

**King George's Medical University, U.P.**  
Chowk, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, INDIA - 226003

**Short Term Tender Notice**

No.: 7630/PS/FO/23-24 Dated:- 12.01.2024

Bids are invited from reputed Companies/ Agencies/ Firms to station one fully equipped & manned Air Ambulance at Chaudhary Charan Singh International Airport, Lucknow / Maharishi Valmiki International Airport, Ayodhya during Pran Pratishtha Ceremony of Ramlala at Ramlala Temple, Ayodhya latest by 17.01.2024.

The tender document containing detailed terms and conditions is available on website kgmu.org. (Finance Officer)

**GOVERNMENT OF RAJASTHAN**  
**OFFICE OF THE MEDICAL SUPERINTENDENT CUM MEMBER SECRETARY, RAJASTHAN MEDICARE RELIEF SOCIETY, SAWAI MAN SINGH HOSPITAL, JAIPUR**  
[Sawai Man Singh Road, Tonk Road, Jaipur, Rajasthan 302 004]  
(Phone 0141-2518308, 2518268]  
(Email ms.mshospital@gmail.com, cms.mshospital@gmail.com)

No.F4/O/STATE/SMR/2023/70 Jaipur, dated, the 8-1-2024

**Notice Inviting Bid**

Bids for the two year rate contract for the procurement of Consumable/Disposable and Miss. Items used in C.T. Surgery department are invited from interested bidders up to 13.2.2024 on 5.00 PM other particulars of which may be visited on the procurement portal (<http://eproc.rajarasthan.gov.in>, <http://sprr.raj.nic.in>) of the state.

UBN No.: MCJ2324GLRC00116

Sd/-  
**SUPERINTENDENT CUM MEMBER SECRETARY**

**UJVN LIMITED**  
(An Uttarakhand Govt. Enterprise)  
H.O. "UJJWAL", MAHARANI BAGH, G.M.S. ROAD, DEHRADUN-248006, CIN No. U40101UR2001SC025866, Tele: 0135-2763505, 2763806, Fax: 0135-2763507, website: [www.ujvn.com](http://www.ujvn.com)

Letter No. 58 TENDER NOTICE Date: 12.01.2024

Office of the Executive Engineer (Maintenance) Tilloh Power House, Uttarkashi invites sealed tender from interested parties. Brief summary of tender is given below:

Tender No.: 16/EE(M)/2023-24

Name of Work: Supply and application of wear and protective coating on underwater parts of Unit #1.

Estimated Cost: Rs. 24,97,616.00 (Taxes Extra)

Date of availability of bid document on website: 15.01.2024

Last date of submission of tender:- 05.02.2024 at 16:00 hrs.

For fuller & further details, kindly visit our website. The tender documents can be downloaded from the Nigam's website "[www.ujvn.com](http://www.ujvn.com)".

Executive Engineer (Maintenance)

**"Avoid wasteful use of Electricity"**

**NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY**  
**SUPPLY OF STORES ITEMS**  
**STORE DEPARTMENT**  
**"THROUGH E-PROCUREMENT TENDERS"**

TENDER NOTICE No: S/2024/46 Date : 11.01.2024

The Principal Chief Material Manager, North Western Railway, headquarter 3rd floor, Near Jawahar circle, Malviya Nagar, Jaipur-302017 for and on behalf of the President of India invites Open E-tenders on [www.reps.gov.in](http://www.reps.gov.in) site as follows. All the E-tenders will be closed at 12:00 hrs.

Sr. No. Tender No. Brief Description Qty. Unit Due date

1 30232189 Pad for secondary suspension to Flat 1112 Nos 15.01.2024

2 6323ENG19 Running contract for manufacturing and supply of various type MS clamps 70960 Set 30.01.2024

3 30230228A SPEED SENSOR 99 Nos 05.02.2024

4 36232667 MOTOR SUSPENSION 28 Nos 07.02.2024

5 36230328 RADIATOR ASSEMBLY 10 Nos 08.02.2024

6 70232191 Two component epoxy top coat 34600 LTR 14.02.2024

**CORRIGENDUM**

No. Tender No. Notice No. Brief Description Existing Date Revised Date Amendment NIT Condition

1 90230005 S/2023/ 43 Date 18.12.2023 Aluminum chequered sheets size 2800 x 800 x 2.03 mm 04.01.2024 30.01.2024 Modified in Opening date

2 70230017 S/2023/ 45 Date 05.01.2024 -- 22.01.2024 29.01.2024

3 70232226 S/2023/ 45 Date 05.01.2024 -- 15.01.2024 23.01.2024

4 40231583 S/2023/ 44 दिनांक 27.12.2023 -- 18.01.2024 22.01.2024

5 40231658A S/2023/ 44 दिनांक 27.12.2023 -- 10.01.2024 23.01.2024 Special condition

1)The warranty/Guarantee shall be applicable as per latest IRSCondition

2) PL, read the warranty/Guarantee

Obligation of the complete item shall be 60 months from date of supply

6 40231787A S/2023/ 44 दिनांक 27.12.2023 -- Existing Date 08.01.2024 19.01.2024 Special condition

PL, read the warranty as 60 months from date of supply as perRDSO spec attached with tender. warranty mentioned in header.

Le 30 months is not applicable.

Note:- (1) Interested tenderers may visit the website [reps.gov.in](http://reps.gov.in) for full details/description/Specification/EMD & tender cost etc. All tenderers are requested to obtain digital signatures and get them registered on above site and quote electronically only. (2) For viewing and participating other tenders such as open tender costing below Rs. 25 Lakh, limited tenders, special limited tenders and low value tenders, please visit [www.reps.gov.in](http://www.reps.gov.in).

SSM/II

41-CQ/24 Follow us on: <https://www.facebook.com/NWRailways> <https://www.twitter.com/NWRailways>

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## Classifieds

## PERSONAL

It is for general information that I,VISHAL,S/o,Ganesh Kumar,R/o-K-89,part-II Defence-Enclave Mahipalpur,South-west Delhi-110037,declare that name-of-my-father has been wrongly-written as Ganesh in my class-10th and class-12th marksheets and certificate, educational-documents.The actual name-of-my-father is Ganesh Kumar,which may be amended accordingly.

I,Vinod Sharma,S/o Madan Lal Sharma,R/o 11022,Tower-2,D-Block,GH-7,Crossing Republic,Ghaziaab,Uttar Pradesh-201016,Have Changed My Name to Vinod Bhardwaj,for all,future Purposes.

I,Suman W/O Subhash.R/O Mohana (181) Sonipat Haryana,have changed my name to Suman Devi,for all purpose.-

I,Shivani Rao,D/o Surendra Rao Ambade,R/o Aligadah vale ke p Peechee.Hjeera.Gwalior (Madhya Pradesh)-474003, have changed my name to Shivani Rao Ambade.

0040708096-12

I, Sanjeev Kumar,S/o Sh.Ram Lubhaya,R/o 285/3,Railway Colony, Shakur Basti,Shakurbasti, Saraswati Vihar North West Delhi-110034,declare that Sanjeev Kumar Sharma, Sanjeev Kumar and Sanjeev Sharma names pertain to the one and same person i.e. Sanjeev Kumar.

0040708096-2

I,SHUBHAM GUPTA,S/o PANKAJ GUPTA, R/o,Flat.No.F-808,Stellar One Phase-1 Plot.No.GH-09, Sector-1, Greater-Noida West, Bisrakh,Gautam Buddha-Nagar,Uttar Pradesh-201306,have changed the name of my minor daughter TASHVI GUPTA,aged-3 years and she shall hereinafter known as DIVISHA GUPTA.

0040708098-1

I,SHAKUNTALA/W/O LAL DIWAN R/O B-733,LEFT-SIDE SR.SEC.SCHOOL,METRO-VIHAR PHASE-2,HOLAMBANI-KALAN,DELHI-110082.HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO SHAKUNTALA.

0040708102-1

I,SAIKH ZAI BIN Hafeez/MOHD SHAIKH ZAI BIN Hafeez/MOHD SHEIKH ZAI BIN BISHFAEEZ,R/O,D-1105,LUXURIA ESTATE, ADITYA WORLD CITY,NE3,GAZIABAD-201002, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO MOHAMMAD SHAIKH ZAI BIN Hafeez,FOR ALL,FUTURE PURPOSES.

0040708098-9

I,SAIM KHAN/MOHAMAD, TASLIM,S/O MOHAMMAD FAKRUDIN CHOHN HOUSE,NO.P.60,STRE ET.NO.18,

BRAHAMPURI,SEELAMPURI,DE LHI-110053,changed my name to MOHD TASLIM,for all,future purposes.

0040708098-8

I,Mukesh Kumar,S/o Sh.Hukam Chand Jain R/o-H-32/1, Sector-3,Rohini,Delhi-110085,have changed my name to Mukesh Kumar Jain.

0040708098-1

I,SAKSHI GABA,W/o-SUMIT GABA,D/o Mahesh-Grover,R/o-1/13/Subhash-Nagar New-Delhi.Earlier my name was Usha Grover(after-my-marriage)as Sakshi Gaba. Usha Grover and Sakshi Gaba is same-person.

0040708098-4

I,SAKSHI GABA,W/o-SUMIT GABA,D/o Mahesh-Grover,R/o-1/13/Subhash-Nagar New-Delhi.Earlier my name was Usha Grover(after-my-marriage)as Sakshi Gaba. Usha Grover and Sakshi Gaba is same-person.

0040708098-1

I,Ritu Lakhanpal,W/o Mukesh Kumar,R/o WZ-31,FF, Street No-2,New Mahavir Nagar Delhi-110018,have changed my name to Ritu.

0040708102-2

I,Praveen Kumar,S/o Sh.Jai Dayal,R/o-1064,N-Block, Mayfields Garden,Sector-51, Gurugram,Haryana,have changed my name from Praveen Kumar to Praveen Bhayana,for all future purposes.

0040708096-9

I,PRADEEP KUMAR SETHI,S/o MADAN LAL SETHI,HOUSE,NO.1118,DLF PHASE-4,GURGAON, HARYANA-122001,changed my name to PRADEEP SETHI.

0040708081-6

I,Naveen Kumar,S/o Nand Kishore,R/o,WZ-1855, Multani Mohalla,Rani Bagh,Delhi-34,have changed my name to Naveen Kumar Dudeja, permanently.

0040708081-3

I,Mukesh Kumar Lakhanpal,S/o Ved Prakash,R/o,WZ-K-31,FF, Street No-2,New Mahavir Nagar,Delhi-110018,have changed my name to Mukesh Kumar.

0040708102-3

I,MANEESH KALRA S/O HIRA LAL KALRA R/O J-64, RBI ENCLAVE,PASCHIM VIHAR, DELHI-110063.HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO MANISH KALRA.

0040708094-4

I,Rohit Kumar Gupta S/o Late Sh.Sudhir Gupta R/o-1/566, Second Floor, Street No.16,Balbir Nagar Extension,Shahdara,Delhi-110032 have changed my name to Rohit Gupta for all purposes.

0040707641-1

I,Ritik Singh S/o Vinod Kumar R/o Ugf, B-27-28, Freedom Fighter Enclave,Delhi-110068 have changed my name to Hrithik Singh for all purposes.

0040708101-1

I,Lovely,W/o Kamal Kishore Chhabra,R/o-WZ-3196, Mahindra Park, Shakurbasti,Delhi-34,have changed my name to Lovely Chhabra,permanently.

0040708081-2

I,Lalita Devi W/o Rajendra Singh,R/o Gauri Nagar, Hardoi,Uttar Pradesh-241126,have changed my name Neha Singh,for all purposes

0040708098-3

I,Kamal Kishore,S/o Ravinder Kumar Chhabra R/o-WZ-3196, Mahindra Park, Shakurbasti, Delhi-34,have changed my name to Kamal Kishore Chhabra,permanently.

0040708081-1

I,KM.BHOOMIKA TRIVEDI,W/O,SHASHI KUMAR TRIVEDI,ADD-398/7,NEW-ASHOK NAGAR,NEAR SN MORDEN PUBLIC-SCHOOL,MAYUR-VIHAR PHASE-3, EAST DELHI-110096,changed my name to BHUMIKA TRIVEDI,for all,future purposes.

0040708102-5

I,KHALID RAZA,S/o MR.ISHTIYAK HUSSAIN,R/o-1,6,GROUND FLOOR,HAJI COLONY,GHAFIAR MANZIL EXTN.,PART-II,JAMIA NAGAR,OKHLA,NEW DELHI-110025,inform that in Passport.No.A9190824,my date-of-birth is wrongly-written 03/06/1976 instead of 30/06/1976 for all,future purposes.

0040708096-8

I, JITENDER SINGH NEGI,S/O,SATYA SINGH NEGI,ADD-A-196A, KHN.34/19,GOLDEN RANAJI ENCLAVE NAJAFGARH, DWARKA-110043,changed my name to JITENDER NEGI,for all future purposes.

0040708102-4

I,Hukam Chand,S/o Sh.Ram Kishan Jain R/o H-32/121, Sector-3,Rohini,Delhi-110085,have changed my name to Hukam Chand Jain.

0040708098-2

I,Hansram Meena,S/o Radhe Shyam Meena,R/o-Vill Attrampura,PO-Chantoli,Teh-Bhusawar,Bharatpur,Rajastha n-321407,in my service records my name was written as Hansram Radheshym Meena,whereas my correct name is Hansram Meena.

0040708098-1

I,Prerna Anand W/O Vishal Anand,R/O House.no-A-1 Greater Kailash Enclave Part -2,New Delhi-110048,Have changed my name to Prerna Vishal Anand,Permanently.

0040708096-6

I,GURMEET SINGH, S/O,GURCHARAN SINGH,ADD-34/37,SECOND-FLOOR,WEST PATEL NAGAR CENTRAL,DELHI-110008, changed my name to GURMEET SINGH ARORA,for all,future purposes.

0040708098-5

I,Chandra Bhushan S/o Damodar Singh,R/o F-75,Gali no-6, Wazirabad Village,Delhi 110084,have changed my name to Chandra Bhushan Singh.

0040708096-5

I,BANI W/O-DILPREET SINGH SODHI,residing at-48,WEST PATEL-NAGAR DELHI-110008,have change my name to BANI KAUR,for all,future purpose.

0040708081-4

I,ARTI SINGHAL/ARTI GUPTA W/O/PRODEEP KUMAR SINGHAL R/O A-33,MOTI-LAL ROAD,ADARSH-NAGAR,DELHI-110033.HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO ARTI SINGHAL.

0040708096-1

I,Vikas Gupta,S/o-Ravi Kumar Gupta,R/o-C-244,Vikaspuri, New Delhi-110018 Have Changed the Name Of My Minor Daughter Anshika Varma alias Anshika Gupta aged 15years and She Shall Hereafter be Known as Anshika Gupta.

0070883058-1

I,Ritu Lakhanpal,W/o Mukesh Kumar,R/o WZ-31,FF, Street No-2,New Mahavir Nagar Delhi-110018,have changed my name to Ritu.

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# GOVT & POLITICS

Puri: Friends in Congress say party's decision will backfire

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 12

HITTING OUT at the Congress for terming the Ram Mandir consecration a 'BJP-RSS event' and staying away from it, Union Minister for Housing and Urban Affairs Hardeep Singh Puri on Friday said that Congress members had confided in him that the party's decision was "counter-productive".

Addressing the annual press conference on the ministry's work in the past year, Puri was asked about Congress leaders declining the invite and some asking why the Shankarcharyas were not attending the event. "Aapko jaanya nahi jaana, mat jayiye [don't attend if you don't want to] but if you make such statements, I think there are repercussions from those statements. I believe that any system based on faith, belief, you should not make statements like this at any stage," he said.

Commenting on the reported differences of opinion within the Congress on the issue, he said it appeared the party was a divided house. "The problem is different this time. The problem is to ensure that the (idol) consecration on January 22 is done in a limited way because there are so many people wanting to go there. I have come across stories when I go anywhere. People in the deep south want to go on trains. Those trains are going to run in a proper way, but after that [January 22]. You don't know the depth and the intensity of this emotion... I have a lot of friends in the Congress who tell me that this is the most counter-productive decision that a lack-lustre leadership has taken in a long time," Puri said.

The Congress on Wednesday announced that party president Mallikarjun Kharge, former Congress president Sonia Gandhi and leader of the party in the Lok Sabha Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury had declined the invitation to what it termed was an "RSS/BJP event".

**Akhilesh: Haven't received consecration invite yet, BJP is insulting Opposition**

MAULSHREE SETH  
LUCKNOW, JANUARY 12

SAMAJWADI PARTY president Akhilesh Yadav on Friday claimed that he had not received the invitation for the Ayodhya Ram Temple 'pran pratishtha' (consecration) ceremony so far, alleging that the Opposition parties were being humiliated by the BJP in the name of Lord Ram.

"Bhagwan Shri Ram ke naam par hum logon ko apmanit na karen (do not humiliate people in the name of Lord Shri Ram)," said Akhilesh in Lucknow.

The former chief minister added, "I have not received any invitation through courier. I checked it at home as well as the party office and asked them to inform me if someone received it."

**Mizoram forms panel to resolve border dispute with Assam**

**Guwahati:** The Zoram People's Movement (ZPM) government in Mizoram has constituted a 'Boundary Committee' led by Home Minister Sapdang to look into vexed Assam-Mizoram boundary issues.

The panel, constituted through a notification on January 3, will have the Minister for Environment, Forests and Climate Change, the state Home Department Commissioner, the advisor to the Chief Minister, the Chief Secretary and the state DGP.

The panel will also include one member each from the recognised parties in the state – BJP, Congress, Mizo National Front, ZPM and AAP, among others.

Mizoram shares a 165-km boundary with Assam across three districts on either side – Cachar, Karimganj and Hailakandi (Assam), and Manipi, Kolasib and Aizawl (Mizoram). The border dispute turned violent in 2021 when six Assam cops were killed after the forces of the two states clashed. Since then, Assam has been trying to resolve the disputes. **ENS**

## RAM TEMPLE CONSECRATION

### Karan Singh: Why hesitate to attend Ayodhya event after SC verdict

LALMANI VERMA  
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 12



Karan Singh gets the invite for the Jan 22 event. Express

EVEN AS the Congress on Friday again hit out at the BJP for turning the Ayodhya Ram Temple inauguration into a "political event", senior party leader Karan Singh said that after the Supreme Court's 2019 judgment in the Ram Janmabhoomi case "there should be no hesitation in attending the function, if invited".

In a statement, 92-year-old Singh, who is the son of Jammu and Kashmir's last Dogra ruler Maharaja Hari Singh, said he had received the "beautiful invitation" to the "historic pran pratishtha ceremony" but would not be able to attend it because of medical reasons.

"As a Raghuvanshi myself, and having made a modest personal donation of Rs 11 lakh towards the construction, it would have been a great pleasure to attend. Regrettably, nearing 93, it will not be possible for me to do so on medical grounds... After the Supreme Court judgement there should be no hesitation in attending the function, if invited."

The statement of Karan Singh, whose life, in many ways, is deeply intertwined with the tumultuous journey of Jammu and Kashmir since 1947, came amid the controversy triggered by the Congress top leadership's decision to turn down the invitation for the Ram Mandir event. Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge – who had been invited along with Congress Parliamentary Party chairperson Sonia Gandhi and the party's Lok Sabha floor leader Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury – on Friday said, "As

far as attending the function, those who have faith (aastha) can go tomorrow or the day after. I have made it clear on January 6 itself. It is not correct to attack us and this is a conspiracy of the BJP." He added, "We do not want to hurt anyone, any religion, any guru. This is not our issue. Our only issue is what (Prime Minister Narendra) Modi ji has done for the people on unemployment, inflation, border issues and the Chinese (intrusions) and what is their foreign policy. The poor who have been destroyed and are harassed...we are concerned about them and are asking him about them rather than this."

At a press conference at the AICC headquarters, Congress media and publicity department head Pawan Khera alleged that the conservation ceremony was not being held keeping in mind religious procedures. "Does anybody go to God's temple on invitation? Do we wait for an invitation? And if an invitation does not come, will we not go?" Khera asked.

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

### President Murmu invited to temple ceremony: VHP

New Delhi: A delegation representing the Ram Temple Trust on Friday formally invited President Droupadi Murmu to attend the Ram Temple consecration ceremony in Ayodhya on January 22.

The delegation comprised Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP) president Alok Kumar, Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh leader Ram Lal and Ram temple construction panel chief Nripendra Mishra.

Today, Her Excellency the President of India, Smt Draupadi Murmu Ji, was invited for the consecration ceremony at Shri Ram Temple on January 22," VHP national spokesperson Vinod Bansal wrote in a post on X. He also posted a picture of President Murmu receiving the invitation from the delegation.

"She expressed immense joy on this, and said that she will soon decide the time to come and visit Ayodhya," Bansal said. **PTI**

We should get the receipt so as to track the courier. Invites are not handed over to someone on the road just like that." On the four 'Shankarcharyas', the top Sanatan dharma spiritual leaders, deciding to not attend the January 22 ceremony, Yadav said that they led the Hindu dharma and people drew knowledge from them.

Whether an invitation for the consecration ceremony was sent to the SP chief, VHP spokesperson Vinod Bansal said, "I cannot confirm whether the invitation has been delivered to him or not. But his name is in the list of invitees."

The former chief minister added, "I have not received any invitation through courier. I checked it at home as well as the party office and asked them to inform me if someone received it.."

### Mizoram

**forms panel to resolve border dispute with Assam**

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The panel, constituted through a notification on January 3, will have the Minister for Environment, Forests and Climate Change, the state Home Department Commissioner, the advisor to the Chief Minister, the Chief Secretary and the state DGP.

The panel will also include one member each from the recognised parties in the state – BJP, Congress, Mizo National Front, ZPM and AAP, among others.

Mizoram shares a 165-km boundary with Assam across three districts on either side – Cachar, Karimganj and Hailakandi (Assam), and Manipi, Kolasib and Aizawl (Mizoram). The border dispute turned violent in 2021 when six Assam cops were killed after the forces of the two states clashed. Since then, Assam has been trying to resolve the disputes. **ENS**

### Industry captains pledge to invest Rs 3,000 cr in J&K: L-G

PARIMAL DABHI  
GANDHINAGAR, JANUARY 12



J&K L-G Manoj Sinha during the summit. **Nirmal Harindran**

such atmosphere is there in J&K," the LG said while concluding his speech at the valedictory function that was also addressed by Union Home Minister Amit Shah.

Sinha said that he is probably the first person from J&K to come to VGGS. "So far, J&K was known for different reasons. It was known for natural beauty and other reasons. Now, our Prime Minister (Narendra Modi) and Home Minister (Amit Shah) have made J&K capable of participating in Vibrant Gujarat," he added.

