology Cooperation Agreement (ETCA) between India and Sri Lanka and the China-Sri Lanka Free Trade Agreement (CSLFTA) are two proposed trade agreements which will be signed soon.

India is the third largest export destination for Sri Lanka. The total export value from Sri Lanka to India was USD 829.7 million in 2023 and total imports from India to Sri Lanka for the same period were USD 3,171.78 million. India is the first import origin for Sri Lanka.

Sri Lanka's main export products to India in 2023 were animal feed, pepper, areca nuts, petroleum oils, non-alcoholic beverages, insulated wires & cables, cloves, pulp of wood, waste & scrap of paper and paper boards. Its main import products from India in 2023 were sugars, sugar confectionery & bakery products, pharmaceutical products, knitted fabrics, woven fabrics, yarn, chilies, and paper & paper products.

Apparel is Sri Lanka's major merchandise export to the world. It has three decades of experience and it strongly promotes ethical working conditions, free of child & forced labour, discrimination, and sweatshop practices. A flagship green destination, Sri Lanka is the only outsourced apparel manufacturing country in Asia which complies with EU GSP+. It boasts three top-rated apparel companies amongst the world's 50 most important suppliers.

Sri Lanka prides itself on manufacturing several value-added rubber products by processing raw rubber. This range of rubber products made in Sri Lanka is internationally acclaimed and accepted for quality and durability.

Sri Lanka is also an emerging ICT/BPM hub. Its Island of Ingenuity (IOI) brand has rapidly gained fame for Information and Communications Technology (ICT) and Business Process Management (BPM). Sri Lanka's ICT/BPM sector is progressively contributing to the Global Value Chain while



Tea is Sri Lanka's biggest export

### WHY INVEST IN SRI LANKA

- 1st Port in South Asia - Colombo Port (WB, S&P Mkt. Intelligence 2022)
- 1st South Asian country to trial 5G technology in 2022
- Best Transhipment Hub in South Asia
- Boasts the safest cities for women travelling alone (Women Solo Travel Index 2022)
- Ranked 17th in Top 20 Places to Travel (Readers' Choice 2022)

serving many Fortune 500 companies in the world.

The inherent uniqueness of Sri Lanka's Electrical & Electronics industry is its ability to provide end-to-end delivery products and services. Electrical & Electronics manufacturers and service providers in Sri Lanka, at present operate within the domains of Electronic Manufacturing Services (EMS), Electrical & Electronics Component Manufacturing, Original Equipment Manufacturing (OEM), and Design Services, coupled with R&D.

Endowed with delicious seafood as a tiny island surrounded by

the Indian Ocean, Sri Lanka is blessed with a large fishing ground filled with the most delicious bounties of the Indian Ocean.

In place of the customary processed food products that are high in sugar, salt and fat, Sri Lankan processed food and beverages are mainly based on natural fruits, vegetables, and cereals like rice and millet that are naturally gluten-free. Sri Lankan processed food and beverage sector covers a wide range of products including coconut, vegetables, and fruit-based products, concentratesates and juices, semi-cooked food, confectionery, bakery products, ready-to-serve food, beverages, animal feed, and preparations of cereals and flour.

Sri Lanka's agricultural practices, agro-industries, and manufacturing companies have expanded their product range to meet global quality standards in processing, packaging and green manufacturing. Certifications include ISO Standards, Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP), Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP), USDA Organic, Japanese Agricultural Standards (JAS), 'Halal' certification, and 'Kosher' certification.

Historically, Sri Lanka was attractive to the Western nations for its spice riches. Today, it exports the most sought-after cinnamon, pepper, cloves, cardamoms, nutmeg, mace and vanilla. These spices grow in abundance all over the island in fertile and diverse soil types and varying temperature conditions. In addition, Sri Lanka also supplies a range of essential oils and oleoresins derived from homegrown spices. Sri Lanka is also the only supplier of true cinnamon to the world.

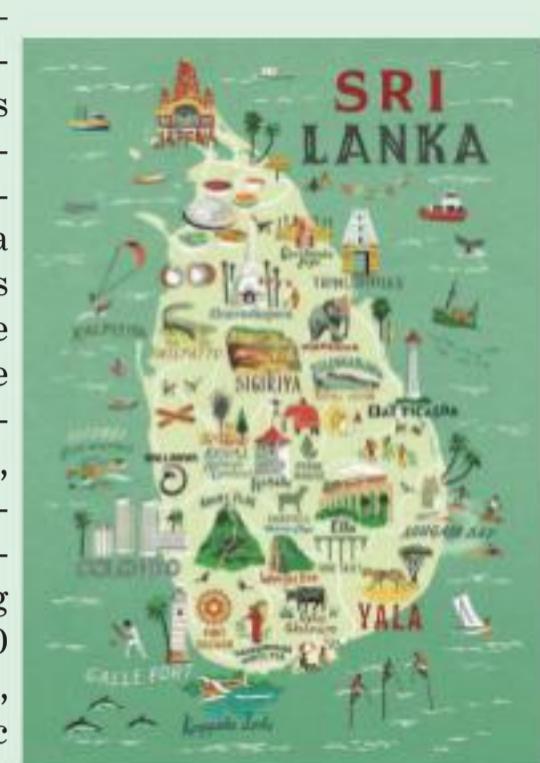
All tea grown in Sri Lanka is now 100% ozone-friendly. This is a distinction which no other tea-producing nation can boast. All Ceylon Tea is entitled to bear the new 'Ozone Friendly Pure Ceylon Tea' logo, certifying that it has been produced without the use of any ozone-depleting substances.

Sri Lanka is virtually a 'Treasure Island', enriched with an astonishing range of vividly coloured gemstones. These were positioned amongst the priceless exhibits in the Royal Museum of Great Britain. A precious and enticing spectrum of Blue Sapphires, Star Sapphires, Rubies, Star Rubies, Alexandrite, Spinel, Cat's Eyes, Garnets, Zircons, and Tourmalines of unsurpassed quality and quantities have been doting delivered in an uninterrupted continuum since the biblical days of Solomon & Sheba to this date from the gem rich soil of the phenomenally blessed island nation.

### Heaven On Earth

On February 4, 2024, Sri Lanka unfurled its 76th Independence Day celebrations, highlighting the country's multitude of travel and holiday options to visitors from across the world.

This island nation which resembles a teardrop in the Indian Ocean, offers everything the modern traveller seeks -



from golden sun-kissed beaches to numerous picturesque locations. Here is a land that houses some of the world's more sought-after natural resources, cultural wonders and heritage sites dating back to 2,500 years. Besides, its exotic wildlife, adrenaline-inducing adventures and delectable culinary trails are guaranteed to liven up the experience of any holiday seeker.

Despite the many challenges the past years have posed, be it social, cultural or political, Sri Lanka Tourism, the apex body responsible for promoting the destination globally and enhancing its tourism offerings, has forged ahead with plans to ensure the industry is sustained. The administration has done everything in its capacity to ensure revenue generation. As the National Tourism Organisation, it has contributed in many ways to promote Sri Lanka as one of the best tourist destinations in the world, by conducting global campaigns, participating in overseas travel and trade fairs, hosting international journalists and initiating new projects to attract global travellers.

It has been a difficult journey, but as a result of the relentless promotional efforts, Sri Lanka Tourism together with the industry stakeholders has achieved its target of bringing the maximum number of tourists to Sri Lanka in 2023, capping a perfect year. It now aims to double these numbers in 2024. Touché!

adani

We have consciously extended

our scale beyond our businesses,

to help the country overcome

economic challenges; to ensure people

live a good quality of life, uninterrupted.

We believe scale can lead to

goodness, and this is what drives us to

growth. Because, the more we grow,

the more lives we can touch.

Growth, the way  
it is meant to be.



## PROTESTERS WERE FROM 140 VILLAGES IN NOIDA, GREATER NOIDA

# Farmers protest at Delhi-Noida border, leave after assurance

Panel to look into demand for higher compensation on land acquired

DHEERAJ MISHRA  
NOIDA, FEBRUARY 8

FOLLOWING THE call by three farmer organisations to march to the Parliament, hundreds of farmers of Noida and Greater Noida from around 140 villages in the state came together to protest against the Noida, Greater Noida and Yamuna Authority, and the Uttar Pradesh government, for allegedly not accepting their demands related to compensation for their land.

Though the farmers had planned to walk up to the Parliament in the Capital, they were stopped by Noida Police at Dalit Prerana Sthal. Following talks with the police and representatives of the Gautam Buddha Nagar administration, the stir, which started around 1 pm, was called off after around six hours even as farmers said they will continue their protest at their respective places in Noida and Greater Noida.

Among assurances given to the farmers were formation of a high-powered committee to look into their issues, and a meeting with the police commissioner later in the day.

A high-powered committee has been formed, where all the farmer issues related to Noida, Greater Noida and Yamuna Authority will be discussed in detail," Sukhbir Khalifa of Bharatiya Kisan Parishad, one of the organisations leading the protest, said. The other organisations were Jai Jawan Jai Kisan Sangathan and Akhil Bharatiya Kisan Sabha. The committee would comprise an MP, an MLA, CEOs of all three authorities, NTPC CMD, and the Industrial Development minister.

On the meeting with the police commissioner, Rupesh Verma, district president of Kisan Sabha, said, "The meeting has completely failed and re-

mained inconclusive. In the end, it was decided that another round of meetings with CEOs of three authorities will be held."

The protest also created a huge traffic jam in the city, especially on the roads leading to Delhi with the police installing barriers at all the borders connecting Noida with the Capital.

## 'Not left with any land'

Subodh Yadav, 34, who joined the protest, said his 12 bigha land, which was in his father's name, was acquired in 2013 by the Greater Noida Authority, which gave him a 6% developed plot as compensation.

"It has been around seven years since we have been fighting but we are yet to get the additional 4% plot. *Hum kisi se kuchh maang nahi rahe hain, ye hamara haq hai* (We are not asking for anything, except what is rightfully ours). After fighting for years in court, they gave us an additional 64.7% compensation. On my land, Gaur city and Amrapali housing societies have been developed while we are here on the road," said Yadav, a resident of Taihda village.

Surender Kasana, 43, resident of Badauli village, said around 70 Bigha of land of his family, belonging to his father and three uncles, was acquired by the Noida Authority in 2007. However, he is yet to get additional compensation and 10% plot. "...Now, we do not have any land left. I have two children. How will I take care of them?" said Kasana.

A Noida authority official said the demands were discussed in previous meetings and were forwarded to the government.

"The board discussed both the major demands of the farmers, which is 10% developed plot and additional compensation, in its earlier meetings and the proposal has been forwarded to the UP government to take a final call..." said the official.

# Posing as passenger, cop nabs pickpocket at station

ARNABJIT SURI  
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 8



Accused at the railway station's ticket line.

ON FEBRUARY 7, a man stood in the ticket line of the Sarai Rohilla Railway Station, his mobile phone peeking out of his back pocket. A 23-year-old man spotted it, placed himself behind the passenger, and reached out to grab the device. Next he knew, the pickpocket was overpowered by another man standing right behind. What he didn't know, though, was that the passenger that he was trying to target was a policeman and the mobile phone, a bait to catch him. The person behind was another cop.

Head Constable Surjeet and Constable Pritam came up with the idea when an ITBP Constable, T Samuel, approached police alleging he was robbed of his phone while trying to board a train. The two cops had been camping at the station for a week as part of their drive to catch

pickpockets. Officers said at least four incidents of theft of cellphones had been reported near the lift of the station.

When Samuel approached the police Wednesday, his phone's location showed that the device was present on the premises of the station. Surjeet then kept his phone in his back pocket. "The accused spotted it and headed to the ticket counter while Pritam followed him. After five minutes, he jumped the queue and took away Surjeet's phone, moments after which Pritam overpowered him," said another officer.

DCP (Railways) KPS Malhotra said the accused was identified as Shabab, originally a resident of Bijnor, Uttar Pradesh.

**SAMAN HUSAIN**  
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 8

THE MUNICIPAL Corporation of Delhi (MCD) passed its budget for the financial year 2024-25, totaling Rs 16,000 crore, amidst chaos during its second presentation on Thursday.

licensing is also expected to rise.

Meanwhile, claiming that the budget was passed through an "illegal passage" in the absence of the Commissioner, a Delhi BJP delegation submitted a memorandum to L-G VK Saxena.

The Delhi government's contribution to the MCD for teachers' salaries is set to increase to Rs 1,500 crore — reflecting a slight uptick from the previous year.

The health department's budget has also seen an increase, focusing on improving MCD hospitals to align with the Delhi government standards. A substantial allocation is earmarked for sanitation in the upcoming fiscal year, with an aim to tackle long-standing garbage issues.

Efforts include the deployment of vacuum-based battery-operated cleaning machines as well as plans for waste management. Furthermore, initiatives to improve air quality through the promotion of e-vehicles and

charging stations are also on the agenda.

There are provisions for road improvement projects worth Rs 1,000 crore, along with a 100-time increase in the Mayor's discretionary. Additionally, Rs 15 crore was allocated for the maintenance and construction of gau-sadas for the welfare of cows.

To enhance transparency, the MCD plans transition from a single-entry accounting system to a double-entry one, along with efforts to digitise all transactions.

Special provisions for repairing corporation buildings and addressing road safety concerns, including dark spots, have also been outlined.

The corporation aims to incentivise the councilor's attendance with a proposed allowance of Rs 25,000 per House meeting, while allocating Rs 10 crore for the purpose.

The MCD plans doorstep delivery of government services and revenue-generating measures such as renting school play-

grounds and auctioning illegal parking sites. Utilisation of AI for maintaining roads, monitoring garbage, and managing parking areas are part of the budgetary initiatives.

These include using AI for prompt road cleaning and equipping parking spaces with FASTags, and a new app for parking areas.

"Today, we passed the budget amidst the ruckus created by BJP councillors... Our biggest achievement is that there has been no change in the budget presented by the MCD Commissioner," said Oberoi.

The initial proposal for the budget was put forth by the Commissioner during the Special Budget Meeting of the House on December 8 last year.

The budget presentation was labeled as the "Commissioner's and officers' budget"; and in response, leaders of the AAP-led MCD had pledged to conduct over 200 meetings to gather public opinions and input for the final budget.

wheelers... Many even took the wrong side to head back towards Pari Chowk on the Expressway."

The Delhi traffic police, meanwhile, said that heavy traffic was witnessed on the DND, Chilla, and Ghaziabad borders; as Sarita Vihar in South Delhi witnessed several vehicles heading towards Noida through Kalindi Kunj getting stuck for hours.

**'GREEN AREAS ARE LUNGS OF CITY'**

**HC disposes of plea to stop demolition, says no illegal structure on public land**

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 8

"RIGHT TO health, right to breathe, and right to heritage and culture have to be harmonised and balanced," said the Delhi High Court on Thursday, while hearing a public interest litigation (PIL), seeking directions to authorities including the Delhi Development Authority (DDA) to desist from demolishing the 'Ashiq Allah Dargah', including the 'Baba Farid' chilagah and other nearby historical monuments, in Mehrauli or Sanjay Van.

A division bench of Acting Chief Justice Manmohan and Justice Manmeet Pritam Singh Arora said in the order, "This Court is of the view that undoubtedly life in its expanded horizons includes all that gives meaning to a man's life, including his culture and heritage, and the protection of that heritage in its full measure.

However, this Court takes judicial notice of the fact that Delhi is one of the cities that are worst affected by pollution." It said Mehrauli and Sanjay Van are marked as "green/forest areas" in the city's Master Plan, adding that green areas are the "lungs of the city", and all statutory authorities have to put in efforts to ensure that "no illegal or unauthorised construction is carried out on this public land".

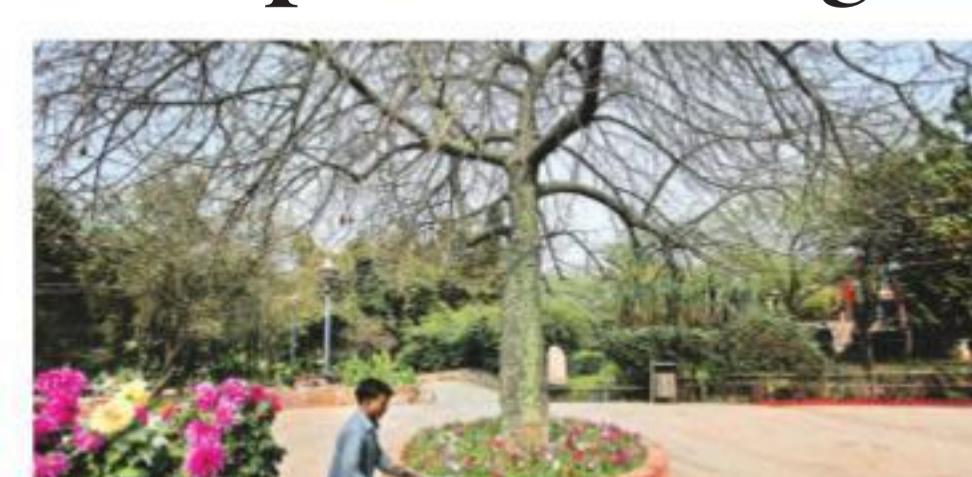
The HC, after examining photos in PIL, said that it was apparent that some of the structures located in the midst of thick forest have been "renovated recently, and are occupied by certain families".

The petitioners' counsel argued that the area where the Ashiq Allah Dargah is, has been barricaded by police as well as public access has been restricted... raising "serious apprehension of its impending demolition". He argued that the dargah and surrounding monuments ought to be protected".

New Delhi: The Delhi High Court on Thursday said that despite "multi-disciplinary jurisdiction" of the city's civic authorities, it is troubled over their failure to prevent "unauthorised construction" at a sealed property near centrally protected monuments Nizamuddin ki Baoli and Barakhamba Tomb.

The HC was hearing a public interest litigation (PIL) moved by an NGO, Jamia Arabia Nizamia Welfare Education Society, claiming that "illegal and unauthorised construction" is underway at

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



The Garden of Five Senses in Delhi's Chhatarpur. Express

## ALL ABOUT THE PLAN

### What is the plan?

To promote garden as a venue for pre-wedding photo shoots, shooting of webseries and films

### How many shoots will be allowed in a day?

Five to 10 on an average, can exceed during peak seasons

### What's more in store?

A facility for staycation and a guest room

nished babysitting room..." said the official, adding that tenders have been floated with the project cost at Rs 40-50 lakh (approximately).

The Delhi Tourism department plans redevelopment of the Garden along the lines of the Singapore-model gardens and parks, with cafes and restaurants, guest rooms, and staycation facilities to promote eco-tourism and increase the footfall of tourists as well as locals. The revamping plan is almost ready, and will soon be submitted for administrative and financial approval..." said the official.

**FULL REPORT ON**

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



DELHI CONFIDENTIAL

ASAD REHMAN  
LUCKNOW, FEBRUARY 8

WITH CONSENSUS yet to be reached with the Samajwadi Party (SP) on details of seat-sharring in Uttar Pradesh, the Rashtriya Lok Dal (RLD) is moving closer to joining the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) in the coming days, sources within the party told *The Indian Express* on Thursday. The BJP, party insiders said, was offering it four Lok Sabha constituencies, a Union ministry, and two state ministries.

If the RLD jumps ship, it will be a major blow to the Opposition INDIA alliance in UP at a time when the Congress and the Samajwadi Party (SP) are also attempting to resolve differences over seat-sharring. A senior RLD leader said, "Things have been almost finalised between us and the BJP. The formal announcement may happen soon, perhaps in a day or two."

An RLD leader also provided details of the seat-sharing arrangement. "The BJP is giving us four seats for the Lok Sabha polls, one



SP president Akhilesh Yadav and RLD chief Jayant Chaudhary had announced to contest 7 Lok Sabha seats together in UP.

Union ministry, and two state ministers in UP. There are some issues on some seats but they will be worked out. One of the seats they are refusing to give us is Muzaffarnagar. That, too, will be worked out," the leader said.

Union Minister Sanjeev Balyan has been representing Muzaffarnagar in the Lok Sabha since 2014.

Sources in the BJP also confirmed progress in the talks between the two parties. A senior BJP leader in Delhi said, "Our party is offering them Baghpat, Mathura, Hathras, and Amroha.

The party leadership has refused to give them Muzaffarnagar and

Kairana. We are even offering Bijnor and Saharanpur."

If the RLD quits the INDIA alliance, it will further weaken the beleaguered alliance in UP. Last month, SP president Akhilesh Yadav announced that the RLD would be allotted seven constituencies as part of a seat-sharing arrangement but the lack of clarity about which constituencies the party would get had created a sense of uncertainty in party ranks.

SP insiders had earlier said that the RLD would get Baghpat, Kairana, Mathura, Hathras, and Fatehpur Sikri while discussions were on for Muzaffarnagar,

Meerut, Bijnor, and Amroha. RLD leaders said there had been issues over the SP wanting its leaders to contest some of these seven seats on their symbol. Among these seats was Kairana, where the SP wanted to field Iqra Hasan, the sister of SP MLA Nahid Hasan.

In Varanasi, Akhilesh on Thursday did not provide a clear answer on the future of the SP-RLD partnership. "The BJP knows how to break parties and when to take whom. The BJP also knows how to cheat. You have seen how cheating happened in the recent Chandigarh mayoral elections. The BJP knows how to buy parties. It is not by coincidence that the BJP has become the biggest party. They know where to send ED, CBI, and the IT department," he said.

For the last couple of days, there have been reports of RLD leaders meeting the BJP leadership. Amid this, RLD chief Jayant Chaudhary, who was elected Rajya Sabha MP from UP in 2022 with the SP's support, maintained silence. On Wednesday, Akhilesh appeared to dissuade the RLD from joining the NDA.



Congress leader Rahul Gandhi being felicitated by Chhattisgarh Congress chief Deepak Baij and other party leaders at Rengarpali in Raigarh on Thursday. PTI

## 'Modi not OBC by birth': Rahul says PM will never hold caste census

**SUJIT BISOYI & JAYPRAKASH NAIDU**  
BELPAHAR, JHARSUGUDA, RAIPUR, FEBRUARY 8

**CONGRESS LEADER** Rahul Gandhi on Thursday hit out at Prime Minister Narendra Modi for "lying to the world", saying that Modi was not born into the Other Backward Class (OBC) category. PM Modi will never hold a caste census in the country, he added.

"When I spoke about social justice and caste census, Modi in his speech said, there were only two castes in the country—one is rich and another is poor. If there are only two castes... which caste census do you belong to? You are not poor since you wear new suits 24/7. If there are only two castes, how can you claim yourself as OBC?" Gandhi asked.

Stating there are 8% tribals, 15% Dalits and 50-55% OBCs in the country, Gandhi said the media questions him for raising his voice against casteism. "Show me an SC worker heading any of the top 200 companies. Can anyone show me any OBC or Dalit among 90 people who run the country? When 73% of the population does not have proper representation, how can the country unite?" he said.

Union minister Pralhad Joshi said the caste was made OBC two years before Modi became Gujarat CM.

The Congress leader also accused the PM of lying about his birth. "I don't need any birth certificate to prove that the Prime Minister was not born as OBC. He never holds hands of any OBC... he never shakes hands with the labourers or farmers. He only holds the hands of Adani ji," Gandhi said.

At a time when the Opposition INDIA alliance has decided to push the caste census demand to counter the BJP's

Hindutva narrative, Gandhi said only the Congress would hold a caste census. "He [PM Modi] will not hold a caste census... Because your PM is lying to the world... Only Congress and Rahul Gandhi will hold a caste census," he said.

"When I spoke about social justice and caste census, Modi in his speech said, there were only two castes in the country—one is rich and another is poor. If there are only two castes... which caste census do you belong to? You are not poor since you wear new suits 24/7. If there are only two castes, how can you claim yourself as OBC?" Gandhi asked.

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## Telis notified under Cong's Gujarat govt: BJP

**PARIMAL DABHI & LEENA MISRA**  
AHMEDABAD, FEBRUARY 8

CONGRESS MP Rahul Gandhi on Thursday found himself in another row during his Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra's Odisha leg by claiming Prime Minister Narendra Modi was "not born an OBC", prompting a sharp retort from the Centre.

"He was born a Teli, which was in the general category, and it was the BJP which included them in the OBC category in 2000," the Wayanad MP said, later revising it to say Modi was a "Modh Ghanchi" in Chhattisgarh.

"Modi ji was not born OBC. Modi is from Modh Ghanchi caste in Gujarat and the state government gave it OBC status in 2000.

Your Prime Minister (Modi) was not of OBC caste. He was from general caste. For 24 hours, he says he is OBC but Modiji you are not OBC, you are from general caste," Rahul said.

Accusing Modi of "fooling the people", he said this was why his government was not in favour of a nationwide caste census as it was essentially meant to determine the real proportion of different castes and groups.

### Who are Telis in Gujarat?

According to the National Commission for Backward Classes (NCBC), members of the Teli community in Gujarat are oil millers by occupation and are involved in the traditional craft of "tel ghani" (oil extraction).

On July 25, 1994, Gujarat government led by Congress's Chief Minister Chhabildas Mehta had issued a resolution while adding the Ghanchi community among the list of Socially and Economically Backward Classes (SEBCs).

Another resolution of the Gujarat government dated June 20, 1995, places the Teli and Modh Ghanchi communities at number 25A in the list while the Ghanchi (Muslims) are placed at number 25. "From now on, as per the SEBC list, caste certificates should be issued as per entry 25 – Ghanchi (Muslim) or as per entry 25A – Teli and Modh Ghanchi (Hindu)," the 1995 government resolution states.

### Are Modh Ghanchis on Central OBC list?

A public hearing of the Gujarat

Bench of the NCBC was held in Ahmedabad in August 1997 to include Telis and 16 others sub-castes, including the Modh Ghanchis in the Central list of OBCs.

The Teli community, represented by general secretary of the Gujarat State Taiilikh Sabu Mahasabha, NS Chaudhari, submitted that the Telis and Modh

Ghanchis were not included in

the Central list on the basis of the "principle of commonality", as they found a place in the Mandal list, but Ghanchi (Muslims) featured in both.

"Those present at the public hearing not only did not object to the inclusion of Teli and Modh Ghanchi as synonyms of Ghanchi (Muslim) in the Central list of OBCs but also supported it," the NCBC noted and recommended the inclusion of the Teli community in the list with retrospective effect from the date when the reservation for backward classes came into effect – September 8, 1993.

Following the recommendations of the NCBC, the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment amended the Central list and added the Telis and Modh

Ghanchis to it in October 1999, around the time the Atal Bihari Vajpayee government led by the BJP came to power. The following year, the list was further amended to include the Teli Sahu, Teli Rathods and Teli Rathores.

Currently, the Central list of OBCs features 104 communities from Gujarat.

### BJP response to Rahul

The Central government issued a short note titled "facts regarding Rahul Gandhi's statement on PM's caste", in which it said the Modh Ghanchi caste was included in Gujarat's list of socially and economically backward classes and OBCs. The note added that the notification to include the sub-group in the list of OBCs was issued on July 25, 1994 – when the state was headed by the Congress.

"The same sub-group was included in OBC list as per a government notification dated April 4, 2000. When both notifications were released, Shri Narendra Modi was not in power, and was not holding an executive office at the time," the Centre's response said.

Modi assumed charge as the CM of Gujarat in 2001, a post he held till 2014 when he became the Prime Minister.

## Not on warpath... but there's discrimination against Opp-ruled states, especially Kerala'



**THE EXPRESS INTERVIEW**  
WITH PINARAYI VIJAYAN  
KERALA CM AND CPI(M)  
POLITBURO MEMBER

Opposition in Kerala isn't interested in standing for state...

