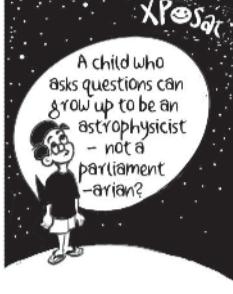


BUSINESS AS USUAL

By UNNY



CHALLENGE TO CITIZENSHIP (AMENDMENT) ACT PENDING BEFORE SC

Govt ready with rules for CAA, set to be notified before LS polls announcement

Process to be online, mobile phones can also be used to apply: Officials

**MAHENDER SINGH
MANRAL
& ANANTHAKRISHNANG**
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 2

RULES FOR the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA), the Bill for which was cleared by Parliament in December 2019, will be notified much before the announcement of the Lok Sabha elections, sources in the govern-

ment said Tuesday.

The Bill, which sought to fast-track Indian citizenship to Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Parsis and Christians – but not Muslims – who migrated to India owing to religious persecution in Pakistan, Afghanistan and Bangladesh, was passed by Lok Sabha on December 9, 2019, and Rajya Sabha two days later. It received the President's assent on December 12, 2019.

E EXPLAINED Rules key to Act

IT HAS been more than four years since the law received Presidential assent after Parliament cleared the Bill. Its passage led to widespread protests. Eight extensions later, the government is ready with the rules which are necessary for implementation of the Act.

GOVT & POLITICS

**BJP HUDDLE ON LS
POLLS: RAM TEMPLE
CAMPAIGN, 303-PLUS
SEATS**

PAGE 7

Express that the rules are now ready and the online portal is also in place. The entire process, sources said, will be online and applicants can apply even from their mobile phones.

"We are going to issue the rules for the CAA in the coming days. Once the rules are issued, the law can be implemented and those eligible can be granted Indian citizenship," the sources said.

Asked whether the rules will be notified before the announcement of the Lok Sabha elections, the sources said, "All things are

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

GMRT TO PLAY KEY ROLE

Another eye in sky, on ground: India is now part of world's largest radio telescope project

DAE approves
Rs 1,250 cr, Pune's
NCRA to take lead



Installation work at one of the SKA sites in Western Australia. Credit: SKAO

ANJALI MARAR
BENGALURU, JANUARY 2

EVEN AS ISRO Monday launched a unique observatory to study X-rays and black holes in deep space and the stage is being set to construct the third node of the LIGO in Maharashtra, scientists in India will now also be part of the international mega-science project, the Square Kilometre Array Observatory (SKAO), that will function as the world's largest radio telescope.

The SKAO is not a single telescope but an array of thousands of antennas, to be installed in remote radio-quiet locations in South Africa and Australia, that will operate as one large unit meant to observe and study celestial phenomena.

India, through the Pune-based National Centre for Radio Astrophysics (NCRA) and some other institutions, has been involved in the development of SKA since its inception in the 1990s.

Considering the multinational collaboration, SKAO was established as an intergovernmental organisation in 2021 fol-

lowing years of negotiation in which India, too, participated.

Countries have to sign, and ratify, the SKAO convention to formally become members. The Government's approval for joining the project, with a financial sanction of Rs 1,250 crore, is the first step towards the ratification.

The approval, which the Department of Atomic Energy announced in its 2023 year-ending note, comes weeks after India gave its go-ahead to construct the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

SCIENCE CONGRESS FAILS TO KEEP DATE THIS YEAR

PAGE 8

TERROR ATTACKS SOUTH OF PIR PANJAL

Lack of actionable intel & thinning of troops factors, reassessment on

AMRITA NAYAK DUTTA
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 2

LACK OF adequate actionable intelligence on infiltration of terrorists and their sustenance, thinning of security forces in the hinterland and an increasing influx of narcotics are among the reasons for the high intensity attacks on security forces in Poonch, Rajouri and Jammu, three border districts of the Jammu region, top



Home Minister Amit Shah chairs a meeting to review the J&K security situation, in New Delhi Tuesday. PTI REPORT, PAGE 8

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Euromonitor.

However, international chocolate behemoths such as Nestlé, Mondelez, and Hershey's, which currently lead in the domestic milk chocolate market, play second fiddle to home-grown players such as Amul in the niche but rapidly-expanding dark chocolate segment.

In contrast, domestic brands such as Amul, ITC's Fabelle, Chokola and Mason & Co are spearheading innovation in product offerings by experimenting with different ingredients and emphasising on single-origin cocoa sources. Amul, for instance, offers 17 dark chocolate bars in its product portfolio.

Yet, international brands such as Nestlé, Mondelez and

Hershey's, who are among the top players in Europe's \$26-billion dark chocolate market, have chosen to continue catering to the milk chocolate market in India as is evident by their limited offerings of dark chocolate and focus on rural penetration with mass-market products.

At a market share of 58.3 per cent, the \$639-million milk chocolate segment dominates India's overall chocolate market. Dark chocolates currently have a market share of nearly 8 per cent, but that's growing.

Consider this: India's dark chocolate market more than doubled in size to \$86 million from \$41 million over the past five years, growing 16 per cent annually, while the dominant milk chocolate segment grew at 11 per cent a year, as per data from market research firm

Euromonitor.

As more and more Indians acquire a taste for dark chocolate, it's domestic brands, not global confectionery giants, who are dominating this fast-growing segment.

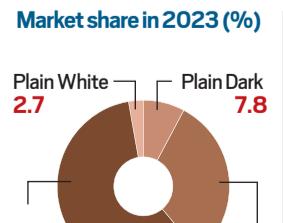
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THE CHOCOLATE MARKET

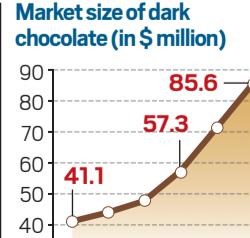
Market for chocolate bars grew to US\$1,096.8 million in 2023 and is set to increase by 65% in the next five years

Market share in 2023 (%)



Source: Euromonitor

Market size of dark chocolate (in \$ million)



These homegrown brands are also tapping into consumer segments that are urban, health conscious, and open to trying unusual flavours through specific marketing and distribution strategies.

Unlike milk chocolate, dark chocolate is generally more expensive and tastes comparatively bitter due to higher cocoa content, ranging from 50 to 90 per cent, which makes it an acquired taste for most consumers.

Nestlé India does not have a dark chocolate bar in its product portfolio and its presence in the segment is limited to dark chocolate-coated wafer Kit Kat

Dark

White Hershey's has a few offerings, Mondelez's Cadbury has only five dark chocolate bars.

Nestlé's limited presence in the Indian dark chocolate market appears consistent with its strategy to boost growth by increasing penetration in the highly price-sensitive rural market, instead of focusing on premium offerings. This rural penetration-led growth strategy leaves little room for pricier products like dark chocolate bars. Nestlé's Kit Kat Dark costs Rs 120 for 41.5 gm, which is much higher than the price of the average milk chocolate bar in the Indian market.

Much like Nestlé, Hershey's only offers a single dark chocolate bar product in India called BARS Dark with 49 per cent cocoa content at Rs 60 for 40 gm. Hershey's also has a range of bite-sized filled chocolate called Exotic Dark, which is essentially fruits and nuts covered by a layer of flavoured dark chocolate.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Ram Lalla idol: 'Shyam' or 'shwet'? Most trustees back Yogiraj's sculpture

Yogiraj of Mysuru used *shyam shila* or bluish-black stone to carve 51-inch idol

Another source said the final decision is likely to be announced by the Trust latest by Makar Sankranti i.e., January 14-15.

Three renowned sculptors from their respective fields were chosen to carve three idols depicting a five-year old 51-inch tall Ram Lalla (child Ram) in standing form. Two idols sculpted by Arun Yogiraj and Ganesh Bhatt have been carved in dark bluish-grey stone (referred to as "*shyam shila*") derived from Karnataka, the third one by Satyanarayan Pandey and his family, is pure white, carved from makrana marble from Rajasthan.

A source said about eight sculptors were invited from different parts of the country in May last year, of whom three agreed to work under specific conditions. The first condition was they would have

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



PM UNVEILS SLEW OF PROJECTS IN TAMIL NADU

Prime Minister Narendra Modi with Tamil Nadu Governor R N Ravi, Chief Minister M K Stalin, Civil Aviation Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia and Union MoS (I&B) L Murugan at the inauguration of the new terminal building at Tiruchirappalli airport on Tuesday. Modi inaugurated projects worth Rs 20,140 crore for the state during his visit. PTI REPORT, PAGE 7

THE WORLD



PLANE CATCHES FIRE AFTER COLLISION AT JAPAN AIRPORT, FIVE KILLED

PAGE 16

IIT-BHU SEXUAL ASSAULT Accused involved in 3 other molestations on campus: Probe



At the home of one of the accused in Varanasi. Asad Rehman

tion on the campus between 11 pm and 1 am frequently, officers involved in the investigation told *The Indian Express*.

Varanasi police had on Saturday arrested Kunal Pandey (28), Saksham Patel (20) and Abhishek Chauhan (22) for the incident, which took place on the night of November 1. As reported by *The Indian Express*, two days before this incident, another woman student had faced a similar ordeal and had reported it to the Proctor's office.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

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Home Minister Amit Shah chairs a meeting to review the J&K security situation, in New Delhi Tuesday. PTI REPORT, PAGE 8

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

PAGE 1
ANCHOR

Local brands take big bite of India's growing dark chocolate pie

Euromonitor.

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CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

SC: Question is to what extent can Bihar withhold caste survey data breakup

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 2

THE SUPREME Court on Tuesday wondered as to what extent Bihar government can withhold the break-up of the caste survey data.

"More than the report itself, what we are concerned about is that the breakdown of data is not normally made available to the public, which leads to a lot of problems. The question is to what extent can the government withhold the breakup of the data?" said Justice Sanjiv Khanna presiding over a two-judge bench.

Senior Advocate Shyam Diwan, who appeared for the Bihar government, told the bench, also comprising Justice Dipankar Dutt, that the survey is available in the public domain.

"If it is available fully, then that's a different matter..." said Justice Khanna, adding: "The

CBI closes 2019 IPL betting cases due to lack of evidence

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 2

THE CENTRAL Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has closed two cases related to alleged fixing of Indian Premier League (IPL) matches in 2019, "based on inputs" from Pakistan, due to lack of evidence, said officials on Tuesday.

In May 2022, the agency had registered two FIRs against seven persons after receiving information that "a network of individuals involved in cricket betting were influencing the outcome of IPL matches, based on inputs received from Pakistan".

The CBI named Dileep Kumar based in New Delhi's Rohini, and Gurram Vasu and Gurram Satish based in Hyderabad as the accused in its first FIR. Sajjan Singh, Prabhu Lal Meena, Ram Avtar, and Amit Kumar Sharma — all from Rajasthan — were also named accused in the second FIR.

Truckers protest

Home Secretary Ajay Kumar Bhalla held with the transporters, AIMTC member Amrik Singh said Tuesday evening that no strike call had been given by his union. "The drivers were protesting against the new provisions. After the meeting, the issue has been resolved," he said.

Transporters' associations across the country have been protesting for the past two days against provisions under the new code, as per which any driver who causes the death of a person by rash and negligent driving and flees from the spot will be jailed for up to 10 years and/or fined.

There was no specific provision for hit-and-run cases in the Indian Penal Code and action was taken under sections for causing death due to negligence, with a maximum jail term of two years.

After the meeting with representatives of the AIMTC, where the transporters demanded revocation of the stringent provisions, Bhalla told reporters, "We have taken cognizance of the apprehensions among vehicle drivers regarding provisions of 10-year punishment and fine provided for in BNS 106(2) and discussed the matter at length with representatives of the AIMTC."

The Government wants to convey that these new provisions and laws are yet to be implemented. We also want to state that a decision regarding the enforcement of BNS 106(2) will be taken only after discussions with the AIMTC. We appeal to the AIMTC and all vehicle drivers to return to work," he said.

At a press conference ahead of the meeting with Bhalla, the AIMTC demanded the withdrawal of the new penal provision.

"We are not demanding that those who drink and drive or drivers who drive rashly should be dealt with kid gloves. But there have been many cases where drivers have got involved in accidents for no fault of theirs and people have gathered in mobs to beat them up. Sometimes the mobs also burn the vehicle and the drivers have to run for their safety," said AIMTC member Bal Malkit Singh.

"A truck costs Rs 50 lakh but is often carrying material worth crores, no driver would be stupid enough to leave their goods behind. The drivers know that they can be traced and in most cases drivers go back and surrender on their own," he said.

"We had written to the Home Ministry on December 27, asking them to withdraw the law but it

FROM PAGE ONE ■ FULL REPORTS ON WWW.INDIANEXPRESS.COM

Centre ready with rules for CAA

in place and yes, they are likely to be implemented before the elections. The applicants will have to declare the year when they entered India without travel documents. No document will be sought from the applicants. Requests of the applicants, who had applied after 2014, will be converted as per the new rules," the source said.

The Centre, an official said, has so far availed eight extensions of the date to frame the rules. "In the last two years, over 30 District Magistrates and Home Secretaries of nine states have been given powers to grant Indian citizenship to Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Parsis and Christians coming from Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Pakistan under the Citizenship Act of 1955," the official said.

Addressing a party gathering in West Bengal last week, Union Home Minister Amit Shah said the BJP was committed to the CAA. "Didi (West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee) often misleads our refugee brothers regarding the CAA. Let me make it clear that the CAA is the law of the land and no one can stop it. Everybody is going to get citizenship. This is our party's commitment," he told the gathering.

Multiple reasons have been attributed to the government delaying the implementation of one of the most polarising pieces of legislation brought by the Modi government. One of the prime reasons is the vociferous opposition faced by the CAA in several states including Assam and Tripura.

The protests in Assam were fuelled by fears that the legislation would permanently alter the demographics of the state. The CAA is seen in Assam as a violation of the 1985 Assam Accord which allows foreign migrants who came to Assam after January 1, 1966 but before March 25, 1971 to seek citizenship. The cut-off date for citizenship to be extended under the CAA is December 31, 2014.

The protests didn't remain confined to the North-East, but spread to other parts of the country. A clutch of petitions, including by the Indian Union Muslim League, are before the Supreme Court, challenging the constitutional validity of the CAA.

The petitioners have contended that the law caters only to Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Parsis and Christians from Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan and is arbitrary as it leaves out the persecuted Rohingya of Myanmar, Tibetan Buddhists from China and Tamils

from Sri Lanka.

In an initial counter-affidavit in response to the petitions, the Centre said the basis of the "reasonable... classification" made by the 2019 Act was not religion, but "religious discrimination" in neighbouring countries which are "functioning with a state religion". It said the legislation was "not meant to be an omnibus solution to issues across the world and the Indian Parliament cannot be expected to take note of possible persecutions that may be taking place across various countries in the world".

In another counter-affidavit filed subsequently, the Centre reiterated its stance and said the CAA "is a benign piece of legislation which seeks to provide a relaxation, in the nature of an amnesty, to specific communities from the specified countries with a clear cut-off date.... the CAA is a specific amendment which seeks to tackle a specific problem prevalent in the specified countries (Pakistan, Afghanistan and Bangladesh) i.e. persecution on the ground of religion in light of the undisputable theocratic constitutional position in the specified countries, the systematic functioning of such States and the perception of fear that may be prevalent amongst minorities as

per the de facto situation in the said countries. The Parliament, after taking cognizance of the said issues over the course of the past seven decades and having taken into consideration the acknowledged class of minorities in three specific countries, has enacted the present amendment".

It said "the treatment to be given to the classified communities in the particular neighbouring countries has been attracting the attention of successive governments but no government took any legislative measure and merely acknowledged the problem and took some administrative action through executive instructions regarding entry, stay and citizenship issues of these classified communities".

The government said the constitutionality of CAA "ought to be tested within that legislative domain and cannot be conflated to extend beyond that object and the reasons behind the Parliamentary cognizance of the issue by which the competent Legislature has, in its wisdom, devised a legislative policy to deal with the acknowledged problem of persecution of the particular communities in the specified countries who are, by their very Constitutions, theocratic countries".

• J&K attacks: Lack of actionable intel, thinning of troops factors

security and government officials have told *The Indian Express*.

This, the officials said, has prompted a reassessment of the deployment of troops and the existing methodology of counter-insurgency operations in the area.

In the last two years, this belt that lies south of the Pir Panjal range has seen high visibility terror attacks though fewer in numbers than the Valley.

The CBI had booked these people on allegations that they were running the racket for more than 10 to 13 years, with suspicious cash transactions being made from their accounts, the officials added. The agency had alleged that these individuals were in touch with Pakistani individuals through a Pakistani cellphone number.

These attacks, together with the death of three civilians in custody, allegedly during questioning of detained men in the wake of the Poonch attack, has led to a shakeup in the local command structure. Three officers have been removed from their posts and an internal inquiry is underway to investigate the circumstances which led to the incident.

According to officials, the Poonch terror attack, around seven months after a similar ambush of Army troops in the same region, has substantiated the presence of terrorists in the region and their ability to evade capture after the strikes.

The Centre wants to point out that these new laws and provisions have not yet come into force. We would also like to point out that the decision to invoke Section 106 (2) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita will be taken only after consultation with the AIMTC," it said in a statement, appealing to the truckers to return to their jobs.

Explaining a key provision in the new law, a source said if a driver accidentally hit someone and made a PCR call to inform police in time, they will face a lesser punishment of five years imprisonment. He said the duration of sentence in hit-and-run cases has been increased to 10 years because of observations made by the Supreme Court.

There are instances when the driver, after committing the accident, flees from the crime scene for fear of being attacked by a crowd or mob lynching. In such cases, the person can escape from the spot and call the police. If one calls the police, then they will escape harsh punishment," an official said. "The Supreme Court has stated in multiple cases that strict action should be taken against those drivers who recklessly drive vehicles, cause accidents resulting in someone's death, and then flee the scene."

According to Section 106(1) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), causing death by any rash or negligent act not amounting to culpable homicide provides for a punishment of up to five years, while Section 106(2) provides for a punishment of up to 10 years in hit-and-run cases where a person is killed and the driver escapes without reporting it to police or a magistrate soon after the incident.

The truck drivers have been protesting since Monday, leading to panic buying and affecting supplies in several states. Many cities such as Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata and Hyderabad reported long queues of vehicles at fuel stations and depleted supply at the mandis.

In Chandigarh, the authorities imposed a cap for sale at fuel stations – two litres for two-wheelers and five litres for four-wheelers per transaction. Today, we are

"This indicates that they are extremely well trained and motivated and have been either able to get internal support for sustenance or gather intelligence on military movements," an official said.

The official said the fact that the terrorists have been able to remain undetected indicates a lack of actionable intelligence on their presence or on the mode of their infiltration and replenishment while they are in the region.

"Instead, they should have been on the run and should have exhausted all resources and support to have had the ability to strike again after an attack," the official said.

Another official said that as terrorists change their tactics, the military also needs to review its standard operating procedure and evolve with better plans and tactics to deal with the challenges.

The lack of actionable intelligence adds to the traditional challenges of the region which geographically favours all-weather infiltration due to the presence of rivulets, forests and gaps in the Line of Control fence.

Moreover, villages ahead of the fence allow infiltrators from across the border to melt into the local population easily without getting tracked.

Multiple small tracks allow their movement into the vast hinterland which provides them places to hide due to the lay of the

land, dense forests and natural caves. The connectivity to Poonch, Jammu and across the Pir Panjal range into the Valley provides them an advantage.

An official said that the thinning of overall security forces in the region in the wake of relative calm has led to gaps in the region. "Moving out of a Rashtriya Rifles force to Ladakh had thinned the overall density of troops on ground. Moreover, there has been a greater focus on the LoC instead of the hinterland," the official said.

"This thinning down of troops from the hinterland has clearly led to a disconnect between the troops and the local population," the official said.

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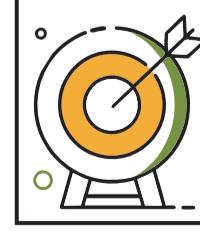
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Woman's death at Metro station: Police lodge FIR

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 2

WEEKS AFTER a 35-year-old woman died at the Inderlok Metro Station, as her sari got caught in the train doors and she was dragged along the platform for 25 metres, police lodged an FIR of negligence and rash driving against unidentified persons.

The case has been filed under IPC sections 279 which pertains to rash driving or riding on public way and 304A which pertains to causing death by negligence.

DCP(Metro) Ram Gopal Naik said CCTV footage of the incident has been collected and a probe into the case is ongoing. He said, "We are waiting for the report from the Commissioner of Metro Railway Safety and will only proceed accordingly."

Last month, Reena, a vegetable vendor, was dragged along the platform after her sari got stuck in the train's door. She eventually hit the track access gate and fell on the tracks before sustaining severe head injuries. She succumbed to injuries at Safdarjung Hospital. The DMRC had announced a compensation of Rs 15 lakh to the next of kin of Reena — her son and daughter.

Sources in the Central

ISRAEL EMBASSY BLAST

'Assembled crude bomb placed near wall': NSG's initial findings

MAHENDER SINGH
MANRAL

NEW DELHI, JANUARY 2

FOLLOWING THE low-intensity blast near the Israel Embassy last month, the National Security Guard (NSG) is learnt to have informed the Delhi Police, as part of its initial findings, that it was an "assembled crude bomb" placed near a wall, it has been learnt.

Police sources said while the Delhi Police did not make a formal request to the NSG to visit the crime scene, the latter went on the Intelligence Bureau's requisition after they had taken clearance from the Delhi Commissioner of Police.

"The NSG picked up evidence from the spot and shared their initial forensic examination report with the IB as well as with the Delhi Police. In their report, they have mentioned that it was an 'assembled crude bomb', but they are not able to ascertain exactly whether any electronic device was used or not," sources said.

Sources in the Central



Forensics teams outside the embassy last week. The Delhi Police had registered an FIR under Section 3 of the Explosive Substances Act. Archive

Intelligence Agencies said they, however, suspect that it might be a timer or remote-controlled assembled bomb. The NSG has a dedicated forensic lab to examine the components and chemicals used in the blast.

"Some shrapnel, ball bearings, a burnt piece of cloth, a part

of a hand watch" were found at the spot, an officer said, adding that the wall also showed "signs of impact".

An "abusive" threat letter from a previously unknown group, Sir Allah Resistance, addressed "to the Israel Embassy ambassador" was also found at the spot.

Last week, the Delhi Police had registered an FIR under Section 3 of the Explosive Substances Act (punishment for causing an explosion likely to endanger life or property) at Tughlak Road police station on a complaint by a police personnel and the investigation was transferred to the New Delhi Range (NDR) of Special Cell.

Their probe, however, appears to have hit a dead end as they have been unable to find new CCTV footage of their prime suspect — a man who "couldn't speak Hindi properly" and "boarded an auto from Jamia Nagar Metro Station".

"Initially, we tried to make a sketch of the suspect based on a description provided by two auto drivers, but they were not able to provide proper details of his description. We found new CCTV footage from Kartavya Path, but the footage was not clear," sources said.

Police said several teams of the NDR have been formed and they have been asked to conduct door-to-door verification to check tenant verification forms, which they have collected from the local police, and to check all the CCTV cameras installed in Jamia Nagar.

On Tuesday, the AAM Aadmi Party on Tuesday said that Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, who has been summoned by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) for questioning on Wednesday in connection with the excise policy case, will "act according to the law" in his response to the summons.

According to sources, Kejriwal's agenda for meetings and engagements on Wednesday is "fairly lean".

