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SURVEY: POINTERS TO TODAY'S BUDGET

Buoyant tax mop-up frees fiscal space for spending

Govt frontloaded spending; private sector will crowd in, create jobs: CEA

SUNNY VERMA & PRANAV MUKUL
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 31

A DAY ahead of the Union Budget for 2022-23, the Economic Survey tabled in the Lok Sabha by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman pointed out that buoyant tax revenues offered the government fiscal space to provide additional support to the economy and continue the push in favour of higher capital expenditure. Though output in various contact intensive services remained below pre-pandemic levels, it said the macroeconomic strength provided buffers against likely stresses such as withdrawal of stimulus by global central banks.

A sharp rise in tax collections and a boost to non-tax revenues following RBI's surplus transfer have led to an increase in the revenue pool. This would enable the government to meet its fiscal

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BUSINESS AS USUAL
BY UNNY

MORE REPORTS
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Why growth in FY23 is pegged at just 8-8.5%

AANCHAL MAGAZINE & SUNNY VERMA
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 31

THE ECONOMIC Survey 2021-22 has projected a modest 8-8.5 per cent growth rate for the next financial year, 2022-23. This is significantly lower than the 9.2 per cent expansion projected by the NSO in its first advance estimates for 2021-22. It is also lower than the 9 per cent growth estimate by the IMF in its World Economic Outlook for the current year and the next.

EXPLAINED

Behind the conservative estimate for the next year are not just the many risks — global inflation

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla with all-party leaders in New Delhi on Monday. *Anil Sharma*

PM and Chairs call for 'fruitful' session, Opp for debate on key issues

4 new notices over Pegasus; Ministers say sub judice

MANOJ C G & LIZ MATHEW
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 31

AMID A high-octane campaign for Assembly elections in five states, the Budget session of Parliament began Monday with Prime Minister Narendra Modi asking parties to keep aside election concerns and ensure a "fruitful" and "constructive" session with "meaningful and effective discussions".

The Prime Minister's remarks came even as the Opposition flagged concerns over several issues including the alleged use of the Pegasus spyware for

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Digital trail points to Pegasus, state role: Experts told SC panel

AASHISH ARYAN
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 31

THERE IS a presence of "strong indicators" pointing to the involvement of "the state, its intelligence and law enforcement agencies" in using the Pegasus spyware for unauthorised surveillance against individuals, at least two cybersecurity experts have deposed before the Supreme Court-appointed committee.

These experts, engaged by some of the petitioners, furnished details of their forensic analysis of the phones suspected to have been the spyware's potential targets.

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Mamata blocks Dhankhar on Twitter: 'abuses me'; he says CM blocking info

ATRI MITRA & SANTANU CHOWDHURY
KOLKATA, JANUARY 31

THE OPEN war between Mamata Banerjee and Jagdeep Dhankhar breached a new red line on Monday, with the West Bengal Chief Minister blocking the Governor on Twitter and the latter responding with a series of tweets on the "essence and spirit of democracy" and accusing Banerjee of "blocking information to the Governor".

On Monday, after a Cabinet meeting at the secretariat, Banerjee spoke to the media and said she was "forced" to block Dhankhar on Twitter because of his "unethical and unconstitutional " statements. She also alleged that the Governor was acting like a "super watchman" and

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

CM Mamata Banerjee; Governor Jagdeep Dhankhar

UP PF scam: CBI seeks nod to probe Agri, Power Secys

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 31

THE CBI has sought permission from the UP government to investigate three senior IAS officers, including Union Agriculture Secretary Sanjay Aggarwal and Union Power Secretary Alok Kumar, among others in connection with its probe in the alleged Rs 2,267-crore employees' provident fund scam in the state. The third IAS officer is Aparna U, mission director of National Health Mission in UP.

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I&B MINISTRY BARS KERALA CHANNEL; HC STAYS ORDER

MAJITHIA GETS SC RELIEF IN NDPS CASE TILL FEB 23

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Anti-India protests in mind, Maldives plans new law to curb unrest

NIRUPAMA SUBRAMANIAN
CHENNAI, JANUARY 31

MEMBERS OF the main ruling party in the Maldives are considering legislation to criminalise protests that "affect the country's relations with other nations". A draft Bill circulated within the Maldives Democratic Party (MDP) comes against the backdrop of protests in the Indian Ocean country over the perceived proximity of the Ibrahim Solih government to India.

The "India Out" protests, which began two years ago, have increased in pitch since the release from house arrest of Opposition leader and former pro-China president Abdulla Yameen late last year.

Titled "The Bill To Stop All Actions That Could Negatively Affect Relations Established By The Maldives With Foreign Countries", the draft is seen as effectively targeting the "India

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DECISION 2022

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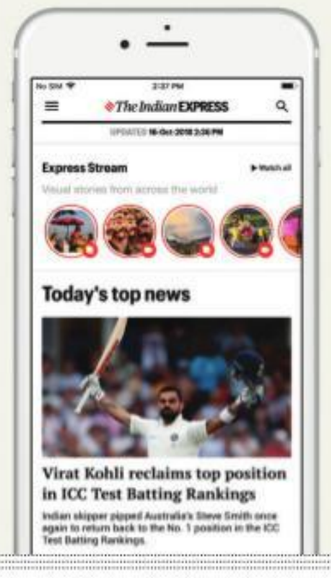

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WEB EXCLUSIVE

HOLLYWOOD REWIND | BRIDESMAIDS: KRISTEN WIIG CAN DO NO WRONG IN THIS CHAOTIC, WILD AND FUNNY FILM ABOUT THE FEMALE BOND

Paul Feig directorial Bridesmaids is as near-perfect as you can get when making a self-deprecating, hilarious, ridiculous movie about a bunch of women in their 30s and 40s.

TECH

MICROSOFT SURFACE PRO X REVIEW

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SURROGACY AND STIGMA

Experts call for normalising process, respecting choices

EXPRESS AUDIO

The advantages and disadvantages for the BJP in UP

NEW EPISODE EVERYDAY

Liz Mathew, Snigdha Sharma discuss how there is resentment against the party over jobs and prices, but there are also some significant factors working in its favour

FROM PAGE ONE

Growth in FY23

to shortage of inputs — posed by Covid-19 the Survey points to, but also its assessment that the economic slowdown induced by the pandemic is not merely a demand problem.

But first, why is the 8-8.5 per cent growth estimate for the next year seen as modest? Last year, the Economic Survey (for 2020-21) had projected real GDP to grow 11 per cent in 2021-22, following estimates of a 6.6 per cent contraction in 2020-21. As things have turned out, the economy is estimated to grow only 9.2 per cent, as per the latest NSO estimate. Plus, the tapering off of the base effect also plays a part in the projections for next fiscal being more conservative.

The risks posed by the Covid-19 pandemic for the economic recovery flagged by the Survey arise from a surge in global inflation, shortage of inputs such as semiconductors, with supply-side disruptions being exacerbated by recovery in demand. While supply-chain breakdowns caused an interruption of the economy's supply-side which also squeezed demand, the Survey notes it is not correct to see the pandemic related economic slowdown as just a demand problem. "…the post-Covid economy will not be merely a re-inflation of the pre-Covid economy. Simply building it back with demand measures is not a solution," it said.

The growth projection for the next year is based on "the assumption that there will be no further debilitating pandemic related economic disruption, monsoon will be normal, withdrawal of global liquidity by major central banks will be broadly orderly and oil prices will be in the range of $70-$75/bbl."

"The projection that the Economic Survey has made is on the conservative side compared to the projections that the other agencies have made. Growth naturally recovers from the fact that we had a 7 per cent contraction in real terms in 2020-21, the base effect continues… growth will be an instrument through which we tackle challenges. Economic growth picks up partly because credit growth is picking up from a very low base and the corporate sector has deleveraged and profitability is good. Therefore, we expect the capital expenditure cycle, which is now going to build on the back of what the government has done," Chief Economic Adviser V Anantha Nageswaran said addressing reporters after the Survey was tabled in Parliament.

The growth estimates for 2022-23 also ride on the widespread vaccine coverage, gains from supply-side reforms and easing of regulations, robust export growth, and the availability of fiscal space to ramp up capital spending. The latest Survey has made use of satellite and geospatial data to show the growth in national highway networks, spread of commercial banks, metro rail networks over the last decade and rise in construction in areas such as Golf Course Road in Gurugram, Bangmane Tech Park in Bengaluru and Bandra Kurla Complex in Mumbai over last 15-20 years.

Last year's Survey had pitched for an expansionary fiscal policy in 2021-22 to boost growth and advised the government towards significant privatisation of state-owned companies, alongside an asset monetisation push and review of the banking sector asset quality. While the Budget that followed did flag the intent to pursue these measures, a number of those proposals are still work-in-progress.

The emphasis given to the supply-side in India's Covid-19 response, the latest Survey noted, is driven by two reasons: first, Indian policymakers saw the disruptions caused by travel-restrictions, lockdowns and supply-chain breakdowns as an interruption of the economy's supply-side. "Although this also squeezed demand, it is not correct to see the pandemic related economic slowdown as just a demand problem as happens with most economic cycles," it said. Second, the post-Covid world will be impacted by a wide variety of factors – changes in technology, consumer behaviour, geo-politics, supply-chains, climate change, it added.

The Survey has flagged risks from rising inflation from both a tighter global liquidity condition and exchange rate volatility in global currency. "In 2021, inflation picked up globally as economic activity revived with the opening up of economies. Inflation in the US touched 6.8 per cent in November 2021, the highest since 1982, driven largely by energy and food prices. As inflation worries are mounting, a distinct shift towards the unwinding of pandemic-led stimulus is taking hold. This may result in tightening of financial conditions, adversely affecting capital flows, putting pressure on exchange rate and slowing down growth in emerging economies," it said.

Highlighting the divergence between wholesale and retail inflation, it said imported inflation is a problem and needs to be taken into account. India's Consumer Price Index inflation stood at 5.6 per cent in December 2021 but wholesale price inflation has been running in double-digits. "Although this is partly due to base effects that will even out, India does need to be wary of imported inflation, especially from elevated global energy prices," it said.

'Fruitful' session

surveillance.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman will present the Union Budget at 11 am Tuesday.

After the Congress, the Trinamool Congress, CPI and CPM gave notice Monday in both Houses for a privilege motion against Minister for Electronics and Information Technology Ashwini Vaishnav for "misleading" Parliament on the Pegasus issue. The Congress gave another notice in Rajya Sabha.

However, Parliamentary Affairs Minister Pralhad Joshi said the matter is sub judice and it is not right for anybody to comment on it. He said it is being probed by a committee appointed by the Supreme Court.

Union Minister Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi too hit out at the Opposition over the Pegasus issue. "The matter is sub judice before the Supreme Court. It's not right for anyone to comment on it. They are repeatedly raising it. The Opposition parties want to make themselves relevant because their political career is at stake," he said.

The government made it clear that it would not bring any Bill in the first part of the session which ends on February 11, owing to paucity of time. This also means that any demand by the Opposition for a discussion on any issue will not be accepted by the government.

As many as 15 Bills, including the Warehousing Amendment Bill and the Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (Amendment) Bill, will come up for consideration and passage in the second half of the session.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and Leader of the House in Rajya Sabha Piyush Goyal told floor leaders of parties in two separate virtual meetings that only two discussions, one on the Motion of Thanks to the President's Address and another on the Budget, will be taken up.

Rajya Sabha Chairman M Venkaiah Naidu told the meeting of House floor leaders that during the first leg of the session, only 23 hours will be available for business other than Zero Hour, Question Hour and Private Members' Business. He reminded the leaders that discussions on the Motion of Thanks to the President's Address and Budget had taken a little over 26 hours in the last Budget session.

Mallikarjun Kharge, Leader of the Opposition in Rajya Sabha, told The Indian Express: "We have put forward our views. We want discussions on Pegasus, Chinese aggression, Covid management, price rise, unemployment, hate speech including the targeting of Muslim women, attacks on churches, disinvestment."

He said the government told the parties that there is a constraint of time and all issues can be discussed in the debate during the Motion of Thanks and the discussion on the Budget.

"I told them that the discussion on the President's Address and Budget are general in nature… We want discussions on specific issues in some form… either through calling attention or short duration," Kharge said.

Meanwhile, four more privilege notices were given Monday by Opposition members -- Saugata Roy (TMC) in Lok Sabha, and Binoy Viswam (CPI), K C Venugopal (Congress) and V Sivadasan (CPM) in Rajya Sabha. Congress leader in Lok Sabha, Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury, had given the first notice Sunday.

Ahead of the start of the session, Prime Minister Modi said: "Elections have their own place and the session its own. The Budget session is an important session and we should make it as effective as it can be."

"I appeal to all members and parties to discuss issues with a commitment to take the country forward on the path of economic progress. We must, with all our intellectual resources, ensure the session is fruitful and the year sees us scale new heights as far as the economy is concerned," he said.

After the all-party meeting, Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla said: "I have told the leaders of parties that there could be extensive discussions on the President's Address and the Union Budget during which all kinds of issues can be taken up, discussing issues faced by the country and how the country can go forward in terms of economic and social progress. The members can use the forum to bring the people's issues to the government's attention." He hoped the House would function smoothly with the support of all parties and the government.

The Speaker, sources said, agreed to the Opposition's demand to have short duration discussions.

Mamata

"treating government officials like his servants".

"I am sorry to say I was forced to do this. Every day, he (Governor) abuses me and our officers using unconstitutional words. He hands out instructions as if we are his servants or bonded labourers. The elected Government is bonded labour, but he, someone who is only nominated, is a super pehredaar (watchman). Every day after seeing his tweet, I get irritated," she said.

Accusing Dhankar of scaring everyone from "courts to Income Tax officers, CBI to ED, Customs to Kolkata Police Commissioner, Chief Secretary to Home Secretary, DMs to SPs", Banerjee said she had written to the PM "four times" on the issue.

Banerjee also accused Dhankar of "spying on everyone..."

After Banerjee's press conference, TMC leaders took their cue from her and blocked the Governor on Twitter. TMC MP Derek O'Brian tweeted, "@MamataOfficial Chairperson of @AITCofficial just blocked The-Tweet-A-Minute Governor of Bengal on Twitter. Good. Doing the same. Blocking @jdhankhar1."

Soon after, the Governor issued a series of tweets, one of which said, "Guv WB: Mandated under Article 159 of the Constitution to ensure none in the state 'blocks' Constitutional Norms and Rules of Law and those in authority 'bear true faith and allegiance to the Constitution of India'."

Another tweet read, "WB Guv: Under Article 167 it is Constitution 'duty' of the Chief Minister to furnish such information relating to the administration of the affairs of the State and proposals for legislation as the Governor may call for. Why 'block' information to Guv now for two years?"

He also tweeted that he sent Banerjee a message on WhatsApp -- "and read by her at 10.25 am today" -- on "dialogue and harmony" amongst constitutional functionaries being the "essence and spirit of democracy and mandate of the Constitution".

Reacting to Banerjee's move, BJP president Sukanta Majumder said, "The Governor asked some questions of the Chief Minister. She could not answer and she fled."

CPM leader Sujan Chakraborty said, "If she knew that Raj Bhavan was snooping on others, she has to clarify. It is a serious allegation."

Monday's development comes amid escalating tensions between the Governor and the Bengal government. On Sunday, Dhankar had said people view West Bengal as a "gas chamber of democracy" and alleged that human rights were being "trampled" in the state.

Dhankar has been using his Twitter handle to post a series of tweets hitting out at the government and Banerjee.

On January 30, the Governor tweeted, "Guv WB: CM @MamataOfficial Is constitutionally ordained to discharge 'duty' under Article 167 of constitution to impart information on Pandemic Purchase Scam and other issues. Guv conveyed that no information, once sought by him, can be screened by the Government."

Responding to the Governor's tweet, State Education Minister Bratya Basu told reporters, "I would urge him not to act as the spokesperson of a particular political party and perform his constitutional duty in an unbiased way. He should cooperate with the chief minister."

On January 27, during a virtual meeting, Banerjee had asked TMCs MPs to also bring a motion in Parliament against Dhankar.

The tussle between the government and Governor found an echo Parliament as well. Sudip Bandyopadhyay, the TMC's Lok Sabha parliamentary party leader, told The Indian Express that on Monday, as President Ram Nath Kovind was exchanging greetings with senior leaders in Central Hall, he told him to remove the Governor. "As my turn came, I told (the President) him to remove the Governor to protect the parliamentary democracy system. Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu was also present there," he said.

UP PF scam

The alleged scam pertains to the investment of provident fund of UP Power Corporation Ltd (UPPCL) employees in crisis-ridden Dewan Housing Finance Corporation (DHFL).

All the three IAS officers held top positions at UPPCL during the period being probed by the central agency. Aggarwal was UPPCL chairman from 2013 till May 2017, and was succeeded by Alok Kumar. Aparna was managing director of the state PSU from October 2017 to November 2019.

"The approval to investigate these officers was sought in December last year from the state government as per law," an official said.

Under Section 17A of the Prevention of Corruption Act, the CBI cannot begin a probe against government officials without the approval of the government under which they were working at the time of the offence.

On the UPPCL investment, the CBI registered a case on a recommendation from the state government in March 2020, three months after a case had been registered by UP Police. Alok Kumar and Aparna had been questioned by CBI in connection with the case in 2020.

When contacted, Kumar, a 1988-batch officer of the UP cadre, told the Indian Express: "This case was unearthed on the basis of an enquiry ordered by me as UPPCL chairman, and I ordered for an FIR to be lodged in November 2019."

Aggarwal, a 1984-batch IAS officer of the UP cadre, did not respond to calls and messages from The Indian Express. Aparna, a 2001-batch officer of the UP cadre, could not be reached for comment.

In its FIR, the CBI had named as accused Pravin Kumar Gupta, former secretary of the UP State Power Sector Employees' Trust, and Sudhanshu Dwivedi, former director (finance) of UPPCL, for alleged criminal breach of trust, cheating and forgery. Both were arrested by the Hazratganj police in Lucknow in November 2019.

According to CBI officials, the provident fund of UPPCL employees was invested in fixed deposits of nationalised banks till October 2016. From December 2016, the PF was invested in PNB Housing allegedly following a proposal from Gupta and former UPPCL managing director A P Mishra, the officials said.

From March 2017 to December 2018, Gupta obtained an endorsement from Dwivedi and allegedly invested over 50 per cent of funds in DHFL in violation of Central Government guidelines that such funds cannot be invested in financial institutions other than scheduled commercial banks.

According to the FIR, this investment was made in deposit schemes of DHFL despite knowing that it was an "unsafe" company. A total of Rs 4,122.70 crore was invested in the DHFL, out of which a sum of Rs 2,267.90 crore is outstanding, officials said.

The CBI has alleged that Aggarwal was part of the decision to invest employees' funds in DHFL, and the first transfer of Rs 18 crore was made on March 17, 2018, when he was UPPCL chairman.

The first FIR in the case was registered on November 2, 2019, by the employees' trust secretary I M Kaushal at the Hazratganj police station. On the same day, the state government sent a recommendation to the Centre for a CBI probe.

On November 20, 2019, the RBI superseded the board of directors of DHFL, which had liabilities of close to Rs 84,000 crore at the time, and initiated bankruptcy proceedings "owing to governance concerns and defaults by DHFL in meeting various payment obligations".

Before the CBI took up the UPPCL case, the state government directed the UP Police's Economic Offences Wing (EOW) to investigate the matter. Subsequently, the EOW arrested 17 persons, including a brokerage firm owner, a chartered accountant, former employees of DHFL, and the then UPPCL MD Mishra. EOW also arrested then managing director of UPPCL A P Mishra.

On January 31, 2020, the EOW filed a chargesheet against Praveen Kumar Gupta, Sudhanshu Dwivedi and A P Mishra -- all three are currently lodged in jail.

Pegasus

The phones show "ample deployment of malware" that is consistent with digital finger-prints of Pegasus available in the public domain, the experts said.

One of the experts is Anand Venkatanarayanan, Strategic Adviser with Deepstrat, a New Delhi-based think tank. He has told the SC panel that a command and control (C&C) mechanism used to scan the internet for Internet Protocol (IP) addresses and domain names linked to Pegasus found many such IP networks "within India."

"The scan found a total of 1019 IP addresses mapped to 1014 domain names. The scan also found many IP networks within India identified by Autonomous System Numbers (ASN), from which the infected devices were talking to these C&C servers," Venkatanarayanan said in his deposition.

The ASN is a group of one or more IP addresses accessible on a network, which is run by one or more network operators. Network operators maintain a single, clearly defined routing policy and need ASN to control routing within their network and to exchange the routing information with other networks.

Venkatanarayanan told the SC panel that of the several ASN found in India, ASN 24560 is, particularly, interesting because it's typically reserved by networks for "very selective corporate clients including the Government of India."

Further evidence of the use of Pegasus, according to Venkatanarayanan, was the forensic analysis of phones of two journalists, which revealed digital finger-prints associated with the spyware.

A second security researcher told the SC panel that based on publicly available documentation for Pegasus, it is clear that a local "system integrator" was essential for deploying it here. In other words, a system in India had to be set up to conduct the surveillance.

"Knowing the level of Indian cybersecurity maturity, I think they needed to be handheld by NSO (the creator of the spyware). I do not see them using this totally independently," the second expert told The Indian Express.

The Supreme Court, had on October 27 last year, appointed a three-member panel, under the supervision of retired Supreme Court judge Justice R V Raveendran, to look into the allegations of unauthorised surveillance using Pegasus.

Maldives unrest

Out" campaign, and could be submitted when the country's legislative body, Majlis, reconvenes on February 3.

But it is still unclear if the government wants to be involved. An MDP politician, who has seen the draft, said some members of the party were advocating the legislation but there has been no formal discussions between the government and the party on it.

The draft Bill is said to have proposed a fine of 20,000 Maldivian Rufiyah, and six-month imprisonment or one-year house arrest, for those who insinuate that the Maldives is under the political, economic or military control of another country.

In recent weeks, President Solih has faced flak from anti-government protestors for "selling out" the country to India, and pressure from within the MDP to decisively stamp out the campaign.

"Such a legislation is required because it will put the government on alert about such things," said another MDP politician.

With an overwhelming majority of 65 in the 87-member Parliament, the proposed legislation is expected to go through if brought to the Majlis. "We have a huge majority in the Parliament. It does not matter which member has proposed the legislation. It is the general belief in the MDP that this legislation is required. Our security and India's security are linked," the politician said.

But some in the party are more cautious, pointing to the "extreme" provisions in "violation of democratic norms", and fear a backlash. They predict that even if the legislation goes through, it would not be acceptable to most within the ruling party in its present form, and would see a lot of amendments before it comes up for debate.

The anti-India campaign, which has picked up speed in the last two months with the involvement of Yameen and his Progressive Party, asserts that large numbers of Indian military personnel are present in the Maldives and that the government is planning to hand over the Uthuru Thilafalhu atoll to the Indian Navy.

In February 2021, India and Maldives signed an agreement for the development of the UTF Harbour during the visit of External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar. The Union Minister had tweeted that the project would "strengthen Maldivian Coast Guard capability" and described the two countries as "partners in development, partners in security".

The "India Out" campaign also targets the presence of military personnel operating aircraft gifted by the Indian government to the Maldives.

While the protestors say they are opposing only the presence of Indian security personnel on Maldivian soil, the campaign has led to insecurity in the large Indian expatriate population of teachers, and medical and tourism sector professionals. Last year, the Indian High Commission asked for more security after flagging to the Maldives government that its diplomats were being targeted repeatedly in social media posts.

Former President Yameen, who was seen tilting his country's foreign policy toward Beijing during his term in office, has been actively leading the protests since he walked free after his conviction in a money-laundering and embezzlement case was overturned in December 2021. One of the anti-India protests took place in front of the Chinese Embassy in Male.

The Speaker of the Majlis has already written to a Parliamentary committee on national security to investigate the "India Out" protests. "A former President should not be behaving in this manner," said former foreign minister Ahmed Naseem. "He should be thinking of another slogan to make himself popular," said the MDP politician.

MDP leader and former president Mohamed Nasheed had told *The Hindu* in January that it was getting "more and more crucial that the MDP remains in government. There is a lot of bad blood, especially with President [Abdulla] Yameen, and his campaign and narrative against India that is making our people very uneasy". He described India as Maldives's "first port of call for assistance".

Buoyant tax mop-up frees fiscal space

deficit target of 6.8 per cent of Gross Domestic Product in 2021-22, the Survey said. "The targeted focus on capital expenditure, with its resulting multiplier effects, will be vital in sustaining the economic growth," it noted.

The Survey — which is an economic report card for the current year — also argued that the banking sector was now well placed to support the economy as it is "well capitalised and the overhang of non-performing assets seems to have structurally declined." As and when the demand for credit returns, the banks are there to support it, while higher government spending will crowd in private investment, said Sanjeev Sanyal, Principal Economic Advisor in the Union Finance Ministry.

Elevated government spending, along with a push in capital spending, is possible as the revenue receipts of the Central government during April-November 2021 have increased 67.2 per cent (year-on-year), as against the 9.6 per cent growth for the full year as per Budget Estimates. The mop-up has been buoyant for both direct and indirect taxes. The gross monthly Goods and Services Tax collections have crossed the Rs 1 lakh crore mark consistently since July 2021, after quickly recovering from a dip in June 2021 following the second wave of Covid-19.

"As the economy grows further, the revenue collection from all the sources is expected to be more robust, which will help to strengthen the fiscal position on one hand, and create fiscal space on the other. Thus, it is expected that reaching the budget estimate for fiscal deficit during 2021-22 will not be a concern for the Central Government," the Survey said. The fiscal deficit for April-November 2021 has been contained at 46.2 per cent of Budget Estimates (BE) — as against 135.1 per cent of BE in April-November 2020 and 114.8 per cent of BE in April-November 2019.