**Do you think people will accept your proposition of fighting the Congress in Kerala and aligning with them elsewhere?**

During UPA-I, we had provided outside support to the government on the basis of a common minimum programme. We have always stood for the interest of the country. In the all-India scenario, the Sangh Parivar and BJP are furthering their communal agenda without addressing issues of people's lives and livelihoods. They are anti-Constitution. They are trying to weaken all its values, especially secularism and federalism, and ultimately our democracy. So, they have to be defeated.

Accordingly democratic and secular parties have to come together...

**Federalism is common concern of Opposition. Given your long administrative experience, how do you view the Centre-state relations under Narendra Modi?**

Those who wax eloquent about cooperative federalism (BJP) have tried to undercut the devolution of funds to states by influencing the Finance Commission (FC). The Terms of Reference of FCs are determined by the Union government. States' opinions and suggestions are not taken into account. At the same time, we are seeing the Union government amassing funds by hiking cess and surcharge which are not shared with the states as they do not fall in the divisible pool. Yet, the Union government's allocation for its own schemes is coming down year after year, with states forced to shell out more from their cash-strapped pockets...

Essentially we should have a strong Union and empowered

states. Kerala is doing its fair share in making the Union strong by contributing massively by way of bringing in much-needed foreign exchange... The NRKs (Non-Resident Keralites) too fetch foreign exchange. Despite our contributions... we are being discriminated against.

**BJP always speaks of rampant use of Article 356, including against the first Left govt in Kerala led by E M S Namboodiripad. Do you see Modigovt as more considerate?**

Subsequent to the Supreme Court's verdict in the S R Bommai vs Union of India, it is not that easy to invoke Article 356. However, the current ruling dispensation does not have to use Article 356. They are able to topple elected governments through horse-trading... Is altering people's verdict the definition of being considerate? They abrogated Article 370. They make governors dance to their tune in Opposition-ruled states.

**Your daughter is facing serious charges.**

All through, there have been a slew of allegations against leaders of the Left. Not a single one has come true, because we in the Left are incorruptible... The PM has all the central agencies at his beck and call... his agencies are not able to find anything concrete.

**Your govt's relations with Governor Arif Mohammed Khan? Have they reached a point of no return?**

The issue is not isolated to Kerala. It affects the whole country, especially its federal character. We cannot allow Indian democracy which was envisaged as a 'Union of States' to be crippled into an undemocratic 'Union over States'. FULL INTERVIEW ON

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

Particulars	Quarter ended	Nine months ended	Quarter ended
	31.12.2023	31.12.2023	31.12.2022
	Un-audited	Un-audited	Un-audited
Total income from operations	6,366.09	20,654.63	6,442.79
Net profit for the period before tax and exceptional items	513.35	1,965.29	977.43
Net profit for the period before tax and after exceptional items	513.35	1,965.29	977.43
Net profit for the period after tax and exceptional items	374.13	1,448.96	694.54
Total comprehensive income for the period (after tax) (attributable to owners of the Company)	355.36	1,389.59	684.96
Equity share capital	480.62	480.62	480.62
Reserves (excluding revaluation reserve as shown in the balance sheet of previous year)			10,529.38 (as at 31.03.2023)
Earnings per share (of ₹ 10/- each)	7.49	29.19	14.24
Basic (₹)	7.49	29.19	14.24
Diluted (₹)	7.49	29.19	14.24

### EXTRACT OF THE STATEMENT OF STANDALONE FINANCIAL RESULTS

Particulars	Quarter ended	Nine months ended	Quarter ended</th
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# IN PARLIAMENT

BUDGET SESSION

House passes  
Bills to amend  
SC, ST lists in  
Andhra, Odisha

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 8

TWO BILLS which seek to modify the list of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in Andhra Pradesh and Odisha through inclusion of more communities were passed by the Lok Sabha on Tuesday by a voice vote. The Bills had already been cleared by the Rajya Sabha.

Repeating to the debate on the Bills, Minister of State for Tribal Affairs Bharti P Pawar said the Modi government has done a lot for the uplift of tribal people. The government has launched schemes such as Pradhan Mantri Janjati Adivasi Nyaya Maha Abhiyan to improve the socio-economic conditions of the Primitive Vulnerable Tribal Groups, she said.

In Andhra Pradesh, three ethnic groups – Bondo Porja, Khond Porja and Parangiperja – are being added to the list of STs. In Odisha, it will add four groups in the list.

Though the Bills were supported by all parties, the Opposition raised various issues related to tribals.

Odisha MP Saptagiri Ulaka from the Congress suggested that such Bills should ideally be brought through a Joint Parliamentary Committee so that right communities can be identified for inclusion in tribal list. Ulaka picked out the Uniform Civil Code as being detrimental to tribal identity.

## 400 Smart City Mission projects to miss June 30 deadline, states must take over, panel told

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 8

SOME PROJECTS under the Smart Cities Mission would not be able to meet the June 30 deadline and the respective state governments would be responsible for completing them thereafter, Union Housing and Urban Affairs Secretary Manoj Joshi told the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Housing and Urban Affairs.

In its report on the evaluation of the Smart Cities Mission presented in the Lok Sabha on Thursday, the committee said the ministry had informed it that 400 projects, out of the 7,970, worth Rs 22,814 crore would take beyond December 2024 to complete. Last year, the Ministry had extended the mission's deadline from June 2023 to June 2024.

The ministry has stated before the committee that in case of non-completion of these projects within the extended time frame, the state governments concerned will have to complete the projects at their own cost. The committee is of the strong opinion that the ministry's role should not be confined to transfer of their share regarding mission/scheme/project, but they have to remain watchful for the execution and successful completion of the projects," the report said.

The committee, chaired by JDU MP Rajiv Ranjan Singh, was told by Housing and Urban Affairs Secretary Manoj Joshi that the ministry did not want to extend the mission further.

**LIZ MATHEW**

NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 8

THE WHITE Paper on Indian economy, which slammed the Congress-led UPA government for "its policy misadventures" and explained how the Narendra Modi government has "straightened" it, will be one of the major poll planks of the ruling BJP with its state units being directed to launch a nationwide campaign on Friday and the Rajya Sabha on

## 52-PAGE DOCUMENT ECHOES RAHUL YATRA THEMES

# Cong 'black paper' flags Modi govt's economic, social, political 'injustice'

MANOJ CG

NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 8

AS THE Government mounted yet another offensive on the Congress party by tabling in Parliament a white paper on "mismanagement" of the economy in the UPA era, the main opposition party hit back, calling it a "laughable" attempt to hide the "dark truth" of the BJP-led Centre's failures.

Hours earlier, the party released what it said was a "black paper" on the Narendra Modi government's tenure, accusing it of having "devastated" the economy, "aggravated" unemployment and "committed grave injustices" against minorities.

As the white paper came out, there was silence in the opposition INDIA bloc. Social media posts by senior Congress leaders K C Venugopal and Abhishek Singhvi were perhaps the only response by the grand old party.

"A White Paper to hide the dark truth. Laughable that after a decade in power, the BJP comes out with a White Paper on our performance, because they have no real accomplishments to speak of," Venugopal said.

"Hunger, price rise, unemployment and abject poverty are a lived reality for a vast majority of Indians. That is a Modi-made disaster. No amount of window dressing, campaigns, gimmicks



Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge, along with party leader Pawan Khera and MP Nasir Hussain, releases the 'Black Paper' on the Modi Government, in New Delhi on Thursday. ANI

or lengthy speeches will make that reality disappear," he added.

With Lok Sabha elections round the corner, the thrust of the Congress's "black paper" titled "10 Saal Anyay Kaal 2014-2024 (10 years of injustice)" was on bread and butter issues such as price rise and unemployment. The 54-page document showcased what the Congress claims was economic, social and political "injustice" committed by the Modi government over the past ten years, and also the spread of social disharmony, "subversion of institutions" and the "compromise of national security".

The themes of the document are similar to Rahul Gandhi's ongoing Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra. In a jibe over the Congress's move,

Modi thanked Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge for coming out with a "black paper" against his government and referred to it as "kaala teeka" (to ward off the evil eye) in the midst of good work being done by his government.

Releasing the document, Kharge accused Modi of often dwelling into history and talking about Jawaharlal Nehru and Indira Gandhi to hide his government's failures. "What have you done to tackle price rise, address

unemployment and double the income of farmers? What happened before Independence, what Nehru, Indira and Rajiv Gandhi did... you only talk about irrelevant things," he said.

Keen to corner the government on the issue of unemployment hoping that it will strike a chord with the young voters, the document said total unemployment in the country has risen to 14 crore in 2022 from one crore in 2012. "Ten lakh sanctioned central government posts remain unfilled.... Youth unemployment has more than doubled, from 6 percent in 2011-12

to 15 percent in 2019-20 according to the PLFS data. The unemployment rate for graduates and post graduates is about 33 per cent – one in three are looking unsuccessfully for a job," it said.

"Under the UPA, between 2004-05 and 2011-12 the Indian economy saw the creation of 75 lakh non-farm jobs every year. Between 2013 and 2019, the number of non-farm jobs created was 29 lakh per year, less than half the UPA's rate. After 2019, the number has been even lower according to government data," it said.

Besides, it argued, the Modi government has reversed the structural transformation of the economy. "As economies mature, workers move away from low-paying farm jobs to higher paying jobs in manufacturing and services. The opposite has happened to India under Modi. Modi's policies have forced India's youth back into farming. The number of agricultural workers declined by 6.7 crore between 2004-05 and 2017-18. This entire progress has almost been reversed in three years. In a single year, 2019-20, even before Covid, the number of agricultural workers rose by 3.4 crore. Since 2018-19, the number of agricultural workers has gone up by 6 crore," it said.

The Congress argued that wage growth too has suffered. It said the share of regular salaried workers in total employment, 23.8% in 2019, fell to 20.9% in 2023. The rare praise came hours before the Government released a "white paper" on the economy, saying the decade-long UPA rule – 2004 to 2014, during which Singh was PM – turned India "from a healthy economy in 2004 to a stagnant economy in 2014".

"Everyone knew that the Treasury benches would win... but Dr Manmohan Singhji came on a wheelchair and voted. This is the duty of a member of this House and he is a shining example. Even for election of some committee he came in a wheelchair." "It does not matter whom he had come to support, but my belief is that he came to support democracy," Modi said, adding, "I pray for his long life and wish he would continue to guide us."

The farewell, however, witnessed some acrimony too.

Former PM H D Devegowda took on Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge for his remark that the JD(S) leader had changed his political course in the end of his life. "I want to save my party when some of the Congressmen want to destroy it... I have taken the decision to extend my support to BJP. That is the only reason," Devegowda said.

While acknowledging Kharge's honesty, Devegowda

said, "This polarisation is full of hate," he said.

## FAREWELL FOR MPs WHO ARE RETIRING

# Before Govt White Paper, PM's praise for Manmohan: 'A shining example'



PM Narendra Modi during a farewell for retiring Rajya Sabha MPs on Thursday. PTI

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 8

BIDDING FAREWELL to retiring Rajya Sabha MPs, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday lavished praise on his predecessor and Congress stalwart Manmohan Singh, calling him a "shining example" and praying that "he continues to guide us".

The rare praise came hours before the Government released a "white paper" on the economy, saying the decade-long UPA rule – 2004 to 2014, during which Singh was PM – turned India "from a healthy economy in 2004 to a stagnant economy in 2014".

"I would especially like to remember Dr Manmohan Singhji," Modi said in the House, recalling an incident last year when the former PM, who has been an MP since 1991, came to vote in Rajya Sabha on a wheelchair.

"Everyone knew that the Treasury benches would win... but Dr Manmohan Singhji came on a wheelchair and voted. This is the duty of a member of this House and he is a shining example. Even for election of some committee he came in a wheelchair."

"It does not matter whom he had come to support, but my belief is that he came to support democracy," Modi said, adding, "I pray for his long life and wish he would continue to guide us."

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said, "This polarisation is full of hate," he said.

## NINE MINISTERS RETIRING AS MPs

**Dharmendra Pradhan:**

Education; Skill Development & Entrepreneurship

**Parshottam Rupala:**

Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying

**Narayan Rane:**

Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises

**Rajeev Chandrasekhar**

(MoS): Skill Development and Entrepreneurship; Electronics and IT; Jal Shakti

**V Muraleedharan (MoS):**

External Affairs; Parliamentary Affairs

**L Murugan (MoS):**

Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying; I&B

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www.indianexpress.com

ment is making sure that fiscal deficit is managed without hurting any project.

Speaking about the Global Hunger Index, she said it is not a balanced approach to measure hunger. She said the unemployment rate in rural areas has decreased from 5.3 per cent in 2017 to 2.4 per cent in 2023.

AAP MP from Punjab, Sanjeev Arora, spoke about the need for more focus on the health sector in the Budget. Congress MP Randeep Singh Surjewala said the Appropriation Bill is not for the lower-income families. He said India's farmers earn so less even as the government earns more from what the farmers provide. "Then why does the government say they can't pay the farmers?" he asked.

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# Shoot-at-sight orders in Uttarakhand's Haldwani as violence breaks out during demolition drive

Arson as admin shows up to raze 'illegal' structures in madrasa area; CM calls for peace

AVANEESH MISHRA  
DEHRADUN, FEBRUARY 8

STONES WERE pelted and several vehicles torched after the administration conducted a demolition drive where a mosque and a madrasa stood, allegedly on nazool land, in Uttarakhand's Banbhopura area in Haldwani district.

According to a statement issued by the state information department, Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami called a high-level meeting in wake of the tension and issued orders to shoot rioters on sight. The district administration has imposed curfew in Banbhopura area.

Talking to *The Indian Express*, a resident said the area is on edge and they can "hear tears being fired". Things became tense earlier in the day after the administration conducted a demolition drive at the Mariam Masjid in Malik Ka Bageecha locality and a madrasa as they were allegedly on nazool land. Stones were pelted and four-five vehicles parked on the road were set on fire," he said.

The Chief Minister reviewed the situation with the Chief Secretary and Director General of Police and gave instructions to deal strictly with unruly elements.



Vehicles set on fire by mob after demolition drive in Haldwani, Uttarakhand, Thursday. PTI

He also appealed to the people to maintain peace.

Nainital District Magistrate Vandana meanwhile issued orders to impose a complete closure in the entire area of Haldwani city.

The order states: "It has been informed by SSP Nainital and City Magistrate, Haldwani that during the process of removal of encroachment and demolition from the pre-marked site of Banbhopura area, there have been incidents of protest, stone pelting and arson by a particular community. Due to this, there is a threat to law and order in the area as well as a fear of damage or danger to human life and public property... Hence, in my opinion, it has become necessary to prevent the threat posed to the safety of pub-

lic life and public property."

As per the order, no person will leave the house except for urgent work, and all business institutions, shops, industries, etc will remain closed. Only hospitals and medical shops will remain open.

"It is also ordered that the information of this order should be given in Banbhopura area through loudspeaker," the DM stated, adding that the order will be in force from 9 pm Thursday until further orders.

Zafar Siddiqui, a resident of Banbhopura, told *The Indian Express* that the mosque was built by one Abdul Malik on a piece of land sold to him by someone who got it on lease. Nazool land is government land not officially mentioned in revenue records.

"For the last four-five days, police had been coming to the area and informing that the mosque and the madrasa would be demolished. On Thursday morning, the administration arrived with a JCB machine. Around 5-6 pm, I came to know that there has been stone pelting and some vehicles have been set on fire. Some protesters also vandalised the police station. This went on for around 30-40 minutes. As of now, curfew is imposed and we all are locked in our houses," said Siddiqui.

Siraj Khan, who runs a fast-food joint near the mosque, said he saw several police vehicles and only then did he come to know about the violence. He closed his shop and locked himself and his family inside his house.

Mob surrounded police station, reinforcements were sent in, says DGP

AVANEESH MISHRA  
DEHRADUN, FEBRUARY 8

THE DIRECTOR General of Police in Uttarakhand has told *The Indian Express* that they are looking into 'rumours' of deaths in the Haldwani violence. He also said the mob had surrounded a police station, and additional forces had to be called to ward them off.

DGP Abhinav Kumar said the police and administration teams had gone to the area to remove an illegal encroachment for which there was already litigation in the High Court, which had ordered its removal.

Shakeel Ahmad, Councillor of Ward Number 31, under which the incident took place, however, told *The Indian Express* that the High Court had not given a final decision in the case of removing illegal encroachment.

"Some miscreants started stone pelting and violence. The exact sequence of events that led to this kind of situation is a matter of administrative inquiry. We will check what was the cause for this kind of public anger, and if there is some conspiracy, we will look into it," said Kumar.

He said that the rioting went on for three-four hours starting around 5.30 pm, and by 9 pm, the

situation was brought under control.

"There are some rumours of deaths, but as of now, I do not have any confirmed information of any casualty in this incident. The mob had also surrounded a police station and set some vehicles on fire, but reinforcement was sent to the spot and the police station was saved. We are still assessing the property damage. On Friday morning, the Chief Secretary and ADG Law and Order will fly to Haldwani to do a proper assessment of the situation," said Kumar.

Senior advocate Manoj Swarup, appearing for the respondents in the matter, said the Scheduled Castes, as held by the SC in its 2004 judgment in *E V Chinniah vs State of Andhra Pradesh*, formed a homogenous group and hence there cannot be any sub-division among them.

He contended that the states have no power to make changes to the list of Scheduled Castes issued by the President under Article 341 and if any change was made, only Parliament could do that.

The bench presided by Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud, also comprised Justices B R Gavai, Vikram Nath, Bela M Trivedi, Pankaj Mital, Manoj Misra, and Satish Chandra Sharma. The bench is examining if the Chinniah judgment needs a relook.

On Swarup's submission, Justice Gavai said the question was not about identification but providing benefits to those identified under Article 341?

Top court: Advanced among SCs will grab benefits if there is no sub-classification

ANANTHAKRISHNANG  
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 8

NOT ALLOWING sub-classification of Scheduled Castes (SCs) will lead to a situation where the "advanced among" them "would grab all benefits", a 7-judge Constitution bench of the Supreme Court observed Thursday, as it reserved its judgment on a reference that raises the question of sub-classification of SCs.

Senior advocate Manoj Swarup, appearing for the respondents in the matter, said the Scheduled Castes, as held by the SC in its 2004 judgment in *E V Chinniah vs State of Andhra Pradesh*, formed a homogenous group and hence there cannot be any sub-division among them.

"Then it would perpetuate inequality amongst those classes," said Justice Gavai.

He said, "After the SC 1976 ruling in *'The state of Kerala vs N M Thomas'*, it was held that even if Article 16(4) – it provides that the State can enact a law to reserve posts in favour of any backward class of citizens – was not there, still taking a queue from Articles 14 (right to equality) and 16(1), it could have made reservations. The purpose is to remove inequalities and bring equality. So, taking for example a particular caste in Maharashtra, for the last 75 years if they are taking reservations of 75-80% of the 13% available reservation and there are some caste which have a sizable representation but they do not have even one or two percent reservation so would it not amount to perpetuating inequality amongst those classes identified under Article 341?"

The bench presided by Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud, also comprised Justices B R Gavai, Vikram Nath, Bela M Trivedi, Pankaj Mital, Manoj Misra, and Satish Chandra Sharma. The bench is examining if the Chinniah judgment needs a relook.

On Swarup's submission, Justice Gavai said the question was not about identification but providing benefits to those identified under Article 341?

**Curative pleas against 2013 verdict on Sec 377 infertile, says SC**

D Y Chandrachud said dismissing the pleas. The bench also comprised Justices B R Gavai, Bela M Trivedi, Pankaj Mital and Manoj Misra.

The Delhi High Court had in *Naz Foundation Vs Union of India*, struck down Section 377 IPC in 2009.

However in 2013, the SC in *Suresh Kumar Koushal versus Naz Foundation*, reversed the HC decision.

Subsequently, the top court also dismissed review petitions filed against the 2013 ruling.

The curative petitions filed against the dismissal of the review petitions however remained pending.

Found indulging in illegal activities, Centre tells Delhi HC on Swain's OCI cancellation

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
DELHI, FEBRUARY 8

THE CENTRE has told the Delhi High Court that it cancelled Sweden-based professor Ashok Swain's Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) registration after it was "satisfied" that he had been found indulging in "illegal activities inimical" to the interests of the sovereignty, integrity, and security of India.

The submission has been made in Centre's response to Swain's plea challenging a July 30, 2023, order of the Indian Embassy to Sweden and Latvia which cancelled his OCI registration.

The Centre through the Ministry of Home Affairs in its response has said that it sought a report from security agencies and the Ministry of External Affairs in the matter.

"The Ministry examined the activities of Mr. Ashok Swain in view of reports received from security agencies and Ministry of External Affairs and provisions under section 7D(c) of The Citizenship Act, wherein the OCI Card of the petitioner was found liable to be cancelled. Therefore, on 06.11.2020, this Ministry served a 'Notice' to the petitioner through Embassy of India in Sweden to show cause as to why his OCI Card may not be cancelled for indulging in inflammatory speeches and anti-India activities," the response stated.

## FOCUS ON WOMEN, WELFARE SCHEMES

### DBT, DA hike in Bengal Budget, ₹3.6 lakh cr outlay

ATRI MITRA & RAVIK BHATTACHARYA  
KOLKATA, FEBRUARY 8

RAINING SOPS, the Trinamool Congress (TMC) government of West Bengal on Thursday hiked the Dearness Allowance (DA) by another 4 per cent for the second time in two months, increased incentives of Direct Benefits Transfer (DBT) schemes such as Lakshmi Bhandar – a financial assistance scheme for women – and launched targeted welfare schemes.

After state Finance Minister Chandrima Bhattacharya tabled the Rs 3.6 lakh crore Budget outlay for 2024-25 fiscal year in the Assembly, Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee called it a "wonderful Budget" for every section of the society.

#### KEY SCHEMES & ALLOCATION

- Lakshmi Bhandar: ₹ 12,000 cr
- Samudra Sathi: ₹ 200 cr
- Artisans Financial Benefit Scheme: ₹ 200 cr
- Karmasree: Allocation not mentioned
- Mid-day meal workers: ₹ 140 crore
- Sasthya Sathi: ₹ 150 cr

"I was telling everyone that you will be shocked after seeing the Budget. So, it happened. If you want to do something, you have to have the thinking



Chief Minister Banerjee in the Assembly. Express

every sector of the society."

"What this budget has done has never been done in the country by anyone. We will make our name in the Guinness Book Of World Records," she added.

In her Budget speech, Bhattacharya also announced the launch of a new scheme – Karmasree – under which the state government will ensure at least 50 days of work to each job cardholder. The scheme, the Finance Minister said, would commence from May 2024.

The new scheme has been announced when the state government has been pressing for the release of pending Central funds, including Rs 6,900 crore for MGNREGA – the rural employment scheme. For over two years, the Centre has withheld the payment of wages under the MGNREGA in the state, citing si-

phoning of funds and fake job cards. While no budgetary allocation has been made for Karmasree scheme, the state Budget has allocated Rs 3,700 crore for the pending wages of 21 lakh MGNREGA workers.

The state government also announced the launch of Samudra Sathi Scheme for fishermen of Purba Medinipur, North 24 Parganas and South 24 Parganas districts who will get Rs 5,000 for two months during the "lean season". Similar schemes have been announced for artisans, youths, and migrant workers. "We have limitations, but I received requests from several stakeholders to increase the DA for government employees. We said we will give the dues slowly. In January we gave 4 per cent DA. In this budget, we gave another 4% DA hike," she said.

The curative petitions have been rendered infertile by the judgment delivered by this court in *Navtej Johar (case)*, a five-judge constitution bench presided by Chief Justice of India

## FREE EDUCATION FROM KG TO PG TO STUDENTS FROM LOW-INCOME GROUPS

### Focus on jobs, farmers, education in Rajasthan Budget

HAMZA KHAN  
JAIPUR, FEBRUARY 8

RECRUITMENT FOR 70,000 posts, free education from kindergarten to post graduation for low-income groups, Rs 1,000 crore for establishment and upgrade of schools, colleges, hospitals and administrative offices in "deprived areas", Rs 2,000 additional annual payout to farmers under the Centre's PM-KISAN scheme and a Rs 125 per quintal hike in wheat MSP – these were among the major announcements in the Bhajan Lal Sharma government's first

Minister and state Finance Minister Diya Kumari, who presented the Budget, alleged that during the previous Ashok Gehlot government's tenure, constituencies such as Ladpura, Nasirabad, Siwana and Ahore among others – from where Opposition MLAs were elected – were ignored, leading to an imbalance in development. In order to maintain regional balance, a provision of Rs 1,000 crore has been made to develop such areas, she said.

Budget, a vote-on-account, presented in Assembly Thursday.

Rajasthan Deputy Chief

small/marginal/bataidar farmers and farm labourers. A financial assistance of Rs 1,000 per student for school bags, books and uniform for students of class 1 to 8 and girl students of class 9 to 12 was also announced.

For farmers, she announced an additional payout of Rs 2,000 under the PM-KISAN scheme, which will take the total annual payment amount to Rs 8,000 each. Also, the minimum support price (MSP) for wheat has been hiked to Rs 2,400 from Rs 2,275 per quintal.

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

## Vastu consultant 'conned firms' in Assam, arrested

fore a court, and placed in police remand for six days, a CID officer said.

An FIR was registered with the Assam CID in October last year on the basis of a complaint from businessman Kamal Sabharwal, alleging that his company Sabharwal Trading India Pvt Ltd was paid only Rs 4.43 crore in return for delivering goods worth Rs 63 crore for what he claimed was a government project being supervised by Assam's Chief Minister, according to an FIR registered by Assam's Crime Investigation Department.

Bansal was arrested, along with his brother, in New Delhi on Monday. Subsequently, he was brought to Assam, produced be-

#### MAHENDER SINGH MANRAL

NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 8

Mental health-related issues are still a "taboo" in the security forces and the personnel hesitate in sharing their problems for the fear of being "mocked and taunted as weak" by other colleagues, states a draft report prepared by a task force formed to look into suicide and fratricide cases in the Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs).

In its final draft-report submitted to the Ministry of Home Affairs last month, after studying of 642 suicide cases and 51 fratricide

cide deaths in the last five years, the task force has recommended in its report that seniors should stop using abusive language with their juniors and behave decently with them, sources said.

The task force found three major factors – working conditions, service conditions and personal/individual issues – that led to incidents of suicides and fratricides. The task force was constituted by the Home Ministry to study and analyse incidents and prepare a comprehensive report.

Some of the work-related key reasons are prolonged deployment in high-risk areas, long separation from families/forced

bachelorship, tough duty hours in inhospitable conditions.

"Mental health-related issues are still a taboo in the forces as well as in society. In the security forces, there is not only the apprehension of being mocked and taunted as weak, worthless, but also a fear of losing their job because of it. As a result, personnel facing mental issues usually don't open up and share it with their seniors or colleagues," the source said.

Data shows that in total 642 personnel, including 10 women personnel, died by suicide and 51 fratricide incidents took place in the CAPFs between 2017 and 2021. The maximum suicide incidents

for the said period were reported in the CRPF (227), while 175 suicides, including 4 women personnel, were reported in the BSF.

The task force mentioned in the report that it found that over 80 per cent suicides happened when the personnel returned to work after availing leaves. Most of the suicides were reported between 7 and 15 days after returning from home, said the sources.

"The task force has found that the trigger for suicides may be related to family or duty. If one of the fronts is easy and smooth, the stress level of the personnel gets managed considerably. The cases of suicides and attempts by

women personnel are less as compared to their male counterparts. Male personnel hesitate sharing their problem because of the fear of being mocked," said a source, citing the report.

The task force has recommended that there should be a provision of mental health screening of all CAPF personnel returning from leave or from other long-term duties, through a questionnaire. "Some of the common challenges associated with combat zones are insomnia, agitation and nightmares, which are considered to be one of the important contributors to suicidality," the source said.