Referring to the industrial policy of J&K, the LG said that the in-

### Was just the charioteer: Advani on temple movement

VIKAS PATHAK  
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 12

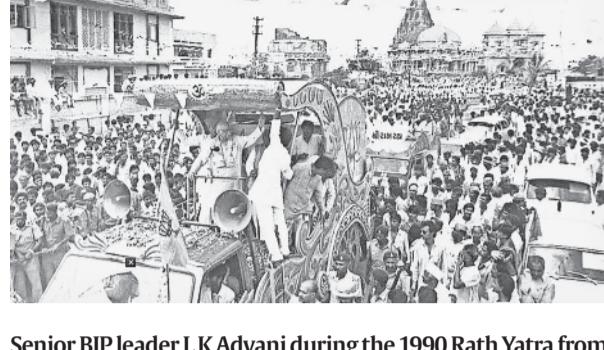
SENIOR BJP leader Lal Krishna Advani, who is keen to reach Ayodhya on January 22 to witness the inauguration of the Ram Mandir, has recalled his 1990 Rath Yatra from Somnath to Ayodhya in Rashtradharm magazine, saying he was only the sarathi (charioteer) of the rath, and that destiny had decided that the temple would become a reality one day.

The piece – Shri Ram Mandir: Divya Swapn Ki Poorti (Shri Ram temple: Fulfilment Of A Divine Dream) that Advani has penned on the Ram Janmabhoomi movement – will be published on January 15 in the 76-year-old magazine. The special

issue of Rashtradharm will be given to participants at the consecration ceremony of the idol in Ayodhya on January 22.

"Days after the Rath Yatra started, I realised that I was only the charioteer. The real messenger of the yatra was the chariot itself. It was venerable, as it was going to Ayodhya, the birthplace of Lord Ram, for the noble purpose of the construction of a grand temple dedicated to Him," Advani wrote in the article.

The senior BJP leader also recalls that Prime Minister Narendra Modi was his associate in the yatra. "When PM Modi will consecrate the temple, he will represent each citizen of India. I hope that this temple will inspire Indians to imbibe the values of Lord Ram," Advani says that he did not know at that time



Senior BJP leader L K Advani during the 1990 Rath Yatra from Somnath to Ayodhya. **Express archive**

"Saugandh Ram ki khaate hain, mandir wahin banayenge (we swear by Lord Ram, we will build the temple there)" rent the air.

"The Rath Yatra gave me some experiences that impacted me deeply. In interior villages, unknown rural folk would see the rath, get emotional and come to me. They would wish me, raise slogans dedicated to Lord Shri Ram and go away," Advani writes. This, he says, convinced him there were innumerable people who dreamt of a Ram temple at Ayodhya but had suppressed their emotions.

On January 22, the suppressed dreams of countless villagers will become a reality, Advani says.

He says in the piece that he misses his long-time senior and associate Atal Bihari Vajpayee, who passed away in 2018.

### Madhya Pradesh comes up with grand plan: 5 lakh laddoos to Ram Leela, kirtans

Mohan Yadav-led govt has a packed schedule ahead of Ayodhya ceremony

ANAND MOHAN J  
BHOPAL, JANUARY 12



### RUN-UP TO AYODHYA EVENT

Prime Minister Narendra Modi offers prayers at Shree Kalaram temple in Nashik on Friday. He also began a special 11-day religious exercise preceding the consecration ceremony at the Ram temple in Ayodhya on January 22. **PTI**

### Religious leaders praise PM for special ritual ahead of ceremony

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 12

The heads of various religious organisations and spiritual figures lauded Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday for his decision to begin a special 11-day religious exercise preceding the consecration ceremony at the Ram temple in Ayodhya.

Chidanand Saraswati of Parmarth Niketan Ashram said that Modi's call has sparked "all-round enthusiasm", adding that people should dedicate themselves to the national cause.

"We are lucky to have a prime minister like him. The temple is coming up after 500 years of struggle and sacrifices," said Saraswati in a message.

Swami Avdheshanand Giri of Juniper Akhara said that Modi's announcement shows he is not only a rare administrator, but also a peerless worshipper and

noted that seers and several religious organisations have also taken up different rituals and programmes in the run-up to the temple consecration ceremony on January 22.

"Everyone should follow some religious exercise. The 'pran pratishtha' is for global brotherhood, harmony and happiness and that is why the prime minister has also begun the special religious exercise," he said.

In a statement, spiritual guru Sri M said that "every Indian should undertake some religious exercise in the spirit of the mankind's happiness", and praised Modi's decision.

A "havan" was also conducted in Hardiwar by religious figures who prayed for the success of Modi's resolve.

Shashikant Das Maharaj of Saryu Maha Arti offered prayers for the success of Modi's 11-day exercise, and asserted that the construction of a "rashtreeya

mandir" is also sure to happen on the Prime Minister's watch.

"May Lord Ram fulfill Modi's wishes for the country," he said in a statement.

Swami Dipankar Maharaj of Deoband said that the blessings of all saints are with the Prime Minister in his resolve.

Modi began the special 11-day religious exercise on Friday, as he spoke about "experiencing feelings like never before in his life". The Prime Minister also said that "god has chosen him as an instrument to represent all Indians during the 'pran Pratishtha' exercise and that he is undertaking the 11-day religious exercise keeping this in mind.

He also said that it was a sacred occasion for all Indians and Lord Ram's devotees, and that "everyone is waiting for the historic moment on January 22 when the idol of Ram will be consecrated at what is believed by his followers as his birthplace".

The CM said people from the state would be sent to Ayodhya for darshan on specific dates provided by the Centre. The government has had its focus on the Ram Mandir ceremony since it was sworn in. In his first Cabinet meeting, the CM announced that the state would welcome Ram

The government has instructed Ram mandals (volunteers) to organise local events in their neighbourhoods and villages, and said that the "main temples in the state will live stream the ceremony from Ayodhya". It read, "Live telecast of the said programme in Ayodhya should be done by installing TV screens in the main temples of the state. People should be specially invited to participate in the events in the said temples and arrangements must be ensured." The state officials have been asked to make arrangements "for the welcome of pilgrims travelling to Ayodhya by special trains and road routes".

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

### VIBRANT GUJARAT GLOBAL SUMMIT CONCLUDES

### Country to become third largest economy in five years, during PM's 3rd term: Shah

PARIMAL DABHI & SOHINI GHOSH  
GANDHINAGAR, JANUARY 12



Union Home Minister Amit Shah addresses the concluding session of the Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit in Gandhinagar on Friday. **Nirmal Harindran**

centives it offers are not available in any other state. He added that the policy has been framed under the guidelines by Shah himself.

"Attempts are being made in J&K. Due to the (industrial) policy, so far, investment (promises) worth Rs 90,000 crore have come. Investments of Rs 15,000 crore have already landed on ground. Attempts are on to convert the received proposals into reality. Difficulties were there... which have been addressed successfully to a large extent under the guidance of the home minister (Shah)," he added.

Sinha said that works related to highways and tunnels worth Rs 1.5 lakh crore are in progress in J&K and rail, road and air connectivity is much better than before. The state is full of natural beauty and other reasons. Now, our Prime Minister (Narendra Modi) and Home Minister (Amit Shah) have made J&K capable of participating in Vibrant Gujarat," he added.

Referring to the industrial policy of J&K, the LG said that the in-

vestments worth Rs 26.33 lakh crore being inked for investment in 4,299 projects. He added that if the MoUs signed during Covid-19 pandemic, when VGGS could not be held, were added to the list, investment worth Rs 45 lakh crore have

been pledged for 98,540 projects.

Addressing the valedictory function of VGGS, Shah said, "When Prime Minister Narendra Modi took charge, our economy was at number 11 in the world. Today, we (our economy) stand at fifth position and with respect, I say quite confidently that when

Modiji becomes the Prime Minister for the third term, in those five years

## Notice Inviting Tender

National Competitive Bidding

1.	Name of the Work	Providing a Monitoring System (Live Web Streaming (Audio, Video, Record, Viewing, CCTV & other Services)) for the Lok Sabha Election 2024 for the Bihar State.
2.	Availability of the document	The Bidding Document is available and downloadable on the following website: <a href="https://eproc2.bihar.gov.in">https://eproc2.bihar.gov.in</a>
3.	Mode of Bid Submission	Online
4.	Bidding Document Fee	R Rs. 5000/- + Processing Fees (non-transferable & non-refundable) payable online only through <a href="https://eproc2.bihar.gov.in">https://eproc2.bihar.gov.in</a> as applicable
5.	Bid Security (Earnest Money Deposit)	R Rs. 15,00,000/- (Rupees Fifteen Lakh) Payable online at <a href="https://eproc2.bihar.gov.in">https://eproc2.bihar.gov.in</a>
6.	Date of Publication of Tender on website	15-01-2024 at 11.00 hours
7.	Pre-bid Query submission	By 19-01-2024 till 17.00 hours
8.	Date & Time for Pre-bid Meeting	24-01-2024 at 11.00 hours
9.	Last Date and Time for submission of online bids	12-02-2024 till 15.00 hours
10.	Date & Time of Technical Bid Opening	15-02-2024 at 11.00 hours
11.	Date of opening of Financial Bids	This would be communicated to successful bidders.
12.	Helpline no.	8544429904 / 8114593952

Note:- Only e-tenders will be accepted

Further details are available on Bihar Government e-procurement website <https://eproc2.bihar.gov.in>This information is available on [state.bihar.gov.in/prdbihar](http://state.bihar.gov.in/prdbihar) also

PR-15264 ( Election ) 2023-24

(Joint Chief Electoral Officer)

Election Department, Bihar

नशे से बनानी दूरी है, क्योंकि परिवार जल्दी है

**Govt. of Bihar**  
Department of Agriculture  
Bihar Horticulture Development Society, Patna  
(State Horticulture Mission)2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Krishi Bhawan, Mithapur, Patna-800001,  
Phone Fax: 0612-2547772, e-mail: dir-bhds-bih@nic.in,Website: [horticulture.bihar.gov.in](http://horticulture.bihar.gov.in)

## NOTICE – INVITING E-TENDER

Through e-procurement mode only over (<https://eproc2.bihar.gov.in>)

Very Short E-Tender notice for the empanelment of agencies for supply of Seeds/Rhizome/Tuber of Elephant foot Yam, Ginger and Turmeric in the State of Bihar.

For the holistic development of horticulture in the state of Bihar, Bihar Horticulture Development Society (BHDS), Bihar, Patna invites e-tender for empanelment to ensure timely availability of Seeds/Rhizome/Tuber of Elephant foot Yam (Ole, Suran, Zimkand), Ginger and Turmeric from interested Govt./Semi Govt. and private organizations having their own Production centre or taking production on others farms under their supervision with proper certification and should have facilities of fundamental infrastructure for storage /Godown of seeds/Rhizome/Tuber of Elephant foot Yam, Ginger and Turmeric.=

E-tender forms including terms and conditions for technical qualification, specifications, as well as quality and quantity of Seeds/Tubers/Rhizome Material and procedure is available on website: [horticulture.bihar.gov.in/](http://horticulture.bihar.gov.in/) <https://eproc2.bihar.gov.in>. Applicants may upload/submit their tender along with all required documents for technical qualification through the online portal <https://eproc2.bihar.gov.in>. Financial proposals should also be proposed on that portal in prescribed form separately.Proposal can only be uploaded/submitted on the website <https://eproc2.bihar.gov.in>, while EMD and Tender fee payment should be through online mode (NEFT/RTGS).

SN Activity Date/Time: Duration

1.	Start Date & Time for Downloading of Tender document	20.01.2024 (10:00 Hrs.)
2.	Date and place for pre-bid meeting	25.01.2024 (11:00 hrs), Department of Agriculture, Directorate of Horticulture, 2nd Floor, Krishi Bhawan, Mithapur, Patna - 800001
3.	Last Date & Time for Downloading of Tender document	29.01.2024 (11:00 Hrs.)
4.	Last Date & Time for submission/uploading of offer/Bid	29.01.2024 (15:00 Hrs.)
5.	Date and time of technical bid opening	29.01.2024 (15:30 Hrs.)
6.	Date and time of financial bid opening	To be intimated to technically successful bidder only
7.	Nodal officer/Contact person for queries	Dr. Rakesh Kumar, Deputy Director Horticulture (Mob No.-9431818933) Smt. Ruby Kumari, ADH (Mob No. 9431818966)
8.	Mode of Selection	Least Cost Based Selection- LCBS (L1)

Mission Director, Bihar Horticulture Development Society, Patna reserves the right to revise/change/cancel the proposal without assigning any reasons thereof.

This information is available on [state.bihar.gov.in/prdbihar](http://state.bihar.gov.in/prdbihar) also

Director Horticulture cum

Mission Director,

Bihar Horticulture Development Society,

Bihar, Patna

PR- 15266 ( Agriculture ) 2023-24

नशे से बनानी दूरी है, क्योंकि परिवार जल्दी है

**GOVERNMENT OF HARYANA TENDER NOTICE**

SR. NO NAME OF DEPARTMENT NAME OF WORK NOTICE TENDER OPENING DATE CLOSING DATE AMOUNT / EMD (APPROX.) IN RUPEES WEBSITE OF THE DEPARTMENT NODAL OFFICER/CONTACT DETAILS/EMAIL

1	PANCHAYATI RAJ FATEHABAD	JALLOPUR (CONSTRUCTION OF KHAD KHADA AT JALLOPUR BUS STAND (ENTRY POINT) AT VILLAGE JALLOPUR BLOCK NAGPUR DISTRICT FATEHABAD + 8 WORKS	10.01.2024 19.01.2024	52.41 LACS	<a href="https://etenders.hry.nic.in">https://etenders.hry.nic.in</a>	01667230855 prexeeng.rtb@hry.nic.in
2	PANCHAYATI RAJ KURUKSHETRA	LED STREET LIGHT INSTALLATION ON EXISTING ELECTRIC POLE VARIOUS VILLAGES OF DISTT. KURUKSHETRA	10.01.2024 31.01.2024	164 LACS	<a href="https://etenders.hry.nic.in">https://etenders.hry.nic.in</a>	9896224357 prexeeng.krk@hry.nic.in
3	DIRECTOR GENERAL SUPPLIES AND DISPOSALS HARYANA	SUPPLY, DELIVERY, MOUNTING, TESTING AND COMMISSIONING OF TURN TABLE LADDER PLATFORM 55 MTR. (WORKING HEIGHT) WITH 02 YEAR DEFECT LIABILITY PERIOD.	12.01.2024 29.01.2024		<a href="https://etenders.hry.nic.in">https://etenders.hry.nic.in</a>	0172-2570122 supplies@hry.nic.in
4	DIRECTOR GENERAL SUPPLIES AND DISPOSALS HARYANA	SUPPLY, DELIVERY, MOUNTING, TESTING AND COMMISSIONING OF AERIAL LADDER PLATFORM 70 METERS HEIGHT WITH RESCUE LADDER WITH 02 YEAR DEFECT LIABILITY PERIOD.	12.01.2024 29.01.2024		<a href="https://etenders.hry.nic.in">https://etenders.hry.nic.in</a>	0172-2570122 supplies@hry.nic.in
5	DIRECTOR GENERAL SUPPLIES AND DISPOSALS HARYANA	SUPPLY, DELIVERY, MOUNTING, TESTING AND COMMISSIONING OF AERIAL LADDER PLATFORM 55 METERS HEIGHT WITH RESCUE LADDER WITH 02 YEAR DEFECT LIABILITY PERIOD.	12.01.2024 29.01.2024		<a href="https://etenders.hry.nic.in">https://etenders.hry.nic.in</a>	0172-2570122 supplies@hry.nic.in
6	DIRECTOR GENERAL SUPPLIES AND DISPOSALS HARYANA	SUPPLY, DELIVERY, MOUNTING, TESTING AND COMMISSIONING OF AERIAL LADDER PLATFORM 42 METERS HEIGHT WITH RESCUE LADDER WITH 02 YEAR DEFECT LIABILITY PERIOD.	12.01.2024 29.01.2024		<a href="https://etenders.hry.nic.in">https://etenders.hry.nic.in</a>	0172-2570122 supplies@hry.nic.in
7	DIRECTOR GENERAL SUPPLIES AND DISPOSALS HARYANA	TENDER FOR THE PURCHASE OF 151 SPLIT AIR CONDITIONER	12.01.2024 29.01.2024		<a href="https://etenders.hry.nic.in">https://etenders.hry.nic.in</a>	0172-2570122 supplies@hry.nic.in
8	DIRECTOR GENERAL SUPPLIES AND DISPOSALS HARYANA	SUPPLY, DELIVERY, MOUNTING, TESTING AND COMMISSIONING OF AERIAL LADDER PLATFORM 90 METERS HEIGHT WITH 02 YEAR DEFECT LIABILITY	12.01.2024 29.01.2024		<a href="https://etenders.hry.nic.in">https://etenders.hry.nic.in</a>	0172-2570122 supplies@hry.nic.in
9	PANCHAYATI RAJ CHARKHI DADRI	RENOVATION OF SC (DHANAK) CHOPAL AT VILLAGE RAWALDHI BLOCK AND DISTRICT CHARKHI DADRI (D-PLAN) + 2 WORKS	09.01.2024 16.01.2024	10.15 LACS	<a href="https://etenders.hry.nic.in">https://etenders.hry.nic.in</a>	9416479223 xenprcharhdadri@gmail.com
10	PANCHAYATI RAJ CHARKHI DADRI	CONSTN.OF BUS Q SHELTER AT VILLAGE SAHUVAS BLOCK AND DISTRICT CHARKHI DADRI(ZP) + 4 WORKS	09.01.2024 16.01.2024	31.32 LACS	<a href="https://etenders.hry.nic.in">https://etenders.hry.nic.in</a>	9116479223 xenprcharhdadri@gmail.com
11	IRRIGATION & WATER RESOURCES DEPARTMENT HARYANA ROHTAK	SUPPLY ERECTION AND COMMISSIONING OF NEW PUMP FOR FLOOD PROTECTION WORKS FOR NANDAL PUMP HOUSE IN W.S MECH. DIVISION GOHANA + 10 OTHER WORKS	CLOSING DATE 30.01.2024	934.07 LACS	<a href="https://etenders.hry.nic.in">https://etenders.hry.nic.in</a>	8901388296 rohtalkxenmech@yahoo.com
12	IRRIGATION & WATER RESOURCES DEPARTMENT HARYANA REWARI	REPAIR OF 2 NO. 125 CS PUMP (P-10 & P-14) AT PUMP HOUSE JF-1 + OTHER	CLOSING DATE 22.01.2024	EMD 7000/-	<a href="https://etenders.hry.nic.in">https://etenders.hry.nic.in</a>	0127428963 xenmech@yahoo.com
13	PANCHAYATI RAJ GOHANA SONIPAT	8. ESTIMATE FOR PROVIDING AND FIXING OF OPEN GYM EQUIPMENT FOR ALL VILLAGES OF KATHURA BLOCK [BLOCK SAMITI] + 3 WORKS	10.01.2024 22.01.2024	46.98 LACS	<a href="https://etenders.hry.nic.in">https://etenders.hry.nic.in</a>	9116051838 xitendersh83@gmail.com
14	PANCHAYATI RAJ MUNDIANA SONIPAT	CONSTRUCTION OF NALA FROM PARFULL CHAKKI TO ANAJMANDI GATE VILLAGE-MUNDIANA + 8 WORKS	11.01.2024 19.01.2024	79.39 LACS	<a href="https://etenders.hry.nic.in">https://etenders.hry.nic.in</a>	9416050239 Kram8175@gmail.com
15	PANCHAYATI RAJ PANCHKULA	CONSTRUCTION OF DRAIN / UNDER GROUND PIPE LINE FOR LIQUID WASTE FROM I/I JASIR / MO MANDEP / TWINS MAIN ROAD AT VILLAGE NANAKPUR, CONSTRUCTION OF BOUNDARY WALL AND R/WALL AT VILLAGE RAMNAGAR, CONSTRUCTION OF DRINKING WATER TANKI OF PLAY GROUND AT VILLAGE RAM NAGAR AND CONSTRUCTION OF LIQUID PIPE LINE FOR LIQUID WASTE / SEWAGE VILLAGE SHAMPIUR GRAM PANCHAYAT SHAMPIUR BLOCK PINJORE DISTRICT PANCHKULA + 3 WORKS	09.01.2024 16.01.2024	37.80 LACS	<a href="https://etenders.hry.nic.in">https://etenders.hry.nic.in</a>	9467807024 prexeeng.pkh@hry.nic.in
16	PANCHAYATI RAJ DHAND KAITHAL	CONST. OF HALL IN GENERAL ( BRAHMĀNAH CHOPAL ) AT VILLAGE-RAWANHERA + 2 WORKS	10.01.2024 17.01.2024	21.65 LACS	<a href="https://etenders.hry.nic.in">https://etenders.hry.nic.in</a>	9416043370 sdoprdrhnd@gmail.com

24178/HRY FOR FURTHER INFORMATION KINDLY VISIT : [www.haryanaeprocurement.gov.in](http://www.haryanaeprocurement.gov.in) or [www.etenders.hry.nic.in](http://www.etenders.hry.nic.in)

Online tenders are invited by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Tamil Nadu e-Governance Agency (TNeGA), towards Selection of Vendor for supply and installation of Signage board for 05 eSeval malayan centres across Tamil Nadu

The tender document (RFP) can be downloaded at free of cost from <https://tntenders.gov.in>, <https://tnega.tn.gov.in> from 13.01.2024, 15:00 hrs.

Pre-bid meeting is scheduled online on 19.01.2024 at 15:30 hrs. through video conference (VC) by TNeGA and the link for the VC can be referred in the RFP.

EMD for an amount of Rs.70,000/- has to be paid through online mode. Last date and time for online submission of bids through <https://tntenders.gov.in> (e-Tender) is 13.02.2024 till 16:00 hrs. Technical Bid shall be opened online on 13.02.2024 at 16:30 hrs.

Bidders are advised to participate in the pre-bid meeting scheduled by TNeGA.

Chief Executive Officer  
TAMIL NADU e-GOVERNANCE AGENCY

12

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RFP/TENDER ENQUIRY No. MQP-230/2023-24/PO(M)  
Dated: 11.01.2024

Chief Engineer/Metering, C-3, Shakti Vihar, PSPCL, Patiala invites E-tender for Appointment of Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) for Service Provider for smart Prepaid Metering in Punjab State Power Corporation Ltd. (PSPCL) on DFOOT basis under RDSS (Border Zone).

For detailed NIT & Tender Specification please refer to [https://eproc.punjab.gov.in](http://eproc.punjab.gov.in) from 03.00 PM onwards.NOTE:- Corrigendum and amendments, if any will be published online at [https://eproc.punjab.gov.in](http://eproc.punjab.gov.in)

3143/Pb C-33/24

# AN-32 debris brings back painful memories for kin

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
JANUARY 12

FOR THE families of the 29 people on board an Indian Air Force (IAF) transport plane that went missing seven years ago, the discovery of the AN-32's debris in the Bay of Bengal has brought back painful memories.