Responding to the Survey's observation that at the end of 2021-22 the economy would have recovered to the pre-pandemic level, Congress leader and former Finance Minister P Chidambaram said, "In plain language, it means that on 31.3.2022 the GDP will be at the same level as it was on 31.3.2020… The two years have impoverished people… This is a time for contrition and change (of approach), not for boasts and no change."

The Survey noted higher capital expenditure has been central to the current year's budget and economic recovery. "The expenditure policy of the Central government during 2021-22 has a strong emphasis on capital expenditure. Budget 2021-22 had not only enhanced the expenditure estimates but also directed them towards more productive capital expenditure. During April to November 2021, capital expenditure registered a growth of 13.5 per cent over April to November 2020 and 28 per cent over April to November 2019," it said.

The government has budgeted a 34.5 per cent growth in capital expenditure this year over 2020-21 budget estimates, with emphasis on railways, roads, urban transport, power, telecom, textiles and affordable housing. The Survey commentary indicates the Budget for the next year could opt for milder fiscal consolidation while continuing the capital expenditure push.

Higher spending by states is another factor that is expected to support growth. "In the first eight months of the current financial year, states' capital expenditure has gone up by 67 per cent compared with the previous financial year's eight months. So in this uncertain pandemic era, governments have done what they are expected to do — front load growth and support it. On the back of it, it will crowd in the private sector, which will lead to job creation and employment growth," the new Chief Economic Adviser V Anantha Nageswaran said in a press conference.

FULL REPORTS ON www.indianexpress.com

Anganwadi workers protest outside CM's residence, demand better pay

SUKRITA BARUAH
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 31

HIGHLIGHTING INCREASED workload and prices, hundreds of anganwadi workers and helpers in the national capital have joined an indefinite strike, protesting near Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's residence on Monday demanding a substantial hike in their honorariums.

Currently, anganwadi workers in Delhi receive a monthly honorarium of Rs 9,678 and helpers receive Rs 4,839, which had been increased from Rs 5,000 and Rs 2,500 respectively following a strike in 2017. Now, they have demanded an increase to Rs 25,000 a month for workers and Rs 20,000 for helpers.

There are currently around 22,000 workers and helpers employed in anganwadi centres (AWCs) across Delhi.

"We are burdened with ground-level work for every department," said a 40-year-old worker, who has been working at AWCs since 2013. "When everyone has been at home during the pandemic, we have been going from home to home doing our duties," she said.

With the onset of the pandemic, the service of cooked food and supplementary nutrition provided at AWCs was replaced by a mechanism where anganwadi workers and helpers were tasked with distributing 'take home ration' to beneficiaries.

"We have been going twice a month to every house to distribute ration. On days that we do this, we work well into the evening, till 6-7 sometimes. We are the ones who have been providing records of who is vaccinated and who is left in each household and have also been pushing people to get inoculated. We are assigned duties for any survey that the government does. At the same time, we are not given any medical assistance, not even masks and sanitiser... Using the Poshan Tracker app, we have to fill in all information both in our registers and on the app," said a woman who has been working as an anganwadi worker for 15 years.

Normally, their work hours are supposed to be from 9 am to 2 pm.

But the introduction of a new government scheme in some AWCs has meant that the daily working hours have been extended to 4 pm.

"The Saheli Samanvay Kendra (SSK) is supposed to stay open till 4 pm so we are working for an additional two hours every day for the same pay; we have been doing this for almost a year now. It is work that is completely new to us. We have to mobilise women in our area and help them conduct self-help group meetings and motivate them to work," said a 46-year-old worker whose centre is functioning as an SSK.

At the protest site on Monday. *Sukrita Baruah*

While the immediate demand is for an increase in honorariums, the demand that these women on the frontlines be recognised as government workers and not just volunteers also ran through the protest.

For some older women, this demand is even more urgent.

"I have been working at this capacity for some 35 years now. But I have no pension or life insurance, and there has been no scope for promotion to better work. Through the pandemic, I have been working in the community. My husband is also getting old, and we have no savings," said a 55-year-old worker.

Government officials did not respond to calls seeking comment.

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(A Govt. of India Undertaking)
Circle Sastra Patna North: 2nd Floor, Chanakya Tower, R-Block, Patna-800 001

POSSESSION NOTICE
Possession Notice for Immovable Properties of borrower by the Authorised Officer
(For Immovable property)

Whereas
Punjab National Bank/ the Authorized Officer/s of the Punjab National Bank under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets & Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002, and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13 read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002, issued demand notice/s on the dates mentioned in the account calling upon the borrower to repay the amount as mentioned in the account within 60 days from the date of notice(s)/ date of receipt of said notice(s).
The borrower having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrowers and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the properties described herein below in exercise of the powers conferred to him under sub-section (4) of Section 13 of the Act read with Rule 8 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 on the date mentioned in the account.
The borrower's/ guarantor's/ mortgagor's attention is invited to provisions of sub-section (8) of Section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.
The borrower/s in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property/ies and any dealing with the property/ies will be subject to the charge of Punjab National Bank for the amounts and interest thereon.

Name of the Branch	Name of the Account/ Borrower	Name of the Owner of the property	Description of the property mortgaged	Date of Demand Notice	Date of Possession Notice Affixed	Amount outstanding as on date of demand notice
SK Puri UBI (59920)	**M/s Abacus Infocon Pvt. Ltd. Director-** Sri Nitish Singh and Smt. Kalawati Singh & Sri Raj Kishore Singh **A/c No.-** 0599250021456	**Mortgagor-** Sri Raj Kishore Singh S/o Late Bachu Prasad Singh and Smt. Kalawati Singh W/o Dr. Madan Murari	1. EM of Shop Bearing No.102 having super build up area 356 sq.ft. on 1st floor of Hira Panna Air Conditioned (AC) Market situated at Mohalla-West Boring Road under Police Station-Srikrishnapuri in the town & Distt of Patna bearing Holding No.116/108,Circle No.249, Ward No.34(old) & 14 (New) of Municipal Survey Plot No.51,53,54,60 & 62 part of Khata No.507,508,552/ 7 & 510/530, Thana No.7, Sheet No.134/88-89, Mauza-Dhakanpura now commonly known as Boring Road within Patna Municipal Corporation & within jurisdiction of PRDA & bounded as follows- N-Set Back of Building, S-Shop No.1 part, E-Shop No.101, W-Corridor absolute sale deed no.21263 dated 30.12.2008 standing in the name of Smt. Kalawati Singh W/o Dr. Madan Murari. 2. EM of Lease Deed No.1399 Dated 28.01.2008 for 66 Years w.e.f. 15.12.2007 in favour of Sri Raj Kishore Singh S/o Late Bachu Prasad Singh by Patna Municipal Corporation bearing Shop No.16, Having an area of 228.32 sq.ft. (21'1"x10'10") at First Floor, Block No.D of Maurya Lok Complex P.S.-Kotwali Distt-Patna within the Limit of Patna Municipal Corporation ward No.2, Circle No.6 within Jurisdiction of PRDA & Bounded as follows:- N-Stair of Passport Office, S-Shop No.15, E-Vernadah, W-Shop No.5	24.12.2019	28.01.2022	**Rs. 52,59,332.61** (Rs. Fifty two lakh fifty nine thousand three hundred thirty two and paisa sixty one only)

Date : 28.01.2022
Place : Patna
(Authorised Officer)
Punjab National Bank

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to notify that Medical Record Committee of RG Stone Urology & Laparoscopy Hospital (East of Kailash) Pitampura, Rajouri Garden, Gagan Vihar and Faridabad) as per guidelines has decided to discard all its Inpatient Files prior to 31-12-2016 and OPD files prior to 31-12-2018. Any patient who underwent treatment at above said hospitals prior to 31-12-2016 or visited OPD prior to 31-12-2018 and requires a copy of the treatment records should please contact the Medical Record Department before 01-03-2022. Please note that no such requests will be entertained thereafter.

RG Stone Urology & Laparoscopy Hospital® Simplifying Surgeries
REGD. OFFICE: F-12, East of Kailash, New Delhi-110065
Tel.: 011-71056000, 9899947937

SCHOOL OF EXCELLENCE IN PULMONARY MEDICINE
NSCB MEDICAL COLLEGE JABALPUR (M.P.)

LAST DATE - 21/02/2022

S.N./Est./Gaz./SEPM/2022/01
Jabalpur, Dated- 20/01/22

// Advertisement Notice //

In compliance of and consequent to Department of Medical Education Govt. of MP order no. F1-3/2018/55-2 Dated 26/05/2018, order no. F1-3/2018/55-2 Dated 12/26-03-2019 and order no. 257/2018/55-1 dated 06/08/2018 Madhya Pradesh Super Specialty Chikitsa Shikshak Adarsh Seva Niyam 2018 & Commissioner medical Education Circular no.5528/ Est./Gaz./2018 Dated 11/09/2018 regarding schedule of posts and Govt. of MP gazette (Extra-Ordinary) dated 14/08/2019 regarding state level reservation roster, & order no. 2-57/2018/55-1 dated 07/04/2018 Madhya Pradesh Swashasi Mahavidhyalaya chikitskiya Adarsh Sewa Niyam 2018, the posts of Professor/Associate Professor/Assistant Professor under teaching cadre in various super specialty & broad specialty subjects and medical officer under non teaching cadre are to be filled. Only those applicants will be eligible to apply who fulfill govt. of MP/MCI/NMC norms. Applications for the vacant posts are invited in the office of Director School of Excellence in Pulmonary Medicine, NSCB Medical College campus Jabalpur latest by 05:30 PM on **21/02/2022.** Those who have already applied in response to previous advertisement no S.N./Est./Gaz./SEPM/2021/11 Jabalpur Dated 26/11/2021 (last date 27/12/2021) need not apply again. Their application will be considered.
Vacancy position of the various posts Is as under:

TABLE NO. 01

S.N	Name of Post (Super Specialty)	Category wise vacancy					Total
1	2	3					4
		UR	EWS	ST	SC	OBC	
1	Professor Pulmonary Medicine	01	00	00	00	00	01
2	Associate Professor Pulmonary Medicine	00	00	00	00	01	01
3	Assistant Professor Pulmonary Medicine	00	00	01	00	01	02
S.N	Name of Post (Super Specialty)	Category wise vacancy					Total
1	2	3					4
		UR	EWS	ST	SC	OBC	
1	Professor-Respiratory Medicine	01	00	00	00	00	01
2	Associate Professor-Respiratory Medicine	00	00	01	00	00	01
3	Assistant Professor-Radio diagnosis	01	00	00	00	00	01

Note-01: As per above table , posts are reserved for - EWS- Economically Weaker Section, ST- Scheduled Tribe, SC-Scheduled Caste and OBC= Other Backward Classes. OBC and EWS category candidates must submit certificate regarding Non creamy layer.(where ever applicable)
Salary and Other benefits:
1. Lump sum per month:- Professor 03 Lakhs Associate professor 2.5 Lakhs Assistant professor 1.5 Lakhs. 2. HRA 10% of monthly Salary 3. 8% Annual increment 4. NPS- 14 % Employer contribution 5. Incentive under Ayushman yojna as per prevailing Rules 6. 50% revenue sharing in paid OPD & 20% revenue sharing in interventional treatment

TABLE NO. 02

No.	post	Pay Scale	Category wise Vacancy					Total
			UR	EWS	ST	SC	OBC	01
01	Medical officer	15600-39100+5400 & NPA as per prevailing rules	00	00	00	00	01	

Details of the advertisement & application format are also being provided on the Website of NSCB Medical College Jabalpur **www.nscbmc.ac.in** and Director medical education, M.P. website **www.medicaleducation.mp.gov.in**
For queries please Email to chest.jabalpur@gmail.com or send whatsapp message on 9425162882

कोरोना से बचने की तीन बातें बहुत जरूरी, टीका लगवाना, मास्क पहनना और अपनाना दो गज दूरी।

G-22029/21

Sd/-
Director and Member Secretary Saadhikar Samiti
School of Excellence in Pulmonary Medicine
NSCB Medical College Jabalpur MP

CENTRAL UNIVERSITY OF PUNJAB
Main Campus, VPO: Ghudda, Bathinda-151401

Admission to Ph.D. Programmes (January-2022 intake)
(For UGC/CSIR/ASRB-NET-JRF, ICMR-JRF, GATE, GPAT, DBT-BET & JEST (Physics) Qualified Candidates only)

Online applications are invited from **"UGC/CSIR/ASRB-NET-JRF, ICMR-JRF, GATE, GPAT, DBT-BET & JEST (Physics) Qualified Candidates only** for admission to **Ph.D. Programmes** in various Departments for Session 2021-22 starting from Jan/ Feb-2022.

Opening of the application form/portal: 01st February 2022,
Last date to apply: **21 February 2022**.
Detailed prospectus and online application form, available at university website **www.cup.edu.in**

CONTROLLER OF EXAMINATIONS

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION MANAGEMENT (MANAGE)
(An Autonomous Organization of the Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare, Govt. of India)
Rajendranagar, Hyderabad - 500 030. Tel: 040 - 24594509, Fax : 040-24015388
Mobile : +91 9705699930, www.manage.gov.in

CORRIGENDUM

In continuation to recruitment notice no. EN 43/7 published in the Employment News dated 22-28 January, 2022 regarding filling up of Group-A positions at MANAGE, following corrigendum is hereby issued :-
Vacancy of two posts of "Assistant Director" (Sl. No. 2 & 3 in the above said notice) under Direct Recruitment (DR) in the Pay Matrix Level-10 (Rs. 57,700/- to 1,82,400/-) in the category UR & OBC have been cancelled due to administrative reasons.

Sd/-
Dy. Director (Admn)

IN REMEMBRANCE

Corps of Signals salutes its following Signallers who left us for their heavenly abode during the month of January 2022.

(a) SS-51197K Captain Sahil Vats
(b) JC-388984F Naib Subedar Nani Gopal Acharya
(c) 15669695H Havildar Yogendra Prasad Yadav
(d) 15669783H Havildar SC Mouli Pulugu
(e) 15678433N Havildar Goutam Panda
(f) 15717103N Lance Naik Videsh Kumar
(g) 15739604N Signalman Ghanshyam Yadav
(h) 15742815F Signalman Keti Prasad

On behalf of the Corps, we sincerely pray to Almighty for peace to the departed souls & strength to the bereaved families to bear this irreparable loss.

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Indian Institute of Packaging

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DIPLOMA IN PACKAGING THROUGH CORRESPONDENCE
Course Duration 18 Months
Last date is extended till 28th February 2022
Eligibility:-Graduate in Science, Commerce, Arts, Engineering and Technology from UGC recognized University / Diploma from recognized technical board in Engineering / Technology are eligible for the course. Candidates should have minimum one-year industrial experience in the operational area like Production, Purchase, Marketing and Quality Control etc.
Age: No age limit
For more details, please visit our website - www.iip-in.com
& submit application form through Online.
Contact Details :-
Mr. Nitin Raibole, T & E; +91-8692943727 Ms. Sreeja Balaji, T & E; +91-8691853911
Mr. A.S. Ravi, A.D. T & E; +91-9869620990 Mr. Bhushan Surpur, A.D. +91-9821022112
Dr. Babu Rao Guduri, J.D. & Head T & E; +91-7208119238

POSSESSION NOTICE

Whereas, The undersigned being the Authorized Officer of the Citibank N.A. having at: 5th Floor, DLF Square, M-Block, Jacaranda Marg, DL City Phase - 2, Gurugram - 122002, under the Securitisation And Reconstruction Of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest [Act], (54 of 2002) and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(2) read with rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a **demand notice dated 26.11.2019 and Notice 09-01-2020 calling upon Mr. Dheeraj Yadav, Ms. Renu Yadav, Mr. Om Prakash (Hereinafter referred to as "Borrowers")** to repay the amount mentioned in the notice **Rs. 10,73,145/- (Rupees Ten Lakh Seventy Three Thousand One Hundred Forty Five only)** within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.

[The Borrowers having failed to the repay the above mentioned amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrowers and the public in general that the undersigned has taken symbolic possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him under sub section (4) of Section 13 of Act read with Rule 8 of theSecurity Interest Enforcement) Rules, 2002 on this **27th Day of Jan of the year 2022].**

The borrowers in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of the **Citibank N.A.** for an amount of **Rs. 10,73,145/- (Rupees Ten Lakh Seventy Three Thousand One Hundred Forty Five only)** and interest thereon.

[The Borrowers's attention is invited to provisions of sub-section (8) of Section 13 of the Act, in respect of time avalable, to redeem the secured assets.]

Description of the Immovable Property: All plot of a Apartment No. SCB 152, The Sky Court, DLF Garden City Sector 86, Gurgoan 122002.

Date: 27/01/2022
Place: Gurgoan
Authorized Officer
Citibank N.A.

EXPRESS Careers

MAHARASHTRA STATE SEEDS CORPORATION LIMITED
Mahabeej Bhavan, Krishi Nagar, Akola 444 104
Phone No.0724-2455093, 2542060 Toll Free 18002338877
CIN : U01200MH1976SGC018990
E-mail – hoadmin@mahabeej.com Website – www.mahabeej.com

Ref No: MSSC/ADMN/ASSTT/Advt/2022/134 **Date: 24/01/2022**

RECRUITMENT NOTICE

The Maharashtra State Seeds Corporation Limited, Akola a leading Public Sector Undertaking in India, engaged in seed production, processing and marketing of quality seeds of various crops and varieties with having annual turnover of more than Rs.500 Crores wishes to recruit dynamic professionals for the following posts.

Sr. No.	Name of the Post	No. of posts /Category	Pay Scale
01	General Manager (Processing)	1 (UR)	Pay matrix–S-27- Rs.118500-214100

The detailed advertisement containing qualification/experience/Pay Scale/Age limit & prescribed format of application etc. is available on Notice Board at Mahabeej Bhawan, Akola and in Job List at MSSCL's website i.e. **www.mahabeej.com.** The last date for submitting the applications is **05/02/2022.** Applications received after the due date will not be entertained.

Akola
Date 24/01/2022.
(Ruchesh Jaivanshi, IAS)
Managing Director

DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL-I, DELHI
4th FLOOR, JEEVAN TARA BUILDING, PARLIAMENT STREET, NEW DELHI-110001

OA/299/2019
Central Bank of India **Applicant**
VERSUS
Ravinder Jeet Singh Walia **Defendants**
To,
1. Mr. Ravinder Jeet Singh Walia
S/o Sh. Dalip Singh
WZ-213/B, Street No. 3, Village Tihar
Virender Nagar Jail Road, New Delhi **Defendant**

Whereas the above named applicant has instituted a case for recovery of **Rs. 16,39,957/- (Rupees Sixteen Lakhs Thirty Nine Thousand Nine Hundred Fifty Seven Only)** against you and whereas it has been shown to the satisfaction to the Tribunal that it is not possible to serve you in ordinary way. Therefore, this notice is given by advertisement directing you to make appearance before **Ld. Registrar on 04.03.2022 at 10.30 A.M.** (for further details kindly visit DRT website **www.etribunal.gov.in** Phone number : 011-23748473).

Take notice that in case of your failure to appear on the above mentioned day before this tribunal, the case will be heard and decided in your absence.

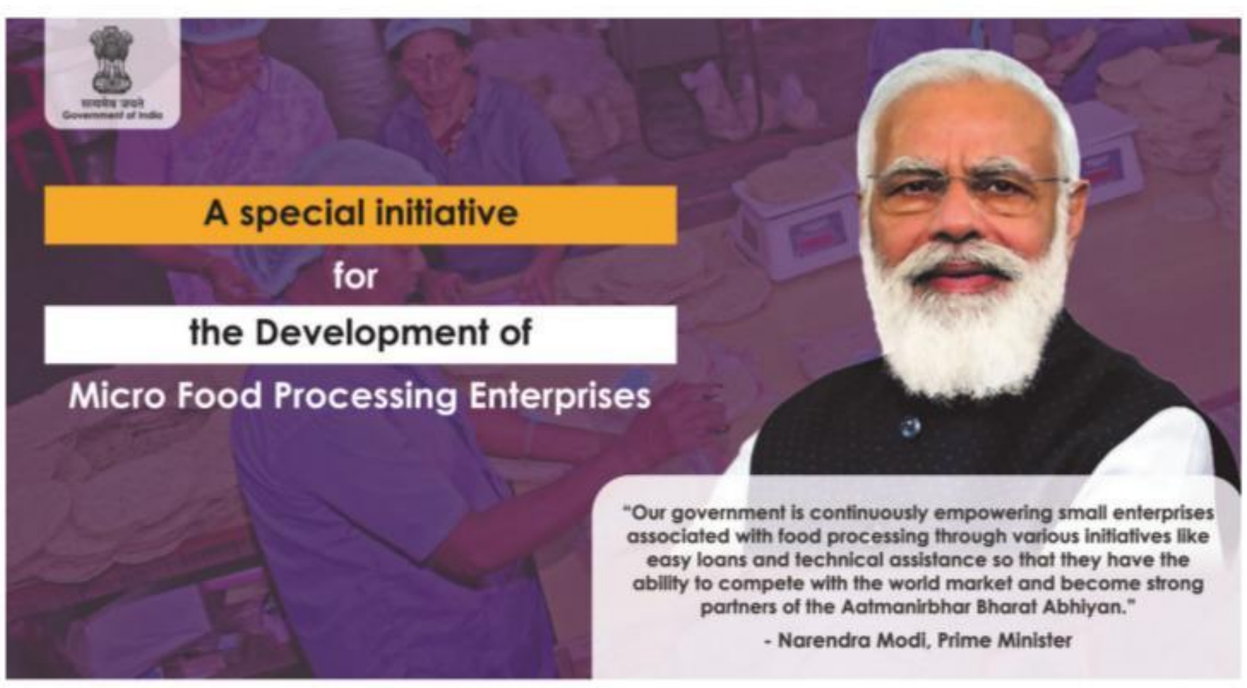
Due to ongoing Pandemic Situation, all the matters will be taken up through Video Conferencing and for that purpose:-

(I) All the advocates/Litigants shall download the **"Cisco Webex"** application/software;
(ii) **"Meeting ID"** and **"Password"** for the next date of hearing qua cases to be taken by 'Registrar/Recovery Officer-I/and Recovery Officer-II shall be available one day prior to the next date at DRT Official Portal i.e. **"drt.gov.in"** under the Public Notice Head.
(v) In any exigency qua that, the Advocates/Litigants can contact the concerned official at Ph. No. **011-23748473**.

Given under my hand and seal of the Tribunal on this **21 January, 2022**.

By order of this Tribunal
Seal
For Registrar
Respondent may contact under mention Phone number for further enquiry
Amit K. Dar, Ld. Registrar
DRT-I, New Delhi, Phone No. 011-23748473, Email: drt1delhi-dfs@nic.in

d 20 10hRLY(5)



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Ministry of Food Processing Industries, India
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CORONAVIRUS IN THE CAPITAL

VACCINATIONS IN LAST 24 HOURS	OMICRON CASES
10,127	549

PATIENTS IN HOSPITAL: 1,452

OXYGEN SUPPORT	427
VENTILATOR SUPPORT	128

DELHI: TOTAL CASES 18,30,268

	Total	Vacant
HOSPITAL BEDS	15,426	13,922
ICU BEDS	4,462	3,881

	Cases	Recoveries	Deaths	Tests
Jan 30	3,674	6,954	30	57,686
Jan 31	2,779	5,502	38	44,847
Total	18,729*	17,85,674	25,865	3,49,02,560

*Total active cases in Delhi

NOIDA	Jan 30	Jan 31
Cases	364	620
Deaths	1	3

GURGAON		
Cases	1,267	1,155
Deaths	3	2

GURGAON

Namaz row: SC to hear plea seeking contempt action against officials

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 31

THE SUPREME Court Monday agreed to take up urgently a petition seeking contempt action against the Haryana Chief Secretary and Director General of Police for allegedly failing to stop "fringe elements" protesting against Muslims performing Friday prayers in groups in "various locations... pre-approved by local authorities" in Gurgaon.

"I will look into it and post before the appropriate bench immediately," said Chief Justice of India N V Ramana, before whom the matter was mentioned.

Appearing for the petitioner, former Rajya Sabha MP Mohammad Adeeb, senior advocate Indira Jaisingh said the plea is not based only on newspaper reports. "We have ourselves filed complaints. We are not asking for any enforcement of FIR. This court has laid down preventive measures," she said.

The petition said that Friday prayer or jumma namaz, where Muslims offer prayer in congregation, "is considered an essential practise in Islam" and that "due to the footfall during the daytime in Gurgaon, Friday prayers have been offered by Muslim community at various locations that are pre-approved by local authorities for the said purpose".

It added that this "measure is necessitated due to lack of administrative foresight in town-planning and non-availability of spaces for namaz".

While stating that "the open locations used for the limited purpose of performing namaz is not in any manner of encroachment, but rather is conducted only after approval from the relevant... authorities...", it added that "as many as 37 such places had been designated for this purpose by the police and district authorities themselves".

Gurgaon had witnessed protests over offering of namaz in public places from members of right-wing outfits and locals for several months. *Archive*

However, in the last few months, "there has been a constant rise in incidents revolving around the said Friday prayers at the behest of some identifiable hooligans, with no local support, who portray themselves falsely in the name of religion and seek to create an atmosphere of hatred and one community across the city," the plea contended.