The task force found that service-related reasons such as "trauma of being abused, bullying at workplace, leave-related issues, extended working hours and inadequate time for rest" also triggered suicidal thoughts. "The newly recruited jawans are highly educated and their immediate bosses should be sensitised to treat them with dignity, hear their grievances and recognise their services. They cannot be treated as subordinates who do not know anything about operations strategy. Seniors should stop



TATA POWER

**THE TATA POWER COMPANY LIMITED**Registered Office: Bombay House, 24, Horni Mody Street, Mumbai 400 001.  
Tel: 91 22 6665 8282; CIN: L28920MH1919PLC000567Email: [tatapower@tatapower.com](mailto:tatapower@tatapower.com); Website: [www.tatapower.com](http://www.tatapower.com)**NOTICE OF RECORD DATE**

NOTICE is hereby given pursuant to Section 91 of the Companies Act, 2013 that following Record Date(s) have been fixed for the purpose of payment of annual interest to the holders of Unsecured, Redeemable, Taxable, Listed, Rated Non-Convertible Debentures:

ISINs	Rate of Interest	Record date	Date of Payment
INE245A08232	7.77%	Sunday, March 10, 2024	Tuesday, March 26, 2024
INE245A08224	7.77%	Sunday, March 10, 2024	Tuesday, March 26, 2024
INE245A08240	7.77%	Tuesday, March 12, 2024	Thursday, March 28, 2024
INE245A08273	7.72%	Tuesday, March 12, 2024	Thursday, March 28, 2024

For The Tata Power Company Limited

Sd/-  
Place: Mumbai  
Dated: February 8, 2024Vispi S. Patel  
Company Secretary**Noida New Okhla Industrial Development Authority**

Main Administrative Building, Sector-6, Noida, G.B. Nagar, (U.P.)

Website: [www.noidaauthorityonline.in](http://www.noidaauthorityonline.in)**E-TENDER NOTICE**E-Tenders are invited from eligible contractors/firm for the following jobs against which bids can be uploaded and same shall be opened / downloaded as per schedule mentioned. The details and conditions of all tenders are available on Noida Authority's official website: [www.noidaauthorityonline.in](http://www.noidaauthorityonline.in) & <https://etender.up.nic.in>. Please ensure to see these websites for any changes/ amendments & corrigendum etc.**A) Fresh Tender Work:-**

SL. No.	Job No.	Name of Work	Tender Amount (in Lacs)
1.	30/D.G.M.(E.M.)/Sr.M.(E/M)-I/E.T./2023-24	Regarding the work of restoration woke to keep the street lighting installed on External Roads & main points of Roads adjoining Sector 82, 91, 92, 93, 93A, 93B, 104, 105, 108, & 110, Noida fully functional.	192.71

The above tenders can be uploaded by dated 22.02.2024 up to 5.00 PM. Pre-qualification shall be opened/downloaded on dated 23.02.2024 at 11.00 AM.

**B) Re Tender Work:-**

SL. No.	Job No.	Name of Work	Tender Amount (in Lacs)
1.	39/DGM/Sr. D/o Vill's (Providing Distribution M ( E & M ) - Line Network in Vill-Bishanpura), 11 / 2 0 2 3 - Sector-58, Noida, 24/ET	D/o Vill's (Providing Distribution M ( E & M ) - Line Network in Vill-Bishanpura), 11 / 2 0 2 3 - Sector-58, Noida.	190.34

The above tenders can be uploaded by dated 15.02.2024 up to 5.00 PM. Pre-qualification shall be opened/downloaded on dated 16.02.2024 at 11.00 AM.

Dy. General Manager  
(E&M) NOIDA**CLEAN, GREEN, SAFE & SECURE NOIDA**OFFICE OF THE RECOVERY OFFICER- I/II DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL PATNA  
2nd Floor, (A, B & F Wing) Kapuri Thakur Sadan, Kendriya Karamchari Parivar (GPOA), Ashiana Digha Road, Patna-800025.**Demand Notice**

NOTICE UNDER SECTIONS 25 TO 28 OF THE RECOVERY OF DEBTS &amp; BANKRUPTCY ACT, 1993 AND RULE 2 OF SECOND SCHEDULE TO THE INCOME TAX ACT, 1961.

RC/276/2023 02-02-2024

PUNJAB NATIONAL BANK

Versus

SHASHI PRAKASH BHARTI AND OTHERS.

(CD 1) Shashi Prakash Bharti and other Son Saudagar Prasad Recorded address:-At and PO-Herudiyara, District-Munger, Bihar-811201, Munger  
(CD 2) Dharmendra Yadav Son of late Mahavir Yadav, Resident at N.A.C. Road, P.O and District-Khagaria-851204  
(CD 3) Rinki Devi Wife of Dharmendra Yadav Resident at N.A.C. Road, P.O and District-Khagaria-851204

(CD 4) Bijay Kumar son of late-Garib Das resident at Hajipur Road Ward No-12, P.O. and District-Khagaria-851204

This is to notify that as per the Recovery Certificate issued in pursuance of orders passed by the Presiding Officer, DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL PATNA in OA/341/2021 an amount of Rs. 3072717.16 (Rupees Thirty Lakhs Seventy Two Thousands Seven Hundred Seventeen And Paise Sixteen Only) along with pendentilite and future interest @ 14 % Compound Interest Monthly w.e.f. 06/10/2021 till realization and costs of Rs 33000 (Rupees Thirty Three Thousands Only ) has become due against you (Jointly and severally/ Fully/Limited).

2. You are hereby directed to pay the above sum within 15 days of the receipts of the notice, failing which the recovery shall be made in accordance with the Recovery of Debt Due to Banks and Financial Institutions Act, 1993 and Rules there under.

3. You are hereby ordered to declare on an affidavit the particulars of yours assets on or before the next date of hearing.

4. You are hereby ordered to appear before the undersigned on 03/04/2024 at 10:30 a.m. for further proceedings.

5. In addition the sum aforesaid, you will also be liable to pay:

(a) Such interests as is payable for the period commencing immediately after this notice of the certificate / execution proceedings.

(b) All costs, charges and expenses incurred in respect of the service of this notice and warrants and other processes and all other proceedings taken for recovering the amount due.

Given under my hand and the seal of the Tribunal, on this date: 02/02/2024

Recovery Officer

DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL, PATNA

**GOVERNMENT OF NATIONAL CAPITAL TERRITORY OF DELHI****OFFICE OF THE****COMMISSIONER OF EXCISE,  
ENTT. & LUXURY TAX****L & N BLOCK, VIKAS BHAWAN,****I.P. ESTATE, NEW DELHI-110002****PUBLIC NOTICE**

The Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi has approved revision of the MRP (Maximum Retail Price) of Quarts (750 ml.), Pints (375 ml.) and Nips (180 ml.) of Spiced Country Liquor, to be sold through the Licensed Country Liquor Vends, in the National Capital Territory of Delhi for the year 2023-24 w.e.f. 09th February, 2024 (Friday) as per details given below:

Sizes	Quart (750 ml.)	Pint (375 ml.)	Nip (180 ml.)
MRP (in Rs.)	180	90	45

Sd/-

(KRISHNA MOHAN UPPU)  
COMMISSIONER (EXCISE)

DIP/Shabdhar Classified/0332/23-24



Government of Haryana

“केंद्र देश में किसानों के लिए खेती को आसान और लाभदायक बनाने के लिए प्रतिबद्ध है, कवरेज बढ़ा है, जोखिम कम हुआ है और देश के करोड़ों किसानों को फायदा हुआ है।”

- नरेन्द्र मोदी

## Haryana in the service of farmers

**Crop Damage Compensation increased**

From ₹10,000 to ₹15,000 per acre

₹11,000 crore compensated for crops damaged due to natural disaster



**LUCKNOW MUNICIPAL CORPORATION**  
T.N. Road, Lalbagh, Lucknow - 226001 (U.P.)  
Website : [www.lmc.up.nic.in](http://www.lmc.up.nic.in)

Tender Notice No.: D/979/EE/23-24 Dated: 08/02/24

**NOTICE INVITING TENDERS**Online bids are invited from bidders for the following work as listed below and will be received online on the website <https://etender.up.nic.in> as per time schedule (key dates) in the notice published on the above website.

SL.	NAME OF WORK	TENDER FEE RS.	EARNEST MONEY RS.	TIME PERIOD (YEARS)
1.	Selection of Contractor for "Door to Door collection, Transfer and Secondary Transportation of Municipal Solid waste, Road/Street Sweeping and transportation of Sweeping waste, Drain cleaning & transportation of silt, collection & transportation of Horticulture Waste and collection & storage of Domestic Hazardous Waste, in Zone 02, 05, 08 (Package 02) to designated processing facility/disposal site/ collection centres."	25,000/- (Rs. Twenty Five Thousand Only) + 18% GST	2,13,00,000/- (Rs. Two Crore Thirteen Lakhs only)	10 Years Extendable Upto 5 Years

**EVENT OF CALENDAR:**

SL.	EVENTS	DATE & TIME
1.	Online Tender purchase start date	09/02/2024 by 10:00 AM
2.	Online Tender purchase end date	24/02/2024 by 03:00 PM
3.	Online Bid Submission End date	24/02/2024 by 05:00 PM
4.	Submission of Pre-Bid queries by prospective bidders	till 15/02/2024 by 03:00 PM
5.	Hard copy of technical submission end date	24/02/2024 by 05:00 PM
6.	Technical Proposal open Date	24/02/2024 by 06:00 PM

Note : All information regarding Tenders and Documents can be seen/download from website [http://etender.up.nic.in](https://etender.up.nic.in). For any clarification Please contact Mobile no. 8909121015, 9451269458 or submit queries through email id: [envengmnko@gmail.com](mailto:envengmnko@gmail.com)

ENVIRONMENTAL ENGINEER

**New Okhla Industrial Development Authority**Main Administrative Building, Sector-6, Noida, G.B. Nagar, (U.P.) Website: [www.noidaauthorityonline.in](http://www.noidaauthorityonline.in)**E-TENDER NOTICE**E-Tender are invited from firms/contractors registered with UPLC Lucknow for the following jobs against which bids can be uploaded and same shall be opened/downloaded as per schedule mentioned. The details and conditions of all tenders are available on NOIDA Authority's official website: [www.noidaauthorityonline.in](http://www.noidaauthorityonline.in) & [http://etender.up.nic.in](https://etender.up.nic.in). Please ensure to see these websites for any changes/amendments & corrigendum etc.

(A)

- 43/S.M.(JAL)-I/E.T./2023-24, M/o W/s (Two Years Maintenance of 40 HP VT Motor, Starter, Transformer & Other Electrical work in Network Sector-106, Sector-132 & 135) Noida. Cost Rs. 38.91 Lacs
- 46/S.M.(JAL)-I/E.T./2023-24, M/o W/s (P/L Water Lines Gowshala and Nandishala in Sector-135), Noida. Cost Rs. 44.76 Lacs
- 50/S.M.(JAL)-I/E.T./2023-24, Strengthening of W/s (P/L RCC Slab for UGR-4 & Other misc. Civil work in UGR Compound, Sector-4), Noida. Cost Rs. 35.42 Lacs
- 47/DGM(Jal)/A.O.S.M.(JAL)-I/2023-24, M/o W/s (Two year Maintenance of PVC Water Line, Sluice Valve & Reflex valve in Network Village-Salarpur, Bhangel, Nagli Wazidpur, Sector-132 & 135) Noida-24. Cost Rs. 52.97 Lacs
- 48/S.M.(JAL)-I/2023-24, Internal/External Water & Sewer in Sector-162 (P/L Sewer & Water Line in front of Plot No.-15 & 16 in Sector-162) Noida. Cost Rs. 81.33 Lacs
- 49/S.M.(JAL)-I/2023-24, M/o W/s (Two Year Running Operation of UGR & Tubewells in Network Sector-132 & 135) Noida. Cost Rs. 84.94 Lacs

Which can be uploaded by date:- 22.02.2024 upto 5.00 PM. Pre-qualification shall be opened/downloaded on date: 23.02.2024 at 11.00 AM.

(B)

- 13/S.M.(JAL)-I/E.T./2023-24, M/o W/s (Two year S/F VT Pump, Tube shaft & R/o Bowl assly. at different Tubewells in Network Sector-14A to 16A, 14, 15, 16 and Sector-62), Noida. Cost Rs. 69.24 Lacs  
Which can be uploaded by date:- 15.02.2024 upto 5.00 PM. Pre-qualification shall be opened/downloaded on date: 16.02.2024 at 11.00 AM.

Dy. General Manager (Jal)  
NOIDA**CLEAN, GREEN, SAFE & SECURE NOIDA**

# The Indian **EXPRESS**

FOUNDED BY  
RAMNATH GOENKA

BECAUSE THE TRUTH INVOLVES US ALL

## GRAND BARGAIN 2.0

Protests by Karnataka and Kerala are driven by politics – they also point to concerns of fiscal federalism that need addressing

**O**NE STATE'S CHIEF minister hit the national capital's streets, along with his cabinet colleagues, against the Centre's alleged discrimination in devolution of tax revenues and non-release of drought relief funds. Another state's CM followed suit, having already moved the Supreme Court against the Centre imposing limits on its borrowing powers. The fact that both of them, Karnataka and Kerala, are Opposition-ruled and the timing of the protests, ahead of Lok Sabha elections, may make these seem purely political in nature. Nor have these states' own fiscally irresponsible actions helped. The ruling Congress in Karnataka should have thought twice before announcing its five assembly poll "guarantee" schemes, which are costing the state exchequer an additional Rs 52,000 crore per year. The Kerala government has, likewise, sought to circumvent its normal net borrowing ceiling, of 3 per cent of GDP fixed by the Centre, by resorting to off-budget loans raised by two state-owned entities.

The political motivations notwithstanding, there are genuine concerns with regard to both the letter and spirit of fiscal federalism that need addressing. To start with, the Centre accounts for more than 60 per cent of the gross tax revenues collected together with the states. On the other hand, the states have well over a 60 per cent share when it comes to total government spending. The disparity between revenue generation capacities and expenditure responsibilities imparts an inherent vertical fiscal imbalance. That imbalance would only have widened with the implementation of the goods and services tax (GST), which has replaced the value added tax and a host of other levies that were major sources of revenue for the states earlier. But the states accepted the apparent loss of fiscal sovereignty through a grand bargain that was a result of consensus building and addressing apprehensions of revenue loss, if any, from the new nationwide non-cascading indirect tax regime. The high point was the setting up of the GST Council, comprising the finance ministers of the Centre and all states, to decide on tax rates, exemptions and any regulatory changes.

A similar compact is required today in matters of tax devolution and other resource transfers, both vertical (Centre to states) and horizontal (among states). Karnataka, for instance, is justified in asking why its share in the divisible tax pool was reduced from 4.713 to 3.647 per cent between the 14th and 15th Finance Commission awards. The next commission should frame clear and transparent rules for distribution of the Centre's tax proceeds and grants-in-aid. As part of a Grand Bargain 2.0, the Centre must desist from levying non-shareable cesses and surcharges on taxes, just as states should be made to strictly adhere to deficit targets and borrowing limits.

## HOLDING THE LINE

RBI keeps interest rates unchanged. If inflation evolves along expected lines, it could open up space for rate cuts

**I**N LINE WITH expectations, the Monetary Policy Committee of the Reserve Bank of India voted in its February meeting to keep interest rates unchanged. The repo rate stands at 6.5 per cent. The committee also decided to remain focused on the withdrawal of accommodation. In his policy statement, RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das noted that "the job is not yet finished" and that policy must "continue to be actively disinflationary to align inflation to the target of 4 per cent on a durable basis".

In December, retail inflation, as measured by the consumer price index, had edged upwards to 5.69 per cent, up from 5.55 per cent the month before. However, this rise in inflation, driven by rising food prices, was not unexpected. On the other hand, core inflation, which excludes the more volatile food and fuel components, had dipped lower to 3.8 per cent in December. The central bank now expects inflation to trend lower to 5 per cent in the fourth quarter (January-March). For the next financial year (2024-25), assuming a normal monsoon, it expects inflation to moderate further to 4.5 per cent. However, the outlook is uncertain. As the RBI also notes, adverse weather events which could impact food prices, and geopolitical tensions and conflicts which could lead to supply chain disruptions, could heavily influence the trajectory of inflation. Governor Das also sounded a note of caution, saying that policy needs to be "vigilant about new supply shocks that may undo the progress made so far." On growth, the RBI Governor sounds optimistic, expecting the economic momentum to continue in the coming financial year (2024-25) as well. Das points to industrial activity "gaining steam", while the services sector "is expected to remain resilient". He sees rural demand continuing to gather pace, even as urban consumption remains strong, with investment activity also "gaining steam" on the back of a sustained push in government spending. Based on these trends, the central bank expects the Indian economy to grow at 7 per cent in 2024-25.

The monetary policy committee's decisions were, however, not unanimous. MPC member Jayanth Varma disagreed with other members of the committee on both interest rates and the policy stance. Varma, in fact, voted for reducing the repo rate by 25 basis points and for changing the policy stance from remaining focused on the withdrawal of accommodation to neutral. In the past as well, Varma has argued that monetary policy should be less restrictive. However, hostilities in the Red Sea and uncertainty regarding the trajectory of food prices are likely to have an outsized influence in the immediate term. If inflation evolves along expected lines over the coming months, it could open up space for the committee to change its policy stance and cut rates.

## CONNECT, DISCONNECT

Australia's new law prevents bosses from emailing and calling workers beyond working hours. It opens up possibilities

**T**HE CURIOUS THING about words is that they can change the very thing they are supposed to explain. Take "gig worker". The term conjures up a young millennial, or even an old Gen-Z chap, sitting in an artisanal (read over-priced) coffee shop engaged in a white-collar well-paying semi-creative profession – coding, designing, etc. This creature's time is her own. Now, take "unorganised sector labourer". A very different picture comes up – this person is the picture of, and often euphemism for, the exploited. The Closing Loopholes Bill, passed earlier this week by the Australian Parliament, makes it clear that the gig worker, like the labourer, needs protection.

Among the slew of provisions in the Bill, the ones around the right to disconnect and the path to formalisation for gig workers have received the most attention. The former allows workers not to take calls or answer emails on holidays or outside working hours. The logic is simple – being constantly "connected" and "on-call" is, in essence, unpaid overtime. Whether in office or not, work is work. The path to formalisation is a bit more complex. On the one hand, it ensures benefits and long-term security, and on the other, the flexibility that many people now prize may become a more scarce phenomenon. Australia's proposed law, if and when implemented, will put it in the company of countries in Europe that have allowed the right to disconnect. Beyond the nitty-gritty of the economics of the law, though, is the waning halo around the idea of the gig worker.

Yes, there is a minority, the so-called "digital nomads", who can use flexible work hours to their advantage. For many, if not most, though, the blurred line between work and non-work has meant the former creeps its way into the latter – without overtime pay. As more countries recognise that gig workers need protection, perhaps the 70-hour work-week will not be considered a virtue. In a disconnected utopia, workers won't check their emails. Just Instaram.

## THE EDITORIAL PAGE

### WORDLY WISE

BY WORKING FAITHFULLY EIGHT HOURS A DAY YOU  
MAY EVENTUALLY GET TO BE BOSS AND WORK  
TWELVE HOURS A DAY. — ROBERT FROST

# A Goldilocks phase

Monetary and fiscal policies have put in place conditions for steady growth, moderate inflation



SOUMYA KANTI GHOSH

WITHIN A WEEK, the interim Union budget and the monetary policy have put in place a framework for a Goldilocks phase of steady growth and moderate inflation for the Indian economy.

On Thursday, the monetary policy committee decided to maintain the status quo, keeping the policy repo rate at 6.5 per cent. The forecast for GDP growth in 2024-25 has been kept at 7 per cent, while for headline inflation it has been reduced in line with our expectations to 4.5 per cent. With inflation expected to fall meaningfully below 4 per cent after June, the first rate cut could be as early as August if not in June itself. The growth forecasts by the RBI, which seem conservative, and rightly so, have been trailing the official estimates for the last two years. However, they only validate the country's robust growth trajectory.

Among the development and regulatory policy changes, the RBI has extended the requirement of the Key Fact Statement to cover all retail and MSME loans and advances. This is designed to provide customers with a clear understanding of the actual annualised interest rate and the overall financial commitment associated with the loan. This move can be seen as a significant step towards empowering customers with comprehensive information, enabling them to make informed decisions about their borrowing.

The technology for authentication of payments has also received fresh attention. With innovations in technology, there is a need to look at a comprehensive framework for alternative authentication mechanisms. Accordingly, a principle-based "Framework for authentication of digital payment transactions" will be explored for the orderly development of this space.

Alongside, enhancing the robustness of the Aadhaar Enabled Payment System (AePS) – now being used by more than 37 crore users and 47 entities – and the adoption of a

principle-based framework for authentication of digital payment transactions will help in preventing digital frauds. The changes proposed in the Central Bank Digital Currency could help onboard people from fringe areas into the CBDC architecture thereby enabling its acceptability exponentially.

However, with credit demand outpacing deposit accretion, the onset of a Just in Time (JIT) mechanism that streamlines the release of government of India funds may anchor the floor of yield on advances, apart from strengthening short-term borrowings as market players are also resorting to non-deposit sources to satiate the rising demand for credit, even as the credit to deposit ratio is a short breath away from hitting 80.

This MPC meeting comes a few days after the interim Union budget firmly stepped away from crowd pleasing measures, and focused on the vision of a developed India in Amrit Kaal, by enabling every Indian to align with the ambitious, yet achievable goal through action-oriented collaborative works. It set the right tone by focusing on infrastructure development, innovation and connectivity leading towards a Viksit Bharat.

As per our estimates, in the interim budget, the overall allocation for capital expenditure is Rs 18.4 trillion (this takes into consideration the capex by central public sector enterprises and grants for the creation of capital). This is equivalent to 5.6 per cent of GDP and implies a growth of around 13 per cent. This sustained thrust on public sector investments will go a long way towards making India a \$5 trillion economy by 2027-28.

The fiscal consolidation path continues to be influenced by the exceptional deviation taken during the pandemic. The primary deficit is expected to correct by 80 basis points to 1.5 per cent of the GDP in FY25. In FY21 the primary deficit was more than 5 per cent of the GDP.

The revenue deficit has also moderated. Public debt as a percentage of the GDP has also reduced and is expected to decline by 90 basis points in FY25 from its level of 58.1 per cent in FY24. Thus the debt to GDP ratio is expected to move along a stable path.

The fiscal consolidation path continues to be influenced by the exceptional deviation taken during the pandemic. The primary deficit is expected to correct by 80 basis points to 1.5 per cent of the GDP in FY25. In FY21 the primary deficit was more than 5 per cent of the GDP. The revenue deficit has also moderated. Public debt as a percentage of

the GDP has also reduced and is expected to decline by 90 basis points in FY25 from its level of 58.1 per cent in FY24. Thus the debt to GDP ratio is expected to move along a stable path. There is also the possibility that if growth and inflation move along expected lines, the fiscal deficit will be lower than the 5.1 per cent target. Further, the market capitalisation of CPSEs is now at around Rs 40 trillion, with the government's stake at around Rs 27 trillion. Buoyant market conditions will create opportunities for disinvestment later.

We would also like to use this opportunity to address some concerns over the state of the rural economy. Take for instance the implications of significant improvements in physical (road/rail) infrastructure which ensure seamless last mile connectivity are changing rural demand and supply. A farmer can now travel long distances comfortably to buy (and sell) goods. These purchases/sales are more often captured under urban/metro area heads even though the goods are being primarily purchased by the rural populace. Thus, it is possible that in some cases the numbers reported for rural areas may not be an accurate reflection of rural demand.

The integration of cities, urban centres and their satellite nodes with surrounding areas and until now far flung areas on the back of the infra boom needs to be factored in carefully. Alongside, a closer look at the data on median wages of rural labourers during FY14-FY23 (November) clearly shows a rising trend. Median Wages are now closer to the average wages. This is in clear contrast to the FY05-FY14 period. Further, the audacious target of increasing the *lakhpatti didi* numbers through the 8.3 million plus self-help groups in the recent budget also bodes well for the rural economy.

The writer is Group Chief Economic Advisor, State Bank of India. Views are personal



AYESHA JALAL

HELD AGAINST THE backdrop of a systemic economic crisis, deepening political polarisation, and the grim aftermath of an unprecedented attack on the most powerful institution of state by a key political party on May 9, 2023, the 2024 election on February 8 was extremely important in determining Pakistan's immediate and future trajectory. While there is every reason to be concerned about charges of unfair treatment being meted out to one party – Imran Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) – accusations of this kind are not altogether new. All polls for the past 75 years except for 1970 and to some extent 2008 and 2013 have been mired in controversy and regrets about the absence of an even playing field for all contenders.

The handover of power from one civilian government to another in 2013 had been significant but could not be sustained. The role of the higher judiciary in overthrowing Nawaz Sharif with the backing of the military in 2017 pushed democracy off the rails once again. The 2018 elections that anointed Imran Khan as prime minister were choreographed by the establishment. The current elections are also being held under close coordination with non-elected institutions of the state that have been dominant in Pakistan since the 1950s. Yet, however compromised, the electoral process is necessary constitutionally and better than an outright military takeover and some new-fangled variant of martial rule.

Now that its decades-long project of grooming and installing Imran Khan and his party PTI into power in 2018 has failed miserably, the establishment – as the army high command is called – has to let parties that

## AT STAKE IN PAKISTAN

Challenges facing economy are daunting, will need bold structural reforms

There is no question that demographic changes could throw up surprises, especially if the turnout is high and women as well as youth come out to vote in large numbers. If they do, the PTI is expected to benefit. But with its electoral symbol taken away and several candidates claiming to represent the party in different constituencies, it remains to be seen how well it will actually perform.

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## FEBRUARY 9, 1984, FORTY YEARS AGO

### PUNJAB BANDH

BARRING A FEW scattered incidents in which more than 25 people got minor injuries, the one-day Punjab bandh sponsored by the Akali Dal went off peacefully. The bandh was total, except a few shops that were open in Patiala, where the police had to intervene to keep two groups of people separated and under control. Significantly, the state-wide bandh was by and large free from acts of arson.

### CENTRE-AKALI TALKS

THE GOVERNMENT IS expecting a favourable response from the Akalis to the

were demonised and persecuted at its best try their luck at the hustings. While some see the Pakistan Muslim League-N (PML-N) as the new favourites of the establishment, this is simply because there is no other party that can command enough votes to govern the country's biggest province, Punjab. This does not mean that other parties like the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) are not trying to take advantage of the PTI's predicament to surge ahead. But the PPP has hardly any presence in Punjab, which leaves the PML-N as the main contender against a PTI in complete disarray with its leader and top leadership languishing in jail on various charges, including treason.

The consensus is that given the multiple crises facing Pakistan today, the elections cannot be expected to be completely free and fair. But there is still hope that everything will be done to ensure that all contenders are given a chance to make their case to the electorate.

There is no question that demographic changes could throw up surprises, especially if the turnout is high and women as well as youth come out to vote in large numbers. If they do, the PTI is expected to benefit. But with its electoral symbol taken away and several candidates claiming to represent the party in different constituencies, it remains to be seen how well it will actually perform.

The PPP is unlikely to sway voters in Punjab as it has done precious little groundwork in Pakistan's largest province. So, despite a vigorous campaign by Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, who is contesting from a constituency in Lahore, the PPP's success will most likely be confined to Sindh even if it

picks up more seats in Punjab than in the 2013 and 2018 elections.

The challenges facing the national economy are daunting for any party and will require bold decisions so that structural reforms are instituted to stretch the unacceptably limited tax base, improve productivity and promote exports. Going by the past record, most in Punjab believe that the PML-N is best placed to manage the country's economy. But this is by no means the view in other provinces with the PTI holding its ground in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and the PPP in Sindh.