The summons, the third of their kind, are for questioning in relation to the excise case which is being probed by both the ED and CBI. The first two summons for questioning were issued on November 2 and December 21.

The Delhi CM sent a written response on both occasions and did not appear for questioning.

In his response to the investigating agency on December 21, Kejriwal said the summons were "not based upon any objective or rational yardstick" and called them pure "propaganda".

In his response to the first summons, he had accused the agency of trying to conduct a "fishing and roving" exercise and called the summons "politically motivated".



Arvind Kejriwal sent a written response for the first two summons and did not appear for questioning. Archive

On Tuesday, when asked whether he would go to the ED headquarters for questioning on Wednesday, national spokesperson Priyanka Kakkar said the party would rely on legal advice and will "act according to the law".

The CM was, in April last year, questioned by CBI in relation to the case. Three senior AAP leaders — former Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia, Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Singh and AAP communications in-charge Vijay Nair — have already been arrested by ED in the case. Both Sisodia and Nair were arrested the same day and will be questioned.

AAP, while calling the case against them bogus, has alleged that the ED now wants to arrest Kejriwal in the same manner.

According to legal experts, if Kejriwal does not appear for questioning the third time, the agency can, in theory, continue to issue notices till he complies. If he still does not join the investigation, the agency can either move an application before a court and ask for a non-bailable warrant against him or investigators can show up at his residence and question him there.

All India Girnar Ascending Descending Competition-2023 TO BE HELD IN FEBRUARY-2023 DISTRICT: JUNAGADH (GUJARAT STATE)

Every year Government of Gujarat Organizes the All India Girnar Ascending Descending Competition, at Girnar-Junagadh. Accordingly this Competition under auspices of Commissionerate, Youth Service & Cultural

Activities, 'Gandhinagar will be held on 4th of February-2024. Prescribed application From is available during office hours and also on website https://commi-synca.gujarat.gov.in/application-forms.htm. and Dydo Junagadh - Facebook ID. The Application duly filled by the applicant should reach the "District Youth and Cultural Activities Office, Junagadh" 1/1, Multistoried Building, Sardarbaugm District: Junagadh (Gujarat State) on or before date: 20-01-2024.

(N. D. Vala)

District Youth Development Officer
Junagadh

INF/Juna/Advt./965/24

NORTHERN RAILWAY
**INVITATION OF TENDERS THROUGH
E-PROCUREMENT SYSTEM**

Tender Notice NO. 80/2023-2024
Principal Chief Materials Manager, Northern Railway, New Delhi-110001, for and on behalf of the President of India, invites e-tenders through e-procurement system for supply of the following items:-

S. No.	Brief Description	Qty.	Closing Date
01	03232500B FLEXIBLE PVC FLOORING SHEET	3113 MTR	24.01.24
02	09232541A CROSS BAR	1786 NOS	31.01.24
03	09242195 CLEVIS	256 NOS	13.02.24

NOTE - 1. Vendors may visit the IREPS website i.e. www.ireps.gov.in for details.
2. No Manual offer will be entertained.
09/24

NORTHERN RAILWAY
NOTICE INVITING TENDER

Name of work and its location:- 30-Elect-45-T-2023-24-E3
Electrical work in connection with Development of Golokpuri Saboli Hault (Meet Nagar)

Approx cost of the works in :- Rs. 22.36 lacs

Address of the office :- Sr. Divl Elect. Engineer/General, New Delhi

Bid Security :- Rs. 44700.00

Date & time of submission of tender :- 29.01.2024, 12.00 Hrs.

Opening of tender :- 29.01.2024, 12.00 Hrs.

Website & notice board :- www.ireps.gov.in & Sr. Divl. Elec. Engineer/General, New Delhi

11/2024

IRCON INTERNATIONAL LIMITED
NAVARTA COMPANY (A Govt. of India Undertaking)
Website: www.ircon.org CIN - L45203DL1976G01008171

e-Procurement Notice
e-Tender No.: IRCON/J&K CELL/TAT/41/014/K-BJ/0/Tender/Misc./Works/SDN/586 DL/01.01.2024
e-tender for and on behalf of the concerned authority from bidders meeting qualifying requirements for the work of "Execution of various miscellaneous work at Sumber Station Yard like External Protection of Slopes, Road Work and maintenance of existing Sangalan-DND approach road etc., Including other miscellaneous works in Sangalan-Sumber Section of the USBR Project. (Package: Misc./Works/Sangalan)".

Estimated Cost of the Work ₹2131.62 Lakh (including all taxes)
Last Date and Time of bid Submission 22.01.2024, 15.00 hrs. (IST)
For further details, visit website: [https://etenders.gov.in/eprocure/app/](http://etenders.gov.in/eprocure/app/). Corresponding bid document, if any, would be hosted only on the website.

Chief General Manager/Sangalan, USBR, Head Office, Satyam Complex, Marley Market, P.O. Sainik Colony, Jammu, J&K-180011

CONCOR CONTAINER CORPORATION OF INDIA LTD.
A Navratna Company (A Govt. of India Undertaking)
NSIC New MOB Building, 3rd Floor, Okha Indl. Estate (Opp. NSIC Okha Metro Station), New Delhi-110020

TENDER NOTICE (E-Tendering Mode Only)

Online Open E-Tender cum Auction in our bid system for leasing out Three (3) Warehouse Space (80700 Sq.ft. x 03 Nos.) on Long Term basis at ICD/Dadri.

Tender No.	CON/Area/UTC/WH/Lease/DER/2024
Name of Work	Leasing Out Three (3) Warehouse Space on Long-Term Basis at ICD Dadri (U.P.)
Period of the contract	Fifteen (15) years.
Bid Reserve Price	Rate for Lease Rent shall be quoted equal or above the reserve price of ₹25/- per sqft per month for each warehouse.
Earnest Money Deposit*	₹25,000/- for each Warehouse.
Cost of Document*	₹1,000/- Inclusive of all taxes and duties through e-payment
Tender Processing Fee*	₹4,720/-Inclusive of all taxes and duties (Non-refundable)
Date of Sale (Online)	From 03.01.2024 at 1500 hrs. to 23.01.2024 (upto 1600 hrs.)
Pre - bidding	On 10.01.2024 at 1500 hrs.
Corrigendum/upload, if any	Or before 15.01.2024 on www.tenderwizard.com/CCL , only.
Last Date & Time of Submission	On 24.01.2024 upto 1500 hrs.
Date & Time of Opening	On 25.01.2024 at 1530 Hrs.
*Through e-Payment	For eligibility criteria and other details please log onto www.concorindia.co.in or eprocure.gov.in or www.tenderwizard.com/CCL . Bidders are requested to visit the websites regularly. CONCOR reserves the right to reject any or all the tenders without assigning any reasons thereof. For complete details logon to www.tenderwizard.com/CCL , Executive Director, Area-I, North

PROVISION AIR CONDITIONING OF OFFICE

E-Tender Notice No. EL-DY-CEEPS-ML-08/23-24 Date: 29-12-2023. E-Tenders are invited by the undersigned for the following works:- E-Tender No. DYCEPS-MLC-HQ-08-23-24. Name of work: At NFR HQ complex- Provision Air Conditioning of offices of PCE, PCEE, PCPO Bldg (1st floor), PFA Bldg (2nd Floor-B & S side) in Phase-I. Tender Value: ₹2,29,70,775.92, Earnest Money: ₹2,64,900/- Date & Time of Closing of Tender: 15.00 hrs. on 22-01-2024. For details please visit www.ireps.gov.in

Dy.CEE/PS/MLC/HQ
NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY
Serving Customers With A Smile

कार्यपालक अभियंता का कार्यालय
पेयजल एवं स्वच्छता प्रमंडल, राँची पाइपल, राँची

ई-प्रोक्यूरमेंट निविदा सूचना
(द्वितीय काल)

जिसका PR No. 313376 (Drinking Water and Sanitation) 2023-24 है।
Tender Reference No. - DWSR/RWR-28/2023-24
Date - 01-02-2024

S. No	Name of the Work	Estimate Cost (in Lac)	Ernest money (in Lac)	BOQ cost (in Rs.)
1	Supply of 29604 nos. of 5G Smart phones with a minimum of 3 GB RAM and 32GB data storage capacity for the use of Jalshiyas working in different Villages of Jharkhand under SBM (G) and JJM for the financial year 2023-24	3552.48	35.53	10000.00

- किसी भी प्रकार का बदलाव <http://jharkhandtenders.gov.in> पर देखा जा सकता है।
- अन्य किसी भी प्रकार की सूचना <http://jharkhandtenders.gov.in> पर देखा जा सकता है।
- निविदा में प्राक्कलित राशि घट-बढ़ सकती है, तत्परता अध्याहन की राशि मात्र होगा।

कार्यपालक अभियंता, पेयजल एवं स्वच्छता प्रमंडल, राँची पाइपल, राँची

PR 314931 Drinking Water and Sanitation (23-24)_D

कार्यालय नगर पंचायत, बरहरवा (साहेबगंज)

अति अल्पकालीन ई-निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना सं-13 / 2023-24

पर्याप्त-1293 / नोर्मॉन्ट

1. विज्ञापनदाता का नाम

बरहरवा दिनांक-29.12.2023

2. निविदा में प्रकाशन की तिथि

3. वेबसाइट में प्रकाशन की तिथि

4. ई-निविदा प्राप्ति की अंतिम तिथि पर्याप्त होने की अपाराहन 05.00 बजे तक

5. निविदा खोलने की तिथि एवं समय

6. वेबसाइट का पता

ई-निविदा की सूची

प्राप्तिका-1293 / नोर्मॉन्ट

1. विज्ञापनदाता का नाम

बरहरवा दिनांक-29.12.2023

2. निविदा में प्रकाशन की तिथि

3. वेबसाइट में प्रकाशन की तिथि

4. ई-निविदा प्राप्ति की अंतिम तिथि पर्याप्त होने की अपाराहन 05.00 बजे तक

5. निविदा खोलने की तिथि एवं समय

6. वेबसाइट का पता

ई-निविदा की सूची

प्राप्तिका-1293 / नोर्मॉन्ट

1. विज्ञापनदाता का नाम

बरहरवा दिनांक-29.12.2023

2. निविदा में प्रकाशन की तिथि

In loving memory of the visionary educationist, administrator par excellence, social activist, philanthropist and Founder of MOUNT CARMEL SCHOOLS



This is the Reader's Digest version of my life. I must tell my story because some shy, reticent, under-confident girl (or boy) needs to hear it to believe it. It is not how you start your journey, but how, and with who all you travel the road and end well. I was the proverbial 'accidental child'. Born six years before independence, to Major Ernest & Louisa Kathleen David in Srinagar, I was the youngest of four siblings: the age gap between my eldest sister Esme and me was 22 years. My elder brother, Wg. Cdr. Archibald Reginald David was already a fighter pilot with the Royal Air Force by my fifth birthday. Small wonder, I was nicknamed Baby and the name stuck through my maiden years.



My mother, Louisa, was an educationist, serving as Principal of the Govind Girls High School in Abbottabad in the North West Frontier Province [now part of Pakistan]. The freedom struggle painted its portraits of hate and violence in the run up to Partition in 1947, leaving fiery marks on my impressionable mind. The family relocated from Abbottabad to Lucknow, then to Ranchi and finally settled in Palampur, in modern day Himachal Pradesh.

My mother served as principal of a girls' school in Ranchi before founding a girls' college in her house in Palampur. I grew up as a student of her mother in both school and college education.

Shortly after my graduation, common friends introduced me to a handsome, young associate professor named Vijay and by my 21st birthday we were married. The dark clouds of war made my husband leave academia to serve the Defense Forces by joining the Indian Air Force. It was during his posting in Bangalore that I first ventured out into the world of teaching. It was at the Cluny Convent where I fell in love with teaching little kids. Five years later, I had built enough courage and confidence to start Mount Carmel School in the living room of our Air Force house in New Delhi.

These were the simple beginnings. We were the young dreamers. I always wanted to be a teacher, he always wanted to serve his country. Together, God gave us the vision, strength and wisdom to achieve both goals through Mount Carmel Schools and in the process impact thousands of lives, which we could never have dreamt of.

So, in my journey, I had picked the right man to marry. With him, God gave us a family with four children and their spouses, nine grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

DR NEENA MOHINI WILLIAMS

30 August 1941 - 28 December 2023

But, looking back, more important was the God I chose to follow. Much before I met Vijay, I had fallen in love with Jesus. His words, His teachings and His life had a huge impact on me. I loved the values He has. Understanding that His whole purpose in coming to this world to die on the cross, as a penalty for the sins I was going to commit, revealed to me the intense love He had for mankind... for me. The Bible says "Greater love has no man than this, that a man should lay down his life for his friend" (John 15:13). Then I learnt that He rose from the dead, so that I would believe He is alive and eternal and living in heaven where He wants me to spend eternity with Him. This assurance of love and life, on both sides of the grave, has been a game changer for me. I realized true education must balance academia, sports, theatre and music as well as emotional and spiritual growth. I read that Jesus grew in wisdom, and in stature and in favour with God and man (Luke 2:52). The knowledge of this four-fold growth has given me the motivation, zeal, energy, and desire to help build children, like Jesus.

This is the legacy I would like to leave behind when my time comes to cross the grave. May the fruits of this legacy celebrate together and continue this journey in faith. Jesus helped me understand that the answer to the eternal quest in the search for meaning and purpose in life is in living a life devoted to loving others. Biblically, we know of God's love for mankind in His sacrifice of Christ on the cross. Through that time-dividing act, we are all recipients of divine love. And for those who reciprocate and love God, He faithfully provides the purpose and meaning of life. This piece of printed paper that you hold in your hands is my tribute to the faithfulness of God. He established Mount Carmel, using a shy girl from the mountains of Himachal.

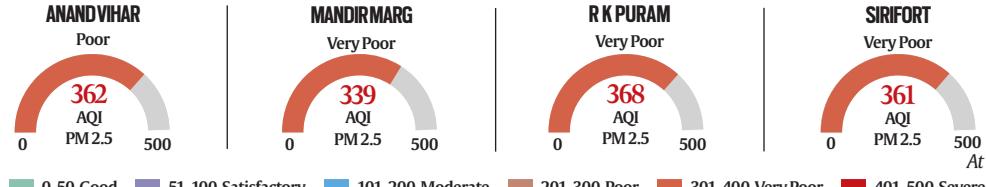
The past has been written, not merely because it is a success story, nor to inflate my ego ... but because it is a story that needed to be told. It fills me with admiration and awe, for Mount Carmel has thrived and prospered against all odds. It is the story of a young couple's grit and determination, their hard work and persistence, their vision and perspicacity, their deep faith in God and His mighty acts – the story of having built, brick by brick, an institution where values such as integrity and discipline are made an integral part of life. At its heart it is a story of my love for children, who today number over 30,000, spread across the globe... each child I have loved and received love back in their own special way. I have been privileged to have been a part of this story. I end with a quote from the Bible from 2nd Timothy 4:7,8... "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved His appearing".

As we bid farewell to our beloved Founder, we welcome you to pay your last respect on
4th January, 2024 at Mount Carmel School, Anand Niketan, New Delhi

- Visiting Time : 10:00 am - 2:00 pm
- Funeral Service : 2:00 pm - 3:00 pm
- Live Streaming : bit.ly/DrNeenaMohiniWilliams (YouTube Link)
- Condolences : celebratingneenawilliams.life



ANAND NIKETAN | DWARKA | GURUGRAM
WWW.MOUNTCARMELSCHOOL.COM



S K Y W A T C H
FORECAST: January 3
 Mainly clear sky.
 Shallow fog in the morning.
AQI: Very poor

MAX: 18
 1.3°C below normal

MIN: 9
 2.1°C above normal

GOVT PANEL PROBES 'CASH-FOR-KIDNEY' CLAIMS AGAINST APOLLO HOSPITAL

Donor, recipient with similar stories, cash payment: Holes found in papers

ANONNA DUTT &
GAYATHRI MANI

NEW DELHI, JANUARY 2

THE DELHI government committee probing reports linking Apollo Hospitals to an alleged "cash for kidneys racket" involving Myanmar nationals has uncovered three significant loopholes in documentation, *The Indian Express* has learnt. These include certificates from the Myanmar Embassy issued on plain paper; payments made entirely in cash or third-party cheques for the procedures, and donors and recipients presenting similar-sounding stories.

The panel identified this during a random check of documentation for 15 transplants (randomly selected among more than 100 cases) performed on Myanmar nationals at Apollo Hospital in 2023. The committee has now recommended that embassies be sensitised about Indian law governing organ transplantation and a standard operating procedure be followed across hospitals for approving transplants.

However, Apollo Hospital maintains that the patient, Daw Soe Soe (58), whose case was highlighted by a UK daily, *The Telegraph*, never underwent a transplant at the hospital. The committee could not independently verify the information with visa details from the embassy or details that UK reporters might have. According to officials in the know of the matter, permission to reach out to the reporters and Myanmar Embassy were not granted by the Delhi government.

The three-member committee headed by Dr Poonam Narang



The panel identified this during a random check of documentation for 15 transplants (randomly selected among more than 100 cases) performed on Myanmar nationals at Apollo Hospital in 2023. Archive

was investigating if there were merits to the allegations. With Apollo Hospital performing over 100 transplants on Myanmar nationals in 2023, the committee selected 15 cases at random and checked documentation.

The allegations surfaced in a report by *The Telegraph* on December 3, which said "desperate young villagers" from Myanmar were brought to the Delhi hospital and paid to donate their kidneys to rich patients from Myanmar. The racket included forging ID documents to prove donor and recipient were related.

Indian law allows only altruistic donations either by close family members or distant relatives and friends who can prove their motivation is not financial.

"It should be the Centre's responsibility to reach out to foreign authorities," said another official.

A senior official from the Union Health Ministry said the apex body, NOTTO, governing all organ transplants in the country, maintained Hein was not associated with them. Hein is the person who put the UK reporter in touch with a paid donor.

is yet to receive the report from the Delhi government. The official added: "We have previously had embassies reaching out to us stating they do not have complete information on everyone coming to India for a transplant.

However, we've made it clear they have to verify the information with agencies in their respective countries that donor and recipient are related..."

The committee also interviewed personnel from administration and finance teams as well as doctors from Apollo Hospital including Dr Sandeep Guleria who was named by the UK daily.

Dr Guleria was asked to identify in writing all the people present on his table in one of the photos highlighted by the UK daily. Dr Guleria identified all individuals other than Phyoe Khant Hein. While Dr Thet Oo, head of Apollo's Myanmar operation was dismissed after the allegations came to light, the hospital maintained Hein was not associated with them.

According to officials in know of the matter, "The documents attached were in their language. Although the committee did send it for translation, it is not possible to say if they are genuine or not."

The money trail

The committee also noted that the money trail could not be traced as payments were made either in cash or third-party cheques by foreign nationals. No proper bank details of donor and recipient were available, it said. This is important as one of the criteria that lead to transplant rejection by authorisation committee is the donor's financial standing.

As per a government official, who is part of authorisation committees of hospitals other than Apollo, "There is an immediate suspicion if the donor is not a near relative and isn't well off."

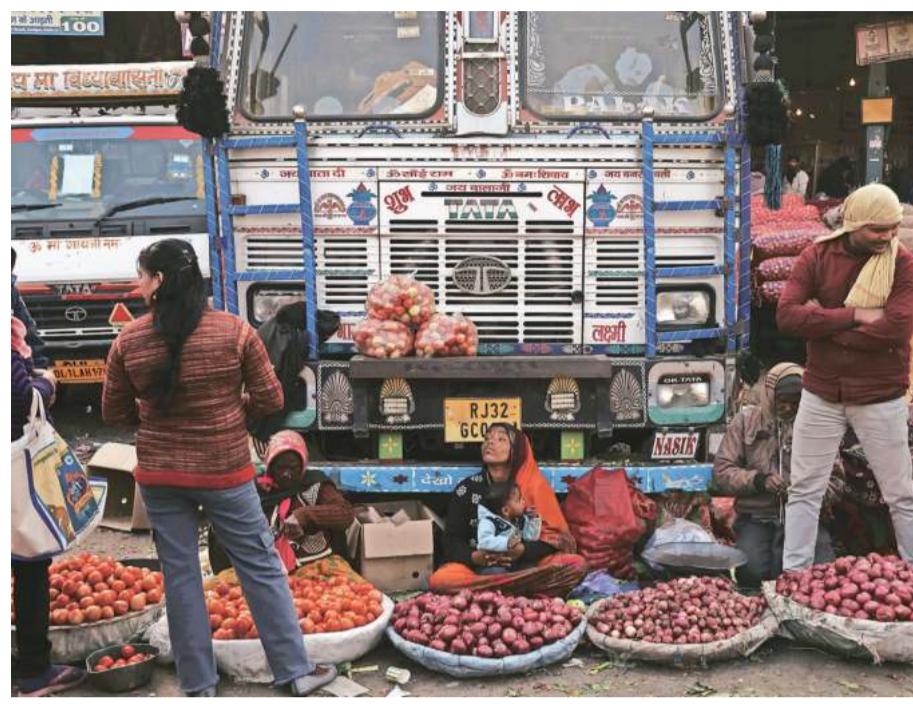
The committee also found that in several cases, the history provided by the donor and recipient were similar, where the donor is a distant family member such as the wife's sister but started living with the recipient's family 3-4 years ago and now wants to donate the organ.

The committee went through the 45-minute recording of interviews conducted by the hospital-based authorisation committee before green-lighting the transplants.

The committee sent the report last week. The Health department has sent it to the Minister. "We have issued a reminder again to speed up the process... Once the minister gives his approval, the report will be sent to NOTTO," said a source.

The source added that following this, the committee has given recommendations, based on which the department will be preparing an SOP that has to be followed by all hospitals.

Hospital representatives were unavailable for comment.



At Delhi's biggest vegetable mandi in Azadpur, supply was not halted completely but fewer trucks arrived with supplies, traders said. Tashi Tobgyal

Truckers' strike hits supply at Delhi's wholesale markets

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 2

SUPPLY OF vegetables and fruits in Delhi's wholesale markets was affected, as was the availability of fuel in pumps in some parts of the city, as truckers protested against the new penal law on hit-and-run road accidents.

According to Atul Peshawaria of the Delhi Petrol Dealers Association, distress calls were received from parts of the city.

"Trucks did not go to the depots today. While some were protesting, others were scared of being manhandled by protesting drivers. Not just petrol pumps, the problem was seen across the board with manufacturing units also being hit," he said.

At Delhi's biggest vegetable mandi in Azadpur, supply was not halted completely but fewer trucks arrived with supplies, traders said.

"There has been a slowdown in supply as truckers in many parts of the country are being stopped at checkpoints, some are protesting, causing delay in reaching the wholesale markets," said a wholesale vendor in the mandi, which is Asia's biggest.

Prices, however, have not been impacted much.

According to traders, supplies from Chhattisgarh, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Punjab and Rajasthan were stuck for about five or six hours due to the protest. Azadpur mandi does not just supply produce to retailers but also to

smaller mandis across the region.

"If vegetables don't reach us, they will not be exported to outside wholesale markets dependent on Delhi. If the situation does not improve tomorrow, the prices will start going up slowly," said another trader.

Truckers have been protesting since Monday against the stringent provision under the recently enacted Bharatiya Nyaya Sahita (BNS), which imposes a punishment of up to 10 years or a fine of Rs 7 lakh if the driver flees in a hit-and-run case without informing the police.