The plane went missing on July 22, 2016, while flying from Chennai to Port Blair. On September 15, the IAF declared all 29 presumed dead but said its search would continue.

Rajendra Barpatte, father of Flight Lieutenant Kunal Barpatte – the AN-32 flight navigator – said the news of the debris being found brought back memories of the "worst phase" of his life and of questions that have remained unanswered. "I had hoped that such a report (on the finding of the debris) would bring closure to us. But I was wrong. It has brought back the memories of the worst phase of our lives. I got



National Institute of Ocean Technology officials speak to media on the AN-32 wreck, in Chennai on Friday. PTI

Prem Lata always asked for proof," said Deepika's father Dalip Sheoran, a retired executive engineer at the Haryana public health department.

Deepika had also been selected as a lieutenant in the Army but chose to join the IAF.

Flying Officer Pankaj Kumar Nandal's family had been looking forward to his wedding, scheduled for November 13, 2016, when the plane went missing.

"We would like to wait for a formal communication from the

government before commenting," said Pankaj's father Krishan, who retired from the Air Force as a Warrant Officer in 2001.

Pankaj, who had joined the Air Force in 2013, was a co-pilot of the AN-32 aircraft.

Anita Badsara, mother of Flight Lieutenant Pushpender Badsara, also sought confirmation: "I still have hope that my son will come one day."

The family of Purna Chandra Senapati from Odisha, who had joined the Naval Armament Depot

(NAD) in Visakhapatnam as a technician two years before the plane went missing, has not done his *sudha kriya* (a funeral ritual) because they believed he would come home, his brother Pratap Chandra Senapati said. "We are not ready to accept that he is dead unless we see his body," said Pratap.

Charan Maharanra from Sunkuda village in Odish's Ganjam district was also working with the NAD when he boarded the AN-32 in 2016. His sister Susmita Maharanra said the accident shattered their family.

"Charan had been a very brave boy since childhood. My mother thinks he is alive and will return one day," she said.

Also among the 29 were two from Kozhikode district in Kerala. At Kakkodi village in Kozhikode, Padmavathi, the mother of IP Vimal, an engineer who was 31 at the time of the incident, has not yet come to terms with the loss. "The vacuum created by the tragedy is still felt. Every day, she goes to a nearby

temple and prays," her neighbour M T Rajesh said.

Vimal's wife Reshma, also a native of Kozhikode, now works at a hospital in Bahrain. Vimal had worked with the Army's Engineering wing for 14 years and was posted in Port Blair three months before the mishap. It was his maiden flight to Port Blair; he had made previous trips by ship.

Sajiv Kumar, 38, who had been a petty officer in the Navy for 18 years, was the other man from Kozhikode on the plane. He had been stationed in Port Blair for two years. At Kakkodi village, Kumar's father Rajan, a farmer, died a year ago. "I don't want to give this news to my mother," Kumar's younger brother Aji said. Kumar's wife Jessina recently got a job at the Indian Naval Academy at Ezhimala in Kannur, where she is now with their daughter.

Reporting by Sushant Kulkarni in Pune, Sukhbir Siwach in Chandigarh, Sujit Bisoyi in Bhubaneswar and Shaju Philip in Thiruvananthapuram



CAPF personnel outside the house of West Bengal Minister Sujit Bose during an ED raid in Kolkata on Friday. Express

## A week after attack, ED back in Bengal, with more backup

RAVIK BHATTACHARYA  
KOLKATA, JANUARY 12

SEVEN DAYS after an Enforcement Directorate team was assaulted in West Bengal's Sandeshkhali area when they went to conduct searches at the premises of a Trinamool Congress (TMC) leader, the agency was back in action on Friday – with much more backup.

The ED raided the residences and offices of West Bengal minister Sujit Bose, TMC MLA Tapas Roy, and former chairman of the North Dum Dum municipality Subodh Chakraborty in connection with a municipal recruitment scam. This time, central forces accompanying the ED officials were seen donning helmets and body shields, and carrying teargas canisters. This is apart from their usual gear of batons and arms.

It is alleged that hundreds of jobs – in Group C, Group D and other positions in municipalities – were given in exchange for money. Roy, the TMC deputy chief whip in the Assembly, is an MLA from Baranagar, which is one of the municipalities under the ED's radar. Bose's residence was raided in connection with alleged recruitment scams in North and South Dumdum municipalities.

"Seventy TMC leaders are involved in the recruitment scam. They should all start packing their bags and I advise them to take some warm clothes," said Suvidha Adhikari, BJP MLA and Leader of the Opposition in the state Assembly. "This should have been done long back. They (ED and central forces) should be stern and proactive. The ED should arrest the culprits. One must keep it in mind that it is a court-monitored probe," said Congress MP and the party's state unit chief Adhir Chowdhury.

Kunal Ghosh, the TMC state secretary and spokesperson, said, "Once again the ED is conducting raids here. This is happening through a script prepared by the BJP."

ED officials and central forces left Bose's residences at around 8 pm. The raid at Chakraborty's residence lasted for around 12 hours. The raid at Roy's apartment ended around 6.20 pm.

## Killing of 3 Manipur men: Forum demands new security adviser

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
GUWAHATI, JANUARY 12

AFTER THREE missing men were found killed Thursday, the Coordinating Committee on Manipur Integrity (COCOMI), a Meitei organisation, demanded that Chief Minister N Biren Singh replace security adviser and former CRPF DG Kuldip Singh, who is in charge of the unified command.

In the aftermath of violence, Singh was sent to Manipur as security adviser to the CM. A unified command was announced by Union Home Minister Amit Shah during his visit to the state at the end of May last year for better coordination among security agencies in the state, and Singh was made in-charge.

COCOMI said in a statement Friday that the "prevailing security arrangements have undeniably failed" and that the role of the security adviser over the past eight months of the conflict in the state "has been utterly ineffective, with no discernible signs of improvement."

Stating that the presence of thousands of central security personnel has not proved to be effective,

Despite attempts to reach him, Singh did not respond.

Marathi channel owners move HC against I&B curb

New Delhi: The proprietors of Marathi news channel *Lokshahi Marathi* have moved the Delhi HC against its suspension by the Union Information and Broadcasting (I&B) Ministry. The petitioners have challenged the January 9 order of the I&B Ministry whereby "up-linking and down-linking permission" for the channel has been suspended for a period of 30 days from January 9. ENS

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## The Indian EXPRESS

FOUNDED BY

RAMNATH GOENKA

BECAUSE THE TRUTH INVOLVES US ALL

## MATTER OF INTEREST

Inflation edges upwards, in line with expectations. RBI must provide forward guidance on possible trajectory of rates

**D**ATA RELEASED BY the National Statistical Office on Friday showed that retail inflation had edged marginally upwards last month. As measured by the consumer price index, it rose to 5.69 per cent in December, up from 5.55 per cent in November, driven largely by higher food inflation. This increase was expected. In his statement on the last monetary policy committee meeting, RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das had noted that the "near-term outlook, however, is masked by risks to food inflation which might lead to an inflation uptick in November and December." Das had cautioned that "this needs to be watched for second round effects, if any."

The disaggregated data shows that the consumer food price index rose to 9.53 per cent in December, up from 8.7 per cent in November. Within the food basket, inflation remains elevated in cereals, vegetables, pulses and products, sugar and spices. As per analysts, the outlook for some of these items like rice, wheat and pulses remains uncertain. However, core inflation, which excludes the more volatile components such as food and fuel, has moderated further. Alongside, data also released by the NSO showed that the index of industrial production slowed down to just 2.4 per cent in November, in part, due to the base effect. For the first eight months of the year (April–November), industrial output is up 6.4 per cent.

In a few weeks from now, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman will present the interim Union budget. A few days later, the monetary policy committee of the Reserve Bank of India will meet for the last time this financial year. In its last meeting, the MPC had voted to maintain the status quo on both rates and stance, as it decided to remain focused on the "withdrawal of accommodation to ensure that inflation progressively aligns to the target". In his statement Shaktikanta Das had said that "the target of 4 per cent CPI is yet to be reached and we have to stay the course." However, in an interview to this paper, MPC member Jayant Varma recently said that "we are approaching the point where an interest rate cut is necessary to prevent an excessive real interest rate." Varma argued that monetary policy can be "less restrictive" if there was expectation of inflation nearing the central bank's target of 4 per cent. The RBI has projected inflation to moderate from 5.2 per cent in the first quarter of 2024–25 to 4 per cent in the second quarter and 4.7 per cent in the third quarter. Considering that the US Federal Reserve has also hinted at the possibility of rate cuts next year, in its coming meetings, the MPC should provide some forward guidance on the possible trajectory of interest rates.

## HEALTHY NEW YEAR

Decision to inoculate against cervical cancer is welcome, could help root out a major disease that afflicts Indian women

**T**HE CENTRE WILL roll out vaccines for cervical cancer in the second quarter of this year. The campaign will begin once the government has a stock of 6.5–7 crore doses of the vaccine needed for the first phase of the inoculation drive. This is a significant and enormously welcome public health move. India accounts for a fifth of the world's cervical cancer burden. It is the second-most common cancer among Indian women, after breast cancer. Cervac, an indigenous vaccine, developed by the Serum Institute of India (SII), has been in the commercial market for about a year. The Pune-based company currently has an annual capacity of manufacturing 20–30 lakh doses. However, at Rs 2,000 a shot, the vaccine is expensive for a large section of the country's population. Also, the overwhelming lack of awareness about the disease means that a mass inoculation drive is imperative to tackle the human papillomavirus (HPV) that's responsible for close to 85 per cent of cervical cancer cases. The vaccination drive that will target girls in the age group of nine to 14 could be a game changer.

HPV is a common microbe. A combination of vaccination and screening facilities has stemmed its virulence in most developed countries. The global strategy encourages a minimum of two screenings of women by the time they are 35 and again by age 45. By all accounts, that doesn't happen in India. In 2018, the National Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation recommended the inclusion of HPV vaccines in the country's Universal Immunisation Programme (UIP). But the high costs of vaccines, then manufactured by the pharma multinationals Merck and Glaxo Smithkline, proved a deterrent — the regimen costs upwards of Rs 4,000. The UIP — it targets more than 2.5 crore newborns and nearly 3 crore pregnant women every year — has demonstrated the capacity to surmount difficulties that have kept young women from accessing the vaccines. It has especially been effective in overcoming the hurdles posed by the country's traditional public health care deficiencies. India's success in inoculating people against Covid is also well-known. The work during the public health emergency to bust myths around the shots could especially prove handy for vaccinators.

Cervac was approved by the Drugs Controller General of India in 2022 on the back of encouraging results in clinical trials — it generated an antibody response 1,000 times more than the baseline required against all HPV variants. SII's admirable track record during the pandemic is ample proof of its capabilities to upscale production in a crisis. In the coming months, health authorities and the Pune-based institute will be keenly watched, with hope.

## ANDHRA'S EXPERIMENT

While the dressing room can be instructed to remain aloof to individual achievement, what about the fans?

**T**HIS RANJI TROPHY season, the Andhra team, while pursuing its first-ever title, has set itself a higher goal. To be true to the spirit of a team sport, it has decided against applauding individual efforts. So in their first match of the season, when the batsmen reached a hundred, the Andhra dressing room reacted with spectacular silence. It was only after the team had taken the first-innings lead did a wild cheer thread through the stadium air. These sights and sounds have been unseen and unheard in a cricket ecosystem known to celebrate personality cults. Sunil Gavaskar, Kapil Dev, Sachin Tendulkar, Virat Kohli — India always had record-breaking cricketing icons but Team India lacked the intimidating aura of the West Indies back in the day or in present-day Australia. Andhra's diagnosis seems spot on, but isn't this a band-aid solution?

Most Ranji Trophy games these days are played in front of virtually empty stands with the proverbial old man and his dog being the only witnesses to the action on the field. To deny a domestic performer the few claps from his mates when he reaches a milestone is cruel. Those who play the sport at the highest level say that the "respect of the dressing room" is the ultimate acknowledgment of their skills. So when an entire squad stands up to applaud a fellow player, who took blows for the team on way to a personal milestone, the moment best represents the ethos of a team sport.

While the dressing room can be instructed to remain aloof to individual achievement, what about the fans? Sport isn't just about the eventual result, it is also about the small sub-plots and the many personal storylines. A stunning dive or a breathtaking catch all add up to make a match-day outing a life-long memory. While Andhra can continue with their little experiment, Indian cricket's bigger stakeholders need to rethink. They need to stop selling team games as individual face-offs. After every India loss, or even Mohammad Siraj's six-wicket haul, they need to stop showing reruns of Kohli's hundreds.



SONALDE DESAI

IN RECENT WEEKS, two American university presidents, Claudine Gay from Harvard and Liz Magill from the University of Pennsylvania, resigned from their positions after evasive responses during a testimony at a Congressional hearing on anti-Semitism on campuses following the October 7 attack by Hamas in Israel. President Magill from the University of Pennsylvania explicitly condemned anti-Semitism as well as Islamophobia, but still, she came under fire for refusing to relieve a professor who led chants for intifada, revolution, that has come to characterise calls for violent protests by Palestinians against the Jewish state. President Gay from Harvard, also under fire, resigned voluntarily to protect the institution from further controversy.

This incident provides an intriguing insight into the culture wars of 21st century America while offering a cautionary tale for other nations seeking civil discourse about difficult issues. Freedom of expression is enshrined in the American Constitution and is often taken to an extreme where the individual right to carry guns or to burn the American flag is hotly defended. Nonetheless, as this incident shows, this freedom is under considerable threat, a threat that is not limited to the present controversy.

In the cases of Harvard and Pennsylvania, this threat came under the guise of creating a safe space for Jewish students, accompanied by the financial clout of donors and alums. But it is not simply the power of donors that has generated such a powerful backlash. We also see a similar desire to avoid controversy and protect the sensibilities of diverse communities in other cases.

For example, the dismissal of Professor Erika López Prater from Hamline University for actions deemed Islamophobic. Her crime? She showed an image of a 14th century painting depicting Prophet Mohammad

That's what the university should be. From campuses in America to India, that's the challenge

The road to hell is often paved with the best intentions, and diversity initiatives do not always increase diversity. A fascinating study of large businesses by Harvard Sociology Professor Frank Dobbin, published in Harvard Business Review, finds that mandatory diversity training for managers has reduced rather than increased diversity. Blaming and shaming led to the hardening of biases, and diversity training was associated with a reduction in black women managers as well as Asian managers. Moreover, attempts at enhancing comfort and silencing strident debate come at a price.

Moderating or censoring speech to what in India we term "respecting the sentiments" of some communities is often classified in the US as protecting vulnerable groups from microaggression. In most settings, power still rests in the hands of white men, creating a hostile environment for women and racial or gender minorities. Efforts at identifying behaviours that constrict aggression in day-to-day interactions, often termed microaggression, have gained currency. Redress usually involves instituting diversity programmes in universities and large businesses. Fareed Zakaria, in a perceptive article, argues that the growth of this DEI (diversity, equity and inclusion) bureaucracy has given rise to a culture of virtue signalling and fed demands from Jewish students for protection from hurtful speech, as other groups have demanded in the past.

And yet, the road to hell is often paved with the best intentions, and diversity initiatives do not always increase diversity. A fascinating study of large businesses by Harvard Sociology Professor Frank Dobbin, published in Harvard Business Review, finds that mandatory diversity training for managers has reduced rather than increased diversity. Blaming and shaming led to the hardening of biases, and diversity training was associated with a reduction in black women managers as well as Asian managers. Moreover, attempts at enhancing comfort and silencing strident debate come at a price.

Modern universities — in the United States and globally — are buffeted by two competing forces. On the one hand, there is a recognition that existing inequalities can create a hostile environment for some students. On the other hand, trying to protect against it can diminish spaces for dissent and debate in institutions designed to foster creativity. Struggling to find a balance between the two, a report of the Committee on Freedom of Expression by the University of Chicago quotes its President Hanna Gray, "Education should not be intended to make people comfortable, it is meant to make them think."

If universities are to remain home to creativity, they must embrace both radical thinking and scepticism toward received wisdom. This is important not just for humanities and social science but also for science and engineering. Arguably, the most visible example is periodic attempts by various US state legislatures to restrict the teaching of evolution in schools since it is inconsistent with the Christian conception of how the universe was created.

Radical thinking and scepticism towards received wisdom are not readily embraced. They imply not simply accepting ideas we like but also being open to ideas that are not consistent with our other beliefs and social norms or may be hurtful to some segment of our society, whether they are about the right of the state of Israel to displace Palestinians, caste-based reservation or scientific discoveries. Temples of education are not places where ideological battles should be fought. As Claudine Gay notes in an essay in *The New York Times*, "At tense moments, every one of us must be more sceptical than ever of the loudest and most extreme voices in our culture, however well organised or well connected they might be."

The writer is a Professor at the University of Maryland and the National Council of Applied Economic Research. Views are personal



MADHU VERMA AND SWAPNA MEHRA

IN RECENT YEARS, India has been a leading participant in global efforts to improve forest cover and arrest climate change. These initiatives have also contributed to building resilience of communities and ecosystems. Conservation of standing forests and increasing forest cover density helps lock carbon underground, contributing to mitigation of global warming.

Forest resources and their conservation directly impact the revenue capacities and expenditure needs of the states. However, the opportunity costs of conservation may be large, and in some cases prohibitive. That's where fiscal federalism comes in. The Finance Commission (FC), responsible for fiscal federalism in the country, has in the past provided incentives to states to maintain and improve their forest cover.

The 12th FC (2005–10) dedicated Rs 1,000 crore for forest conservation across states; the 13th FC (2010–15) enhanced this allocation to Rs 5,000 crore. The 14th FC (2015 to 2020) considered several recommendations of a study conducted by the authors of this article and replaced the grants with a more prominent placement for the forestry sector — it dedicated 7.5 per cent of the divisible central tax pool for ecology and forests. The allocation was based on the forest cover in each state. The 15th FC (2021–22 to 2025–26) extended this share to 10 per cent. Having mobilised and distributed over Rs 4.5 lakh crore to states against not only their forest cover but also forest density, the 15th FC effectively became the largest payment for ecosystem

## A GREEN FISCAL BLUEPRINT

Finance Commission needs to become an agent for India's climate readiness

Innovations to tackle the seemingly intractable problem of crop burning will require funds. So will mangrove restoration, a key necessity given the weather vagary-induced floods in recent times. At the same time, increasing dry spells have led to forest fires in several states. Such incidences are not part of the forest's regenerative cycle but a result of changing climate patterns.

services (PES) systems in the world. The Commission also gave grants to combat air pollution.

In November last year, the government appointed the 16th FC to discuss tax distribution principles for 2026–31. This comes at a critical time. India's Paris Agreement commitment necessitates the reduction of GHG emissions by 33–35 per cent and building an additional carbon sink of 2.5 to 3 billion tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> by 2030. A National Carbon Market and a National Green Credit Market are also on the government's anvil.

The 16th FC can be pivotal in creating a basis for these market instruments to succeed.

It can do so in the following manner. First, by making climate vulnerability and emission intensity of states a key parameter of the tax devolution formula, the Commission can nudge action towards achieving India's NDCs under the Paris Pact. Much will depend will how the panel can evolve a formula to ensure incentive-based performance.

Second, the FC could look at the possibility of performance-based grants for different sectors: Sector-specific grants for key actions are critical towards achieving the objectives of India's NDCs and SDG goals. Emissions reduction requires the decarbonisation of the energy and transport sectors, sustainable land and forest management, as well as nudging people to make lifestyle changes. Given the severity of the pollution challenge, clean energy should be amongst the FC's priorities. Innovations to tackle the seemingly intractable problem of crop

burning will require funds. So will mangrove restoration, a key necessity given the weather vagary-induced floods in recent times. At the same time, increasing dry spells have led to forest fires in several states. Such incidences are not part of the forest's regenerative cycle but a result of changing climate patterns. The FC has to find ways to become a part of the solution to this ecological challenge.

There is no dearth of studies that show the exact climate vulnerability of the different regions in India. Moreover, policymakers are equipped with pollution inventories at different levels. Remote sensing data helps assess the degradation of ecosystems and understand forest fires. The experts at 16th FC can therefore turn to science to ascertain both the vulnerability of states and how they are doing to mitigate them. This can help them design a performance-based system for fund apportioning.

The Commission needs to metamorphose from a conventional fiscal arbitrator to an orchestrator of India's climate readiness. The country requires a fiscal blueprint that harmonises economic growth with environmental imperatives. The 16th FC is the best-placed institutional mechanism to fulfil this critical need.

Verma is Senior Economic Advisor and Mehra is Chief Executive Officer, Iora Ecological Solutions, New Delhi. The authors led the study to recommend environmental formula for the 14th and 15th Finance Commissions. Views are personal



## JANUARY 13, 1984, FORTY YEARS AGO

## OPPOSITION MEET

FORMULATING A COMMON economic programme will be the main objective of the fourth opposition conclave. The economic problems of different opposition governments, lacking adequate cooperation from the Centre, will be highlighted. The draft economic resolution points to issues requiring a planned country-wide movement.

## SOVIET-BANGLA ISSUE

THE SOVIET UNION has asked Bangladesh not to send its official trade delegation to Moscow

to sign a new annual barter protocol scheduled for January 14. The Soviet Union asked Dhaka to postpone the departure of the delegation. This comes within a fortnight of the departure of 14 Soviet diplomats from the country after they were declared "undesirable" by the Bangladeshi government.

## NC-CONGRESS CLASH

THE PRADESH CONGRESS (I) has, after a week's suspension, revived its agitation in the state. This follows the so-called failure of talks between Chief Minister Farooq Abdullah and Prime Minister Mrs Gandhi. The party head-

quarters in Srinagar directed all district units to observe January 14 as a protest day against what the Congress (I) workers describe as the failure of the ruling National Conference to meet the aspirations of the people.

## MINI EMERGENCY

MINISTERS H D GOWDA and S R Bommai, were using coercive measures in Karnataka and not allowing other ministers or legislators to function, M Veerappa Moily, leader of the opposition, told newsmen. The Janata government had imposed a "mini emergency" not only on the people but also on legislators.

# THE IDEAS PAGE

## The fifth term challenge

Elections in Bangladesh were marred by boycott by the principal opposition and incidents of violence. PM Hasina is best placed to address concerns regarding the fragility of democracy



RAM RAJYA

BY RAM MADHAV

AS SHE TOOK the oath of office for the fifth time as Prime Minister of Bangladesh earlier this week, Sheikh Hasina would have fondly recalled that 52 years ago, on January 12, 1972, Sheikh Mujibur Rehman — Father of Bangladesh and her biological father — too took the oath as the first PM of the newly-formed independent state. Affectionately called Bangabandhu by his countrymen, Mujib not only liberated the Bengali-speaking population from the clutches of West Pakistani rulers, but he also sought to instil the ethos of a democratic polity in the newly-formed country.