All parties make grandiose promises to voters during election campaigns based on some variant of welfarism, but are typically unable to carry them out once at the helm. While large promises are being heard everywhere, no one expects much to change and the best that is being hoped for is some modicum of political stability and judicious economic decision-making to pull the country out of the current quagmire.

All parties in the fray in Pakistan also claim to want to improve relations with India and the USA. But improved foreign relations depend on both sides making the necessary moves to restore trust and confidence. As things stand today, not much can be hoped by way of improved Indo-Pakistani relations.

As for US-Pakistan relations, Washington's tilt towards New Delhi is now too evident to give much hope to an incumbent government in Islamabad for any dramatic shift in relations to take place.

The writer is the Mary Richardson Professor of History at Tufts University



decision to hold a tripartite meeting on the Punjab problem. Invitations for the talks may be sent early next week after consultations with some of the opposition leaders. In any case, the talks are expected to take place before the commencement of the Parliament session on February 23.

### INDO-PAK & KASHMIR

THE MURDER OF the Birmingham-based Indian diplomat Ravindra Mhatre by a group calling itself member of the Kashmir Liberation Army (KLA) appears to be taking a new political turn which may have unpredictable repercussions in south Asian poli-

cies. The Guardian published an article with a background of the dispute between India and Pakistan over Kashmir, providing an oblique boost to the KLA and the JKLF.

### PM FOR PEACE PRIZE

PRIME MINISTER INDIRA Gandhi, Canadian Premier Pierre Trudeau and Italian President Sandro Pertini, are among the candidates for the 1984 Nobel Peace prize, the prize committee confirmed. Names of 75 candidates have been proposed for the prestigious prize which is due to be awarded in October. Last year's winner was Lech Walesa, leader of the outlawed Solidarity of Poland.

# Ram's bell of justice

What we can learn from tribal communities that have a consciousness which evaluates gods — worship them and question their divinity



DEVANURA MAHADEVA

"EVALUATION OF GODS and A Muslim Deity named Dr Khan" is a small, heartwarming piece of writing by Panju Gangoli that has completely captured me. In hundreds of tribal communities across Bastar district in Chhattisgarh, there is a religiosity that transcends the boundaries of caste and religion and a consciousness that evaluates gods — a finding that has struck me like a revelation that can light up our world.

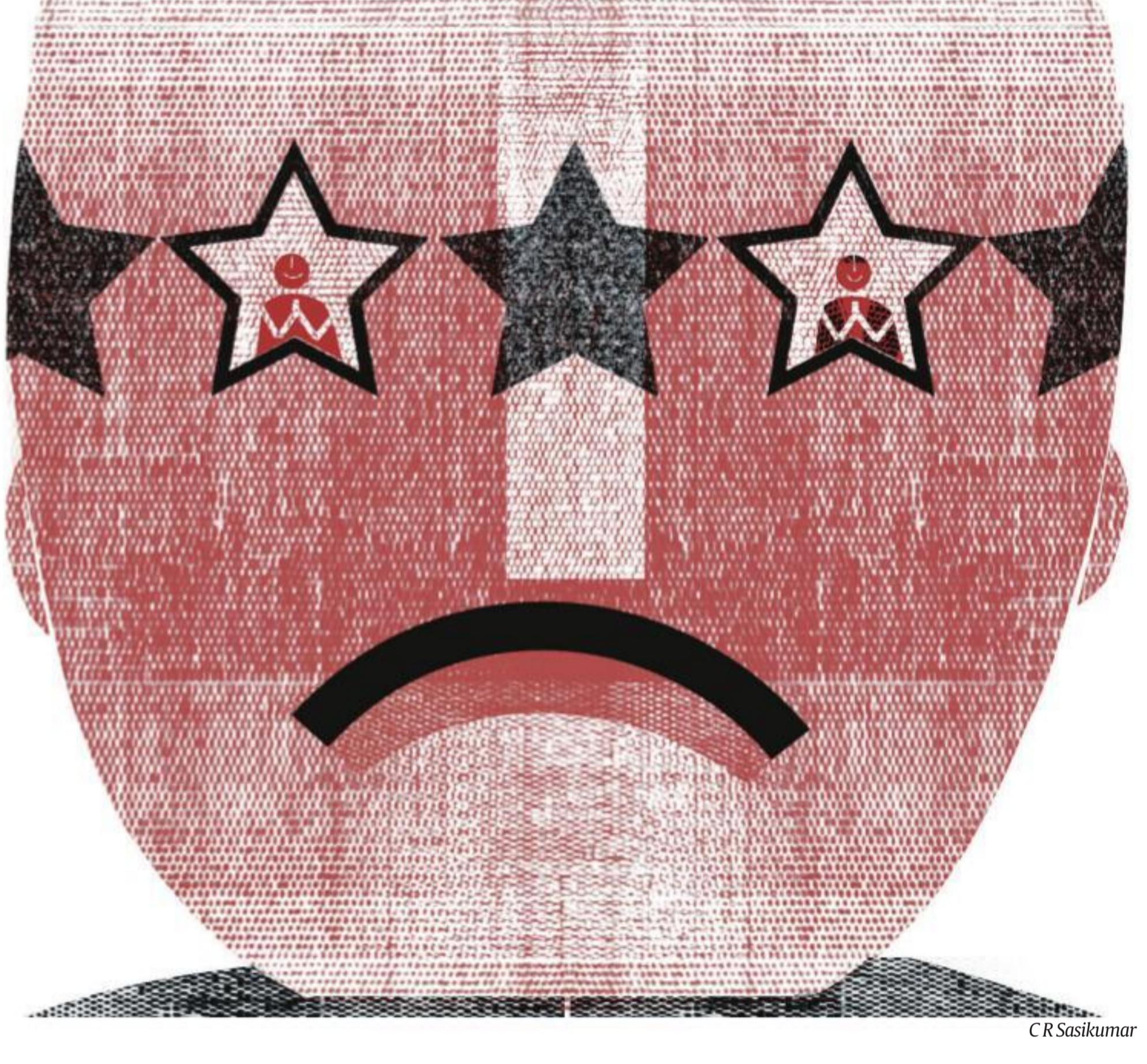
The story goes like this: Bangaramdevi is a prominent God among Bastar district's various tribal communities. Once a year, a festival named "Bhado Jatra" is conducted here. On that day, tribal communities from over 240 villages carry their gods along and place them under Bangaramdevi's feet. In the presence of Bangaramdevi, the priests examine these gods. Those gods who did not address and solve the problems of their devotees over the previous year are stripped of their divinity. Without divine power, they are mere figurines made of wood and stone, which are then banished to the backyard of Bangaramdevi's temple and end up in a heap in some corner. Then they continue to shrivel up under the sun, bearing the brunt of rain and cold alike, and can often be found stuck in some bushes or leaning against the roots of an old tree.

There's another interesting thing to note here: On the top of Bastar's Keshkal hill, there's a small temple where a terracotta stage can be found. On this stage, a black wooden piece shaped like a Shivalinga has been installed. An earthen lamp is lit next to it. The temple doors are opened during the "Surongal" fair and thousands of people from nearby tribes come to seek the *darshana* of God. There is also a belief that even other gods visit this God. The name of this deity is Dr Khan.

Around 200 years ago, when Bastar was afflicted with diseases like cholera and smallpox, a Muslim man named Dr Khan arrived here and saved many people from the clutches of death. He stayed behind and continued to serve the people of the region. Following his death, the local tribes elevated him to the status of a God and started worshipping him. All this and more can be found here. In our own land.

But do we have the consciousness of evaluating our gods? Let alone the gods, we don't even evaluate our representatives whom we elected. So, how can we expect our problems to be addressed and solved? Tribal communities, which are essentially our earthly ancestors, do possess this consciousness of examining the gods and discarding those they deem useless. But we who are the progeny of the same Adivasis have turned ourselves into superstitious souls. Since the connection to our Adivasi roots has been severed, we as a populace are no longer vigilant and are unable to preserve the best practices of our ancestors that are still relevant.

We need to be alert: The 2024 Lok Sabha elections are just around the corner. We need to cultivate the consciousness of evaluation



CR Sasi Kumar

in the upcoming election. The health of our democracy, the judiciary, and the sovereignty of our independent organisations, the weakening of the federal structure by the ruling Centre, social justice, women's reservation, Swaminathan report, and education, health, unemployment — all these issues need to be evaluated. We need to open our eyes to look at how our precious natural resources are being used, the toll that is paid by common people due to inflation and price rise, and how corporates close to power unduly benefit.

This is what we have to do next — when parties and candidates contesting the upcoming election approach us for votes, we need to tell them: "We will evaluate your words as well as your actions. We won't tolerate your lies any more." If we can give such a warning, the nation can move forward, however small those steps may be.

We need to free ourselves from the influence of fraudulent weapons like *Sammohanastra* (weapon of collective hypnosis), *Dweshashtra* (weapon of hatred), *Asahanastra* (weapon of intolerance), *Bhramashastra* (weapon of illusion) which are being used by the people in power to lull us into submission so that we are unperturbed by real issues.

First, we need to identify this veil of illusion. For example, "Hindutva" is triumphing over "Hindu". Is this the Hindutva of the *Chaturvarna* system? Even the idea of "Sanatana" is being spread now. But what is *Sanatana*, anyway? We need to inculcate hu-

This is what we have to do next — when parties and candidates contesting the upcoming election approach us for votes, we need to tell them: 'We will evaluate your words as well as your actions. We won't tolerate your lies any more.' If we can give such a warning, the nation can move forward, however small those steps may be.

mane and healthier values of Sanatana and relieve ourselves from its flawed ones.

Compassion, patience, love, coexistence, equal justice, the adage "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you" and more light our paths even today. They are good *Sanatana* values. Along with them, *Chaturvarna* system, caste discrimination, intolerance, hatred too are *Sanatana* values that exist even today. But these are the evil values that only light the fire and lead to conflagration. Today, there is a struggle between these good and evil *Sanatana* values. I believe India's collective consciousness possesses the essence to pull us back from the brink. What we need is the wisdom of farmers who weed their land for the health of their crops.

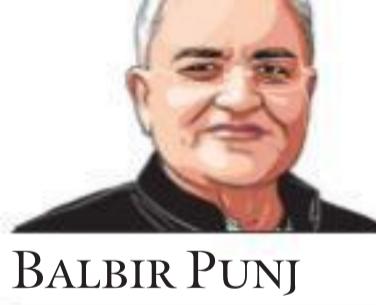
India is celebrating the inauguration of Ayodhya's Ram Mandir. India should celebrate Ram's commitment to *vachanapadane*, honouring the promises made. It is said that "A Bell of Justice" was hung outside Ram's palace. One day, a horse is found ringing the bell and Ram delivers justice to this hungry horse. Let a bell of justice be installed in Ayodhya where all struggling living beings can ring it. But will the *Delhi Darbar* listen?

*Mahadeva, a Kannada writer, is a pioneer of the Dalit movement in Karnataka. He is a member of many social and political movements*

*Translation from the original Kannada by Amulya B*

## Colonial habits die hard

Those who oppose Ayodhya movement suffer from Stockholm Syndrome



BALBIR PUNJ

PRATAP BHANU Mehta is correct when he says that the *pran pratishtha* at Ayodhya on January 22 is a "watershed moment" ("January 22", IE, January 22). The moment is a turning point in India's history — an important milestone in the decolonisation of India. Mehta, however, adds, "The *pran pratishtha*, following the foundation stone of Ayodhya, marks the consecration of Hinduism as a political religion, pure and simple."

This part of Mehta's statement is half-true, bordering on sophistry. If the rebuilding of the temple at Ram Janmabhoomi in Ayodhya is a political statement, so was its demolition by an Islamic invader and the opposition to its reconstruction, spanning over seven decades after independence.

The Babri structure was never a place of worship — it was raised to humiliate the vanquished Hindus after razing a temple that was especially reverent to them. Arnold Toynbee, one of the great historians of the past century, while delivering the Azad Memorial Lecture in February 1960, said, "In the course of the first Russian occupation of Warsaw (1614–1915), the Russians had built an Eastern Orthodox Christian Cathedral on this central spot in the city that had been the capital of the once independent Roman Catholic Christian country, Poland. The Russians had done this to give the Poles a continuous ocular demonstration that the Russians were now their masters. After the re-establishment of Poland's independence in 1918, the Poles pulled this cathedral down. The demolition had been completed

just before the date of my visit. I do not greatly blame the Polish Government for having pulled down that Russian Church. The purpose for which the Russians had built it had been not religious but political, and the purpose had also been intentionally offensive."

Referring to mosques at Kashi, Mathura and Ayodhya, Toynbee said, "Aurangzeb's purpose in building those three Mosques was the same intentionally offensive political purpose that moved the Russians to build their Orthodox Cathedral in the city centre at Warsaw. Those three mosques were intended to signify that an Islamic Government was reigning supreme, even over Hinduism's holiest of holy places."

Meha talks about Gandhi, "who rejected the logic of retaliation". Gandhiji was asked how to deal with a situation when a mosque is forcibly built on someone else's land. He dealt with the vexed issue in *Young India* on February 5, 1925. Here are excerpts of Gandhiji's response, "The question of mosques built on another's land without his permission is incredibly simple. If A is in possession of his land and someone comes to build some things on it, be it even a mosque, A has the right at the first opportunity of pulling down the structure. Any building of the shape of a mosque is not a mosque. A building to be a mosque must be duly consecrated. A building put up on another's land without his permission is pure robbery. Robbery cannot be consecrated... If A has not the will or the capacity to destroy the building miscalled mosque, he

has the right of going to a law court to have the building pulled down. Law courts are forbidden to convince non-co-operators but not to those who require such conviction."

Post-independence, the Ram Janmabhoomi movement was neither a Hindu-Muslim problem nor a political issue. It was an effort by civil society in a free India to obliterate a symbol of colonisation and reclaim Lord Ram's birthplace. The cast of the high voltage drama played out in Ayodhya during 1949–50 was a smorgasbord of characters belonging to divergent backgrounds and disparate professions. KK Nair and Guru Datt Singh were bureaucrats with Nair belonging to the coveted ICS. Ramchandra Paramhans and Digvijay Singh were mahants and Hindu Mahasabha leaders. Abhiram Das was a naga bairagi. Baba Raghav Das was a local Congress MLA, a Gandhian of impeccable credentials. Bhagwan Sahai, the chief secretary of the province, Premier Govind Ballabh Pant, a well-respected freedom fighter, and Purushottam Das Tandon, another freedom fighter, to name a few were all silent supporters of the bloodless revolution in Ayodhya.

Even at that time, there were a few die-hard communists (read left-liberalists) and colonial remnants who were alarmed by what was happening in Ayodhya — as they are now. Such people are victims of the "Stockholm Syndrome", wallowing in the psyche of servitude and reminiscing about the times when the locals could be trampled upon in the name of rules and regulations imposed by an op-

pressive regime. The then Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, provided support and leadership to such desperate elements. As a result, the temple reconstruction was delayed by over seven decades and this delay cost the country immensely in terms of human lives, destruction of private and public property and the global perception of India.

Nehru's antipathy was not limited to Somnath or the Ram temple in Ayodhya; it extended to all Hindu temples as such. Delivering his inaugural address at a seminar on architecture in Delhi in 1959, he said:

"Some of the temples of the South, however, repel me in spite of their beauty. I just can't stand them. Why? I do not know. I cannot explain that, but they are oppressive, they suppress my spirit. They do not allow me to rise, they keep me down..." Those inspired by the "Nehruvian consensus" are the ones who opposed the Janmabhoomi movement; and now find it difficult to reconcile with the reconstruction of the Ram temple in Ayodhya.

Logically, the debate on the issue should have ended on November 9, 2019, when a five-member constitutional bench of the Supreme Court in a unanimous verdict put paid to all the arguments that had been used to denigrate the Ram Janmabhoomi movement. But old habits die hard. The colonised minds outlive the colonisers.

*Punj is the author of the recently published Tryst with Ayodhya: Decolonisation of India*

## WHAT THE OTHERS SAY

"The state must take every measure to ensure citizens' security today... Given that they are being held after considerable delay, it is important that voters are able to participate freely in these elections, which must be concluded to the public's satisfaction. History awaits our people's verdict."

—DAWN, PAKISTAN

## An ethical minefield

Data transparency, a fundamental tenet of scientific discovery, is conspicuous by its absence in trials of Neuralink's brain-computer interface



SIMANTINI GHOSH

sible to find out anything about the conditions under which it was conducted. The only clues we have are the basic information disclosed in the brochure. The inclusion criteria specify adult patients with quadriplegia (paralysis or loss of function in all four limbs) from ALS or spinal cord injury without much improvement up to a year post-injury, and those who have an available full-time reliable caregiver. The trial will preclude individuals who have other implants (such as pacemakers or electrodes for deep brain stimulation) as well as people whose conditions need procedures such as regular MRI scans or Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation (TMS). This is likely to ensure no damage due to embedded electrodes being subjected to a high-powered magnetic field. Also excluded are individuals with a history of seizures. This is related to something that is theoretically plausible to predict — the brain often responds to foreign objects by encapsulating in a layer of certain glial cells, and these "glial scars" are notoriously epileptogenic.

However minute, the threading of up to 1,024 recording electrodes in the brain will lead to some form of micro-injuries in the brain. Neuralink will need to convince the scientific community that these implants do not enhance the likelihood of microbleeds or strokes or any other form of injuries in the brain. Such microscopic injuries are often not picked up by diagnostic modalities yet they accumulate over time and predispose individuals to serious neurological conditions such as neurodegeneration. The study has to prove that the recording capacity of the electrodes is maintained consistently — this is a problem with existing brain-computer interfaces. The efficiency of the recording decays over time. The PRIME study calls for 18 months of primary observation followed by periodic follow-ups up to five years. Hopefully, they will have designed the study to collect enough safety data during this period.

A primary ethical concern is data ownership. There is no clarity on who the recorded data belongs to, which will be decoded to interpret the "intentions" of a person. Embedding proprietary technology enabling data recording and routing it through a proprietary appraises a crucial question: Will the subjects retain ownership of this recorded data? Will Neuralink have data ownership? If yes, what can they technically do with this ownership? "intend to carry out an action" on behalf of a third party? In the current situation, it is easy to overlook the ramifications of this issue because the population on which the trial is being conducted is clinically disabled and there is direct benefit to them. However, Neuralink's ambition and vision extend beyond clinical use to enhance human cognition and possibilities. Keeping that in mind, the ethics of data ownership is non-trivial and extremely important to settle at the outset. Any wrong precedent here can endanger human agency and privacy.

Neuralink has previously refused National Institute of Health funding to keep its patented technology secure — federally-funded research comes with more oversight, data sharing and transparency requirements. While most academia-sponsored clinical trials that happen through major university hospitals in the US need to be registered, Neuralink's PRIME (Precise Robotically Implanted Brain-Computer Interface) study is not. The device did receive FDA approval — that ideally should provide ironclad oversight to maximise patient safety. However, the FDA has fallen short of that task in the past. Ultimately, the gold standards of replicability and reliability in science tie back to the very thing that has been absent from the very beginning — transparent data. Because the trial was unregistered, it is virtually impossible to interpret the results.

*The writer is assistant professor, psychology, Ashoka University. Views are personal*

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### PM ON THE FLOOR

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'The gloves are off' (IE, February 8). PM Modi's speeches revealed his strategic analysis of the future of India aimed at decimating the Congress party and challenging regional opposition parties. He quoted Jawaharlal Nehru and other Congress party leaders to show that the country was led by a party that was anti-poor. He also mentioned that the nation has been gaining global recognition under his leadership and then enumerated the roadmap for the future in which the poor, youth, women and farmers will have a better quality of life.

Y G Chouksey, Pune

### AFFORDABLE CARE

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'Taking cancer on' (IE, February 8). The editorial highlights the promising advancements in homegrown cancer therapy, particularly CAR T-cell therapy in India. While these innovations offer hope for effective treatment with reduced side effects, the editorial emphasises the critical need to address affordability issues. Despite lower costs compared to western treatments, homegrown therapy remains financially out of reach for many in India, exacerbating the growing cancer burden. Urgent action is required to ensure equitable access, including efforts to reduce treatment costs and increase investment in cancer research and infrastructure.

Ambi Dey, Bangalore

### OUR STAR BOWLER

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'Bumrah days' (IE, February 8). Whether he is ICC's number one ranked bowler or not, he belongs to a different league altogether. Adjectives fail to describe his true genius. In the current India-England series, where spinners are supposed to lead the wickets chart, it is Bumrah who has created havoc in the minds of Babzar batsmen and that is his sheer class. Since IPL is just around the corner, followed by T20 World Cup, he is to be used judiciously.

Bal Govind, Noida

THIS REFERS TO the article, 'Finding harmony' (IE, February 8). The origins of East-West fusion music can be attributed to Anand Shankar, nephew of sitar maestro Pt. Ravi Shankar. His 1970 fusion album substituted the sitar for the guitar for rock music covers like 'Jumpin' Jack Flash by The Rolling Stones. The Beatles had also recorded 'Within You Without You' and 'Lucy in the Sky With Diamonds' from Sgt. Pepper's in 1967 using the sitar, tabla and tanpura. Against the backdrop of the recent Grammy to Shakti, its original band member Zakir Hussain won yet another award for Indo-Western jazz number 'Pashto' with master flautist Hariprasad Chaurasia's nephew Rakesh playing the flute. For Indians and fusion global music, this is truly the moment.

Raja Bandopadhyay, Vadodara

## In-law dead, Bilkis Bano case convict out on parole a fortnight after surrender

**ADITI RAJA & SOHINI GHOSH**  
VADODARA, AHMEDABAD,  
FEBRUARY 8

A LITTLE over a fortnight after 11 convicts in the Bilkis Bano gangrape case surrendered at the Godhra sub-jail on January 21—in line with the stipulated two-week deadline set by the Supreme Court (SC)—one of the convicts, Pradip Modhiya, returned to his native village of Randhikpur in Dahod district on Wednesday on a five-day parole granted by the Gujarat High Court following the death of his father-in-law.

The court of Justice M R Mengdey on February 5 allowed Modhiya parole from February 7 to 11. In his plea, moved on January 31, Modhiya had sought 30-day parole due to his father-in-law's death. The prosecution had pointed to the HC that as per jail records, Modhiya had "reported back on time" when he was last released on parole and that his conduct in jail is also "reported to be good".

On Thursday morning, Modhiya was seen running errands in the Randhikpur market by local residents. A villager said, "His father-in-law passed away in the last week of January at Limdi, about 32 km from Randhikpur. He had arrived in the village late Wednesday and stepped out on Thursday."

Speaking to The Indian Express, Deputy Superintendent of Police Vishakha Jain from Limkhera in Dahod said, "The HC has granted parole to the convict and he has returned to his village for five days. As per his parole conditions, he is not required to report

to the Randhikpur police station. The district police has no role to perform during the parole period. He is expected to return on his own to jail."

According to details pertaining to the parole and furlough granted to the 11 convicts in the Bilkis Bano case—submitted by the state government to the SC in an affidavit in October 2022—Modhiya has been let out on parole for 1,041 and on furlough for another 223 days while he was serving his life sentence in the case since January 2008.

The affidavit also recorded that of the 19 instances when he was let off on parole, he had surrendered late by a day on three occasions.

Modhiya and 10 other life term convicts in the Bilkis Bano case had surrendered at Godhra sub-jail shortly before midnight on January 21, after the SC on January 8 annulled the remission and premature release granted to them by the Gujarat government on August 15, 2022, vide an order dated August 10, 2022.

The Gujarat government had released the convicts as per its 1992 remission policy, based on a May 2022 SC order in a petition filed by one of the convicts, Radheshyam Shah. Bano had challenged the state government's decision before the SC.

The 11 convicts—Radheshyam Shah, Jaswant Nai, Govind Nai, Kesar Vohania, Baka Vohania, Raju Soni, Ramesh Chandana, Shailesh Bhatt, Bipin Joshi, Mitesh Bhatt and Pradip Modhiya—had arrived from Singwadi in Dahod district to the Godhra sub-jail in Panchmahal in the last hour of their stipulated time awarded by SC.

### THREATS OF 'POACHING', SPEAKER YET TO RESIGN

## Political mind games continue ahead of Bihar trust vote

**SANTOSH SINGH**  
PATNA, FEBRUARY 8

WITH DAYS to go for the Bihar trust vote on February 12, the NDA government led by Nitish Kumar and the Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) are engaged in mind games. Speaker Awadh Bihari Choudhary has yet to step down from his position, with the RJD saying that the Nitish government is "precariously placed" and hinting at more changes in political equations in the state. The BJP, meanwhile, has warned of "stern action" if horse-trading is attempted.

An RJD leader told *The Indian Express*, "It is always safe to have our Speaker in a situation when the Nitish government is precariously placed. The Hindustani Awami Morcha (Secular), which has been supporting the government, looks non-committal.

Some JD(U) MLAs also look upset with Nitish changing sides."

The Mahagathbandhan has 114 MLAs in the 243-member Assembly, eight short of a simple majority. Even if Jitan Ram Manjhi's Hindustani Awami Morcha backs it, the Opposition alliance will be four short of the majority mark. The NDA has the support of 128 MLAs, including Manjhi's party and one Independent MLA.

The other scenario in which the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government can fall is if legislators in the ruling alliance break ranks. Deputy CM Samrat Choudhary of the BJP on Thursday said, "The NDA government will comfortably win the trust vote. It is the Opposition that needs to worry about keeping its flock together." On Tuesday, Samrat Choudhary had warned the RJD of any "stern action", saying, "Lalu

Kelvani, Anil Singh Patel and others

should know I am well aware of his party's vulnerability to a split, though the BJP does not believe in such tactics."

About the Speaker, he said, "It is only a matter of time before the Speaker, against whom all NDA MLAs have moved a no-confidence motion, is replaced. Either he will resign or face the ignominy of being voted out in the House where a majority of members do not have faith in him."

Prasad should know I am well aware of his party's vulnerability to a split, though the BJP does not believe in such tactics."

About the Speaker, he said, "It

### Chhattisgarh: 12-year-old girl dies by suicide, teacher held

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
RAIPUR, FEBRUARY 8

HOURS AFTER being pulled up by a schoolteacher for bunking the last period in school, a 12-year-old girl died by suicide in Ambikapur city in Chhattisgarh's Surguja region on Tuesday.

On Wednesday, based on her suicide note, the police arrested the teacher on charges of abetment to suicide.

The minor studied in a co-ed convent school in Ambikapur city. On Tuesday around 2.30 pm, the girl and her two friends bunked the last period.

The 45-year-old accused teacher, who is also the disciplinary in-charge, got to know about the girls not attending the last class and took disciplinary action by seizing their identity cards. "The girl got frightened that her parents would be asked to come to school," said a police officer.

According to the police, the girl told her mother she was not feeling well and went to her room. Around 9.30 pm when she did not respond to phone calls, her mother went to check on her and found the door locked from inside. On breaking the door, the girl was found dead.

"An FIR has been registered under section 305 of the IPC and the teacher has been arrested. She is in judicial custody," said Ambikapur city SP Smruthik Rajanala.

**'TIRED OF WAITING' FOR SEAT-SHARING DEAL**  
**AAP announces 3 candidates for Lok Sabha polls in Assam**

**SUKRITA BARUAH**  
GUWAHATI, FEBRUARY 8

SAYING IT is "tired of talking" about seat-sharing with alliance partners, the Aam Aadmi Party's central leadership on Thursday announced candidates for three out of Assam's 14 Lok Sabha seats. At the same time, the party insisted that it is "strongly" with the Opposition INDIA bloc.

AAP has not yet announced any candidates from either Delhi or Punjab, states where the party is in power.

The party, which has previously not contested any parliamentary or Assembly elections in Assam, is part of the INDIA bloc nationally and is also one of 15 parties in the United Opposition Forum alliance in Assam.