The protest also impacted the supply of fuel as motorists were seen in long queues outside petrol stations triggering a panic-buying spree.

Gurgaon portion of Dwarka Expressway to open in Feb

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
GURGAON, JANUARY 2

THE GURGAON portion of Dwarka expressway will be opened in February, Deputy Commissioner Nishant Kumar Yadav said at a press conference Tuesday. He said the Haryana government has written to the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) seeking to throw the stretch open.

"We are yet to hear back from the NHAI, but we expect the Gurgaon part to be opened soon, as 99% of the work has been completed and only finishing touches remain," an official said.

After several missed deadlines, NHAI officials had said the Gurgaon portion of the expressway will be completed by the end of October. It is divided into four packages: the first is from Shiv Murti near Mahipalpur to Dwarka; the second from Dwarka Urban Extension Road (UER) to Baighera; the third from Baighera to Basai rail overbridge (Delhi-Haryana border); and the fourth package from Basai RO to Kherki Daula.

Unveiling projects for 2024, DC Yadav said a new drain is being laid at a cost of Rs 136 crore from Vatika Chowk to SPR. This drain, constructed by GMDA, will mitigate the waterlogging problem on the Delhi-Gurgaon-Jaipur National Highway near

Narsinghpur and around sectors 15 to 20. He stated that the district administration has identified around 110 locations in the city prone to waterlogging and suitable measures are being taken at all these locations.

Giving details about the Metro expansion project in the old city, DC Yadav said the Haryana government has formed the Haryana Metro Rail Corporation on the lines of the DMRC. Work on Metro expansion in Old Gurgaon is expected to start by the end of this year and a special body has been formed by the government to oversee the project, he said.

Some of the areas where permission has been granted to open 24x7 shops are Alipur, Mehrauli, Badarpur, Gandhi Nagar, Okhla Phase 3, Netaji Nagar, Vinod Nagar, Rajouri Garden, Asaf Ali Road, Dwarka Sector 23A, Najafgarh Road, Africa Avenue, Hauz Khas among others.



The expressway is divided into four packages. Archive

CM nod to proposal for industrial hub in city

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 2

CHIEF MINISTER Arvind Kejriwal Tuesday approved the proposal to create an industrial hub on 147 acres of land in Northwest Delhi's Rani Khera. The file has now been sent to the L-G for final approval.

The key aim of this project is to create job opportunities. The land is being acquired from the Delhi Development Authority, said the CMO in a statement.

According to officials, services industries like IT and ITES (Information Technology Enabled Services) with multilevel buildings are expected to come up in the proposed hub. Officials said the government will provide land at concessional rates for setting up industries, and upon its development, it could provide direct and indirect employment to thousands.

The project will be executed by the Delhi State Industrial and Infrastructure Development Corporation (DSIIDC).

Further, in keeping with its eco-friendly industrial nature, the government will prioritise industries that do not cause any

pollution. "Therefore, this place will promote industries largely associated with the service sector," said the official statement.

The CM also emphasised completing development of the hub within the set time frame and directed the departments concerned to take necessary measures, said officials.

Meanwhile, Kejriwal also granted permission for 32 more shops and commercial establishments to operate 24 hours. This proposal has also been sent to the L-G for approval.

The Labour Department received 52 applications, of which 20 did not meet the requirements; 32 applications meeting the criteria were approved.

Officials said that the government has granted permission for several categories of shops — couriers, restaurants, sweet shops and departmental stores.

Some of the areas where permission has been granted to open 24x7 shops are Alipur, Mehrauli, Badarpur, Gandhi Nagar, Okhla Phase 3, Netaji Nagar, Vinod Nagar, Rajouri Garden, Asaf Ali Road, Dwarka Sector 23A, Najafgarh Road, Africa Avenue, Hauz Khas among others.

Delhi Police lodge cheating FIR against crypto investment firm

JIGNASA SINHA
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 2

THE DELHI Police has lodged a cheating case against a cryptocurrency investment company, CoinDCX, after several users complained of alleged bank fraud on the firm's mobile application, said officials Tuesday. Police said an inquiry is being conducted and a notice will soon be sent to the company to verify the allegations.

The Indian Express reached out to the company with queries regarding the case but received no response.

As per sources in the Cyber Cell, complainants across Delhi reported they were asked to pay more money when they tried to withdraw their crypto investments online. A police source said three to four complaints from November last year have been clubbed and the matter is being investigated.

In one of the complaints, a 36-year-old businessman from North Delhi said he invested around Rs 1.40 lakh last year on the CoinDCX application.

"I made payments from time

to time and the total was close to Rs 1.2 lakh. I had some gains and wanted to withdraw the money but the app asked me to submit tax. When I called officials, I was told to pay Rs 40,000 more and get a refund later. I decided to not put more money," claimed the complainant.

Government rules state that additional tax (capital gains), which is close to 20-30%, is levied on withdrawals. This is varied for different platforms and the money withdrawn.

Police said senior officers are looking into the case and will talk to victims to see if "fraud" has been committed. An officer said, "We checked the rules online related to crypto investment and lodged a case. We are verifying allegations..." said the officer.

Chattarpur said he started using CoinDCX last month and invested close to Rs 14 lakh. "In total, I have transferred Rs 14,09,540 which I am unable to withdraw... They are now telling me it is a large amount and can be withdrawn after I submit the tax as per law. They want me to transfer another Rs 4.65 lakh from which they will deduct Rs 46,544 tax. They said they would refund Rs 4.18 lakh along with my complete amount. I see this as internet banking fraud," alleged the complainant.

The FIR states that an SHO-level officer conducted an inquiry and a "cognizable" offence has been made out.

"Necessary permission regarding registration of the case has been granted by senior officers. A case under sections of cheating has been filed," read the FIR.

Police said senior officers are looking into the case and will talk to victims to see if "fraud" has been committed. An officer said, "We checked the rules online related to crypto investment and lodged a case. We are verifying allegations..." said the officer.

As per the Samvaad @ Raj Niwas' outreach, Saxena presided over an interactive ses-

sion where he assured over 300 residents of 180 Delhi villages that no stone would be left unturned to transform them within six to eight months.

The event was attended by four of the seven Lok Sabha MPs from Delhi, Chief Secretary Naresh Kumar, Additional CS Ashwani Kumar and Delhi Development Authority (DDA) Vice-Chairman Subhash Pandit among others under the "Dilli Gramoday Abhiyan".

A senior government official said an estimated Rs 920 crore earmarked for developing Delhi's villages had not only laid unsprung but had, due to economic factors over almost 10 years, "begun depreciating in value".

The L-G decided to bring this corpus under the DDA for developmental activity in the city's countryside; DDA has, apart

from this, disbursed almost Rs 500 crore for projects across 360 villages," the official said.

"Since December, DDA and district officers have been chalking out the best way of utilising this corpus. All district magistrates have been given till January 5 to submit focus areas for 200 Delhi villages; similar plans for remaining villages will follow," the official added.

Village residents, as well as BJP MPs, flagged troubles ranging from lack of playgrounds and sports complexes to a poor garbage disposal mechanism, lack of proper sewage facilities, flooding of agricultural land and homes during monsoon to low home rates compared to neighbouring Haryana.

Saxena said funds for Delhi's rural development would be spent on infrastructure needs

flagged by their residents.

"... what you need will be added, what you don't will be subtracted... by the end of this month... tenders will be floated and we will begin the implementation of work... if a village of Delhi, the capital of the country, is not clean... does not have necessary infrastructure... the image that Delhi deserves will always be incomplete," the L-G said.

"After 10 days, our DMs will choose each village, reach it at 10 am and will stay overnight... when a district official stays in that village... only then will they be able to identify its issues... I will also stay with you... I am sure that in six to eight months, we will transform the condition of Delhi's villages," he added.

Development for the countryside, Saxena said, was not limited to providing roads, drains or

streetlights and creating sports infrastructure would be a significant part of the project.

"...A child from a Delhi village prides themselves on bringing laurels and a good name to it... sports facilities will be developed so that children from five to six villages can come there and play..." he said.

"... A few days ago, I mentioned this to Chief of Army Staff Pandey sahab... he said that if you need instructors, the Indian Army will provide them... The Indian Oil chairman has also said that if you need instructors, appoint them in the villages and we will foot the bill," Saxena, who has adopted the Qutabgarh, Jaunti, Daurala, Rawta and Nizampur villages so far, said.

Though he appreciated district officials for having reached out, Ravinder Dabas from

Kanjhawala sought to highlight how 900 bighas of Gram Sabha land set aside in 1996 for a mini-secretariat was lying unused



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DELHI CONFIDENTIAL



TRUTH & TIMING

NOT QUITE apologetic but only a veiled reference to break the ice. South Delhi BJP MP Ramesh Bidhuri on Tuesday said his outburst against Lok Sabha MP Danish Ali (expelled from the party by BSP) in Parliament was because he was "pained". "Main badnaam hoon (I am infamous)...people say goodie goodie things... but not the truth. (Madan Lal) Khurana ji used to say that tell the truth, but at the right time! Everyone knows that 'Ram naam satya hai', but if you say so at someone's wedding, you will be beaten up; this I sometimes end up doing... when I am pained by something," he said.

UP FOR GRABS

AFTER JUSTICE Sanjay Kishan Kaul's retirement last month, his 19, Akbar Road, residence is now up for grabs. A double-storey house with a large office space, this bungalow is now likely to be assigned to Justice Sanjiv Khanna, the next in line to be Chief Justice of India after CJI D Y Chandrachud retires in November 2024.

Khalistani forces got lot of space in Canadian politics, says Jaishankar

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 2

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS Minister S Jaishankar said Canadian politics had given a lot of space to Khalistani, who were being allowed to indulge in activities detrimental to the India-Canada relationship.

"The issue at heart is the fact that in Canadian politics, these Khalistani forces have been given a lot of space and have been allowed to indulge in activities which I think are damaging to the relationship, clearly not in India's interest, but I would not argue in Canada's interest either," Jaishankar said in an interview to news agency ANI that was published on Tuesday.

Jaishankar's comments come as the relationship between the two countries remains frosty over allegations that Indian agents were connected to the murder of Khalistani Hardeep Singh Nijjar in Canada on June 18 last year.

Speaking in Canadian Parliament in September, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said there were "credible allegations" that Indian agents were behind Nijjar's murder — something which India termed "absurd".

As Modi, Stalin share stage in TN, a play of words & interplay

ARUN JANARDHANAN
CHENNAI, JANUARY 2

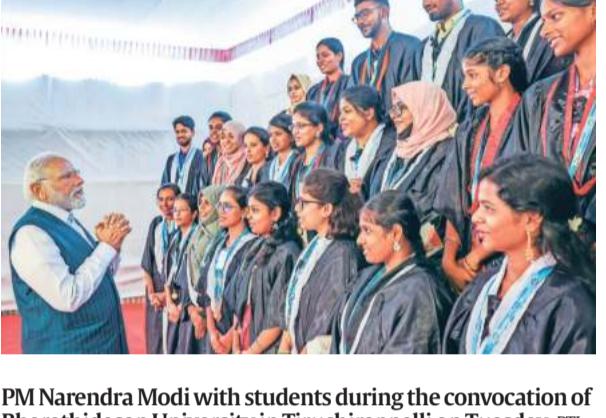
SHARING THE stage after 10 months, at a government event, PM Narendra Modi and Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M K Stalin Tuesday ensured that they made their political points without letting the tension between the state and Centre take over.

Modi was in Trichy to lay the foundation for projects worth Rs 20,000 crore and to attend the 38th convocation ceremony of Bharathidasan University. Stalin thanked the PM for the projects, while pointedly addressing the Modi government as 'Ondriya Arasu' — or Union government — the term it prefers compared to Central government, to emphasise its federal nature.

In his speech, the PM listed the contribution of his government towards Tamil Nadu's welfare, adding: "India will progress with the progress of Tamil Nadu."

Modi was last in Tamil Nadu in April 2023, when he flagged off a Vande Bharat.

One of the two events in Trichy, organised by the Central government's Airports Authority of India, had valuable BJP support-



PM Narendra Modi with students during the convocation of Bharathidasan University in Tiruchirappalli on Tuesday. PTI

ers — reportedly bussed in from Trichy and nearby delta districts — who responded with chants of "Modi, Modi, Modi" when Stalin made his 'Ondriya Arasu' comment and, in stretches, drowned out the CM's voice.

Speaking before Modi, the CM requested that the Madurai airport be made an international airport, that direct flight services be started between Chennai-Pengang and Chennai-Tokyo on priority basis (both Malaysia and Tokyo have a large Tamil diaspora), that

the Centre boost its contribution to the Chennai Metro Rail project, and that the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) projects in Tamil Nadu be expedited.

Stalin also complained that orders from public sector giant BHEL, run by the Centre, to

MSMEs in the state have significantly reduced, affecting micro-industries operating in the Trichy area. Seeking more relief to the state for the damage caused by recent floods, the CM said that they should be declared a "national

Hindenburg row: SC verdict today on pleas seeking to probe Adani

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 2

THE SUPREME Court will pronounce on Wednesday its verdict on petitions seeking probe into allegations against Adani group of companies in a report published by US-based short seller Hindenburg Research in February last year.

A three-judge bench of CJY Chandrachud and Justices J B Pardiwal and Manoj Misra had reserved its decision on the petitions on November 24, 2023.

The SC had in March 2023 asked the SEBI to continue the probe initiated in the wake of the report published by Hindenburg Research on Adani group of companies as to examine "if there was any manipulation of stock prices in contravention of existing laws".

STATE BANK OF INDIA भारतीय स्टेट बैंक
BRANCH - MODEL TOWN (1708)
NOTICE FOR ARREARS OF RENT OF LOCKERS

That the State Bank of India had rented safe deposit vaults (locker) to the respective locker hirer as mentioned in the table below.

The rent has not been paid by the locker hirer and there are arrears of rent against them. The bank has issued three notices to the respective locker hirer for payment of overdue locker rent in arrear, but still rent not deposited.

RELOCATION OF BRANCH

All customers are informed that Branch at HDFC BANK LTD, 2/10 East Patel Nagar, Main Road Branch, Delhi-110008 Will be relocated to the following address, from 26th February 2024.

HDFC BANK

New Address: Upper Ground Floor, 2/2 East Patel Nagar Delhi -110008

Gold Loan Service Desk / Lockers

Monday to Friday: 9:30 AM to 3:30 PM
Second, Fourth Saturday & Every Sunday Closed

DELIMITATION OF LS SEATS

'Issues of South to be addressed'

New Delhi: The concerns of southern states will be taken care of during the delimitation of LS constituencies, said a senior government functionary Tuesday, adding five states — Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Karnataka, Andhra and Telangana — "won't suffer". PTI

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4/24	Senior Manager (Civil)	01
5/24	Senior Manager (Social Safeguard Specialist)	01
6/24	General Manager (Civil/ Ports)	01
7/24	General Manager (Mechanical/Ports)	01
8/24	Additional General Manager-Marine Structural Engineering	01
9/24	Additional General Manager - IWT Sector Expert	01
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SI. No.	Name of Posts	Number of Vacancies	Qualification & Experience
1	Deputy Manager (Electrical)	1	Engineering graduates with minimum 60% and Seven years relevant post qualification managerial experience.
2	Deputy Manager (Weapons)	1	
3	Deputy Manager (Administration)	1	MBA / PG Degree / PG Diploma with minimum 60% and Seven years relevant post qualification managerial experience.
	Total	3	

For more details on age, reservation, educational qualification, experience, remuneration etc., please read the vacancy notification on CSL website www.cochinshipyard.in (Career page->CMRSU, Mumbai). Last date of receipt of online application is 31 January 2024.

"Hindi version of detailed advertisement is published on the website (www.cochinshipyard.in) of CSL." Sd/- GENERAL MANAGER (HR & TRAINING)

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Date : 03/01/2024 Branch Manager, State Bank of India

Place : New Delhi

BJP huddle on LS polls draws up Ram Temple campaign roadmap

LIZ MATHEW
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 2

SETTING THE ball rolling for its preparations for the Lok Sabha elections, the BJP leadership held a series of meetings Tuesday to deliberate on strategies for the polls besides chalking out a micro-level plan for its campaign over the Ram Temple whose consecration is scheduled for January 22.

A high-level committee of senior BJP leaders held a meeting at the party headquarters in the morning to discuss strategies, campaign and issues to be taken up for the Lok Sabha polls expected in March-April.

The panel includes Union ministers Bhupender Yadav, Dharmendra Pradhan, Ashwini Vaishnaw and Mansukh Mandaviya, party general secretaries Sunil Bansal, Vinod Tawde and Tarun Chugh besides Assam CM Himanta Biswa Sarma.

party leader said, "The RJD has been under pressure from Nitish for a while from the JD(U) camp to agree to the idea of simultaneous polls. Nitish is trying to impress upon the RJD that Mahagathbandhan can not only win the Lok Sabha elections handsomely but also bring down the BJP's tally of 78 seats to below 50 if the Assembly elections are held simultaneously. The party, which has 79 seats, is not convinced and believes if Nitish is made the INDIA bloc convener, he will give up this idea and focus more on national politics."

The JD(U), however, officially remained tightlipped. The party's chief national spokesperson, K C Tyagi, told *The Indian Express*, "Though we have not heard anything from the Congress, we will welcome any such move. While Kharge's elevation will be a good card to play since he is Dalit, making Nitish Kumar the convener is a good idea since he has played a key role in bringing parties with various hues and shapes on the same platform."

FULL REPORT ON www.indianexpress.com

For instance, a truck

driver involved in an accident will be punished under the new law without investigating the reasons. The new law can also land one in jail or they can be hanged for marrying someone, saying they married cleverly. Can a government keep a watch if two people get married out of love or otherwise? This new sys-

tem is full of complications. These laws are anti-people. To pass these Bills they expelled 141 MPs just to keep them out of Parliament."

He slammed the TMC government over ration strike and blamed the party for the "collapse" of the ration distribution system in state. Chowdhury accused the TMC and the BJP of having a "mutual understanding". The Trinamool, he alleged, is full of corruption which has turned into a cancer. "They have no solution to this. The TMC's decline has started at a fast pace," he said.

Addressing a press conference at the party office in Kolkata, the Congress MP from Barrampur said, "These laws were passed in Parliament in a dictatorial manner. They are inhuman. For instance, a truck

driver involved in an accident will be punished under the new law without investigating the reasons. The new law can also land one in jail or they can be hanged for marrying someone, saying they married cleverly. Can a government keep a watch if two people get married out of love or otherwise? This new sys-

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BRIEFLY

UTTAR PRADESH

Agra woman raped, killed by constable: Cops

Agra: A 25-year-old Dalit woman was allegedly raped and strangled by a UP Police constable posted in Agra, who was arrested, police here said on Tuesday. The woman's body was found hanging from the ceiling of the policeman's rented room on December 29, they said. Agra Police booked the constable under sections 306, 376 and SC/ST Act of IPC, he said. The post-mortem report revealed hanging as the cause of death. PTI

NEW DELHI

ED moves HC against release of Vivo staff

New Delhi: The Delhi HC Tuesday issued a notice on an ED plea challenging the release of three senior employees of Vivo-India in an alleged money laundering case. A bench of Justice Tushar Rao Gedela, however, said since the three have already been released, "no ex parte ad-interim orders can be passed". Vivo-India CEO Hong Xuquan, Chief Financial Officer Harinder Dahiya and consultant Hemant Mundal were arrested by ED on December 21 last year. ENS

2 charge sheets filed in Manipur students' case

New Delhi: The CBI has filed two separate charge sheets against the five accused of "kidnapping with intent to kill" and other offences in the case of two missing Manipuri students, who were feared murdered during ethnic violence in the state. According to the CBI, the parents of the missing teenagers had filed FIRs with Imphal Police and Lamphel Police on July 8 and 19, respectively. The father of the girl alleged she may have been kidnapped with intention of marriage, while the boy's father believed his son was kidnapped, it said. ENS

Transgender teacher moves SC over removal

New Delhi: The SC on Tuesday issued notices on a plea by a transgender person whose services as teacher were "unlawfully terminated from two schools in two different states in the last one year". "We will see what we can do," said a three-judge bench presided by CJ D Y Chandrachud as it issued notices to Centre as well as UP and Gujarat. The SC also sought responses from head of the school in Jamnagar in Gujarat and the chairperson of another private school based at Khir in UP. ENS

After nudge by FBI chief, agencies start collecting fugitives' biometrics

MAHENDER SINGH MANRAL
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 2

CENTRAL INVESTIGATIVE agencies have started preparing/collecting biometric data of fugitive criminals, prompted by suggestions of FBI Director Christopher Wray that such details were more helpful in tracking the wanted criminals than just their "current address and location".

The biometric data are being gathered from the passports, genuine or forged, and Aadhaar cards of the fugitives, The Indian Express has learnt. Fingerprints and facial and iris patterns are among the most common types of biometric identifiers.

Wray was in Delhi along with his team on December 11-12, his

Long queues at fuel stations as protest by truck drivers triggers panic buying

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
CHANDIGARH, MUMBAI,
KOLKATA, RAIPUR, JANUARY 2

AS TRUCKERS remained off the road to protest against the new law for hit-and-run cases for the second consecutive day, several states witnessed panic buying, especially at fuel stations, Tuesday. As people stood in long queues to fill up their fuel tanks, states held review meetings and assured that adequate supplies were in place.

Punjab was among the worst-affected with several fuel stations running dry. In Chandigarh, the district magistrate imposed temporary cap on fuel sale — two litres for two-wheelers and five litres for four-wheelers per transaction.

Manjeet Singh, general secretary of Punjab Petroleum Association, said all 3,800 fuel stations in the state were affected by the truck drivers' protest. "The last fuel supply came on December 30. Now the pumps have run dry. Some stations had a stock for 3-4 days, which will be over by tomorrow morning," he said.

"We are uncertain when we will receive a fresh supply. Despite deliveries scheduled on December 30 and 31, truck drivers did not show up," said R A Batra, owner of a fuel station in Chandigarh.

Punjab Home Secretary Gurkiran Kirpal Singh, also in charge of Food and Civil Supplies, said the state had adequate stock



At a petrol pump in Lucknow on Tuesday. Vishal Srivastav

of petrol and diesel, and there was need for panic buying. Earlier, he held a high-level meeting to monitor fuel distribution in the state.

Huge rush was also seen at fuel stations in neighbouring Himachal Pradesh. Many pumps in Dharamshala, Kullu-Manali, Bilaspur, Hamirpur, Chamba, Una and Shimla turned away customers. Authorities of Hamirpur, Una and Bilaspur issued directions for rationing of fuel, and Himachal Roadways Transport Corporation stopped plying buses on 138 routes with low occupancy.

The Maharashtra government gave directions for supply of fuel to state transport buses under police security. The Maharashtra

State Road Transport Corporation (MSRTC), which operates the buses, had fuel stock till Tuesday. Senior officials said the corporation may have to cancel some bus trips from Wednesday if the strike continued.

The daily fuel requirement for the 14,500-odd state transport buses is around 11 lakh litres.

In West Bengal, truck drivers blocked roads in Kolkata leading to the port, as well as in Dankuni in Hooghly and Narayangarh in West Midnapore.

Congress's leader in Lok Sabha and party state unit chief Adhir

Ranjan Chowdhury supported the protest. "This law is a Draconian law... What does a truck driver do? They have no other options. We are opposing this law and for that reason they suspended us otherwise they could not pass this law in Parliament. This law is anti-people and anti-workers," he said.