Pointing out that several complaints were given to the authorities, the plea filed through advocate Fuzail Ahmad Ayyubi said: "Despite the... complaints, there remained severe inaction at the hands of the contemnors and the incidents grew both in intensity and number every Friday at Gurgaon."

The refusal to take action against what is being "perpetrated by a miniscule group of fringe elements" amounts to contempt of the court's 2018 order in Tehseen S Poonawalla Vs Union of India and Others in which the apex court had laid down preventive measures to avoid communal incidents spiralling into lynching, etc.

In the case, the court "expected the law enforcement agencies to identify communally divisive tendencies... and to nip them in the bud", the plea said, urging the court to initiate contempt proceedings against the officials.

'Kapil Mishra hadn't surfaced when violence was planned'

Prosecution tells court during Umar Khalid's bail hearing

ANAND MOHAN J
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 31

OPPOSING FORMER JNU student Umar Khalid's bail in a UAPA case in connection with the Northeast Delhi riots, the prosecution Monday told a court that there was a proposal to incite violence by the main conspirators before BJP leader Kapil Mishra was even in the picture.

Dismissing the narrative of Mishra's complicity in the riots, Special Public Prosecutor (SPP) Amit Prasad read out portions of some WhatsApp chats and argued before Additional Sessions Judge Amitabh Rawat: "There was a proposal to incite violence as on February 17, 2020, which is the time when you draw a narrative that Kapil Mishra came there... Where was Kapil Mishra then? He has not even surfaced anywhere and your proposal to incite violence has surfaced."

"Blockade is not the picture. The picture is the riots that follow, the riots which happen. That is the reason despite the fact that you have blocked crucial locations, you say this. Kapil Mishra is not there till now, not a whisper on 17th. For that you need a name and a narrative," Prasad argued.

Khalid is accused in a UAPA case in connection with the NE Delhi riots

The SPP spent most of the hearing reading from the WhatsApp chats of several accused in the main conspiracy case, arguing that several incidents of rioting in the aftermath of the anti-CAA and NRC protests had much in common with the Delhi riots.

Prasad told the court that there was "prior planning" as "petrol bomb is not something you buy in a shop. You need someone to make it and someone who knows how to use it. There is prior planning. The first phase riots were also not spontaneous".

The SPP added that the FIRs registered in both incidents had identical patterns such as the involvement of common people: "The reason why first phase riots failed was that the desired mobilisation was not there. They couldn't do that much of mobilisation."

ASJ Rawat remarked that the "one common thread" he has seen on the arguments made by the SPP was that "when somebody has done something and he has said something in the group, then you say they have said something nasty, but when they don't, you say they are so clever".

Prasad told the court, "There is incitement to violence and silence. I will show from the record why this is a conspiracy of silence. It is my contention, which I will make good by their conduct."

BRIEFLY

Another assault case in Shahdara

New Delhi: Days after a young woman was abducted and allegedly gangraped in Shahdara, another case of assault has been reported from the same district. Police said two sisters were allegedly beaten up by a group of people Sunday evening after they objected to them selling drugs. According to police, one of the sisters said their younger brother was addicted to smack and she wanted him to stop. On Sunday, she and her sister followed their brother and found a woman who sells smack in the area. When the sisters objected, the woman called her husband and three other family members who hurled abuses and allegedly beat up the women publicly. The victims later called police. A senior police officer said, "We received a call about the incident. Two women were assaulted by two other women and their family members, who have a criminal history. One person has been arrested." Police said the others are on the run.

How will you pay DAMEPL: HC to Metro

New Delhi: The Delhi HC Monday asked the DMRC to provide it with an answer on how it will pay the money it owes to Anil Ambani-led Reliance Infrastructure-promoted Delhi Airport Metro Express Pvt Ltd. "On the next date of hearing, I don't want to hear anything here and there," said Justice Suresh Kumar Kait, while hearing a plea related to the 2017 arbitral award pertaining to Delhi Airport Metro Express Line. **ENS**

IN LINE

The President's Bodyguard at Parliament House on the first day of the Budget Session, Monday. *Prem Nath Pandey*

Kejriwal hands over cheques to farmers hit by unseasonal rain

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 31

CHIEF MINISTER Arvind Kejriwal Monday handed over compensation cheques to farmers whose crops were damaged due to unseasonal rains last October. The government has set aside Rs 55.35 crore for 45,000 villagers at present.

"Right after we came to power, a group of farmers told me how the unseasonal rains had destroyed their crops... We immediately announced a compensation of Rs 20,000 per acre. The amount was transferred within 2-3 months... Now, in October last year, a similar situation transpired. We have again started providing compensation at Rs 20,000 per acre... The logic is simple: if a farmer has faced less than 70% of the damage, the government will pay at the rate of 70%. If more than 70% we'll pay 100%.

CM Arvind Kejriwal

Since we made the announcement, our teams have been surveying the on-ground damage... Unlike other states that have the audacity to hand over Rs 10-20 as compensation to insult farmers, the Delhi government is paying a very respectable amount. A lot of these cheques are over Rs 2-3 lakh," he said.

Unseasonal rains in January have also damaged the mustard crop in several areas in the city. Kejriwal said a survey to assess loss to the crop will be started soon to fix compensation.

SHAHDARA RAPE-ASSAULT

2 booked for spreading misinformation online

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 31

POLICE MONDAY booked two persons for spreading misinformation on the Shahdara abduction and gangrape case and issued an appeal to the public not to name the young woman or post her photos and personal details. This came after several people posted tweets falsely claiming that she had committed suicide, while revealing her name and photos.

Police have booked the two under IPC sections 153 (wantonly giving provocation to cause riot), 153 A (promoting enmity between different groups), and 505 (b)(c) (statements conducing to public mischief with intent to cause fear in society).

The woman was abducted, allegedly gangraped and paraded by her neighbours in Shahdara last week. Police have arrested nine people and apprehended three juveniles.

R Sathiyasundaram, DCP (Shahdara), released a statement, clarifying that the woman was alive: "We sent a team to her house. The woman is absolutely safe and fine. The team is in touch with her... people who are posting her photos and revealing her name... are breaking the law. We have registered two FIRs against persons for spreading false rumours and giving the incident a religious/communal colour."

In one of the videos posted online, a group of women are seen thrashing the victim with belts and pipes while boys of the same family are seen harassing her.

On this, the DCP said, "We found that a certain group of people are trying to give the incident a communal colour. The motive is personal enmity. The accused blamed the woman for their 15-year-old son's suicide. There's no communal angle. We are taking necessary action against all those spreading misinformation."

CM to monitor compensation for families of govt staff who died of Covid

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 31

COMPENSATION FOR families of those Delhi government employees who died of Covid-19 will now be monitored by Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal. The cabinet Monday approved the formation of a dedicated group of ministers to handle these cases.

In 2020, the Delhi government had announced that in case healthcare workers, security/sanitation staff or any other government official, including police personnel, deployed on Covid duties by the government contracted Covid during their duties and died, their families would be given ex-gratia of around Rs 1 crore.

According to sources, several complaints had been made and it was alleged that there was a disparity in how the amount is being disbursed.

The group of ministers assigned for the task will be headed by Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia. Health Minister Satyendar Jain and Revenue Minister Kailash Gahlot will be part of the group.

The group will individually examine every case and send its recommendations to the CM as the final authority, a statement issued by the government said.

The statement also added that the compensation will be processed faster with the CM taking charge of the issue.

"The CM will take charge of dispensing compensation and act as the final authority in case of discrepancies... Families of Covid warriors will receive compensation in record time," the statement added.

Those eligible include temporary or permanent or contractual employees in the government or private sector who were deployed for Covid duties by the Delhi government.

Second dose begins for teens, camps at schools from today

ANONNA DUTT
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 31

AS MANY as 4,576 children received their second vaccine shot till 6 pm on Monday in Delhi — accounting for 21.7% of those who became eligible when the Covid vaccination drive opened up for the second dose in children aged 15-17 years. There were 21,029 children who had received their first shot on January 3, when the drive opened for the group, and became eligible for their second shot this Monday after completing the 28-gap period between two shots of Covaxin.

The children are eligible to receive only Covaxin shots.

There were 13,604 shots administered to children in total till Monday evening, as per data from the CoWIN portal. In comparison, an average of 9,001 shots were administered to children every day over the last seven days.

"The second dose opened for children today, but the response wasn't great. This is because the shots were only being administered at our designated vaccine centres today; we will start organising camps at schools tomorrow onwards. We started the camp mode a day later when the vaccination began for children at the beginning of the month. Now that children are aware that the camps will happen in schools, most are opting to get their shots there itself," said an official from Delhi's health department.

Another district official said they are hoping that the numbers will increase Tuesday onwards as the camps begin.

So far, at least 8,06,109 children have been administered their first dose, accounting for 77.5% of the estimated children in this age group in Delhi.

A total of 76,185 shots were administered on Monday till 6 pm, slightly higher than the median 70,301 shots administered during the previous week. There were only 10,127 shots administered in total on Sunday, when the number of people getting the shots usually decreases. In comparison, last Sunday 11,723 shots were administered, and 23,579 the week before.

4,576 children received their second shot till Monday 6 pm. *Amit Mehra*

The Indian Express had reported that the immunisation drive in Delhi has been reaching a saturation point — 100% of adults have received their first dose in the capital and over 82% have received their second dose.

"The numbers will increase a little again as we start giving the children their second dose of the vaccine from January 31," said the official, adding that the number of people receiving precaution doses is likely to increase after three months as most people who are eligible had the infection during the January case surge. Government guidelines state that a shot has to be given after a gap of three months from an infection.

So far, 2.71 lakh precaution doses have been administered. There are a total of 9.70 lakh healthcare and frontline workers, and people over the age of 60 years with co-morbidities eligible for the precaution doses.

Meanwhile, the city saw fewer than 3,000 cases (2,779) being recorded while the positivity rate stood at 6.20% from 44,847 tests, as per the daily health bulletin.

The number of fatalities, however, remained high, with 38 more deaths being added to the toll. This takes the total number of deaths in January to 758, crossing 740 recorded last June when the second wave was waning.

RUN-UP TO UP ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS

Those who raise voice against joblessness beaten up: Priyanka in Noida

ABHINAYA HARIGOVIND
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 31

"ELECTIONS NEED to be fought over real issues — development, why is there no water in your taps, why is there no electricity and no roads, why are people not able to find employment," said Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, All India Congress Committee General Secretary in-charge of Uttar Pradesh, as she kickstarted her door-to-door campaign from Noida on Monday.

"You are talking about 80 per cent and 20 per cent, why are you not talking about how many people are unemployed in Uttar Pradesh? Why are you not talking about how the percentage of money spent on education in the budget has reduced, why are you not talking about how much you have spent on health facilities? We are saying that the election needs to be fought on these matters," she said, adding that only political parties benefit from spreading casteism and communalism, not the public.

Earlier this month, UP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath had said that the Assembly election will be an 80 per cent versus 20 per cent fight.

"There are many students, young people whose careers have been destroyed... hoping that they will get jobs after giving exams. When they raise their voice, they are being beaten up. For them, we want to create a special recruitment commission that will understand these problems and solve them," she said.

Elaborating on the 'Ladki Hoon, Lad Sakthi Hoon' slogan that is part of the Congress campaign, Vadra said, "Women need to understand how much power they have. Women are not taken seriously in politics now.

Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, All India Congress Committee General Secretary in-charge of UP, kickstarted her door-to-door campaign from Noida, Monday. *Abhinav Saha*

Women must stand together, and say that we want to stand on our feet... you must make us safe and able, and give us the chance to fight."

Vadra, who was campaigning for Pankhuri Pathak, the party's candidate from Noida, said that people of Noida are unhappy.

"Nobody listens to them, nobody even sees the MLA, they only see his advertisements," she said. She added that it was significant that the Congress is contesting all 403 seats in the state after nearly three decades.

The Congress leader visited the JJ colony in Sector 8 as part of her door-to-door campaign, where a large crowd had gathered in the narrow lanes strewn with party flags and pamphlets, and people watched from terraces and shops.

"She told us we will get water connections and free electricity," said Rita Yadav, a 35-year-old resident of the colony, who met Vadra. "We don't have water connections, and the water we get is hard," she said. Her nephew, Ashu Kumar Singh, a 22-year-old college student, said that the water in the colony, mostly drawn from handpumps, was hardly fit to drink.

Uday Chandra Jha (60), a retired auto parts machinist who has lived in the colony for over 35 years, said, "Not much has changed over the years. The smaller jhuggis just became concrete buildings. There's still no clean water or proper drains, and the colony is still considered unauthorised."

दिल्ली सरकार
आप की सरकार

CORONA ISN'T OVER YET!
REMEMBER TO GET VACCINATED

Children in the 15-18 age group must get the Covid-19 vaccine

(All those born before 31st December, 2007 are eligible)

Health care workers and front line workers must get the Precaution Dose of Covid-19 vaccine

(On completion of 9 months/39 weeks from the date of 2nd dose)

60 years + with co-morbidities must take the Precaution Dose of Covid-19 vaccine

(On completion of 9 months/39 weeks from the date of 2nd dose)

"According to experts, Omicron spreads very rapidly, but there is no need to panic. Continue to wear your mask, follow all covid norms and when it's time, remember to get your Precaution Dose of the Covid-19 vaccine"

- Arvind Kejriwal

www.delhifightscorona.in

Directorate of Health & Family Welfare, Government of NCT of Delhi

DIP/Shabdarth/D/0199/21-22

epaper.indianexpress.com

DECISION 2022

UTTAR PRADESH • UTTARAKHAND • PUNJAB • GOA • MANIPUR

For Ritu, a battle of prestige in Kotdwar. *Express*

Khanduri's daughter faces uphill battle against candidate her father lost to

AVANEESH MISHRA
DEHRADUN, JANUARY 31

IN THE political history of Uttarakhand, former chief minister Major General (Retd) B C Khanduri is one of the tallest leaders. In 2022, with his loyalists now with other parties, his daughter Ritu Khanduri Bhushan is now in the field, fighting a fight her father once lost.

Khanduri first came to state politics with the plaudits of having piloted the A B Vajpayee government's grand national highways development plan as Union minister. A Brahmin, he enjoyed the support of the state's other dominant caste, Thakurs, even as his Army background helped among Uttarakhand's large defence population.

In 2007, the second Assembly election of Uttarakhand, the BJP had named Khanduri CM after it won and formed the government. However, just years later, after losing the Lok Sabha elections, it had replaced Khanduri with Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank'. The latter, in turn, lasted two years as well, as the BJP, under pressure from partymen who coined the slogan "*Khanduri hai zoroori* (Khanduri is needed)" brought Khanduri back five months before the 2012 Assembly polls.

Despite the flip-flops at the top, the BJP had come within winning distance – a performance largely attributed to Khanduri. However, with one seat more than the BJP, the Congress had formed the government. Adding insult to Khanduri's injury, he had himself lost from Kotdwar to the Congress's Surendra Singh Negi, reaffirming an Uttarakhand belief that its sitting CM never retains his or her seat. Since then, Khanduri has virtually receded into the background. Now 89, he is battling health issues and largely stays at home.

In 2017, the BJP had wrested back Kotdar, with Harak Singh Rawat defeating Negi. While Harak is now in the Congress, and has not got a ticket, Negi is again in the race as a Congress candidate, against Khanduri's daughter Ritu.

While Ritu had won in 2017 from Yamkeshwar, the BJP shifted her to Kotdwar this time, making this a prestige battle of sorts for the Khanduris.

VOTING ON FEBRUARY 14

BJP sources said Ritu wasn't too pleased with the change. Yamkeshwar would have been a safe seat for her, having been always won by women Brahmin candidates. However, the BJP chose Congress turncoat Renu Bisht for the seat, and Ritu was in no position to resist.

Plus, sources said, internal surveys indicated Ritu was not very popular at Yamkeshwar, seen as spending most of her time away. Ritu's husband is senior IAS officer and Union Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan, a crucial official in the Centre's anti-Covid efforts.

Ritu says her father remains as relevant as ever in Uttarakhand as he has worked for the state and brought it development. "I want to continue that tradition. My politics in the last five years has been about development," she says, adding she often consults him.

Negi will be a challenge, as will be the seat change, Ritu accepts, adding she is ready for it.

THE BIG FIGHT

Hindutva push vs OBC outreach: western UP contest down to this

Modi undented, but can SP damage enough of BJP OBC support is the question

LIZ MATHEW
FATEHABAD, KASGANJ, JANUARY 31

THE AGGRESSIVE pitch of Union Home Minister Amit Shah as he campaigns door-to-door in western Uttar Pradesh, which goes to polls in the first two phases, reflects the unease in the BJP over the traction the Samajwadi Party-Rashtriya Lok Dal alliance seems to be getting, at least in optics.

Shah took charge of the campaign soon after several OBC leaders left the BJP in quick succession for the SP. This is expected to help Akhilesh Yadav's outreach to OBCs, to blur caste lines and expand the SP beyond its Muslim-Yadav vote bank. In western UP, where the RLD holds considerable sway among Jats, that makes the SP-RLD combination a formidable one.

With father Mulayam Singh Yadav virtually retired, this is Akhilesh's first solo election. And in both the outreach to OBCs and bonhomie with RLD chief Jayant Chaudhary, he is banking big on the shake-up of the SP's base. The alliance also brings together Jats and Muslims, two substantial groups whose relations have been strained by the 2013 riots.

The OBCs constitute over 50% of the state's population. In 2017, the SP had contested 311 constituencies and won 47, with 21.82% votes, and the RLD 277 seats and won 1, with 1.78% votes. The BJP had got 39.7% votes.

"The SP strategy is working, its support base is getting bigger. Now that Jats are with us, more communities are backing us. Some of them had shifted to the BJP in 2017 and 2019," says Bhavsingh Gurjar, a vegetable vendor in Fatehabad, an SP supporter.

Laxman Mahore, another vegetable seller, chips in: "Price rise and unemployment are big issues. Even Dalits want to see the SP-RLD win this election."

Mahesh Chand Yadav, who runs a truck service centre in Agra, agrees "*sameekaran* (understanding)" is happening, but says that doesn't enthuse him about the SP-RLD's prospects. "It is not likely to make much difference other than making it a tough fight. A BJP defeat is unlikely as it has urban support. And while backwards are not vocal about it, the BJP has a vote bank in the name of Ram Mandir."

Jawar Singh, who runs a small roadside eatery in Mathura, brings up the anger among farmers, a large number of them Jats, against the BJP over the farm laws. "Jat farmers were already upset with the Yogi government, then came the police atrocities. Jats are self-respecting people. They will not forgive the BJP," Jawar says.

Babloo Kushwaha, a farmer in Agra, is certain there is a realignment of communities behind the SP and RLD. "*Pichadi jati ko ye tay karna hai unko dharam chahiye ya vikas* (the backwards have to decide whether they want religion or development)... The government has no issue other than temple. *Mandir se insaan ka pet nahin bharega* (A temple cannot counter hunger)," he says, adding, "More Kushwahas, Gurjars and Sainis will support the BJP this time."

One of the constituencies where the BJP seems comfortably placed is Kasganj. "In this constituency, the BJP has the support of Lodh Rajputs, Baghels, Thakurs and Rajputs. There is no major dent in its vote base," says Saurav Verma, a munim at a brick kiln.

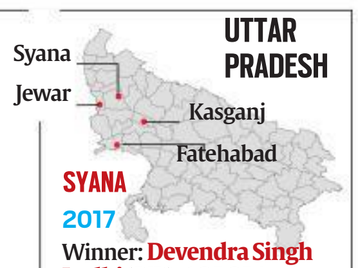
And then there is Modi, whose image remains largely intact. "Modi as a leader still evokes hope and people want to believe him. The backwards, cutting across caste lines, trust him. Once the PM hits the campaign trail, the BJP's graph will rise and the confusion over this so-called fight would disappear," declares Dinesh Kumar, a social worker in Kasganj.

FULL REPORT ON www.indianexpress.com

JEWAR

2017
Winner: **Dhirendra Singh** (BJP); 1,02,931 votes
Runner-up: **Vedram Bhati** (BSP); 80,762 votes

2012
Winner: **Vedram Bhati** (BSP); 67,479 votes
Runner-up: **Dhirendra Singh** (Cong); 57,967 votes



SYANA

2017
Winner: **Devendra Singh Lodhi** (BJP); 1,25,854 votes
Runner-up: **Dilnawaz Khan** (BSP); 54,244 votes

2012
Winner: **Dilnawaz Khan** (Cong); 76,646 votes
Runner-up: **Devendra Bharadwaj** (BSP); 52,223 votes

Land relief a drag but airport may see BJP through in Jewar

SHIVNARAYAN RAJPUROHIT
JEWAR, JANUARY 31

LUSH GREEN fields straddling roads are ubiquitous in fertile western Uttar Pradesh. But the landscape along Sikandarabad-Jewar road is dotted with dug-up agricultural land, heavy machinery and display boards announcing 'Noida International Airport, Jewar'.

Opinions on the airport, touted as "Asia's largest" and Yogi Aditayanath's dream project, however, are divided in the Jewar Assembly constituency of Gautam Buddh Nagar district, with anger high in six villages that are among the most affected. Jewar votes in the first phase, on February 10.

It's the discontent with compensation for land which SP-RLD candidate Avtar Singh Bhadana is tapping into. "The BJP MLA (sitting legislator Dhirendra Singh) has lured farmers into selling their land. I will ensure four times compensation," says Bhadana in Ranhera, which will be acquired in second phase of the project.

Bhadana's words find resonance among farmers, who are seeking four times the circle rate for their land instead of two times (the amount decided upon, for change in land use from 'rural' to 'urban'). "Do you think this is an urban area? Even if considered so, let the government apply the 'urban' circle rate here," says Naresh Kumar Sharma from Ranhera, a Thakur-dominated village.

Suresh Thakur, a farmer from the dominant community, says he too would like the hiked compensation, but not at the cost of voting out the BJP. "We should take what the government is offering."

In neighbouring Rohi village, where around 500 houses stood until a year ago, a few tents in the rubble symbolise the resistance. "We won't leave until the correct compensation is awarded. A group of displaced farmers has moved the High Court," says Ravi Kumar, a BSc final year student.

Campaigning in Kishorpur village, Dhirendra Singh says he raised the issue of land use change. "We had a meeting with Yogiji. They told us that an increase in compensation will make the project financially unviable," claims the MLA.

Dhirendra is also a familiar face, having first come to limelight during the Bhatta-Parsaul land agitation when he had taken Rahul Gandhi to the protest site evading a police cordon.

MLA Dhirendra Singh

The contender, Bhadana

Dhirendra praises Adityanath for "putting Jewar on the world aviation map". "Until a few years ago, Jewar's only claim to fame was Tappal (known for horseshoe and a horse festival)," he tells a gathering, to a loud cheer.

Dhirendra also claims it was his intervention that ensured the Noida authority made it mandatory for industries to absorb 40% of their workforce from Jewar.

Another factor in Dhirendra's favour is his acceptance across communities. Locals say that this could be the only UP seat where the BJP gets considerable Muslim support due to his personal equation with the minorities.

At Bhatta Parsaul, villagers say what they need is a farmer leader like former PM Chaudhary Charan Singh, to prevent continuous stand-offs on land acquisition. However, they don't see one in Charan Singh's grandson and RLD chief Jayant. "Is there any other alternative to Baba (Adityanath)? The Bhatta-Parsaul movement could not ensure a Congress victory. The protest against the Jewar airport will also have limited impact. Moreover, Dhirendra is our own," says Sanjay Sharma of Bhatta village.

FULL REPORT ON www.indianexpress.com

In Syana, 'missing' BJP MLA opens window of hope for SP-RLD combine

SEAT WATCH

AMIL BHATNAGAR
BULANDSHAHR, JANUARY 31

BJP MLA Devendra Singh Lodhi

ON A campaign tour last week, BJP's Syana MLA Devendra Singh Lodhi had no sooner entered Maakdi village in his constituency than he had to leave. Just as his SUV had stopped, angry locals surrounded it, shouting slogans. Lodhi sped away, without asking for votes.

Lodhi is one of the three sitting MLAs retained as candidates by the BJP in Bulandshahr. Four others MLAs have been dropped over voter dissatisfaction. In 2017, Lodhi had won the seat that's dominated by the Lodhi Rajput caste, followed by Muslims and the Jats. Lodhi had defeated BSP's Dilnawaz Khan by 70,000 votes. Khan had won the 2012 polls on a Congress ticket.

This year, Khan is pitted against Lodhi again, but as the SP-RLD combine candidate. And with the protests in Maakdi, the BJP MLA may not have it easy at all.

"There was a reason why everyone was angry with Lodhi. If anyone does a quick survey in the constituency, they will tell you that he never visits the region," says a resident, Baljeet Chaudhary. "A local representative should ideally visit the village... If nothing, just to listen to people's grievances. But he never did. They also know people ultimately vote for Modi or Yogi so it doesn't matter if they work or not,"

Besides Maakdi, Lodhi faced similar protests in villages such as Ratanpur, Longa, Kisaula and Bharana.

For Khan, it is RLD chief Jayant Chaudhary's "efforts during the farmer protests" and the schemes announced by the alliance that will bear fruit in Syana. "When I lost (in 2017), I thought people have faith in Lodhi. But over the next five years, he did not do anything for his constituency, and as a result there is mass protest...From farmers to backward classes, people across caste lines want to give us the mandate. On 10th, it will be evident," he told *The Indian Express*.

Lodhi was not available for comment. But, while the anger against him means an opportunity for the SP-RLD combine to grab Syana, BJP supporters are still optimistic – the reason, Yogesh Raj, a much revered local leader.