The United Opposition Forum had been stitched together even before the INDIA bloc was launched, and it had announced that it would field consensus candidates to all 14 Lok Sabha seats in the state. None of the other parties in the alliance—Congress, TMC, RJD, CPI(M), CPI, and regional parties like Akhil

Gogoi's Rajor Dal and Lurinjyoti Gogoi's Assam Jatiya Parishad—have announced candidates in the state.

Of the 14 current MPs from Assam, nine are from the BJP, three are from Congress, one is from the All India United Democratic Front, and one is an Independent.

On Thursday, AAP's national general secretary (organisation) Sandeep Pathak made an official announcement declaring its state president Bhaben Choudhury as its Guwahati candidate, state vice-president Manoj Dhanowar as its Dibrugarh candidate, and state organising secretary Rishiraj Kaundinya as Sonitpur candidate. Having claimed these three seats through its announcement, the party sought to appear to leave the ball in its alliance partners' court, saying that it hoped the INDIA alliance would give these seats to AAP.

"We have quite little time left for Lok Sabha elections... That's why AAP is announcing three candidates from Assam for the Lok Sabha elections..." Pathak said.

## BJP earned more than Rs 2K crore in 2022-23

23% more than previous fiscal and five times as much as Congress

**DAMINI NATH**  
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 8

THE BJP's income in 2022-2023 increased by around 23% from the previous year, with the party earning Rs 2,360.84 crore, which was five times as much as the Congress's income, according to the party's annual audit report submitted to the Election Commission of India.

In 2022-2023, the BJP spent Rs 1,361.68 crore, 80% of which was on "election expenses" (Rs 1,092.15 crore), as per the annual report published by the ECI on Thursday. Out of that, the BJP spent the most on advertisements (Rs 432.14 crore).

In keeping with the previous year's trends, a large portion of the party's income came from electoral bonds. In fact, 61% (Rs 1,294.14 crore) of the income from voluntary contributions (Rs 2,120.06 crore) was in the form of anonymous electoral bonds, the party's annual report shows. The

party closed out the financial year with cash and cash equivalents of Rs 5,424.71 crore to its name, up from Rs 4,456.18 crore in 2021-2022. In 2022-2023, electoral bonds worth Rs 2,800.36 crore in total were sold by State Bank of India, as per an RTI reply by SBI to *The Indian Express*. The BJP's declaration shows the party received 46% of the total amount of EBS sold that year.

During an interaction at Vivekananda International Foundation in Delhi, Mahmud said: "Fencing the India-Myanmar border would be good for India and the region as I think there is insurgency (flowing) from Myanmar. In recent weeks, hundreds of people fled from Myanmar to India and Bangladesh. That is why the Indian government decided to go for it (fence the border)."

Later, in another interaction with the media at the Foreign Correspondents' Club of South Asia, he said: "We have discussed this issue and I think we should work together on it because it's a common problem." Mahmud said 1.2 million "forcibly displaced" Rohingya refugees was a "burden" on Bangladesh and sought India's assistance for their repatriation to Myanmar.

He said the refugees are creating environmental and security problems besides other difficulties for Bangladesh.

## India's decision to fence border with Myanmar good for region, says Bangladesh

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 8

CALLING INDIA'S decision to fence its borders with Myanmar a "good move", Bangladesh Foreign Minister Hasan Mahmud on Thursday said India and Bangladesh were facing the same problem of insurgency and that they should work together.

During an interaction at Vivekananda International Foundation in Delhi, Mahmud said: "Fencing the India-Myanmar border would be good for India and the region as I think there is insurgency (flowing) from Myanmar. In recent weeks, hundreds of people fled from Myanmar to India and Bangladesh. That is why the Indian government decided to go for it (fence the border)."

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The accused person falsely boasted about his connection with an ED officer to threaten the victims. To rule out any connection of ED personnel with the said case, the agency checked multiple CCTV footage of the places where the alleged offence took place.

Police sources said that Romi is one of the top "laissez agents" and has close links to some politicians and government officials.

## Sena UBT ex-corporator shot dead on Facebook live; accused kills himself

**VIJAY KUMAR YADAV & VALLABH OZARKAR**  
Mumbai, February 8



Abhishek Ghosalkar and Mauris Noronha

ABHISHEK GHOSALKAR, 41, former corporator of Shiv Sena (UBT) and son of party's former MLA Vinod Ghosalkar, was shot dead in Borivali, in suburban Mumbai on Thursday evening during a Facebook live, allegedly by his old rival Mauris Noronha, 49, who later shot himself fatally.

Abhishek and Mauris, a businessman who resides in Borivali, had recently patched up and were at the Facebook live together.

The incident comes a week after the Thane shooting incident, where Ganpat Gaikwad, BJP MLA

from Kalyan (E), was shot at Shiv Sena Eknath Shinde group functionary Mahesh Gaikwad inside a police station in Ulhasnagar.

Soon after he was shot at on Thursday, Abhishek was rushed to nearby Karuna Hospital, where he died during the treatment.

A senior IPS officer on condi-

tion of anonymity said, "Both Abhishek and Mauris succumbed to their injuries. Abhishek's body will be taken to Sir JJ Hospital for postmortem, while Mauris' body will be taken to Cooper Hospital. We will share more details later."

As the two were on Facebook live when the incident took place, the video of the incident went viral and a total five bullets were heard to have been fired at Abhishek.

In the four-minute 26-second video of the live video session, the two were seen talking comfortably and telling their audience that they have resolved all their past disputes and were in good terms. "Today we have decided to come together and unite. We have

Sanjay Raut said, "There is a rule of gangsters in Maharashtra. The chief minister and his people meet goons everyday and induct them into their party. The home minister has disappeared and the state is in the hands of gangsters. That is why there is no fear of law and police are left to serve the Shinde gang (faction)."

Shiv Sena (UBT) MLA and leader Aaditya Thackeray questioned the law and order situation. "There is a government of goons in the state. There is no law and order in the state. First the firing took place in Kalyan and now in Mumbai," Aaditya said.

Sources said that while Abhishek was an ex-corporator, Mauris, too, had political ambitions and was often seen with political leaders.

### JHARKHAND

## 'Did Raj Bhavan ask him to resign?': Governor denies his role in Soren's arrest

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
RANCHI, FEBRUARY 8

JHARKHAND GOVERNOR C P Radhakrishnan on Thursday denied former chief minister Hemant Soren's allegation that he had played a role in Soren's arrest in an alleged money-laundering case on January 31.

The Governor also denied claims that he wanted to impose President's rule in the state.

Hemant Soren had stepped down as CM, and picked Champai Soren to succeed him to the post, just before his arrest by the Enforcement Directorate in connection with a "huge racket of illegal change of ownership of land by the mafia". Despite his arrest, Hemant was allowed to take part in the new government's floor test in the Assembly on February 5, during which he alleged that Raj Bhavan was involved in his arrest.

"It was a very peculiar situation, and that is why I had asked for legal advice. A sitting CM was absconding, as per media reports. And the next day, he was arrested. However, as soon as I received the advice, I asked Champai Soren to come by midnight... We never asked him to prove majority in the next 24-48 hours, but we gave 10 days' time... Every democratic norm was followed," Radhakrishnan said.

"We were getting a lot of calls on (Hemant Soren's) resignation. We also received one or two calls from people saying they do not support the new government formation... Even then, we extended our invitation to Champai Soren... So, where is the question of imposing President's Rule? Writing news articles about the imposition of President's rule without verification gives a wrong signal to the people, and it makes a mockery of everything," he said.

"We have been raising this issue regularly with them. We continue to call on Canada to take effective measures to address our core concerns," he said.

**Bangladesh Foreign Minister Hasan Mahmud**

**India's decision to fence border with Myanmar good for region, says Bangladesh**

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 8

CALLING INDIA'S decision to fence its borders with Myanmar a "good move", Bangladesh Foreign Minister Hasan Mahmud on Thursday said India and Bangladesh were facing the same problem of insurgency and that they should work together.

During an interaction at Vivekananda International Foundation in Delhi, Mahmud said: "Fencing the India-Myanmar border would be good for India and the region as I think there is insurgency (flowing) from Myanmar. In recent weeks, hundreds of people fled from Myanmar to India and Bangladesh. That is why the Indian government decided to go for it (fence the border)."

Later, in another interaction with the media at the Foreign Correspondents' Club of South Asia, he said: "We have discussed this issue and I think we should work together on it because it's a common problem."

Mahmud said 1.2 million "forcibly displaced" Rohingya refugees was a "burden" on Bangladesh and sought India's assistance for their repatriation to Myanmar.

He said the refugees are creating environmental and security problems besides other difficulties for Bangladesh.

The accused person falsely boasted about his connection with an ED officer to threaten the victims. To rule out any connection of ED personnel with the said case, the agency checked multiple CCTV footage of the places where the alleged offence took place.

Police sources said that Romi is one of the top "laissez agents" and has close links to some politicians and government officials.

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GOLD

₹63,300



USD RATE

₹82.96



OIL

\$79.28



SILVER

₹74,600

Note: Gold, silver rates at Delhi spot market, gold per 10g, silver per 1 kg; Crude oil (Indian basket) as of February 7

International market data till 1900 IST

# RBI targets inflation at 4% for sustainable economic growth

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU  
MUMBAI, FEBRUARY 8

RESERVE BANK Governor Shaktikanta Das on Thursday emphasised on achieving the four-per cent inflation target as stable and low inflation at four per cent for providing the necessary bedrock for sustainable growth. "Headline inflation moderated to an average of 5.5 per cent during April-December 2023 from 6.7 per cent during 2022-23. Food price inflation, however, continued to impart considerable volatility to the inflation trajectory," he said while unveiling the monetary policy review.

"In contrast, the deflation in consumer price index (CPI) fuel deepened and core inflation (CPI inflation excluding food and fuel) moderated to a four-year low of 3.8 per cent in December," he said. The decline in core inflation continued to be broad-based with inflation remaining steady or softening across its constituent groups and sub-groups.

The medium-term target for CPI inflation is 4 per cent within a band of plus or minus 2 per cent, the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) said.

Retail inflation surged to a four-month high of 5.69 per cent in December driven by higher prices of food items such as pulses, spices, fruits and vegetables, data released by the National Statistical Office (NSO) showed.

Headline inflation has re-



RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das delivers the Monetary Policy statement, at the RBI headquarters in Mumbai Thursday. PTI

mained high and has seen considerable volatility, moving in a range of 4.3 per cent to 7.4 per cent during the current financial year. "Recurring food price shocks could interrupt the ongoing disinflation process, with risks that it could lead to de-anchoring of inflation expectations and generalisation of price pressures. Adding to these are the renewed flash points on the geo-political front, including supply chain disruptions. Importantly, the CPI inflation target of 4.0 per cent is yet to be reached," Das said.

Das said the inflation trajectory, going forward, would be shaped by the outlook on food inflation, about which there is considerable uncertainty. Adverse weather events remain the pri-

mary risk with implications for the rabi crop. Increasing geopolitical tensions are leading to supply chain disruptions and price volatility in key commodities, particularly crude oil, he said.

On the positive side, the progress in rabi sowing has been satisfactory and augurs well for the season. Prices of key vegetables, especially onions and tomatoes, are registering seasonal price correction. Taking into account these factors, the RBI has projected retail inflation at 5.4 per cent for the current year (2023-24) with Q4 at 5.0 per cent. The policy panel has projected retail inflation for 2024-25 at 4.5 per cent with Q1 at 5.0 per cent, Q2 at 4.0 per cent, Q3 at 4.6 per cent and Q4 at 4.7 per cent.

However, Jayanth Varma, member of the MPC, differed with other members and voted for 25 basis points (bps) reduction in repo rate and changing the policy stance to 'neutral' from 'withdrawal of accommodation'.

Interest rates on loans and deposits are largely likely to remain unchanged as of now. Certain segments of the retail loans are expected to cost more as the RBI recently hiked the risk weights on retail loans and many banks raised marginal cost of fund-based lending rate (MCLR). All external benchmark lending rates that are linked to the repo rate will not rise. It will provide some relief to borrowers as their equated monthly instalments (EMIs) will not rise.

However, as banks are under pressure on the deposit growth front due to competition from mutual funds, deposit rates are likely to rise in certain buckets.

## What will happen to lending, deposit rates?

The six-member rate-setting panel, headed by Governor Shaktikanta Das, has decided not to tinker with the repo rate — the

GEORGE MATHEW &  
HITESH VYAS

MUMBAI, FEBRUARY 8

AS EXPECTED, interest rates on home, vehicle, personal and other loans in the banking system will remain unchanged with the six-member Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) keeping the main policy instrument, repo rate, unchanged at 6.5 per cent in a 5:1 majority decision in its bi-monthly policy review.

The central bank also retained the stance of the monetary policy as 'withdrawal of accommodation' in a 5:1 majority decision. The central bank has retained the headline inflation forecast at 5.4 per cent for the current fiscal as uncertainty persists on the food prices front.

However, Jayanth Varma, member of the MPC, differed with other members and voted for 25 basis points (bps) reduction in repo rate and changing the policy stance to 'neutral' from 'withdrawal of accommodation'.

This is the sixth monetary policy on the trot when the MPC has kept the repo rate unchanged at 6.5 per cent. Last time, the repo rate was raised from 6.25 per cent to 6.5 per cent in February 2023.

Anu Aggarwal, President and Head, Corporate Banking, Kotak Mahindra Bank said, "the sustained pause in the repo rate hike is poised to benefit India's economic trajectory positively. Moreover, the remarkable growth in capital expenditure witnessed in FY24, coupled with robust capex push by the government underscores a pivotal moment for economic resurgence. The capex push also aligns with the broader endeavour to propel India towards achieving its \$5 trillion economy milestone."

## Why has RBI kept the repo rate unchanged?

The six-member rate-setting panel, headed by Governor Shaktikanta Das, has decided not to tinker with the repo rate — the

rate at which RBI lends money to banks to meet their short-term funding needs — to manage and balance the retail inflation and growth.

A major reason for the continual pause in the repo rate hike is because retail inflation continues to remain above the 4 per cent target of the RBI. Retail inflation (CPI) rose to 5.5 per cent in November from 4.8 per cent in October and 5.02 per cent in September, and further reached 5.69 per cent in December. Even in FY25, the RBI has forecast a 4.5 per cent retail inflation.

"Going forward, the inflation trajectory would be shaped by the evolving food inflation outlook. Rabi sowing has surpassed last year's level. The usual seasonal correction in vegetable prices is continuing, though unevenly.

Yet considerable uncertainty prevails on the food price outlook from the possibility of adverse weather events," Das said.

"Looking ahead, recovery in rabi sowing, sustained profitability in manufacturing and underlying resilience of services should support economic activity in 2024-25. Among the key drivers on demand side, household consumption is expected to improve, while prospects of fixed investment remain bright owing to upturn in the private capex cycle, improved business sentiments, healthy balance sheets of banks and corporates and the government's continued growth helps the government bring down fiscal deficit.

Nominal GDP refers to the GDP evaluated at current market prices without excluding the pace of inflation. However, it can inflate the growth figure.

"Looking ahead, recovery in rabi sowing, sustained profitability in manufacturing and underlying resilience of services should support economic activity in 2024-25. Among the key drivers on demand side, household consumption is expected to improve, while prospects of fixed investment remain bright owing to upturn in the private capex cycle, improved business sentiments, healthy balance sheets of banks and corporates and the government's continued growth helps the government bring down fiscal deficit.

"Its impact is clearly visible in the money market with AAA-rated PSU banks issuing three-month CDs at more than 120 bps above the repo rate. In the last five years, this spread has been close to 30-50 basis points," said Pankaj Pathak, Fund Manager, Fixed Income, Quantum Asset Management.

The RBI is expected to maintain the system liquidity at a slightly deficit level to ensure better transmission of interest rates and this has been in evidence in November. "With higher govt. bond redemptions scheduled in the current month and also the likelihood of higher FPI flows, the RBI may consider the deployment of tools like OMO to suck up additional liquidity from the market," said Chowdhury.

However, analysts said there is a strong case for the RBI to change its stance from "withdrawal of accommodation" to "neutral". Financial condition has tightened a lot in the last few quarters. Real rates are reasonably high and likely to increase further as inflation is trending down. Liquidity condition has also tightened with banking system liquidity running in deficit of over Rs. 2 lakh crore on daily basis.

"The leftover spectrum in the 2022-23 auctions, the one which is getting expired in 2024, and the spectrum which has been surrendered by companies, will be put to auction. While the government did not announce a timeline, the spectrum auction is expected to be conducted in the next few months.

"The left over spectrum in the 2022-23 auctions, the one which is getting expired in 2024, and the spectrum which has been surrendered by companies, will be put to auction," said Anurag Thakur, minister of information and broadcasting.

With a certain quantum of spectrum held by Bharti Airtel and Vodafone Idea due for renewal this month (at the end of a 20-year lease period), the Cabinet has also approved fresh allotment of spectrum to the companies till the time auctions are conducted. This has been done to avoid any disruption in the telecom services.

In the interim period, Airtel and Vodafone Idea can continue to use the spectrum by paying the last auctioned determined price.

According to analysts, for Airtel, renewal of spectrum is due in 900 and 1800 MHz bands in six circles — Uttar Pradesh (East), Uttar Pradesh (West), West Bengal, Assam, Bihar, Jammu and Kashmir, and Odisha. For Vodafone Idea, the licence is expiring in two circles — West Bengal and Uttar Pradesh (West).

From the upcoming auction, DoT is expecting a subdued response from telcos as demand is expected to be restricted to airwaves which will be up for renewal in some circles. The government is not expecting anything beyond ₹10,000 crore revenue from the upcoming auctions, according to officials.

"The next spectrum auction will be a limited auction because an already large part of the spectrum required by the industry was auctioned last year. Every financial year, we are trying to have one auction, communications and IT minister Ashwini Vaishnaw had said earlier this month. "This will not be as big as the last round. This will be a significantly smaller auction," he added.

The Cabinet has also approved allocation of additional 5 MHz spectrum in 700 MHz band for Indian Railways for Kavach technology. Additional 5 MHz spectrum in 700 MHz band has also been approved for National Capital Region Transport Corporation.

From the upcoming auction, DoT is expecting a subdued response from telcos as demand is expected to be restricted to airwaves which will be up for renewal in some circles. The government is not expecting anything beyond ₹10,000 crore revenue from the upcoming auctions, according to officials.

"This is a supervisory action on a regulated entity for persistent non-compliance. Such actions are invariably preceded by months and, at times, years of bilateral engagement where we not only point out deficiencies but also provide more than adequate time for them to take corrective action," RBI Deputy Governor Swaminathan J said. He said the RBI will act to safeguard the interests of the ultimate consumer and to protect the stability of the financial system.

Das said, in general, the RBI's emphasis is on bilateral engagement with the regulated entities (REs), with a focus on nudging them for corrective action. The RBI gives sufficient time to the REs to undertake such action.

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

## 'Action on Paytm due to persistent non-compliance'

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU  
MUMBAI, FEBRUARY 8

THE RESERVE Bank of India (RBI) on Thursday said that the action on Paytm Payments Bank (PPBL) was taken due to persistent non-compliance and that there is no worry at the systemic level.

The central bank will soon issue a frequently asked question (FAQ) which will provide all clarification on the Paytm Payments Bank issue, RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das said. This comes a day after the central government urged the RBI to issue an FAQ for the customers of the bank.

"Let me put the record straight... There is no worry about the system at the moment. Here we are talking about a specific in-

sitution, a payments bank," Das said when asked if there is any risk to the entire fintech sector.

On January 31, the RBI barred PPBL from accepting deposits or top-ups in any customer account, prepaid instruments, wallets, FASTags, and NCMC card after February 29 in the wake of persistent non-compliances and material supervisory concerns.

There was non-compliance of various regulatory guidelines including those related to know your customer (KYC), concerns over anti-money laundering and not maintaining a distance with the group company,

## In India, momentum around developers, development is unbelievable, says Nadella

BIJIN JOSE  
BENGALURU, FEBRUARY 8

MICROSOFT CHIEF Executive Officer (CEO) Satya Nadella on Monday said that India is second to the US when it comes to the total number of developers on GitHub and it is going to cross that in 2027, making it the place with the maximum number of developers.

In terms of generative artificial intelligence (AI) projects on GitHub by Indian contributors, it is next to the US.

"India is a place where the momentum around developers and development is unbelievable," Nadella said to a packed crowd full of developers at an event in Bengaluru on Thursday. The underlying theme of the high-stakes event has been the democratisation of AI, making it accessible and transforming lives and society at large. "It is awesome to see the human capital of the country embrace this new platform and effectively lead this new platform shift," he added. "If you take 70 years of computing, one of the dreams has always been: Can we create computers that can understand us versus us understanding computers? I think we may be finally there with the break-

through of natural language," the Microsoft CEO said.

Nadella said developers tend to digitise people, places, and things, but with AI, things are changing. "We put into data models, query it, and essentially all our computing is getting up in the morning and digitising. Now, we have a new tool in our arsenal, think of it as a neural reasoning engine that can find patterns and give us that predictive power," he said.

Nadella emphasised that developers need to understand the power of platform shifts as they are key to why we take these as inputs that drive economic growth in India. "Something like 10 per cent of India's GDP growth can come from this output. And that's what grounds us in our mission to empower every person and every organisation in India to be able to achieve more and take advantage of this platform shift."

Nadella went on to describe the key components of AI transformation opportunities for Indian organisations, which include enriching employee experience, reinventing customer engagement, reshaping business processes, and bending the curve on innovation.

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

The bid document shall be available online from 09.02.2024. For submission & other tender details, please refer detailed NIT available on websites [www.tltranco.com](http://www.tltranco.com), e-procurement System at NIC's (CPP) Portal <https://tenders.nic.in/eprocure/app>. HITES / Client reserves the right to accept or reject any application without assigning any reason or incurring any liability whatsoever.

**Vice President (IDN)**

**NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER**

HLL Infra Tech Services Ltd (HITES) as Project Management Consultant of Indian Council of Medical Research, (ICMR-NIV, Pune), invites online bids from eligible contractors/firms for the following work:

**Name and Description of work**      **Estimated cost**      **Completion period**      **Last date & time to submit the e-tender**

Design, Engineering, Procurement & Construction (EPC) of ICMR, BSL-3 Laboratories and other Infrastructure facilities at village Jagti, Jammu. Part A: Design, Engineering, Procurement & Construction (EPC): Rs. 44.25 Crore. Part B: Operation & Maintenance: Rs. 6.64 Crore Total (Part A+ Part B): Rs. 50.89 Crore

22.02.2024 at 11.00 am

The bid document shall be available online from 09.02.2024. For submission & other tender details, please refer detailed NIT available on websites [www.tltranco.com](http://www.tltranco.com), e-procurement System at NIC's (CPP) Portal <https://tenders.nic.in/eprocure/app>. HITES / Client reserves the right to accept or reject any application without assigning any reason or incurring any liability whatsoever.

**Vice President (IDN)**

## LIC posts 50% rise in Q3 profit

Bengaluru: Life Insurance Corporation of India reported a nearly 50 per cent rise in third-quarter profit on Thursday, as it moved more money to its shareholders' fund. LIC, country's largest insurer, posted a profit after tax of Rs 94.44 billion (\$1.14 billion) for the quarter ended December 31, up from Rs 63.34 billion a year ago.

PTI

New Delhi: Sebi on Thursday barred 10 entities, including guest experts, appearing on a business news channel from the securities market and directed seizure of unlawful gains of Rs 7.41 crore made by them through alleged stock manipulation. In its probe, Sebi found that few guest experts shared advance information pertaining to recommendations to be made by them with certain entities called "profit makers" before the broadcast of the recommendations on Zee Business. PTI

**SUKALP SHARMA**  
BETUL (GOA), FEBRUARY 8

INDIA IS likely to start supplying liquefied natural gas (LNG) to Sri Lanka by the end of next year and will eventually establish an off-shore regasification terminal at the Colombo port. The supply — which will be done using tankers that will be shipped to Colombo — as well as the terminal construction and operation will be done by India's largest LNG terminal operator Petronet LNG.

Petronet LNG will supply around 850 tonnes a day of LNG, or super-chilled gas, to Sri Lanka for five years, during which it plans to build and commission a floating storage regasification unit (FSRU), which is essentially a regasification unit housed on a vessel,



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## EVERYDAY ECONOMICS

## How ride-hailing cabs charge you, what Karnataka order can change

## What does the Karnataka transport department's order say?

It specifies minimum fares based on three slabs of vehicle costs.

THE KARNATAKA government has announced uniform minimum fares for app-based cabs and city taxis depending upon the cost of the vehicle, and disallowed surge pricing.

The order, issued on February 3 and effective immediately, may lead to higher earnings for cab drivers. However, it can disrupt India's crowded ride-hailing market, in which companies have innovated and differentiated their business models to gain a competitive edge.

Be it the fare settlement mechanism or the booking process, companies such as Uber, Ola, BluSmart, and inDrive offer similar services in significantly different ways. The ride-hailing companies will now have to rework their business models in Karnataka, and look for new ways to remain competitive.

The order makes no distinction between types of vehicles (sedans, SUVs, etc), and does not consider the availability of features like airconditioning.

Also, fares are based only on distance travelled, not on the time taken. This implies that surge pricing, which is the hiking of fares during peak hours, is also not allowed. But the order does allow for a 10% surcharge

on trips between midnight and 6 am.

## How will the order impact Uber, Ola, and BluSmart?

Uber and Ola together command the bulk of India's ride-hailing market. Both companies offer an upfront fare which consists of the base rate, and rates for estimated time and distance of the route. The fare also factors in the current demand for rides in the area. This third component is determined by an algorithm that automatically increases the cost of the trip based on the demand for rides in the user's locality. Once the user selects the vehicle and the corresponding upfront fare, the app connects them to a nearby driver.

By disallowing surge pricing and price determination on the basis of time taken, the Karnataka order fundamentally alters Uber's and Ola's price settlement mechanism.

Also, Uber and Ola fares are based upon vehicle type and not vehicle cost, as man-

dated by the order. It is not clear how the two companies plan to alter their business models to adhere to the order.

Unlike Uber and Ola, the ride fares of BluSmart, which offers rides on battery-run vehicles, are not sensitive to fluctuations in demand. BluSmart, which currently operates only in Delhi-NCR and Bengaluru, has fixed rates for specified distance slabs.

For its Delhi market, BluSmart additionally applies a distinction between relaxed and rush hours. Thus, a BluSmart cab for a 6-km ride during rush hours in Delhi costs Rs 199, but only Rs 149 during relaxed hours.

For city rides up to 6 km in Bengaluru, BluSmart charges a flat rate of Rs 199. For rides between 6 and 9 km, it charges Rs 249, and so on. For airport rides and rentals, BluSmart follows the same system, albeit with different rates.

As per the order, the minimum fare for a 6 km ride in a car costing between Rs 10 lakh and Rs 15 lakh would be Rs 171. Still, among the major ride-hailing companies, BluSmart

is likely to be the least affected by the order: it has no surge pricing, and it already only considers the distance travelled.

## What about inDrive?

inDrive's ride-hailing model is significantly different, as there is no predetermined trip fare thrust upon the passenger and the driver: inDrive only recommends a base fare which is subject to in-app negotiation between passengers and drivers to reach a mutually agreed fare. The recommended fare takes into account the normal cost per kilometre, the normal cost per minute, and the cost of the driver coming to the pick-up location.

inDrive's recommended fare does not include any algorithm-based surge charge. The company says that for peak-hour rides, drivers themselves can negotiate a higher price. At all times, the ride is confirmed only after both the passenger and driver agree on a price.

The Karnataka order requires inDrive's

base fare to match the minimum fares prescribed by it. While it does not impose any restrictions on additional negotiations between rider and driver, a higher fixed base price might make trips with inDrive more expensive.