In Chhattisgarh, Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai chaired a meeting with top officials where he directed them to ensure that there is no shortage of essential commodities. "There should be no shortage of essential commodities," Sai said.

Several petrol pumps across major cities in Chhattisgarh saw long queues since Monday night. Many tanks carrying petrol were seen parked outside Raipur as part of the protest. Further, commuters were left stranded at bus stations as none of the inter-district and inter-state buses operated on Tuesday.

In Uttarakhand, drivers of autos and other commercial vehicles remained off the road in Haridwar for the second day in solidarity with the truck drivers. Long queues were seen at petrol pumps in Dehradun and other districts.

In Gujarat, 23 truck drivers were detained by Surat Police after protesters stopped a city bus on the way to Dumas at Magdalla junction. The protesters also allegedly beat up a policeman.

INPUTS FROM
ENS/DEHRADUN AND SURAT

Grounded flight: Probe finds passengers from Gujarat agreed to pay Rs 60-80 lakh to agents

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
VADODARA, JANUARY 2

THE GUJARAT Crime Investigation Department (CID) Tuesday said the 66 passengers from Gujarat on the chartered Legend Airlines flight that was grounded at Vatry airport in France on suspicion of human trafficking had agreed to pay Rs 60 lakh to Rs 80 lakh to agents to illegally immigrate to the US. Officials said they will also question 15 agents, whose names emerged during the course of investigation, in facilitating the alleged illegal immigration.

The CID has also written to the CBI seeking details from authorities in Dubai on the agency that chartered the flight as well as on the financial transactions to secure visas from the UAE, which was the assembly point for the 303 passengers who had boarded the flight from Fujairah to Nicaragua. "In order to migrate illegally to the US, they had agreed to pay between Rs 60 lakh to 80 lakh (in total) to the local agents," the CID stated.

Earlier, an officer who is part of the investigating team, had stated the passengers had paid an advance of up to Rs 8 lakh, including ticket fees, to the agents.

The agents had also handed over forex currency to the travellers for their use. "It has been established that the passengers also paid for the flight tickets from Ahmedabad to Dubai to

Nicaragua and also received foreign exchange of USD 1,000 to 3,000 to cover their expenses to reach the US," the CID stated.

The passengers were to travel from Ahmedabad to Dubai and exit to Nicaragua from where a network of agents would further facilitate them to cross the US border. According to the CID statement Tuesday, the rest of the payments were to be made after the individuals successfully crossed over to the US.

Superintendent of Police of Anti-Economic Offences Cell, Sanjay Kharat, said the police are also investigating the financial resources of the travellers as many hailed from "financially weaker" backgrounds and would have "networked to raise funds" to pay the agents.

In a statement Tuesday, the Gujarat CID said it had recorded statements of 55 of the 66 passengers from Gujarat who returned home after being deported from France. "On recording statements of 55 persons, either by summoning them to the CID or by visiting their homes, names of 15 agents have emerged. They will be questioned as part of the investigations," the Gujarat CID said in a statement.

The CID also said that after confirmation from the FRRO Bureau of Immigration in Mumbai of the number of passengers deported from France, the Gujarat police received a list of 66 passengers, who were probed.

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nicar



वीरांगना रानी दुर्गविती का 500 वां जन्मशताब्दी वर्ष

विरासत का सम्मान हर कर्ज का उत्थान



नरेन्द्र मोदी, प्रधानमंत्री



डॉ. मोहन यादव, मुख्यमंत्री

शौर्य और पराक्रम की प्रतिमूर्ति
वीरांगना रानी दुर्गविती एवं रानी अवंतीबाई लोधी
के सम्मान में
संस्कारधानी जबलपुर में
मध्यप्रदेश की नवगठित सरकार की
प्रथम कैबिनेट बैठक
एवं
मुख्यमंत्री
डॉ. मोहन यादव
द्वारा
**विकास कार्यों का
भूमिपूजन व लोकार्पण**

3 जनवरी, 2024

अपराह्न 3:00 बजे | गैरीसन ग्राउंड

“ प्रदेश का हर क्षेत्र सम्पूर्ण रूप से विकसित हो और विकास का लाभ समाज के अंतिम पायदान के अंतिम व्यक्ति तक पहुंचना सुनिश्चित हो, मध्यप्रदेश इस उद्देश्य की पूर्ति के लिए इधर प्रतिबद्धता के साथ आगे बढ़ रहा है। ”

- डॉ. मोहन यादव, मुख्यमंत्री

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THE INDIAN EXPRESS, WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 3, 2024

THE EDITORIAL PAGE

The Indian EXPRESS

FOUNDED BY

RAMNATH GOENKA

BECAUSE THE TRUTH INVOLVES US ALL



SANJAYA BARU

OPPOSITION POSITION

Essentially, INDIA must find ways to win voters, not just fight BJP. That's its challenge in an election year — and its glaring gap

AS THE NEW year takes the baton from the old, and with the parliamentary contest only months away, three images of the country's Opposition seem resonant. In no particular order: AAP and Congress, two prominent members of the joint anti-BJP front, INDIA, are locked in an impasse over seat-sharing in Delhi and Punjab, and one of them, Congress, is also up against the Shiv Sena wall on the same issue in Maharashtra. In West Bengal, festering tensions between the so-called old and new guards within Mamata Banerjee's TMC spilled into the open, with factions loyal to state president Subrata Bakshi and general secretary Abhishek Banerjee exchanging taunts on the occasion of the party's Foundation day. And the fog is yet to lift within the Opposition front on the question of whether to go to Ayodhya for the inauguration of the Ram temple on January 22, or not, with the CPM its only prominent member so far to clearly rule out its participation. The three images point to three Opposition challenges that will become more and more urgent in 2024.

Of course, it won't be just three. INDIA must deal with more than conflicts of interest between constituent parties, turbulence within them, and the difficulties of framing and coordinating responses to issues thrown by the dominant BJP. What it will also have to find answers for, as the election countdown grows louder, are questions that involve not just parties but also the people. After all, when all the calculating and negotiating and compromising within and between parties is done, the crucial task of convincing and persuading the people will still remain. Why will the supporters of the AAP or SP or TMC, for instance, vote for the Congress, and will they, really, just because the parties have firmed up a bargain on poll-eve? Are the Opposition's arithmetic sequences and sums reason enough? Why will voters prefer INDIA if it offers them a reactive or BJP-lite position on important issues, as it seems to be currently doing, instead of articulating an agenda that is more imaginative and affirmative?

As much as it constantly projects a confident and optimistic vision, the Modi agenda also counts on an accumulated voter pessimism and cynicism vis à vis Opposition parties. The BJP has a formidable communication machine, but the message has gone through even without it — the onus of proving their innocence is on parties of the Opposition. Be it on the issue of dynastic rule or complicity in corruption, or bad faith arguments made over the years in the name of secularism or social justice, they must reach out to the people and regain their trust. Essentially, INDIA must find ways to win the voters, not just fight the BJP. In the new year, in a democracy that functions best when a strong government is met with a strong Opposition, that will be key.

STAYING IN THE LANE

Healthy tax collections, lower spending, could ensure that government adheres to its fiscal deficit target

NOTWITHSTANDING THE SHARP monthly fluctuations, the Union government's tax collections continue to grow at a fairly robust pace. Data released recently by the Controller General of Accounts shows that in the first eight months of the ongoing financial year, April-November, the Centre's gross tax revenues grew at a healthy pace of 14.7 per cent. This is higher than the growth factored in for the full year in the Union budget. While, on the other hand, government spending is also marginally higher than its budget projections, at the current juncture, based on these trends, most analysts do not expect the government to breach its fiscal deficit target for the year.

On the revenue side, direct tax collections continue to grow at a fairly brisk pace. At the end of November, collections were up almost 25 per cent, with healthy growth in both corporate and personal income tax collections. However, indirect tax collections have been subdued, in part, due to lower excise duty collections. Alongside, data released on Monday shows that GST collections grew at the slowest pace in three months in December, though it is possible that collections in the previous months did receive a boost due to the festive season. So far this year, GST collections have averaged Rs 1.66 lakh crore per month, up from roughly Rs 1.5 lakh crore over the same period in 2023. And while non-tax collections have been healthy, shored up by the higher than budgeted transfer from the RBI, disinvestment proceeds continue to disappoint. As against a target of Rs 61,000 crore, collections have touched only Rs 8,858 crore (as of November). Based on these trends, there are expectations that direct tax collections will comfortably surpass the budget targets, and possibly offset the lower than expected excise duty collections and disinvestment proceeds.

On the expenditure side, the pace of central government capex has slowed down in the last few months, even as, for the year so far, it is up roughly 31 per cent. With elections approaching, and the model code of conduct likely to be imposed in the next quarter, there is a likelihood of the government not meeting its capex target for the year. There is also a concern that slower nominal GDP growth — the economy grew at 8.6 per cent in the first half of the year, as against the budget estimate of 10.5 per cent — could imply a marginally higher fiscal deficit ratio. However, in absolute terms, for now, a breach of the deficit target does not seem to be on the cards.

SWALLOW THIS

Gym trainers say, no pain, no gain. Could an exercise pill turn this wisdom upside down?

HE'RE SOME GOOD news for those who are already regretting their New Year resolution to start going to the gym. The result of a landmark experiment, currently underway in Norway, could make getting some exercise as simple as popping a pill. The clinical trial involves injecting the blood plasma of regular exercisers into older adults showing early stages of Alzheimer's disease, thus transmitting to them the benefits of being physically active. If the results are positive and can be replicated in pills, it would change the lives of those who are unable to exercise — due to age, disability or disease. It would also turn upside down all the received wisdom of the "no-pain-no-gain" variety that gym trainers and physical coaches specialise in.

Few people really like to exercise. And anybody who can pop a pill to get rid of a bulging belly or thundering thighs, will do so. Put it down to human nature — a few years ago, a study by paleoanthropologist Daniel Lieberman had concluded that it is "natural and normal to be physically lazy". This is why, over the last few years, drugs like Wegovy and Ozempic — used to treat people with obesity and diabetes — have been used by celebrities as a shortcut to weight loss. And why, obviously ineffective get-slim-quick fitness hacks, like using activated charcoal in food or wearing sauna suits, continue to find traction.

But could an exercise pill replicate the add-on benefits of physical activity, such as becoming a part of a community of other runners or lifters, or simply having a universally acceptable reason to just focus on oneself and spend some time in the sun? The fact is that beyond just physical benefits, like weight loss and improved cardiovascular health, physical exercise also yields more intangible benefits, like improved mood and higher self-esteem. There's no shortcut for these — and that is a bitter pill to swallow.

Voting with their visas

More Indians are migrating overseas, across classes. Something is going wrong

THERE IS A sense that only those who pay money or are well-connected get government jobs, lamented the man from Mehsana speaking to a journalist tracking the recent news of the flight of 303 Indians to Nicaragua. "There are no well-paying private jobs. So it is better to be in some menial job in Canada or the US and earn well than stay here in India and struggle forever."

Many enterprising Indians have left the shores of Gujarat over the centuries in search of fortune and opportunity. India of the 2020s is, however, making them leave in desperation. From November 2022 to September 2023, The Hindu news report says, up to 96,917 Indians were arrested while crossing illegally into the US alone. This compares with 19,883 Indians caught trying to illegally sneak into the United States in 2019-20, and 63,927 in 2021-22.

"Gujarat's development journey has received tremendous praise both across India and the world" — claimed an April 2014 article titled 'The Gujarat Model' on the website narendramodi.in. It added, "Under Narendra Modi's leadership Gujarat was known for its development oriented governance where the people were made active partners and stakeholders in the development journey." Clearly, something has gone wrong this past decade.

If desperate Indians are jumping ship and bearing ordeals in search of decent livelihood, the country's wealthy, the so-called "high net worth individuals" (HNIs), are buying golden visas to settle overseas. The London-based global citizenship and residence advisory firm, Henley & Partners, reported in 2022 that 7,500 HNIs had left India to take up residence and citizenship in a foreign country. The global investment bank, Morgan Stanley estimated that between 2014 and 2018 as many as 23,000 Indian millionaires had moved their principal home out of India.

The out-migration of the poor, the professionals and the wealthy has increased exponentially this past decade. While the poor become victims of touts and middlemen, professionals use their marketable talent to secure work visas and the wealthy simply buy their overseas citizenship. An increasing number of countries are selling citizenship

to wealthy Indians.

Time was when Indians complained about enforced migration. Novelists and historians have written eloquently about the fate of "indentured labour", lured from their villages with the false promise of a better life and then pushed into slavery and drudgery. That was British India. Then came the 1970s and 1980s when Indian labour was once again lured away with the promise of employment and higher income. In the event, many found themselves living in inhuman conditions in the non-democratic, feudal kingdoms of West Asia.

Interestingly, though, neither the indentured labour of the colonial era nor the working class in the Gulf region chose to return home. After 1947, the former were offered the option of taking up Indian citizenship, but most chose to live overseas. Over the years their lot, in countries as varied as Mauritius and Jamaica, has improved. Most are better off than their relatives back home in the villages of eastern India. In West Asia too, the working class fought for better living conditions but rarely opted to return home. Rather, they have been demanding dual citizenship and voting rights.

With over 20 lakh Indians migrating overseas every year, the regionally and professionally diversified Indian diaspora is now close to 30 million and non-resident Indians are now more than non-resident Chinese. Till recently, many NRIs retained their Indian citizenship. However, a combination of attractive citizenship policies in host countries and liberal outward remittance of foreign exchange have combined to increase the number of Indians taking up foreign citizenship.

Replies to a question in Parliament on July 21, 2023, India's external affairs minister, S Jaishankar, stated that a total of 2,25,260 Indians had "renounced their Indian citizenship" in 2022. This compared to 85,256 in 2020. Taken together a total of 16,63,440 Indians had renounced their citizenship in the period 2011-22. In the first six months of 2023, the figure was already at 87,026. The minister then added: "The number of Indian nationals exploring the global workplace has been significant in the last two decades. Many of them

have chosen to take up foreign citizenship for reasons of personal convenience."

Many in government take the view that overseas Indians are an asset. A "brain bank" claimed Prime Minister Narendra Modi. True, inward remittances into India have increased steeply to an all-time high of US\$125 billion last year. These money inflows are not matched by "brain inflows" to justify the specious claim of overseas Indians being a "brain bank".

"A successful, prosperous, and influential diaspora is an advantage for India," the foreign minister claimed and added that the government's efforts, "are particularly aimed at encouraging the exchanges of knowledge and expertise in a manner that would contribute to India's national development." Money inflows are there to be counted. Knowledge inflows remain nebulous, if not elusive.

If inhospitable conditions at home encourage poor and middle-class Indians to migrate, the fear of harassment by government agencies is driving wealthy Indians to go overseas. The rising demand for school education that enables securing admission overseas is only one indication of the middle class's desperation to quit India.

Till now this phenomenon has been taken lightly by policy makers and analysts. After all, most of their children have already migrated. However, the out-migration of Indians is acquiring staggering proportions. It is partly shaped by the global shortage of people that has created demand for Indian labour and professionals. Equally, it is being shaped by a desire of many to migrate to a better, safer life, far away from Modi's "New India".

While the government is now discovering, in light of growing activism of religious extremists of all hues among overseas Indians, that the diaspora is as much of a liability as an asset, families that have children overseas are beginning to bear the burden of their absence, investing in old age homes. In all this, it is the wealthy who are having a ball — in Dubai, Singapore, London, Lisbon, Cayman Islands and other exotic places.

The writer was member, National Security Advisory Board (1999-2001) and Advisor to the Prime Minister of India (2004-08)



MIHIR VASAVDA

IN A WAY, the backstories of 256 Indian athletes, who won a medal at the Asian Games last year, traced by The Indian Express over two months, capture the story of Indian sport.

Those stories, heartbreaking and inspiring in equal measure, show who plays sports, and where; reveal why they play, and how; illustrate the progress made over the years and expose the potential pitfalls.

The trends don't paint a picture of a sporting nation. They bring out a feel-good factor, and point to the flaws that have kept the country from realising even half of its potential.

It's striking that despite access to specialised training in some of the remotest corners of the country, there's no clear-cut path to make a career in sport unlike in, say, academics where there's a formal progression. What happens at the end may differ from person to person. But the parent and the child know what the journey will be like, the important milestones and what to expect along the way.

Ninety-six athletes who medalled in Hangzhou stumbled upon their sport in either school or a local ground. Many others were introduced, by chance, by an enterprising coach at a basic academy with the bare minimum facilities. Stars, then, have to miraculously start aligning from that moment on.

A career in sport is a game of luck — to be spotted at the right age, given there's no scientific scouting network; to be given the right environment, as a majority come from underprivileged backgrounds; and to be shown the right direction as the athlete, in most cases,

Many in government take the view that overseas Indians are an asset. A 'brain bank' claimed Prime Minister Narendra Modi. True, inward remittances into India have increased steeply to an all-time high of US\$125 billion last year. These money inflows are not matched by 'brain inflows' to justify the specious claim of overseas Indians being a 'brain bank'.

WINNERS, AGAINST ALL ODDS

Asian Games stars show sport can change lives — but systemic change is essential

MIHIR VASAVDA

ENTERS BLINDFOLDED in terms of her career path. Perhaps it's this fear of the unknown that keeps parents with stable, government jobs from pushing their child in this direction. As the data showed, only 33 medallists out of 256 had parents in the service class. For them, the absence of a safety net in case of a sporting career gone wrong seems a far bigger concern than any gains — financial, primarily.

That's clearly not a deterrent for aspiring cricketers, who aren't afraid to put all their eggs in one basket. The data showed that to further their ambitions, eight players each in the men's and women's teams did not study beyond Class 10 or 12, hoping for a life-changing contract with an IPL or WPL side. As the cricket industry grows, more children will be forced to choose between one or the other, leaving them vulnerable to life after sport.

It is also glaring that big cities like Chennai, Mumbai, Delhi, Kolkata and Bangalore accounted for just 41 medal winners between them. Ahmedabad, which is hyped up as the host city for the 2036 Olympics, had only one.

These disappointing numbers raise questions as to why the privileged or middle class from urban areas who can afford high-nutrition food, and have access to the best gyms and state-of-the-art training facilities, do not think of sport as a viable career option.

Shrinking public spaces and a comfortable lifestyle means the participation of people from big cities in sports like hockey — which requires big playing grounds — and wrestling, a hard strength-based sport, is negligible.

Likewise, the entry barriers and high cost in squash and tennis mean that those from rural backgrounds — who accounted for one-third of the medalists — can only dream of a career in such sports. The next stage of evolution for Indian sports will be the narrowing of the urban-rural participation ratio in these sports.

Despite these imperfections, sport's ability to change lives in India is undeniable. Money remains the primary motivation for families. It's why a daily wager moved from Varanasi to Sonbhadra; why a petrol pump attendant encouraged his daughter to take up running; and why a tribal belt in Sundergarh has more hockey turfs than colleges.

The government has finally woken up to the benefits of prioritising sports, which is evident from the increasing investment. The central government's sports budget of Rs 3,397 crore this year is nearly double what it was 10 years ago and ambitious projects announced, including the debatable bid for the Olympics.

At the state level, new infrastructure is being built from scratch and sports policies revised.

The results, in theory, should only get better going forward. Earlier generations never benefited from endless resources and customised training at elite levels, as athletes do today. Simultaneously, however, there should also be an overhaul of a system that has too many webs and uncertainties for a career to flourish. That's one of the biggest lessons from the 256 stories.

mihir.vasavda@expressindia.com



JANUARY 3, 1984, FORTY YEARS AGO

FARMERS ARRESTED

NEARLY 11,000 FARMERS belonging to the Bharatiya Kisan Union, a non-political party, courted arrest in protest against the recent hike in power tariff and "unremunerative" prices for foodgrain. Sharad Joshi, leader of the Shetkari Sangathan and Bhupinder Singh Mann, president of the Punjab unit were among them. It was after great "persuasion" that the district administration agreed to arrest the peaceful demonstrators.

SHOOTOUT IN DELHI

THREE GUNMEN FROM Punjab shot and

wounded a bank employee at Parliament Street, snatched his bags and then shot at a policeman. The dramatic incident took place just as crowds were spilling out on the streets of Connaught Place during lunch hour. One of the gunmen was caught by three constables of the Delhi Police down a short lane off Tolstoy Marg.

STATE & ARMY LEADER

NIGERIA'S BORDERS REMAINED sealed as a British-trained army officer, Major-General Mohammed Buhari, 41, took over as the nation's new military leader, declaring war on "corruption" and profligacy by the deposed

civilian rulers. State-run Lagos Radio announced the appointment of a supreme military council, with Gen Buhari as chairman, heading both the state and the armed forces.

NO RUPEE TRADE

THE IDEA OF looking for an alternative to the rupee trade arrangement with the Soviet Union and others has been floated by a private sector source. The suggestion is to begin with shifting a part of the trade to convertible currencies. At present, India has rupee trade arrangements with the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Poland and Romania in East Europe.

THE IDEAS PAGE

Why the West endures

Theories of China overtaking the US as the world's largest economy, rising Europe out of American dominance and emerging as the dominant power in Asia have been proved wrong



RAJA MANDALA
BY C RAJA MOHAN

IS THE US-LED global order collapsing? The military stalemate in Ukraine, the widening war in the Middle East, and the Chinese assertiveness in Asia would suggest that the US-led West is on the back foot around the world. The intensifying political polarisation in the US and the prospect of the return of Donald Trump as the President in the 2024 elections reinforces the sense of a West in terminal decline.

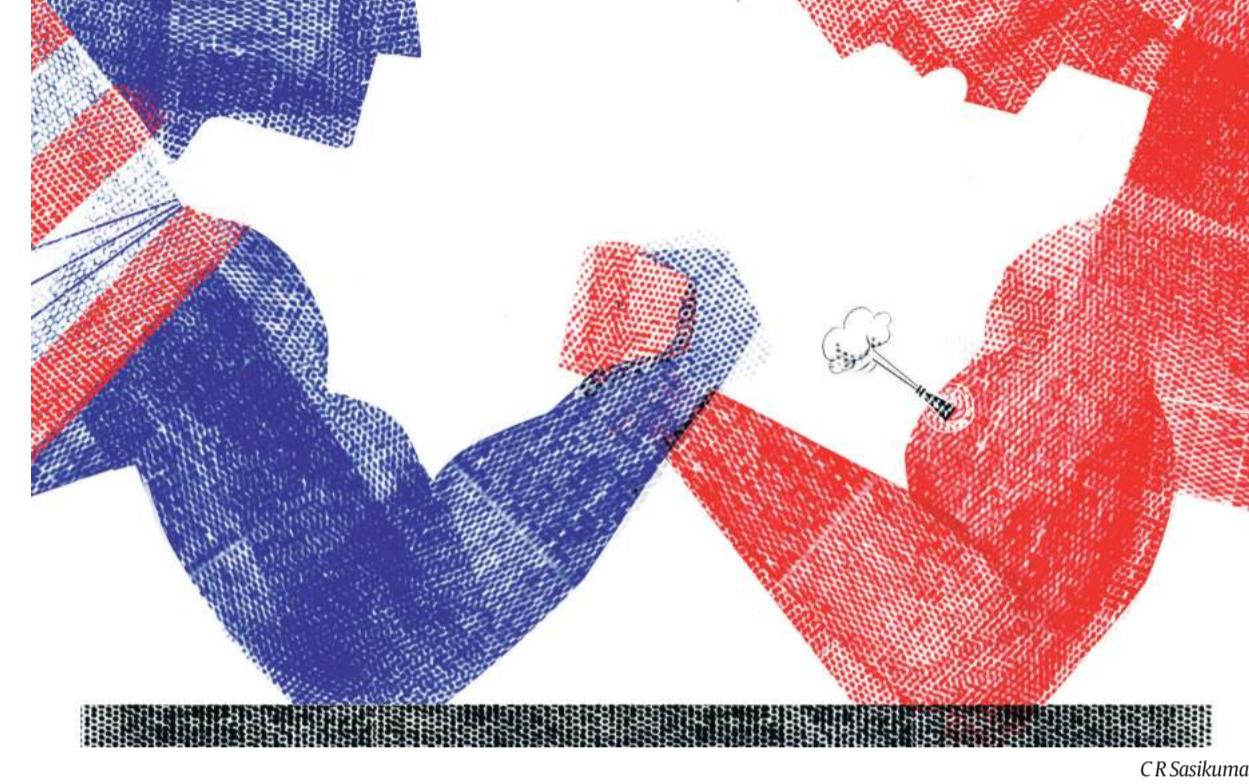
There is no holding back the triumphalism among many sections of the "Eastern" political elites that see the current setbacks to the West as a seminal moment in world politics. For them, it is about the long-awaited end to four centuries of Western dominance. The endless self-flagellation in the West about its collective failures and a sense of panic about the rise of the rest reinforce the sense of a new dawn in global order. India is not immune to this infectious exuberance.