Raj is in jail for the December 2018 riots, which led to the murder of Inspector Subodh Kumar Singh is in jail. As he supported the BJP and was also a member of the Bajrang Dal, a large number of Syana voters may gravitate towards Lodhi.

FULL REPORT www.indianexpress.com

I HEREBY DECLARE

SUKHBIR SINGH BADAL
Shiromani Akali Dal (Badal), candidate from Jalalabad

TOTAL ASSETS: ₹202.61 Cr
CASH ₹1.5 Lakh

MOVABLE ASSETS: ₹80.74 Crore
IMMOVABLE ASSETS: ₹121.87 Crore
VEHICLES: Tractor Tafe, Tractor Holland
PROFESSION: M.P and Agriculturist
CRIMINAL CASES: 7
EDUCATION: M.B.A

AMARINDER SINGH
Punjab Lok Congress Party candidate from Lambi

CASH
Self: ₹55.2 Lakh
Spouse: ₹2.15 Crore
As 'Karta' of Hindu United Family (HUF): ₹17 lakh

MOVABLE ASSETS:
Self: ₹3.55 Crore
Spouse: ₹4.17 Crore
HUF: ₹2.7 Crore
IMMOVABLE ASSETS:
Seslf: ₹13.8 Lakh
Spouse: ₹2.25 Crore
HUF: Self acquired: ₹14.9 Crore
Inherited: ₹41 Crore
VEHICLES: Self: No vehicle
Spouse: Two vehicles- Innova and Innova Crysta – worth Rs 26 lakh
CRIMINAL CASES: 1
PROFESSION: Politician
EDUCATION: Pre Senior Cambridge from Doon School, NDA

CHARANJIT SINGH CHANNI
Congress candidate from Bhadaur

TOTAL ASSETS: ₹9.44 Cr

CASH: ₹1.5 Lakh
MOVABLE ASSETS: ₹2.62 Cr
IMMOVABLE ASSETS: ₹6.82 Cr
VEHICLES: Toyata Fortuner Sigma 4, Toyata Fortuner, Seltos
PROFESSION: Businessman
CRIMINAL CASES: Nil
EDUCATION: LLB, MBA (pursuing Ph.D)

TRACKING COVID IN ELECTION-BOUND STATES

	UTTAR PRADESH	PUNJAB	UTTARAKHAND	GOA	MANIPUR
Deaths	23,207	17,253	7,546	3,693	2,046
Deaths Today	18	39	10	11	5
Cases	6,226	2,347	1,200	500	346
	16,159	7,696	4,964	2,668	578
	Jan 22 – Jan 31	Jan 22 – Jan 31	Jan 22 – Jan 31	Jan 22 – Jan 31	Jan 22 – Jan 31

HASHTAG POLITICS

• Bitter Harvest

The ruling BJP is trying hard to win back farmers. Making its job more difficult, farmer leader Rakesh Tikait targetted the government on Monday, the day the farmers observed as 'Vishwasghat Divas' or 'Betryal Day'. Taking to Twitter, Tikait alleged PM Modi has "betrayed farmers" by not taking back police cases against protesters and not solving MSP and electricity bill issues.

4.4K LIKES, 1.3K RETWEETS IN 8 HOURS

PARTIES & CONTENDERS

As Channi drops in, on other side is AAP's 'humble man'

MAN AMAN SINGH CHHINA
CHANDIGARH, JANUARY 31

A VILLAGE mobile repair shop owner from Ugoke village in Barnala district, Labh Singh suddenly finds himself in one of the most high-profile contests of this Punjab election. Sunday evening came the surprise news that facing the Aam Aadmi Party candidate from the Bhadaur Assembly constituency will be Chief Minister Charanjit Singh Channi.

It will be the second seat from where Channi will contest, as the Congress seeks to cash in on the unexpected popularity of its last-minute CM. Chamkaur Sahib, the other seat from where Channi, Punjab's first Dalit CM, is fighting, falls in Doaba, which has a large Scheduled Caste population.

A reserved constituency, Bhadaur had been won by AAP in 2017, along with the nearby constituencies of Dirba, Barnala and Mehal Kalan, in the Malwa belt. AAP Bharaur candidate Pirmal Singh Dhaula had won comprehensively, beating the Akali Dal runner-up by over 20,000 votes, garnering 44.14% of the votes.

Proving this support was not a fluke, AAP had also won the Lok Sabha election from Sangrur under which Bhadaur falls in 2019. In the Bharaur Assembly segment alone, AAP's Bhagwant Singh Mann had a 10,000-vote lead over his rival.

Channi's entry now has shaken AAP's confidence of having it easy here.

Despite Dhaula switching to the Congress, its current nominee Labh Singh has been working hard on the ground. A 35-year-old who studied up to Class 12 before learning to repair mobiles and opening a shop, the father of two has proved a quick learner. After joining AAP full-time, he has risen from the ranks, from halka in-charge, to block and circle president.

Channi after filing his nomination on Monday. *PTI*

In the affidavit that he filed along with his nomination, he listed a Hero Honda 2014 motorcycle as his asset.

Labh Singh was also under consideration for a ticket in the 2017 Assembly polls before AAP decided to go with Dhaula, who has a strong presence among some worker unions in the area.

Labh Singh told *The Indian Express* he had been inundated with "congratulatory phone calls and messages" since the announcement regarding Channi. "I am being told by people that I will make history by defeating the sitting CM. My logic is simple. Had the CM done any development work in his own constituency of Chamkaur Sahib, he would not have had to shift to another seat," he argues.

The son of a driver, Labh Singh also talks about his humble background and says he is "fully committed to AAP". "I am associated with the party since 2013 when the party came to Punjab." He also claims that since Dhaula joined the Congresss, the latter's influence has waned.

Senior AAP MLA and Leader of Opposition, Harpal Singh Cheema, who is fighting from neighbouring Dirba, says the Congress hopes of increasing its influence in the area will fail. "They know these areas are AAP strongholds and they think they can turn the tide in Bhadaur and Barnala by fielding Channi. But they are mistaken. This young man, Labh Singh, who lives in a two-room house with his family, will defeat the CM," said Cheema.

AAP state president Raghav Chadha and Mann, its CM face, also assert this. "Channi is most welcome, but he will be defeated by an AAP ground worker. The people of the constituency are already saying that they will teach the CM a lesson," said Mann.

Chadha said Channi will lose from Chamkaur Sahib as well. "That is why he has come to Bhadaur.."

Speaking to mediapersons after filing his nomination from Bhadaur Monday, Channi said he was fighting elections from Malwa region to improve the area. "Badal saab was CM and then Capt Saab (Amarinder Singh) too (both contestants from Malwa), but this area has remained backward. I have come as 'Sudama' and the people of this area are 'Krishna' for me," he said.

On AAP claims that he would also lose Chamkaur Sahib besides Bhadaur, Channi said: "(Arvind) Kejriwal has lost his mental balance. I challenge him to fight against me from any seat."

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Or search PRATHAM SCORE on youtube

Economic Survey: Focus on need for crop diversification and substituting fertilisers

HARIKISHAN SHARMA
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 31

Observing that performance of the agriculture and allied sector has been "resilient to the Covid-19 shock", Economic Survey 2021-22 has highlighted the need for improving productivity of small and marginal farmers through development and implementation of small-holding farm technologies.

The Survey has also suggested the use of "alternative" fertilisers such as nano urea and organic fertiliser to protect soil.

The Economic Survey stated that the agriculture and allied sector grew at 3.6 per cent in 2020-21, and "improved to 3.9 per cent in 2021-22".

Referring to the findings of the National Statistical Office (NSO) survey on "Land and Livestock Holdings of Households and Situation Assessment of Agricultural Households", conducted during January 1, 2019 to December 31, 2019, the Survey said that fragmentation of landholdings has led to alternate sources such as livestock, fishery and wage labour becoming significantly important for an agricultural household.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in Parliament on Monday. *Anil Sharma*

"Increasing importance of allied sectors, including animal husbandry, dairying and fisheries in growth and income of farmers, indicates that focus needs to shift more towards harnessing the potential of allied activities. There is also a need to improve productivity of small and marginal farmers through development and implementation of small holding farm technologies," according to the Survey, tabled by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in Lok Sabha on Monday.

"Focus should be on use of new technology including drones and AI-based decision support systems, reduction in use of chemical fertilisers and use of low-cost organic inputs and supporting start-ups for innovations," it recommended.

The recommendations come at a time when the government is in the process of preparing a farmers' database by providing a unique ID. Besides, the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare has recently signed MoUs with 10 private companies, including ITC, Microsoft, Patanjali and Amazon.

The Survey stated, "There is a need to explore options and promote use of alternative fertilisers..." It said crop diversification needs to be given priority.

MGNREGS jobs still higher than pre-Covid levels: Economic Survey

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 31

THE DEMAND for work under Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) is still higher than pre-pandemic level, the Economic Survey 2021-22 said on Monday.

The Survey said, "An analysis of the latest data on demand for work under MGNREGS suggests the following trends in the rural labour market: (i) MGNREGS employment peaked during the nation-wide lockdown in 2020 (ii) the demand for MGNREGS work has stabilized after the second Covid wave; (iii) aggregate MGNREGS employment is still higher than pre-pandemic level..."

"During the nationwide lockdown, the aggregate demand for MGNREGS work peaked in June 2020, and has thereafter stabilized. During the second-Covid-wave, demand for MGNREGS employment reached the maximum level of 4.59 crore persons in June 2021. Nonetheless, after accounting for seasonality, the demand at an aggregate level still seems to be above the pre-pandemic levels of 2019," said the Survey, tabled by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in Lok Sabha on Monday.

The Survey said, "For some states like Andhra Pradesh and Bihar, the demand for work under MGNREGS has reduced to below the pre-pandemic levels during the last few months."

"Intuitively, one may expect that higher MGNREGS demand may be directly related to the movement of migrant labour i.e. source states would be more impacted," it said.

"In contrast, the demand for MGNREGS employment has been higher for migrant recipient states like Punjab, Maharashtra, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu..." it said.

Survey a 'self-serving cheerful assessment' of India's economy: Cong

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 31:

THE CONGRESS on Monday said the Economic Survey was a "self-serving cheerful assessment" that raises doubts about the Union Budget, which is set to be presented in Parliament on Tuesday.

The Union Budget's thrust should be to stimulate the "ailing economy, revive sectors, boost consumption, encourage investment and create jobs" but the Economic Survey does not see any of these as a problem, the Opposition party said.

"The Economic Survey repeats ad nauseum that at the end of 2021-22 the Economy would have recovered to the pre-pandemic level (2019-20)," said former finance minister and Congress leader P Chidambaram. He was referring to the assessment that India's GDP is projected to grow 8 to 8.5 per cent in the next fiscal. "This is a time for contrition and change (of approach), not for boasts..." he added, referring to the effects of the pandemic.

P Chidambaram also said the time is for 'change', and not 'boasts' by the govt.

Congress's Randeep Surjewala too said in a series of tweets that: "Self-serving cheerful assessment of economy raises doubts about what the Budget is set out to achieve..." It is a classic case of "what statistics say" versus "what they actually reveal". It clearly reveals the "gross economic mismanagement by the Modi government, he added.

PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS TO JOINT SITTING

Have to work hard for a grand, modern India by 2047: Kovind

HARIKISHAN SHARMA
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 31

LAUDING THE nation's response to Covid-19 and listing the government's schemes to reach out to the poor during the pandemic, President Ram Nath Kovind on Monday urged the people to "work hard" to build a "grand, modern and developed" India by 2047 — the centenary year of Independence.

Addressing both Houses of Parliament on the first day of Budget Session, the President said, "Due to consistent endeavors of my government, India has again emerged as one of the fastest-growing economies in the world."

"GST collection has consistently remained above Rs 1 lakh crore during the last several months. Inflow of $48 billion in the first seven months of the current financial year is a testimony to the belief the global investor community has in India's growth story," he said, adding that exports are "growing rapidly, breaking several past records".

"In the year 2047, the country will celebrate its centenary of Independence. We have to work hard now for building a grand, modern and developed India of that time. We have to ensure that our hard work leads to fruitful results in the end. We all have a stake, and an equal stake in this journey," Kovind said.

"Today the country's achievements and successes are as limitless as the country's potential and possibilities. These achievements are not of one institution or establishment; these are the collective achievements of more than a billion citizens of our country...."

"I have firm belief that together we will take our great Bharatvarsha to the pinnacle of its glory," Kovind said, in his last joint address of his current tenure that ends in July this year.

President Ram Nath Kovind (centre) along with Vice-President Venkaiah Naidu, Speaker Om Birla and Prime Minister Narendra Modi in Parliament on Monday. *Prem Nath Pandey*

In his 53-minute speech, Kovind devoted maximum time to various schemes of the central government, and the Covid-19 pandemic and vaccination. While government schemes have been part of all his previous joint addresses at the beginning of the Budget Session, one subject missing this time was "New India".

While he had mentioned "New India" thrice in his 2018 speech, he discussed it at length and mentioned it a dozen times during each of his addresses in 2019 and 2020. Last year, he mentioned "New India" once in his speech.

This year, Kovind mentioned reforms implemented under Atmanirbhar Bharat.

"In recent times, we have witnessed a new resolve of Atmanirbhar Bharat taking shape in the country. This resolve is getting further strengthened by the energy emanating from the slew of reforms. From new reforms in labour laws to reforms in banking sector, and to insolvency and bankruptcy code, this series of reforms is rolling on uninterrupted," he said.

The President began his speech by lauding the efforts of health workers and front-line workers during the pandemic. "We are in the third year of the pandemic caused by coronavirus. In these years, people of India have displayed profound faith in the democratic values, discipline and sense of responsibility," he said.

Discussing the government's free ration scheme, the President said, "Several major countries have experienced scarcity of food-grains and faced starvation during the Corona crisis. But my sensitive government ensured that nobody remained hungry during the worst pandemic in 100 years.

"My government is providing free ration to each poor household every month under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana. This is the world's largest food distribution program... reaching out to 80 crore beneficiaries for 19 months."

FULL REPORT ON
www.indianexpress.com

A speech of govt's failure, says Congress

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 31

THE CONGRESS on Monday said the President's address to the joint sitting of Parliament was about the "failures" of the BJP government in fulfilling the promises made so far.

Leader of Opposition in Rajya Sabha Mallikarjun Kharge said the government had promised four crore houses for the poor and double farmers' income by 2022 but has done nothing about these.

"Whatever they said have not been fulfilled. What (Narendra) Modi Ji has been saying outside, the President repeated those... There is no important issue in the President's address... and there is no thought too," Kharge said.

DELHI CONFIDENTIAL

MISSING PERKS

RAJYA SABHA Chairman M Venkaiah Naidu on Monday held a virtual meeting with leaders of various parties in the House on agenda for the Budget session, the first of its kind. While everyone appreciated that the meeting was taking place, Union minister Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi lamented that it also meant certain losses. In a lighter vein, he said although technology allowed Naidu to conduct the meeting, the leaders missed out on the delicious south Indian meals that are served on such occasions. Naidu assured the leaders he will make up for it at an appropriate occasion. TMC leader Derek O'Brien complimented Naidu for the first virtual interaction and urged him to consider the same for standing committee meetings as well.

RUNNING LATE

ALREADY BATTLING a controversy over recruitment drives, the Railways Ministry is lagging in filling up even its internal/routine vacancies at top levels. Three zonal railways are running without a full-time General Manager while the in-house process to appoint GMs is inordinately late. The post of Director General-Human Resource has also been vacant for a long time. Worse is the case of Divisional Railway Managers. Around 20 of them have completed their tenures and are simply waiting for next assignments since the past few months. Added to that is the mess over proposed Indian Railway Management Service, which never took off, but thanks to that Railways has not recruited Group A officers in the past two years and has no plans to recruit even this year.

WOMEN POWER

FOLLOWING THE spectacular show of their women motorcycle acrobats on Rajpath during Republic Day, the BSF on Monday launched an official Twitter handle in their name (@SeemaBhawaniBSF). It will be used to promote the motorcycle team and will put out videos and photographs of their antics apart from news about them, BSF officers said. A similar Instagram account has also been opened. Notably, the men's motorcycle team, which in 2015 got a thumbs up from US President Barack Obama, has got no such social media presence. "The idea behind the move is to use the appreciation and fame they have garnered to inspire women in general to achieve greater heights," a BSF spokesperson said.

BJP springs a surprise, fields MoS Baghel against Akhilesh

ASAD REHMAN & LALMANI VERMA
MAINPURI, JANUARY 31

ON A day Samajwadi Party (SP) president Akhilesh Yadav filed his nomination from Karhal Assembly constituency in Mainpuri district for the upcoming elections in Uttar Pradesh, the BJP sprung a surprise by fielding Union Minister of State Satya Pal Singh Baghel against him.

Baghel, currently an MP from Agra, also filed his nomination papers on Monday soon after Akhilesh submitted his papers.

However, this would not be the first time that Akhilesh Yadav and Baghel will be facing each other in an electoral contest. The two had contested from Firozabad in the 2009 Lok Sabha election. Baghel had then lost to Akhilesh.

Baghel, 61, a former police officer, was part of Samajwadi Party founder Mulayam Singh Yadav's security team, and was made the president of Mulayam Singh Youth Brigade in 1992. Mulayam introduced him into politics and fielded him in the 1998 Lok Sabha elections from Jalesar. Baghel won the election and repeated the feat twice in 1999 and 2004 Lok Sabha elections on an SP ticket. After the seat was scrapped in the delimitation exercise, the SP refused to field him from Firozabad, and gave the ticket to Akhilesh Yadav instead. Baghel then joined BSP and contested the 2009 Lok Sabha election from Firozabad where he was defeated by Akhilesh.

SP president Akhilesh Yadav files his nomination from Karhal in UP's Mainpuri district on Monday. *Courtesy: SP handout*

A year later, he was sent to Rajya Sabha by the BSP. He joined the BJP before the 2014 Lok Sabha polls and lost to SP's Akshay Yadav — son of SP leader Ram Gopal Yadav — from Firozabad. In 2015, the BJP appointed him the national president of its OBC Morcha.

In the 2017 Assembly polls, he contested from Tundla — a Scheduled Caste (reserved) seat — as he is a member of Dhangar subcaste and defeated BSP's Rakesh Babu. He was inducted in the Yogi Adityanath Cabinet. Two years later, he was elected as an MP from Agra — a reserved constituency. Prime Minister Narendra Modi gave Baghel the the portfolio of MoS (Law and Justice) last July.

Meanwhile, after filing the nomination, Akhilesh Yadav said that he chose to contest the election because he wanted to "stay ahead" of CM Yogi Adityanath.

This will be Akhilesh's first contest in an Assembly election. In 2012, he had chosen the route of Legislative Council membership to become chief minister. The election will write the country's "history", Akhilesh said, appealing people to defeat "negative politics".

Reject politics of revenge and riots: PM Modi in his first virtual rally for UP

MAULSHREE SETH
LUCKNOW, JANUARY 31

IN HIS first virtual election campaign rally for BJP in Uttar Pradesh, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday hit out at rival Samajwadi Party and urged voters to "unite against the divisive forces" in the name of "kamal ka phool (lotus flower)" and "roti (bread)".

The rally – Jan Chaupal -- was live streamed across 21 Assembly segments spread across five districts of western Uttar Pradesh, which will go to polls in the first and second phases of the seven-phase election. Addressing BJP workers and supporters, Modi said that while the BJP government made efforts to bring "*badlaav* (change)" in Uttar Pradesh in the past five years, the Opposition has the "intention of taking revenge from people".

"We are making all efforts to bring badlaav (change) in Uttar Pradesh, but they (BJP rivals) are sitting with the intention of taking *badla* (revenge) from you all. The language, the attitude, the history and work of those who have been given tickets by them in the election proves it," said Modi, addressing the rally for people in five districts of Saharanpur, Shamli, Muzaffarnagar, Baghpat and Gautam Buddh Nagar.

"Taking revenge is their ideology… I am happy that people of Uttar Pradesh are alert about those who have *'dangai soch'* (mentality of rioters). People of UP does not want to bring back the old days," he added.

Claiming that five years ago, goons and rioters were law unto themselves, Modi said the people of west UP would never forget that the region was "burning in the fire of riots" when Samajwadi Party was in power.

"Five years ago, *dabang* (goons) and *dangai* (rioters) were law unto themselves. Their saying was the government order. Traders were looted and daughters could not come out of their homes. Mafia used to roam freely under government patronage… Illegal encroachment of houses of poor, Dalits, deprived, backwards and traders had become the symbol of *samajwad* (socialism)," said the Prime Minister.

Praising Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, Modi said that it took five years for his government "teach the meaning of law" to the criminals.

Targeting Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav, Modi urged voters to compare the "clear vision of BJP" with that of the leaders of "fake *samajwad* (socialism)".

After voluntary retirement accepted, ED joint director set to join politics

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 31

ENFORCEMENT DIRECTORATE (ED) joint director Rajeshwar Singh on Monday officially announced joining politics. The officer, who probed high-profile such as 2G scam, Sahara case, CWG case, Aircel Maxis deal case, and the INX Media case, among others, announced on Monday said his application for voluntary retirement from the agency has been accepted by the Finance Ministry.

"Twenty four years of this caravan has come to halt. On this occasion I wish thank honourable PM @narendramodi, Home Minister @amitshah, Finance Minister @nsiatharaman and SK Mishra, Director of the Enforcement Directorate," Singh tweeted. He said he will use all that he has learnt in service of people and in protecting the country's integrity. Sources said Singh is trying for a BJP ticket from Suktanpur in UP. In 2014, too, Singh had tried his luck with BJP to get a ticket from Amroha. In a letter attached to the tweet, Singh said that since childhood he wanted to walk the path taken by his illustrious father, UP police officer Ran Bahadur Singh, and believed that nationalist politics was the way to serve the nation.

An encounter specialist with UP Police, Singh joined ED in 2007 and was absorbed in the agency in 2014. Singh's name cropped up during the 2018 battle between then CBI director Alok Verma and the agency's then special director Rakesh Asthana.

Singh had also written a scathing letter to then Revenue Secretary Hasmukh Adhia, asking him if he "developed animosity against him by siding with scamsters". The letter was leaked at a time when Supreme Court allowed the government to look into allegations against Singh with regard to a call he had received from Dubai.

Poll panel again extends ban on rallies, roadshows till Feb 11

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 31

THE ELECTION Commission on Monday announced it has further extended the ban on physical rallies and roadshows again for the upcoming Assembly elections across five states from January 31 to February 11.

The EC, however, granted more relaxations for conducting for physical public meetings in open spaces from February 1 in view of the improving Covid-19 situation across states.

"The Commission has also enhanced the limit for door-to-door campaigns. Instead of 10 persons, now 20 persons... will be allowed for door to door campaigns... Commission has now granted relaxation for the parties to the extent that indoor meetings of a maximum of 500 persons (instead of existing 300 persons) or 50% of the capacity of the hall or the prescribed limit ... (by the SDRF) is allowed," a statement by the poll panel said on Monday.

Cong fields distant relative of slain UP gangster Vikas Dubey from Kalyanpur

MAULSHREE SETH
LUCKNOW, JANUARY 31

THE CONGRESS'S fifth list of candidates for the Assembly elections in Uttar Pradesh sprung a surprise as the party fielded the mother-in-law of gangster Vikas Dubey's nephew and associate Amar Dubey from Kalyanpur in Kanpur district.

Amar was killed in a police shootout on July 8, 2020, almost a week after eight policemen were gunned down in an ambush in Kanpur's Bikru village when they were on their way to arrest Vikas. On July 10, Vikas was shot dead after he allegedly tried to flee while being brought back from Madhya Pradesh.

Amar's mother-in-law Gayatri Devi recently met Congress's Priyanka Gandhi Vadra.

Devi's daughter and Amar's wife Khushi was a newlywed at the time of the Bikru attack, and has been in jail since being arrested in its aftermath. Gayatri has been making a plea for Khushi's release, saying that her daughter got married to Amar only three days before the ambush and had no links to any criminal activities.

The brother of a police officer killed in Bikru criticised the move. Anoop Kumar Singh's brother Anuj said his family had not yet recovered from the shock of how political parties were giving patronage to Amar Dubey's family.