"In our experience, fixed rates don't necessarily lead to increased ride opportunities for drivers or improved vehicle availability for passengers," Arijit Das, inDrive India's public policy head said.

## Will the Karnataka order allow drivers to earn more?

The order does not specify commission rates for ride-hailing companies. Currently, Uber and Ola can charge up to 30% of the ride fare as commission. inDrive charges 10%. BluSmart drivers are paid weekly, and their earnings are linked to the business they do on the platform. If the commission rates stay at these levels, the higher minimum fares set by the order can improve drivers' earnings.

## EXPLAINED POLICY

## NEW GUIDELINES TO MAKE CINEMA HALLS ACCESSIBLE TO THOSE WITH DISABILITIES

DIVYAA  
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 8

THE MINISTRY of Information &amp; Broadcasting last month came out with 'Accessibility Standards in the Public Exhibition of Feature Films in Cinema Theatres for Persons with Hearing and Visual Impairment', and invited stakeholder comments on the draft till February 15.

These guidelines are applicable for those feature films that are certified by the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC) for commercial public exhibition in movie theatres. Once notified, the guidelines will require production houses and movie theatres to either run dedicated shows for the impaired, or ensure special provisions in theatres so they can enjoy the cinema experience like anyone else.

## Why the guidelines?

The proposal quotes Sections 29 and 42 of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016, which mandate the government to take measures to promote universal access in the information and communication sector. This includes access to films for persons with hearing and visual disabilities.

## When do they come into effect?

Films dubbed in more than one language would be required to provide at least one accessibility feature each for the hearing impaired and visually impaired, within six months from the date of implementation of these guidelines.

Feature films submitted for consideration in the National Film Awards, in the Indian Panorama Section of the International Film Festival of India, Goa, and Mumbai International Film Festival have to include closed captioning and audio description with effect from January 1 next year.

All other Feature Films being certified through CBFC and meant for theatrical releases would be required to provide accessibility features within three years from the date of issue of the guidelines.

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UDIT MISRA  
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 8

FINANCE MINISTER Nirmala Sitharaman presented a "white paper" on the Indian economy in Parliament Thursday. The document, which has been prepared by the Ministry of Finance, essentially compares the 10-year record of economic governance under the Congress-led UPA governments (between 2004-05 and 2013-14) with the 10-year record of the BJP-led NDA governments (between 2014-15 and 2023-24).

## What is a white paper, and is this one?

A white paper typically provides information about a specific issue. A government may present a white paper — say, on black money — to make people aware of the nature and scope of the problem and the possible ways to resolve it.

In that sense, what was presented in Parliament is not exactly a white paper, because it is a comparison between the record of two governments on a variety of economic parameters. A comprehensive review of the state of the Indian economy as things stood in 2014, when the incumbent government first took charge, would have been a white paper on the economy.

## Why is it being presented now?

The document explains why the white paper is being presented at the end of 10 years instead of at the start. "Our government refrained from bringing out a white paper on the poor state of affairs then. That would have given a negative narrative and shaken the confidence of all, including investors. The need of the hour was to give hope to the people, to attract investments, both domestic and global and to build support for the much-needed reforms."

## What is its objective?

There are four stated objectives.

One, it seeks to inform everyone "of the nature and extent of governance, economic and fiscal crises that were bequeathed" to the NDA government when it assumed office in 2014.

Two, it informs about "the policies and measures that (NDA) government took to restore the health of the economy" since 2014.

Three, it "hopes to generate a wider, more informed debate on the paramountcy of national interest and fiscal responsibility in matters of governance over political expediency."

Four, and it quotes Prime Minister



The white paper was presented in Parliament by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman. PTI/File

## UPA AND NDA YEARS: WHAT SOME CRUCIAL NUMBERS SAY

Financial Year	Nominal GDP growth rate (%)	Real GDP growth rate (%)	Fiscal Deficit*	Financial Year	Nominal GDP growth rate (%)	Real GDP growth rate (%)	Fiscal Deficit*
2004-05	14.10	7.92	3.95	2014-15	10.99	7.41	4.10
2005-06	13.99	7.92	4.03	2015-16	10.46	8	3.87
2006-07	17.14	8.06	3.35	2016-17	11.76	8.26	3.48
2007-08	15.14	7.66	2.59	2017-18	11.03	6.8	3.46
2008-09	12.56	3.09	6.11	2018-19	10.59	6.45	3.44
2009-10	15.46	7.86	6.57	2019-20	6.37	3.87	4.64
2010-11	19.92	8.5	4.89	2020-21	-1.36	-5.83	9.17
2011-12	14.43	5.24	5.91	2021-22	18.36	9.05	6.75
2012-13	13.82	5.46	4.93	2022-23	16.06	7.24	6.38
2013-14	12.97	6.39	4.48	2023-24	8.87	7.32	5.85
AVERAGE OF UPA YEARS				AVERAGE OF NDA YEARS			
2004-2014	14.95	6.80	4.7	2014-2024	10.31	5.9	5.1

Source: MoSPI and CIME, \*(as a % of Nominal GDP)

as a per cent of total expenditure (excluding interest payments) halved from 31 per cent in FY04 to 16 per cent in FY14. This ratio stands at 28% in the current year. The resulting "neglect of infrastructure creation and challenges of the logistical constraints caused industrial and economic growth to stumble."

■ Health expenditure of Indian households showed very little improvement.

Part 1 discusses the macroeconomic situation during the 10 years of UPA rule. Part 2 provides the "current status of the various corruption scams of the UPA government". Part 3 shows how the NDA "turned the economy around".

Here are some of the most important claims in the white paper.

■ The UPA Government inherited a healthy economy ready for more reforms, but made it non-performing in 10 years.

■ UPA abandoned economic reforms.

■ In a quest to maintain high economic growth by any means after the Global Financial Crisis of 2008, UPA severely undermined the macroeconomic foundations. For instance, it underscores high inflation, high fiscal deficit (or the money borrowed to meet expenses), and high proportion of bad loans in the banking system that dragged down economic activity.

■ Not only did UPA borrow heavily from the market, but the funds raised were applied unproductively. "Capital expenditure

asubstantive part of the documents goes on to claim how things have improved under the NDA. It uses data from the International Monetary Fund to show how "average headline inflation has been lower in the NDA decade". Or how many of the schemes — such as construction of toilets or opening of bank accounts — achieved higher results during the NDA decade.

## What is the upshot?

Analysing the performance of any economy over two decades, even when they are aligned back to back, is a daunting task. This

is so because a variety of factors affect not just the economy but also how we measure it.

For instance, a very big reason why domestic inflation was very high during the last couple of UPA years and immediately subsided during the first two of NDA is the cost of crude oil, which ranged between \$111 and \$105 a barrel between FY12 and FY14, and then fell to \$84 in FY15 and to \$46 in FY16.

Indeed, on aggregate, data shows that India registered better GDP growth as well as lower fiscal deficits during the UPA time.

The NDA government has several genuine achievements to its credit — such as the GST and IBC — but the white paper ignores all that is amiss with the economy. For instance, it does not even contain the word "unemployment". This was when the government's own Periodic Labour Force Survey showed that unemployment had reached a 45-year high in 2017-18.

Similarly, it makes no mention of the fact that there has been no formal measure of poverty since 2011. Or that this government has failed to conduct the decadal Census — the first such miss since 1881. Also, a white paper on the Indian economy over two decades does not have a single chart on GDP growth over this period.

LONGER VERSION ON  
indianexpress.com/explained

## Court reserves verdict: debate around subcategorisation within SC quota

AOJY SINHA KARPURAM & APURVA VISHWANATH  
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 8

A SEVEN-JUDGE Constitution Bench headed by Chief Justice of India D Y Chandrachud Wednesday reserved judgment in the sub-classification among Scheduled Castes (SCs) case.

Some states have argued that despite reservation, some castes are underrepresented compared with 'dominant' Scheduled Castes. They want to create a separate quota for such castes within the SC quota of 15%.

In 2004, a five-judge Constitution Bench in *E V Chinnaiyah v State of Andhra Pradesh* held that under Article 341 of the Constitution, only the President can notify which communities get reservation, and states don't have the power to tamper with this.

A number of states have now returned to the Supreme Court to argue against this decision, claiming they do have the power to make sure reservation benefits are distributed to communities that need them the most. The respondents, on the other hand, argue that all Scheduled Castes must be treated equally.

## The beginning

In 1975, Punjab issued a notification dividing its 25% SC reservation at that time into two categories. In the first category, seats were reserved solely for the Balmiki and Mazhabhi Sikh communities, which are still among two of the most economically and educationally backward communities in the state. Under the policy, they were to be given first preference for reservation in education and public employment.

While the notification remained in force

for nearly 30 years, it ran into legal hurdles in 2004, when a five-judge Constitution Bench, in the *Chinnaiyah* case, struck down a similar law introduced by Andhra Pradesh in 2000 for being violative of the right to equality. Two years later, the Punjab & Haryana High Court in *Dr. Kishan Pal v. State of Punjab* struck down the 1975 notification.

The appeal In October 2006, Punjab attempted to bring back the law by passing the Punjab Scheduled Caste and Backward Classes (Reservation in Services) Act, 2006. This Act reintroduced the first preference in reservations for the Balmiki and Mazhabhi Sikh communities. In 2010



बिहार सरकार

## बिहार तकनीकी सेवा आयोग

19. हाइटेंग रोड, पटना-800001

## आवश्यक सूचना

PR.NO.-002204 (NINI) 2023-24

विज्ञापन संख्या-07/2023 से 36/2023 (व्यवसाय अनुदेशक के विभिन्न पदों)

अम संसाधन विभाग, बिहार पटना, अन्तर्गत निदेशालय, नियोजन एवं प्रशिक्षण (प्रशिक्षण पक्ष), बिहार, पटना के अधीनस्थ विभिन्न औद्योगिक प्रशिक्षण संस्थानों में व्यवसाय अनुदेशक के रिक्त पदों पर ITI योग्यताधारी अभ्यर्थियों की नियुक्ति हेतु दिनांक- 06.02.2024 को आयोजित परीक्षा के प्रश्न-पत्र पर दिनांक-09.02.2024 से 11.02.2024 तक अभ्यर्थियों से Online Portal पर आपत्ति प्राप्त किया जाना है।

उक्त से संबंधित विस्तृत दिशा-निर्देश एवं आपत्ति Portal का लिंक आयोग के Website- [www.btsc.bih.nic.in](http://www.btsc.bih.nic.in) पर प्रकाशित की जायेगी। अभ्यर्थियों को नियोजन से हिस्सा होने के लिए उक्त Website का सतत अनुश्रवण करते रहेंगे।

उक्त सूचना [www.state.bihar.gov.in/prdbihar](http://www.state.bihar.gov.in/prdbihar) पर भी देखी जा सकती है।

PR-17117 (B &amp; C) 2023-24

प्रभारी सचिव,

विहार तकनीकी सेवा आयोग, पटना।

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ENGINEER (BUILDING)  
PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT, NIRAMAN BHAWAN,  
Plot No. 27-28, Arera Hills, BHOPALPHONE NO. 0755-2559571 E-mail:-[apdpubbhopal@gmail.com](mailto:apdpubbhopal@gmail.com)

BHOPAL DATE 30/01/2024

NOTES FOR THE Bidders  
Online bids for the following works are invited from registered contractors and firms of repute fulfilling registration criteria:

S. No.	Tender Portal No.	Name of work	District	Probable Amount (Rs. in lakh)	Ernest Deposit (EMD) (in Rs.)	Cost of Bid Document (in Rs.)	Period of completion (in months /& Rainy Season)
1	2024-PWPNU-330195_1	Consultancy for supervision and Quality control Services for Construction of Various Building of Various Department at Raisen	RAISEN	9000.00	180000	12500	24 Month /c Rainy season
2	2024-PWPNU-322048_2	Construction Of Govt. Higher Secondary School At Chitawar Tehsil-Sironi District- Vidisha. (Second Call)	VIDISHA	117.52	117520	12500	12 Month /c Rainy season
3	2024-PWPNU-329076_1	ZONAL TENDER FOR SMALL CONSTRUCTION WORK, BALANCE WORK AND P.G. REPAIRING WORK UNDER DISTRICT-VIDISHA	VIDISHA	105.22	105220	12500	12 Month /c Rainy season

1 All details relating to the Bid Document(s) can be viewed and downloaded free of cost from the website: <http://mptenders.gov.in>

2 Bid Document(s) can be purchased after making online payment of portal fees through Credit/Debit/Cash Card/internet Banking

3 The Bid Document(s) can be purchased only online from 10:30 (time) 30.01.2024 (date) to 17.30 (time) 14.02.2024 (date). Other key dates may be seen in Bid Data Sheet.

4 Amendment(s) to NIT, if any, shall be published on website only, and not in newspaper.

Sd/-  
CHIEF ENGINEER (BUILDING)  
P.W.D. BHOPAL M.P.

G-23974/23

Bihar Medical Services & Infrastructure Corporation Limited  
(A Govt. of Bihar Undertaking)2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Swasthya Bhawan, Behind IGIMS, Sheikhpura, Patna-800014

## RE-TENDER NOTICE

Re-tender for empanelment of agencies for supply of stationary

Notice Inviting Re-tender Ref No.: BMSIC/10035/04-23/02

(Only through E-tender on website: <http://eproc2.bihar.gov.in>)Bihar Medical Services and Infrastructure Corporation Limited (BMSICL) invites E-Bids from the interested agencies for "Re-tender for empanelment of agencies for supply of stationary". Detailed tender document containing eligibility criteria, selection mechanism, other terms and conditions are available on the website [https://eproc2.bihar.gov.in](http://eproc2.bihar.gov.in).

## Tender Schedule

Bid Submission Start Date	From 16/02/2024, 11:00 AM on <a href="http://eproc2.bihar.gov.in">https://eproc2.bihar.gov.in</a> .
Pre-Bid Meeting Date & Place.	On 19/02/2024, 03:00 PM at Conference Hall of BMSICL, Swasthya Bhawan, Behind IGIMS, Sheikhpura, Bihar, Patna.
Bid Submission Last Date	Up to 04/03/2024, 05:00 PM on <a href="http://eproc2.bihar.gov.in">https://eproc2.bihar.gov.in</a>
Last date and time for submission of EMD (Only in the form of BG) in hard copy (Offline mode) & tender document	Up to 05/03/2024, 03:00 PM in the office of BMSICL, Patna.
Opening of Technical Bid	05/03/2024, 03:30 PM on the e-proc2 Portal

BMSICL reserves the right to amend or withdraw any of the terms and conditions contained in the Tender document or to reject any or all tenders or annul the tender process at any stage without giving any notice or assigning any reasons.

For further details please visit : [www.state.bihar.gov.in/prdbihar](http://www.state.bihar.gov.in/prdbihar)  
PR-017005 (B & C) 2023-24

GM (Admin)  
BMSICL

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

Govt. of Bihar

## BIHAR STATE DISASTER MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY

## SECTION I

## REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

- I. Secretary, Bihar State Disaster Management Authority, Patna invites RFP (Two Bid System) on behalf of Bihar State Disaster Management Authority (BSDMA) from an Indian Registered Company under Companies Act 1956 or 2013/Proprietary or Partnership Firm Located in Bihar for Design, Preparation, Printing & Supply of Books for (a) मुख्यमंत्री विद्यालय सुरक्षा कार्यक्रम : शिक्षकों के लिए हस्त-पुस्तिका/ Handbook for Teachers : Chief Minister School Safety Programme & (b) मुख्यमंत्री विद्यालय सुरक्षा कार्यक्रम : बाल प्रेरकों के प्रयोग हेतु हस्त-पुस्तिका/ Handbook for Child motivators : Chief Minister School Safety Programme to Govt. Schools of Bihar in all 38 districts.

- II. Above mentioned books have to be supplied to all 38 district headquarters of Bihar after Design, preparation & printing.

## III. Details of Work :

Sl.	Name of work	Quantity (No. of books)	EMD (Rs. in lakh)	Period of work
1.	1. मुख्यमंत्री विद्यालय सुरक्षा कार्यक्रम : शिक्षकों के लिए हस्त-पुस्तिका / Handbook for Teachers : Chief Minister School Safety Programme & 2. मुख्यमंत्री विद्यालय सुरक्षा कार्यक्रम : बाल प्रेरकों के प्रयोग हेतु हस्त-पुस्तिका / Handbook for Child motivators : Chief Minister School Safety Programme	1,00,000 (One lakh) each	4.00 (Four Lakh Only)	45 days
2.				

## IV. Schedule of Events :

Sl. No.	Event Descriptions	Timeline
1.	Date of Issue of Advertisement	06.02.2024
2.	Date & time of Purchase of RFP	22.02.2024 up to 16.00 Hrs from the O/o BSDMA, Patna
3.	Payment Mode Via Demand Draft in Name of Secretary, Bihar State Disaster Management Authority, Patna	
4.	Last date & time for submission of Bid	23.02.2024 by 15.00 Hrs to "The Secretary, Secretary, Bihar State Disaster Management Authority, Sardar Patel Bhawan, Baily Road Patna."
5.	Pre Bid Meeting	15.02.2024 at 15:00 Hrs at Bihar State Disaster Management Authority, Sardar Patel Bhawan, Baily Road Patna
6.	Time, Date of opening of Technical Bid	28.02.2024 by 15:00 Hrs in O/o Secretary, Secretary, Bihar State Disaster Management Authority, Sardar Patel Bhawan, Baily Road Patna."
7.	Time, Date of opening of Financial Bid	To be announced later after Evaluation of Technical Bid

Note – (i) Interested bidders may obtain further information about this Notice Inviting RFP from the office of the Secretary, Secretary, Bihar State Disaster Management Authority, Sardar Patel Bhawan, Nehru Path, Patna.

Secretary  
PR. No. 017042 (Disaster) 2023-24 Bihar State Disaster Management Authority

विस्तृत जानकारी [www.state.bihar.gov.in/prdbihar](http://www.state.bihar.gov.in/prdbihar) से प्राप्त की जा सकती है।

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

Govt. of Bihar

## Bihar Museum Society, Patna

(An Autonomous Organization Under the Department of Art, Culture and Youth, Government of Bihar, Registered Under Societies Registration Act, 21, 1860)

## Recruitment Cancellation Notice for engagement of Research associate in Bihar Museum, Patna, Bihar on contract basis.

This is in reference of the recruitment advertisement No.—Pr. No. 014237 (Art & Culture) 2023-24 dated 28<sup>th</sup> December 2023 and Ad ID-130127 dated 27<sup>th</sup> December 2023 which was for engagement of Research associate for one year on Contract basis for a project on "Nomination of Chhath Puja in the UNESCO Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage. The advertisement was published in News Paper and Website, is hereby cancelled due to no candidates were found suitable as per essential qualification. The fresh advertisement for the same shall be notified shortly. This information is available on [www.state.bihar.gov.in/prdbihar](http://www.state.bihar.gov.in/prdbihar) also

(Ranbeer Singh Rajput)

Additional Director Admin (I/C)

Bihar Museum, Patna

PR. No. 017030 (Art &amp; Culture) 2023-24

नशामुक्त हो जाए बिहार, सुरक्षित रहे घर परिवार।

GOVERNMENT OF ASSAM  
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ENGINEER (ROADS), PUBLIC WORKS  
ROADS DEPARTMENT, ASSAM, GUWAHATI-03

No. CE/DEV/MMNPNA/402/2023-24/06

## PRESS NOTICE INVITING TENDER(Re-BID)

The Chief Engineer (Roads), PWRD, Assam, Chandmari, Guwahati-3 invites Bids on behalf of Governor of Assam for 1 (One) no. of Package for Construction of Roads and Bridge projects under MMNPNA for the year 2023-24 in Sivasagar District of Assam amounting to **Rs10.14 Crores** (approx.) including GST etc. from approved & eligible Contractors registered with PWRD, Assam. Details may be seen from **10.02.2024** at website [www.assamtenders.gov.in](http://www.assamtenders.gov.in). Amendment /Addendum to the SBD, if any, and further notifications shall appear in this website and also at the office of the undersigned during office hours. The contractor/bidder must be registered with the Electronic Tendering System (ETS) of PWRD, Assam website [www.assamtenders.gov.in](http://www.assamtenders.gov.in).

The schemes are not yet sanctioned by the competent authority. In the event of non - sanction of the schemes, the bids may be cancelled and no claim what so ever on this account shall be entertained from the bidders.

Note: - N.I.T Value is inclusive of GST (12%), Labour cess (1%) etc.

Chief Engineer (Roads), PWRD, Assam, Chandmari, Guwahati-3

JANASANYOG/CF/5411/23/9-FEB-24

## Varthana Finance Private Limited

(Formerly known as M/s. Thirumeni Finance Private Ltd.)

Registered Office at : No. 5 BC-110, Varasiddhi, 3rd Floor, Outer Ring Road, Service Road, 3rd Block, HRB Layout, Kalyan Nagar, Bangalore-560043, Website [www.varthana.com](http://www.varthana.com), Email: care@varthana.com, Phone : 080-68455777.

Branch Office : Unit no. 3, Ground Floor, Peers Omanax Tower, Plot B 1, Netaji Subhash Place, Pitampura, Delhi-110034.

## DEMAND NOTICE

Notice under Section 13(2) &amp; (3) of the Securitisation And Reconstruction Of Financial Assets And Enforcement Of Security Interest Act, 2002.

We hereby serve upon you this notice, the contents whereof you may kindly note: That you the Borrower along with Co-applicants/Mortgagors have approached and requested for grant of the credit facility from M/s Vartana Finance Private Ltd. (Formerly known as Thirumeni Finance Private Limited). This Demand Notice issued on **21.01.2024**, the contents of which are being published herewith as per Sec.13(2) of the Act. Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002, by way of alternative service upon the Borrower/



CISF proudly remembers the supreme sacrifice of these brave-hearts. On this day, they laid down their lives at the altar of duty while fighting with LWE outfits at Dantewada (Chhattisgarh). Their Courage and bravery would remain an abiding source of inspiration for the force. The force will remain eternally indebted to them for their noblest deeds.

## PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON

### See Section 82 Cr.P.C.

Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused person namely **Vinay @ Ali**, S/o. Sh. Mukesh @ Shajnawaj, R/o. Gali No. 7, Sonia Vihar, Delhi, Also at: Gaushala Mohalla, Hamirpur, U.P., has committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence in case Cr. Case 1804/2019, FIR No.214/2019 U/s 380/457/411 IPC registered at P.S. Lohori Gate, Delhi and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said **Vinay @ Ali** cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said accused **Vinay @ Ali** has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant). Proclamation is hereby made that the said **Vinay @ Ali** accused of Cr. Case 1804/2019, FIR No.214/2019 U/s 380/457/411 IPC P.S. Lohori Gate, Delhi is required to appear before this Court to answer the said complaint on or before 30.05.2024

By Order

Sh. Mayank Agarwal  
Metropolitan Magistrate-09,  
Central, Room No. 286, 2nd Floor,  
Tis Hazari Courts, Delhi

DP/1417/N/2024

**NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER**  
E-TENDER, Short Term E-tender No. ETC/MU/T-50/2023-24 is invited for Operation and Maintenance of different primary Sub-stations under the jurisdiction of Electricity Transmission Circle, Muzaffarnagar. E-tender is being uploaded on [www.etender.up.nic.in](http://etender.up.nic.in). EMD cost Rs. 2000000.00 Lacs. Cost of tender documents including GST : Rs. 2950/- Scheduled date & time of submission of bid : Up to 21.02.2024 by 17:00 Hrs. Scheduled date & time of opening of Part-I : 22.02.2024 at 12:00 Hrs. Short Term E-tender No. ETC/MU/T-51/2023-24 is invited for Maintenance of different voltage Transmission Lines under the jurisdiction of Electricity Transmission Circle, Muzaffarnagar. E-tender is being uploaded on [www.etender.up.nic.in](http://etender.up.nic.in). EMD cost Rs. 400000.00, Cost of tender documents including GST : Rs. 2950/- Scheduled date & time of submission of bid : Up to 21.02.2024 by 17:00 Hrs. Scheduled date and time of opening of Part-I : 22.02.2024 at 12:00 Hrs. For Detailed information, please visit website [www.etender.up.nic.in](http://etender.up.nic.in) for any corrections/amendments/ modifications extensions till the date of submission of tender and thereafter. (Nikhil Kumar) Superintending Engineer Electricity Transmission Circle Muzaffarnagar "Save Electricity in the interest of the Nation" पत्रक/ No. 208 / विभागांश (ETC) / मुन्हगर (MZN) / दिनांक/ DATED 08.02.2024

## UJJVN LIMITED

H.O. "UJJWAL", Maharan Bagh, GMS Road, Dehradun-248006,  
Telephones: 0135-2763808, Fax: 0135-2763508,  
CIN No. U40101UR2001SGC025866, Website: [www.ujvnl.com](http://www.ujvnl.com)

No. 198 Tenders Time Extension Notice-1 Date: 08.02.2024

Due to unavoidable circumstances the date of submission and opening of following tender invited by the office of the Executive Engineer (Gen.), MB-II, Chinyalisar (Uttarakhand) is hereby extended as follows:

Tender No: 35/EE(Gen.)/MB-II/2023-24

Name of Work: Routine maintenance work of LT and Switchyard at MB-II, Dharasu Power House.

Last date of submission of tender : 14.02.2024 up to 15:30 Hrs.

Date of opening of tender : 17.02.2024 up to 11:00 Hrs.

For fuller & further details, kindly visit our website. The tender documents can be downloaded from the Nigam's website "[www.ujvnl.com](http://www.ujvnl.com)"

"Avoid wasteful use of Electricity" Executive Engineer (Generation)

CESC LIMITED

## NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER

An e-tender is invited by Executive Director, Power Marketing, CESC Ltd on 08.02.2024, having registered office at CESC House, Chowringhee Square, Kolkata-700001 for purchase of power on Short Term basis from May, 2024 to June, 2024 as per Ministry of Power (MOP), GOI guidelines dated 30.03.2016 and amendments thereof. Request for Proposal (RFP) is available on [www.mstecommerce.com](http://www.mstecommerce.com) and [www.cesc.co.in](http://www.cesc.co.in). The bids are to be submitted electronically through DEEP Portal of MSTC.

## The Brihanmumbai Electric Supply & Transport Undertaking (OF THE BRIHANMUMBIA MAHANAGARPALIKA)



### TENDER NOTICE

E-tender is invited for the supply of following item.

(1) 77912- Purchase of new fully built cash van and delivery van with CNG engine.

### Re - invited e-tenders

(2) 78013, (3) 77795, (4) 78030, (5) 78006.

Note: For more details, log on to website [https://mahatenders.gov.in](http://mahatenders.gov.in)

PRO/AAM(M)/141/2024

GENERAL MANAGER

## HIMACHAL PRADESH STATE ELECTRONICS DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION LIMITED

1st & Ground Floor, I.T. Bhawan, Shimla -171 013  
Tel. No. 0177-262359 2623513, 2623603,  
FAX:0177-2626324, Website: [www.hpsdc.in](http://www.hpsdc.in)

No.: SEDC/PCB-Microscope/2k4 Date: 08-02-2024

### E-TENDER NOTICE

e-Tenders are invited from eligible bidders for Rate Contract for Stereo Zoom Microscope with Colour Digital Camera attachment and Computer System. Pre-Bid meeting will be held on 15/02/2024 (11:30AM) through Video Conferencing.

Last date for online e-bid submission is 06/03/2024 (upto 02:30 PM) and shall be opened on 07/03/2024 at 2:30 PM. Detailed Tender Document containing Technical Specifications and Terms & Conditions are available on HPSEDC website [www.hpsdc.in](http://www.hpsdc.in) and [https://htenders.gov.in](http://htenders.gov.in).