Sceptics, however, dismiss the talk of Western decline. India, in particular, whose relations with the West have never been as good as they are today, has no reason to wish for its decline. Nor would Delhi want China to replace the US as the dominant power in Asia. Delhi today sees the West as a critical partner in propelling India's rise and securing itself against some major national security challenges. However, the question of decline must be addressed in objective terms.

The debate on the decline and fall of the West has been around for more than a century. Yet, if there is one geopolitical concept that has survived the turbulence of the last hundred years, it is the idea of the West. Many competing ideas that burst upon the world – international communism, pan-Asianism, pan-Arabism, pan-Islamism, and third-worldism – have all exhausted themselves while the notion of the West as an idea lives on.

The West has survived frequent and often intense crises of capitalism and endured the loss of colonial empires. It fought back geopolitical challenges to its hegemony from Nazi Germany, Imperial Japan, and the Soviet Union. It is now locked in a new confrontation with China. And the odds are tilting in favour of the West. Until very recently, it was widely assumed that China would overtake the US as the world's largest economy, prise Europe out of American dominance and emerge as the dominant power in Asia.

Some of those dreams have crashed against reality. Slow down in growth and demographic decline suggest China is unlikely to overtake the US economy any time soon, if ever. Yet, it is possible to argue that the Sino-Russian alliance unveiled by Presidents Xi Jinping and Vladimir Putin presents a formidable challenge to Western primacy. Yet, both Russia and China are eager for an accommodation with the West. Despite his tough rhetoric against the "collective West", Putin needs a deal with the US to secure a new European compact in which Moscow can play a major role. President Xi, whose soaring imagination



C R Sasikumar

about a post-Western order in Asia was making waves a few years ago, is now promising President Joe Biden that he is not seeking to overthrow the US-led order but seeking a dignified coexistence.

In both Russia and China, there is a long lineage of political forces that seek Westernisation and integration with the US-led order. They have had to battle the Russian "Slavophiles" and Chinese nationalists who seek to define their national path in non-Western if not anti-Western terms. The Westernisers in Russia and China might be on the defensive now but have not disappeared from the political scene. For both Putin and Xi, the question is not about fighting a forever war with the West, negotiating favourable terms of accommodation. Meanwhile, their aggressive actions in Europe and Asia are compelling their neighbours to move closer to the US and enhance the power of the West. For many in Europe and Asia, the distant power, is very welcome in the effort to limit the power of the regional hegemons.

The story is not different in the Middle East. Iran may be rocking the US-led order in the region, but it is not strong enough to promote an alternative. Many Arab regimes see Iran and its proxies like Hamas as a bigger threat to their existence than Israel. For many Arab states, the distant America remains a valuable and the only balancer against Tehran.

What about the potential role of BRICS as a bulwark against the West? Well, Argentina has just declined to join the forum – the invitation was extended at the BRICS summit in South Africa last year. Earlier, Indonesia had said it was not ready to join the forum when the expansion was being discussed. In any case, the deepening contradictions between India and China have cast a shadow over the BRICS and other non-Western institutions like the SCO, where both Delhi and Beijing are members. The contradictions within the rest are deep and must always be factored in assessing the real and serious tensions between the West and the rest.

What about the decline in the economic

Although the rise of the rest is real, the West continues to lead in the production of new scientific knowledge and technological innovation. Resilient economic and political institutions cushion Western societies from internal turbulence and external challenges. Western academia, think tanks, arts and culture continue to exercise powerful influence worldwide. The broader attraction of Western societies is reflected in the fact that millions of people worldwide, including from India, are eager to find a way into Europe and North America, either legally or illegally. No amount of political posturing by their elites is going to diminish the Western pull for Indian professionals, Chinese computer geeks, Russian dissidents, and talented people from everywhere in the world.

Despite the unprecedented warmth between India and the West at the current juncture, many in the Indian political class, including those on the left and the right, are tempted to buy into the narrative of a rising East and a declining West. Resentments – old and new, major and minor against the West – rush to the surface at the smallest of real and perceived provocations.

But Delhi, which is determined to move India up the global power hierarchy, has little time for deluding itself into ideological crusades against the West. India has been there and done that (and paid a price) in the second half of the 20th century. Two decades of productive engagement in the 21st century has given India the political confidence and the negotiating skills to advance its strategic partnership with the West despite frequent disagreements.

The writer is a contributing editor on international affairs for The Indian Express

weight of the G7 in the global economy? To be sure, the share of G7's GDP has been on a continuous decline in the 21st century. Much of that decline, though, has come from Europe. The US retains nearly 24 per cent of the global GDP. The relative economic decline of Europe vis-a-vis the US and China and its security vulnerability vis-a-vis Russia will only help consolidate the West under American leadership.

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WHAT THE OTHERS SAY

"The digitisation of old documents is a valuable, even essential measure. But to destroy the paper copies, once they have been scanned, is — as the historian Sir Richard Evans has warned — not a matter of efficiency, but of vandalism."

— THE GUARDIAN

Making votes and voices count

People must demand that political class holds corporates to account for ills ranging from social media addiction to climate change



VIKRAM PATEL

AMIDST ALL THE troubles in the world, the recent Amnesty International publication "Driven into Darkness" sank without notice. This is a pity, for the report documents the contribution of TikTok, the popular social media platform, to the youth mental health crisis sweeping the world. A companion report reveals how a "deeply discriminatory and invasive model of surveillance for profit" sustains TikTok's business model.

The Amnesty team's research concluded that TikTok had maximised the addictive qualities of its content generation thereby "incentivising a race to the bottom between a small number of leading social media companies vying for the highest user numbers and engagement rates". In plain language, social media companies were intentionally building algorithms to addict young people for the old-fashioned motive of profit. The consequence of this greed has been the sickening of tens of thousands of young people. Most perversely, social media companies now fund initiatives to promote youth mental health, while continuing to deploy algorithms which addict young people to their products.

The accounts of how corporations have enriched themselves and their shareholders while causing immense harm to society are a legion. Consider just two notable examples. The first example, though somewhat historical, is still instructive. Allan Brandt, a colleague in my department in Harvard, wrote a superb account (*The Cigarette Century*) of how the tobacco industry became one of the most profitable in history while selling a product which had killed hundreds of millions of people. The book documents the spectacular success of advertising and public relations in making smoking such a pervasive habit that over half of all men and a fifth of all women in the US smoked cigarettes by 1950. But, what is more to the point is that, even though the harms associated with smoking had begun emerging as far back as the 1920s, the tobacco industry was able to obfuscate public opinion by co-opting members of the medical profession, media and elected members of government to question the credibility of the science for 40 years before the US, and the world, finally cracked down. And when the evidence became too strong to refute, the industry responded by promoting "safer low-tar" cigarettes and, even more shamelessly, funding apparently independent initiatives to address the public health consequences of tobacco consumption.

The second example is not only more contemporary but is still in the early phases of unfolding. I am referring to climate change, the result of over a century of industrialisation and globalisation propelled largely by the fossil fuel industry. Even as the world counts, on a daily basis, the mounting toll of death and disease directly

attributed to climate change, these are still only the tip of the proverbial iceberg of the catastrophe which lies ahead, as entire regions become uninhabitable due to flooding or heat. As with the tobacco industry, the fossil fuel industry has long known about the effects of its products on altering climate but succeeded in hoodwinking the world by funding sceptics in the academy and promoting climate-deniers in governments. And, as the evidence became too compelling to ignore, not least when the destructive effects of climate change began to hit the rich and powerful, they started funding initiatives to mitigate the effects of climate change or "diversify" into renewable energy, all the while continuing to drill for oil and dig for coal.

I could go on with the list of other corporate enterprises which have followed the same playbook. The real threat to the people, however, is not the corporate world. After all, they do what they always claimed they would do — make money. The existential danger, of course, is that the governments whom we elect to represent us, have metastasised into becoming agents of the corporate world, which is hardly surprising given that all major political parties rely on direct cash contributions and myriad forms of indirect contributions for their survival.

It was, therefore, a rare opportunity to celebrate when, in November 2023, 41 states in the US joined hands to sue Meta, alleging that the company harms children by building addictive features into Instagram and Facebook. The suit is the result of a major investigation which arrived at exactly the same conclusion as the Amnesty Report on TikTok. The federal complaint alleged that the company engaged in a "scheme to exploit young users for profit by misleading them about safety features and the prevalence of harmful content, harvesting their data and violating federal laws on children's privacy". As with the tobacco, cola and processed food industries, they intentionally trapped young people into their webs while knowing of the harms that would ensue. The recent shenanigans at OpenAI is, at its heart, an insight into a similar contestation between the competing visions of enormous short-term profits of AI versus its long-term threats to the very survival of humanity.

It is not an exaggeration to state that the collusion of corporate interests with elected governments is the single biggest threat to the survival of our societies and the planet. Even though most democracies are now simply a fig-leaf for a plutocracy, our votes and voices do count. We must demand from our political class that to win our support, they must truly represent us through appropriate prohibitions, taxes and punitive actions to ensure that the corporate chiefs and their boards are held accountable for the damages that result from their products. Moreover, we will need more than individual action, in the form of social movements. To quote Noam Chomsky, "as long as the general population is passive, apathetic and diverted to consumerism or hatred of the other, then the powerful can do as they please".

The writer is the Paul Farmer Professor of Global Health at Harvard Medical School

The leader's storytelling

Besides talent and expertise, that is what set newsmakers of 2023 apart



RADHA GOENKA

ALL GREAT LEADERS have two superpowers, capability in their field and storytelling. The first, expertise in their field, is common sense. We already knew that. But the second and arguably the more important one, the ability to tell a story, is one we often don't think about.

Let's reflect on the year that went by and the leaders we saw in 2023.

This was the year that Taylor Swift, the US-based pop singer made headlines globally. At 33, she has been nominated 46 times and won 12 Grammy Awards. In 2023, she went on tour and did 66 live concerts across cities in the US, which have grossed one billion dollars so far. There was a mini economic boom in every city the concert was held in. Even the US Federal Reserve took note of the "Taylor Effect", as it was called. What led to this mania? There have been many talented musicians – what sets Swift apart is her ability to tell a story. She both shares details about her life, like who she is dating and her love for cats, and openly talks about the difficult times, like her long struggle with depression. The peek into the person behind the music makes her relatable to her fans.

Joe Biden, President of the United States, was in the news a lot too, although not always for the right reasons. He lost the support of many young Democrats and he lost

a lot of popularity over his decision to support the war in Gaza. The lobby for Israel in the US is very strong and able to push its agenda to support the war. But this has been true for years. Would other US presidents have taken a similar decision? Probably, yes. Let's for a minute imagine Barack Obama in the same situation. Whether he would or wouldn't have supported the war is secondary. His ability to convince his vote bank about his reasons would hold far more weight. He had the power of storytelling. The ability to convince the larger public on his reasons between the West and the rest.

What about the decline in the economic

master storyteller. When he speaks, we want to listen. I remember once hearing him speak at a Coldplay music concert in Mumbai. He was addressing an audience of young urban English-speaking youth right before a pop-music concert: a difficult place to find connections and hold attention. And yet, he managed to do both! He is a capable leader and a great orator. But his story is more than that. He is the humble chaiwala, a man who has devoted his life to serving the country. It's these narratives that make him relatable.

In the world of social media, it has become easier for people to become storytellers. Earlier we had to be great orators, get over our fears of public speaking and find avenues to get our story out to large audiences. Today, all one needs is good ideas and a social media account. Add to that, the magic ingredient, vulnerability. And you have a winning mix! Your weak moments make you likeable. Taylor Swift had her struggle with depression; PM Modi, his humble roots and personal sacrifices.

Let's toast to 2024 being a year of more leaders sharing their stories and more viewers being wiser in deciphering them.

The writer is director at RPG Foundation and Founder of Pehlay Akshar, The Heritage Project

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

KEEP YOUR FOCUS

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'The Hangzhou haul' (IE, January 2). It is heartening to see youth from humble backgrounds excelling in sports at the international level. But India has a long way to go to achieve sports supremacy. Nurturing talent from the primary school level itself is crucial to growing Olympic talent. Issues of nepotism, corruption and misuse of power by selectors and sports authorities are disheartening for emerging athletes and must be remedied. Finally, world-class training facilities will ensure athletes don't have to go to a foreign country to be able to excel.

Anany Mishra, Bhilai

ROLE OF JUDICIARY

THIS REFERS TO the article, 'The temples of justice' (IE, January 2). While the concern about subversion of inclusive values in India is genuine, one wonders how the judiciary can play a role in confronting such issues. It is rather his job as an Opposition MP to actively promote inclusive values. If religious fundamentalism has seeped into Indian society, it is because the Opposition has failed to produce a counter-narrative. His frustration with the collegium system is surprising because when the NJAC was brought in to reform the system, he was its most vocal opponent.

Prakhar R Jaiswal, Meerut

KUDOS, ISRO

THIS REFERS TO the editorial 'A light in space' (IE, December 2). The successful launch of XpoSat by ISRO is fantastic news. This will hopefully be the start of a year of more such accomplishments. Understanding the degree and angle of light using X-ray polarimetry data can provide fresh insights into the universe's properties. The combination of NASA's IXPE mission and our mission suggests we are not far from uncovering the truth. Most importantly, the fact that ISRO has made such a significant contribution is cause for pride. Kudos to ISRO.

Yashi Navaya, Jammu

Govt plans to end Free Movement Regime along international border with Myanmar

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 2

THE FREE Movement Regime (FMR), which allows people residing on either side of the India-Myanmar border to venture 16 km into each other's territory without visa, will end soon. Anyone coming through will have to get a visa," the source said.

"The idea is to not only to stop the misuse of the FMR, which is used by insurgent groups to carry out attacks on the Indian side and flee towards Myanmar, but also put a brake on the influx of illegal immigrants, drugs and gold smuggling," the source said.

Earlier in September 2023,

The Centre has decided to start the tendering for an advanced smart fencing system for the entire India-Myanmar border, sources said. "We are going to end

the FMR along the Indo-Myanmar border soon. We are going to put fencing along the entire border. The fencing will be completed in the next four-and-a-half years. Anyone coming through will have to get a visa," the source said.

"The idea is to not only to stop the misuse of the FMR, which is used by insurgent groups to carry out attacks on the Indian side and flee towards Myanmar, but also put a brake on the influx of illegal immigrants, drugs and gold smuggling," the source said.

Earlier in September 2023,

'BJP's imagination': Soren rejects possibility of wife contesting polls

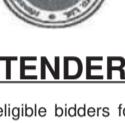
Ranchi: Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren on Tuesday dismissed speculations of his wife Kalpana Soren contesting from Gandey Assembly constituency in the state, and termed it as a "complete imagination" of the BJP.

"There is not an iota of truth in the speculations," said Soren, who is JMM's executive president. "Possibility of my wife contesting in the near future is a complete imagination of BJP... The specula-

tion about handing over reins to her is a fabric woven by BJP to build a false narrative," he told PTI.

The speculations were triggered by the recent summons by the Enforcement Directorate to Soren, coupled with the sudden resignation by the ruling JMM's Gandey MLA Sarfaraz Ahmad on Monday. Sources in the CMO told PTI that the timeline for reply to the fresh summons by the ED to Soren will end on January 5. PTI

HIMACHAL PRADESH STATE ELECTRONICS DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION LIMITED Tender No.: HPSEDC/DMP/2K24-19094



Ist& Ground Floor, I.T. Bhawan, Mehli, Shimla - 171 013 Tel. No. 0177-2623259 2623513, 2626320, 2623513 2623043, FAX: 0177-2626320 Website :www.hpsedc.in Date: 01-01-2024

E-TENDER NOTICE

e-Tenders are invited from eligible bidders for Rate Contract for Dot Matrix Printers. Pre-Bid meeting will be held on 08/01/2024 (11:30 AM) through Video Conferencing.

Last date for online e-bid submission is 29/01/2024 (upto 02:30 PM) and shall be opened on 30/01/2024 at 2:30 PM. Detailed Tender Document containing Technical Specifications and Terms & Conditions are available on HPSEDC website www.hpsedc.in and https://htenders.gov.in.

1056/HP General Manager (Technical)

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON

See Section 82 Cr. P. C.

Whereas a complaint has been made before me that accused person namely Sh. Sanjeev Bhatnagar S/o Mahender Swaroop Bhatnagar R/o H.No. D-123, Flat No.23, Sangam Apartment Sector-09 Rohini, Delhi, have committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence under FIR No. 950/18 U/s 138 NI Act, has been registered at P.S. South Rohini, Delhi and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest there upon issued that the said, Sh. Sanjeev Bhatnagar cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said, Sh. Sanjeev Bhatnagar as absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant).

Proclamation is hereby made that the said accused, Sh. Sanjeev Bhatnagar of FIR No. 950/18 U/s 138 NI Act, Registered at P.S. South Rohini, Delhi is required to appear before this court to answer the said complaint on or before 16.02.2024.

By Order

Smt. Deepali Srivastav, MM (NW), Room No.107, 1st Floor, Rohini Courts, Delhi

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON

(SECTION 82 Cr.P.C.)

Whereas complaint has been made before me that the accused (1) Ajay Goyal, R/o D-780-781-782, 7J Colony, Shiv Vihar, Uttam Nagar, Delhi, (2) Gyan Singh, S/o Ram Snehi, R/o As above, (3) Simran, W/o Rajesh, R/o As above, have committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence in case CT Case 406/2022, U/s 135 Indian Electricity Act, registered at P.S. Uttam Nagar, Delhi, and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest there upon issued that the said accused Ajay Goyal, Gyan Singh and Simran, cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said accused Ajay Goyal, Gyan Singh and Simran, have absconded (or are concealing themselves to avoid the service of said warrant).

Proclamation is hereby made that the said accused Ajay Goyal, Gyan Singh and Simran, of case CT Case 406/2022, U/s 135 Indian Electricity Act, P.S. Uttam Nagar, Delhi, are required to appear before this court to answer the said complaint on or before 06.02.2024.

By Order

Vinod Kumar Meena, A. S. J., Room no. 609, Dwarka Courts, Delhi

DP/15155/DW/2023 (Court Matter)

Himachal Pradesh Power Corporation Limited

(A State Govt. Undertaking)
Corporate Identity Number (CIN) :- U40101HP2006SGC030591
Regd. Office: Himed Building, BCS, New Shimla, HP-171009
Ph. No: 0177-2671589 Website: www.hppcl.in

NOTICE INVITING EXPRESSION OF INTEREST FROM ELIGIBLE PRACTICING CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS/ CA FIRMS FOR APPOINTMENT AS INCOME TAX AUDITOR FOR THE FY 2023-24 AND FY 2024-25

HPPCL invites Expression of Interest from eligible practicing CAs / CA Firms for appointment as Income Tax Auditors, to conduct Tax Audit under Section 44AB of the Income Tax Act, 1961, for the F.Y. 2023-24 and F.Y. 2024-25.

The Application Form, Scope of Work, Detailed Terms & Conditions, Minimum Eligibility Criteria and Fee Structure are as per Annexure-A" to "D" which are available at HPPCL's website www.hppcl.in and can be downloaded. The selection of the Auditor shall be based on overall suitability of the firm and its experience in conducting of Income Tax Audit of Central/State Power Sector organizations/PSUs.

Interested firms (having requisite experience in conducting Income Tax Audit of Central/State Power Sector organizations / PSUs and having its Head Office/ Branch office located in Shimla, Himachal Pradesh) may send their application in prescribed format in separate envelops superscribing "Appointment of Income Tax Auditor", so as to reach in the office of Deputy General Manager (Finance & Accounts), Himachal Pradesh Power Corporation Limited, Himed Building, BCS, New Shimla (H.P.)-171009, latest by 16th January, 2024 up to 01:00 PM and will be opened at 03:00 PM, on same date, in the presence of authorized representatives of the participating firms.

-Sd-
Director (Finance)

Centre to start tendering for advanced smart fencing system for the entire border: Sources

Manipur Chief Minister N Biren Singh had urged the Centre to permanently wind up the FMR along the Indo-Myanmar border to curb "illegal immigration". He had also said the state was working towards a National Register of Citizens, and fencing of the border

with Myanmar. Manipur shares around 390 km of porous border with Myanmar, of which only about 10 km is fenced.

The border between India and Myanmar runs for 1,643 km in the four states of Mizoram, Manipur, Nagaland, and Arunachal Pradesh. The FMR is a mutually agreed arrangement between the two countries that allows tribes living along the border to travel up to 16 km inside the other country without a visa. Under the FMR, every member of the hill tribes, who is either a citizen of India or a citizen

of Myanmar and who is resident of any area within 16 km on either side of the border can cross over on production of a border pass with one-year validity and can stay up to two weeks.

The FMR was implemented in 2018 as part of the Narendra Modi government's Act East policy at a time when diplomatic relations between India and Myanmar were on the upswing. In fact, the FMR was to be put in place in 2017 itself, but was deferred due to the Rohingya refugee crisis that erupted that August.

UP dithers over cane price, farmers hope for big hike in poll year

Sugar mills worry over diversion to higher-paying gur-making units

HARISH DAMODARAN
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 2

FARMERS AND millers are both anxious over the Uttar Pradesh government not declaring its state advised price (SAP) for sugarcane for 2023-24, despite the crushing season technically starting from October.

"They are supposed to announce it before October, when mills start crushing the new cane harvested by farmers. But it's now January and we still don't know what price farmers will get from mills for their current season's crop," said V M Singh, convenor of the Rashtriya Kisan Mazdoor Sangathan. Farmer unions are seeking a significant hike in the cane SAP, which was last raised in 2021-22 to Rs 340 per quintal for "general" and Rs 350 for "early-maturing" varieties.

The incident occurred early Tuesday morning in Parauli village of Badaun district. Officials said the incident appeared to be a case of "honour killing". Police said the deceased were identified as Neetu and Jaipal (20).

"They belonged to the Scheduled Castes. The two were neighbors and had been in a relationship for the past three years. The woman's family was against their relationship. Jaipal worked as a cab driver in a private company," said police.