Pakistan could never develop democratic values. Mohammed Ali Jinnah, its founder, preferred a Westminster-model democracy but it could barely take root in that country. In the first decade of its existence, it didn't even have a constitution and was run as per the Government of India Act, 1935.

A constitution was promulgated for the first time in 1956, but it was short-lived as the military coup in 1958 brought General Ayub Khan to power. Pakistan spent almost half its 75-year existence under military rule. Even when there were so-called elected governments, they were always under the tight control of the military.

The people of East Pakistan faced enormous discrimination under successive military regimes. Bangabandhu stood up for the rights of the Bengali nation and faced persecution at the hands of military dictators. When General Yahya Khan decided to hold elections in the hope of establishing a puppet government in Lahore, the Bengali voters of East Pakistan rallied behind the Awami League led by Bangabandhu. The Awami League secured 166 seats in a 300-member National Assembly in the elections held on December 7, 1970.

Instead of calling Mujib to form the government, Yahya had him arrested on March 25, 1971, and the people of East Pakistan were subjected to unspeakable atrocities by the Pakistan Army. It was in this scenario that an Awami League-led government was formed in exile in Kolkata and a rebel movement broke out, led by the Mukti Bahini. India's intervention, when the Pakistan Army attacked Indian forces on the Western Front, resulted in the humiliating defeat and surrender of the Pakistan forces and the creation of Bangladesh as an independent country.

Released from prison after 10 months, Bangabandhu returned to Dhaka on January 10, 1972. When leaving London for his triumphant return, Mujib asserted at Heathrow Airport that "I never considered myself a Pakistani and I never shall." He wanted Bangladesh to be moulded on principles that mark a total departure from Pakistan. "This independence of mine will be futile", he exhorted in a speech delivered to several million people who came to welcome him back to the motherland, "if the people of my Bengal are not fully fed on rice, if the mothers and



CR Sasikumar

sisters of Bengal do not get clothes for the protection of their modesty if the youth of mine do not find employment or do not get jobs". He proclaimed "establishing the country on a firm financial footing" as his life's motto.

Unfortunately, Bangladesh couldn't escape the evil shadow of Pakistan. On August 15, 1975, as India was celebrating its Independence Day, the Bangladesh Army attacked Mujib's mansion and killed him and dozens of his family members, including his wife and three sons, the youngest being just 10 years old. General Ziaur Rahman, who later seized power in November, was not directly present but said to have told the conspirators, "I am a senior officer. I can't get involved in that. If a junior officer wants to do it, go ahead".

Against the wishes of Bangabandhu, Bangladesh lapsed into a Pakistan-style military dictatorship and remained so for 15 years. General Hussain Muhammad Ershad became the military dictator after the assassination of Ziaur Rahman in 1981 and continued in that role for almost a decade. All this while, sham elections became a norm with the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) of Ziaur Rahman and the Jatiya Party of Ershad running the governments successively by proxy.

It was only a major democratic revolution by the students in 1990 that forced the army back to its barracks and Bangladesh saw the return of a semblance of democracy. In the last three decades, the BNP and the Awami League shared power, with the League leading the race with 20 years in office.

Sheikh Hasina and her sister Rehana were in Europe when her father and the entire family were assassinated. The survivor sisters were provided asylum by Indira Gandhi in Delhi. Hasina returned to Dhaka

in 1981 as the elected head of the Awami League but faced oppression and arrests by the military regime for many years. Finally, as democracy returned in 1990, she became one of the two prominent players and has held prime ministership for 20 years so far. The victory of the Awami League in the 2024 elections gave her another term of five years and a record for an elected prime minister to be in office for twenty-five years.

Her life experiences have taught Hasina many important lessons. She firmly stood against terrorism and religious extremism. Her focus on economic revival brought Bangladesh's economy to an impressive level where the country went from the UN list of Least Developed Countries in 2018 to become a Developing Country. It stays ahead of its neighbours in parameters like per capita GDP, human capital index and economic vulnerability index.

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**ECO-TOURISM SOCIETY OF  
HIMACHAL PRADESH  
UNDER THE AEGIS OF  
H.P. FOREST DEPARTMENT  
(GOVT. OF HIMACHAL PRADESH)**



**Invites REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS  
for  
SELECTION OF OPERATORS FOR DESIGN, DEVELOPMENT,  
MANAGEMENT/ PROVIDING SERVICES TO RUN ECO-TOURISM  
ACTIVITIES AT ECO- TOURISM POTENTIAL SITES  
IN THE STATE OF HIMACHAL PRADESH**



"We are not above nature, we are a part of nature"

The Eco-Tourism Society of Himachal Pradesh ("HPECOSOC") under the aegis of Himachal Pradesh Forest Department ("HPFD") is desirous of developing 13 eco-tourism sites in the State of Himachal Pradesh which have a huge potential for eco-tourism activities.

As such, HPECOSOC under HPFD invites bids from interested and eligible bidders for designing/ developing, operating, managing, providing services and maintaining ecotourism facilities & activities at the following eco-tourism sites, for a period of 10 (ten) years, extendable by 5 (five) years subject to certain conditions:

- Eco-tourism sites at (1) Swar; (2) Sourav Van Vihar; (3) Neugal Park; (4) Bir-Billing, under Palampur Forest Division of Dharamshala Forest Circle;
- Eco-tourism sites at (5) Near FRH Kaisdhar under Kullu Forest Division; (6) Kasol under Parvati Forest Division; (7) Khirganga under Parvati Forest Division; (8) Sumaropa under Parvati Forest Division; (9) Shojia under Banjar Forest Division of Kullu Forest Circle;
- Eco-tourism site at (10) Narkanda under Kotgarh Forest Division of Rampur Forest Circle;
- Eco-tourism sites at (11) Shoghi, Camping Site; (12) Potter Hill, under Shimla Forest Division of Shimla Forest Circle and
- Eco-tourism site at (13) Ganga Nal, Prashar Mandi falling under Mandi Forest Division of Mandi Forest Circle.

For further details regarding the detailed scope of work, minimum eligibility criteria, bidding procedure etc. for each eco-tourism site, the interested bidders are required to refer to the RFPs/ Bidding Documents for each eco-tourism site which will be hosted on the e-procurement portal <https://htptenders.gov.in/> on 15.01.2024 and the interested bidders can download the RFP document 12:00 noon onwards from 15.01.2024 to 12.02.2024 12:00 midnight. For further updates, please visit the portal <http://htptenders.gov.in/> and the website <https://himachalecotourism.hpt.gov.in> periodically as all updates shall be posted there only.

For queries (if any), please contact

O/o CEO cum APCCF (Eco-Tourism)

Ecotourism Society of Himachal Pradesh

Mist Chamber, Khalini, Shimla, Himachal Pradesh, India

Phone: 0177-2623036, +91-7018504629 Email: hpecosoc@gmail.com



**THE SPECIAL OFFICER AND COMPETENT AUTHORITY  
(UNDER KPIDFE - IMA & OTHER SCAM)**

3rd Floor, Podium Block, V.V Tower, Dr. Ambedkar Veedhi, Bengaluru-560001

**NOTICE/INVITATION FOR E-AUCTION FOR IMMOVABLE PROPERTY**

Pursuant to attachment of Immovable properties by the Government under the provisions of the Karnataka Protection of Interest of Depositors in Financial Establishments Act, 2004 (KPIDFE Act) and pursuant to the absolute attachment order by the Hon'ble Special Court the Special Officer & Competent Authority (under KPIDFE-IMA and other Scam), is issuing notice for e-auction of the immovable property through e-auction on 'as is where is and whatever there is basis'.

The intending bidders will be required to furnish Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) (as mentioned against each auction in the e-portal provided by the Service Provider/Karnataka Public Procurement Portal only).

**Short description of the Immovable Property**

Sl. No.	DETAILS OF THE PROPERTY (Clear Title by Court in order No. MISC No. 868/2022)					RESERVE PRICE (Rs)	EMD (Rs)	Bid Increase Value (Rs)	Clear Title
	Village	Hobli	Taluk	District	Sy No				
1.	Baradanapura	Jayapura	Mysore	Mysore	8/2	1 Acre 14 Guntas	1,08,00,000/-	10,80,000/-	1,08,000/-
	Google Location: <a href="https://maps.app.goo.gl/YoC8bdmJ745PEEyk7">https://maps.app.goo.gl/YoC8bdmJ745PEEyk7</a> Latitude and Longitude: 12°12'30.9"N 76°33'13.9"E								
2.	Baradanapura	Jayapura	Mysore	Mysore	8/3	0 Acre 9 Guntas	18,00,000/-	1,80,000/-	18,000/-
	Google Location: <a href="https://maps.app.goo.gl/YoC8bdmJ745PEEyk7">https://maps.app.goo.gl/YoC8bdmJ745PEEyk7</a> Latitude and Longitude: 12°12'30.9"N 76°33'13.9"E								
3.	Baradanapura	Jayapura	Mysore	Mysore	8/7	0 Acre 9 Guntas	18,00,000/-	1,80,000/-	18,000/-
	Google Location: <a href="https://maps.app.goo.gl/YoC8bdmJ745PEEyk7">https://maps.app.goo.gl/YoC8bdmJ745PEEyk7</a> Latitude and Longitude: 12°12'30.9"N 76°33'13.9"E								
4.	Baradanapura	Jayapura	Mysore	Mysore	8/8	0 Acre 9 Guntas	18,00,000/-	1,80,000/-	18,000/-
	Google Location: <a href="https://maps.app.goo.gl/YoC8bdmJ745PEEyk7">https://maps.app.goo.gl/YoC8bdmJ745PEEyk7</a> Latitude and Longitude: 12°12'30.9"N 76°33'13.9"E								
5.	Baradanapura	Jayapura	Mysore	Mysore	8/9	0 Acre 8 Guntas	16,00,000/-	1,60,000/-	16,000/-
	Google Location: <a href="https://maps.app.goo.gl/YoC8bdmJ745PEEyk7">https://maps.app.goo.gl/YoC8bdmJ745PEEyk7</a> Latitude and Longitude: 12°12'30.9"N 76°33'13.9"E								
6.	Baradanapura	Jayapura	Mysore	Mysore	8/10	0 Acre 9 Guntas	18,00,000/-	1,80,000/-	18,000/-
	Google Location: <a href="https://maps.app.goo.gl/YoC8bdmJ745PEEyk7">https://maps.app.goo.gl/YoC8bdmJ745PEEyk7</a> Latitude and Longitude: 12°12'30.9"N 76°33'13.9"E								
7.	Baradanapura	Jayapura	Mysore	Mysore	8/11	0 Acre 9 Guntas	18,00,000/-	1,80,000/-	18,000/-
	Google Location: <a href="https://maps.app.goo.gl/YoC8bdmJ745PEEyk7">https://maps.app.goo.gl/YoC8bdmJ745PEEyk7</a> Latitude and Longitude: 12°12'30.9"N 76°33'13.9"E								
8.	Baradanapura	Jayapura	Mysore	Mysore	37	1 Acre 38 Guntas	1,56,00,000/-	15,60,000/-	1,56,000/-
	Google Location: <a href="https://maps.app.goo.gl/xez83yVJ4Aq6tqsx6">https://maps.app.goo.gl/xez83yVJ4Aq6tqsx6</a> Latitude and Longitude: 12°12'48.6"N 76°32'49.2"E								
9.	Baradanapura	Jayapura	Mysore	Mysore	38/1	0 Acre 35 Guntas	70,00,000/-	7,00,000/-	70,000/-
	Google Location: <a href="https://maps.app.goo.gl/xez83yVJ4Aq6tqsx6">https://maps.app.goo.gl/xez83yVJ4Aq6tqsx6</a> Latitude and Longitude: 12°12'48.6"N 76°32'49.2"E								
<b>Date of Inspection &amp; time</b>		<b>Date of Pre-bid meeting &amp; time and Place</b>			<b>Last Date of Submission of Bids &amp; EMD submission</b>			<b>Date &amp; Time of E Auction</b>	
19th February 2024 11:00am to 05:00pm		20th February 2024, 3 pm to 4 pm Place: O/o SPLCOA, 3rd Floor Podium Block, Visvesvariah Tower, Bengaluru-01			22nd February 2024 Before 5pm			23rd February 2024 11 am to 1 pm	

For Registration & Online Auction, you can login to: <https://kpp.karnataka.gov.in> (Helpdesk No: 080-46010000, 080-68948777) The interested bidders who require auction related information can contact Joint Secretary, Office of the Special Officer & Competent Authority, 3rd Floor, Podium Block, Visvesvariah Towers, Dr. Ambedkar Veedhi, Bengaluru-560001, e-mail ID: [splocaeauction@gmail.com](mailto:splocaeauction@gmail.com) or Contact Mob. No 8217203930.

Place: Bengaluru  
Date: 12-01-2024



**HIMACHAL PRADESH STATE ELECTRICITY BOARD LIMITED  
(A State Govt. Undertaking)**

"PRESS TENDER NOTICE" (E-tendering Mode only)  
ONLINE TENDERS are hereby invited on partial turnkey basis (two part bid) by the undersigned for & on behalf of Managing Director, HPSEB Ltd., Shimla-4, and the Bidders/ Joint Venture Firms having A-Class Electrical contractor license from Chief Electrical Inspector, for the following work:-

Sl. No.	Tender No.	Description of Work	Estimated NIT Cost	Earnest Money	Cost of Documents	GST (Non-refundable)	Completion Period
1.	CE/018 R/Peo & Kaza 2023-24	Construction of Sub Stations, HT & LT Lines under Border Area Extension Plan for R/Peo & Kaza Towns under RDSS.	Rs.12,64 Crone 25,200/-	Rs. 280/-			24 Months

**Key Dates:-**  
1. Date of online publication 18.01.2024  
2. Start date and time of bid submission 18.01.2024, 11:30 AM  
3. Date & time of Pre bid meeting 05.02.2024, 11:30 AM- 4:00 PM  
4. End date and time of bid submission 13.02.2024, 11:30 AM  
5. Date and time of opening of techno comm. bid 14.02.2024, 11:30 AM

The bid document is available online and bid shall be submitted online on website <https://www.htptenders.gov.in>. Bidders would be required to register in the website which is free of cost. For submission of bids, the bidders are required to have digital signature certificate (DSC) from one of the authorized certifying authority (CA). Aspiring bidders who have not obtained the user ID and password for participating in e-tendering in HPSEBL may obtain the same from the website <https://www.htptenders.gov.in>. DSC is mandatory to participate in e-tendering. Bidders already possessing valid DSC issued from authorized CAs can use the same in this tender.

(ER. RAKESH KUMAR)  
Chief Engineer (OP) South, HPSEB Ltd., Shimla-4.

"Save Energy for the Benefit of Self & Nation"

Sd/-  
Chief Administrative Officer, MIDFC  
Date: 12.01.24

**MEGHALAYA INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT & FINANCE CORPORATION**

No. MIDFC/IT-MUIP/2024/150/2

NOTICE INVITING REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL FOR SELECTION OF IT SERVICE PROVIDER FOR DEVELOPMENT OF MEGHALAYA'S UNIFIED INVESTMENT PORTAL

Meghalaya Infrastructure Development and Finance Corporation Ltd. (MIDFC), through the process of open tendering invites tenders from eligible bidders for 'Selection of IT Service Provider for development of Meghalaya's Unified Investment Portal'

The Authority invites proposals from reputed and capable IT Service Providers for development of Unified Investment Portal for Meghalaya. The IT Service Providers should have the experience of working for Semi/Govt. Organizations/ Central or State Govt./PSUs, etc. Conditional tender shall not be accepted.

The Tender Document shall be available from 13/01/2024 onwards in following web portal: <https://meghalayatenders.gov.in>. Further, intimation i.e. (Corrigendum/ Addendum/ Clarifications) shall be uploaded in the above website only.

Applicants are required to submit the duly filled proposals as per the prescribed format on or before 01/02/2024, 15:00 hrs. The proposals received shall be opened on 01/02/2024 at 16:00 hrs. In case of any query/clarifications, please contact 8837023572/76298737 or email at [midfcmech@gmail.com](mailto:midfcmech@gmail.com)

Meghalaya Infrastructure Development and Finance Corporation Ltd. reserves the right to accept or reject bid process without assigning any reasons thereof.

MIPR NO:1453  
Date: 12.01.24

Sd/-  
Chief Administrative Officer, MIDFC

**JHARKHAND URJA SANCHARAN NIGAM LIMITED**  
(CIN: U40108JH2013SGC001704)  
OFFICE OF THE GENERAL MANAGER

TRANSMISSION ZONE-I, KUSAI COLONY, DORANDA, RANCHI

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# With Hasina, without Hasina

For a record fourth consecutive time, Sheikh Hasina is back in power in Bangladesh — after an election marred by an Opposition boycott and allegations of highhandedness. SHUBHAJIT ROY analyses why New Delhi needs her and may look the other way

**A**S SHEIKH Hasina begins her fifth term in power and fourth in a row, Bangladesh is on the cusp of history. Under Hasina and her Awami League, the country is set to make the big leap out of the group of least developed countries (LDCs) by 2026 and will share the table with developing countries India and China.

In an election boycotted by the main Opposition Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) and its allies, Hasina's ruling Awami League won 222 seats out of 300; the Jatiya Party 11 seats; the Workers' Party, Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal and Bangladesh Kalyan Party one seat each; and Independent candidates won 62 seats.

On Friday, Mahfuz Anam, editor and publisher of Bangladesh's largest English daily, *The Daily Star*, pointed out in an incisive piece that there's more to Hasina's win than meets the eye. The seats won by the rebels, most of them "lifelong Awami-Leaguers", the Jatiya Party and that of the two alliance partners, had the "blessings" of the Awami League.

"If we add the 50 reserved seats for women, by far the majority of which will go to the Awami League, Hasina can easily claim a tally of minimum 45 more, making for a total of 338 MPs in a House of 350. Can it then be termed as anything other than a one-party rule?", wrote Anam, who has been at the receiving end of Hasina's crackdown on dissent.

It's a question whose echo has travelled far beyond the country's borders — from neighbours India and China, to the US — as her government faces allegations of highhandedness and intolerance. Yet, if New Delhi has held its nose to welcome her victory, it's because Bangladesh's history and geography is so intertwined with India's.

#### India on her side

The assassination on August 15, 1975, of Sheikh Mujibur Rehman, Hasina's father and the founder of a modern, secular Bangladesh, shook the early foundations of a secular, Bengali identity. After a coup, Lt Gen Zia-ur Rahman became the President and founded the BNP. Following his assassination in 1981, his wife Khaleda Zia took over the mantle of the party in 1982-83.

Khaleda and Hasina briefly came together to lead a popular uprising during the military rule of Gen H M Ershad, Zia-ur Rahman's successor, forcing him to resign. In the elections that followed, Khaleda became the Prime Minister, while Hasina served as the Opposition leader, setting off what has been the staple of Bangladesh politics ever since — the Battle of the Begums.

Hasina's first shot at power came in 1996, when she defeated Khaleda, and became the

Prime Minister.

Many in Bangladesh and India feel that the 21 years from 1975 (when Sheikh Mujib was assassinated) to 1996 (when Hasina became PM), led to the strengthening of radical, Islamic and pro-Pakistan forces.

"It is quite ironic that after India helped Bangladesh win freedom in 1971, politically, it lost Bangladesh to Pakistani forces for about 21 years," said an expert on India-Bangladesh ties, who spoke on condition of anonymity.

Hasina lost in 2001, and during Khaleda's term between 2001 and 2006, Islamist parties, especially the Jamaat-e-Islami, who were part of the coalition government, and anti-India terrorist and insurgent groups had a free run.

From India's perspective, it was the toughest challenge it faced in the neighbourhood. So when Hasina came back to power in 2008, it was a strategic game-changer for India — a position that continues to determine India's Bangladesh policy.

Prof Syed Munir Khasru, head of the Dhaka-headquartered think tank, The Institute for Policy, Advocacy, and Governance (IPAG), said, "As PM Hasina cracked down on the insurgent and terrorist groups, she found India on her side. For her, fighting extremism and radicalism was the sine qua non of her governance."

Locating Hasina's 2024 victory in this larger political context, former Indian High Commissioner to Bangladesh Pankaj Saran said, "During her 15-year rule Sheikh Hasina steered Bangladesh back to the spirit of the liberation struggle that had led to the breakup of Pakistan and the creation of Bangladesh. This means that almost half a generation of Bangladeshis within and outside the government have grown up in an atmosphere that celebrated their Bengali identity and gave them confidence."

"The weakening of pro-Pakistan and revisionist forces, and hence anti-India, forces is first and foremost a strategic gain for Bangladeshi society but it is also good for India-Bangladesh relations. India does not want another Pakistan on its Eastern front," Saran said.

India also opened up its purse strings for Dhaka. With USD 8 billion in three Lines of Credit under implementation, Bangladesh has become India's largest development partner. The first Line of Credit of US \$1 billion was extended to Bangladesh in 2010, and subsequently more projects were implemented.

Saran said, "Bangladesh has gained economically and in terms of its own security by opening up to India and integrating itself with the Indian economy. There has been a marked increase in people-to-people exchanges because of a better security environment."



Illustration: Suvajit Dey

**During her 15-year rule, Sheikh Hasina steered Bangladesh back to the spirit of the liberation struggle that had led to the breakup of Pakistan and the creation of Bangladesh. This means that almost half a generation of Bangladeshis within and outside the government have grown up in an atmosphere that celebrated their Bengali identity and gave them confidence.**

**PANKAJ SARAN**  
FORMER INDIAN HIGH COMMISSIONER  
TO BANGLADESH

With India, Hasina worked to restore connectivity that existed before 1965 — the railway lines, while creating new ones such as in the energy sector; took on radicals, terrorists and extremists within Bangladesh and those operating against India; and offered transit rights to north-eastern India from the eastern states. However imperfect they may have been, fundamentally, Hasina presided over a strategic shift in relations with India born of the conviction that good relations with India were good for Bangladesh.

With India as its key backer and ally, Hasina doubled down against the Opposition BNP and the Jamaat-e-Islami.

#### When India looked away

In 2014, BNP boycotted the elections for the first time and Hasina's party won 152 seats uncontested in the 300-member Parliament. The Manmohan Singh-led UPA government looked the other way, learning from the past experience of dealing with Khaleda's stint when anti-India groups had a free run.

In 2018, BNP contested, but the crackdown against the Opposition was severe. Amid reports of massive rigging, Hasina's Awami League won 257 seats while the BNP got a mere seven.

A Dhaka-based analyst said, "In 2016-17, the Rohingya refugee crisis broke out and millions of refugees poured into Bangladesh. Sheikh Hasina became a global hero, as she decided to give shelter to these persecuted refugees. This international standing of hers shielded her from criticism from the developed world."