General Manager (Technical)

## MANGALORE ELECTRICITY SUPPLY COMPANY LIMITED (Government of Karnataka undertaking)

Corporate Office, MESCOM Bhavana, Bejai, Mangalore-575 004  
Phone: 0824-2885795 CIN: U40109 KA 2002 SGC 030425

No. E-100976/L76479/2024 Date: 07.02.2024

### SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION (THROUGH E-PROCUREMENT PORTAL ONLY)

MESCOM invites Short term tender for Opening Retail Outlets in MESCOM Jurisdiction for following on Rate Contract Basis for a period of ONE Year extendable for one more year on need basis:

Tender No	Particulars	Quantity
MESCOM/2023-24/ IND0060	Sale of LT Three Phase CT Operated ETV Energy Meters as per technical specifications	Approximately 5000 to 6000 Nos per year

The interested bidders may log on to [www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in](http://www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in) on or after 09.02.2024.

Sd/- Superintending Engineer (Ele.) (Proc.)

For Power Related Complaints and Assistance Call Toll Free Number 1912

## उत्तर प्रदेश पावर ट्रॉन्समिशन कारपोरेशन लिं

ई-निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना (2023-24)

विद्युत जानपद पारेषण मण्डल आगरा

1. अल्पकालीन ई-निविदा सूचना संख्या-26 / विज्ञापायोग्य/आगरा/2023-

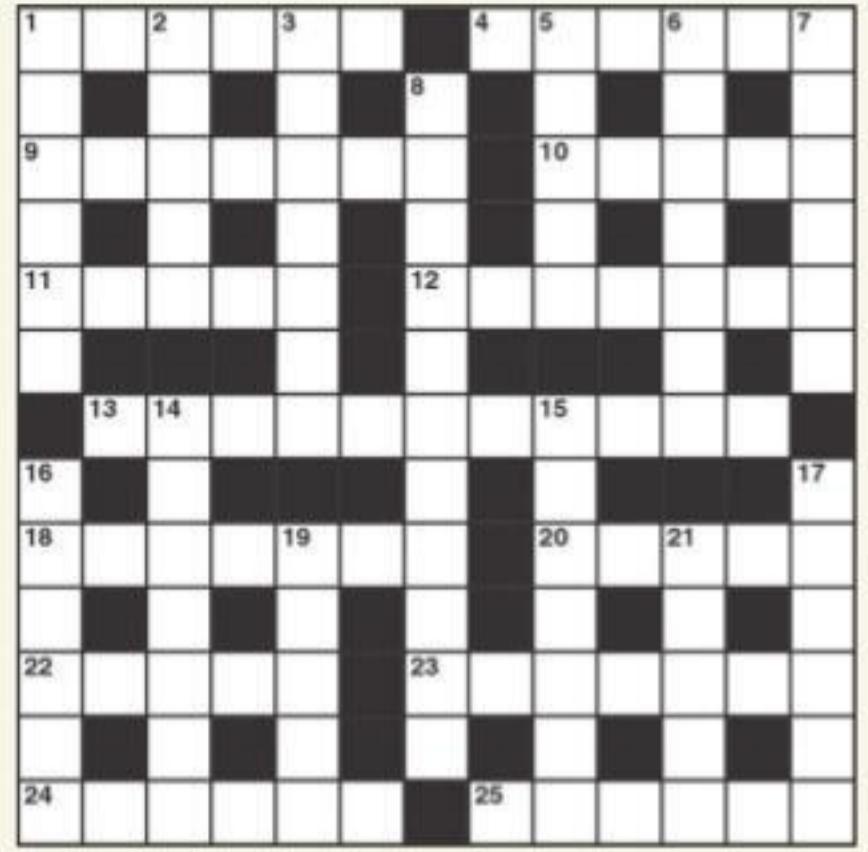
24:- विद्युत पारेषण मण्डल, आगरा के अन्तर्गत विभिन्न विद्युत उपकरणों के जानपदीय वार्षिक अनुरक्षण कार्य। समय अवधि 24 माह, धरोहर धनराशि ₹ 8,20,000.00, निविदा

मूल्य ₹ 10,000+1800 = ₹118,000.00, अनियम तिथि 23.02.2024 | 2. अल्पकालीन ई-निविदा सूचना संख्या-27 / विज्ञापायोग्य/आगरा/2023-24:- विद्युत पारेषण मण्डल, आगरा के अन्तर्गत विभिन्न उपकरणों के जानपदीय वार्षिक अनुरक्षण कार्य।

समय अवधि 24 माह, धरोहर धनराशि ₹ 6,40,000.00, निविदा मूल्य ₹ 10,000+1800 = ₹118,000.00, अनियम तिथि 23.02.2024 | 3. अल्पकालीन ई-निविदा सूचना संख्या-

28 / विज्ञापायोग्य/आगरा/2023-24:- 22 कोवीटी उपकरण फिरोजाबाद पर (1x10) एम्पी०१०एम्पारो कैपेसिटर वैक-ड्विलीय की स्थापना से सम्बन्धित जानपदीय नियमाण कार्य। समय अवधि 02 माह, धरोहर धनराशि ₹ 36,00,000. निविदा मूल्य ₹ 2000+360=2360.00, अनियम तिथि 22.02.2024 | 4. निविदा का विस्तृत विवरण, विस्तारीकरण शुद्धिकरण इत्यादि की सूचना तथा डाउनलोड करिया जा सकता है। बैंक खाता अधिकारी अभियन्ता (जानपद) आगरा A/C No.-30065294923, IFSC Code-SBIN0005717 Payable at S.B.I. Foundry Nagar (Agra). अधीक्षण अभियन्ता के विवरण, विद्युत जानपद पारेषण मण्डल, उत्तर पावर ट्रान्समिशन कारपोरेशन लिं, 220 कोवीटी उपकरण फिरोजाबाद पर (1x10) एम्पी०१०एम्पारो कैपेसिटर वैक-ड्विलीय की स्थापना से डाउनलोड करिया जा सकता है। बैंक खाता अधिकारी अभियन्ता (जानपद) आगरा A/C No.-30065294923, IFSC Code-SBIN0005717 Payable at S.B.I. Foundry Nagar (Agra). अधीक्षण अभियन्ता के विवरण, विद्युत जानपद पारेषण मण्डल, उत्तर पावर ट्रान्समिशन कारपोरेशन लिं, 220 कोवीटी उपकरण फिरोजाबाद पर (1x10) एम्पी०१०एम्पारो कैपेसिटर वैक-ड्विलीय की स्थापना से डाउनलोड करिया जा सकता है। बैंक खाता अधिकारी अभियन्ता (जानपद) आगरा A/C No.-30065294923, IFSC Code-SBIN0005717 Payable at S.B.I. Foundry Nagar (Agra). अधीक्षण अभियन्ता के विवरण, विद्युत जानपद पारेषण मण्डल, उत्तर पावर ट्रान्समिशन कारपोरेशन लिं, 220 कोवीटी उपकरण फिरोजाबाद पर (1x10) एम्पी०१०एम्पारो कैपेसिटर वैक-ड्विलीय की स्थापना से डाउनलोड करिया जा सकता है। बैंक खाता अधिकारी अभियन्ता (जानपद) आगरा A/C No.-30065294923, IFSC Code-SBIN0005717 Payable at S.B.I. Foundry Nagar (Agra). अधीक्षण अभियन्ता के विवरण, विद्युत जानपद पारेषण मण्डल, उत्तर पावर ट्रान्समिशन कारपोरेशन लिं, 220 कोवीटी उपकरण फिरोजाबाद पर (1x10) एम्पी०१०एम्पारो कैपेसिटर वैक-ड्विलीय की स्थापना से डाउनलोड करिया जा सकता है। बैंक खाता अधिकारी अभियन्ता (जानपद) आगरा A/C No.-30065294923, IFSC Code-SBIN0005717 Payable at S.B.I. Foundry Nagar (Agra). अधीक्षण अभियन्ता के विवरण, विद्युत जानपद पारेषण मण्डल, उत्तर पावर ट्रान्समिशन कारपोरेशन लिं, 220 कोवीटी उपकरण फिरोजाबाद पर (1x10) एम्पी०१०एम्पारो कैपेसिटर वैक-ड्विलीय की स्थापना से डाउनलोड करिया जा सकता है। बैंक खाता अधिकारी अभियन्ता (जानपद) आगरा A/C No.-30065294923, IFSC Code-SBIN0005717 Payable at S.B.I. Foundry Nagar (Agra). अधीक्षण अभियन्ता के विवरण, विद्युत जानपद पारेषण मण्डल, उत्तर पावर ट्रान्समिशन कारपोरेशन लिं, 220 कोवीटी उपकरण फिरोजाबाद पर (1x10) एम्पी०१०एम्पारो कैपेसिटर वैक-ड्विलीय की स्थापना से डाउनलोड करिया जा सकता है। बैंक खाता अधिकारी अभियन्ता (जानपद) आगरा A/C No.-30065294923, IFSC Code-SBIN0005717 Payable at S.B.I. Foundry Nagar (Agra). अधीक्षण अभियन्ता के विवरण, विद्युत जानपद पारेषण मण्डल, उत्तर पावर ट्रान्समिशन कारपोरेशन लिं, 220 कोवीटी उपकरण फिरोजाबाद पर (1x10) एम्पी०१०एम्पारो कैपेसिटर वैक-ड्विलीय की स्थापना से डाउनलोड करिया जा सकता है। बैंक खाता अधिकारी अभियन्ता (जानपद) आगरा A/C No.-30065294923, IFSC Code-SBIN0005717 Payable at S.B.I. Foundry Nagar (Agra). अधीक्षण अभियन्ता के विवरण, विद्युत जानपद पारेषण मण्डल, उत्तर पावर ट्रान्समिशन कारपोरेशन लिं, 220 कोवीटी उपकरण फिरोजाबाद पर (1x10) एम्पी०१०एम

## CROSSWORD 5283



**ACROSS**

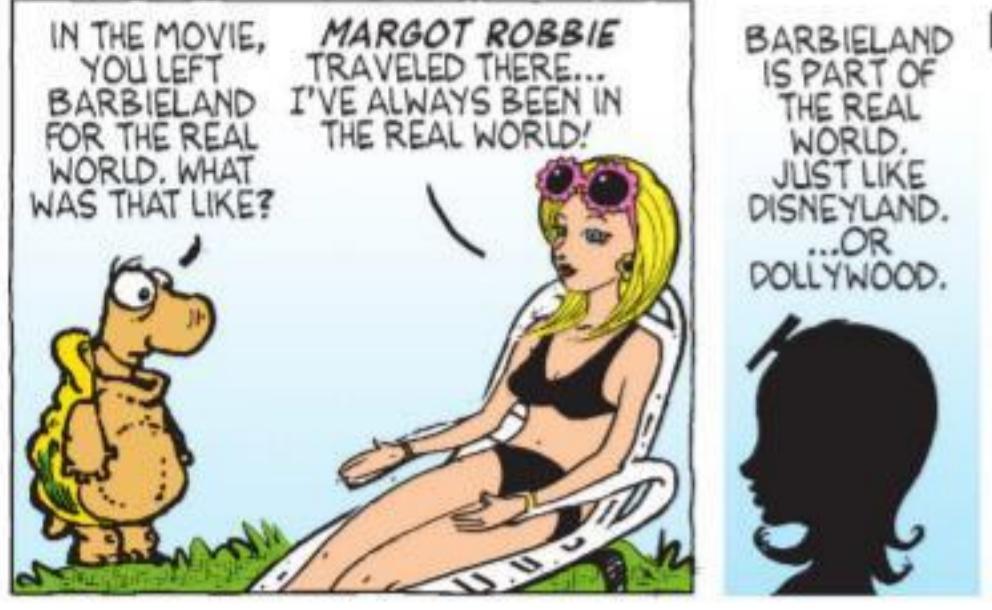
- Marital relations (2-4)
- Religious retreats for sailor and Turks (6)
- For thirty seconds one has quiet at least (7)
- Superior kind of cut (5)
- Monster fish? (5)
- Right of access to a famous statue? (7)
- Possibly uppermost in arrogance (11)
- Hit by a car, not at all well (3,4)
- Bent and crooked cedar (5)
- Open-air types will be out of these (5)
- Quick to declare (7)
- Hemingway and Sterne at variance (6)
- Give the call sign (6)

**DOWN**

- I meant to put out the occupant (6)
- Language used in schooling overseas (5)
- Many quietly engaged in cunning capital investments (7)
- Attractive material for a jacket? (5)
- Grass around the seaport (7)
- Animals unleashed on society? (6)
- Little cared for being petty (5-6)
- Managed to continue with foreign capital (7)
- Walk wearily out of boisterous parties (7)
- A game bird for example all of a flutter (6)
- Conversion is done by inventor (6)
- Desert island with a water supply (5)
- Examine what's said to be a bill of exchange (5)

Solutions Crossword 5282 Across: 1 Radical, 5 Ports, 8 Revolving door, 9 Lento, 10 Obscene, 11 Unsafe, 12 Abodes, 15 Carry on, 17 Reset, 19 Reincarnation, 20 Slept, 21 Wigdown; 1 Rural, 2 Divine service, 3 Calloff, 4 Laidon, 5 Pages, 6 Rooted dislike, 7 Shrieks, 11 Uncurts, 13 Bernard, 14 Andrew, 16 Yacht, 18 Tenon

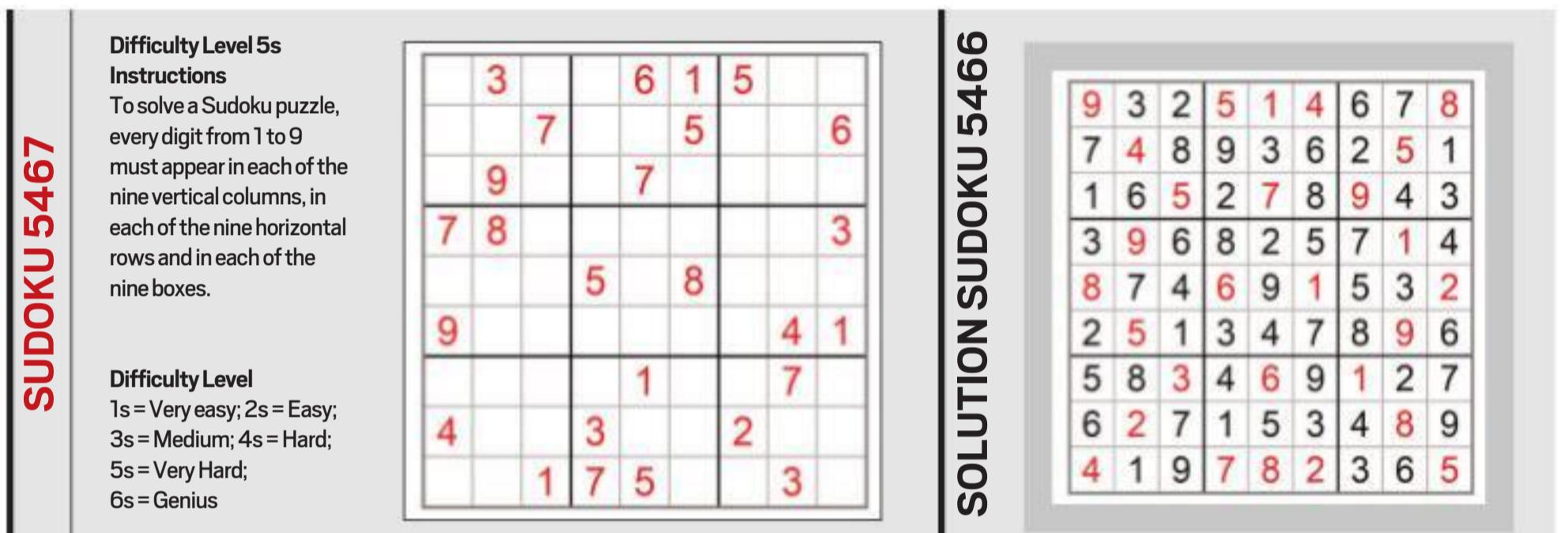
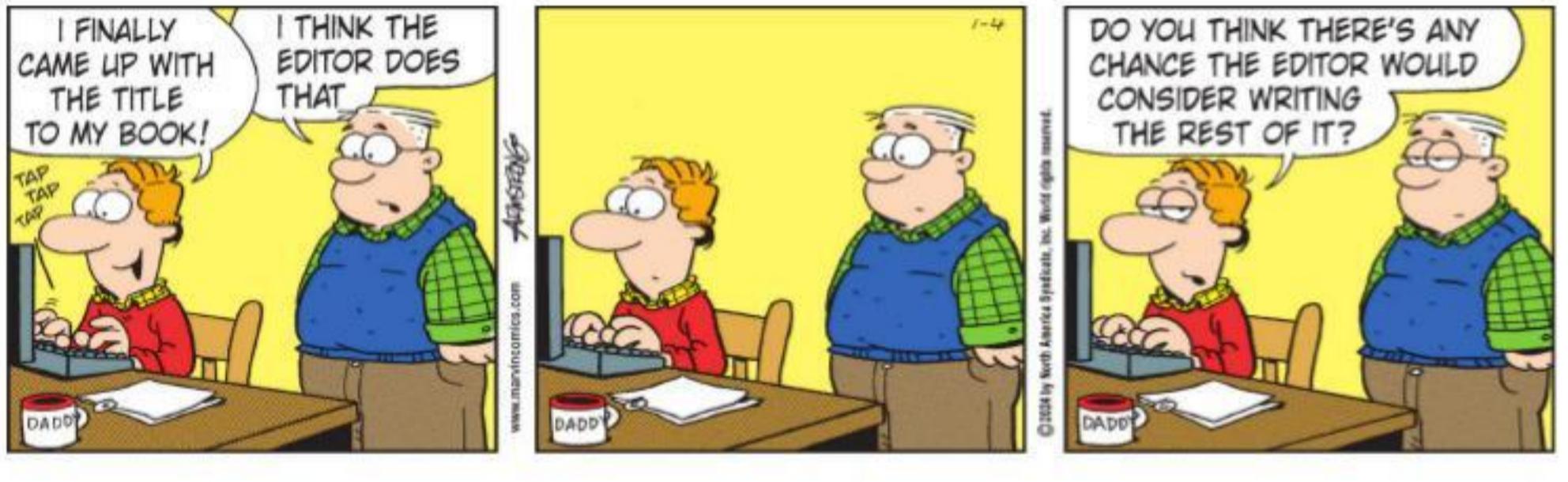
## OVER THE HEDGE by Michael Fry &amp; T Lewis



## CALVIN &amp; HOBBS by Bill Watterson



## MARVIN by Tom Armstrong



## JUMBLED WORDS

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

Great men are like eagles, and build their nests on some lofty solitude. - Arthur Schopenhauer (4,8)

MTEEO

EITLTT

IBSSL

IPTDNU

Answers: GREAT MEN ARE LIKE EAGLES, AND BUILD THEIR NESTS ON SOME LOFTY SOLOITUDE. - Arthur Schopenhauer

## SUDOKU 5467

## Difficulty Level 5s

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



## Difficulty Level

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

## SOLUTION SUDOKU 5466



## CORRIGENDUM

Reference the Tender Notice issued by this Office vide No. PTS/RECR/TENDER/2023-24/34 - A dated Shg., 22nd January, 2024 and based on the outcome of the Pre Bid Meeting held on the 5th February, 2024 at DGP's Conference Hall, the Pre Bid Committee had made corrections in the Clauses of the Tender Notice. Full details regarding the Corrigendum Notice are available in the Office of the undersigned during office hours as well as in the Meghalaya Police Department website <http://megpolice.gov.in>

Deputy Inspector General of Police (ER),  
-cum- Chairman,  
Pre-Bid Tender Committee,  
Meghalaya, Shillong.

MIPR No: 1627  
Dt: 8.2.24

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF CONSTRUCTION ENGINEER  
RURAL WORKS CIRCLE, BALASORE

E-Mail ID: serv\_balasore@yahoo.in

Ph-No.: 06782/260318,

"e" Procurement Notice for Road Work

Identification No.- Online Tender-Road N.C.B. No. 78 of 2023-24

Letter No. 653 /WE Date: 07/02/2024

1. Name of the Work :- Road under MMSY-TRIP

2. Total No. of work :- 3 Nos. of Roads

3. Estimated Cost :- From Rs. 613.71 Lakhs to Rs. 833.09 lakhs (Approximately)

4. Eligible Class of Contractor :- "A" & "S" Class (of Odish P.W.D.) or relevant Class of other Licensing authorities (as per annexure)

5. Period of Completion :- From (09) Nine to (11) Eleven Calender months for the work.

6. Other details :-

## NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY

## E-TENDER NOTICE

No. EL/118/21R, 64/2023-24/W6/TF Dt

07.02.2024 DRM (Electrical) Jaipur, for

and on the behalf of president of Union of India, invites e-tenders for following works:

1. NIT No.: ELJP/21 R/2023-24

Name of Work: JR Div: Provision of

80Nos. Escalator at Khatpura Station

(Electrification of Escalator only) NIT

Cost: 21,11,484 Earnest Money:

42200/- Tender Opening Date:

29.02.2024 2. NIT No.: ELJP/64/2023-24

Name of Work: Provision of

individual MPCB for water pumps and

shifting of its controller to onboard in set

of panels for LHB Non-AC/EOG coaches. NIT Cost: 617934.60 Earnest

Money: 12400/- Tender Opening Date:

29.02.2024 Note: Date & time of

closing of e-tenders: On tender

opening date Upto 15.00 hours. Date & time of e-tender opening: On

tender opening date after 15.00 hours. Complete details of tender can

be seen on website No.: <http://www.ireps.gov.in>

170-AC/24

Follow us on [Facebook](#) [Twitter](#) [Instagram](#) [NWRRailways](#)

## NORTH EASTERN RAILWAY

## Open Tender Notice No. :-

NER-BSB0SnT-OT-04-2024

"Open Tenders" through Online

(E-Tendering) are invited by

Digital Railway Manager (Signal &

Telecomm) /Varanasi, N.E. Railway

and behalf of the President of India

for the following works:

S.N.1:Tender Notice No. and

Description of Work: NER-

BSB0SnT-OT-04-2024: Name of

work: Signalling work in connection

with Engineering work related to

LHSW etc in the section of

SRDSTE/II/Varanasi. Approx. Value:

₹ 9,56,071.73, Earnest Money:

₹ 1,87,100.00, Cost of Tender Form:

0.00, Completion period: 12 Months, Tender Closing Date & Time:

01.03.2024 upto 15.00 Hrs.

2. For full details and submission of bid kindly visit the Official website of Indian railways i.e. [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in)

Divi. Rly. Manager(S&T)

CPR0/Sig-100 Varanasi

Never travel on roof and foot boards.

## DISTRICT ELECTION OFFICE, Rewari

Jiila Nivardhan Karayalay, Rewadi

Dhoomkapt 01274-222779 ई-मेल elt\_rwr@yahoo.in

प्र०१०० निवार्दन-2024/180

दिनांक :- 08.02.2024

-निवार्दा सुपाना-

लोक सभा/विधान सभा आम चुनाव 2024 के दौरान महत्वपूर्ण प्रश्नान्वयों की विविधायार्थी कराई जाती है अतः लोक सभा/विधानसभा आम चुनाव 2024 के दौरान महत्वपूर्ण प्रश्नावयों की विविधायार्थी कराई जाने लाइन दिनांक 12.02.2024 प्रति 10.00 बजे से दिनांक 20.02.2024 को साथ 300 बजे तक है-निवार्दा आमार्थिका भी जाती है जो कि दिनांक 21.02.2024 को साथ 11.00 बजे बाद खोली जाएगी।

आमार्थिका दो बोर्डी प्राप्तियाँ (Two Bid System) के आधार पर खोली जाएगी। इंटरेस्ट टैक्स लाइन दिनांक 12.02.2024 को प्रति 10.00 बजे से दिनांक 20.02.2024 को साथ 300 बजे तक वेबसाइट <https://etenders.hry.nic.in> पर निवार्दा भी जाएगी। निवार्दा दिनांक 21.02.2024 को साथ 11.00 बजे तक वेबसाइट और लोक सभा/विधानसभा आम चुनाव 2024 के दौरान महत्वपूर्ण प्रश्नावयों की विविधायार्थी कराई जाने लाइन दिनांक 12.02.2024 पर खोली जाएगी।

निवार्दा के साथ-

- टेंडर प्रोसेसिंग फीस राखे 1180/- जो कि नान रिफेंडेल है।
- टेंडर फीस राखे 5000/-जो कि नान रिफेंडेल है।
- EMD राशि के रूप में रखे 10000/- - रिफेंडे ल है।

इच्छित कर्म एवं ऐनेंट दिनांक 12.02.2024 को प्रति 10.00 बजे से दिनांक 20.02.2024 को साथ 300 बजे तक वेबसाइट <https://etenders.hry.nic.in> पर खोली जाएगी। निवार्दा दिनांक 21.02.2024 को साथ 11.00 बजे तक वेबसाइट और लोक सभा/विधानसभा आम चुनाव 2024 के दौरान महत्वपूर्ण प्रश्नावयों की विविधायार्थी कराई जाने लाइन दिनांक 12.02.2024 पर खोली जाएगी।

कृपा उपर्युक्त एवं निवार्दा अधिकारी, रेखा।

BRUHAT BENGALURU MAHANAGARA PALIKE  
Office of The Executive Engineer,  
Road Infrastructure (TEC), N.R.Square, Bengaluru-02  
No. EE/RI-TEC/TEND/13/2023-24 Dated : 08-02-2024

## Short Term Tender Notification

## (Request for Proposal (RFP))

(Through KPP Portal only) Two Cover System

The Executive Engineer Road Infrastructure (TEC), BBMP, Bengaluru on behalf of the Chief Commissioner, BBMP invites tenders from eligible Agencies / Consultancy Firms who have registered in any State Government organizations and license holders from labour department for the Man Power Supply detailed in the table below.

Sl. No.	Name of the Work	Approximate Value of Work / Service including GST (Rs. in Lakhs)	EMD (Rs.)
1	Availing Graduate / Diploma Engineers and Literate Assistants for Road Infrastructure.	143.28	2,15,000/-

Calendar of Events : (1) Tender documents may be downloaded from the KPP Portal from 09.02.2024 (1) Last Date for Tender queries : 15.02.2024 up to 3.00 pm. (2) Pre bid Meeting on 15.02.2024 at 4.30 pm at Office of Engineering-in-Chief, No. 109, 1st Floor, Annex Building 2, N.R. Square, Bengaluru. (3) Last Date for Receipt of Tender is 20.02.2024 up to 4.00 pm. (4) Date of opening of technical Bid is 21.02.2024 by 4.30 pm. (5)

# Shreyas Iyer: AWOL

Proficient player of spin, the batsman's game has deserted him this series, as has several other facets

**SIRRAM VEERA**  
MUMBAI, FEBRUARY 8

KEVIN PIETERSEN was raging. "Listen, when Kohli comes back and other guys come back [KL Rahul and Ravindra Jadeja] and these are the days these boys are going to look back and go, 'oh why did I not get a hundred? I had the opportunity to get the hundred'. And when you are sloppy like that, getting out doesn't impress me at all," the former England batsman, and now television pundit, fumed after the first innings in the second Test at Vizag. His anger was directed at India's No.4 for the game Shreyas Iyer.

Now, even without Virat Kohli playing, but the "other guys" returning, the pressure is still on Iyer. Luckily for him, his contender Rajat Patidar didn't make it count either and the shootout between the two for a spot in the team when the third Test swings into action in Rajkot on February 15 will be interesting. With Rahul's return, India might want the more overtly aggressive Iyer in the mix but you never know. That it has come to this is Iyer's own making.

One thing is clear from his brief Test career. He is not going to look 'composed' or show 'hunger' or not be 'sloppy' in traditional terms as Pietersen wishes. That doesn't seem his way. As a batsman he puts himself in unique positions that can bewilder even former cricketers, let alone the fans.