"Hours after their deaths, Mahesh, a farmer, reached the police station with a spade which was allegedly used for the crime and surrendered," the officer said. A police team rushed to the house and found the bodies, which had injury marks on the head and face.

This is much lower than during the previous governments led by SP's Akhilesh Yadav (Rs 65 increase: from Rs 240-250/quintal in 2011-12 to Rs 305-315/quintal in 2016-17) and BSP's Mayawati (Rs 115-120 increase; from Rs 125-130 in 2006-07 to Rs 240-250/quintal in 2011-12).

With Lok Sabha elections due in April-May, there are expectations of a substantial rise in the SAP this time. "Farmers are today paying Rs 45-50/quintal only as harvesting labour charge, compared to Rs 30-35 two years

ago. The cost of fertilisers, pesticides and other inputs have also shot up, even as per-acre cane yields have fallen because of the dominant Co-0238 variety becoming susceptible to red rot fungal disease," said Singh.

But it isn't farmers alone. Even millers in UP are worried over the delay in announcing the cane SAP. The reason: Diversion of cane to gur (jaggery) and kandsari (cottage sugar) units. These alternative sweetener makers are offering higher prices for cane – Rs 360-400/quintal for early-maturing varieties.

Meanwhile, the National Federation of Cooperative Sugar Factories Ltd has estimated India's sugar output during 2023-24 (til December 31) at 112.10 lakh tonnes (lt), 76 per cent lower than the 121.35 lt for the same period of the last season. Production is down in Maharashtra (47.4 lt to 38.2 lt) and Karnataka (26.7 lt to 24 lt), while it is up in Uttar Pradesh (30.8 lt to 34.65 lt).

"They are paying more, that too immediately in cash after weighment. Our payment cycle is 14 days after cane purchase. We can neither pay in cash nor increase and reduce cane prices just like that. The government monitors the price of both our input (cane) and output (sugar), unlike the unregulated gur and kandsari makers who operate in a completely free market," said a miller.

The worry over diversion is even more, given that this year's cane crop is seen to be not as good as was initially believed. "Yields are down due to red rot and also top borer (an insect pest) attack," said K P Singh, CEO of Hans Heritage Jaggery and Farm Produce, which operates a modern fully-automated

gur plant at Unn in west UP's Shamli district.

His plant, said to be the first of its kind, can crush up to 150 tonnes of cane per day (tcd). That's more than the 10 tcd for an average gur-making kohlu and 50-70 tcd for a kandsari crusher, but way below the 2,500-15,000 tcd crushing capacity range of sugar mills. Kohlus are currently realising Rs 33-35 per kg for gur. At 13 per cent average recovery, they would be grossing Rs 429-455 for every quintal of cane crushed.

For the whole 2023-24 season (October-September), the time the Yogi Adityanath-led BJP government has been in office, the cane price in India's largest producing state has gone up by only Rs 35, from Rs 305-315/quintal to Rs 340-350/quintal.

This is much lower than during the previous governments led by SP's Akhilesh Yadav (Rs 65 increase: from Rs 240-250/quintal in 2011-12 to Rs 305-315/quintal in 2016-17) and BSP's Mayawati (Rs 115-120 increase; from Rs 125-130 in 2006-07 to Rs 240-250/quintal in 2011-12).

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SENSEX: 71,892.48 ▲ 379.46 (0.53%) NIFTY: 21,665.80 ▲ 76.10 (0.35%) NIKKEI: 33,464.17 ▼ 75.45 HANG SENG: 16,788.55 ▼ 258.84 FTSE: 7,706.81 ▼ 26.43 DAX: 16,728.20 ▼ 23.44



GOLD

₹64,200



USD RATE

₹83.32



OIL

\$77.21



SILVER

₹78,800

Note: Gold, Silver rates at Delhi spot market, gold per 10g, silver per 1 kg; Crude oil (Indian basket) as of December 27

International market data till 1900 IST

SECTOR WATCH BANKING

Inoperative accounts: How will RBI's revised guidelines benefit customers?

HITESH VYAS
MUMBAI, JANUARY 2

THE RESERVE Bank of India (RBI) has revised guidelines for classifying accounts and deposits as inoperative accounts and unclaimed deposits by banks. As per the norms, account holders can reactivate their inoperative accounts/unclaimed deposits by submitting 'know your customer' (KYC) documents afresh at all branches, including non-home branches, of banks in which they have an account.

What is an inoperative account?

A savings or current account is treated as inoperative, if there are no 'customer induced transactions' in the account for a period of over two years. A customer-induced transaction can be a financial transaction initiated by or done at the behest of the account holder by the bank or third party, or a non-financial transaction, or a KYC (know your customer) update done in face-to-face physical mode or through digital channels such as internet banking or mobile banking application of the bank. Around Rs 1-1.30 lakh crore is estimated to be lying in inoperative bank accounts.

What are unclaimed deposits?

Balances in savings / current accounts which are not operated for 10 years, or term deposits not claimed within 10 years from date of maturity are classified as 'unclaimed deposits'. The government recently informed the Parliament that unclaimed deposits of Rs 42,270 crore are lying with the banks as of March 2023.

What do the revised RBI guidelines say?

The RBI has asked banks to undertake at least an annual review in respect of accounts, where there are no customer induced transactions for more than a year. In cases where there is no explicit mandate to renew the term deposit, banks need to review such accounts if

the customers have not withdrawn the proceeds after maturity or transferred these to their savings/current account in order to prevent such deposits from becoming unclaimed. Banks should communicate to the account or deposit holders through letters or email or SMS that there has been no operation in their accounts in the last one year. The alert messages should invariably mention that the account would become 'inoperative' if no operations are carried out during the next one year and, the account holder would be required to submit KYC documents afresh for reactivating the account in such case.

Which account can be classified as inoperative?

For the purpose of classifying an account as inoperative, only customer induced transactions and not bank induced transactions shall be considered. There may be instances where the customer has given a mandate like standing instructions (SI) / auto-renewal instructions and there are no other operations in the savings /current account or the term deposit. These transactions shall also be treated as customer-induced transactions. Bank-induced transactions are transactions in the account initiated by the bank such as charges, fees, interest payments, penalties and taxes.

Which accounts cannot be classified as inoperative accounts?

Banks open zero balance accounts for beneficiaries of Central/State government schemes and for students who receive scholarships. Central and State governments have been expressing difficulty in crediting cheques or direct benefit transfer or electronic benefit transfer or scholarship amount in these accounts as they are also classified as inoperative due to non-operation for two years.

FULL REPORTON
www.indianexpress.com

Voda Idea denies talks with Starlink for tie-up

CANARA BANK
Launches data,
analytics centre
in Bengaluru

New Delhi: Canara Bank has started its new data and analytics centre at Bengaluru. The centre, planned as a hub of excellence, is equipped with state-of-the-art facilities. The lender said that the new centre will help it consolidate its position in leveraging analytics for operations and services. The bank also launched a number of artificial intelligence and machine learning-driven analytics initiatives in areas like customer experience, business generation, and employee upskilling. **ENS**

Bitcoin touches 21-month high at \$45,000

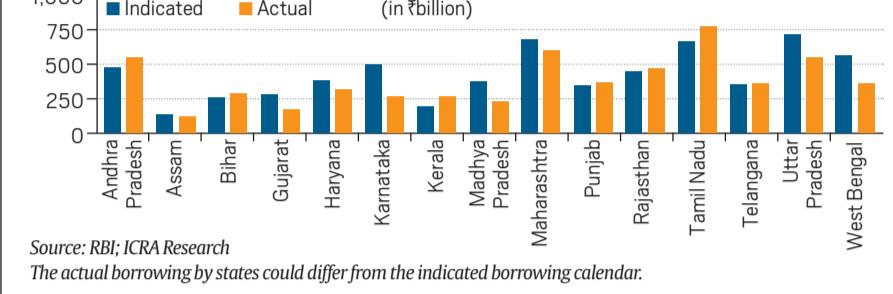
New Delhi: Bitcoin stormed above \$45,000 on Tuesday for the first time since April 2022, buoyed by optimism around the possible approval of exchange-traded spot bitcoin funds. Bitcoin touched a 21-month peak of \$45,532, having gained 156 per cent last year in its strongest yearly performance since 2020. It was last up 3.5 per cent at \$45,727. **REUTERS**

STATES' BORROWING SEEN AT RECORD RS 4.13 LK CRORE IN Q4

Higher borrowing by states to widen yield spread with G-sec

ANCHAL MAGAZINE
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 2

ACTUAL & INDICATED ISSUANCE BY TOP 15 BORROWING STATES IN APR-DEC

Source: RBI; ICRA Research
The actual borrowing by states could differ from the indicated borrowing calendar.

with G-sec supply is expected to weigh on state government bonds this quarter, with higher borrowing expected to lead to a rise in the borrowing cost for states compared with Centre. The weighted average cut-off of state government securities increased by a sharp 8 bps to 7.71 per cent on Tuesday from 7.63 per cent last week and the spread between the cut-off of 10-year state government securities and the 10-year G-sec (7.18 per cent, 2033 bond) yield widened to 53 bps on Tuesday from 48 bps last week, highest since January 2022, ICRA said.

"In our view, if the weekly SGS auctions in Q4 FY2024 are closer to the indicated amount, the spreads between the 10-year SGS and 10-year G-sec yield may widen to 50-60 bps in this quarter, especially in February-March 2024," Aditi Nayar, Chief

Economist, ICRA said.

Last week, the Reserve Bank of India had released the indicative calendar of market borrowings by state governments and union territories (UTs), wherein a record borrowing of Rs 4.13 lakh crore has been proposed by states and UTs in the last quarter of this financial year, over 37.4 per cent higher year-on-year. Estimates by economists had pegged states' borrowing to be around Rs 3.4-3.5 lakh crore in Q4. Among states, Karnataka, West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh and Tamil Nadu constitute the majority share in the proposed borrowing, with Karnataka and West Bengal accounting for nearly 80 per cent of the incremental indicated borrowing amount of Rs 1.1 lakh crore for Q4. However, the actual borrowing by states could turn out to be lower than the indicated borrowing

ing. ICRA said some states may have estimated their Q4 borrowing by subtracting their actual issuance in nine months so far from the total permitted borrowing for FY2024 by the Government of India. Release of additional funds under the capex loan scheme in Q4 and tax devolution could also help limit the total states' borrowing, it said.

After a gap of 10 quarters, the actual borrowing by states had exceeded the indicated amount by 4 per cent or Rs 8,700 crore in October-December. The total borrowing by states in April-December stood at Rs 6 lakh crore, 90 per cent of the amount indicated for this period (Rs 6.7 lakh crore) compared with 70 per cent in the year-ago period (Rs 4.6 lakh crore actual borrowing vs Rs 6.5 lakh crore indicated).

FULL REPORTON
www.indianexpress.com

NEW YEAR GREETINGS

Union Minister of Finance Nirmala Sitharaman on Tuesday was greeted by Nitin Gupta, Chairman, CBDT and members on the occasion of New Year 2024. Revenue Secretary Sanjay Malhotra was also present. @IncomeTaxIndia

RBI proposed easing of norms for dividend payout by banks

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU
MUMBAI, JANUARY 2

THE RESERVE Bank of India (RBI) on Tuesday has proposed to give permission for banks having net non-performing assets (NPAs) ratio of less than 6 per cent to declare dividends.

Currently, banks need to have a NPA ratio of up to 7 per cent to become eligible for declaration of dividends.

The RBI said a commercial bank should have a minimum total capital adequacy of 11.5 per cent to be eligible for declaring dividend, while the same for a

small finance bank and payment banks has been set at 15 per cent, and 9 per cent for local area banks and regional rural banks.

The RBI has proposed increasing the upper ceiling on dividend payout ratio -- which is the ratio between the amount of the dividend payable in a year and the net profit -- to 50 per cent if the net NPA is zero from the earlier ceiling of 40 per cent.

The draft also made it clear that the Reserve Bank should not entertain any request for "ad-hoc dispensation on declaration of dividend".

The net NPA ratio, for the financial year for which the dividend is proposed, should be less than six per cent," the Reserve

bank said in the draft guidelines on dividend declaration.

The guidelines have been reviewed in the light of implementation of Basel III standards, the revision of the prompt corrective action (PCA) framework, and the introduction of differentiated banks, the RBI said.

The central bank has proposed that the new guidelines should come into effect from FY25 onwards.

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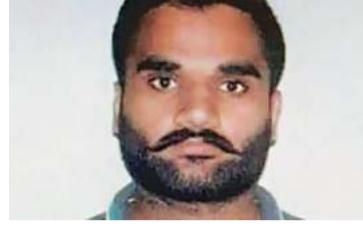
THE INDIAN EXPRESS, WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 3, 2024

E. EXPLAINED

THIS WORD MEANS

DESIGNATED TERRORIST

Gangster Goldy Brar has been declared a designated terrorist under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act



Goldy Brar is a member of the Lawrence Bishnoi gang. File

the standard of proof required to establish that an individual is involved, or is likely to be involved, in terrorist activities.

What happens when an individual is declared a terrorist?

The designation of an individual as a global terrorist by the United Nations is associated with sanctions including travel bans, freezing of assets and an embargo against procuring arms. The 2019 UAPA amendment, however, did not provide any such detail.

The amendment also gave the Centre the power to remove a name from the schedule when an individual makes an application. If an application filed by an individual declared a terrorist is rejected by the government, they have the right to seek a review within one month.

Under the amendment, the central government set up a review committee comprising a chairperson (a retired or sitting judge of a High Court) and three other members. The review committee is empowered to order the government to delete the name of the individual from the schedule that lists "terrorists" if it considers the order to be flawed.

Apart from these two avenues, the individual can also move court challenging the government's order.

EXPLAINED GLOBAL

SKOREA'S OPPN LEADER STABBED: HISTORY OF POLITICAL VIOLENCE

SOUTH KOREAN opposition Democratic Party leader Lee Jae-myung was stabbed in the neck on Tuesday, months ahead of a national parliamentary election.

The country has a history of political violence dating back to its founding in 1948. Here are some recent incidents:

2022: Song Young-gil

Lee's predecessor as leader of the Democratic Party, Song Young-gil, was attacked in Seoul by an elderly man wearing a traditional robe who approached him from behind and struck him on the head with a hammer.

Song, who was also serving as manager for Lee's presidential campaign at the time, underwent surgery before returning to the campaign trail a day later.

Media described his attacker as a liberal activist with a YouTube channel. Reports said he shouted slogans criticising South Korea-US military exercises when he struck Song.

2015: Mark Lippert

Then US ambassador Mark Lippert

needed 80 stitches after his face was slashed with a fruit knife at a forum discussing Korean unification in the capital, Seoul. He spent five days in hospital and underwent surgery for an 11 cm gash on the right side of his face, as well as a puncture wound on his left wrist.

The attack was carried out by a Korean nationalist who said he was protesting against annual US-South Korean military exercises. It prompted an outpouring of public support in South Korea.

2006: Park Geun-hye

Then conservative opposition party leader Park Geun-hye was stabbed while attending a political rally. She suffered an 11 cm gash to her face that required 60 stitches and prevented her from speaking normally for weeks.

The assailant told police he was frustrated at having to serve prison time for crimes he did not commit.

The daughter of assassinated president Park Chung-hee, she was elected president herself in 2013, but was impeached in 2017.

REUTERS

phone, a subsidiary of Norway's telecom giant Telenor.

sumed in fighting to prevent further dilution of the differentiation principle.

Fossil fuel guzzler

While Saudi Arabia took most of the blame for attempting to prevent a mention of fossil fuel phase-out in the Dubai meeting's final outcome, the United States has largely got away with its record on fossil fuels. It continues to be the largest producer of fossil fuels – oil, natural gas and coal taken together – and more than 80% of its energy needs are still met by these sources.

Yet, the United States has never faced the kind of pressure that India faces for its use of coal. In fact, till 2015, the US was using as much coal as India, and it is only in recent years that it has reduced its reliance somewhat.

Despite constant criticism, India has a far better record on fossil fuels than the United States. Data from the International Energy Agency shows that about 27% of India's energy needs were being met by non-fossil sources, compared with the less than 20% in the case of the United States.

No money

As the world's leading economy, home to some of the largest global corporate houses, and the biggest influence on international financial institutions, the US is uniquely positioned to mobilise financial resources for climate actions. But it has not delivered.

A day after facing criticism for its paltry contribution to the Loss and Damage fund in Dubai, the US announced a US\$ 3 billion commitment to the Green Climate Fund (GCF) for the next four years, by far the largest sum from any single country. GCF is the main financial instrument of the Paris Agreement for raising funds to help developing countries carry out climate actions. But it handles a very small fraction of the money that is required for such actions.

A major concern has been the lack of money for adaptation activities. In Glasgow, countries had decided to double the financial flows to adaptation, but a recent Adaptation Gap Report showed that far from doubling, the money had seen a year-on-year decline. The US was among the countries that ensured that no separate financial provisions were included in the decision on Global Goal on Adaptation reached in Dubai in December.

LONGER VERSION ON
indianexpress.com/explained

EXPLAINED CLIMATE CHANGE

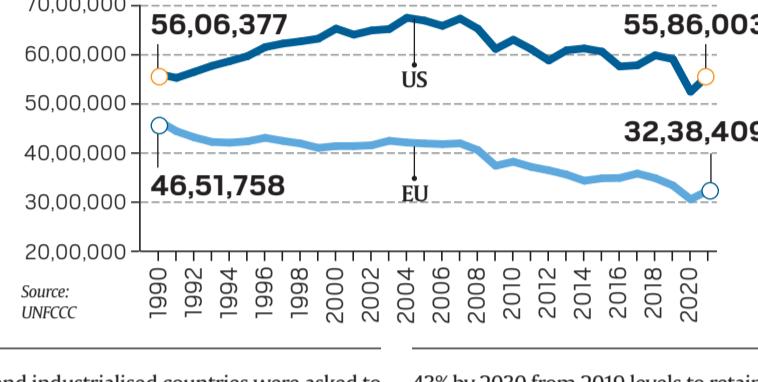
America's climate failures

The United States is one of the biggest reasons the world is not on track to meet 2030 targets. The country has lagged behind in everything, from reducing emissions to meeting its financial responsibilities

SHARE OF HISTORICAL EMISSIONS (1850-2021) IN %

USA	European Union	China	Brazil	India
20.9	11.8	11.5	4.6	3.3

Source: Study published in Nature, 2023

Annual Emissions (in thousands of tonnes of CO2 eq)

and industrialised countries were asked to take the lead in reducing emissions. That group of about 40 countries came to be known as Annex-I countries because they were listed in Annexure-I of UNFCCC.

This was not the first time that the United States has been found wanting in playing its expected role in the fight against climate change. As the country with the largest share of historical emissions and the world's biggest economy, the United States carries a greater burden than any other nation in taking climate actions. Both the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and its 2015 Paris Agreement repeatedly mention that developed countries must take the lead in the climate change battle.

But the United States has been one of the biggest laggards on climate action. Not only has it not cut down on emissions, it has done little to meet its financial and technological obligations. It never ratified the Kyoto Protocol, and therefore never abided by the emissions reduction targets assigned therein. The Paris Agreement was negotiated largely on terms dictated by it, but it still walked out. It has rejoined the Paris Agreement now, but lack of enthusiasm from the United States is one of the biggest reasons why the world is not on track to meet the 2030 targets.

Of course, there are other Annex-I countries that have fared worse – eight of them, including Canada and Turkey. But the United States alone emits about four times the combined emissions of all eight.

Historical responsibility

Despite China emitting much more in the last 15 years, the US continues to have the largest share historically, accounting for more than 20% of all carbon dioxide emissions since 1850.

Around the early 1990s, when the first international rules on climate change were emerging, the US accounted for more than 30% of historical emissions. Broadly in line with the polluters' pay principle, developed

countries were asked to take the lead in reducing emissions. That group of about 40 countries came to be known as Annex-I countries because they were listed in Annexure-I of UNFCCC.

A recent assessment by UNFCCC shows that by 2020, when the Kyoto Protocol came to an end, the Annex-I countries as a group had reduced their net greenhouse gas emissions by about 25% from 1990 levels.

Emissions in the US came down by just 0.4%

during this period, that too after including the effect of the Covid pandemic. In 2019, US emissions were about 6 per cent higher than in 1990.

The upper limit of the US emission reduction target on 2005 levels translates to less than 46% from the 2019 baseline. That is just about doing the bare minimum. And even that is not certain to be achieved. According to a UNFCCC assessment, current policies and measures by the US could result in just about 20% per cent reduction from the 2005 baseline by 2030. The US is banking heavily on the Inflation Reduction Act, which it passed recently, to enable the emissions reductions that would help it to achieve the 50-52% target.

Against equity, justice

The bare minimum act of the United States means that the global target for 2030 is almost certain to be missed. Meeting the global target from hereon would mean every country would have to match the effort made by the US. This is violative of the principles of equity and justice enshrined in the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement.

Unsurprisingly, the US has been working actively in negotiating rooms to do away with the differentiation between developed and developing countries that is at the heart of the international climate change framework.

This is the reason why, at every climate change conference, a lot of energy is con-

sumed in fighting to prevent further dilution of the differentiation principle.

Fossil fuel guzzler

While Saudi Arabia took most of the blame for attempting to prevent a mention of fossil fuel phase-out in the Dubai meeting's final outcome, the United States has largely got away with its record on fossil fuels. It continues to be the largest producer of fossil fuels – oil, natural gas and coal taken together – and more than 80% of its energy needs are still met by these sources.

Yet, the United States has never faced the kind of pressure that India faces for its use of coal. In fact, till 2015, the US was using as much coal as India, and it is only in recent years that it has reduced its reliance somewhat.

What happens when an individual is declared a terrorist?

The original Act dealing with "unlawful" acts related to secession, anti-terror provisions were introduced in 2004.

The 2019 amendment sought to empower the central government to designate an individual as a "terrorist" if they are found committing, preparing for, promoting, or involved in an act of terror.

The Centre may designate an individual as a terrorist through a notification in the official gazette, and add their name to the Fourth Schedule to the UAPA. The government is not required to give an individual an opportunity to be heard before such a designation.

Although UAPA doesn't define the words "terror" or "terrorist", it defines a "terrorist act" as any act committed with intent to threaten or likely to threaten the unity, integrity, security, economic security, or sovereignty of India or with intent to strike terror or likely to strike terror in the people or any section of the people in India or in any foreign country. While the original Act dealt with "unlawful" acts related to secession, anti-terror provisions were introduced in 2004.

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EAST CENTRAL RAILWAY**OPEN TENDER Batch No-21/2023 Dt. 28/12/2023**

E-Tender Notice for supply of materials "Participation in through" Web Portal of IREPS - www.ireps.gov.in. Offers are invited for supply of the following material. The closing time for the tender is at 14.00 Hrs. SL. No : 01, Tender No. : 392357353, Short Description of Work : Supply of high tensile AAR H type light lock coupler complete with transition screw coupling & balanced draft gear and all other associated components. Quantity : 11 Nos. Publishing Date & Time : 27 Dec. 2023 17:26 Hrs, Tender Closing Date & Time : 25 January 2024 14:00 Hrs. Participants are required to submit their offer only online through the web Portal of IREPS - www.ireps.gov.in before the closing date and time. Other details regarding Consignee and detailed description of stores are available in tender document in tender notice on the above portal.