Classifieds

PERSONAL

I, ADNAN,S/O.MOHAMMAD ARIF, H,NO.B-154,KANCHAN KUNJ,MADANPUR KHADAR EXTN,2 SARITA-VIHAR, SOUTH EAST DELHI 110076 changed my name to ADNAN QURESHI. Permanently. 0040601001-4

I,Kawaljeet Kaur Sachdeva,W/o Preetpal Singh Sachdeva R/o-B-35,New Multan Nagar Shakur Basti Delhi-110056,have changed my name to Kawaljeet Kaur. 0040600986-3

I,Sunita,W/o Naresh Kumar R/o.A-88-1, Phase-2,New Palam Vihar, Choma (62) Gurgaon (Haryana)-122017, have changed my name to Sunita Devi. 0040600986-7

I,Santosh Devi W/o Lt.Raj Singh No.14390016Y NK R/o H/no.330, Chandan Vihar,Gali no.12,Sant Nagar,Burari,Delhi-84,have changed my name to Sunita Dagar. 0040600996-6

I,Sanjay Kumar,S/O-Shri Ganesh Rai,R/O-A-279,Plot No.Old 2042,First Floor,Vijay Vihar, Phase-1, Delhi-110085, have changed my name to Sanjay Kumar Rai. 0040600996-4

I,Kuldeep Kaur,D/o Sh.Kirpal Singh,R/o R-37,Ramesh-Park, Laxmi-Nagar, Delhi-110092, have changed my name to KULDEEP KAUR KALKAT,for all purposes. 0040600982-1

I,RAVINDER KUMAR S/O ISHWAR CHAND,C-2/61 RAJASTHALI APARTMENT PITAMPURA-110034,HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO RAVINDER GOEL. 0040600982-7

I,Naveen Kumar S/o-Sh. Mahender Singh R/o-HNo-74, Village Malahera,Post Offce-Shyed Shahpur Rewari, Haryana-123401,have changed my,name Naveen Kumar to Naveen Kumar Janghu for all, future purposes. 0040600982-8

I,NIKITA AGARWAL,W/O JITENDRA AGARWAL,R/o C-724 NEW FRIENDS COLONY,DELHI-110025,have changed my minor son name,from KAVIESH AGARWAL to KAVISH AGARWAL. 0040601001-1

I,LEHAR SAKINA,D/O KHISAL MEHD! NAQVI,R/O-S10/D-10 JOGABAI-EXT JAMIA NAGAR N.DELHI-110025,IN MY PASSPORT.NO-J0949348 MY NAME IS LEHAR SAKINA BUT MY CORRECT-NAME IS LEHAR SAKINA NAQVI. 0040600982-6

I,KHISAL MEHDI NAQVI,S/O-MANZAR HUSSAIN NAQVI,R/O-S10/D-10 SECOND-FLOOR JOGABAI-EXT JAMIA-NAGAR DELHI 110025 IN MY PASSPORT NO.G2774290,MY AND MY FATHER NAME WRONGLY-MENTION SYED KHISAL MEHDI AND MANZORUL HASAN BUT CORRECT-NAME IS KHISAL MEHDI NAQVI AND MANZAR HUSSAIN NAQVI 0040601001-7

I,DHOMSE RAHUL SADASHIV,S/O SH.SADASHIV SHIVRAM DHOMSE,R/O ROOM.NO.2, KRISHNA-NIWAS, TELCOSWADI, OLD DOMBIVLI, DOMBIVLI (WEST),THANE MAHARASTRA-421202, have changed my name,from "DHOMSE RAHUL SADASHIV" to "RAHUL SADASHIV DHOMSE,vide-affidavit dated-24-1-2022. 0040601008-9

I,BUDIDA PAVAN KUMAR,R/O-RZ-51/A1,HAPPY HOME APARTMENT GALI.NO.06 RAJ NAGAR-1,PALAM,NEW DELHI-110045,HAVE CHANGED MY MINOR SON'S NAME BUDIDA DIVANSH TO BUDIDA DIVANSH RAJ,VIDE-AFFIDAVIT,DATED-31/01/2022,BEFORE NCT-DELHI. 0040601008-7

I, Samreen Azim D/o Azim Ullah R/o A-346, Gali No-14, Part-4, Pusta-0, Sonia Vihar, Delhi-110094, that my Name and my Date of Birth has been wrongly written as Samreen Azeem and 29.05.1997 in my Passport N0090388, my correct name and Date of Birth are Samreen Azim and 14.01.1997 as mentioned in my Educational Documents 0070770657-1

It Is For General Information That I,Sageer,S/O-Alimuddin, R/O-B-66,Gali.No.19,Mansingh-Nagar,Old Mustafabad,North-East Delhi-110094,Declare That Name of My Late.Father Has Been Wrongly Written As Aleemudeen In My Passport No.K5137007.The Actual-Name Of My Late.Fater Is Alimuddin, Which May Be Amended Accordingly 0040601001-6

I Amar Lata Kataria Alias Amar Lata Sangwan D/o Tilak Raj Kataria And W/o Kaptan Singh Sangwan R/o F-89-90, Gali No-6, Wazirabad Village, Burari Delhi-110084, have changed my name to Amar Lata Sangwan 0070770641-1

I, Mohit Tater s/o Sh. Moti Lal Tater r/o C-88, C-3, Ramprastha Colony, Ghaziabad-201011 has changed my name from Mohit Tater to Mohit Raaj Tater for all purpose. Henceforth I may be known, called and referred to as Mohit Raaj Tater. 0040600909-1

I,Preetpal Singh Sachdeva,S/o Harbhajan Singh Sachdeva R/o-B-35,New Multan Nagar Shakur Basti Delhi-110056,have changed my name to Preet Pal Singh. 0040600986-2

I,Jasvir Singh,S/o Sube Singh, R/o H.No.1017,Near Lal Kuan, Jharsa, Gurgaon(Haryana)-122003,have changed my name to Jasbir Singh. 0040600986-9

I,Pawan Kaiyadan S/o-Kalyan Siingh, R/o C-602,C, Tower, Corona-Optus Housing Society-Sector-37-C,Gurgaon (Haryana),have changed my name to Pawan Kadian. 0040600986-6

I,PARDEEP S/O BHISHAM CHAND SOOD R/O HNO.216,GROUND-FLOOR, POCKET-D-16,SECTOR-7,ROHINI,DELHI-110085.HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO PARDEEP KUMAR SOOD. 0040600996-8

I,Neeraj Bala W/O,Dinesh Kumar R/O, DA-255, Block-D, Pocket-A, SFS Shalimar Bagh,Delhi-110088,have changed my name to Neeraj Kumari 40600996-9

I,Naresh S/o Bhimu Singh R/o.A-88-1, Phase-2,New Palam-Vihar,Choma(62) Gurgaon (Haryana)-122017,have changed my name to Naresh Kumar. 0040600986-8

I,TANYA VERMA,D/O SHIV KUMAR VERMA,R/O H54, GS APARTMENT, SECTOR-13, ROHINI,DELHI-85,have changed my name to TANYA KAUR. 0040601001-3

I,Mithlesh Kumar Maurya,S/o Ram Chander Maurya,R/o A-55,Hari Enclave, Part-2, Kirari, Delhi,have changed my name to Mithilesh Kumar Maurya. 0040600996-10

I,Manorama Devi,W/O-Shri Sanjay Kumar Rai,R/O-A-279, Plot No.-Old 2042,First Floor, Vijay Vihar,Phase-1,Delhi-110085,have changed my name to Manorama Rai. 40600996-3

I,MEENU SHARMA,W/O.VINOD KUMAR SHARMA,ADD-78-B,KRISHAN KUNJ EXTENSION, LAXMI NAGAR,DELHI 110092. Changed my name to MEENAKSHI SHARMA, permanently. 0040600982-3

I,Hemant,S/O Shri Sanjay Kumar Rai,R/O-A-279,Plot No.-Old 2042,First Floor,Vijay Vihar,Phase-1,Delhi-110085, have changed my name to Hemant Kumar. 40600996-2

I,Gaurav S/O-Vijay Goel, House. No-202/203, Ground-Floor Pocket.D-16 Sector-3, Rohini Delhi-110085,has changed my name to Gaurav Goel. 0040600986-5

I,GEETA W/o-VIVEK MANN, :HOUSE.NO.155, DEER-WOOD CHASE, NIRVANA COUNTRY, SOUTH CITY-II, GURGAON, HARYANA-122018,CHANGED MY NAME TO GEETA MANN. 0040600996-7

I,DHARAMVEER PARCHA,S/O-RAJPAL SINGH,R/O.H.No.-378, Makanpur,Indirapuram,Ghazia bad-U.P.-201014,have changed my name to DHARAMVEER SINGH FOR ALL MY FUTURE PURPOSES. 0040600996-5

I,Bagh Sampark Dhawan,S/o Vinod Dhawan,R/o.WZ-1110,ST-9, Sadh Nagar Palam-Colony South-West Delhi-110045, changed my name to Babu Sampark Dhawan. 40600996-1

I,Baleshi Fakirappa Navi,s/o-Fakirappa Somappa Navi, address-Kanakdas Colony, Ambedkar-Nagar, Angol, Belagavi, Karnataka-590006, changed my name,from Baleshi Fakirappa Navi to Balesh Fakirappa Navi,vide-Affidavit dated-29.01.2022 0040601008-8

I,Arun Jain,S/o Mohan Lal Jain,R/o D-14/235-237,Sector-7, Rohini,Delhi-110085,have changed my name to Arun Kumar Jain. 0040601001-2

I,Arti Nayak Arvind,W/o Arvind Madhav Nayak,R/o-30A Phase-I MIG-Flats Qutub Enclave Katwaria Sarai Delhi-110016, changed my name to Arti Arvind Nayak. 0040601015-1

I,Anil Verma,S/o Late.Dharam Pal Verma R/o-9/540, Peepal, Wala Mohalla,Badli Delhi-110042,changed my minor son's name Naman Verma to Naman Soni,for all,purposes. 0040600986-1

I,Abdul S/o Mohd.Abdul Kalam R/o-X/1131 Gali.No.4,New Chand Mohalla,Gandhi Nagar Delhi-110031,have changed my name to Aman for all purposes. 0040601001-5

I,ASS MOHAMMAD,S/O CHAND MOHAMMAD.R/O.H-39, 4th-floor,L/S ABUL-FAZAL ENCLAVE PART-1,JAMIA-NAGAR,SOUTH-DELHI-110025,Inform that Given Name-AAS and Surname-MOHAMMAD,for all purposes. 0040601015-2

I, Satish Kumar S/o Hari Kishan Sharma R/o-1834/137, 1st Floor, Shanti Nagar, Tri Nagar, Delhi-110035 have changed my name to SATISH SHARMA for all future purposes. 70770645-1

I, Rattan Lal S/o Pushkar R/o-D-816 Madipur-Colony Paschim Vihar Delhi-110063, have changed my name to Ratan Lal Dhaliya Permanently. 0040600919-3

I, Neha Periwal w/o Sh. Mohit r/o C-88, C-3, Ramprastha Colony, Ghaziabad-201011 has changed my name from Neha Periwal to Neeha Periwal for all purpose. Henceforth I may be known, called and referred to as Neeha Periwal. 40600910-1

I,GULSHAN JAHA,W/O MOHAMMAAD SHAHIN,ADD-59B,B-BLOCK, 3RD-FLOOR NEW-SEELAMPUR GARHI MENDU, NORTH-EAST DELHI-110053. Changed my name to GULSHAN, permanently. 0040600982-5

I, MEENA SINGH D/O Sh. TRILOK SINGH, R/o 10A, Vishwakarma Park Laxmi Nagar Delhi-110092 have changed my name and hereafter shall be known as to MIINAL SINGH. 0040600849-8

I, Daneshwer Singh Rana S/o Baleshwar Singh Rana R/o SH-21, Sec-71, Noida Gautam Buddha Nagar-201301 U.P.,have changed my name to DANESHWAR SINGH RANA for all future purposes 0070770648-1

I, Amit Sharma declare that names of my son and wife were mistakenly printed in birth certificate as Aaradhya and Shewta. Both will now be named as Akshat Sharma and Shewta Sharma. 0040600949-1

I Shally W/o Vikram Singh R/o RZ C 17, Vishnu Garden, New Delhi-110018 have changed my name to Shelly 0040600945-1

I Rukaiya D/o Irfan Ahamed R/o-49-A Block-C Khanpur Extension Delhi-110062 have changed my name to Rukkaiya Permanently. 0040600919-2

I Neha Malhotra D/o Sh. Virender Kumar R/o- JG3/223B, First Floor, Vikas Puri, New Delhi-110018 have changed my name to Neha Chachra 0040600946-1

I Suresh Kumar S/o Ram prakash Agarwal R/o-1246 Sector-14, faridabad Haryana have changed my name to Suresh Agarwal 40600919-1

I Manju W/O, Ajay Kumar R/o C-4e/11/177,janakpuri West Delhi-110058 have changed my name to Manju Lakhani for all purposes. 0040600943-1

I Mangla Chaturvedi, R/o F 004, BPTP Park Floors 1, Sector 77, Faridabad have changed my name to Mangala Chaturvedi for all future purposes. 0070770620-1

I Aprajita D/O, Shabnam Upadhyay R/o B404 Ramkrishan Apts Plot 12 Sec 23 Dwarka have changed my name to Aprajita Upadhyay for all purposes. 0040600944-1

I ANJUM KHAN W/O SHAHID KHAN R/O A-400, GALI NO.24, CHAUHAN BANGAR DELHI-53, have changed my Name From SANA KHAN to ANJUM KHAN for all future purposes. 0040600914-1

I,Prapti D/O,Dinesh Kumar R/O,DA-255, Block-D,Pocket-A,SFS Shalimar-Bagh Delhi-110088,have changed my name to Prapti Pundir. 40600982-2

I,MOHAMMAD SHAHIN KHAN, S/O.BABBOO KHAN,ADD-59B, B-BLOCK, 3RD-FLOOR,NEW SEELAMPUR GARHI MENDU, NORTH-EAST DELHI-110053. Changed my name to MOHAMMAD SHAHIN, permanently. 0040600982-4

LOST & FOUND

Lost my original Share Certificate & Possession Slip against my Flat No.C-601, Lake View Apartment, Sunder Vihar,New Delhi-110087. Finder may Contact-Dhirender Kumar Gupta at the above mentioned address or my elder brother Virender Kumar Gupta R/o-53,Punch Kuin Road,N.Delhi-110001. 0040600962-1

Lost original-conveyance deed of M/S Krishna Fruit Industries, Plot.No.G-12, Lawrence-road, Industrial-area, New-Delhi 110035,which belongs to Jagdish Chander Sachdeva (proprietor). NCR has been lodged in the police-station crime branch,Delhi.I am not responsible for any misuse of lost conveyance deed.If found,please contact-at above address to Jagdish Chander Sachdeva or Vimal Sachdeva on mobile:9810042748. 0040601001-8

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is informed to the public that my client Sh. Sachin Vats S/o Sh. Ishwar Sharma R/o KH 271, Kavi Nagar, Ghaziabad is purchasing a residential property bearing No.KG-116, Kavi Nagar, Ghaziabad from Sh. Sanjay Deshwal S/o Late Sh.Iqbal Singh R/o KG-116, Kavi Nagar, Ghaziabad. Sh. Sanjay Deshwal S/o Late Sh.Iqbal Singh has acquired the title of the property through Courts Judgment dated 12.03.2018 passed in Civil Suit No.37/2014, Sanjay Deshwal V/s Santosh and others on the basis of WILL dated 10.05.2013 executed by his father Late Sh. Iqbal Singh. Sh. Sanjay Deshwal S/o Late Sh.Iqbal Singh has lost/ misplaced the Original Allotment Letter dated 04.05.1966, Possession Letter dated 16.12.1970 & Original Lease Deed dated 07.12.1966.

Sh.Sanjay Deshwal S/o Late Sh.Iqbal Singh has lodged an FIR dated 29.11.2018 with Police Station Kavi Nagar.

Anybody (Banking/Financial Institutions/ Individuals) having any kind of interest/ claim/ title/ objection on the basis of said Original Allotment Letter dated 04.05.1966. Possession Letter dated 16.12.1970 and Original Lease Deed dated 07.12.1966 may submit the same to the undersigned within 7 days of the publication. Please note carefully that if any objection is not received within the notice period, the said property will be treated as un-encumbered, marketable and no claim will be accepted on the basis of the Original Allotment Letter dated 04.05.1966, Possession Letter dated 16.12.1970 and Original Lease Deed dated 07.12.1966.

VIVEK SEHGAL (ADVOCATE)
Office : IInd-F-4, Nehru Nagar, Ghaziabad-201001 (U.P.)
Mob.: 9811144654

PUBLIC NOTICE

General public is hereby informed that my clients Mukesh Kumar S/o Lt. Shri Ram Singh & Smt. Meena W/o Lt. Sh. Rakesh Kumar, R/o: C-144/2, C-Block, Yadav Nagar, Delhi-110042 are the absolute & legal owners in possession of Plot bearing no. 781, area measuring 300 Sq.yds. out of Khasra no. 547 & 548, Abadi known as Gali no. 12, Jeewan Park, situated in Area Siras Pur, Delhi 110042. My clients have lost/misplaced the chain of original document of above mentioned plot. If found please contact: 9810763002.

Sd/-
MANOJ KUMAR LOHAT
Advocate
Ch. No. 1022, Rohini Courts, Delhi-85

PUBLIC NOTICE

My Clients Sh. Ashraf Ali & his Wife Guddi Both R/o RZD-51, Nihal Vihar, Nangloi, Delhi-110041 do hereby Disown/Debar their son Bablu & his Wife Ashamona from all their movable & immovable properties & severe their relations from them as they are no more in their control. If anybody dealing with them shall be doing at his/her own risk & responsibility. My clients shall not be responsible for pros & cons arise therefrom.

Sachin Kumar (Advocate)
RU-6, Pitampura, Delhi

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform to the general public that my client Mrs. Shashi Sharma W/o Late Rohtash Sharma R/o H.No. B-20/2, UGF Old No. B-25/2 Kh. No.77 Ganesh G.No.4, Arjun Mohalla,Maujpur Delhi-110053 have disowned her son Amit Sharma from all of their movable & immovable properties, and severed all her relations with him. Anybody dealing with him will do so at his/her own risk, my clients Mrs. Shashi Sharma will not be responsible of any act done by them in any case.

Kartikay Bhaskar-Advocate
Harsh Bela 123/9 Sant Nagar Burari, Delhi-110084 Ph.9540808980

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given to the General Public on behalf of IDFC First Bank Ltd. that Mrs. Chander Kanta Sharma was the owner of Property No. 31, in Block-C, situated at Ashoka Niketan, Delhi "the said property" by virtue of Conveyance Deed dated 03.04.2001, & after her demise Mr. Narinder Kumar Sharma & Mrs. Neelam Sharma became the Joint owners of the said property, by virtue of registered will of Mrs. Chander Kanta Sharma, & presently Mr. Narender Kumar Sharma became the owner of Entire Third Floor, with roof rights, of the said property, by virtue of partition deed dated 10.05.2018, registration No. 4019, executed between Mrs. Neelam Sharma & Mr. Narinder Kumar Sharma, All persons are hereby informed that Mr. Narinder Kumar Sharma want to sell Third floor, with roof rights, to Mr. Vinod Jain & Mrs. Anita Jain who is taking Loan for purchase the said floor from IDFC First Bank Ltd., if anybody has any objection/s upon the ownership of Mr. Narinder Kumar Sharma in respect of the said floor its sale /Mortgage/ Litigation, & any kind of objection kindly inform the under-signed in writing on the below mentioned address within 10 days of the present.

Kumar & Associates (Advocates & Consultants) 200, 2nd Flr, 23 Shivaji Marg, Moti Nagar,N. Delhi-15 M 011-41313570,38 kumarassociates.advocate@gmail.com

PUBLIC NOTICE

The General Public is hereby informed that my client's **KAVITA MATHUR** W/o Mr. Azad Mathur, R/o 103 Moon Light, Pocket-14, Sector-20, Rohini, Delhi-110086, is the purchaser of DDA LIG Flat No-104, on First Floor, in Pkt-14, Phase-3,Sector-20, Rohini, Delhi-110086, purchased from Mrs. Tripta Bhandari, Vide Conveyance Deed dated 3.2.2000, vide its Regd. No.1235, in Addl. Book No. 1, Vol. No. 189, on pages 5-6 on dated 8.2.2020, in the office of SR, Delhi, is going to borrow loan against her above noted property from Cholamandalam Investment and Finance Co. Ltd., That the Original Chain Documents related to the said property has been lost/misplaced by my client for which my client lodged a NCR vide LR No. 83514/2022. details of lost documents are as under :-

1. Photocopy of allotment letter & Possession letter & Possession certificate issued by Delhi Development Authority, in favour of Mrs. Tripta Bhandari, in respect of the said property.
2. Original General Power of Attorney & ATS & Will of Attorney Dt. 1.9.1997 executed by Mrs. Tripta Bhandari, in favour of Mr. I.S. Bhasin, in respect of the said property.
3. Original Special Power of Attorney Dt. 1.9.1997 executed by Mrs. Tripta Bhandari, in favour of Mr. I.S. Bhasin in respect of the said property.
4. Photocopy of Conveyance Deed Dt. 3.2.2000, executed by President of India in favour of Mrs. Tripta Bhandari, through SPA holder of Mr. I.S. Bhasin in respect of the said property.

If any person found the same please return the same to my client above mentioned address within 06 days & contact my client at mobile no.**9810205274**. **J.C. Trikha** (Advocate) M-4, Civil Wing Tis Hazari Courts, Delhi-54.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Re: Property No. 587-B, area measuring 135 sq. yds., in Ward No. 3, out of Khasra No. 1151/3, situated in the Lal Dora abadi of Village Mehrauli, New Delhi, hereinafter referred to as "said property".

Notice is hereby given to the general public including Banks, Financial Institutions, etc., that our client, Mr. Abhiram Kumar S/o Shri Arun Singh R/o House No.177-F, Tyagi Appartment, Ward No.2, Mehrauli, New Delhi-110030 (hereinafter called the "Purchaser") intends to purchase the said property from Mr.Sanjay Sharma and Mr Sandeep Sharma, both sons of late Shri Chiranjiv Sharma R/o 587-B, Ward No. 3, Mehrauli, New Delhi-110030 (hereinafter called the "Seller"). In this connection, the seller has informed the purchaser that they are the joint owners of the said property, being the legal heirs of late Shri Chiranjiv Sharma. The seller has also informed the purchaser that the said property devolved on late Shri Chiranjiv Sharma upon the death of Mrs.Chandro who owned the said property by means of Sale Deed executed by Mr.Moal Chand in her favour and registered as Document No.2128, I Book No.1, Volume No.561, pages 197-200 on 19/05/1960 in the office of concerned Sub-Registrar-V at New Delhi. Mrs.Chandro had executed and registered a Will in favour of Shri Chiranjiv Sharma vide Document No.6219 Book No.III, Volume No.1043, pages 147-148, on 27/08/2002 in the office of Sub-Registrar-V at New Delhi. The seller has further informed our client that the said property is duly mutated in their name in the record of South Delhi Municipal Corporation vide letter dated 27/07/2016 and the said property is not mortgaged anywhere and there is no charge or dispute or any litigation pending regarding the said property.

Any person including Bank/s, Financial Institution/s, relative/s having any claim, right, title or any interest of any nature whatsoever into or upon the aforesaid property is hereby called upon to make the same known, in writing, with documentary evidence, by Registered AD Post, to the undersigned at the address mentioned herein below within 07 days of publication of this notice and in the event of no response having been received to the notice, the title of the seller to the said property shall be deemed to be clear of any charge or encumbrance of any nature whatsoever and any subsequent claim shall not bind our client/Purchaser, in any manner whatsoever.

Amit Kumar Khurana,
Advocate
M/s Intellective Law Offices
A-74, LGF, Defence Colony,
New Delhi -110024

For All Advertisement Booking
Call : 0120-6651214

PRESS NOTICE

Water Resources Department

Tembhu Lift Irrigation Project Management Division, Ogalewadi

e- TENDER NOTICE NO. 26 FOR 2021-2022

Main Tender Portal : https://mahatenders.gov.in

CIRCLE : SANGLI IRRIGATION CIRCLE; SANGLI

DIVISION : TEMBHU LIFT IRRIGATION PROJECT MANAGEMNT DIVISION OGALEWADI

Online electronic bids in B-1 form for below mentioned works is invited by Executive Engineer, Tembhu Lift Irrigation Project Management Division, Oglewadi Water Resources Department Maharashtra Governement from non registered or registered contractors with Public works department, Government of Maharashtra contracters. Tender documents are download from Government website https://mahatenders.gov.in. Executive Engineer, Tembhu Lift Irrigation Project Management Division, Oglewadi reserves the right to reject / accepet of tender. Tender is not accepted with any condition.

1	Name of Work	Construction of RCC foot bridge at ch 6/200 and protection wall in Gabion to Abutment of VRB in km 1 to 31 on Link Canal II and construction of Protection wall on U/S and D/S side of Tunnel in Km 16 & 17 on Link Canal II and replacement of Old expansion Joint and Providing and laying new expansion Joint for Yerla aqueduct For Tembhu Lift Irrigation project Tal Karad Dist Satara
2	Cost Put to Tender	1) Rs. 162.18 Lakhs
3	E Tender period	Dt 01.02.2022 to 15.02.2022
4	E-Tender Opening	Dt 17.02.2022

All information of above E tender is available on below link.
1. https://mahatenders.gov.in **2.** Any changes in E Tender will inform on above website
3. Name of Officer and Address :- Executive Engineer, Tembhu Lift Irrigation Project Management Divison Ogalewadi Tal- Karad, Dist-Satara Ph.No. 02164-271327
E-mail- eetlimd@gmail.com

sd/-
Executive Engineer,
Tembhu Lift Irrigation Project Management Division Ogalewadi Karad

dgipr/2021-22/4004

IMPORTANT NOTICE

For the convenience of rail passengers, Railways have decided to augment the following Trains temporarily from the dates shown against each:-

AUGMENTED COMPOSITION OF TRAINS

Train No. & Name	Augmented by	Date w.e.f. (Originating Station)
12571/12572 Gorakhpur Jn.-Anand Vihar T.-Gorakhpur Jn. Humsafar Express	AC 3 Tier-1	**From Gorakhpur Jn.:** 02.02.22 to 30.03.22 **From Anand Vihar T. :** 02.02.22 to 30.03.22
15065/15066 Gorakhpur Jn.-Panvel-Gorakhpur Jn. Express	AC 3 Tier-1	**From Gorakhpur Jn.:** 01.02.22 to 31.03.22 **From Panvel :** 01.02.22 to 31.03.22
15159/15160 Chhapra Jn.-Durg Jn.-Chhapra Jn. Sarnath Express	Sleeper-1	**From Chhapra Jn.:** 01.02.22 to 31.03.22 **From Durg Jn. :** 01.02.22 to 31.03.22
15013/15014 Jaisalmer - Kathgodam-Jaisalmer Ranikhet Express	AC 3 Tier-1	**From Jaisalmer.:** 01.02.22 to 31.03.22 **From Kathgodam :** 01.02.22 to 31.03.22
12511/12512 Gorakhpur Jn. - Kochuveli-Gorakhpur Jn. Raptisagar Express	Sleeper-1	**From Gorakhpur Jn.:** 03.02.22 to 31.03.22 **From Kochuveli :** 03.02.22 to 31.03.22
12589/12590 Gorakhpur Jn. - Secunderabad Jn.- Gorakhpur Jn. Express	Sleeper-1	**From Gorakhpur Jn.:** 02.02.22 to 30.03.22 **From Secunderabad Jn. :** 02.02.22 to 30.03.22
12591/12592 Gorakhpur Jn.-Yesvantpur Jn.-Gorakhpur Jn. Express	Sleeper-1	**From Gorakhpur Jn.:** 05.02.22 to 26.03.22 **From Yesvantpur Jn.:** 05.02.22 to 26.03.22

For any kind of information such as detailed Time-Table and stations enroute etc., passengers are requested to contact RailMadad Helpline No. 139 or may visit Indian Railways website: www.enquiry.indianrail.gov.in or NTES App.