Hasina also has the steadfast support of the Modi government.

In 2023-24, however, the Biden admin-

istration started raising questions about the crackdown against the Opposition, media and civil society, including the repeated arrests of Nobel laureate Mohd Yunus. The US also issued visa bans on Bangladeshi officials who were allegedly "involved in undermining the democratic election process".

Analyst Ashikur Rahman, Senior Economist at the Policy Research Institute of Bangladesh, said the BNP has, however, failed to seize the opportunity and turn the tables, something that has only served to strengthen Hasina's hand. BNP boycotted the elections held in January this year too.

This election was taking place under intensive international scrutiny, but the BNP didn't take advantage of that. That only gives the Prime Minister legal continuity even though our political process and the space will be plagued by distrust and confrontation. So I think you know that those are the trade-offs."

Constantine Xavier, Fellow in Foreign Policy and Security Studies at the Centre for Social and Economic Progress (CSEP, formerly Brookings India) in New Delhi, said, "The US had lost the plot a long time ago and has failed to... push for regime change. With Delhi's help, Washington has begun to course correct in recent months but will have to work hard to box itself out of its values corner to remain relevant."

Many in Dhaka see that the US toned down its criticism, after India took it up with the US during the last round of 2+2 ministerial meeting in Delhi.

#### The way forward

For now, Hasina's emphatic victory may have paved the way for another five-year term, but many say it's unlikely to be a

smooth ride.

Analyst Ashikur Rahman said, "There has been legal continuity, but the divided and polarised polity remains. Also, this time, Hasina is politically strong but is inheriting a weaker economy, a fragile economy. For 13 years, we had tremendous growth. We had mega infrastructure coming up all over Bangladesh. But post COVID and post the Ukraine war, there are pressures on foreign exchange reserves and inflation and questions are raised on internal financial management of the banking sector."

Besides, there are several likely scenarios and questions.

Prof. Khasru said, "For Dhaka, there are three main challenges in the foreseeable future as it battles international censure for the elections: Firstly, what happens, if the US and EU — who comprise 80 per cent of Bangladesh ready-made garments market — impose sanctions? Secondly, like 2007, when the then ruling BNP tried to manipulate elections, if the UN threatened to cease Bangladesh's participation in UN peacekeeping operations because of its human rights track record? Thirdly, what if the Western powers play hardball when it comes to development finance from leading international lending institutions?"

Given India's stakes in Bangladesh, these are also questions that stare New Delhi in the face.

"Delhi's engagement with Dhaka is a good example of India's democratic realism: don't let the ideal come in the way of the real. A more democratic Bangladesh would be desirable but at this point political and economic stability are paramount to keep the momentum, as bilateral relations are at their best in fifty years," said Xavier.

## CHASING MONSOON FOR 150 YEARS

# The story of India Meteorological Department's origin

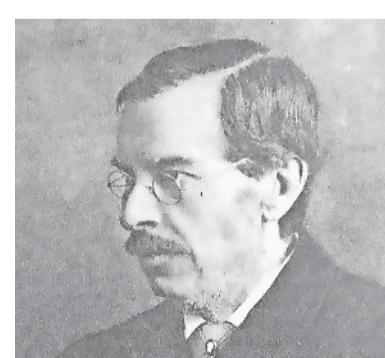
**ANJALI MARAR**

BENGALURU, JANUARY 12

TWO MONSTROUS cyclones in 1864, one striking Kolkata and the other hitting the Andhra coast, killed more than one lakh people. The loss of lives in the Kolkata cyclone, possibly the most destructive one till then, alone was estimated to be over 80,000. Two years later, in 1866, India faced severe drought and famine, pushing scores of people into malnutrition and death by starvation.

Though events like these were not uncommon in India in those times, the severity of these particular calamities, more than anything else, exposed the lack of a system of monitoring atmospheric parameters and foreseeing their changes. It is these events that triggered the eventual setting up of the India Meteorological Department, which on Monday, January 15, is entering its 150th year of existence.

Though meteorological observations were being made from several observatories at least from the 1850s, these were being done largely by amateurs or the disparate wings of the British colonial system, including the Survey of India, the Asiatic Society of Bengal, which had been publishing some of these observations in its journal, was among the first to push for the setting up of a separate office. It was on January 15, 1875, that the IMD officially started functioning, employing the services of just one person, Englishman HF Blanford, who was called the Imperial



(Left) IMD headquarters, New Delhi; H F Blanford, the first Imperial Meteorological Reporter, took charge on January 15, 1875.

Photos: 'Hundred Years of Weather Service', IMD

Meteorological Reporter, to systematically study the climate and meteorology of India, and use this knowledge for weather forecasting and issuing cyclone warnings.

The IMD now has hundreds of permanent observatories and thousands of automatic weather stations across the country. While weather forecasting remains its main raison d'être, IMD now provides a variety of related specialised services that are sought by a vast range of agencies. Whether it is conducting general elections or examinations, sporting

events or mountaineering expeditions or organising a big function or a space launch, there is hardly any major activity that happens without the inputs of the IMD. These, apart from the several regular forecast, railways, airways and ships, power plants, fishing community, water management agencies and the like.

"Weather affects many of our activities, and it is not surprising that the IMD is now called upon to provide its services across several sectors. We are constantly upgrading our skills and capabilities, so that our information

from the office of the Election Commission of India (ECI)," Kelkar recalled.

Within a few days, Kelkar met with ECI officials and made a presentation. Since then, the dates of the general elections, and also other state elections, are invariably decided after taking inputs from the IMD.

M Rajeevan, a former Secretary with the Ministry of Earth Sciences and an expert on Indian monsoons, has a similar recollection. As per IMD records, October 28, 2008, remains a heavy rainfall day, following the onset of the northeast monsoon. It was also the day that India launched its first space mission to the moon, Chandrayaan-1. Rajeevan led the team that predicted favourable weather conditions over Sriharikota at the time of the launch.

"Due to the approaching northeast monsoon, frequent thunder events were being reported during the days leading to the launch date of Chandrayaan-1. Based on simple physics and the local weather forecast, that indicated light rainfall during morning hours and thunder post afternoon, my team assured ISRO of a thunder-free window at the time of the launch.

"Many of these services are recent additions to IMD's work profile. Rajan Kelkar, 80, who served at the IMD for 38 years till his retirement as the director general in 2003, remembers an invite from K R Narayanan, then President, in 1999. "The President was alone, seated on a sofa. He asked in great detail about the monsoon forecast and wanted to understand the 'right' time to conduct the general elections in 1999. At the end of 30 minutes, he informed me to expect a call

from the office of the Election Commission of India (ECI)," Kelkar recalled.

Within a few days, Kelkar met with ECI officials and made a presentation. Since then, the dates of the general elections, and also other state elections, are invariably decided after taking inputs from the IMD.

Kelkar said the obsession with the monsoon began with the start of the IMD, and early British meteorologists were flummoxed with what they experienced in their early days in India. "Experiencing it for the first time, the early British officers serving at the department were amused by the monsoons. They wrote poetic and essay-like monsoon forecasts," he said.

IMD's first long-range monsoon forecast was made in 1886 and, quantitatively, was a good one. However, the most impactful successes of IMD have been in cyclone predictions, one of the main triggers for its establishment 150 years ago. Starting with the 2013 Phailin, the death toll from cyclones has come down to a minimal level. Earlier, cyclones these powerful would have easily killed thousands of people. The credit goes to IMD's forecasts, combined with efficient evacuation measures put in place by local administration.

Mohapatra, who specialises in cyclones and was posted in Bhubaneswar during the 1999 Odisha super cyclone, said that event was his lowest point as a meteorologist.

"But that was also the turning point for IMD's cyclone forecast capabilities. We made massive investments in time, manpower and technology, with the intent that something like this must never be repeated," he said.

# CPI data: Are you better or worse off over the last 5 or 10 yrs?

**UDIT MISRA**  
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 12

ON FRIDAY, the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation released data that showed retail inflation in December grew by 5.7%.

## EXPLAINED ECONOMICS

**What is retail inflation, and what is its significance?**

Retail inflation is also called consumer price inflation (CPI) – i.e., the price rise that consumers have to deal with.

Retail inflation data is critical to policy-making because it is this measure of inflation that the central bank – Reserve Bank of India – takes into account when it decides whether to raise or cut interest rates in the economy.

The RBI's action, in turn, affects what EMIs people pay for their car loans or home loans, and for how long.

It is also important to note that inflation

in this context refers to increase in the general price level – not the increase in the price of any one commodity.

It is equally important to understand that inflation rate is the rate at which prices rise. In other words, an inflation rate of 5.7% implies that the price level is 5.7% higher than what it was in December 2022.

By law, the RBI is required to target an inflation rate of 4%. From that perspective, a 5.7% reading is disappointing.

More so because inflation had dipped below 5% in September and October before rising in November (5.5%).

Not to mention that since late 2019 – that is over the last four years – retail inflation has not come down to 4% for even a single month.

However, for any given month, the RBI has a legally mandated comfort zone – that is, a range in which inflation can vary. This com-

## PRICE LEVELS SINCE 2014-15

YEAR	Retail Inflation Rate (in %)	Index Value	Index Value
		2014-15	100
2014-15	5.8	106	
2015-16	4.9	111	
2016-17	4.5	116	
2017-18	3.6	120	
2018-19	3.4	124	100
2019-20	4.8	130	105
2020-21	6.2	138	111
2021-22	5.5	146	117
2022-23	6.7	156	125
2023-24(F)	5.5	164	132

fort zone is from 2% to 6%. For a large part of the past four years, retail inflation has been above the 6% mark – first on account of the

supply disruptions due to the Covid-19 pandemic, and later because of the Russia-Ukraine war.

From this perspective, a 5.7% reading is palatable because it is within the RBI's comfort zone.

### What has been the record of inflation over the past 10 years?

If the annual inflation rate is 4% – the RBI's mandate – it implies that the general price level will rise by 4% every year. As such, in five years, the general price level will be 22% higher, and in 10 years, it would be 48% higher than what it was at the end of the 2013-14 financial year.

The way this calculation works is to peg the general price level at the 100 mark. A 4% increase in overall prices each year implies that whatever you could buy for Rs 100 in the base year costs Rs 104 in first year, Rs 108 in the second (Rs 108 and paise 16 to be exact), and so on, until it costs roughly Rs 122 in the fifth year.

The way this calculation works is to peg

In reality, the data show that the price level rose by 24% during the first five years (2014-15 to 2018-19) of the BJP-led government. Also, if one assumes an annual inflation rate of 5.5% for the current financial year, the price level has grown by another 32% over the past five years (2019-20 to 2023-24). Taken together, the price level has likely gone up by 64% since April 2014 (See Table).

In other words, while the increase in the price level during the first five years (24%) was close to the 4% annual mark, the price rise during the past five years – roughly 64% higher than 2013-14 – has been decidedly more than what either policy makers intended or what people hoped for.

### So, have people become better or worse off in 'real' terms during the past five or 10 years?

As the data show, to keep up with a 4% annual inflation over five years, a person's salary/income would have to go up by 22%. If

that doesn't happen, they would be worse off in 'real' terms. That's because their current day salary would not be enough to buy the same basket of goods that it bought five years ago. Even if their salary did go up by 22%, they would be still be at the same level in 'real' terms as they were five years ago.

### What is the upshot of these calculations?

By itself, inflation data provide only one side of the affordability story. To assess whether a person is better/ worse off, one has to look at the trends of both income and inflation.

To understand whether people are better or worse off, and by how much, from where they were five or 10 years ago, the following rough calculation is helpful:

- Has their salary increased by more than 32% since the start of 2019?
- Has it increased by more than 64% since 2014?

**LONGER VERSION**  
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## EXPLAINED HISTORY

### THE STORY OF NASHIK'S KALA RAM TEMPLE, VISITED BY PM MODI

**DIVYA A**  
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 12



PM Narendra Modi at the Kala Ram Mandir, Nashik, on Friday. PTI

#### Panchavati in the Ramayana

A number of important events described in the epic took place here. Ram, along with Sita and Lakshman, spent the first few years of their 14-year exile in Dandakaranya, the dense forest in central India of which Panchavati was a part.

The name Panchavati comes from the existence of five banyan trees in the area. According to the epic, Lord Ram, Sita, and Lakshman set up a hut here as the presence of five banyan trees made this spot auspicious.

It is from the Panchavati region that Ravan, the demon king of Lanka, abducted Sita.

#### Important Dalit satyagraha

In 1930, B R Ambedkar and the Marathi teacher and social activist Pandurang Sadashiv Sane, known as Sane Guruji, led an agitation to demand access for Dalits to Hindu temples.

On March 2, 1930, Ambedkar organised a large protest outside the Kala Ram temple. Dalit protesters arrived in Nashik in trucks, and surrounded the temple with a sit-in. Over the next few days, they sang songs, raised slogans, and demanded the right to enter the temple.

The protesters faced opposition, and there was an incident of stone-throwing

when they tried to stop a Ram Navami procession from entering the temple premises. Babasaheb reached the spot and controlled the situation, according to an account of the satyagraha in Dhananjay Keer's book, *Dr Ambedkar, Life and Mission* (1954).

The satyagraha at the Kala Ram temple continued until 1935, Keer wrote.

#### Unusual statue of Lord Ram

The Kala Ram temple derives its name from a black statue of the Lord – Kala Ram translates literally to "Black Ram". The *sanctum sanctorum* has statues of Ram, Sita, and Lakshman, and a black idol of Hanuman at the main entrance.

The temple was built in 1792 with the efforts of one Sardar Rangarao Odhekar, according to the website of the Shree Kalaram Mandir Sansthan. It says that Sardar Odhekar dreamt of a black-coloured statue of Lord Ram in the Godavari, and recovered the statues from the river and built the temple.

The main temple has 14 steps, which represent the 14 years of Ram's exile. It has 84 pillars, which represents the cycle of 84 lakh species that one has to complete in order to be born as a human.

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# In Taiwan's presidential election, the question of relations with China

**MIRA PATEL**  
MUMBAI, JANUARY 12

ON JANUARY 13, Taiwan will vote to elect its next President and legislature. It is a historic election, with a likely far-reaching outcome, given the island's fraught relationship with China.

The presidential election was initially expected to produce a clear victory for the candidate of Taiwan's ruling Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), but the race has become tighter with the main opposition Kuomintang (KMT) seeing a late surge in popularity.

The outcome of the election boils down to whether the new government will take Taiwan closer or more distant from China.

The DPP candidate, William Lai, who remains the frontrunner, has asked voters to "choose the right path" to advance Taiwanese sovereignty. China, which views Taiwan as a renegade province, has said that

Lai "would...follow the evil path of provoking 'independence' and...take Taiwan ever further away from peace and prosperity, and ever closer to war and decline".

China has not ruled out a military invasion to take control of the country, officially the Republic of China. China launches fighter jets into the Taiwan Strait almost daily. The United States, the *de facto* security guarantee for Taiwan, has been intensifying military drills in the Indo-Pacific with its partners.

#### History of China & Taiwan

After the Communists led by Mao Zedong seized power in 1949, Chinese nationalists led by Chiang Kai-shek fled to the island off China's east coast, which, at its closest, is 180 km from the mainland.

During the early decades of the Cold War, the government in Taipei was a crucial ally of the West. This situation changed in 1979, when the US, seeking to normalise ties with the People's Republic, moved its



recognition from Taipei to Beijing.

Washington's policy of "strategic ambiguity" has continued ever since. Officially, the US recognises that Taiwan is part of China under the "One China" formulation. But it maintains close connections with Taiwan as well.

Only a dozen-odd small countries, mainly in South America and the Caribbean, recognise Taiwan's independence.

#### Governments of Taiwan

From 1949 to 1996, Chiang Kai-shek's

KMT ruled Taiwan under a *de facto* dictatorship. After holding its first direct presidential election in 1996, the island has seen peaceful transitions of power in 2000, 2008, and 2016.

The current President, Tsai Ing-wen of the DPP, became the first woman to be elected to the top office in 2016. Tsai has refused to acknowledge the 1992 consensus that Taiwan is part of "One China", and has almost quadrupled the defence budget.

#### Candidates on Saturday

President Tsai is constitutionally barred from running again. The DPP's presidential candidate is her Vice-President, Lai Ching-te, popularly known as William Lai. Hardliners find the former physician and lawmaker for more than 10 years, who has occupied nearly every important position in Taiwanese politics, appealing; centrist voters too have shown some affection for him.

Hou Yu-ih of the KMT is a former police officer who was raised among street-market pork vendors in Chiayi, and is supposed to have a "Taiwanese flavour". The KMT

hopes he will be able to win over voters who are not part of the KMT's traditional base of immigrants from the mainland. Hou supports holding discussions to ease tensions with the Chinese government.

Ko Wen-je of the Taiwan People's Party (TPP) served as mayor of Taipei from 2014 to 2022. He has prioritised local issues like housing and energy, and says the principal battle is between "new politics and old forces", and not between "democracy and autocracy".

#### The question of China

Despite the tensions, China is Taiwan's largest commercial partner. A large number of Taiwanese have familial and commercial ties across the strait. However, surveys have indicated an increase in the proportion of individuals who identify as Taiwanese rather than Chinese.

Broadly, all contenders want to ensure Taiwan's *de facto* independence. While Lai prioritises closer connections with Taiwan's allies, Hou and Ko lay greater emphasis on resuming talks with Beijing, which China broke

off following the inauguration of Tsai in 2016.

Under President Xi Jinping, China has dramatically ratcheted up the rhetoric against Taiwan, issuing open threats of an invasion. Beijing is keen to see the ruling party overthrow in the election. Two relatively recent events have cast a shadow over the elections.

Beijing enacted a national security law for Hong Kong in 2020, and has significantly restricted political and civil liberties, despite promising "a high degree of autonomy" for the territory. This has made Taiwanese who are used to democratic freedoms nervous.

Second, the Ukrainian resistance against Russia, though flagging somewhat in recent months, have been seen by some Taiwanese leaders as evidence of the ability of smaller militaries to restrict authoritarian power.

Beijing would also have noted that more than 60% of the island's population now identifies exclusively as Taiwanese, with 30% identifying as both Taiwanese and Chinese, and only 2.5% as Chinese. For the first time, all presidential contenders are native Taiwanese.

# With a Cherry on the Cake

## STREAMING WATCH LIST

BY ALAKA SAHANI



### MERRY CHRISTMAS ★★

**Director:** Sriram Raghavan **Cast:** Katrina Kaif, Vijay Sethupathi, Sanjay Kapoor, Tinnu Anand, Vinay Pathak, Pratima Kazmi, Radhika Apte, Ashwini Kalsekar

A dead body stiffening in an armchair stops the revelry in its tracks. More people start crowding the frame — Sanjay Kapoor as a stranger who thinks he might get lucky with the lovely lady, Vinay Pathak as a policeman on the spot, Pratima Kazmi as his suspicious colleague, Radhika Apte and

Ashwini Kalsekar in walk-on parts — things slacken somewhat, and that's also a very Raghavan thing, this flattening patch once the set-up has reached its pitch. But a well-judged climactic curveball, also characteristic of the director, stiffens all sinews, and we are back on edge: what's going to

happen now?

That post-interval slump is a thing, but it isn't a deal-breaker. Because very soon after they fall into step, walking through the streets, exchanging kindling glances, building confidences, we are willing for all good things to happen to these two, who've had a

rough time up until now in their search for love. It's an unlikely pair, but they make it work, getting past the few bumps: Kaif, who has always hinted (remember her in *Zero*?) that she can be an actor underneath all that pancake and bump-and-grind, makes us believe in her Maria, with her red lips and seductive change of dress: is she as innocent as she makes herself out to be? And Vijay Sethupathi's Albert is just flat out terrific, perfectly balancing yearning-and-caring in the way he responds to the lovely Maria, jiving and swaying, and holding us close. I can see the film again just for this *pas-de-deux*.

As she makes herself out to be? And Vijay Sethupathi's Albert is just flat out terrific, perfectly balancing yearning-and-caring in the way he responds to the lovely Maria, jiving and swaying, and holding us close. I can see the film again just for this *pas-de-deux*.

A dead body stiffening in an armchair stops the revelry in its tracks. More people start crowding the frame — Sanjay Kapoor as a stranger who thinks he might get lucky with the lovely lady, Vinay Pathak as a policeman on the spot, Pratima Kazmi as his suspicious colleague, Radhika Apte and

## A Bland Broth

### KILLER SOUP

★★

**Director:** Abhishek Chaubey  
**Cast:** Manoj Bajpayee, Konkona Sensharma, Nassar, Sayaji Shinde, Kani Kusruti, Lal, Anula Navelkar, Jasir, Rajeev Ravindrana, Anbu Thasan, Vaishali Bish, Shilpa Mudbi

**Streaming on:** Netflix

APITCH-BLACK comedy, garnished by *paya* soup over a dream serving of Manoj Bajpayee and Konkona Sensharma, and dressed with murder and mayhem? Sign me up already, I'd thought gleefully when I heard of 2024's new web series, *Killer Soup*, directed by Abhishek Chaubey. And it crushes me to say this, but this concoction, which promised so much flavour and freshness, only bubbled up for me intermittently.

First, the plus points. The picturesquely setting, in a fictional small town close to Madurai called Mainjir, is perfect for a twisty tale dotted with dodgy characters and dodgier doings. Husband-and-wife duo Swathi (Konkona Sensharma) and Prabhakar aka Prabhu Shetty (Manoj Bajpayee) are in the middle of what seems like a permanent argument, her dreaming of a restaurant of her own, him trying to figure out how to get out of a multi-crore *ghapla*. Prabhu's older brother, the street-smart, foul-mouthed Arvind Shetty (Sayaji Shinde) is of no help, holding the family purse-strings close, and his art-loving daughter Apeksha aka Apu (Anula Navelkar) even closer, refusing to let her follow her heart. Arvind's long-time factotum, the gravelly-voiced Lucas (Lal), knows where the skeletons are buried, and is a keeper of past secrets.

It feels like a great set-up for a fly in the soup. Or several. A jovial private eye, brandishing a camera, clicks incriminating photos. Blackmail is in the air. Prabhu's looka-

like, the squint-eyed masseuse Umesh Pillai (Manoj Bajpayee, in a double role), turns up at the wrong time in the wrong place. Bodies start piling up. Beady-eyed senior Inspector Hassan (Nassar) arrives on the scene, along with sturdy constable Asha (Shilpa Mudbi) and eager newbie Thupalli (Anbuthasan) and stirs things up. Who is that mysterious woman in a burka? Where is the missing camera? Whose body is in that grave where the glittering fireflies swarm?