Sr. DMM/ECR/DHNH/PR/01994/DHNH/STORE/T/23-24/32

ई-निविदा सूचना (२०२३-२४) क्र. १४

पुरातत्व व वस्तुसंग्रहालये संचालनालयाच्या, अधिपत्याखालील संचालक, पुरातत्व विभाग, महाराष्ट्र शासन, नाशिक हे प्राचीन व ऐतिहासिक वा तत्सम वारसा वास्तुची जतन दुरुस्ती कामाचा पुरेपूर अनुभव असलेल्या ठेकेदाराकडून निविदा ब-१ प्रारूपात खालील जतन दुरुस्ती कामाच्या प्रस्तावासाठीची टवक्कवारी निविदा मागवीत आहे.

क्र.	कामाचे नाव	सुरक्षा ठेव	निविदा किंमत
१.	लिंगा किल्ला, लिंगा, ता. धुळे या राज्य संरक्षित स्मारकाचे जतन दुरुस्ती काम करणे.	रुपये १,१३,०००/-	रुपये १,१८०/-
२.	मालेगाव किल्ला, मालेगाव, ता. मालेगाव, जि. नाशिक या राज्य संरक्षित स्मारकाचे जतन दुरुस्ती काम करणे.	रुपये २,८८,०००/-	रुपये १,१८०/-
३.	स्वातंत्र्यवर सावरकर जम्मस्थान, भगुर, ता. व. जि. नाशिक या राज्य संरक्षित स्मारकाचे जतन दुरुस्ती काम करणे.	रुपये ६४,०००/-	रुपये ५९०/-

<http://mahatenders.gov.in> या वेबसाइटवर ई-निविदा प्रसिद्ध करण्यात आली असून निविदा फॉर्म, कामाच्या अटी व शर्ती इत्यादी सविस्तर माहिती वेबसाइटवर दिलेली आहे.

सही/-

(आ. मृ. आ)

संचालक, पुरातत्व विभाग, महाराष्ट्र शासन, नाशिक.

दोजीआयायीआर-२०२३-२४/६२७२

GOVERNMENT OF ASSAM
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ENGINEER (ROADS),
PUBLIC WORKS ROADS DEPARTMENT,
ASSAM, GUWAHATI-03

No. CE/DEV/TB/740/2023-24/01

PRESS NOTICE INVITING TENDER

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 Road and Bridge projects under SOPD-G for the year 2023-24 in **Barpeta District** amounting to **Rs. 941.089 Lakhs** (approx.) including GST etc. from approved & eligible Contractors registered with PWRD, Assam.

Details may be seen from **04.01.2024** at website 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.

The scheme is not yet sanctioned by the competent authority. In the event of non-sanction of the scheme, the bids may be cancelled and no claim what so ever on this account shall be entertained from the bidders.

Note:- N.I.T Value is inclusive of GST (12%), Labour cess (1%) etc.

Sd/-

Chief Engineer (Roads), PWRD, Assam, Chandmari, Guwahati-3

JANASANYOG/CF/4538/23/03-JAN-24


GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF CONSTRUCTION ENGINEER,
RURAL WORKS CIRCLE : CUTTACK

A/IPO- NAYABAZAR, DIST- CUTTACK-753004, TEL NO. 06712443399, Email-Id: serv_cte@yahoo.com

1st corrigendum to Bid Identification NO. Tender Online RWC 32/23 vide T.O. It. No. 5021 dt. 15.12.2023

dt- 30.12.23

The Tender invited in the above Tender Call Notice No- Tender Online RWC 32/23 invited by the Chief Construction Engineer, Rural Works Circle, Cuttack vide letter no. 5021, dt. 15.12.2023 is hereby rescheduled.

(i) Clause no- 06 of NIT is modified as below:-

Procurement Officer	Bid Identification No.	Availability of Tender on-line for bidding		Last Date & Time of Seeking Tender clarification	Date & Time of opening of tender		
		Previously fixed	Previously modified		Previously fixed	Previously modified	Previously fixed
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Chief Construction Engineer, Rural Works Circle, Cuttack	Tender Online RWC-32/23	28.12.23 at 11.30 A.M.	03.01.24 to 11.30 A.M.	11.01.24 to 05.00 P.M.	17.01.24 up to 02.00 P.M.	12.01.24 up to 02.00 P.M.	18.01.24 at 11.30 A.M.
							Will be Intimated later on

All other terms & conditions remain unaltered.

Sd/-
Chief Construction Engineer
Rural Works Circle, Cuttack
OIPR- 25091/11/0039/2324Sd/- Chief Construction Engineer, R.W. Circle, Sambalpur
OIPR- 25091/11/0076/2324Sd/- Chief Construction Engineer, R.W. Circle, Sambalpur
OIPR- 25091/11/0039/2324Sd/- Chief Construction Engineer, R.W. Circle, Sambalpur
OIPR- 25091/11/0039/2324

Sd/- Chief



Ana Ofelia Murguia

Mexican actor Ana, voice of Disney's 'Coco', dies at 90

Los Angeles: Mexican actor Ana Ofelia Murguia, who voiced the role of Mama Coco in Disney's two-time Oscar-winning animated feature film Coco has died. She was 90. Murguia passed away on December 31, 2023. The news of her demise was shared on Monday by Mexico's National Institute of Fine Arts and Literature. Born in Mexico in 1933, Murguia's career spanned over 40 years in movies and television during Mexican cinema's golden age. She received the Golden Ariel lifetime achievement award, the highest honour given by the Mexican Academy of Cinematographic Arts and Science, in 2011. AP

PAKISTAN
Six abducted barbers found killed in KPK

Peshawar: Unidentified militants shot and killed six barbers from Pakistan's Punjab province after abducting them from the restive northwest region, police said. The incident took place in the Mir Ali area of the North Waziristan district of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province bordering Afghanistan, ARY News reported on Tuesday. The victims, who were from the Punjab province, ran barber shops in the local bazaar, police said, adding that they were abducted a day earlier and their bodies were recovered on Tuesday. The gruesome act took place at a time when the province wrestled with a worsening law and order situation due to the rising terrorism. PTI

UNITED STATES
3 killed, several wounded in 2 shootings in LA

Los Angeles: Two people were killed and eight others wounded in a shooting early New Year's Day at a party in a commercial neighbourhood of downtown Los Angeles, authorities said. Meanwhile, the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department was investigating a separate shooting that killed a woman and wounded four other people early on Monday in Hawthorne city. AP

FINLAND, SWEDEN
Cold spell sends temperature below minus 40

Helsinki: Finland and Sweden recorded their coldest temperatures of the winter on Tuesday when thermometers plummeted as low as minus 40 degrees Celsius as a cold spell grips the Nordic region. Cold and snow disrupted transportation throughout the region, including in Norway where a major highway in the south was closed. Swedish train operators said the cold snap caused substantial problems for rail traffic in the Arctic north. Nikkaluokta, a small village in northern Sweden, recorded minus 41.6 degrees C. AP

JAPAN AIRLINES FLIGHT GOES UP IN FLAMES AFTER HITTING QUAKE AID PLANE**Close call for 379 on plane after Tokyo airport collision, 5 in small craft killed**

Heard explosion 10 minutes after everyone got off plane: passenger

REUTERS
TOKYO, JANUARY 2



A Japan Airlines plane on fire on the runway of Haneda airport in Tokyo on Tuesday. AP

Japan quake toll at 55, several feared trapped under collapsed buildings in freezing cold

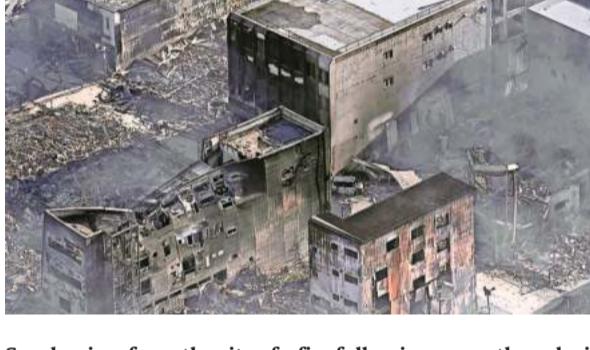
REUTERS
JAPAN, JANUARY 2

A POWERFUL earthquake that hit Japan on New Year's Day killed at least 55 people, with rescue teams struggling in freezing temperatures Tuesday to reach coastal areas where many are feared trapped under possibly thousands of destroyed homes.

In Suwa, a town of just over 5,000 households near the quake's epicentre, 90% of houses may have been destroyed, according to its mayor Masuhiro Izumiya.

The quake with a magnitude of 7.6 struck on Monday afternoon, prompting people in western coastal areas to flee to higher ground as tsunami waves swept cars and houses into the water.

Saito said the cause of the accident was unclear and a probe will be conducted.



Smoke rises from the site of a fire following an earthquake in Wajima, Ishikawa prefecture, Japan, on Tuesday. AP

Around 200 tremors have been detected since the quake first hit on Monday, according to the Japan Meteorological Agency, which warned of more strong

shocks in coming days.

Prime Minister Fumio Kishida said the extent of damage from the quake was becoming "increasingly clear" more than 24

hours after it struck on the Noto peninsula in Ishikawa prefecture. "The government has deployed emergency rescue teams to the area and is doing its utmost to save lives and rescue victims and survivors, but we have received reports that there are still many people waiting to be rescued under collapsed buildings."

Kishida said some 3,000 rescuers were finding it difficult to reach the northern tip of the peninsula where helicopter surveys had discovered many fires and widespread damage to buildings and infrastructure.

Many rail services and flights into the quake area have been suspended. More than 500 people were stranded at Noto's airport which closed due to cracks in its runway and access road and damage to its terminal building.

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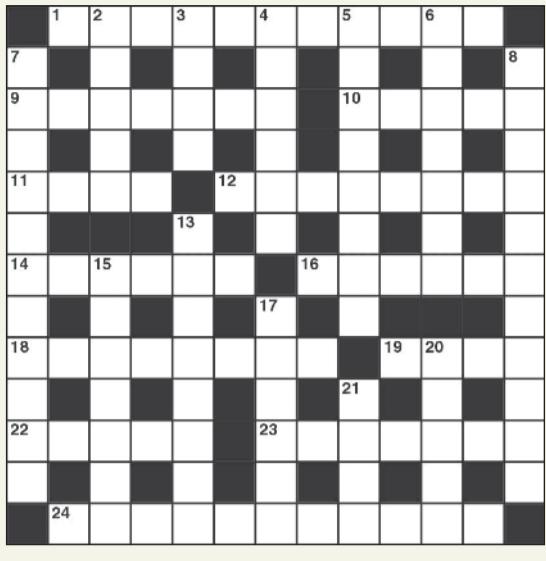
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CROSSWORD 5251



ACROSS

- 1 Boxer of little importance (11)
9 A certain pace produced by the position of a jockey (7)
10 The beast arrived and left (5)
11 The reason we hear bird cries (4)
12 Put an end to a current measure in drink (5,3)
14 What must be left at the end of the sentence (6)
16 Metal grating to cook eggs initially (6)
18 The end of training? (8)
19 Give a hand in getting a bargain (4)
22 It's not moving yet (5)
23 Nothing in fact is drunk in the party (7)
24 Make up the deficiency with a denture perhaps (5,3,3)

DOWN

- 2 Pull in first behind another vehicle (2,3)
3 He takes after his father presumably (4)
4 Sad reminder from the war (6)
5 Where a judge privately puts his films? (2,6)
6 Meaty part said to be for a bad actor (3,4)
7 Don't miss a few words from a comedian for example (5,6)
8 Washing may depend on it (11)
13 Places of little standing like a rundown toolshed (8)
15 The bee in one's bonnet? (7)
17 A swift turnaround is considered proper (3,3)
20 Heather is a girl's name (5)
21 Yearn for each other (4)

Solutions Crossword 5250 Across: 1 Batter, 4 Chestnut, 9 Sparta, 10 Ancestry, 12 Urge, 13 Gross, 14 Iron, 17 Homesickness, 20 No difference, 23 Trap, 24 Vixen, 25 Ball, 28 Mahogany, 29 Rafter, 30 Symmetry, 31 Staged Down; 1 Besought, 2 Team game, 3 Eats, 5 Hands and feet, 6 Stew, 7 Nature, 8 Trying, 11 Practitioner, 15 Ascot, 16 Usury, 18 Engaging, 19 Declared, 21 Stamps, 22 Mayhem, 26 Ogre, 27 Fast.

OVER THE HEDGE by Michael Fry & T Lewis



CALVIN & HOBBS by Bill Watterson



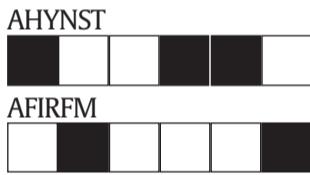
MARVIN by Tom Armstrong



JUMBLED WORDS

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

An unhungry _____ is in itself a form of wealth. - Bonnie Friedman (5,2,4)



ANSWER: EMEH SHANTY AFREHM
SOLUTION: EMEH SHANTY AFREHM

SUDOKU 5430

Difficulty Level 4s
Instructions
To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from 1 to 9 must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.



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

SOLUTION SUDOKU 5429



विहार सरकार

विहार राज्य भवन निर्माण, लिंग पटना
(विहार सरकार का उपकरण)

राष्ट्रीय स्पर्धा ई-निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना सं-10-60 / 2023-24

- विज्ञापनस्थान का पदनाम एवं पता : मुख्य महाप्रबंधक, विहार राज्य भवन निर्माण निगम लिंग, अस्पताल रोड, शास्त्रीयनगर, पटना-800023
- निविदा आमंत्रण की विधि : दिनांक: 29.12.2023
- निविदा कागजात प्राप्त (डाउनलोड) करने की अंतिम विधि एवं समय : दिनांक: 13.01.2024 से 01.02.2024 को 15:00 बजे तक।
- निविदा जमा (अपलोड) करने की अंतिम विधि एवं समय : दिनांक: 02.02.2024 को 15:00 बजे तक।
- केवल वेबसाइट www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in पर :
- दिनांक: 22.01.2024 को 16:00 बजे संवित्रित उप महाप्रबंधक के कार्यालय कक्ष में।प्री-बीड मीटिंग की विधि: दिनांक: 23.01.2024 को 16:00 बजे, मुख्य महाप्रबंधक, विहार राज्य भवन निर्माण निगम लिंग, अस्पताल रोड, शास्त्रीयनगर, पटना-23
- दिनांक: 03.02.2024 को 15:00 बजे।
- तकनीकी मूल्यांकन के बाद।
- दिन: 120 दिन।

11.कार्य का विवरण:

क्र. सं.	जिला का नाम	कार्य का नाम	प्राक्षिक राशि (अनुभूति एवं गैर अनुभूति) (₹) में	अग्रधन की राशि (₹ में)	परिमाण विप्रका मूल्य (अप्रत्यरूपीय) (₹ में)	Bid Processing Fee	कार्य समाप्ति की अवधि (महीने में)	उप महाप्रबंधक का नाम
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1	कट्टिहार	पशु एवं मरम्य विभाग अंतर्गत कट्टिहार जिलान्तरित जिला पशुपालन कार्यालय कैप्स में जिलान्तरीय संसाधन एवं प्रशिक्षण केंद्र का निर्माण कार्य।	₹9,96,32,881.00	₹19,92,700.00	₹10000.00	As per website	12 (वार्ष)	पूर्णर्थी
2	अररिया	पशु एवं मरम्य विभाग अंतर्गत अररिया जिलान्तरित राजकीय पशु औषधालय कैप्स में जिलान्तरीय संसाधन एवं प्रशिक्षण केंद्र का निर्माण कार्य।	₹10,16,46,624.00	₹20,16,500.00	₹10000.00	As per website	12 (वार्ष)	पूर्णर्थी
3	पूर्णर्थी	पशु एवं मरम्य विभाग अंतर्गत पूर्णर्थी जिलान्तरित जिला पशुपालन कार्यालय कैप्स में जिलान्तरीय संसाधन एवं प्रशिक्षण केंद्र का निर्माण कार्य।	₹9,43,50,784.00	₹18,87,020.00	₹10000.00	As per website	12 (वार्ष)	पूर्णर्थी
4	सहरसा	पशु एवं मरम्य विभाग अंतर्गत सहरसा जिलान्तरित पशुपालन कार्यालय कैप्स में जिलान्तरीय संसाधन एवं प्रशिक्षण केंद्र का निर्माण कार्य।	₹9,69,39,251.00	₹19,38,800.00	₹10000.00	As per website	12 (वार्ष)	सहरसा
5	मुजफ्फर पुर	पशु एवं मरम्य विभाग अंतर्गत मुजफ्फरपुर जिलान्तरित क्षेत्रीय नियोजन कार्यालय कैप्स में जिलान्तरीय संसाधन एवं प्रशिक्षण केंद्र का निर्माण कार्य।	₹9,69,39,251.00	₹19,38,800.00	₹10000.00	As per website	12 (वार्ष)	मुजफ्फरपुर
6	सीतामढ़ी	पशु एवं मरम्य विभाग अंतर्गत सीतामढ़ी जिलान्तरित पशुपालन कार्यालय कैप्स में जिलान्तरीय संसाधन एवं प्रशिक्षण केंद्र का निर्माण कार्य।	₹9,69,39,251.00	₹19,38,800.00	₹10000.00	As per website	12 (वार्ष)	मुजफ्फरपुर
7	मोतीहारी	पशु एवं मरम्य विभाग अंतर्गत मोतीहारी जिलान्तरित राजकीय पशु औषधालय कैप्स में जिलान्तरीय संसाधन एवं प्रशिक्षण केंद्र का निर्माण कार्य।	₹9,69,39,251.00	₹19,38,800.00	₹10000.00	As per website	12 (वार्ष)	मुजफ्फरपुर
8	वैशाली	पशु एवं मरम्य विभाग अंतर्गत वैशाली जिलान्तरित पशुपालन कार्यालय कैप्स में जिलान्तरीय संसाधन एवं प्रशिक्षण केंद्र का निर्माण कार्य।	₹9,69,39,251.00	₹19,38,800.00	₹10000.00	As per website	12 (वार्ष)	मुजफ्फरपुर
9	समस्तीपुर	पशु एवं मरम्य विभाग अंतर्गत समस्तीपुर जिलान्तरित अंतर्गत पशु औषध कैप्स में जिलान्तरीय संसाधन एवं प्रशिक्षण केंद्र का निर्माण कार्य।	₹9,69,39,251.00	₹19,38,800.00	₹10000.00	As per website	12 (वार्ष)	दरभंगा
10	दरभंगा	पशु एवं मरम्य विभाग अंतर्गत दरभंगा जिलान्तरित लक्ष्मीपुर संसाधन एवं प्रशिक्षण केंद्र का निर्माण कार्य।	₹9,69,39,251.00	₹19,38,800.00	₹10000.00	As per website	12 (वार्ष)	दरभंगा
11	साराण	पशु एवं मरम्य विभाग अंतर्गत साराण जिलान्तरित राजकीय पशु औषधालय कैप्स में जिलान्तरीय संसाधन एवं प्रशिक्षण केंद्र का निर्माण कार्य।	₹9,69,39,251.00	₹19,38,800.00	₹10000.00	As per website	12 (वार्ष)	साराण
12	गोपालगंज	मुख्यमंत्री योजना नियम लिंग पटना के अंतर्गत गोपालगंज, गोपालगंज, गोपालगंज, खेती-खाना-81, खाना-184,332, खेती-खाना-170,173,174 के जर्मीन पर खेती-खाना-सह-व्यापारियालय का निर्माण कार्य।	₹9,64,28,013.00	₹19,28,600.00	₹10000.00	As per website	12 (वार्ष)	साराण

11. निविदा केवल ई-निविदा पद्धति के अनुसार वेबसाइट (www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in) पर निष्पादित किया जाएगा। ई-निविदा प्रक्रिया से संबंधित जानकारी Toll Free No.-18005726571 से प्राप्त किया जा सकता है। विस्तृत जानकारी state.bihar.gov.in/prdbihar पर देखी जा सकती है।

PR-14460 (NI NI) 2023-24

नशे से बनानी दूरी है, योग्यकारी परिवार जरूरी है।

विहार राज्य भवन नियम लिंग, पटना।

मुख्य महाप्रबंधक,

PR-14460 (NI NI) 2023-24

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PR-14460 (NI NI) 2023-24

नशे से बनानी दूरी है, योग्यकारी परिवार जरूरी है।

Test series wins... you don't top that. Maybe a World Cup win is up there. I have never had that opportunity but this is my World Cup. This is my arena where I want to win.

DEAN ELGAR, SOUTH AFRICA CAPTAIN

Time to wear the cape

India's young batsmen and bowlers will have to play out of their skins to level the two-match series at Cape Town

SANDIP G

JANUARY 2

INDIA'S TOURS to South Africa are like primetime soap operas without the endless drag. They all look and feel the same. Just the names and characters change. The latest trip is unfolding like the nine others to the country. The usual themes have played out—lost opportunities, false hopes and swift implosions, the pain numbed somewhat by stirring individual performances. A twist here, a tweak there, the script takes the much-trodden route. So just replace Sachin Tendulkar's Centurion masterclass with KL Rahul's virtuosic hundred at the same venue; just erase Javagal Srinath's name and scrawl that of Bumrah. Instead of Durban 1996 read Centurion 2023.

Now, they reach Cape Town, a venue that evokes the splendor of nature as well as bitter memories. Twice have India landed in the Western Cape with the hope of conquering the final frontier; twice they left the city battered. Once, they came within touching distance, only to be blunted by the greatest all-rounder of this century. The Indian audience of a certain vintage could read an invisible sentence—"Cape of Missed Chances"—on the face of the imposing Table Mountain.

At least this time, they are saved from the pain of not winning a series here. The final frontier remains unconquered, giving a sense of context to the next tour, but there are other races to be won, other questions remain to be answered. The first and foremost — are India reacquiring their poor traveller's tag under Rahul Dravid?

In the last six Tests outside of the West Indies, his men have lost five games. Two of them were one-off Tests; one was his first tour in charge, and the sixth was the Centurion one. So it's harsh to presume that they are sore travelers yet. But the reputation is quickly developing and the next overseas assignment is the long sojourn Down Under at the end of the year.

Some old flaws have resurfaced. Like the snap-of-the-fingers collapses, inconsistent top-three, lack of runs down the order, inability to polish off the lower-order, listless support bowlers, over-dependent on individual performances, the symptoms point to the return 90s syndrome.

Just when it seemed that the malaise had been wiped off, another variant had sprung, another wave gripping India's Test team. In these six Tests, India have shuffled different openers and tried four different combinations. It could be down to loss of form, or injuries, only once has a pair of openers struck 45-plus runs (Mayank Agarwal and Rahul in Centurion 2021–22).

So the sooner Yashasvi Jaiswal settles down, the better it is for both the team and individual. The princely yield in the Caribbeans would all be forgotten if he continues to struggle against quality seamers in hostile conditions. The critics would instantly ridicule him as a flat-track bully.

The fate is similar for a clutch of other youngsters teething in, and finding their ways in Test cricket. It's high time Shubman Gill came up with a performance that justifies the hype around him as the inheritor of Virat Kohli's mantle. Ditto Shreyas Iyer. Combine the stutter of the youth brigade with the stumble of Rohit Sharma in Centurion, India's batting in this series has been just about Rahul and Virat Kohli. Like in the past days—Tendulkar and Mohammed Azharuddin, or just Tendulkar alone (as had often been the case).

The plight is similar on the pace-bowling front too.