All norms of the State and Central Government regarding COVID-19 may please be followed in the trains and at the Railway stations. All other precautions associated with COVID-19 should also be ensured.

RailMadad Helpline No. **139**
Visit RailMadad website: www.railmadad.indianrailways.gov.in
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Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav
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SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE 220/2022

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NORTHERN RAILWAY

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

Name of work and its location	30-Elect-13-T-2021-22-E3 Electrical work in connection with renovation of Civil Engineering works in DRMs Office, N.R., New Delhi.
Approx cost of the works in	Rs. 44.50 lacs
Address of the office	Sr. Divil Elect. Engineer/General, New Delhi.
Earnest Money	Rs. 89,100.00
Date & time of submission of tender	22.02.2022, 12.00 Hrs.
Opening of tender	22.02.2022, 12.00 Hrs.
Website & notice board	www.ireps.gov.in & Sr. Divl. Elect. Engineer/General, New Delhi.

211/2022

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

DELHI JAL BOARD: GOVT. OF NCT OF DELHI
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (CIVIL) PLANT SDW S/E
SRINIWASPURI: NEW DELHI: 110065

PRESS N.I.T. No. 54 (2021-22)

S. No.	Name of Works	Estimated Cost (Rs.)	Date of release of tender in E-procurement solution	Last date/time of receipt of tender through e-procurement solution
1	Renovation and development of park for new Type-V Jal Vihar Kilokari SPS. 2022_DJB_215604_1	36,19,724/-	29.01.2022	14.02.2022 up to 3.00 P.M.
2	Renovation and face lifting of Administrative block Kondli STP. 2022_DJB_215604_2	39,49,815/-	29.01.2022	14.02.2022 up to 3.00 P.M.

* Further details in this regard can be seen at **https://govtprocurement.delhi.gov.in/nicgep/app**

ISSUED BY P.R.O. (WATER)
Advt. No. J.S.V. 1065(2021-22)

Sd/-
EX. ENGINEER (CIVIL) PLANT SDW S/E

"STOP CORONA; Wear Mask, Follow Physical Distancing, Maintain Hand Hygiene"

MAHATMA GANDHI STATE INSTITUTE OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION, PUNJAB

Institutional Area, Sector 26, Chandigarh 160019, India
Phone:+91-172-2793589/91 I Fax: +91-172-2793589-90 Extn: 400
E-mail: helpdesk.mgsipa@punjab.gov.in
Website: https://mgsipa.punjab.gov.in

NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER

[Ref. NO.MGSIPA/C/531, dated 31.01.2022]

Online bids are invited in electronic tendering system from the reputed firms/ contractors for the contract of providing **"Security/ Watch and Ward in MGSIPA campus".**

Important Dates

Document Download/ Sale Start Date and Time	01.02.2022 10.00 AM	Document Download/ Sale End Date and Time	23.02.2022 02.00 PM
Bid Submission Start Date and Time	01.02.2022 10.00 AM	Bid Submission End Date and Time	24.02.2022 04.00 PM

IMPORTANT INSTRUCTIONS

1. The tender document can be downloaded from/ submitted at https://eproc.punjab.gov.in website.
2. For any clarification/ difficulty, please contact on i) 0172~2970263/2970284 for e-tendering process and ii} 0172-2793588-591 for eDNIT clauses.
3. Bidders shall have to pay the requisite fee (earnest money, document/ processing etc.) through online mode as per e-portal https://eproc.punjab.gov.in
4. Corrigendum / addendum etc., if any, shall be published only on the web-site (https://eproc.punjab.gov.in).

12364/Pb

Director General

कार्यालय, नगर पालिक निगम, रतलाम (म. प्र.)

क्रमांक/राजस्व/219/2021 **:: ई-निविदा आमंत्रण ::** रतलाम, दिनांक 25/01/2022

नगर पालिक निगम रतलाम द्वारा पी.पी.पी. मॉडल आधारित आउटडोर मीडिया नियम 2017 के अन्तर्गत रतलाम नगरीय क्षेत्र में 10 गैन्ट्री गेट/ 10 एलईडी डिस्प्ले बोर्ड/ 10 सार्वजनिक शौचालय के निर्माण, वित्त, संचालन, रखरखाव का कार्य 10 वर्ष की अवधि के लिये एजेंसी की नियुक्ति हेतु **https://mptenders.gov.in** के माध्यम से ऑनलाईन निविदाएं आमंत्रित की जाती है। कार्य का विवरण निम्नानुसार है:-

क्र.	ऑन लाईन निविदा क्र.	कार्य का विवरण	कार्य स्थल का नाम	कार्य हेतु निर्धारित धरोहर राशि रूपयें	निविदा प्रपत्र मूल्य रूपयें	कार्य की समयावधि
01	181360	पी.पी.पी. मॉडल आधारित आउटडोर मीडिया नियम 2017 के अन्तर्गत रतलाम नगरीय क्षेत्र में 10 गैन्ट्री गेट/ 10 एलईडी डिस्प्ले बोर्ड/ 10 सार्वजनिक शौचालय के निर्माण, वित्त, संचालन, रखरखाव का कार्य 10 वर्ष की अवधि के लिये।	सम्पुर्ण रतलाम शहर	3,00,000/-	5,000/-	कार्यादेश दिनांक से 06 माह

1. उपरोक्त निविदाओं के निविदा प्रपत्र ऑनलाईन भुगतान कर, क्रय किये जा सकते है। निविदा क्रय तथा प्रस्तुत करने की समय सारणी निम्नानुसार है:-

Publish Date:	26-01-2022 17:00	Pri Bid Meeting Date:	07-02-2022 15:00
Document Download/Sale Start Date:	26-01-2022 17:15	Bid Submission End Date:	28-02-2022 17:30
Bid Submission Start Date:	26-01-2022 17:30	Bid Opening Date:	01-03-2022 15:00

उपायुक्त- नगर पालिक निगम, रतलाम

DELHI JAL BOARD: GOVT OF NCT OF DELHI
OFFICE OF THE ACE (M)-2
2142 JANTA FLATS G.T.B.ENCLAVE DELHI-110093

PRESS NIT No- 66 (2021-22)

S. No.	Name of Work	Amount put to tender	Date of release of tender in E- procurement solution	Last date / time of receipt of tender through E- Procurement solution
1.	Engagement of 10 nos S.G Beldar for on contract basis for maintenance of sewerage system in Gokalpur AC-68	Item rate	28-01-2022 2022_DJB_215542_1	11-02-2022 2:10 PM
2.	Engagement of 10 nos S.G Beldars for one year on contract basis for maintenance of sewerage system in Seemapuri Constituency (AC-63) under AEE(M)-63	Item rate	28-01-2022 2022_DJB_215542_2	11-02-2022 2:10 PM
3.	Engagement of 10 nos unskilled workers for one year on contract basis for maintenance of sewerage system in Rohtash Nagar Constituency AC-64 under ACE(M)-2	Item rate	28-01-2022 2022_DJB_215542_3	11-02-2022 2:10 PM

PRESS NIT No- 67 (2021-22)

S. No.	Name of Work	Amount put to tender	Date of release of tender in E- procurement solution	Last date / time of receipt of tender through E- Procurement solution
1.	Engagement of 10 nos unskilled workers for one year on contract basis for maintenance of water supply network of Seemapuri Constituency (AC-63) under AEE(M)-63	Item rate	28-01-2022 2022_DJB_215550_1	11-02-2022 3:10 PM

Further details in this regards can be seen at **https://delhi.govtprocurement.com**

ISSUED BY P.R.O. (WATER)
Advt. No. J.S.V. 1067 (2021-22)

Sd/-
SUKHPALCHAUHAN
Ex. Engineer (T)-2

"Stop Corona; Wear Mask, Follow Physical Distancing, Maintain Hand Hygiene"

NORTHERN RAILWAY

E-TENDER NOTICE

Sr. DEE/EMU/GZB for and on behalf of President of India. Invites open e-tender under single packet system for the under noted work:-

1	GeM Bid Number	GEM/2022/B/1897281 dt.31.01.2022
2	Name of the Work	Hiring of 01 no. road vehicle 7/8 seater (Tavera, Scorpio, Xylo, Tata Sumo, Innova, Mahindra, Bolero etc.) to attend breakdown & derailment for 24 x7. (round the clock) for 3000 KMS per month at EMU

Majithia wife files papers from Majitha

Amritsar: Shiromani Akali Dal leader Bikram Singh Majithia's wife Ganieve Kaur Monday filed her nomination papers from the Majitha assembly constituency.

This development leads to speculation that Majithia may now fight only from the Amritsar East seat against Punjab Congress chief Navjot Singh Sidhu. Majithia had earlier filed his nomination papers from both Majitha and Amritsar East constituencies. **ENS**

ACTIVIST MURDER: SC ASKS HC TO DISPOSE OF APPEAL

New Delhi: Supreme Court on Monday turned down the prayer to stay the operation of Gujarat High Court's order suspending life sentence to former BJP MP Dinubhai Boghabhai Solanki, convicted in the July 2010 murder of RTI activist Amti Jethwa. A bench headed by Justice A M Khanwilkar disposed of SLP by Jethwa's father Bhikhalal Jethva, with the direction that appeals pending before HC against conviction of the accused be heard and decided expeditiously, and not later than December 2022, advocate Abhimanue Shreshtra, who appeared for the petitioner, said. **ENS**

SC gives Majithia protection from arrest till February 23

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 31

Bikram Singh Majithia

SUPREME COURT on Monday granted Shiromani Akali Dal leader Bikram Singh Majithia, who is facing charges under the Narcotics and Psychotropic Substances Act, 1985, protection from arrest till February 23 while observing that criminal cases are suddenly emerging out of Punjab in the run-up to the Assembly elections.

Chief Justice of India N V Ramana, heading a three-judge bench, said Majithia will have to surrender before a trial court on February 23 and seek regular bail.

During the arguments, the CJI told Senior Advocate P Chidambaram, who appeared for the state government, "Sorry to say, there was another mentioning regarding Simarjit Singh Bains where a case has been registered against him. Sorry to say, suddenly these criminal cases are coming up before elections. At least allow to file nominations."

"We are not saying hold your hands and not control drug mafia. But let the elections take place on February 20."

The remarks came as Chidambaram told the bench that "it is a gross case of international drug trafficking" and there is need for custodial interrogation of the accused.

"Punjab is sinking under a drug trail and we have to send a message that drug trafficking will not be taken lightly. Else the future of Punjab youth is damned... I am not saying throw him into a dark hole. But there is a need for custodial interrogation in this case," he said. "This is not a political action. Let them surrender on February 21 and we move the trial court for custody."

The bench, also comprising Justices A S Bopanna and Hima Kohli, then sought to know when the elections are due. On being told that it is on February 20, the bench ordered: "Heard the counsel. For the present, we are protecting the petitioner from arrest till February 23. On February 23, he has to surrender before trial court and apply for regular bail."

The court also directed that the bail application be considered expeditiously as and when it is filed.

The CJI then told Chidambaram: "Please advise your state that such cases are not filed before elections. Another case is coming tomorrow."

Chidambaram responded: "I know political vendetta exists. But I assure this case has a long history... I assure you there will be no politically vindictive action in the state."

Appearing for Majithia, Senior Advocate Mukul Rohatgi said it is a "classic case of political vendetta". "He is a member of prime opposition. He has never dealt in drugs or been found with anything. FIR is a telltale itself. There cannot be a grosser case of vendetta or political humiliation."

Rohatgi contended that the FIR was filed in December 2021 on the instructions of a senior police officer just "a month before the elections". "No drug trafficking by him and the offence period is from 2004 to 2014... Majithia who has had a clean record is now being hounded," he said.

Majithia has been booked under the NDPS Act on the basis of a 2018 report of a probe into a drug racket operating in Punjab.

The SAD has announced him as its candidate from Amritsar East where the Congress has fielded Punjab Congress president Navjot Singh Sidhu.

Majithia had earlier approached the Punjab and Haryana High Court, which on January 24 rejected his prayer for anticipatory bail, but gave him interim protection for three days so that he could appeal to Supreme Court.

In his appeal, Majithia said the "case is blatantly political in nature and has been registered with a malafide objective to target the petitioner who is the mainstream leader of opposition party, one month prior to polls in the state".

CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK REVISION

State panels asked to help prepare school syllabus with NEP features

SOURAV ROY BARMAN
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 31

THE CENTRE expects state-level committees formed as part of the ongoing curriculum framework revision exercise to recommend ways to incorporate key elements of the National Education Policy (NEP) in school syllabus.

"How can knowledge of India develop national pride?" and "What should be the approach to sex education?" are some of the questions that the state-level committees, or focus groups, have to answer.

These are among the guidelines prepared by a sub-group of the National Steering Committee, leading the exercise to revise the National Curriculum Framework.

On January 27, School Education Secretary Anita Karwal shared the guidelines with states and UTs, urging that these be studied thoroughly.

The state- and UT-level focus groups will recommend the required changes in various subjects in reports known as "position papers" following these guidelines.

Among questions focus groups have to answer is: "How can knowledge of India develop national pride?"

The guidelines state: "Each Position Paper should aim to illustrate how education in that particular curricular area would be transformed from the current reality of today to that envisaged in NEP 2020.... Global best practices in curriculum and pedagogy should be studied and adapted as appropriate to the Indian context."

Position papers will be developed on 25 areas — from knowledge of India to social sciences to mathematics and gender education, among others.

"How will Indian history and the freedom struggle systems, heritage, and culture be incorporated into education in social sciences?" is among the questions that the focus groups drawing up position papers on social sciences will have to answer.

On gender education, the guidelines nudge the committees to identify specific learning needs of transgender children and answer ways to sensitise teachers about the Transgender Persons Act, 2019.

On language education, the groups will have to suggest ways on how the three-language formula envisaged in NEP-2020 should be implemented. The guidelines state: "When should the second and third languages be introduced? How can students be given flexibility in choosing their second and third languages? What is the best time/grade to introduce English as a subject..."

Cutting across subjects, the committees have been directed to suggest ways to reduce curricular load and strengthen focus on core areas. The need to incorporate Indian knowledge systems is another constant theme, be it in Arts, Sciences or Mathematics.

"What would be the approach to make students bilingually capable in mathematics?" is another question posed to the committees that traces its roots to NEP, which has suggested that students are enabled to think and speak about a subject in English as well as their home language or mother tongue.

Lt Gen CP Mohanty at South Block on Monday. *Praveen Khanna*

China-facing Northern, Eastern Commands to get new chiefs today

KRISHN KAUSHIK
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 31

TWO OF the three Army commands responsible for the sensitive 3,488-km India-China boundary will get new commanders on Tuesday.

While serving Northern Army Commander, Lt Gen Y K Joshi, retired, on Monday, Eastern Army Commander, Lt Gen Manoj Pande, will take over as the new Vice Chief of the Army on Tuesday, as the incumbent Vice Chief, Lt Gen CP Mohanty, also superannuated on Monday.

The Northern Command is responsible for both the Line of Actual Control with China as well as the Line of Control and a small part of international border with Pakistan. Lt Gen Upendra Dwivedi will take over as the new Northern Army Commander on Tuesday.

Lt Gen Dwivedi was posted in the Army Headquarters as a Deputy Chief of Army, looking at the entire force's training and finances. He had earlier commanded the Himachal Pradesh-based IX Corps.

In the Kolkata-headquartered Eastern Command, responsible for the border with China, and the India-Myanmar border, Lt Gen Rana Pratap Kalita will take over from Lt Gen Pande on Tuesday. He was also posted in the Army Headquarters, looking at personnel. He had commanded the Dimapur-based III Corps, responsible largely for the border with Myanmar, and counterinsurgency operations in the Northeast.

The two commands account for 2,723 km out of the 3,488-km boundary with China. The length of LAC is much shorter, especially in the Northern Command.

Lt Gen Pande, who takes over the sensitive position of the Vice Chief, is expected to become the next Army Chief. The incumbent Army Chief, General M M Naravane, is scheduled to retire in April, which will make Lt Gen Pande the most senior officer after him.

SC collegium proposes Justice Bhandari as CJ of Madras High Court

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 31

THE SUPREME Court Collegium has recommended appointing Justice Munishwar Nath Bhandari as Chief Justice of Madras High Court.

The Collegium, headed by Chief Justice of India N V Ramana and also comprising Justices U U Lalit and A M Khanwilkar, which met on December 14, 2021 and January 29, 2022, also recommended 14 advocates and three judicial officers for appointment as judges in Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh and Orissa HCs.

Justice Bhandari, who began his stint on the Bench as a judge of Rajasthan HC in July 2007, has been serving as the Acting CJ of Madras HC.

Those recommended for elevation to MP HC are advocates Maninder SIngh Bhati, Dwarka Dhish Bansal and Milind Ramesh Phadke, and judicial officers Amar Nath Kesharwani. Prakash Chandra Gupta, DInesh Kumar Paliwal.

Those approved for AP HC are advocates K Srinivasa Reddy, G Ramakrishna Prasad, Venkatateswarlu Nimmagadda, T Rajasekhar Rao, Satti Subba Reddy, Ravi Cheemalapati, and V Sujhata as judges of Andhra Pradesh HC.

The collegium also cleared the elevation of advocates V Narasingh, Sanjay Kumar Mishra, Biraja Prasanna Satapathy and Raman Murahari as judges of Orissa HC.

NANAJI DESHMUKH VETERINARY SCIENCE UNIVERSITY, JABALPUR (M.P.)
No. Estt-1/Recruit./2022/261 Date 31/01/2022
ADVERTISEMENT No. 01/2022/261
Applications in prescribed format are invited for the teaching posts (Professor, Associate Professor / Deputy Director, Assistant Professor/ Farm manager) vacant in Various Colleges of Nanaji Deshmukh Veterinary Science University, Jabalpur, Application forms alongwith qualifications, experience, score card proforma and other terms and conditions can be downloaded from the Unuiversity website www.ndvsu.org. Application form and necessary enclosures along with prescribed fee as Bank Draft shall reach the **Registrar, Nanaji Deshmukh Veterinary Science University, Administrative Building, Adhartal, Jabalpur M.P.-482004 on or before 21.02.2022, upto 5:00 PM.**
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THE EDITORIAL PAGE

WORDLY WISE

NEVER UNDERESTIMATE A GREAT CHAMPION.

— ROGER FEDERER

The Indian EXPRESS

FOUNDED BY

RAMNATH GOENKA

BECAUSE THE TRUTH INVOLVES US ALL

RAMP UP SUPPORT

Economic Survey points to scope for greater government aid to economy. Credible path for fiscal consolidation is also needed

THE ECONOMIC SURVEY 2021-22, tabled by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in Parliament on Monday, expects the Indian economy to grow by 8-8.5 per cent in the upcoming financial year, on the back of a 9.2 per cent expansion in 2021-22. The Survey's projections appear conservative when compared to recent assessments of the IMF, which has pegged the economy to grow at 9 per cent, or the World Bank which expects it to grow at 8.7 per cent. As the annual flagship document of the Ministry of Finance, it is disturbing that the Survey does not examine the uneven nature of the recovery in greater detail. The continuing distress in the labour market, the sharp rise in inequality, the lingering financial stress among the MSMEs, especially those operating in the informal parts of the economy, are issues that need to be explored more exhaustively. While the Survey has sought to assure that when it comes to macro-economic stability, India is better placed than it was at the time of the global financial crisis and the taper tantrum, what is less clear is the extent to which the recovery will heal the scars induced by the pandemic in the near term.

While there is always a gap between growth projections and reality, the Survey has rightly flagged the risks to these projections. To begin with, the external environment is likely to be less benign, and financial conditions will tighten considerably. In its recent World Economic Outlook, the IMF has pegged global GDP growth at 4.4 per cent in 2022, down from 5.9 per cent in 2021, with global trade volumes growth expected to fall in 2022. There is also the threat of another wave of infections and the associated impact on economic activity. Elevated crude oil prices are another area of concern — while the Survey has assumed oil to remain in the range of $70-75 per barrel, crude oil prices are currently around $90.

The Survey has, once again, mounted a strong defence of the policy response to the pandemic, arguing in favour of the emphasis on supply-side oriented measures, rather than relying solely on "demand management". Even so, coming ahead of the Union budget on Tuesday, the underlying message is of continued government support to the economy. The "government has the fiscal capacity to maintain the support, and ramp up capital expenditure when required," it says. The sharp rise in central government revenues provides it with the necessary fiscal space. However, considering that the general government debt stands at 89.3 per cent in 2021-22 (BE), up from 74.6 per cent in 2019-20, the government needs to remain mindful of its constraints. The upcoming Union budget will be judged on how the finance minister balances the twin objectives of supporting the economy and putting government finances on a credible path of consolidation.

COURT & PEGASUS

SC panel must factor in questions raised by latest revelations, the people have a right — and need — to know

THE REPORT IN The New York Times last week that the Indian government bought Israeli spyware Pegasus in 2017 as part of a $2-billion defence deal revives questions that were raised earlier but never addressed. Last year, an investigation by a global consortium of media groups revealed that Pegasus was used by governments, including in India, for targeting individuals for alleged surveillance. The government stonewalled questions and claimed that the probe was an exercise in "maligning India's well-established institutions". A few weeks after the Pegasus story broke, the Defence Ministry informed the Rajya Sabha that it "did not have any transaction with the NSO group," the Israel-based developer of the spyware. A month later, however, after the matter reached the Supreme Court, Solicitor General Tushar Mehta was more ambivalent. He told the three-judge bench that lawful interception is permitted to prevent terrorist incidents and "whether it's done through which software etc can't be a matter of public debate." The court did the right thing by calling out the use of national security as a free pass and constituted an inquiry panel under former judge R V Raveendran. Now, this expert committee must extend the scope of its investigation to include the questions raised in the NYT report.

Union Minister of Information Technology Ashwini Vaishnaw has maintained that only "lawful interception of electronic communication" is carried out for "national safety". There is no contesting the government's mandate to meet security-related imperatives. Surveillance is a part of the security toolbox but, in a democracy, there need to be checks and balances. In the present case, the government's equivocation doesn't wash. The issue at hand is not about keeping a watch on the activities of terrorists through established procedures. It is, instead, this: Since those allegedly targeted by Pegasus include Opposition leaders, civil society activists, a former election commissioner, and journalists (including three editors of this newspaper, two current and one former), were any red lines breached to violate these individuals' right to privacy? Targeting the Opposition's phones corrodes democracy and so, as SC pointed out, "any restriction must pass constitutional scrutiny".

The NYT investigation has revealed that the FBI bought Pegasus but discarded its plans to use the spyware last year. Union minister General V K Singh has dismissed the US daily's probe as one conducted by "supari media". Singh's name-calling deserves to be ignored. But, as the SC rightly underlined, "The public is entitled to know whether the spyware was used by the government by any other method other than those permissible under the law". At stake is the credibility of institutions and it's up to the Justice Raveendran panel to take the new revelations forward.

THREE PLUS ONE

Nadal steals a march over his two rivals, Medvedev's underdog story searches for a happy ending

THE TYRANNY OF reverence towards tennis' holy trinity was always going to be tricky for those biding their time in the wings. Daniil Medvedev, perhaps, has picked up the gauntlet of dislodging their pedestal, and is feeling the heat of howling crowds who aren't sensitive to how their vocal love for the Big Three can end up sounding like jeers for their younger challengers. The three-way debate on who is GOAT will continue unabated, and Rafael Nadal stole a march over Federer and Djokovic by reaching his 21st at Melbourne.

But what the 6-hour-long battle, where the Spaniard came from two sets down to jostle past Medvedev, did to the Russian, showed that in tennis' fervent dogma for the three presiding divinities, sport's enduring underdog story has crumbled. So insistent are the fans in their devotion to the trio, that anyone not playing second fiddle to them will have to play the antagonist, and no more.

A disruptor of the near-two-decade-long hegemony, owing to his hard-court consistency, Medvedev is acutely feeling the un-love of the crowds. The 25-year-old who might've started out as a fan of the trinity, finds himself in the unenviable position of being good enough to take them apart in Grand Slam finals. But he's simultaneously hit by the whiplash realisation that his childhood dream where the crowds would root for an underdog as he slayed the giants, is not coming true. Medvedev is uniquely in the hot seat when New York whimsically starts showering love on Djokovic and Melbourne shushes audibly so Nadal can peacefully serve out. All that Medvedev wanted was love while accumulating his own Grand Slam trophies. It's the one thing he'll have to do without, apparently, while the search for the GOAT bleats on.