It may seem like a lot, but over eight 45-50 minute episodes, these plot points — apparently based on a real-life case — dissipate in writing that's mostly flat and occasionally convoluted. Quirk is great when it is intrinsic to the characters and embellishes the story-telling, but here it feels grafted on. Watching this, I flash-backed to the delightful quirky touches in Chaubey's *Ishqiyā* and *Dedh Ishqiyā*: were there too many cooks here?

The whole idea of a black 'comedy' is that it is meant to be funny, and that it makes you chortle, despite yourself, but here I kept waiting for the laughs. I also kept waiting for shockers, also an essential black comedy component, but the proceedings bob along placidly. Where's the urgency? Or the tension? Why is the Hyderabad *khanasa* such an exaggerated note? Why, in fact, this obsession with badly-made *paya* soup? We never really find out.

And why, most crucially, don't the ubertalented Bajpayee and Sensharma spark together? By rights, they should have set the screen ablaze.

Bajpayee gets the physicality spot-on for both his characters, switching between being heavy-handed and unctuous with ease, and Sensharma pours in an enormous effort into her done-against wife, but I couldn't dredge up any interest in either of them.

Some detailing does have an impact, especially when new faces show up. So many of the characters speaking in Tamil, just as they would naturally, is a terrific touch. I also sat up whenever Kalaripayattu expert Kirtima (Kani Kusruti, very good) showed up to demand her pound of flesh that weakened when confronted by her low-backed blouses. Or when the headstrong Apu, played by an effective Navelkar, tears into her dad who is incapable of speaking without abusing his mothers and sisters, a jarring note because it carries on for far too long: Shinde and Bajpayee worked together with more efficacy in the 1999 cop drama, *Shool*.

The most excellent Nassar kept yanking me back into the thick of things just by being there. His old-timey cop who won't stop, who knows when to use a slap, and how to meet a plank just right, measuring his length on the floor, is a delight. He is droll and sharp, as required, and the best part of this bland, unpalatable broth.

SG



## Up in the Air

ALAKA SAHANI

THE PREMISE of *Lift*, the latest movie to be added to Netflix's catalogue of heist thrillers, sounds fascinating as a massive consignment of gold is to be stolen mid-air. Shot in some of the most beautiful locations of the world, including Venice, Switzerland and Ireland, the thriller looks gorgeous. The movie, which presumably wants to be an edge-of-the-seat thriller, is also powered by a diverse cast. Yet, the movie helmed by F Gary Gray, who has directed movies like *The Italian Job* (2003) and *The Fate of the Furious* (2017), falls short of being gripping as it goes for style over substance.

Written by Daniel Kunka, *Lift*

follows the adventures of a professional thief Cyrus Whitaker (Kevin Hart) and his crew, as they attempt the ultimate heist: stealing USD 500 million in gold from a vault on a plane — 40,000 feet in the air as it flies over the Alps. The thriller has a team of hackers who can make the most complicated heists look like child's play. That's established with a lengthy opening sequence when an enigmatic artist is whisked away by the gang and an intense chase on Venice canals ensues. Soon after, Interpol agent Abby Gladwell (Gugu Mbatha-Raw), who is hot on Whitaker's

trail, approaches him with the proposal to steal the gold at her senior official's behest.

In the movie, Hart is presented as this heist mastermind, who comes up with complicated plans that are near-impossible to execute. He takes high risks but is hesitant to endanger his teammates' safety. However, what his suave character needed is a bit more razz to match the charm that heist bosses typically exude in such dramas. That becomes quite apparent

when he is dealing with Abby, especially when he is supposedly giving her moonly looks.

As an Interpol agent with a beating heart and conscience, Mbatha-Raw is convincing. She deeply cares about people, values and saving people' (that's used as an excuse for multiple actions in the movie).

The actors, who form the motley crew of thieves assisting Whitaker, are fascinating since the makers seem to have hand-picked them keeping 'diversity' in mind. However, their characters lack depth and dimension.

Though touted as a thriller, *Lift* has only a few nail-biting moments while the twists are predictable. The ending of *Lift* hints at upcoming installments and a possible franchise. If that's the case, the creators should shift their focus to making the heists more believable and the narrative more engaging.

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APRIL 2024

★★★

**Director:** F Gary Gray  
**Cast:** Kevin Hart, Gugu Mbatha-Raw, Vincent D'Onofrio, Ursula Corberó, Billy Magnussen, Jacob Batalon, Vivek Kalra  
**Streaming on:** Netflix

APRIL 2024

★★★

**Director:** Thomas Vincent  
**Cast:** Kaley Cuoco, David Oyelowo, Bill Nighy, Connie Nielsen  
**Streaming on:** Prime Video

APRIL 2024

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**Director:** Shalini Langer  
**Cast:** As incongruous as this plot about a hired assassin who is also a wife and mother is, what's more unbelievable is the decision to get Bill Nighy and then have him bumped off in

the first 40 minutes or so.

Just when you are sitting down to enjoy that delectable drawl of Nighy's, with its suggestion of all kinds of possibilities, hoping that you are going to have a better film after all, off he goes.

The rest is all par for the course, with a determined diverse family (racial mix, plus chil-



dren from different partners) at the heart of it.

Emma (Cuoco) is the woman leading a double/triple/or howsoever many kinds of life as needed when you are flying around the world killing for money. You can't blame her really for forgetting her wedding anniversary in the midst of all this.

However, it is this that sets off the chain of events in the film as Emma is brought to public spotlight and her husband Dave's attention as more than the pancake-cooking mother and high-flying executive he imagines her as.

It's easy to guess where the film will go from here; it's the how part where the trick

lies. And while Cuoco tries her best, this is not really her territory. Oyelowo is strangely out of sorts, playing catch up in a very unkempt, detached sort of way. There are flashes of humour here and there, and it's nice to see a scared husband taking the wife's lead as she saves the family.

However, he is essentially inconsequential to the story, as are the kids — mere props to give Cuoco a new kick-off post her long *Big Bang Theory* stint.

Nielsen, who deserves better, is left trying to justify her initiation of Emma into this world in a roundabout sort of unconvincing way, muttering at intervals: "Oh, sweet girl."

## Playing Different Parts

### ROLE PLAY ★★

**Director:** Thomas Vincent **Cast:** Kaley Cuoco, David Oyelowo, Bill Nighy, Connie Nielsen **Streaming on:** Prime Video

APRIL 2024

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US President Joe Biden

## UNITED STATES

**Student debt cancellation to begin from Feb**

**Washington:** The Biden administration will start canceling student loans for some borrowers in February as part of a new repayment plan that's taking effect nearly six months ahead of schedule. Loan forgiveness was originally set to begin in July under the new SAVE repayment plan, but it's being accelerated to provide faster relief to borrowers, President Joe Biden said Friday. It's part of an effort "to act as quickly as possible to give more borrowers breathing room" and move on from their student debt, he said in a statement. Education Department said February's numbers are not clear. AP

## PAKISTAN

**Won't do poll body's job: SC in bat symbol case**

**Islamabad:** Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Qazi Faez Isa on Friday said that the Supreme Court would not "take over" the job of the election commission, as it took up the poll body's petition challenging the Peshawar High Court's decision to restore jailed former premier Imran Khan-led Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf party's 'bat' election symbol. A three-member bench — comprising CJP Isa, Justice Muhammad Ali Mazhar, and Justice Musarrat Hilali — heard the case. PTI

**Another Senate resolution seeks election delay**

**Islamabad:** A week after Pakistan's Senate passed a resolution to postpone the February 8 general elections, a similar resolution was submitted to the upper house of the Parliament while two prominent parties unanimously filed a requisition for the Senate session for timely polls. Moving the resolution seeking a three-month delay, independent Senator Hidayat Ullah on Friday called for postponing the February 8 general elections given the "security challenges" given the increase in the terrorist attacks in different parts of the country. PTI

**CHINA**  
**'US think tank concocts threat from China'**

**Hong Kong:** Chinese state media warned on Friday that a report by a prominent U.S. think tank on the military uses of Chinese scientific research across the Indian Ocean gave "ammunition" to countries bent on concocting threats from China. The report this week by the Center for Strategic and International Studies "comes at a time when some countries need to manufacture a 'China threat' narrative in the Indian Ocean region and provides them with ammunition", the state-controlled Global Times said in an editorial. REUTERS

## ITALY, SPAIN, FRANCE ABSTAIN FROM STRIKES

## US, UK launch strikes across Yemen in response to Houthis' Red Sea attacks

Military and naval bases, ports among targets

REUTERS

WASHINGTON, ADEN, JAN 12

**U.S. AND British warplanes, ships and submarines launched dozens of air strikes across Yemen overnight in retaliation against Iran-backed Houthi forces for attacks on Red Sea shipping, widening regional conflict stemming from Israel's war in Gaza.** Witnesses confirmed explosions at military bases near airports in the capital Sanaa and Yemen's third city Taiz, a naval base and at the main Red Sea port Hodeidah.

"These targeted strikes are a clear message that the US and our partners will not tolerate attacks on our personnel or allow hostile actors to imperil freedom of navigation," President Joe Biden said. The Houthis said five were killed in a total of 73 air strikes, and that they would retaliate and continue their attacks on shipping.

By mid-afternoon, hundreds of thousands gathered in central Sanaa and other cities, carrying Palestinian and Yemeni flags, chanting slogans denouncing Israel and the US in a response to a speaker on a huge screen.

"Your strikes on Yemen are terrorism," said Mohammed Ali al-Houthi, member of the group's Supreme Political Council.

A US official said the targets were intended to weaken the Houthis' resources: "We were going after very specific capability with precision munitions."



Houthi supporters rally to denounce air strikes launched by the US and Britain on Houthi targets, in Sanaa on Friday. Reuters

## Split in Europe

Italy, Spain and France stood out on Friday by not taking part in U.S. and British strikes against the Houthi group in Yemen and not even signing up to a statement put out by 10 countries justifying the attack.

## US sanctions

The US on Friday issued sanctions targeting commodity shipments financing Iran's Quds Force and Yemen's Houthis as Washington steps up pressure on the Iran-backed Houthis. A Hong Kong-based company and a UAE-based company and four vessels come under the sanctions, the US Treasury Department said.

## Israel tells ICJ it must defend itself, denies SA's genocide allegations

REUTERS

THE HAGUE, JANUARY 12

**ISRAEL FRIDAY rejected as false and "grossly distorted" accusations brought by South Africa at the UN's top court that its military operation in Gaza is a state-led genocide campaign against the Palestinian population.**

It called on judges to dismiss South Africa's request to halt its offensive, saying to do so would leave it defenceless.

## ISRAEL REFUSES NORTH GAZA ACCESS, SAYS U.N.

**Geneva:** The UN humanitarian office said on Friday that Israeli authorities were systematically denying it access to northern Gaza to deliver aid and this had significantly hindered the humanitarian operation there. Israeli authorities did not respond to requests for comment.

REUTERS



## US To SEND OFFICIALS TO ECUADOR

Soldiers stop pedestrians to search for weapons in Quito, Ecuador, on Thursday amid the emergency in the country. US law officials will travel to Ecuador to assist in investigations after drug gangs caused a wave of violence, the US State Department said Thursday. AP

## Argentina inflation surges past 200%

REUTERS

BUENOS AIRES, JANUARY 12

**ARGENTINA'S ANNUAL inflation rate sped past 21% in December, official data showed on Thursday, hitting the highest level since the early 1990s as new libertarian President Javier Milei seeks to head off hyperinflation with tough austerity measures.**

Argentina's monthly inflation rate also hit 25.5% in the month, slightly below forecasts, after a sharp devaluation of the peso currency last month after Milei's government took office pledging to get inflation under control.

The inflation reading took Argentina past regional peer Venezuela, long Latin America's inflation outlier, where inflation cooled to an estimated 193% in 2023, following years of painful, out-of-control price rises.

While high inflation has dogged Argentina for years, the rate of price increases is now at the highest level since the start of the 1990s, when the country was emerging from a period of hyperinflation, with food prices climbing particularly fast.

Javier Milei, a political outsider who rode to power on the back of voter anger, is looking to employ tough austerity measures to bring down inflation.

## Sunak in Kyiv: Signs security pact with Zelenskyy, declares \$250 mn boost in aid

**Sending troops to Ukraine is akin to declaring war: Russian ex-president**



Rishi Sunak with Volodymyr Zelenskyy in Kyiv, Friday. AP

next financial year to 2.5 billion pounds (\$3.19 billion), an increase of 200 million pounds on the previous two years.

"I am in Ukraine to deliver a simple message. Our support cannot and will not falter," Sunak wrote on X. His trip comes at an important juncture for Kyiv as political infighting in the US and EU has held up major aid packages.

London has been one of Kyiv's closest allies during Russia's invasion and Sunak said Britain would increase its support in the

Kyiv has relied heavily on military and financial aid from the West since the full-scale invasion in February 2022.

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SENSEX: 72,568.45 ▲ 847.27 (1.18%) NIFTY: 21,894.55 ▲ 247.35 (1.14%) NIKKEI: 35,577.11 ▲ 527.25 HANG SENG: 16,244.58 ▼ 57.46 FTSE: 7,624.93 ▲ 48.34 DAX: 16,704.56 ▲ 157.53



GOLD

₹63,280



USD RATE

₹82.92



OIL

\$78.10



SILVER

₹76,000

Note: Gold, silver rates at Delhi spot market; gold per 10g, silver per 1kg; Crude oil (Indian basket) as of January 11

International market data till 1900 IST

**INDIA-US TRADE MEETING**

**India seeks easier visas, FDA checks; US flags laptop import monitoring**



USTR Katherine Tai with Jaishankar, Goyal in New Delhi, Friday

**RAVI DUTTA MISHRA**  
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 12

THE UNION government Friday asked the US to increase the number of inspections by the US Food and Drug Administration in India to boost pharma exports and reiterated its longstanding demand to restore the Generalised System of Preferences (GSP) for easier access of goods into America, a Trade Policy Forum joint statement said Friday.

Union Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal highlighted challenges faced by business visitors from India due to visa processing time periods and requested the US to augment the processing. Visa delays to Indians surged to record levels after Covid-19, causing severe disruptions for IT professionals working in the US.

Meanwhile, the US took up a number of trade measures introduced by India to curb import of cheap quality items including quality control order (QCO) and the laptop import monitoring system that several countries are seeing as a trade barrier. These measures were put in place largely to curb imports from China amid rising trade deficit.

The Ministers reiterated their commitment to ensure that technical regulations, such as Quality Control Orders (QCOs), do not create unnecessary barriers to trade by providing sufficient opportunities for stakeholder consultations and ensuring that relevant domestic standards align with international standards to the extent feasible," the statement said.

Both countries discussed overdependence and lack of diversity in active pharmaceutical ingredients, a key input material for medicines, within the global pharma supply chain. India has identified manufacturing of APIs as a strategically important sector and has begun its manufacturing under the PLI scheme.

The statement said both governments agreed to establish a pathway in which India and the US mutually recognise results from accredited conformity assessment bodies. Several Indian exports are rejected in the US due to differences in standards.

"India emphasized the need to increase the number of inspections by the US Food and Drug Administration in India to facilitate trade and continue to reduce the backlog," the statement said. Goyal reiterated India's interest in restoration of its beneficiary status under the US GSP program. "US Trade Representative Katherine Tai noted that this could be considered, as warranted, in relation to the eligibility criteria determined by the US Congress," the statement read.

**SENSEX TOUCHES 72,568, NIFTY SURGES 247 POINTS**

## Markets hit fresh highs on IT results

**ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU**  
MUMBAI, JANUARY 12

**DOMESTIC EQUITY** benchmarks Sensex and Nifty touched new records Friday on buying in information technology (IT) stocks, including Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) and Infosys Ltd.

The BSE's 30-share Sensex gained 847.27 points, or 1.18 per cent to close at a life time high of 72,568.45. Nifty rose 247.35 points, or 1.14 per cent to end at an all-time high of 21,894.55.

A 19 per cent surge in the country's net direct tax collection also supported domestic equities to make new highs on Friday, said Siddhartha Khemka,

Head - Retail Research, Motilal Oswal Financial Services Ltd

"Indian markets soared to new heights in a powerful rally, driven by IT heavyweights. Green shoots of recovery in the IT sector on the back of an improved outlook for BPSI in FY25 positively influenced market sentiments," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Financial Services.

The buying momentum in IT stocks was driven by decent results posted by TCS and Infosys in the quarter ended December 2023. Analyst expects Q3 FY24 to be the bottom for the earnings downgrade cycle for the IT sector.

The country's largest IT services company, TCS, reported a



Surge in direct tax collection also supported equities

1.95 per cent increase in net profit to ₹11,058 crore for the third quarter ended December 2023 as against ₹10,846 crore in the same period a year ago.

"We are seeing strong deal

momentum across markets resulting in a solid order book..." said K Krishnavasan, CEO and Managing Director, TCS.

Infosys Ltd posted a 7.3 per cent decline in consolidated net profit at ₹6,106 crore in Q3 FY24 as against ₹6,586 crore during the same period a year ago. The company revised its revenue growth guidance for the financial year to 1.5-2 pc from 1.2-2.5 percent earlier.

Nuvama Institutional Equities said it sees Q3FY24 to be the bottom for the earnings downgrade cycle for Infosys and the sector. "We have stayed positive on the sector through the year, and expect the strong deal wins of the last few quarters to gradually convert into revenue in coming

quarters, even as the US macroeconomic favourable," it said in a note.

According to Kunal Shah, senior technical and derivative analyst, LKP Securities, the Nifty index exhibited significant strength, securing a notable breakout on the daily chart as it surpassed the key resistance level of 21,800. This bullish move positions the index for potential short-term targets of 22,000 and 22,200, he said.

Nifty IT index gained 5.14 per cent with TCX rising 3.92 per cent to end at ₹3,881.9 apiece and Infosys gaining 8.08 per cent to close at ₹1,615 apiece. Tech Mahindra Ltd rose 4.69 per cent, LTIMindtree Ltd gained 4.63 per cent and Wipro rose 3.97 per cent.

**Tata acquires Capital Foods for ₹5,100 cr**

**Mumbai:** Tata Consumer Products Friday said it was acquiring Capital Foods, which makes the Ching's Secret and Smith & Jones brands, for an enterprise value of ₹5,100 crore. The company said that it had entered into a share purchase deal and shareholders agreement to acquire the firm in an all-cash deal.

Tata Consumer has also acquired Organic India from existing owner Fabindia for an enterprise value of ₹1,900 crore. The company is into organic teas and health foods. The deal with Organic India values the firm at over 5 times its FY24 estimates sales of ₹560-570 crore.

The transaction with Capital Foods, on the other hand, values the firm at 6.5-6.8 times its FY24 sales which is estimated at ₹750-770 crore. Sales of Capital Foods in FY23 stood at ₹900 crore, which was close to double its FY22 sales of ₹580 crore. Earnings before interest tax depreciation and amortisation (EBIDA) margins for FY23 stood at 25%, according to sector analysts tracking the firm.

The two-step transaction will see Tata Consumer initially pick up a 75% stake in Capital Foods for ₹3,825 crore.

**PATRA REAPPOINTED AS RBI DY GOV FOR 1 YEAR**

**Mumbai:** The Union government has reappointed Michael D Patra as Deputy RBI Governor for a year, effective January 15. This is the second extension given by the Cabinet's Appointments Committee to Patra.

ENS

## HCL beats Q3 profit view but trims full-year revenue forecast

**ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU**  
BENGALURU, JANUARY 12

**BUCKING THE** industry trend of a weak Q3 performance, the country's third largest IT firm, HCLTech, on Friday reported a 13.5% sequential rise in net profit to ₹4,350 crore for the October-December quarter, while its revenue rose 6.7% quarter-on-quarter to ₹28,446 crore.

The company beat Bloomberg consensus estimate on both fronts, pegged at ₹4,124 crore and ₹28,075 crore, respectively.

However, as the slump in dis-



HCL profit rose 13.5%. File

cretionary spending is expected to continue, the company trimmed the upper end of its FY24 revenue growth guidance

to 5.5-5% from 5-6%. This is the second time HCLTech has cut its full-year growth guidance in FY24, after initially guiding revenue growth between 6-8%.

Indian IT companies have been grappling with a slowdown in client spending since last year. HCLTech, however, sees certain areas where the hit to spending was minimal. "While we still don't see an uptick in the discretionary spend, where it remains pretty similar to what it was in the last quarter, there is still a portion of tech spend that is looking resilient," CEO and MD CV Vijayakumar said.

Consolidated revenue during the period came in at ₹22,205 crore, down 1.4% from the preceding quarter and above Bloomberg estimate of ₹22,094 crore. The decline in revenue was expected pri-

## Real money games on Play Store from June

**New Delhi:** Google's move to relax its Play Store policies to allow more real-money games on its app marketplace will throw open the market for gaming companies. Beginning June, the tech giant will onboard categories of real-money games other than fantasy and rummy.

Google is also considering a new service fee model for real-money games. FE

will benefit real-money gaming companies like WinZo, MPL, among others, who will now be able to host pay-to-play skill games such as poker, chess, etc, on Play Store, and get access to a large Android user base.

Google is also considering a new service fee model for real-money games. FE

The development

## Jindal Power may top Adani coal plant bid

**SARITA CHAGANTI SINGH**  
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 12

**JINDAL POWER** has proposed to top a bid by Adani Power, led by billionaire Gautam Adani, for a thermal power plant, two sources with direct knowledge of the matter said, as India looks to drum up investment in coal-fired power.

The tussle for the 1,980-MW plant in central India, ensnared in insolvency proceedings, comes after the power minister called last November for more private investment to meet a dramatic rise in electricity demand.

In a letter, Jindal Power, a unit of Jindal Steel and Power, has asked India's insolvency court to allow it to participate in an auction for the Amarkantak project, said the sources, who sought anonymity as they were not authorised to talk to media.

Jindal Power has offered a better value than Adani's bid, added the sources, who are

aware of the letter, which has not been previously reported.

"Adani Power, with its revised offer, looked the best suitor so far," one of the officials said. The official was referring to a bid of ₹41 billion the company made last month, just as the insolvency court prepared to give final clearance to another bid from the lenders to the project.

Adani Power's bid, an increase from a previous offer of ₹29.5 billion, exceeds the bid of ₹30.2 billion made in Dec. 2022 by state-run lenders Power Finance Corp (PFC) and REC Ltd.

Adani Power and Jindal Power did not respond to queries. Private investments in coal-based power in India started dwindling after 2018, hit by lower demand and an ambitious national thrust in renewable energy. Now the Amarkantak project goes up for a fresh auction ordered by the insolvency court, which has limited participation only to those who had put in financial bids.

REUTERS



Alaska Airlines plane that made emergency landing

off an aircraft while in mid-flight, prompting a dramatic emergency landing Friday.

FAA Administrator Mike

Whitaker told CNBC the new MAX 9 had "significant problems" and "we believe there are other manufacturer

ing problems".