At SuperSport Park it was just Bumrah; the second most incisive bowler was off-spinner Ravi Ashwin. Just as Javagal Srinath and Anil Kumble were back in the day. Mohammed Siraj was damningly erratic; Prasidh Krishna is uncut and needs to put in hard yards in the domestic cricket to harness his gifts; Shardul Thakur was all bluster and no blast.

The bench does not offer much hope ei-



Skipper Rohit Sharma (L) and coach Rahul Dravid will look to address the fact that India may be reacquiring their poor travellers' tag. PTI

ther. Mukesh Kumar could be as good or bad a pick as Prasidh. The selectors summoning Avesh Khan to the Test squad is a definite sign of panic. Whether he is handed the debut or not, India's once stacked stable of thoroughbreds seems thinly-stocked. The digression of Ishant Sharma, the baffling omission of Umesh Yadav and the non-emergence of Navdeep Saini has made Mohammed Shami's injury-induced layoff look like a vacuum that cannot be filled.

Again, you could strike parallels with the past. Zaheer Khan limps off and suddenly India looks beaten already.

The comeback, thus, looks unlikely though not impossible. They could take refuge from the admirable collection of comeback narratives outside the subcontinent from the past. Oval 2021, Melbourne 2021, Durban 2010, Perth 2008, the years and venues leap off from the memory. Not all those teams were flawless, but they found courage in adversity.

Whether Rohit's men — a team in flux and without key figures (Shami and Rishabh Pant) — have the courage and quality to bounce back will define his captaincy. The return of all-rounder Ravindra Jadeja would strengthen the team, but one man alone cannot make a drastic difference.

That's the curse of two-episode Test rubber too. It is a blur, unfolding so rapidly that the thrill and drama of comeback narratives is nonexistent. Even before a team settles down, even before they acclimate to the weather and wind, even before they grasp the conditions and size up the bowlers, they have boarded their flights home.

For the (niche) audience, it's like the five-act play is crunched to two acts because there would be a bigger show in town in fortnight, or there is little commercial viability, or there simply is no need for a longer fare. So five days after their Centurion capitulation, they reach Cape Town, 1,455 kilometres down to the tip of the continent. And in this time, India have to quickly solve the same issues that have crippled the captains of the past too. Lest, they would leave these shores with another wave of pain and regret.

Despite fielding two spinners in Australia and England, India have not fielded two spinners traditionally in South Africa.

When it comes to just one spot in SENA countries, India have been inclined to Jadeja, since he offers something different as a left-hander and is seen more as a bat-

VENKATA KRISHNA B

JANUARY 2

WITH THE Table Mountain in the background, India have an uphill task of mounting a comeback in the second and final Test against South Africa in Cape Town.

Having been outplayed across all departments in Centurion, they face plenty of questions with regards to their team combination and balance. Here are the talking points:

Batting in transition

In both the innings at Centurion, India's batting unit failed to cope with the bounce and seam movement. In conditions where they were supposed to be compact and tight, they were guilty of failing to do the basics.

Given this is a batting unit that is in transition, India will not be seeking reinforcements unless they are forced because of anybody's unavailability. So in that case, Abhimanyu Easwaran will spend another game warming the bench.

So where to expect changes?

Definitely on the bowling front. Shardul Thakur, who was hit on the shoulder a couple of days back at a training session, isn't ruled out of the game.

But with Ravindra Jadeja, who missed the first Test with a back spasm, fit and available, India have a few calls to make not just with regards to the make up of the bowling combination, but also the personnel.

Is there space for spin duo?

Despite fielding two spinners in Australia and England, India have not fielded two spinners traditionally in South Africa.

When it comes to just one spot in SENA countries, India have been inclined to Jadeja, since he offers something different as a left-hander and is seen more as a bat-



Ravindra Jadeja returns from injury. PTI

IND VS SA AT CAPE TOWN

Year	Winner	Margin
2022	SA	7 wkts
2018	SA	72 runs
2011	draw	--
2007	SA	5 wkts
1997	SA	282 runs
1993	draw	--

tting all-round rather than a bowling all-rounder.

The southpaw, though, has previously played only one Test in South Africa and has missed the last four with injury. Ashwin, on the other hand, has played seven Tests, but hasn't been as effective in terms of wickets as in other places.

However, Cape Town is seen as a venue where the pitch could get dry and the cracks could open up from Day 3. And unlike Centurion, there isn't much grass cover.

Prasanna Agoram, who is working with the Lions team on South Africa's domestic circuit, offered this on X: "Dry grass has been watered for a couple of days. Grass will come off and the cracks will open up and spinners will come into play later on. Will be interesting to see what combination India will come up with," with a photo of the pitch accompanying the post.

While the conditions may not fit both, there are pros and cons as well. At Centurion, India's biggest issue was streaming the run-flow and bowl dot balls that could generate pressure. With the pace attack being inexperienced, playing two spinners with experience on their back may not be a bad idea after all.

They will also strengthen the batting. The downside of playing both is, there is a strong chance that one of them is under-bowled.

What about the pace attack?

Jasprit Bumrah and Mohammed Siraj would definitely start. But given how Prasidh Krishna struggled on his debut and Shardul Thakur's expensive outing (went at over 5 RPO), India are pondering whether to include Mukesh Kumar.

They have also added Avesh Khan, a seamer who is considered a natural fit to the red-ball, to the squad. One of Avesh's strongest suits is to bowl long spells. With his ability to use the shoulder more, he could get a look-in if India believe he can complement Bumrah and Siraj.

On the eve of the Test, skipper Rohit Sharma backed Prasidh to do well in these conditions, which means India could re-pose faith in him and if they play three seamers, he could well be in the XI.

But if India chose to go with four seamers, then they have to pick between Shardul Thakur, Mukesh Kumar and Avesh Khan. With not much grass on the pitch, Shardul may not be handy to the conditions. Mukesh is again a seamer, who may not be able to extract bounce off the pitch, so will India be tempted to play Avesh?

"Around the world, you can see some solid Test cricket being played and you have seen results everywhere and competitive cricket being played."

ROHIT SHARMA
INDIA CAPTAIN

Warner said on Monday that he would be also retiring from one-day internationals, leaving a big gap at the top order for Australia to fill in two formats.

Cummins gave few clues as to who is leading the running to open for the two tests against West Indies in January, although he did cite Warner's current partner Usman Khawaja as an example of a non-specialist who forced his way into the team.

Pakistan captain Shan Masood has a different set of problems to contemplate as he looks to motivate a team that was mauled in the opener and failed to exploit their opportunities to level the series in the second test.

Masood has already made it clear that he is a skipper who looks more on the positives and felt the fact that Pakistan had been competitive at times in Melbourne au-

gured well.

FAREWELL TEST

Warner issues emotional plea for return of his stolen baggy green

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

JANUARY 2

AUSTRALIA OPENER David Warner has made an emotional appeal on his Instagram handle for the return of his stolen backpack, which contained his baggy green, was taken from his luggage on the eve of his farewell Test match at the Sydney, starting from Wednesday.

"Hi everyone, David Warner here. Unfortunately, this is my last resort to do this. But a couple of days ago, our bags got freighted via Qantas," Warner said in the video.

"We've gone through CCTV footage. They've got some blind spots, apparently. We spoke to the Quay West Hotel, who we absolutely trust, and have gone through their cameras. No one's came into our rooms, but

unfortunately someone has taken my backpack out of my actual luggage, which had my backpack and my girls' presents in there.

"Inside this backpack was my baggy green. It's sentimental to me, and something that I would love to have back in my hands walking out there come this week."

"If it's the backpack you really wanted, I have a spare one here. You won't get into trouble. Please reach out to Cricket Australia or myself via my social media, and I am happy to give this to you if you return my baggy greens. Thank you."

The veteran opener will play his 112th and final Test on his home deck, the SCG, with Australia eyeing a 3-0 series whitewash against Pakistan this week.

Pakistan Test captain Shan Masood also spoke about the importance of Warner's Baggy Green and has called for a country-wide search.



David Warner will play his final Test in Sydney. Cricket Australia

"There should be a country-wide search right now from the Australian Government. We might need the best of detectives to get that back," he said.

"He's been a great ambassador, and he deserves every bit of respect, every bit of celebration for his unbelievable career."

He added: "I hope they find it. It's the most precious thing for any cricketer, and I hope David Warner gets it back."

'Warner Week' has started

Reuters adds: Australia will go for the tried and tested as they look to sweep Pakistan in their three-match series and send veteran opener David Warner out a winner in his home ground in his final test this week.

Pat Cummins confirmed on Tuesday that the same team that won the first test in Perth by 360 runs and the second in Melbourne by

79 runs would take the field for the final clash at Sydney Cricket Ground on Wednesday.

The Australia captain said that Warner, who has sometimes divided opinion even in his own country, fully deserved to end his test career on his own terms in his 112th match in the longest format.

"Warner Week has started," Cummins told reporters. "I think he's our greatest three-form player."

"Three formats over a decade, two 50-over World Cups, one T20 World Cup and in all those campaigns he was front and centre and a big reason for it. Playing more than 100 tests puts him in an elite category in all three formats."

"Every time he walks out there, he's competitive, ready to go, so just a champion of Australian sport and hopefully he gets a good send off this week."

BRIEFLY

Djokovic hampered by wrist in United Cup

Perth: Novak Djokovic received treatment for a wrist issue during his 6-16-7(3) 6-1 win over Jiri Lehecka at the United Cup on Tuesday as Serbia squeezed past the Czech Republic 2-1 to reach the quarter-finals. Djokovic drew Serbia level at 1-1 in the \$10 million mixed team tournament and had been scheduled to compete in the mixed doubles decider with Olga Danilovic before being replaced by the 20-year-old Hamad Medjedovic. The young Serbian duo overcame Petr Nouza and Miriam Kolodziejova 4-67(6) 10-8 to send Serbia into the last eight where they will play hosts Australia on Wednesday. **REUTERS**

Trott to continue as Afghanistan coach

Kabul: Former England batter Jonathan Trott has signed a contract extension as Afghanistan head coach following their remarkable World Cup campaign in India. Afghanistan finished sixth of 10 teams at the 50-overs World Cup where they registered upset wins over former winners England, Pakistan and Sri Lanka, and came close to humbling eventual champions Australia. The 42-year-old, who has signed an extension to the end of the year, also oversaw Afghanistan's T20 series victory against Pakistan and a one-day series win against Bangladesh in his first stint. **REUTERS**

India to play four-nation tournament

New Delhi: The Indian men's hockey team will take part in a four-nation tournament featuring France, the Netherlands and hosts South Africa from January 14 as part of the side's preparations for the Paris Olympics. Ahead of the tournament, a 39-member core group will train at the national coaching camp, beginning at the Sports Authority of India campus in Bengaluru on Wednesday. Hockey India said in a media release. Following the 11-day camp, India, who have already qualified for the Paris Games, will head to Cape Town. **PTI**

Krishnan sits atop Chennai Open table

Chennai: International Master P Sarvana Krishnan was on top of the points table despite his loss to Adhiraj Mitra in the fourth round of the ongoing Chennai Open International Grandmaster Chess tournament here on Tuesday. Krishnan shared the lead of 4 points with five other Grandmasters - Fedorov Alexei (Belarus), Glez Igor (Belgium), Khushenkhajaev Muhammad (Tajikistan), Manik Mikulas (Slovakia) and Nguyen Duc Hoa (Vietnam). **PTI**

Rooney sacked as Birmingham coach

Birmingham: Wayne Rooney has been dismissed as the manager of Birmingham City after less than three months in the role, the second-tier Championship club said on Wednesday, after a winless run left them hovering above the relegation zone. Rooney was appointed Birmingham manager in October when the club were sixth in the table, but they have since fallen to 20th place, six points above the relegation zone. **REUTERS**

Phoebe's day out, India's to forget

Litchfield's century and brilliant fielding sets tone for Australia's 190-run win and 3-0 series sweep

VINAYAKK MOHANARANGAN
JANUARY 2

IN HER first ODI knock, it was fitting that Phoebe Litchfield batted with Meg Lanning. On her debut in January 2023 against Pakistan, the then-19-year-old left-handed opener scored a match-winning 78* and shared a partnership worth 137 runs with the now-retired legend of the game.

After that game, in which she was filling in for Alyssa Healy at the top of the order, Litchfield quipped: "I am happy to run drinks for a long time. I am just happy to be around this group. If there is an opportunity, I'll take it but I will be pretty happy to see Midge (Healy) back."

Fast forward a year, and as Australia enter a new era under Healy's leadership, but with the same old aspiration of dominance, Litchfield is front and centre. On Tuesday in Mumbai, she was involved in a 189-run partnership with the current captain as she scored a classy 119 to power her side to a mammoth 338/7. And it was Healy who had the best seat in the house.

India managed just 148 in response and Litchfield was sensational in the field too – taking an early contender for catch of the year at cover to dismiss Amanjot Kaur – as the 190-run win completed a 3-0 series sweep for the visitors.

"At 20 years of age, what an unbelievable talent we've unearthed," Healy beamed after her side completed a rout at the Wankhede Stadium. "To have two ODI hundreds under her belt already is scary. She's one for the future no doubt, for me it's an amazing experience to stand at the other end and watch the next generation. She is also the self-proclaimed best fielder in the team and she proved that today."

For India, after getting close on Saturday but losing a match they should have probably won, there was very little to write home about. Shreyanka Patil's spell of 3/57, with back-to-back wickets of Beth Mooney and Tahilia McGrath, was a highlight and the youngster came for praise from her captain after the match. Deepthi Sharma picked up her 100th ODI wicket, becoming the first Indian to reach that milestone in both white-ball formats. But the batting was a no-show as an already steep target kept getting out of reach with regular fall of wickets.

Classy ton

Litchfield finished the day as the Player of the Match and Player of the Series. When her tour to India began last month with the one-off Test, she was run out for a 0-0 in the first over, after a misunderstanding with Mooney. But since then, with every subsequent knock she has played, she's shown her class.

Incidentally, in the second innings of the Test, when she was looking in good touch, she got out playing the reverse sweep. But come the white-ball series, Litchfield brought out that shot frequently to great effect. In the first ODI, she played second fiddle to Ellyse Perry before shifting through the gears and finishing with 78. In the second game, she was dropped three times and rode her luck to finish with a solid 63. But the third ODI was a case study for a young batter who is constantly learning and improving.



Phoebe Litchfield's 119 off 125 comprised 16 fours and a six. **PTI**

INDIA'S BIGGEST LOSSES*

Margin	VS	Venue	Year
221 runs	Aus	Mumbai	2012
210 runs	NZ	Lincoln	2006
190 runs	Aus	Mumbai	2024
153 runs	Aus	Auckland	1982
142 runs	NZ	St Saviour	2002

* in terms of runs

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Destined for greatness

Ever so rarely, young cricketers reach the highest of stages already earmarked for greatness. Even before they face a ball, there is an aura around them, and it could go either way. They either embrace it or let it get to them. So far, Litchfield has shown she is very much in the former category, not just with her skills but with her temperament too. Her first reaction, in fact, after the century on Tuesday was to say, "I have good batters around me."

There is a video of a 16-year-old Litchfield batting in the nets for New South

Wales, showing the range of her shots – including the now familiar drive through the offside and reverse sweep – that went viral on social media in 2019. She was still in school then, but anyone who saw that video, knew they were watching someone special.

After her debut against Pakistan, she was asked about being in the limelight so soon in her career. "I try not to think too much about it," she had said.

"It probably comes on when I fail a bit more and I look back and go, 'am I as good as, you know, everyone says I am?' but I think it's just down to watching the ball at the end of the day and once I get on the field, it goes away which is nice."

As 2024 begins, few people will have doubts over the talent that Litchfield is, as she showed emphatically that she's here to stay.

Brief Scores: Australia Women

338 for 7 in 50 overs (Phoebe Litchfield 119, Alyssa Healy 82, Ashleigh Gardner 30; Shreyanka Patil 3/57) bt **India Women** 148 all out in 32.4 overs (Smriti Mandhana 29, Georgia Wareham 3/23) by 190 runs.

India must learn from Australia, says Rodrigues after big loss

Mumbai: Jemimah Rodrigues on Tuesday urged the India women's cricket team to take a leaf out of Australia's book and bounce back in the upcoming T20s after being hammered in the ODIs.

India suffered their third heaviest loss by 190 runs in the third ODI here on Tuesday at the Wankhede Stadium to be whitewashed in a three-match series for the second time by Australia since 2018.

Rodrigues said while there were a 'lot of learning points' from a team as dominant as Australia, she also hoped for better returns for her team in the shortest format.

A three-match T20I series will be played at the DY Patil Stadium in Navi Mumbai starting January 5.

"Obviously, there's a lot of learning points. When we reflect back on our own game and also the way the Aussies played, (in) the Test match we completely dominated them, but what I would learn is the way they got back after a fall," Rodrigues told the media here after the match.

"This is something I can, (and) as a team we can learn, to come back stronger in the T20I series," she said.

At the post match presentation, skipper Harmanpreet Kaur said her team needs to field better.

"We always discuss about the Australian fielding, because skill wise we believe we are really close. Fielding is something that has been bothering us, and we need to think about that and do well in the future."

"When we are playing red ball, we have a lot of time to think and execute. But in white ball, you don't have that kind of time. We are doing a lot of hardwork, but now we need to focus on T20s and take a few positives from this series," said Harmanpreet.

Rodrigues too said players have no excuse to give for their horrendous fielding in the last two ODIs, particularly in the second when the host dropped seven catches apart from making several errors.

"I don't think there's any reason we can give because we need to accept what we've done. We've not played to our potential," she said.

"Especially in the fielding department, a lot of work we need to still continue (doing). We have been working on it, but definitely (it has) not (been) the standard expected for the Indian Women's team." "I can assure you that we will work on it and come back stronger," she added.

Rodrigues also denied that if fatigue, having played eight matches across formats against England and Australia since December 6, had anything to do with India's poor fielding.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Nadal sends positive vibes in comeback match versus Thiem

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
JANUARY 2

RAFAEL NADAL put any concern about rustiness to bed following his year-long injury lay-off, defeating 2020 US Open champion Dominic Thiem 7-5, 6-1 in routine fashion in the first round of the Brisbane International on Tuesday.

Nadal, playing his first singles match since suffering a hip flexor injury in his second-round defeat at last year's Australian Open, looked razor-sharp from the get-go, typically taking command with his big forehand and dominant play from the baseline.

His serve was especially accurate, winning 90 percent of the points on his first serve and two-thirds of them on his serve in total. His movement was sharp, and he also put in plenty of returns back in play.

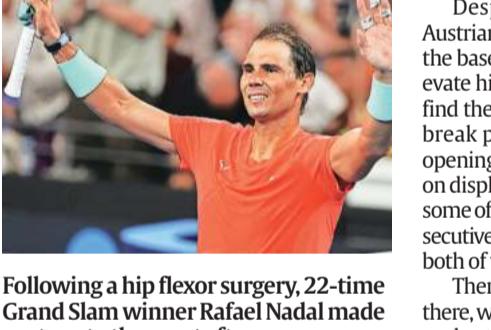
"Today is honestly an emotional and important day for me after probably one of the

toughest years of my tennis career," the Spaniard was quoted as saying by Reuters after the match. "I had the chance to come back after a year and play in front of an amazing crowd and play at a very positive level on the first day is something that makes us feel proud – my team and family who have been there every day in the last year."

Nadal asserted, later in his press conference, that he was happy to overcome any lingering fears regarding his competitive level with a confidence-boosting win.

"For me, the main thing is (to) stay healthy. I really think that I didn't forget how to play tennis. The only thing that's going to be difficult (is) to make it in a professional match and at a very high level of tennis," he said.

"You need to recover the confidence and the movements. That takes time. After the surgery, you feel scared sometimes to do a kind of movement and you need to recover the speed and reading the ball and (doing)



Following a hip flexor surgery, 22-time Grand Slam winner Rafael Nadal made a return to the court after a year. **AP**

things in an automatic way."

Thiem, a former World No.3 himself who is looking to return to his competitive best after spending a few seasons in and around

the top 100, turned out to be a valiant sparring partner for Nadal, showing glimpses of his former self in a high-quality first set.

Despite leaking too many errors, the Austrian's power was telling during most of the baseline exchanges, forcing Nadal to elevate his game at the back end of the set to find the breakthrough and convert a fourth break point in the 12th game to take the opening set. The intensity and shot-making on display in that period was reminiscent of some of the best tennis during the duo's consecutive French Opens in 2018 and 2019, both of which Nadal won.

There was no looking back for him from there, who took the initiative early in the second set, breaking in Thiem's first service game and consolidating his position further from there.

"You need hours on court, hours in a practice session, but at the same time hours in professional matches," Nadal would later say. "I (didn't) know what could happen today."

It's a day to be happy. I am excited to have the chance to play another time."

Despite having made several injury comebacks in the past, most recently at the 2022 Australian Open where he returned from surgery to win the title after coming back from a two-set deficit in the final, this is the first time in his career that Nadal has been forced to return to his best after such a long period away from competitive action.

With uncertainty regarding the level he will be able to return at, a solid performance and win bodes well for his hopes to script another fairytale in Melbourne, where the Australian Open kicks off on January 14.

Nadal has proven in the past that he should not be counted out after returning from injury layoffs. But the elite field has several Major contenders – including 10-time champion and World No.1 Novak Djokovic as well as exciting 20-year-old World No.2 Carlos Alcaraz. Nadal's next match in Brisbane is against home favourite Jason Kubler.

Advantage City as main rivals to lose players

REUTERS
LONDON, JANUARY 2

MANCHESTER CITY could have an advantage in the Premier League title race through January as their rivals face up to losing key players to the African Cup of Nations and Asia Cup. As the Premier League emerges from a frantic set of festive fixtures with only six points separating the top five, managers will be busy drawing up contingency plans.

Some will likely deem it necessary to dip into the transfer market to make up for the loss of some top performers.

But while Liverpool will lose Egyptian Mohamed Salah and Tottenham Hotspur will have to make do without South Korea's Son Heung-min, champions Manchester City will be unaffected.

City manager Pep Guardiola does not have a single player jetting off to either the Ivory Coast or Qatar for the continental tournaments that start on Jan. 13 and Jan. 12 respectively and run for almost a month.

Leaders Liverpool, who head Aston Villa by three points after their win over Newcastle United on Monday, will be goodbye to Salih who with 14 goals is the joint-top scorer in the Premier League this season, equal with Erling Haaland.

They will also be missing combative midfielder Wataru Endo who will join up with



Tottenham will be without their South Korean signing Son Heung-min. *File*

feet and now he goes to the Asian Cup," manager Juergen Klopp said.

Surprise title challengers Villa will only lose squad player Bertrand Traore to Burkina Faso but fourth-placed Arsenal will be harder hit with Mohamed Elneny (Egypt), Thomas Partey (Ghana) and Takehiro Tomiyasu (Japan) all heading off for an unspecified amount of time, depending on the progress of their nations. Tottenham have been be-devilled by injuries in the last couple of months and now manager Ange Postecoglou

KEY PLAYERS SET TO MISS EPL FOR AFCON & ASIA CUP

NOTTINGHAM FOREST (6)

Serge Aurier (Ivory Coast), Willy Boly (Ivory Coast), Ibrahim Sangare (Ivory Coast), Cheikou Kouyate (Senegal), Moussa Niakhate (Senegal), Ola Aina (Nigeria).

WOLVES (4)

Hee-Chan Hwang (