The room to grow

Economic Survey shows post-Covid recovery has stabilised. But risks remain, will need to be addressed

SAUGATA BHATTACHARYA

THE ECONOMIC SURVEY has evolved into a valuable document and, in recent years, has often presaged the contours and strategy of the Union budget. Even in its truncated form this year, the Survey provides insights into the economic conditions and outlook which are key inputs for the FY23 budget assumptions.

The Survey notes that India's growth–inflation trade-off is becoming more favourable. Economic recovery has stabilised and is proceeding apace, while prices are expected to moderate in the months ahead. It projects that GDP growth in FY23 will be 8.0-8.5 per cent, moderate and more realistic compared to the IMF's recent forecast of 9.0 per cent for India. This follows the official estimate in early January of a 9.2 per cent growth for FY22, which the Survey has retained.

However, there are risks that will need to be addressed.

India's external environment is likely to be less benign than in FY22, and financial markets are likely to remain volatile. As the world comes out of the pandemic and the set of extraordinary policy stimulus measures, the Central banks of many countries, grappling with high, persistent inflation, have reversed their accommodative monetary policy stance. The US Federal Reserve is expected to aggressively tighten its monetary policy, starting with hiking its policy rates at its March 2022 meeting and, thereafter, start extracting the huge infusion of liquidity during the pandemic period.

In its recent update of the World Economic Outlook, the IMF projects that the world GDP growth will decelerate from 5.9 per cent in 2021 to 4.4 per cent in 2022. China's slowing economy is expected to contribute to this, but the large developed markets are also decelerating. India remains the only bright spot, with growth expected to continue at 9.0 per cent (or even the Survey's 8.0-8.5 per cent range). The WTO forecasts global trade volumes to moderate, falling from 10.8 per cent in 2021 to 4.7 per cent in 2022. This is going to be mostly led by a drop in emerging markets. Note, too, that the high demand for consumer goods during the pandemic is likely to cycle back towards travel and hospitality services, meeting pent-up demand.

Even more importantly, India's nominal growth in FY22 is 17.6 per cent, which implies an increase of roughly Rs 30 lakh crore over the FY20 pre-pandemic level. In terms of the segment of economic activity which is expected to contribute to this increase in nominal incomes in FY22, both consumption and fixed investment are expected to add about Rs 10 lakh crore each and government spending about another Rs 6 lakh crore. How this additional income is likely to be distributed, especially for lower-income households, will have implications for durable recovery and aggregate demand going forward. The FY23 budget is likely to project a nominal growth rate of 13–14 per cent on which the fiscal assumptions will be based, assuming an 8.3 per cent real GDP growth and 4.5 per cent inflation rate.

> On reinforcing India's medium-term 'potential growth' prospects and the associated 'output gap', the Survey notes longer term uncertainty in the post-Covid world due to technology, supply chains, geo-politics and other shifts. The ability to sustain a 7-8 per cent growth over many years without the economy overheating and the consequent need for policy tightening will determine income potential and distribution over the next decade.

On inflation, prospects seem a little better in FY23, with our base scenario of a gradual fall from the current high levels of about 6 per cent in Q4 of FY22, to an average of 4.8 per cent in FY23. However, there are risks. Crude oil prices — indeed, the entire energy complex of gas and other hydrocarbons — remain a source of concern. Brent crude is likely to remain elevated so long as current global geopolitical tensions continue, but are unlikely to lower significantly due to a continuing demand–supply imbalance (the International Energy Agency had recently forecast that demand in 2022 is likely to be higher than the pre-Covid levels, particularly if travel demand resumes), coupled with very moderate investments in new sources of hydrocarbons. China's growth slowdown had cooled the prices of some key metals, but more stimulus measures are already underway, and some growth recovery might again take these prices up. In addition, the broader move towards electrification and decarbonisation will keep the prices of another set of metals high. Shortages of chip and electronic components are likely to continue for some time. The good news is that logistics and the operational costs of cross-border trade have come down.

In light of these expectations, the importance of the Union Budget, and more broadly the fiscal space, is evident in the sequencing of the Survey chapters, with the fiscal developments following the lead chapter on growth and aggregate demand. The role of monetary policy will largely be in keeping financial conditions stable, even as the RBI begins a gradual, calibrated normalisation. While the Centre's balance sheet remains strong, growth in tax and other receipts might be expected to moderate in FY23, given the economic conditions noted above, and a possible need to further cut excise taxes on fuels. Be that as it may, the Centre has headroom to maintain relatively high expenditure without having to take recourse to a large bond borrowing programme, which might take interest rates much higher. The very large estimated cash balances with the RBI at present are likely to be augmented by direct tax and GST collections in March, and will help to finance the fiscal deficit in FY23. Proceeds from the LIC IPO will either add to these balances in FY22 and or become an additional revenue source in FY23, opening up the fiscal space to provide additional support to economically vulnerable segments, which is likely to be required.

On reinforcing India's medium-term "potential growth" prospects and the associated "output gap", the Survey notes longer-term uncertainty in the post-Covid world due to technology, supply chains, geo-politics and other shifts. The ability to sustain a 7-8 per cent growth over many years without the economy overheating and the consequent need for policy tightening will determine income potential and distribution over the next decade. The Economic Survey notes that MSMEs account for 33 per cent of India's nominal Gross Value Added (GVA), and will be a key pillar for supporting growth and employment. This segment will be a key beneficiary of the Union budget's pivot towards capital spends during the last couple of years, a statement of the government's commitment to a growth revival plan, which is expected to continue even in FY23. Backing this is a programmatic approach to creating infrastructure through a pipeline of projects, supported with a financing outlay, including the planned asset monetisation. The "Twin Balance Sheet problem" of impaired corporates and banks had hindered capex programmes for many years but has now been significantly resolved. Conditions are favourable for the next capex cycle and will need multiple interventions, supported by industrial, trade and skilling policies to further ease business operating conditions. The Survey "particularly highlights the importance of process reforms" to raise India's competitiveness and growth trajectory.

The writer is executive vice president and chief economist, Axis Bank. Views are personal

RESETTING THE BALANCE

Why UP polls could show a new path for minority representation in a diverse polity

QUDSIYA CONTRACTOR

AS THE election dates close in, there is a scramble among parties to get the social formula right in the selection of candidates. The last few days have seen major political players like the Bahujan Samaj Party, Samajwadi Party and the All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen announcing a significant number of Muslim candidates. The NDA, too, has announced one Muslim candidate. The Muslim-majority districts of Uttar Pradesh are expected to play an important part in the first phase of elections, the results of which may hold the key to power.

This suggests a growing claim for greater political representation from the community and the deepening of secular democracy in a society that is diverse and divided along caste and religious lines. It also seems to suggest that the BJP under CM Yogi Adityanath is under pressure as it tries to consolidate the votes of all caste fragments under the Hindutva banner. But is it possible that competition between Muslim candidates will end up being an advantage for the BJP again? The use of Muslim cultural symbolism by leaders such as AIMIM president Asaduddin Owaisi has been criticised for attempting to rouse communal sentiments. What is the use of community identification by Muslim candidates meant to achieve — separatism or representation?

Electoral competition may not necessarily be bad for Muslims because, as scholars have pointed out, they, like others, tend to vote based on issues rather than the identity of the candidate. Even in a communally-polarised constituency, what matters is local issues of access to public services and amenities. Electoral competition has, in the past, led to a change in patronage politics of the Congress that would field very few Muslim candidates, despite the rising threat of BJP. Politically underrepresented social groups within Muslims have joined other political parties and forged alliances with other traditionally marginalised groups such as OBCs and Dalits to counter the communal agendas of dominant caste Hindus. This has also helped counter the prioritising of personal gain by elite Muslims over addressing local issues concerning equitable development, justice and dignity.

> Politically underrepresented social groups within Muslims have joined other political parties and forged alliances with other traditionally marginalised groups such as OBCs and Dalits to counter the communal agendas of dominant caste Hindus. This has also helped counter the prioritising of personal gains by elite Muslims over addressing local issues concerning equitable development, justice and dignity.

Muslims, like Hindus, are not a homogenous community. Factions based on class, sect and *jaat/biradari* are part of the Muslim social world. Electoral competition may only create more opportunities for politically underrepresented groups within the community. It might force Muslim candidates to walk the talk in order to keep one's electoral constituency.

Using Muslim symbols in this context may not necessarily mean stirring communal sentiments. Since these refer to forging a collective identity not violently opposed to Hindus, such symbols could be seen as a way to mobilise Muslim votes with the acknowledgement that being part of a secular democracy also means inclusive development for all citizens. It is an attempt, often found effective in Indian political culture, to forge an identity by stringing together a common experience of marginalisation and political alienation. Invocations of the Indian Constitution and one's rights as citizens alongside Muslim symbols suggest a deepening of the cultural aspects of a secular democracy.

The BJP and the Sangh Parivar have been actively engaged in appropriating Hindu secular symbols in an attempt to empty democracy of its cultural signifiers. The use of Muslim symbols in this context across parties may be a way to break the cycle of a long-standing political alienation of Muslims, for a more inclusive secular democracy. The new generation of Muslim voters is starting to connect to such an identification in the context of a dominant Hindu right-wing discourse, as opposed to an earlier tendency to downplay their identities when aligning with secular liberal parties.

Even though representation might seem to be at the heart of modern democracies, it will always be a challenge for Muslim politics in a Hindu majoritarian democracy to be acceptable and endorsed. If the thwarting of the anti- CAA protests was a display of how the state uses violence to discipline its subjects, "Muslim" politics requires new ways of making demands for representation. The upcoming elections in UP might just be showing us the way it could be done.

The writer is faculty associate, IIT-Goa

INDIAN EXPRESS

India, Pakistan to set up joint commission

CLEARANCE SALE

FEBRUARY 1, 1982, FORTY YEARS AGO

INDO-PAK COMMISSION

WHILE THE TALKS on a no-war pact are not making any headway, India and Pakistan agreed to set up a joint commission to tackle bilateral problems. The suggestion to set up a joint commission was made by the PM when Pakistan Foreign Minister Agha Shahi met her. Shahi accepted the proposal immediately. While details about the composition of commission — its mandate and how often it should meet — are yet to be discussed by the two governments, the foreign ministers of the two countries are likely to be its co-chairmen. Both India and Pakistan have joint commission arrangements with many countries, but this is the first time the two countries will be setting up an institutional mechanism to tackle nagging bilateral problems. Problems concerning Indo-Pak trade, travel facilities, communications, cultural exchanges and perhaps the settlement of a maritime boundary are likely to be referred to the proposed joint commission.

BILLA, RANGA HANGED

BILLA AND RANGA, killers of the Chopra children were hanged simultaneously at Tihar jail in Delhi exactly three years and 159 days after the ghastly offence. The hanging brings down the curtain on one of the most publicised criminal cases in the country. It follows a long drawn legal battle by Ranga, which went up to the Supreme Court.

PAWAR ON ANTULAY

THE CONGRESS (S) is likely to launch an agitation against the appointment of former Maharashtra Chief Minister A R Antulay as chairman, Irrigation Corporation, according, to Sharad Pawar, president of the party. Talking to newsmen, Pawar said in Mumbai that they would also raise the issue in the proper forums, like the state assembly. He welcomed the CPM resolution adopted at Vijayawada on united opposition on issues of common interest. He said his party would welcome even the BJP and other left parties in this effort.

WHAT THE OTHERS SAY

"If the US continues to discard warnings from China, it will face more tensions, crises and even conflicts in the Taiwan Straits."

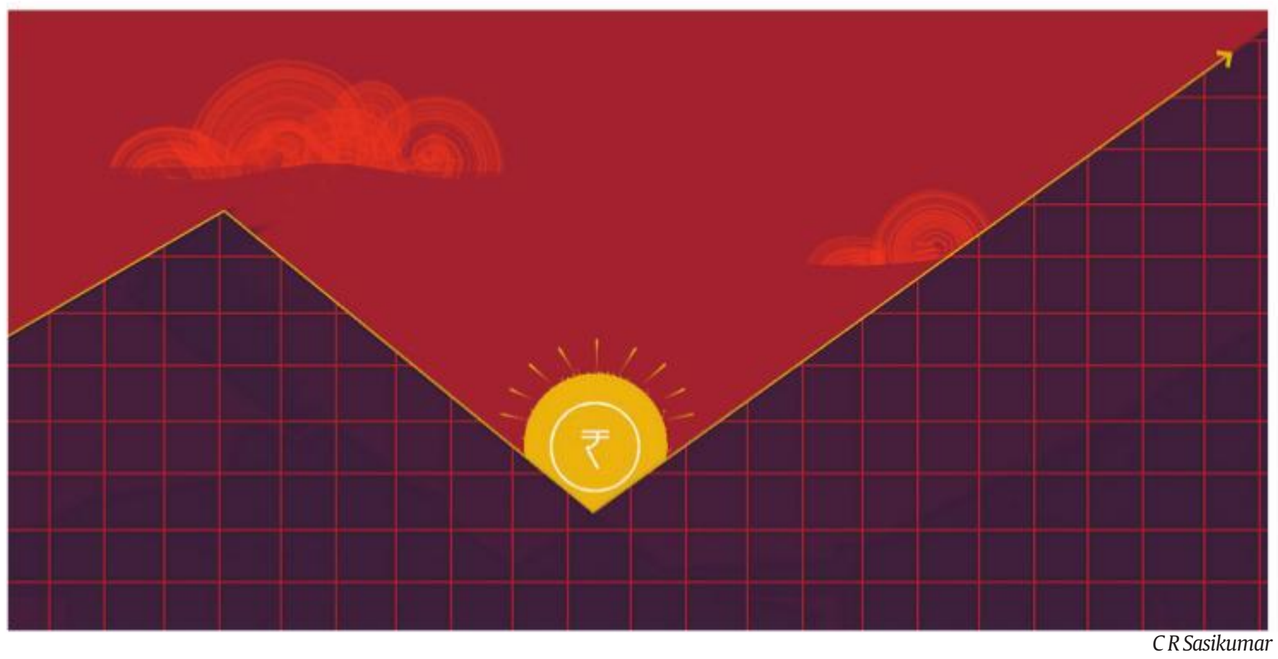
— GLOBAL TIMES

Doing business in a new world

Adapting to global geo-economic churn demands that Delhi find ways to integrate financial, trade, technological, security and foreign policies

RAJA MANDALA

BY C RAJA MOHAN



C R Sasikumar

AS INDIA RETURNS to a high growth path after a slowdown in the last decade, its geopolitical salience in the world will continue to rise. India's GDP has grown manifold since 1991-92 when it stood at $270 billion. Today, India's GDP is $3.1 trillion and could cross, according to some estimates, $8 trillion by the end of this decade.

India is now the sixth-largest economy and could become the third-largest by the end of the decade if the current projections hold. India's total trade, which was about $38 billion in 1991-92, is expected to touch $1.3 trillion this year. This is about 40 per cent of India's GDP and underlines the fact that India is more deeply tied to the world than ever before.

But the GDP's journey from three to eight trillion will not be a linear process; nor would it be easy to secure India's interests amidst the deeper integration with the world. That the world itself is in a geo-economic churn makes the transition a challenging one.

Elevating India to a higher economic orbit would involve a recalibration of its assumptions, taken for granted in the last three decades of reform. For, the international context in which India has rapidly grown has begun to change. If globalisation was seen as inevitable and irreversible during the last three decades, India's task now is to adapt to significant changes in the global economic order.

First, a word about the current buzz on geoeconomics. It was Edward Luttwak, the well-known American strategist, who triggered a global discourse on the idea of geoeconomics in a seminal article in 1990 amidst the end of the Cold War and a new wave of economic globalisation.

Luttwak — who is speaking to the Indian strategic community this week on the legacy of the Indian strategist late K Subrahmanyam — addressed the emerging consensus on the new importance of economics in global affairs, as opposed to the dominance of military competition during the Cold War years.

The rapid economic rise of China in the last three decades and Beijing's success in leveraging its growing economic clout for political gain is widely seen as a classic example of geoeconomics. But Luttwak was not really talking about economics replacing politics in the international system. Luttwak was offering a more powerful argument on the relationship between geopolitics and geoeconomics.

Luttwak warned against the excessive optimism that was enveloping the post-Cold War era — that economic interdependence would eliminate the contestation among nation-states. The idea of a borderless world promoting perpetual peace and prosperity across the world had indeed become a powerful force at the dawn of the end of the 20th century amidst the fall of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of the Soviet Union. Luttwak argued that the "logic of conflict" between states is likely to persist in the age of globalisation if only in the "grammar of commerce". He suggested that the emphasis on "national interest" will remain as powerful in the economic domain as in the geopolitical domain. He also insisted that states will continue to do what matters more within their frontiers than the presumed imperatives of global good.

Luttwak posits that zero-sum situations that prevail in military conflicts are not exclusive to geopolitics. They also exist in the economic domain inevitably triggering conflicts, some of which could escalate to the military level. But the popular notion of geoeconomics as a metaphor for the replacement of politics by economics endures. The latest example is the recently issued document on Pakistan's national security policy.

Pakistan's real challenge is not replacing geopolitics with geoeconomics. What Pakistan needs is a long-overdue transition from a rentier national security state to a developmental state. This, in turn, demands ending the dominance of the military, the feudals and a kleptocratic elite over the country's economy. Rearranging the Pakistani state is in the end a political task rather than an economic one.

Luttwak's warning against illusions of economic interdependence and globalisation have been borne out by major changes in US-China relations in recent years. The dramatic expansion of economic interdependence between China and America over the last four decades — what some called "Chimerica" — was the principal evidence for the thesis that geopolitics and ideology no longer mattered.

That "capitalist" America and "communist" China would form such an expansive economic partnership reinforced by a massive linkage between their business elite and civil societies reinforced the power of geo-economics. Chimerica was held up as an efficient economic fusion that underscored the virtues of economic globalisation. That mythology is now being shredded by developments in the US and China.

Economic nationalism has re-emerged in both countries today. In the US, President Joe Biden has persisted with his predecessor Donald Trump's emphasis on "America First" economic policies. He has gone one step forward by making the effort at rebooting America a more purposeful one. The US is also strengthening domestic research and industrial capabilities to compete more effectively with China.

Biden is resisting strong pressures from the American financial capital and other interested groups to restore the old economic engagement with China. It is not the US alone that is backtracking from globalisation. China too has adopted the economic strategy of "dual circulation" that focuses on strengthening domestic capabilities and reducing exposure to external factors.

> Although there is widespread criticism of India's decision to turn its back on Asian economic integration, there are others who share Delhi's concerns about China's dominant economic position. In a recent book, *China's Rise and Asia's Decline*, William Bratton argues that the short-term benefits for Asia from China's growth might be temporary and will be overshadowed by the long term costs of economic, industrial, financial, and technological dependence on China.

The question of China has also shaped India's recent policies on free trade. At the end of 2019, India has walked out from the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) suggesting that the costs of joining a China-centred regional economic order are unacceptable.

Although there is widespread criticism of India's decision to turn its back on Asian economic integration, there are others who share Delhi's concerns about China's dominant economic position. In a recent book, *China's Rise and Asia's Decline*, William Bratton argues that the short-term benefits for Asia from China's growth might be temporary and will be overshadowed by the long-term costs of economic, industrial, financial, and technological dependence on China.

After abandoning RCEP, Delhi has turned towards free trade agreements with countries like Australia, Britain, UAE, and Israel. This must be seen as the beginning of a process of deepening India's engagement with countries whose economies are complementary. Trade liberalisation with Europe and the US will be difficult but important next steps.

India is also arguing, much like the US and China, that no large country can simply abandon domestic manufacturing to other countries in the name of economic efficiency and globalisation. India is now taking a number of initiatives to promote domestic manufacturing in a range of sectors — from mobile phones to armaments — under the banner of "Atmanirbhar Bharat".

India's selective trade arrangements and the policies to promote domestic manufacturing have drawn much criticism at home as a dangerous return to economic protectionism and deglobalisation. While those arguments must continue, they must be related more closely to the structural changes in the international economic order.

Until now, India had the luxury of treating its foreign, economic and strategic policies as separate domains pursued by different bureaucracies with different agendas. Adapting to the current global geo-economic churn demands that Delhi find better ways to integrate its financial, trade, technological, security and foreign policies. Above all India needs a strategy that can respond to the imperatives of building domestic capabilities, developing geo-economic partnerships, and constructing geopolitical coalitions with like-minded countries.

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

Ideas of Indian-ness

It means much more than can be discerned from voting choices and public statements of political leaders

PRIYADARSHINI SINGH

DO MOST INDIANS see India as a Hindu and Hindi nation?

Statements by some political leaders and recent survey research seem to suggest so. At the inauguration of the Kashi Vishwanath corridor project, Prime Minister Narendra Modi declared that India is defined by Hindu tradition and history. Alongside, Rahul Gandhi stated that a distinction must be made between the "good", truth-seeking Hindus and the power-seeking "Hindutva-vadis". Pew Research survey findings on religion and nationhood in India in July 2021 highlighted a similar conclusion. On the one hand, valuing religious diversity (84 per cent) is among the key attributes of being an Indian along with respecting elders (88 per cent) and having an Indian ancestry (70 per cent). On the other hand, a majority also believes that being a Hindu (56 per cent) and speaking Hindi (57 per cent) are important. Among Hindus, the support is higher -- for 64 per cent, being a Hindu and for 59 per cent speaking Hindi is important for Indian-ness.

Understanding the meaning of this Hindu-Hindi idea of India at the grassroots is critical, particularly because it has electoral implications. As we have seen over recent decades, voting choices and electoral victories of parties are used as insights into the everyday meanings of nation and nationhood.

My research highlights that for ordinary Indians, the idea of India has many layers. It includes cultural and civic elements; some parts of it determine political choices while others don't. Being an Indian is not just about being a part of a homogenous national community. India is a community of communities. When people talk about India, they often speak from the standpoint of multiple community locations. For example, one respondent talked about corruption in national politics but in terms of how it impacted him as a Gujjar, living in a poor village. The importance of one's own religion (Hinduism) and language (Hindi) for being an Indian highlighted in the Pew Research data is likely emerging from this idea. This does not necessarily mean that other groups don't have similar views.

In one research village in Rajasthan, upper castes accepted an important demand made by a Dalit farm labourer and tea-stall owner. He said that the village should nominate a Dalit to contest the village sarpanch election (a general seat) because Dalits are also a part of India. That is, they are citizens not just in their individual capacity but also as Dalits, just as others are as Hindus, Brahmins, Muslims, Shias, etc. Similarly, during discussions on national pride with people working on farms, small dairies, shops, etc, it emerged that their idea of Indian-ness included many different types of identities. They are proud of India not only on "national" issues like "defeating" the British or the Taj Mahal but also of their community identities. As one respondent in a village in Sawai Madhopur district said, "if we are talking about India, we are from Rajasthan, we should be proud of being Rajasthani". While stating this, he strongly brushed aside his friend who was telling him that he should highlight Hindu-Muslim peacefulness in their village. Another respondent, in a village in Karnataka, said that she is proud of India because "it has everything -- there is Kashmir, it has gold, iron, silver, good weather and food". In fact, some of the Pew Research data also highlights this. Fifty-three per cent of Indians believe that religious diversity benefits India and only 24 per cent believe it harms us. Almost all Indians are expressly proud of their states (95 per cent) and their religion (94 per cent).

The critical thing the research highlights is that contexts impact the way people talk about the nation. And the context could include the people with whom one is discussing the idea of the nation or the political dynamics of the localities or even professional backgrounds. In my field sites, areas where there was a history of tension between religious groups, many respondents expressly said that they were proud to be Indian because of the good relationship between communities; in other sites, this was rarely mentioned.

The nation can mean much more than may be discerned from voting choices and public statements of political leaders. One respondent, a Gujjar diary owner in Sawai Madhopur, educated till Class XI, said that national culture cannot be homogenised and a person born in India is an Indian because "where will the others go". His illiterate wife aggressively said that everyone has a different language. Differentiating between the political and non-political aspects of national pride, he said that "fights between groups are about politics, now even brothers fight". His political support, however, tended towards a Hindu-centred idea of nationhood. Yet, he was proud of India because "it has everything, *dharma nirpekshata* (secularism), *sanskriti* (culture), *vikas* (development)... *yeh toh sone ki chidiya hai* (a golden bird".

Above all, I discovered that the idea of India is meaningful because it has immense moral significance. It is the ideal horizon -- a hope, a promise of a future defined by dignity, equality, justice and socio-economic development. It's this emancipatory promise of nationhood that resonates across groups. Prejudices and differences and how they project onto politics co-exist alongside valuing diversity. But the nation is not just its politics, and an Indian is not just who they vote for. Alternative ideas, inclusionary narratives exist even if the corresponding politics does not.

The writer is fellow, Centre for Policy Research, Delhi

The right to peace

UNSC joint statement on nuclear weapons is a significant step forward

UPENDRA BAXI

THE NUKE-WARY PEOPLE of Earth have not risen in unison to welcome the statement made on January 3 by the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council (P5). Yet, the assurance about "avoiding an arms race and not targeting each other or any other state", and preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons, is important.

The P5 statement reaffirms that a "nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought" because of its "far-reaching consequences". The statement further reaffirms that nuclear threats must be addressed and emphasises the importance of "preserving and complying with our bilateral and multilateral non-proliferation, disarmament, and arms control agreements and commitments". The statement also expresses a commitment to the group's Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) obligations and "to prevent the unauthorised or unintended use of nuclear weapons".