The incident was the latest in a series of events that have shaken confidence in the aircraft manufacturer as it tries to recover from a pair of MAX 9 crashes in 2018 and 2019 that killed nearly 350 people. The announcement of the audit to ensure compliance with approved quality procedures comes a day after the FAA announced a formal investigation into the cabin panel blowout of an Alaska Airlines 737 MAX 9 that led to the agency grounding 171 airplanes last week.

**REUTERS**  
WASHINGTON, JAN 12

THE FEDERAL Aviation Administration (FAA) will significantly increase oversight of Boeing, the agency said Friday, with the head of the agency saying publicly that they believe there are "other manufacturing problems" at the company.

The FAA will conduct a new audit of the Boeing 737-9 MAX production line and its suppliers, the FAA said in a statement, after a panel broke

## CPSEs meet 75% of FY24 capex target in Apr-Dec period

**PRASANTA SAHU**  
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 12

THE CENTRAL public sector enterprises (CPSEs) and other government agencies such as the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) and the railways have invested ₹5.51 trillion or 75% of their combined FY24 capital expenditure target during the April-December period.

On an annual basis, these entities' capex grew by a robust 22.4% in the first nine months of the current financial year. The corresponding growth in the year-ago period was 19.3%.

The capex target for the CPSEs and other agencies was set at ₹7.33 trillion for FY24 against ₹6.62 trillion in FY23. The data pertains to select CPSEs having a total capex target of ₹100 crore and above as well as other government organisations.

Thanks to robust public capex,

investment demand grew by 11% in the second quarter compared with 8% growth in the first quarter of FY24. The investment rate (GFCF as a percentage of GDP) also inched higher to 35.3% compared with 34.2% a year ago.

This was supported by higher capital expenditure at both the Central and state government levels as well as state-run entities/agencies. Against the target of ₹10 trillion, the Centre's capex has reached 58.5% in April-November of FY24.

Capital expenditure by state governments surged by 56% on year in the first half of the current financial year compared with just a 2% rise in the year-ago period, supported by capex loans from the Centre.

The railways and NHAI, with substantial budgetary support, as well as petrochemical CPSEs are the largest public-sector investors that play a catalytic role in crowding capex from other entities. FE

## Govt likely to meet 5.9% fiscal deficit target: Goldman

**ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU**  
MUMBAI, JANUARY 12

US INVESTMENT banking group Goldman Sachs has said the government is expected to meet the FY24 fiscal deficit target of 5.9 per cent of GDP in the interim budget as receipts are likely to be upwards of 0.2 per cent of GDP.

Goldman Sachs also said there are three key things for investors to look out for in the interim budget: the government's commitment to the medium-term fiscal consolidation path, if capex growth can continue with fiscal consolidation and the supply of government bonds that the market may be able to absorb.

If spending remains muted in the current quarter, the deficit may end up at 5.8 per cent of GDP, it said. "In FY25, we think the government will try to consolidate the fiscal deficit to 5.2-5.4 per cent of GDP (with 5.3 per cent of GDP as our base case) given their medium-term fiscal consolidation target of reaching 4.5 per cent of GDP by FY26," Goldman Sachs said in its interim budget outlook.

Goldman said it expects the focus on capex to continue, but at a slower pace — 10 per cent growth in capex as a base case — than what has been seen in the last few years (over 30 per cent annual growth between FY21 to FY24 BE) given the fiscal constraints.

However, government borrowing in FY25 is likely to remain elevated, it said.

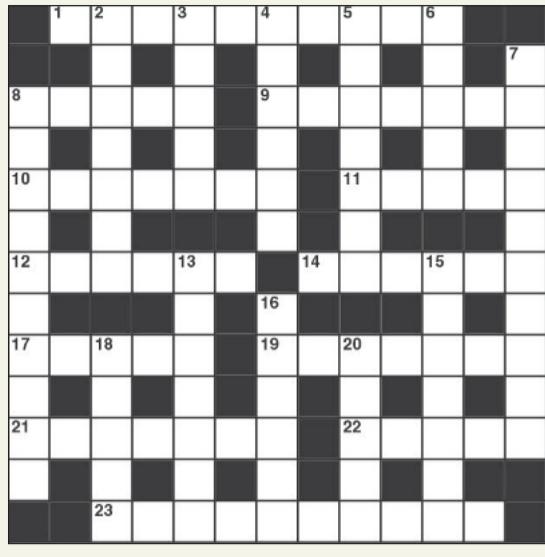
**KERALA WATER AUTHORITY e-Tender Notice**

Tender No: e-Tender No. 211.212/2023-24/ SE/PH/ALP

AMRUT 2.0 - CWSS - Haripad Municipality-Construction of 7LL OHSR at Thrikkupadam and Supply and Laying of Transmission Main to Newly Proposed OHSR at Thrikkupadam- General Civil Work - and Kayamkulam Municipality-Pipeline Work. EMD: Rs. 200000/-, Rs. 1,00000/-, Tender fee: Rs. 13010/- and Rs. 9759/-, Last Date for submitting Tender: 05-02-2024 02:00:pm, Phone: 0477-2237954, Website: www.kwa.kerala.gov.in

Superintending Engineer

## CROSSWORD 5260



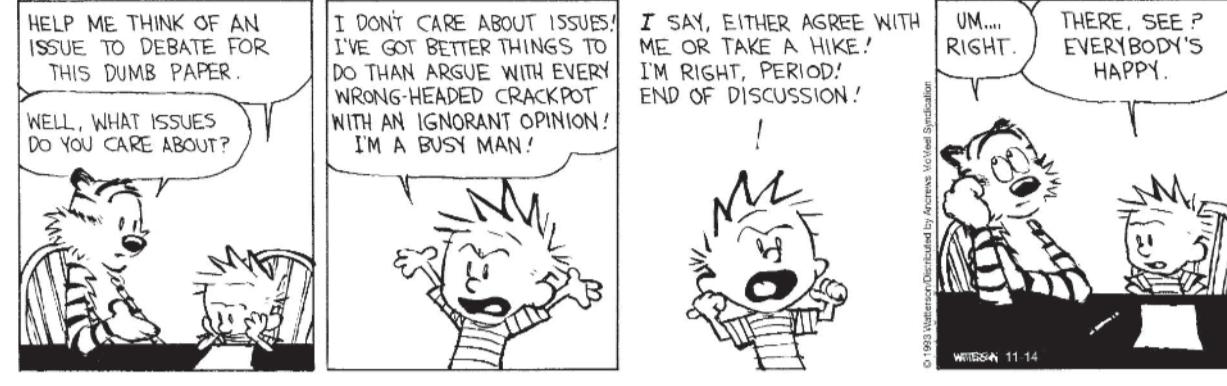
- ACROSS**
- Accentuates a clue in places (10)
  - Thus can Algeria provide a navigable channel (5)
  - Tried hard the way Verdi composed (7)
  - The defendant made charges (7)
  - Poems about some old salts (5)
  - In their own fields the French are unbeatable (6)
  - Back at sea (6)
  - Cruel process shows a profit (5)
  - Included in a show of affection (7)
  - His visitors may take a dim view of him at first (7)
  - Berate Lincoln about his country (5)
  - It's not often the present combines with the past (3,3,4)
- DOWN**
- It puts an end to any ill-feeling (7)
  - Covers overhead (5)
  - Enid is upset internally (6)
  - Fit to work like a horse (7)
  - Avoids spending reserves (5)
  - The first orphans (4,3,3)
  - German leader has the opportunity to turn up (10)
  - A show presented before the show (7)
  - An age certain to get wiped out (7)
  - Forwarded foreign money not rising (4,2)
  - Agitate a liquid container (5)
  - It's most desirable to enclose a wild animal (5)

Solutions Crossword 5260 Across: 1 Madame, 4 Humour, 9 Cholera, 10 Green, 11 Whizz, 12 Radiate, 13 Laundry bill, 18 Ferous, 20 Usher, 22 Avast, 23 Embargo, 24 Despot, 25 Grazes Down: 1 Macaws, 2 Hot, 3 Muezin, 5 Urged, 6 Overall, 7 Ringer, 8 Hairdresser, 14 Airways, 15 Blubber, 16 Afraid, 17 Drols, 19 Outdo, 21 Hertz

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



## CALVIN &amp; HOBBES by Bill Watterson



## MARVIN by Tom Armstrong



**SUDOKU 5440**  
Difficulty Level 1s  
**Instructions**  
To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from 1 to 9 must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

		8	3	1				
2	7				6			
6		5		3	9	4		
	4			5	9	1	3	
1		8	4			7		
9	2	7	3		8			
1	9	2	6		3			
7					5	1		
	8	4	2					

		8	3	1				
2	7				6			
6		5		3	9	4		
	4			5	9	1	3	
1		8	4			7		
9	2	7	3		8			
1	9	2	6		3			
7					5	1		
	8	4	2					

## SOLUTION SUDOKU 5439

2	4	5	9	6	7	3	1	8
7	9	6	3	8	1	5	4	2
1	8	3	5	2	4	7	9	6
5	1	7	2	3	8	4	6	9
6	3	8	1	4	9	2	7	5
9	2	4	7	5	6	8	3	1
3	5	9	6	7	2	1	8	4
4	7	1	8	9	5	6	2	3
8	6	2	4	1	3	9	5	7

## DAY TODAY

BY PETER VIDAL

## ARIES (Mar 21 - Apr 20)

Enterprises that have got underway lately may be subject to changes—not to mention delays. It's possible that you might lose interest in a current activity. However, a little extra application and self-discipline will work wonders. Try it and see.

## TAURUS (Apr 21 - May 21)

It may be a vain hope to expect that all family or domestic adjustments should be completed by now. Although partners still have certain expectations of you, your task is to broaden your horizons and try and make others see your bright possibilities.

## GEMINI (May 22 - June 21)

No longer does the advantage seem to lie with other people, forcing you to bow to partners' wishes. It will be a tough person who can get you to compromise now that you are discovering your true sense of vocation and destiny. Time is running out, so make your move.

## CANCER (June 22 - July 23)

You're entering a more restless phase which could see you spending more time away from home. Certainly, short trips will be in order as you make an increasing effort to follow up some of your intriguing ideas. You really are much more original and inventive than you often think.

## LEO (July 24 - Aug 23)

You may be happy to hear that the planetary picture is beginning to look decidedly more advantageous, and there's every reason to expect the best from the future. Pay more attention to financial matters, and get a grip on spending before it's too late.

## VIRGO (Aug 24 - Sep 23)

It's a fact of life that current planetary movements are bound to raise a number of questions, challenging you to take a long, hard look at those aspects of your existence that you have so far taken for granted. In the final analysis, you will be free to make your own decisions.

## PISCES (Feb 20 - Mar 20)

Hidden snags will bring temporary setbacks, but if you keep an eye open, these should be speedily dealt with. Your best times are when you rouse yourself from your contemplation and resolve to deal firmly with practical problems. You may even surprise yourself.

## LIBRA (Sep 24 - Oct 23)

The celestial signs indicate that this is not the best time for speculation, so be extra careful with cash unless you are absolutely sure of your ground. Prudence is one of your more sensible qualities, and one to encourage, given what's happened recently.

## SCORPIO (Oct 24 - Nov 23)

The chances are that events won't turn out as you planned today, so why not be adaptable and enjoy the unexpected? If you're hoping for improvements in the quality of life, you may need an extra push. In fact, you may need an almighty, gigantic shove.

## SAGITTARIUS (Nov 24 - Dec 22)

The Moon's changing presence indicates that travel is in the air and the chances are that this will be for work rather than pleasure. Check all arrangements in advance as there is a strong likelihood of last-minute alterations, perhaps due to new information.

## CAPRICORN (Dec 23 - Jan 20)

Once again, take note that care is needed with all business transactions as impulse buys could prove costly. If you're thinking of boosting your income, go for unusual angles as it's without doubt time for a change of direction. 'What, again?'

## AQUARIUS (Jan 21 - Feb 19)

This is one of those times when life seems to take its own course, no matter what you had planned. If you are in an adventurous mood, this is just what you need to get you out of a rut and introduce an element of spice into your most personal affairs.

## PISCES (Feb 20 - Mar 20)

Hidden snags will bring temporary setbacks, but if you keep an eye open, these should be speedily dealt with. Your best times are when you rouse yourself from your contemplation and resolve to deal firmly with practical problems. You may even surprise yourself.

## JUMBLE WORDS

Given below are four jumbled words. Solve the jumbles to make proper words and move them to the respective squares below. Select the letters in the shaded squares and jumble them to get the answer for the given word. Nothing can please which is not also \_\_\_\_\_. Quintessential (8)

**COXED**      **APSUCM**  
**GLTIN**      **AIMYBGS**

Answers: NODDING; SCINTILLATE; GLIMMER; QUINTESSENTIAL

**NORTHERN RAILWAY**  
**E-TENDER NOTICE**  
Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer/Traction Distribution, DRM's Office, State Entry Road, New Delhi for & on behalf of President of India, invites open e-tender for the under noted work:

Name of Work with its location	Part-A: Improvement/Augmentation of Traction Distribution assets by (a) Providing number plates & bonds (b) Provision of anti-monkey climbing device.
Approx. Cost of work	Rs. 1,28,28,535.50/-
Ernest Money Deposit	Rs. 2,14,200/-
E-Tender Bid Online Submission Period	24.01.2024 (00.00 Hrs.) to 07.02.2024 (15.00 Hrs.)
E-Tender Bid Submission End Date & E-Tender Open Date & Time	07.02.2024 (15.00 hrs.)
Fund Allocation	RRSK (29366203)
Website particulars where complete details of tender documents can be seen	www.ireps.gov.in

E-TENDER No.: 35A-TRD-NDLS-2023-24 Date : 11.01.2024 151/2024  
SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

**SEARCH FOR MISSING/KIDNAPPED**

General public is hereby informed that this Girl (depicted in the photo) namely Neha D/o Jitam Yadav R/o N-29/C-141, CSA Colony, WPIA, Ashok Vihar, Delhi has been Missing/Kidnapping from her residence since 07.01.2024. In this regard a vide FIR No./DD No. 71-A Dated 07.01.2024 has been lodged at PS Ashok Vihar, Distt. North West, Delhi. Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out this girl but no clue has come to light so far. His physical description is as under:-

Sex: Male, Age: 21 years, Height: 5' ft., Complexion: Fair, Face: Long, Built: Medium, Wearing: White colour Suit & Red colour Shawl and white colour Salwar. Any person is having information or clue about this missing girl may kindly inform to the following numbers:-

SHO Website: http://cbi.nic.in E-mail: cic@cbi.gov.in Ph. No.: 011-27243066 Tel. No.: 011-24368638/24368641 Fax No.: 011-24368639

**KARYAPALAK AMBIVANTKA KA KARYALAY, GRAMINEEN VIKAS VIASHA VISHESH PRAMANDAL, CHATRA |**

**— रद्द संबंधी सूचना :-**

**पत्रांक 53 / ग्रा.वि.वि.प्र.चतरा,** दिनांक—11.01.2024

एतद् द्वारा सूचित किया जाता है कि इस कार्यालय द्वारा मुख्यमंत्री ग्राम रेतु योजना के तहत ई-निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना सं.-R-02 में वर्णित प्रखण्ड-हाउटरार्सन में कानूनी मंदिर से करेलीबार जानेवाली पथ में निलाजन नदी पर पुल निर्माण कार्य का निविदा आमंत्रित की गई थी जिसका PR 305086 Rural Development(23-24)D है। मुख्य अभियंता, ग्रामीण विकास प्रक्षेत्र, एकाफ़ॉपी 010 भवन धूध्य, राँची का जार्यांक-2685 दिनांक—27.12.2023 के अलाके में उपर्युक्त निविदा एकल निविदा होने के कारण इसे रद्द किया जाता है एवं पुर्णनिविदा आमंत्रित की जायेगी।

प्राप्तिक्रम 31586 Rural Development(23-24)D चतरा।

PR 31586 Rural Development(23-24)D चतरा।

**PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF A PERSON ACCUSED**

**See Section 82 Cr.P.C.**

Where as complaint has been made before me that one accused Deepak Kashyap S/o Devillal, R/o Village Doghat, PS Doghat, Distt Baghpat, Uttar Pradesh have Committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence in case FIR No. 93/19 u/s 420/468/471/482/120B IPC has been registered at P.S. Nangloi, Delhi and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said Deepak Kashyap cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said Deepak Kashyap has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant).

Proclamation is hereby made that the said accused Deepak Kashyap of FIR No. 93/19 u/s 420/468/471/482/120B IPC is required to appear before this Court to answer the said complaint on or before 30.05.2024.

By Order  
Sh. Subham Devadiva  
Metropolitan Magistrate-05,  
Room No. 336A, 3rd Floor,  
Tis Hazari Courts, Delhi

DP/452/OD/2024(Court Matter)

SEARCH FOR MISSING/KIDNAPPED

**NEHA**

General public is hereby informed that this Girl (depicted in the photo)



Janneke Schopman (R) working with India players. Hockey India

## Pressure on coach Schopman, seniors before Olympics hockey qualifiers

Absence of key players, tough opponents high hurdles as India try to book flight to Paris

MIHIR VASAVDA  
MUMBAI, JANUARY 12

WHEN JANNEKE Schopman came to India for the first time, it was to stop the women's team from qualifying for the Olympics. She failed, as the Sjoerd Marijne-coached team beat Schopman's USA in the playoff.

Over the next one week, Schopman will now try to shepherd the Indian team to the Olympics. Failure, she knows, isn't an option. For, if it might cost her the job, end a few playing careers and break the fine streak the women's team finds itself in.

Understandably, then, there will be a few nerves when India step onto the field against the same opponent they beat four years ago to kickstart another qualifying campaign.

They'll bank on the familiarity of the venue, Ranchi, where egged on by capacity crowds, India won the Asian Champions Trophy a couple of months ago. But that was, at best, a series of glorified friendlies, the pressure of which pales when compared to the all-or-nothing qualifiers.

There's a tournament within the tournament here. India's first task will be to finish in the top two of their group, which includes New Zealand – an equal – and a potential banana skin opponent in Italy, apart from the dark horses USA.

If they successfully navigate past these teams and reach the semifinals, the task will be to finish in the top three and qualify for the Olympics. Given that the mighty Germany and a tricky Japan – expected to finish top two in the other pool – could be waiting for India in the second half of the tournament, the path to Paris will be far from smooth for the hosts.

Then again, if there's any team that relishes in the underdog role and thrives under pressure, it's India. They did that in 2015, when Savita Punia stopped a barrage of Japanese attempts to secure India's qualification. They did it again in 2019, with Rani Rampal doing what she did the best – be in the right place at the right time to score a goal. They punched above their weight in Tokyo and gave a good account of themselves at the Commonwealth Games.

But Schopman knows best the trap of revisiting the past. And the present looks tense.

One of the senior-most players of the team, and a reliable goal-scorer, Vandana Katariya fractured her cheekbone last week and has been ruled out of the tournament. That leaves Neha Goyal and Navneet Kaur with added responsibility.

Another stalwart, defender and penalty corner specialist Deep Grace Elka isn't in Ranchi for reasons not made public. When asked on Thursday, Schopman cryptically replied: "You should ask her."

It smelt of another senior player falling out with the coach after Rani Rampal was forced out of the team. Although with neither side speaking up, it's only speculation.

Deep Grace's absence will be felt in the defence but her powerful hits in penalty corners will be missed even more. Especially because Gurjot Kaur, the go-to drag-flicker, did not make the cut. Deepika, only 20, is expected to shoulder drag-flicking responsibility with some help from Udit Duhan. In a worrying scenario where the set-piece doesn't work out, and with Vandana out, one wonders where the goals will come from.

If the Asian Champions Trophy was anything to go by, that burden will be effortlessly taken care of by the two Jharkhand players, Sangita Kumari and Salima Tete. Between them, they scored 11 goals but more importantly, playing in front of a home crowd, Sangita and Salima were a big reason why the modest Ranchi stadium felt like a cauldron to the visiting teams.

India will hope for more of the same starting Saturday. Especially Schopman, who has a point to prove. The former World Cup winner knows she very nearly got shown the door after the Hangzhou debacle and if not for stern intervention by Hockey India president Dilip Tirkey, she would have been home by now.

"It's difficult at times," she said of the noise from the outside. "I practice a lot of mindfulness. I know what I can control, what I can't. Life happens, things happen in unexpected ways. I just try to do my best, want to be the best coach I can be for my players. I can't control more than that. If other people have a different opinion, then that is what it is."

Schopman lost the qualifiers the last time playing against India. She'll hope to win this time, with India.

## AUSTRALIAN OPEN

# Returning moms could be disruptors

Osaka, Kerber make comebacks after maternity leave, while Wozniacki and Svitolina's stories continue

NAMIT KUMAR  
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 12

FOR THE first time in the last few years, an established top 4, with momentum on their side with nothing to prove, will kick off a women's singles Grand Slam at the Australian Open on Sunday but the likelihood of a major upset in some feisty early rounds looms large. The reason: the unpredictable level of Major champions of the past making their comebacks.

Iga Swiatek, Aryna Sabalenka, Elena Rybakina, and Coco Gauff each have a Major under their belt and come into the first Slam of the year with confidence-boosting wins during the tune-up tournaments in Australia. But it is the progress of the returning mothers that remains the dominant storyline of the women's section of the tournament.

Former champions Naomi Osaka and Angelique Kerber are chief among them. Caroline Wozniacki, who reached the fourth round at the US Open last year, three years on from initial retirement; and Elina Svitolina, still representing an embattled Ukraine after reaching the semi final at Wimbledon six months after childbirth; are stories that will continue to draw attention.

Returning from maternity to top-level professional sport is undoubtedly a daunting task, but Sania Mirza, who reached a Major semifinal and final after becoming a mother, explains how there are many more challenges than those that meet the eye.

"You are not just fighting the intense physical demons that come with childbirth, but also fighting your emotional demons – your mother's guilt. There are sleepless nights, lots of changes in your life, and as a mother, it is natural not to prioritise yourself. To do that and then return to the everyday life of a tennis player is obviously not easy," she told The Indian Express. "It is the most challenging thing that can be asked of an athlete."

Kerber, 35, gave birth to her daughter last February. Osaka, 26, returns from the birth of her daughter as recently as July, before which there had already been injury trouble, an intensive period of controversy and scrutiny, and frayed mental health. Mirza believes that expectations must be tempered when the turnaround time is this short, and says it is an achievement just for these players to be ready to compete at the highest level.

"Not enough credit is given to these mothers. About 15 years ago, there would be maybe one or two women who could come back and play, and now it's becoming a lot more normal... it's truly great," she says.

When it comes to the competitive level, Mirza believes that none of these players would return if they did not think they could win.

"I don't think players, especially past champions, come back to be mediocre. Having said that, some people just enjoy being competitive. But my view is that a former top 10 player does not return if she does not think she can get there again because once you have tasted success, being around top 100 in the world will not motivate you."