In Visakhapatnam, he started to shuffle outside leg before the left-arm spinner Tom Hartley released the ball and returned to his original position to tap away the balls. That too irked Pietersen. "On this wicket, why are you doing that? What you are doing is you are messing yourself up, losing where your stumps are as a batter. I am more comfortable if you are coming towards the bowler, this here does nothing for me."

The thing that might have grated Pietersen is that Iyer is considered a good attacking batsman of spin: twinkling feet, the dare, the imagination, and the skill to pull it off, but it hasn't come off yet in this series. But that shuffle move, we have seen in the subcontinent before, usually in the white-ball cricket.

Pakistan's Salim Malik would do it to spinners, but he wouldn't retreat to the crease but remain there and slash-slice-cut through the off side. It seems Iyer triggers himself for some dare, but doesn't quite go the whole hog. When he went towards the bowler in the second innings, as Pietersen wished, he went for an almighty heave against the turn and miscued it towards long-off.

Or take that position he adopted against James Anderson on a relatively placid track when the short-pitched stuff began. For a short while, he was pulling them down, but



It'll likely be a shootout between Shreyas Iyer and Rajat Patidar, who made his debut in Vizag, for a spot in the third Test. PTI

suddenly yanked to an approach he has used in the past. Moving outside leg stump, trying to swat balls over the off side. He didn't connect with any; once even nearly dragged on to his stumps, triggering smiles from Ollie Pope and co.

Interestingly, that's the approach that Don Bradman took in the famous Bodyline series. With the field behind square on the leg packed (the rules would later be changed to not more than two men), and Larwood and Co. opened the dam of bouncers, Bradman had enough of trying to keep the ball down or sway away. As there were nothing but short balls to face, and he wanted runs, he moved outside leg and tried to slash them to the off side. Once, he even dragged a ball onto his stumps. The interesting approach divided the cricketing world. Some, like his own

team-mate Jack Fingleton, saw it as the great batsman turning 'yellow', a minority saw it as a prudent way to get some runs against that line of attack.

On a flat track at Visakhapatnam, it was a 41-year-old James Anderson, a swing great who has reinvented himself with seam bowling in the subcontinent and a man not known for bowling pacy-high-intense bouncers. And England didn't have any other medium pacer, forget paceman, in the XI. But that's how Iyer likes to bat. For some reason, he is loath to sway or duck away. Neither is there a confidence that he can continue to keep the ball down on the leg side with waiting English palms near the boundary.

It's not as if he hasn't worked in conventional ways in the recent past. As

Mohammad Kaif would point out on Star Sports during the World Cup, he tweaked with his bat-lift. Previously, where he was holding the bat almost vertically up in his stance and tilting it further past the ears before the commencement of the downswing, he held it behind him, not quite parallel to ground but not extremely up. The whole swing had become tighter and smoother.

"If I can leave or keep it down, I definitely won't have a problem," he had said but Iyer clearly doesn't want to do it. Does he feel it will encourage more bouncers, or thinks it's not the aggressive way he would like to see himself bat, or does he think it's not cool? But none of his current options are going to make the pacers, even a forty-plus medium pacer, not try the short stuff.

In the end, whether conventional or his own way, it would come down to success. If he backs away and collects fours on the un-tenanted off side, the critical world might shut up. Until then, forget them, the opposition fast bowlers and spinners are going to keep whirling away at him. He will have to make Rajkot count at all costs.

**PRATYUSH RAJ**  
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 8

THREE YEARS ago, Muhammad Masroor, Pakistan U-19 assistant batting coach saw a 12-year-old with torn shoes bowling his heart out in the nets at Rana Naved-ul-Hasan cricket academy in Sheikhupura. The boy was Ali Raza, who on Thursday, almost took Pakistan into the final of the U-19 World Cup.

"Raza is a future prospect," Masroor had told *The Indian Express* on the eve of the semifinal. "He hails from Nankana Sahib in Sheikhupura. He has played most of his cricket in the village. He hates going to the gym. He just loves bowling in the nets; you have to literally pull him out. That part of Pakistan has always produced good pacers such as Mohammed Asif, Aaqib Javed, and Rana Naved-ul-Hasan. All three were masters of their craft," said Masroor.

It was Masroor, who spotted Raza's potential and in November 2022, selected the youngster in a home series against Bangladesh.

"We were playing a three-day game at the Rana Naved Cricket Academy. In the morning, I saw a young boy wipe and clean the nets with the broom, and bowl for two hours on the trot. During lunch, he rested for an hour and started bowling again. He is that lambi race ka ghoda (in for a long haul). He knows how to bowl long spells that you don't see in the current pacers. He is not a T20 bowler," Masroor had said.

All the traits Masroor had spoken about were visible in the semi-final clash. The 15-year-old bowled with cramps, hobbled off after bowling his last over, but only after conjuring one of the finest spells of the tournament picking up 4 for 34. But it was not enough as the last wicket stand between Raf MacMillan (19 not out) and Callum Vidler (2 not out) took Australia home and set up the final clash against India.

"I will remember this spell from this young man for a long time," former West Indies fast bowler Ian Bishop gushed in commentary. "He is a super star!"

Chasing 180, Australia were in control with their openers negotiating the early burst from Ubaid Shah. Raza provided Pakistan the first breakthrough after he cleaned up Sam Konstas. A mini-collapse reduced Australia to 59 for 16. 3 overs before Harry Dixon (50) and Oliver Peake (49) put on a 43-run stand for the fifth wicket. But left-arm-spinner Arafat Minhas (2/20) castled both the set batters with rapid arm-balls to turn the tide again.

Raja turned in figures of 4-0-9-3 in his second spell to almost seize a victory. "This is absolute gold from Ali Raza," Bishop screamed in his iconic way after Raza dismissed Australia's No 10 Mahli Beardman. Ubaid Shah and Mohammed Zeeshan failed to repeat the performances that they showed against Bangladesh and Australia's last wicket partnership sneaked to the final.

**He is so tiny but I can tell you from what I can see that this kid is quick. For the next three years, he needs to be nurtured... If they (Pakistan) would do that, they have a real talent on their hands.**

**IAN BISHOP**

FORMER WEST INDIES PACER

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# What is freestyle chess, format that excites Carlsen

AMIT KAMATH  
FEBRUARY 8

**WORLD NO 1 Magnus Carlsen**

will face off against world champion Ding Liren across the chess board in a new, innovative tournament starting Friday. It will be the first time the duo will command their miniature armies of carved pieces against each other since the Chinese GM sat down on the throne abdicated by Carlsen without a shot being fired.

The duo will face off in a unique format with a twist – a format popularised by the American chess legend Bobby Fischer called freestyle chess. The format promotes creativity from players by having unique starting positions on the board rather than having pieces on the back ranks in the same positions.

Besides the reigning world champion Liren and the current world no 1, the invitational tournament – called the Freestyle Chess G.O.A.T. Challenge – will also have six other players: with veterans Fabiano Caruana and Levon Aronian joined by young stars like Alireza Firouzja, Vincent Keymer, Nodirbek Abdusattorov, and Gukesh Dommaraju, who will be India's only representative.

What makes the tournament interesting is Carlsen has hand-picked the rest of the seven challengers, who will face off at an expansive nature retreat in Germany called Weissenhaus Private Nature Luxury Resort. The resort previously played host to the G7 Foreign Ministers' Summit in 2022.

The tournament will start with a round-robin event in the rapid format (with a time control of 25

minutes, 10-second increments for every move) on Friday and Saturday. This will be followed by the knockout stages: where all eight players will play quarters on Sunday and Monday, semis on Tuesday and Wednesday, and final on Thursday and Friday (time control will be 90 minutes for the first 40 moves with 30 more added minutes and a 30-second increment per move after move 30).

While the winner of the event stands to take home approximately Rs 50 lakh, the player finishing last also bags a cheque for approximately Rs 6.6 lakhs. Freestyle chess goes by multiple names: Fischer Random Chess, Chess 9LX, and Chess 960 (960 is the number of possible starting positions on the board when you shuffle your pieces on the last ranks of the board).

How this form of chess differs from the other forms is in the placement of the pieces on the board at the start of the game. While all the eight pawns of each colour remain in the second and the seventh ranks on the board like in regular chess, the position of the rest of the pieces – the rooks, the bishops, the knights, the queen, and the king – on the first and the last rank changes randomly at the start of the game. It must be noted that the pieces still retain their regular characteristics in action: rooks travel in straight lines, bishops saunter diagonally, and so on.

The purpose of changing the position of the pieces in the far ends of the board is to throw the meticulous opening preparations that chess players do, running into several moves, out of the window. Players only find out what the board position is before the game.

While promoting the event, Carlsen had called it "the format I have been waiting for".

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**Core EBITDA up by 75%**

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

Particulars	Standalone						Consolidated					
	Quarter ended 31 December 2023 (Unaudited)	Quarter ended 30 September 2023 (Unaudited)	Quarter ended 31 December 2022 (Unaudited)	Nine months ended 31 December 2023 (Unaudited)	Nine months ended 31 December 2022 (Unaudited)	Year ended 31 March 2023 (Audited)	Quarter ended 31 December 2023 (Unaudited)	Quarter ended 30 September 2023 (Unaudited)	Quarter ended 31 December 2022 (Unaudited)	Nine months ended 31 December 2023 (Unaudited)	Nine months ended 31 December 2022 (Unaudited)	Year ended 31 March 2023 (Audited)
Total income from Operations	2,792.14	2,883.64	2,236.86	8,301.42	6,251.27	9,921.20	2,884.22	2,986.83	2,346.51	8,588.20	6,587.27	10,367.93
Net profit / (loss) (before tax & exceptional items)	245.97	299.10	212.95	772.67	598.73	883.19	313.79	328.36	177.92	905.20	590.29	891.00
Net profit / (loss) (before tax & after exceptional items)	245.97	299.10	212.95	772.67	598.73	883.19	313.79	328.36	177.92	905.20	590.29	891.00
Net profit after tax	185.12	230.44	227.42	577.22	528.65	776.83	244.70	250.78	190.00	682.85	508.75	765.23
Profit is attributable to :												
Owners of the Parent	185.12	230.44	227.42	577.22	528.65	776.83	244.64	250.73	189.99	682.73	508.74	765.23
Non Controlling Interest	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.06	0.05	0.01	0.12	0.01	-
Total comprehensive income	182.85	237.01	225.87	582.03	537.79	787.94	242.40	257.35	188.45	687.63	517.84	776.29
Equity share capital	188.10	188.10	188.10	188.10	188.10	188.10	188.10	188.10	188.10	188.10	188.10	188.10
Other Equity attributable to Owners of the Parent (Excluding Revaluation Reserve)						4,990.38						5,023.39
Earnings Per Share (not annualized)												
(Face Value of ₹/- each)												
(a) Basic (in ₹)	1.97	2.45	2.42	6.14	5.62	8.26	2.60	2.67	2.02	7.26	5.41	8.14
(b) Diluted (in ₹)	1.97	2.45	2.42	6.14	5.62	8.26	2.60	2.67	2.02	7.26	5.41	8.14

**NOTES :**

1. The above standalone and consolidated financial results were reviewed and recommended by the Audit Committee and approved by the Board of Directors at their meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> February 2024. The Statutory Auditors of the company have conducted limited review of the financial results for the Quarter and nine months ended 31<sup>st</sup> Dec. 2023.
2. The Standalone and consolidated financial results have been prepared in accordance with the Indian Accounting Standards (Ind AS) as notified under Section 133 of the Companies Act, 2013 read with relevant rules thereunder and in terms of Regulation 33 of the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015 (as Amended) and other recognised accounting practices and policies to the extent applicable.
3. The above is an extract of the detailed format of the financial results filed with the Stock Exchange under Regulation 33 of the SEBI (Listing and Other Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015, as amended. The full format of the aforesaid financial results are available on the Stock Exchanges website of BSE (<https://www.bseindia.com>), NSE (<https://www.nseindia.com>) and Company's website at [www.ircon.org](http://www.ircon.org).
4. Ministry of Railway (MoR) vide letter dated 18.10.2021 has decided in principle for closure of Indian Railway Stations Development Corporation Limited, a joint venture company and transfer of its assets and liabilities to RLDA/Railways. The transaction pricing and related modalities are in process.
5. Ministry of Railway (MoR) has granted in-principle approval for closure of Bastar Railway Private Limited, a joint venture company and transfer of its assets and liabilities to MoR. The legal formalities, pricing and related modalities are in process.
6. It has been decided to handover Phase-I (Angul - Balram, 14 KM already operational) and Phase-II (Balram-Putgadia-Tentuloi, 54 KM under construction) of MCR Project to Ministry of Railways (MoR). The legal formalities, pricing and related modalities are in process

and the Company does not foresee any impairment in the value of investment at this stage.

7. Interim Dividend of Rs. 1.80 per equity share on face value of Rs 2/- per share for the year 2023-24 was approved in BoD held on 8<sup>th</sup> February, 2024.

For and on behalf of Ircon International Limited  
Sd/-  
**Brijesh Kumar Gupta**  
Chairman & Managing Director  
DIN-10092756

**IRCON INTERNATIONAL LIMITED**  
(A Government of India Undertaking)  
Registered Office: C-4, District Centre Saket, New Delhi-110017; Tel: +91-11-29565666; Fax: +91-11-26522000/26854000  
E-mail: [info@ircon.org](mailto:info@ircon.org); Website: [www.ircon.org](http://www.ircon.org); Corporate Identity Number: L45203DL1976G01008171

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Corporate Affairs Centre for  
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(C-PACE) IICA Building, 7th Floor,  
Plot P-6,7,8, Sector-5, IMT Manesar,  
Gurgaon, Haryana-122050.  
Email: roc.cpace@mca.gov.in


**FORM No. STK--6  
PUBLIC NOTICE**

[Pursuant to sub-section (2) and sub-section (4) of section 248 of the Companies Act, 2013 and rule 7 of the Companies (Removal of Names of Companies from the Register of Companies) Rules, 2016]

**Public Notice No. ROC/C-PACE/STK-2/248(2)/865**

Date: - 23.01.2024

**Reference:**

(1) In the matter of striking off or removal of names 79 of companies in Delhi State of under section 248 of the Companies Act, 2013 in respect of:

S. No	Work Item	CIN	Company Name
1	AA6503877	U74999DL2019PTC344344	BELLWAY AUTOMATION PRIVATE LIMITED
2	AA6342726	U74999DL2018PTC328781	PIRCUBE TECH SOLUTIONS PRIVATE LIMITED
3	AA6004400	U74899DL1961PTC003536	RENTERS AND FINANCIERS PVT LTD
4	AA6514103	U74899DL1987PTC028755	SURAJ ELECTRONICS PRIVATE LIMITED
5	AA6619300	U74899DL1985PTC022502	PATKAL MEDICAL FACILITIES PRIVATE LTD
6	AA6501464	U65929DL1996PTC084143	KHATRI FINVEST PRIVATE LIMITED
7	AA6611540	U72200DL2001PTC110841	INFONET SYSCOM (INDIA) PRIVATE LIMITED
8	AA6593708	U22219DL2003PTC121026	ROOTS PUBLISHERS PRIVATE LIMITED
9	AA6621722	U74899DL2004PLC137211	CATA APPLIANCES LIMITED
10	AA6615960	U85110DL2004PTC130084	CAPITAL WOMEN & CHILD CARE PRIVATE LIMITED
11	AA6596536	U45203DL2004PTC130615	INTERNATIONAL STRUCTURE SOLUTIONS PRIVATE LIMITED
12	AA6480414	U55101DL2005PTC142816	NEW DELHI HOSPITALITY PRIVATE LIMITED
13	AA6495174	U55209DL2007PTC158965	BIZPORT IMPEX PRIVATE LIMITED
14	AA6572790	U35122DL2007PTC162057	VTEK MOBILE SOLUTIONS PRIVATE LIMITED
15	AA6521718	U45400DL2008PTC172165	N R LANDCON PRIVATE LIMITED
16	AA6602921	U25202DL2007PTC170157	RAMDOOT POLYVINYL'S PRIVATE LIMITED
17	AA6519654	U45400DL2008PTC172163	CRESENT LANDCON PRIVATE LIMITED
18	AA6595030	U74140DL2008PTC181492	BLUE SUN ADVISORS PRIVATE LIMITED
19	AA6606302	U24100DL2008PTC183062	AUTHENTIX INDIA PRIVATE LIMITED
20	AA6380750	U74899DL2006PTC144619	AMG SOFTWARE SOLUTION PRIVATE LIMITED
21	AA6603137	U16000DL2010PTC203562	KASTURI DEVI JAISWAL TOBACCO PRIVATE LIMITED
22	AA6622424	U36910DL2011PTC215495	AAMBRA GEMS AND JEWELS PRIVATE LIMITED
23	AA6505627	U74999DL2012PTC237890	VARIVAS BUILD & HELP PRIVATE LIMITED
24	AA6575403	U80904DL2012PTC244020	E-LEARNING CONTENT AGGREGATORS PRIVATE LIMITED
25	AA6617359	U52300DL2011PTC224399	SKAA TRADEMART PRIVATE LIMITED
26	AA6636939	U33110DL2006PTC149034	AYANA MEDICARE PRIVATE LIMITED
27	AA6520802	U70109DL2006PTC149216	MOONLIGHT INFRABUILD PRIVATE LIMITED
28	AA6397409	U15400DL2013PTC247152	SJB FOODS PRIVATE LIMITED
29	AA6551546	U74999DL2014PTC263020	NEELRISHI FILMS PRIVATE LIMITED
30	AA6522704	U70109DL2006PTC150876	CORONET BUILDCON PRIVATE LIMITED
31	AA6575236	U51909DL2006PTC154703	RASICA ENTERPRISE PRIVATE LIMITED
32	AA6607124	U27300DL2015PTC284804	TECHNO CARS SOFTWARE PRIVATE LIMITED
33	AA6618943	U51101DL2014PTC265327	JAYNA TRADEMART PRIVATE LIMITED
34	AA6590770	U67120DL2012PTC232603	INSIGNIA COMMODITIES & FOREX PRIVATE LIMITED
35	AA6619802	U67119DL2015PTC283540	BUILDSOIL MANAGEMENT PRIVATE LIMITED
36	AA6627085	U85300DL2011PTC229420	SECOND INNINGS SERVICES PRIVATE LIMITED
37	AA6637166	U72300DL2015PTC284804	THINKOLOGY PRIVATE LIMITED
38	AA6591554	U52590DL2015PTC286132	VARS E-RETAIL PRIVATE LIMITED
39	AA6444259	U74999DL2016PTC309168	RENEWED TECHNOLOGY PRIVATE LIMITED
40	AA6618008	U74900DL2015OPC280244	NAIYAKI DESIGNS OPC PRIVATE LIMITED
41	AA6397938	U52100DL2016PTC290596	WOODSBURY TRADING PRIVATE LIMITED
42	AA6502880	U74999DL2016PTC299402	UNIMIG PRIVATE LIMITED
43	AA6641867	U70100DL2012PTC240711	ADAB HOSPITALITY SERVICES PRIVATE LIMITED
44	AA6556284	U15439DL2016PTC299692	MRIDHA ENTERPRISES PRIVATE LIMITED
45	AA6494960	U74999DL2017PTC313719	ULMA MANUTENCION INDIA PRIVATE LIMITED
46	AA6610617	U70109DL2018PTC336775	RCDK PROPERTIES PRIVATE LIMITED
47	AA6592461	U74999DL2018PTC327075	NIYAMA HEALINGZ PRIVATE LIMITED
48	AA6644243	U74999DL2018PTC331158	VEMRI INDIA OVERSEAS PRIVATE LIMITED
49	AA6556182	U80300DL2018PTC330197	PARAMETER LEARNINGS INDIA PRIVATE LIMITED
50	AA6575472	U22210DL2018PTC330184	ISSHATITVA PRIVATE LIMITED
51	AA6505072	U72900DL2017PTC327085	ZILIGENCE INFOTECH PRIVATE LIMITED
52	AA6583808	U29100DL2018PTC338954	NEEOM COMPONENTS PRIVATE LIMITED
53	AA6634671	U93090DL2018OPC332852	RIDHIMA VEDIC SOLUTIONS (OPC) PRIVATE LIMITED
54	AA6527596	U45201DL2018PTC340900	CUBE HIGHWAYS PROJECT MANAGEMENT PRIVATE LIMITED
55	AA5317362	U70109DL2019PTC349231	JHAJJBAD PROJECTS PRIVATE LIMITED
56	AA6571258	U70109DL2019PTC347914	NARSINGHDASS VENTURES PRIVATE LIMITED
57	AA6590779	U72900DL2019OPC355289	ERIOTROTYA TECHNOLOGY (OPC) PRIVATE LIMITED
58	AA6579557	U74999DL2017PTC354554	APRIL INDUSTRIES PRIVATE LIMITED
59	AA6594424	U74999DL2019PTC358199	CLEAN ECOTECH INDIA PRIVATE LIMITED
60	AA6487898	U73100DL2019PTC358353	BRAINMAPPERZ ANALYTICS PRIVATE LIMITED
61	AA6510554	U51909DL2019PTC355738	KEELA TACTICAL SOLUTIONS (INDIA) PRIVATE LIMITED
62	AA6609379	U51909DL2020PTC362808	HIDARZI PRIVATE LIMITED
63	AA6609626	U72900DL2020PTC362060	TECHDARZ PRIVATE LIMITED
64	AA6388415	U80902DL2019PTC359478	SBMC PROFIN INDIA PRIVATE LIMITED
65	AA6634053	U01110DL2020PTC370257	AGRIPONICS INDIA PRIVATE LIMITED
66	AA6617454	U15400DL2020PTC367714	GRANOMIL FOODS PRIVATE LIMITED
67	AA6562491	U72900DL2020PTC368175	MYSTREAM FUTURETECH PRIVATE LIMITED
68	AA6556651	U80904DL2021OPC375953	DOCRZZ GURURHH ELEARNING (OPC) PRIVATE LIMITED
69	AA6616562	U72900DL2020PTC371541	ROMBITS PRIVATE LIMITED
70	AA6561263	U51909DL2021PTC381974	SCHIFF TECH PRIVATE LIMITED
71	AA6629207	U21010DL2021PTC380413	KCL PAPER MILL PRIVATE LIMITED
72	AA6611622	U72900DL2021PTC377195	DIGITAL HUT CONSULTING PRIVATE LIMITED
73	AA6497860	U29309DL2021PTC388172	QUALISTAR MOTOSPORTS PRIVATE LIMITED
74	AA6626360	U74999DL2021PTC387472	ONRO INDIA PRIVATE LIMITED
75	AA6476031	U52399DL2022PTC393248	ESHRAH HOMES PRIVATE LIMITED
76	AA6593637	U72900DL2022PTC399295	9YARDS SOFTWARE SERVICES PRIVATE LIMITED
77	AA6606591	U51400DL2022PTC408618	L.N.GOENKA INDUSTRIES PRIVATE LIMITED
78	AA6596279	U78300DL2023PTC413826	ANRISS PRIVATE LIMITED
79	AA6628816	U79110DL2023OPC422144	INDIREPS (OPC) PRIVATE LIMITED

- (2) Notice is hereby given that the Registrar of Companies had received applications from the above-mentioned companies under section 248(2) of the Companies Act, 2013 for removal of its/their name (s) from the register of companies either on the ground that they have failed to commence business within one year of their incorporation or on the ground that the company(ies) is/are not carrying on any business or operation for a period of two immediately preceding financial years and has/have not made any application (s) within such period for obtaining the status of a dormant company under section 455 of the Companies Act, 2013 or the company(ies) have obtained the status of dormant company/subscribers to the memorandum have not paid the subscription which they had undertaken to pay at the time of incorporation of a company and a declaration to this effect has not been filed within one hundred and eighty days of its incorporation under subsection (1) of section 10A/ have not been carrying on any business or operations, as revealed after the physical verification carried out under sub-section (9) of section 12, but it/they do not wish to continue its/their registration as companies and have, therefore, requested for removal/strike off of its/their names from the register of companies.
- (3) Accordingly, the Registrar of Companies proposes to remove or strike off the names of the above-mentioned companies from the Register of Companies.
- (4) Any person objecting to the proposed removal or striking off of name of the companies from the register of companies may send his or her objection to the office address mentioned here above within thirty days from the date of publication of this notice.

(Harihar Sahoo)  
Registrar  
Centre for Processing Accelerated Corporate Exit

**FEBRUARY 13 DILLI CHALO MARCH**

# Union ministers meet farm leaders; consensus on some demands: Mann

KANCHAN VASDEV,  
RAAKHI JAGGA  
& SUKBIR SIWACH  
CHANDIGARH, LUDHIANA,  
FEBRUARY 8

ATHREE-MEMBER team of Union ministers Thursday held detailed discussions with the leaders of farmer organisations with Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann saying that a consensus was reached on some of the demands of the agriculturists and second round of talks was likely before the Dilli Chalo protest march by farmers on February 13. The farmer leaders said their march on February 13 still stands, and added that they will take a call on it only if "government gets back to us with a positive response".

Mann, who coordinated with the farmer leaders for arranging the meeting, said the ministers agreed on several issues including withdrawal of cases registered against farmers during the previous agitation against the now-repealed farm laws and strict punishment for those selling fake seeds and chemicals.

The Central team comprised Agriculture Minister Arjun Munda, Food and Civil Supplies Minister Piyush Goyal, and Minister of State for Home Affairs Nitin Gadkari. They flew down to Chandigarh in the evening to reach out to the farmer leaders. From farmers' side, the meeting was attended by Kisan Mazdoor Sangharsh Committee (KMSC) general secretary Sarwan Singh Pandher and Samyukta Kisan Morcha (Non-Political) leader Jagjit Singh Dallewal among others.

The SKM (Non-Political) and the KMSC had announced 'Dilli Chalo' march by more than 200 farmers' unions on February 13 to press the Centre for accepting several demands, including enactment of a law to guarantee a minimum support price (MSP) for



Boulders stocked up at Bathinda border. Express

crops. Dallewal said the meeting with the Union ministers was held in a positive atmosphere.

"We presented our demands with facts. When Prime Minister Narendra Modi was the Gujarat chief minister, he had constituted a committee which had recommended the legal guarantee to the MSP. We also put forward how farmers were getting burdened with debt. The central team heard us and they (Union ministers) said they will discuss the issue in Delhi before getting back to us," said Dallewal.

On farmers' proposed march, Dallewal said it still stands. "The Centre assured that they will soon hold another meeting. If the Centre resolves our issues by holding a meeting before February 13, then it is right. Otherwise, our February 13 programme still stands," said Dallewal.

Mann, meanwhile said, said, "A general consensus emerged on rolling back the cases registered against farmers during the agitation against the now-repealed farm laws. Exemplary punishment was sought against the manufacturers of the spurious seeds, to which the ministers agreed".

## Border to be sealed

Aiming to stall the movement of farmers to Delhi, the Haryana

## 'Shocking', says Karnataka CM on PM's threat to unity remark

Bengaluru: Karnataka CM Siddaramaiah on Thursday lashed out at Prime Minister Narendra Modi for his remarks against the 'Delhi Chalo' protest held by the Congress government on February 7.

"Modi's remarks that the 'Delhi Chalo' protest - held against the injustice to Karnataka in devolution of taxes and other issues - threatens the unity and security of the nation has shocked me," he said. Recalling the criticism by Modi as Gujarat CM against the then UPA govern-

ment, he asked "whether his statements had not threatened national unity and security?"

Siddaramaiah said that as Gujarat CM, Modi had advocated for an increase in the state's share of taxes devolved by the Centre. "He wanted a change in the tax-sharing formula that gave more incentives to states who have failed in finance management and ignored the states which did well... He had argued this with the (14th) Finance Commission. Was it not a stance against the Centre?" he said. ENS

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