### Order at the top

With the top 4 being settled at the top of the pecking order, opportunities may be few and far between for those returning, but they should still create some eye-catching big-name early encounters.

**"You are not only fighting physical demons that come with childbirth, but also emotional demons. It's the most challenging thing that can be asked of an athlete"**

SANIA MIRZA  
FORMER GRAND SLAM WINNER



Former two-time Australian Open champion Naomi Osaka returns to Melbourne this year after giving birth in July. Reuters

World No. 1 Swiatek opens her tournament against 2021 champion Sofia Kenin, and will face either 2021 finalist Danielle Collins or 2016 champion Kerber in the second round. A potential fourth round against Svitolina – who defeated her in the Wimbledon quarter final last year – is also looming.

The Pole shed the tag of being a one-surface wonder after her record-breaking 2022 season, and did enough to consolidate her position at the summit of the sport last year

too. As has been the case for the past 18 months, she remains the one to beat in Melbourne. Swiatek kicked off 2024 with four consecutive wins, including one against Kerber, at the United Cup.

Defending champion and World No. 2 Sabalenka will look to find the same inspiration she found last year, when she won a maiden title in Melbourne and reached the US Open final. She has already started the year strongly, reaching the Brisbane final where she lost to World No. 3 Rybakina, remarkably 0-6, 3-6, in a rematch of last year's epic final.

Rybalkina is already looking in good nick to put her streaky second half of 2023, when she was plagued by physical problems, behind her.

World No. 4 Gauff, who was able to drown out the hype swirling around her prodigal status to overcome a tough draw and win a first Major at the US Open last year, has shown little sign of slowing down. Like Rybakina, Gauff has already picked up her first title of the year in Auckland last week. She could face Osaka in what would be a blockbuster fourth round.

(The Australian Open starts on Sunday, live on the Sony Sports Network)

**NOTABLE FIRST ROUNDS:**  
(1) Iga Swiatek vs Sofia Kenin  
(2) Danielle Collins vs Angelique Kerber  
(3) Elena Rybakina vs Karolina Pliskova  
(4) Naomi Osaka vs (16) Caroline Garcia

## Nagal ensures Indian representation in singles

NAMIT KUMAR  
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 12

ENDING A barren run of 11 Majors, India's top-ranked singles tennis player, **Sumit Nagal**, ensured there will be an Indian representation in a Grand Slam singles main draw for the first time in three years. Nagal defeated Slovakia's Alex Molcan 6-4, 6-4 in the final round of qualifying for the Australian Open on Friday.

Nagal, who recovered from a series of injuries to increase his ranking to 122 after being ranked outside the top 500 for much of last year, looked in good nick during his qualifying campaign, not losing a single set across his three matches. He takes on the 31st seed, Kazakhstan's Alexander Bublik, in the first round.

"Happy to be in the main draw (of a Grand Slam) again," Nagal, who will play in the main draw of a Major for the fourth time, told reporters from Melbourne on Friday.

"I'm very proud of myself. 12 months ago, I was not even qualifying for a Challenger, barely getting points, barely getting matches. To qualify here is a very big step for me."

Despite being in the lead from start to finish, breaking Molcan's first service game in the opening set, there was a slight worry when Nagal was forced to call for a medical timeout for an abdominal issue right before he served for the match. He failed to convert two match points on Molcan's serve before the timeout.

After managing to get over the line without a wobble, the 26-year-old later played down the problem. "I had already asked for the physio before the game even ended, I knew I needed treatment... Just a little bit of tightness. I was happy I got through," he said, adding that the problem was not an 'injury'.

He asserted that despite the physical issues, he is not concerned about playing a

best-of-five match. He has never played a five-setter, but Nagal had famously taken a set off Roger Federer in the first round of their 2019 US Open encounter, before going down in four sets.

### AITA standoff

Nagal himself was the last Indian to play in the singles main draw of a Grand Slam, at the 2021 Australian Open, after he received a singles wildcard reserved for one player from the Asia-Pacific region.

After the improvements in his ranking last year, he could have been one of the contenders for the same wildcard for the 2024 edition, but due to a standoff with the All India Tennis Association (AITA), which arose after Nagal refused to travel to Pakistan for India's upcoming Davis Cup World Group 1 playoff tie, the federation failed to nominate him for wildcard contention.

Nagal's decision to skip the tie mainly centered around his apprehensions of playing on grass, but regardless of the line of reasoning, his decision did not sit well with the national federation.

"There was no guarantee I would get the wildcard anyway. The (standoff) didn't really affect me at all. I was happy to be in a position to play as well as I possibly could and give myself a chance to get into another tournament at the top level," he said on Friday.

"I don't think I'm playing tennis for AITA or anyone else. I'm playing for my family and those who believed in me. There are good and bad things in life but you just have to carry on."

At the 2020 US Open, Nagal became the first Indian since Somdev Devvarman seven years prior, to win a main draw match at a Grand Slam. None have done so since, but the 26-year-old will be hoping to snap another barren run against the big-serving and flamboyant Bublik this coming week.

## AFC ASIAN CUP

# Ravaged by series of injuries, India face World No 25 Australia first up

With just 12 days of preparation and missing key players, Blue Tigers face their biggest test

SHASHANK NAIR  
JANUARY 12

FACING AN Australian team ranked 25th in the world – one that gave Leo Messi hell at the 2022 World Cup and troubled England with their physically monstrous set piece routines – is a daunting task in itself for India. And if that isn't enough, the Blue Tigers are without four press-resistant players that constituted a well-built spine of the team for the first time in decades. What could have been a showcase of how far Indian football has come in the last one year is now set to be reduced to an act of mere survival at Ahmed Ali Stadium in Al Rayyan on Saturday as both teams begin their Asian Cup campaign.

It is remarkable how things have gone against India in the build-up to this tournament. Coach Igor Stimac pleaded for more time with the team but instead got a grand total of 12 days. If India was Japan, 12 days would be no issue but the time it takes Stimac to scrub the poor domestic structure of his players is where the issue lies.

And if time with the team was withheld,

a slew of injuries to major players made matters so much worse. Central defender Anwar Ali – a key defensive player who decided the space between the India defensive line and their offensive line – was lost to a long-term knee injury. Jeakson Singh, a metronome passer who rarely gave the ball away and boosted India's capabilities when they had possession, is out injured as well. And then Sahal Abdul Samad, a tireless attacking midfielder who put defensive pressure in the final third and combined it with a creative presence against heavy-set defences, was taken with the team and was part of the press conference but is clearly not fit enough to play. Three players that represented the new way that the Indian football team played, all out of the tournament.

"We have lost a good part of our quality with four key players. Sahal is not ready yet for the game, but we are doing everything to bring him back. But, not having Ashique (Kurunyan), Anwar (Ali) and Jeakson is quite hard for us because we could've been a very different side with them on the pitch," Stimac said at the pre-match press conference.

And then there is the group that India is



India will face Australia in their Asian Cup opener on Saturday. AIFF

a part of. If the 2019 Asian Cup was a missed opportunity to make it to the Round of 16, the 2023 Asian Cup is possibly the worst situation India could have found themselves in. An Australian team that are only second to Japan and South Korea in Asia, an Uzbekistan squad that has only lost to Japan across U17 to U23 age group tournaments and is looking to take the next step for their senior team. India's only realistic hope for points comes

against the Syrians, a team that recently drew with Malaysia, a team that had beaten the Indians in the Merdeka Cup at the Bukit Jalil Stadium.

But the immediate concern is which version of India turns up against Australia. Does Stimac prefer pragmatism and stay the flow of goals, hoping to keep India in the tournament for a pivotal clash against Uzbekistan? Or does India continue on the path built by

him across the three tournaments earlier where the national team started to play an attractive brand of football on the bedrock of improved fitness levels?

Against Australia, there might be a bit of both. "We have been working on our mindset through meditation. Mindset change was the key element in our approach when I started my work with Indian football. To switch from a defensive mindset to attack-

ing football, it's not easy. Hopefully, soon things will change in Indian football and give us elements that other countries are using to get as good as it can in football," said Stimac.

Despite the promise of sticking to their style of play, Stimac said that stopping the Australians and their set pieces and crosses would be where India's challenge lies. To put it into context, India has the fourth lowest average height across the 24 teams at the Asian Cup. While India's average height stands at 177.35cm, the Australians are the fifth tallest team in the tournament with an average height of 182.38cm.

"We don't have to give away set-pieces. We know the strengths of Australia. Graham (Arnold) and myself are the longest-serving managers here at the tournament. He has also coached at the youth setup. They play very pragmatic football, insisting on their strengths. They caused a lot of problems to England and we can expect the storms coming out of them. We need to stay compact and do everything possible to stop the crosses from the flanks," said Stimac.

With so many factors going against India, the only silver lining that remains from the Asian Cup is the experience gained. By playing against two perennial quarter finalists at the Asian level, India stands to know where they truly are among Asia pecking order.

## ROAD AHEAD

India's Group B fixtures at the AFC Asian Cup Qatar 2023

**JANUARY 13, 2024**

AUSTRALIA VS INDIA

17:00 IST, Ahmad bin Ali Stadium, Al Rayyan

**JANUARY 18, 2024**

INDIA VS UZBEKISTAN

20:00 IST, Ahmad bin Ali Stadium, Al Rayyan

**JANUARY 23, 2024**

SYRIA VS INDIA

17:00 IST, Al Bayt Stadium, Al Khor

Iyer passes short-ball test, but falls short on patience

DEVENDRA PANDEY  
MUMBAI, JANUARY 12

FROM THE time Shreyas Iyer walked into the middle with Mumbai placed at 130/3 against Andhra at MCA-BKC, it was all about how he would handle the mind games. That team, especially in red-ball cricket, would test him with short deliveries was a given and in the second round of Ranji fixture, Andhra were not going to be an exception this front.

If anything, once the new ball loses its shine, they are known to test opponents with a barrage of short balls and bouncers with a packed onside field for company. This was their Plan A against most opponents last season. And against Iyer, you didn't expect anything different. And when Iyer walked in, he expected nothing different, but Andhra were not going to be that predictable. Despite his shortcomings, Iyer is a free-flowing batsman, who prefers to be busy at all times. Even when the chips are down, he prefers in counter-attacking his way out of trouble, an approach that has yielded him results.

There is a lot riding on him, especially after his struggles in South Africa, and with the Tests against England approaching, India need in an in-form Iyer in the middle-order. It was with this reason that the selectors wanted him to play red-ball cricket.

A customary flick through the mid-wicket got him going and later on, he used his feet to come down the track and loft the ball for a straight boundary of off-spinner Shoaib Mohammad Khan. Shreyas, wasn't going to shelf his aggressive approach if anything landed in his arc.

In the time he stayed in the middle, runs flowed for Mumbai as Shreyas not only found his timing back, but looked set for a big one as Andhra struggled in terms of executing their plan. And all it took was those two boundaries for Andhra to go back to their Plan A with their pacers operating from round the stumps. They started with a couple of successive short balls that Iyer carefully negated. The only thing he had to tackle was the pace. Unlike South Africa, where he was hurried for pace, at the MCA-BKC ground he had to wait for the ball to come. As long as he was not going to be rushed, these short balls were not going to trouble Iyer. And once he got adjusted to the pace of the pitch, Iyer wasn't going to just hang around.

Despite Andhra having a packed leg-side field with five fielders, Iyer still managed to fetch a couple of boundaries off short balls. And on both the occasions, he remained in total control of the shot. He didn't try to use power, instead just relied on timing to direct the ball in between the tiny gaps.

With just two fielders on the off-side, and acres of space available, Andhra tested him by angling the ball across, hoping he would at least keep the cauldron in play. After shouldering arms to a few, Iyer finally fell into the trap as he chased a wide from Nithish Kumar Reddy, but only for wicketkeeper S Girinath to pouch a low catch. Andhra's plan finally worked. In his 48-ball stay, he made 48 runs which included seven boundaries.

**Brief Scores:** Mumbai 281 for 6 (Jay Bista 39, Bhupen Lalwani 61, Sudeep Parkar 41, Shreyas Iyer 48, Shams Mulani 30 not out, Tanush Kotian 31 not out, Nithish Reddy 3 for 44) vs Andhra.

# Satwik-Chirag take no prisoners

Indian pair demolish He Ji Ting and Ren Xiang Yu in two quick games, to face Korean world champions for a spot in the final

SHIVANI NAIK  
JANUARY 12

IT'S THE sort of scorching form Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty were in at the Korea Open last year. Where they were tearing oppositions to shreds, while not sheathing their attack or tempering it with caution. Just pure, blistering two-pronged offence as they seemed to be flying often. In a similar vein, the opponents couldn't stem the floods at the Super 1000 Malaysia Open, one of the Tour's four big ones, as the 2024 season begins.

He Ji Ting and Ren Xiang Yu of China might have been dismissed 21-11, 21-8 in 35 minutes by the ruthless Indians. But theirs was an exhausting siege when aided by fast-court conditions at the Axiatia Arena in Kuala Lumpur. The Indians didn't hold back, from start to a crisp finish.

Only for 3 points at the start of the second game did the Chinese lead in the match, but both games had 7-point barrages from the Indians when the shuttle just fell around Chinese feet like thunderbolts as He-Ren twisted and turned and ultimately were left deluged by the raining smashes.

Satwik didn't start tentative like he usually does, and his bolting out of the blocks and taking charge even in the front court meant the Chinese never settled. They had little time for prologues or dramatic detours of trading leads. Jump-hit-serve was their repeat settings for the day.

The Indians took the drift out of the equation by slam-dunking to the centre of the court, so that the lines didn't come into the picture. But it was the confidence with which they smashed down the middle, the sharp steepness and slashing speed that gave the Chinese no defensive opportunities to free themselves out of corners. They looked clueless at 10-1 down in the opener, and by the time it was 14-4 in the second, they were drained of colour.



Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty beat China's He Ji Ting and Ren Xiang Yu 21-11, 21-8 on Thursday.

In the shorter rallies, the Indians snapped the Chinese shut with one-leg hop-smashes. It's the sort of scarring loss that pushes Chinese pairs back to the drawing board.

past match-ups haven't proven especially challenging. But heading into a Thomas Cup summer, and given how sticky it got in the last faceoff, expect the Koreans to be a handful.

## Masters of trickery

They are world champions for a reason, and Seung-jae's bag of tricks is infinite. Mathias Boe will have a task on his hands in getting the Indians to persist with their hit-all offence even when the Koreans send everything back. Seo-Kang cannot be blitzed like the Chinese, and Indians are capable of operating with wildly different playing styles, but Satwik remains the key as does Chirag's poise at the net.

Each of the four matches against the Koreans - even if Indians won 3 of them - got tight towards the end. The last game scores read 23-21, 20-22, 21-19 and 21-18, with things getting very interesting around the 17-point mark. Seo-Kang keep their fighting best for the last, and the current World Nos.3 will not allow an easy ride to the Indians. A

quarterfinal was taken with brutal ease, but the semifinal will not be at all pleasant, even as Satwik-Chirag aim for their first final of the season. In their quarterfinals to silence the Malaysian crowd, Seo-Kang lulled Aaron-Soh into believing they were cruising, before they flipped the result in a three-game contest. Satwik-Chirag lost just one semifinal in 2023 out of 7 Saturdays, and that was at the Malaysia Open. They will hope 2024 starts better.

## World champions next

When things are going swimmingly well, the threat of jeopardy on the following day is to be expected. It comes in the form of Kang Min-hyuk and Seo Seung-jae, the low-key reigning World champions.

That Seung-jae, who won world titles in both doubles and mixed in 2023, has chosen to focus solely on men's doubles means things are getting serious. The Indians enjoy a 3-1 head-to-head against the pairing that poses little visible threat, but the Koreans are just the

sort of combination to trip up the confident duo, if the Indians don't watch out for the slantways threats.

The Koreans typically don't enjoy these conditions, but this pairing adapts as well as the Chinese Liang-Wang. They are a left-right combination, and after the last World Championships loss to Astrup-Rasmussen, the Indians need to be on a perennial vigil against the left-right combination of angles.

Chirag will be drawn into battles more by the Koreans than the Chinese, and with their sturdier defence, they will not allow a demolition job like on Friday. Chirag's net game meets its match in the Koreans and he will need to patiently read their patterns, though

## Ishan overlooked, uncapped Jurel named for England Tests

VENKATA KRISHNA B  
JANUARY 12

THE MESSAGE is loud and clear for Ishan Kishan. The wicketkeeper, who sought a rest and missed Tests against South Africa, will have to play domestic cricket and earn his comeback. The senior selection committee has overlooked him for the first two Tests against England and have given a maiden call-up to Uttar Pradesh's Dhruv Jurel as four spinners headlined the 16-member squad.

The selectors didn't want to rush Mohammed Shami back and it is understood he is likely to be drafted in for the second-half of the five-match series. With regards to Prasidh Krishna, who made his debut in South Africa, it is learnt that the pacer has picked up a quadriiceps injury on Day 1 of Karnataka's Ranji fixture against Gujarat in Ahmedabad. Prasidh bowed 14.5 overs before walking off the field.

Post the ongoing T20Is against Afghanistan, India are scheduled to host

England in a five-match Test series at home, with the first match beginning in Hyderabad on January 25. Despite the mixed outing in South Africa, no big changes were expected and the only question was around the wicketkeeper's slot. While Rahul had donned the gloves in the Rainbow nation, there are still doubts as to whether he can keep at home, especially on turning tracks against R Ashwin, Ravindra Jadeja, Axar Patel and Kuldeep Yadav.

While one expected India to bring back Kishan into the fold — as he also offers something different by being a left-handed batsman — he now has to wait for the time being.

That there are already two other left-handers in Jadeja and Axar to tackle the English spinners has made it all the more easy for the selectors not to include Kishan.

The Indian Express understands that Rahul is the front-runner to keep wickets, but India will also keep a close tab on his preparations and how he fronts up to the spinners in the lead up to the first Test. Although the 31-year-old has kept wickets

regularly in the ODIs for the past couple of years, the challenge of doing it on turning tracks against the spinners with a red-ball still remains an unchartered territory for Rahul.

In the worst-case scenario, India feel they can always go back to KS Bharat. But having Rahul means, India's batting will also get a bolster, provided he comes up with improved performances with the bat.

As far as Jurel goes, he was part of India A tour to South Africa and is also part of the team that is facing the England Lions. In 15 FC games, he has an impressive average of 46.47 and is regarded as a compact batsman.

Unlike the limited-overs format, in Test cricket, especially when it comes to playing at home, batting depth has been India's greatest strength.

On turning tracks, where India have gone in with three spinners — Ashwin, Jadeja and Axar — and two pacers, the batting depth extends all the way up to No 9. In the closely-fought series against Australia last year, the contributions of the spinners with the bat

proved to be the turning point.

## Trial by spin

That India will stick to playing on spin-friendly pitches was expected and if there needed any confirmation, the presence of a strong four-prone attack proves it. That Kuldeep Yadav, who has been their lead wicket-taking option in white-ball cricket over the past 14 months, could end up warming the bench tells a story or two. Despite having an impressive performance in Bangladesh in late 2022, the left-arm wrist-spinner hasn't played a Test since and spent the entire Border-Gavaskar Trophy on the bench.

The likelihood of it repeating again this time isn't ruled out as there is sufficient break in between. Between the second Test in Vizag and third in Rajkot there is an eight-day break. And between the fourth match in Ranchi and the last in Dharamsala, there is another eight-day break.

The Indian Express understands that there are concerns around Shubman Gill,

who is yet to own his place in Tests. While Gill has very much cemented his spot in the limited-overs format, there are still doubts over his form in Tests, with bowlers exposing a couple of weak links.

Since scoring a century against Australia in Ahmedabad, he has batted in nine innings and has touched 30, only once. With Rajat Patidar, Abhimanyu Easwaran waiting in the wings, if Gill's string of poor scores continue, his place could be under cloud for the remaining three Tests.

Similarly, there are concerns around Shreyas Iyer as well, but given his record against spinners, especially in home conditions, India believe he could well be their trump card in the middle-order.

**Full squad:** Rohit Sharma (captain), Shubman Gill, Yashasvi Jaiswal, Virat Kohli, Shreyas Iyer, KL Rahul (WK), KS Bharat (WK), Dhruv Jurel (wk), Ravichandran Ashwin, Ravindra Jadeja, Axar Patel, Kuldeep Yadav, Mohd. Siraj, Mukesh Kumar, Jasprit Bumrah (vice-captain), Avesh Khan.

## RANJI ROUND UP

### Saurashtra's call backfires

Winning the toss and batting first at Rajkot, Saurashtra were bowled out for 145 against Haryana in the first innings. Cheteshwar Pujara top-scored with 49 as off-spinner Jayant Yadav picked up a five-wicket haul (5/42) to put Haryana in early command.

**Brief scores:** Saurashtra 145 (Cheteshwar Pujara 49, Chirag Jana 29 no; Jayant Yadav 5/42, Sumit Kumar 3/7) vs Haryana 122/1 (Ankit Kumar 68 batting).

### Bhuvi returns with a bang

Playing his first first-class match in six years, Bhuvneshwar Kumar kept Uttar Pradesh in the game with a five-wicket haul after Bengal shut them for 60 in the morning session.

**Brief scores:** Uttar Pradesh 60 (S Singh 13; Md Kaif 4/14, S Jaiswal 3/20) vs Bengal 95/5 (Ghosh 37 \*; B Kumar 5/25).

### Gujarat on recovery mode

At Ahmedabad, Gujarat got back on its feet through Kshitij Patel and Umang Kumar against Karnataka. Put to bat first, Gujarat's top-order once again crumbled as they were placed 4/45 as Karnataka seamers made the most out of the conditions.

**Brief scores:** Gujarat 264 (K Patel 95, Umang Kumar 72, Chintan Gaja 45; V Koushik 4/49).

### Udeshi picks up 7

After shocking Delhi in the opening game, Sagar Udeshi ran through Baroda's batting line-up to return with figures of 7/82 at Vadodara. Winning the toss and batting first, Baroda could only make 218 in the first essay with opener Jyotilal Singh top-scoring with 51.

**Brief scores:** Baroda 218 (Jyotilal Singh 51, Kinit Patel 44; Sagar Udeshi 7/82) vs Pondicherry 54/3.

### Bad light plays spoilsport

With dense fog being witnessed in most of the northern belt, matches in Mullanpur, Jammu, Agartala, Guwahati were all called off by bad light. The entire day's play between Tripura and Tamil Nadu was cancelled at Tripura, while only one over was possible at Jammu where Delhi were batting first against Jammu and Kashmir.

**Khadoshi**

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Followed by a discussion with  
Shubhra Gupta,  
Film Critic, The Indian Express

Here are some comments shared by our readers  
about the unique format of the Indian Express Club.

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Doctor

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