Declaring that an arms race would benefit none and endanger all, the P5 have undertaken to: (1) "work with all states to create a security environment more conducive to progress on disarmament with the ultimate goal of a world without nuclear weapons with undiminished security for all"; (2) "continue seeking bilateral and multilateral diplomatic approaches to avoid military confrontations, strengthen stability and predictability, increase mutual understanding and confidence"; and (3) pursue "constructive dialogue with mutual respect and acknowledgement of each other's security interests and concerns".

This is a major statement. It is not a binding resolution and reiterates some of the core obligations of the NPT, while a review of the NPT remains postponed till August due to the Covid-19 pandemic. But none of these factors diminish the urgency and the political significance of the statement, especially given the unimaginable danger posed by the 13,000 nuclear weapons currently believed to be held by a handful of countries, and the growing spectre of loose nukes, which may be deployed by armed terrorist groups for nefarious purposes.

The P5 statement was followed by a warning from UN Secretary-General António Guterres that nuclear annihilation is "just one misunderstanding or miscalculation away".

Bold action on six fronts was necessary, he said. First, that member states should chart a path forward on nuclear disarmament; second, they should agree to new measures of "transparency and dialogue"; third, they should address the "simmering" nuclear crises in the Middle East and Asia; fourth, they should strengthen the existing global bodies that support non-proliferation, including the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA); fifth, they should promote the peaceful use of nuclear technology, and finally, they should remind "the world's people – and especially its young people – that eliminating nuclear weapons is the only way to guarantee that they will never be used".

Gandhi taught us that the right to peace is an essential framework for all human rights and that waging peace is everyone's work, regardless of vocation, profession, or discipline. Peace is necessary for rights, freedom, equality, and justice and for that reason, we need what Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes Jr. called "education in the obvious" — namely, peace education. This is required at multiple levels, ranging across the planetary, global, supranational, regional, national, and local levels of social cognition and action. These spheres are intensely related, critical and transformative. As Betty Reardon writes: "… the general purpose of peace education… is to promote the development of an authentic planetary consciousness that will enable us to function as global citizens and to transform the present human condition by changing the social structures and the patterns of thought that have created it." If this "transformational imperative" is placed at the centre of peace education, there will be a "profound global cultural change" that will influence ways of thinking, world views, values, behaviours, relationships, and the structures of public order — "a change in the human consciousness and in human society of a dimension far greater than any other that has taken place since the emergence of the nation-state".

Critical peace education should perform a number of tasks. Among these are: Bearing witness to negativity (that is, telling the truth about the realities and inequalities of this society); throwing light on spaces for possible actions that can challenge these realities; and acting (to borrow the words of the introduction to Rita Verma's 2017 book *Critical Peace Education and Global Citizenship*) as the "critical secretary of the people, programmes and practices that are actually interrupting the dominant relations and building workable alternatives to them in educational institutions, communities and other sites". Instead of creating cadres of techno-public intellectuals, peace education requires the creation of a mass of "critical secretaries" to people's movements.

Gandhi would have certainly welcomed the slender but significant UN Resolution 39/11 (November 12, 1984), which "solemnly proclaims that the peoples of our planet have a sacred right to peace" and equally solemnly declares that the "preservation of the right of peoples to peace and the promotion of its implementation constitute a fundamental obligation of each State". The subsequent UN Resolution 53/243 B, declaring a programme of action for a culture of peace (1999) also owes a great deal to Gandhi's legacy and mission. May the managers of our education system no longer privilege ignorance and the promotion of social indifference, resilient even now.

The writer is professor of law, University of Warwick, and former vice chancellor of Universities of South Gujarat and Delhi

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

PETTY POLITICS

THIS IS WITH reference to the column by P Chidambaram, 'Service and Servitude', (IE, January 30) on the proposed amendment in the service rules. His claim that the shortage of IAS officers in the central government is PM Modi's fault is absurd. Every IAS officer knows that she has to serve in the state of allotment and the Centre. They aspire to get a central deputation as that gives them an opportunity to learn. So why this shortage? As an IAS officer, I know that one weapon a CM has to harass an upright IAS officer is to keep shunting her from one useless post to another if she does not toe the line. And if she wishes to go on central deputation, then not to send her name to DoPT and, if she somehow gets selected, not to release her. The central government suffers. It is surprising that Mr Chidambaram should talk of work culture. During the UPA, the NAC, an unconstitutional body, under Sonia Gandhi, was the de facto power. No wonder we had scam after scam.PM Modi has brought in discipline, done away with multiple power centres and, what is more, done away with corruption. With a 360-degree review, the process of empanelment has become streamlined and fair.

Prabeer K Basu, *former secretary, Ministry of Agriculture*

TAX CUTS NEEDED

This refers to the editorial, 'Why FM must not cut taxes' (IE, January 31). While the logical argument against cutting taxes is right, we must remember that inflation is at record levels and the common people are facing the twin pressures of low income hike and inflation. Corporate tax cuts in the previous years have resulted in record industrial growth in India and undertaking of fresh capex across industries. In the same spirit, the finance minister should slowly reduce the tax burden of individuals to revive the animal spirits across the nation and the consumer sentiment. The fiscal deficit will be covered up by the record spending and hence the GDP growth. One more year without any tax cuts for individuals will not bode well for the ruling party in the upcoming elections.

Gaurav Gupta, *Pune*

SCHOOLS AND VIRUS

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'Unlocking classroom'(IE, January 31).From the number of hospitalisations in the current wave of Omicron it seems that virus is not as lethal as the Delta variant was. The time has come to "live with the virus". School closures in India are one of the longest in the world and that too at a time when we don't have digital infrastructure on the same scale as the western countries. Our education system was already in need of reforms in the pre-pandemic era. Steps like NEP 2020 and NIPUN Bharat are steps in the right direction but what is needed is funding. With the Union Budget coming, it is a good opportunity for government to scale up funds for education.

Dewang Ganesh Thosar, *Raigad*

BRIEFLY

MAHARSHTRA

Follow procedure for putting people in 'anda cell': HC

Mumbai: The Aurangabad bench of the Bombay High Court on Monday said that authorities cannot "arbitrarily lift the prisoners and keep them in 'Anda cell' (solitary confinement) without strictly following the prescribed procedure". The HC added that even if the prisoner is a hardened criminal, there should not be any "inhuman treatment" and authorities cannot act as per their "whims". The bench asked the state government to file an affidavit in reply within four weeks to a plea by the wife of convict Imran Shaikh, who was on Friday shifted to regular prison after spending two years in solitary confinement. **ENS**

TAMIL NADU

RSS man held for 'harrasing' nuns, say police

Chennai: The Tamil Nadu Police has arrested a 38-year-old man, said to be associated with the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), for allegedly harassing two nuns and seizing their belongings, and claiming that they were involved in religious conversion in Pudukkottai district. Pudukkottai SP Nisha Parthiban said that Ganesh Babu is associated with the RSS. He was arrested on Saturday and produced before a court on Sunday. **ENS**

NEW DELHI

SC refuses to hear plea on Gandhi movie

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Monday declined to entertain a petition seeking stay on the release of the movie *Why I killed Gandhi* on an Over The Top (OTT) platform and asked the petitioner to approach the High Court for relief. A bench headed by Justice Indira Banerjee said "A writ petition under Art 32 may only be filed when there is a question of violation of fundamental right. There is no fundamental right of the petitioner which appears to have been violated. Thus this plea cannot be entertained..." **ENS**

DEMAND TO HOLD BOARD EXAMS ONLINE

Student protests turn violent in Mumbai, Nagpur; FIRs registered

PALLAVI SMART & JAYPRAKASH S NAIDU
MUMBAI, JANUARY 31

A LARGE number of students across various cities in the state, including Mumbai, held protests on Monday, demanding the cancellation of offline board exams for Class 10 and 12 in view of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The protests took a violent turn in Mumbai and Nagpur, with some students damaging private and police vehicles by pelting stones and blocking roads. While protests at Jalgaon and Aurangabad remained peaceful, at Mumbai and Nagpur, local police had to resort to lathi-charge to disperse the mob of students, most of whom were minors.

Around 1,000 to 1,500 students gathered outside the Dharavi residence of state School Education Minister Varsha Gaikwad between 12 pm to 4 pm on Monday. Police said the crowd gradually swelled around 3 pm, when many students from far-off places like Thane, Kalyan, Badlapur, Vasai, Virar and places in Navi Mumbai reached the spot using local trains.

Divisional Assistant Commissioner of Police, Suresh Jadhav, told *The Indian Express*, "Only some students in the crowd acted like goons and took to violence. They broke the glasses of a few private vehicles...". To disperse the crowd, police resorted to lathi-charging the students.

A traffic police official said, "There were around 1,000 to 1,500 students. They choked the Sant Rohidas Marg in Dharavi near Sion railway station and we had to divert the traffic on that road for around two hours. The traffic was moving slowly due to the protest."

The call for the protest was given by a social media influencer Vikas Fhatak, alias 'Hindustani Bhau', who allegedly makes abusive videos on social media.

On January 29, Fhatak had uploaded a video on his fan page account on Instagram, asking students to come out and "peacefully protest" against the government's decision with him in Dharavi outside the residence of Gaikwad.

He also appealed to students across Maharashtra to visit education offices in their region with the same demand. The videos are available on his social media handle.

As they gathered near Gaikwad's residence in Dharavi, students were heard shouting slogans demanding justice. According to them, they are not prepared to appear for the board exam that is to begin in March. While their primary demand is to cancel the exam, protesters said if the exam has to be held, it should be held online.

"Until and unless the pandemic is over, there should not be exams. Many students have already lost their lives due to depression. Due to online classes, many have lost out on academics without adequate access. The government should cancel the exam, considering the physical and mental health of these students. Otherwise, hold an online exam, just as the studies were done online," Fhatak had said in one of his videos.

Fathak, too, was present at the protest spot. He was escorted away by police after students started getting restless. The police subsequently had to use force to disperse the students.

The Maharashtra government, meanwhile, has said that it is unwilling to reconsider its decision to hold offline exams. A meeting has been called by Gaikwad to discuss the topic with officials and students on Tuesday. At the time of going to press, the Mumbai Police was in the process of registering an FIR against the students and Fhatak. No one has been arrested in connection with the protests so far.

At a protest in Rajkot on Monday. *Chirag Chotaliya*

Protests over Dhandhuka murder turns violent in Rajkot, Chota Udepur

VAIBHAV JHA, ADITI RAJA & GOPAL KATESHIYA
AHMEDABAD, RAJKOT, SURAT, VADODARA, JANUARY 31

PROTEST DEMONSTRATIONS over the death of 30-year-old Kishan Boliya alias Kishan Bharwad, who was allegedly shot dead in Dhandhuka of Ahmedabad recently for an objectionable social media post, took a violent turn in Rajkot and Chota Udepur districts in Gujarat on Monday.

Police in several districts, including Ahmedabad, issued advisory appealing for peace and asked citizens to not pay heed to unsubstantiated rumors creating a rift between communities. The Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) also issued a statement appealing for peace even as the opposition Congress attacked the state government over its "failure" to provide security to the deceased. Kishan Boliya, a resident of Dhandhuka in Ahmedabad district, was shot dead by two bike-borne men on January 25 while he was traveling on a motorcycle. According to police, Boliya had posted an objectionable video on Facebook. Five persons, including two clerics, have been arrested so far in the case.

Demanding capital punishment for the perpetrators, several right wing groups held demonstrations in Rajkot, Morbi, Banaskantha, Surendranagar, Amreli, Bhavnagar, Porbandar, Patan, Vadodara and Chhota Udepur. Clashes were reported in Rajkot and Chhota Udepur.

In Rajkot, a huge mob assembled outside the district collector's office on Shroff Road to submit a memorandum. The mob of around 3,000 then started marching towards the city police headquarters in Panchayat Chowk. They blocked the road near Dharam Cinema and allegedly indulged in vandalism and also assaulted a police sub-inspector (PSI). Police resorted to a lathicharge to disperse the mob.

"The mob threw stones at the PCR van of Pradyumannagar police station and damaged it. They also vandalised three shops opposite Galaxy Cinema and one in Fulchhab Chowk. We repeatedly asked them to disperse but to no avail... So we used mild force," Manoharsinh Jadeja, deputy commissioner of police (Zone-II), told media persons.

The DCP added that KD Patel, a PSI attached to the Pradyumannagar police station, was injured in the violence and the mob targeted furniture of four shops, including an omelet outlet in Fulchhab Chowk.

CLERIC AMONG 2 IN 8-DAY POLICE REMAND

Ahmedabad: A magisterial court in Dhandhuka on Monday granted eight days remand of cleric Maulvi Qamar Gani Usmani (40) to the Gujarat Anti Terrorist Squad (ATS), a day after he was arrested in connection with the murder of Kishan Boliya alias Kishan Bharwad in Dhandhuka, Ahmedabad, recently. The ATS also received eight days remand for another accused Azeem Sama (38) from Rajkot who was arrested in the same case. Both the accused were arrested on January 30. **ENS**

CONVERSION ROW

Madras HC orders CBI probe into girl's suicide

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MADURAI, JANUARY 31

THE MADRAS High Court Bench here on Monday directed transferring the probe into the suicide of a 17-year-old school girl, who was allegedly coerced to convert to Christianity, to the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI).

Justice G R Swaminathan ordered the transfer of the case after hearing the arguments of the petitioner, the girl's father, and also the school management.

"This court has a duty to render posthumous justice to the child. The foregoing circumstances cumulatively taken will definitely create an impression that the investigation is not proceeding on the right lines. Since a high-ranking Hon'ble Minister himself has taken a stand, investigation cannot continue with the state police. I therefore direct the Director, Central Bureau of Investigation, New Delhi to assign an officer to take over investigation from the state police," the court ruled.

The CBI will undertake an independent investigation and shall not take into account any of the observations made in this order, the judge added.

The 17-year-old student of the missionary school in Thanjavur belonged to Ariyalur district. A few days ago, she died by suicide. The girl, a hostel inmate, was allegedly asked to convert to Christianity. A video clip in this connection had gone viral. The school management had rejected the allegation and blamed vested interests.

The victim's father had demanded a CB-CID investigation "but in the final hearing, the original prayer was given up and the request was for transfer of investigation to CBI", the court said.

CITES 'LEGITIMATE SECURITY INTERESTS'

At UNSC meet on Ukraine, India walks the tightrope

SHUBHAJIT ROY
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 31

ON A day when a senior Russian official visited India and met his counterparts in the Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi on Monday played a tightrope walk with a slight tilt towards the Russian position at a meeting of the UN Security Council on Ukraine.

Articulating its position on "legitimate security interests" that echoes with nuanced tilt towards the Russian position, India's Permanent Representative at the UNSC T S Tirumurti said, "India's interest is in finding a solution that can provide for immediate de-escalation of tensions taking into account the legitimate security interests of all countries and aimed towards securing long term peace and stability in the region and beyond."

While Delhi's statement talked about "legitimate security interests of all countries", it is widely perceived as somewhat aligned with the Russian interests.

Stressing that "quiet and constructive diplomacy is the need of the hour", Tirumurti said that "any steps that increase tension may best be avoided by all sides in the larger interest of securing international peace and security".

"I reiterate our call for the peaceful resolution of the situation by sincere and sustained diplomatic efforts to ensure that concerns of all sides are resolved through constructive dialogue," he said. This is India's second statement on the Ukraine issue, and a more expansive one after the statement made by the MEA spokesperson last week.

This statement was made at the UNSC meeting on Ukraine, where Russia and China tried to block discussions while 10 UNSC members, including the US, UK and France, voted in favour of the discussion. Here too, India was among three countries along with Kenya and Gabon to abstain, in a bid to maintain its neutral position and not side with either bloc.

The UNSC went ahead with the discussions, as 10 countries — it needed 9 yes votes — voted in favour of the discussions.

The vote and the Indian statement took place on a day when bilateral consultations on UN-related issues were held between India and Russia in New Delhi on Monday. The Indian delegation was led by Reenat Sandhu, Secretary (West) in MEA, while the Russian delegation was led by Ambassador Sergey Vasilyevich Vershinin, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Russia.

"Secretary (West) congratulated Russia on its upcoming Presidency of the UN Security Council in February 2022. Both sides held wide ranging discussions on issues on the UN Security Council agenda and related developments. Both sides agreed to deepen cooperation on issues of mutual interest at multilateral platforms," the MEA said.

The visiting Russian official also called on Foreign Secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla and briefed him on Russian priorities during its upcoming Presidency of the UNSC.

Hours later, Tirumurti in his statement at the UNSC said, "We have been closely following the evolving developments relating to Ukraine, including through ongoing high-level security talks between Russia and the United States, as well as under the Normandy format in Paris."

EXPLAINED — Stakes on both sides, a balancing act

INDIA'S STATEMENT is a balancing act, keeping in mind its vital interests and stakes on both sides of the divide. But it is perceived to be closer to Moscow's position, although Delhi has talked about security interests of "all sides". Also, it does not convey any condemnation publicly of Russian actions, much to Western bloc's disappointment. Overall, it does not want to take sides clearly.

KARNATAKA

BJP minister's meeting with state Congress chief sparks speculation

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
BENGALURU, JANUARY 31

A MEETING between Karnataka Congress president D K Shivakumar and a minister in the state government sparked speculation that the BJP leader was unhappy with recent party appointments for in-charge of districts.

Karnataka tourism minister Anand Singh visited the Bengaluru residence of Karnataka Pradesh Congress Committee chief D K Shivakumar for the meeting on Monday.

Shivakumar, however, said the meeting on Monday was a courtesy meeting with no discussion of politics. "A visit to the house is not about politics but other issues. To talk politics we would go to a resort or hotel," Shivakumar told reporters at his home in Bengaluru.

Dissatisfied with the forest portfolio accorded to him, Singh was among the first MLAs to quit the Congress party in 2019 as the mass defections eventually brought down the Congress-JD(S) government in the state

The development comes close on the heels of Karnataka Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai divesting ministers of the responsibility of overseeing their own districts and appointing them in charge of regions where they have no political stakes.

Several state ministers are believed to be disgruntled about this new policy of the BJP government.

Separately, BJP legislator B R Patil had also said that several ministers are in touch with the Congress. "Many have booked their tickets...," Yatnal had said.

Tourism minister Anand Singh, the legislator from Vijayanagar district, was named as the minister in-charge of Koppal. The decision to move him from Vijaynagar and appoint Shashikala Jolle in his place triggered protests by his supporters in the district's Hospet area two weeks back.

Last week, Singh also held a meeting with Bommai and the CM's predecessor B S Yediyurappa.

Petition moved against former Kerala minister for contempt of Lokayukta

SHAJU PHILIP
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, JANUARY 31

A PETITION was moved in the Kerala Lokayukta on Monday, seeking contempt procedure against CPI(M)-backed legislator K T Jaleel for attacking Justice Cyriac Joseph.

Jaleel quit as the higher education minister in the previous Left Democratic Front (LDF) government after the Lokayukta indicted him of nepotism in appointments in April 2021. Jaleel was found guilty of appointing a close relative as a general manager with the state minority development finance corporation at the time.

The office of Justice Joseph said on Monday that the lokayukta will not react to the allegations raised by Jaleel.

Kerala ex-minister K T Jaleel

"Lokayukta would stick to its judicial discipline and would not respond to these allegations. Over the years, maintaining that judicial discipline has been the practice of the Lokayuktas and Upalokayuktas," his office said.

The petition, seeking to initiate contempt procedure against Jaleel, was filed by Rajeev Charachira -- a member of the Indian Lawyers Congress, which is affiliated to the Congress party.

As per the Lokayukta Act, lokayuktas and the upalokayuktas have the same jurisdiction and authority with regard to contempt of itself as the high courts in the country. As per the procedure, the Lokayukta will serve a notice to the respondent and it can subsequently take action after hearing the parties in the case.

Jaleelon Sunday posted a copy of a 2005 Kerala high court order, which had dismissed writ petitions seeking action against the then UDF minister P K Kunhalikutty in an alleged sex scandal. Justice Joseph was then among the judges on the HC bench that delivered the verdict.

The former minister then alleged that the judge "bargained" for a university vice-chancellor post to be given to his family member in return for "rescuing" a UDF leader.

No deal with AIADMK, BJP to fight urban polls on its own in TN

ARUN JANARDHANAN
CHENNAI, JANUARY 31

TAMIL NADU BJP on Monday announced it will fight urban local body polls alone and without its ally in the state, AIADMK, after the two parties could not reach a consensus in multiple rounds of talks. State BJP president K Annamalai said the call to break away from AIADMK was difficult but also an informed decision. Top AIADMK leaders O Panneerselvam and Edappadi K Palaniswami back the decision, he said. Annamalai said the BJP will put up candidates in all seats for the February 19 polls. He added the alliance with the AIADMK remains intact nationally.

"BJP cadres were particular they occupy seats in maximum local positions. That makes a lot of sense for a fast growing party like the BJP in Tamil Nadu. At the same time, we had to consider the issues within AIADMK too, their difficulties to meet our demands and share as many seats that we demanded. So after these detailed talks, we decided to contest alone…," he said.

According to a senior BJP leader aware of the talks between the allies, the main difference was over the Mayor posts in Nagercoil and Coimbatore – which the AIADMK was unwilling to give up – and the 30-70 per cent breakup (70 to AIADMK) of seats sought by the BJP.

UGC releases draft framework for higher education qualification

SOURAV ROY BARMAN
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 31

THE UNIVERSITY Grants Commission (UGC) has developed a draft National Higher Educational Qualification Framework (NHEQF), which is part of a set of reforms that the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 envisages.

From job readiness to constitutional values, theoretical knowledge to technical skills, higher education institutes across the country will soon be brought under a new framework to assess students on a range of learning outcomes. The UGC has put out the 72-page draft NHEQF in the public domain, inviting suggestions till February 13 through emails at nepnheqf@gmail.com.

"It has been felt that given the size of the higher education system and the diversity of institutions and programmes of study in India, the country needs to move towards developing a nationally accepted and internationally comparable and acceptable qualifications framework to facilitate transparency and comparability of higher education qualifications at all levels. The NHEQF is an attempt in this direction," the draft says.

In the draft, the UGC has clarified that the framework is not intended to promote a uniform curriculum or national common syllabus. "The purpose is to bring up/elevate all HEIs to a common level of benchmarking to ensure that all institutions are providing quality education," it states.

The NHEQF envisages the award of certificates, diplomas and degrees based on what students are "expected to know, understand and be able to do at the end of their programme of study". In line with the structure outlined in the NEP, the NHEQF also fixes the number of credits required to clear the different courses. Those looking to exit the undergraduate programme with a certificate will require 40 credits; a diploma after two years will need 80 credits; degree after three years will need 120 credits; degree with honours/research after four years with 160 credits.

ALWAR CASE

Teen told family 2 men tried to throw her off bridge, says father

HAMZA KHAN
JAIPUR, JANUARY 31

IN A fresh development in the alleged Alwar sexual assault case, the father of the girl claimed on Monday that she has said that two men had tried to throw her off the bridge where she was found on January 11.

Talking to *The Indian Express*, the girls' father said, "For the first 10-15 days she didn't tell us anything. But for the last 4-5 days, she has been gesturing that two men tried to throw her off the bridge."

The 15-year-old girl, who is mentally challenged and also has speech impairment, was reported missing by her family in Alwar on January 11. She was found bleeding on a bridge later that day and had to undergo surgery in Jaipur where she is now stable.

"She has been gesturing, as if you would throw something, like a sack. She also keeps repeating 'do bhai', to indicate two men, who tried to throw her off. It was her luck that she somehow didn't go over the barrier wall and just fell there. Had the men not been in a hurry and would have taken their time, the child would have died after falling off the bridge," the father said.

"However, the child has not been able to communicate the kind of vehicle she was brought in," he said.

The father also addressed a press conference organised by Sarva Samaj Nyay Sangharsh Samiti in Alwar, which had been constituted to seek justice for the girl. At the conference, he asked that if it was an accident, why didn't his daughter "sustain injuries elsewhere, like on her head or her back. Her clothes would have been torn (if it was an accident). But even her shawl did not have any blood marks."

Talking to this paper, he said, "Why has she got injuries only in the sensitive area? When there's an accident, her head or elbows could have been injured. But why are there no other injuries? That tells us that it is a heinous case. And that's why police is changing its statements and we don't trust the police or the administration anymore. We want CBI to take up this case at the earliest."

While police had initially suspected it to be rape case and lodged an FIR under IPC sections for kidnapping, rape and sections of the POCSO Act, Alwar Superintendent of Police Tejaswani Gautam later said that while they are still investigating, medical reports and technical evidence indicated that there is "no possibility of rape in the case."

Quoting a media report, the father said that the report had cited FSL report to claim that semen has been found on her salwar. "So something has happened. But a day or two ago, I read a report that the semen matches with the father's DNA. This means that the girl's father raped her? You can imagine the levels the police have stooped to."

"Sometimes they say it's a gang rape, sometimes they claim it's an accident. So we are doubtful about the investigation." he said.

Identification of minorities: Apex court pulls up Centre for not replying to petition

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 31

THE SUPREME Court on Monday pulled up the Centre for dragging its feet on a 2020 petition seeking identification of minorities at the state level and minority status for Hindus in states where their numbers are low. The court imposed a cost of Rs 7,500 after the government failed to file its reply to the 2020 plea despite the court granting it a last opportunity in January this year.

"You have not filed counter despite several opportunities. This is not fair. You have to take a stand," Justice S K Kaul, heading a two-judge bench, told Additional Solicitor General K M Natraj, who appeared for the Centre and submitted that the reply will be filed soon and urged the court to not impose cost.

Turning down the request, the bench, also comprising Justice M M Sundresh, ordered, "We grant one further opportunity of four weeks subject to deposit of cost of Rs 7,500.... Thereafter two weeks for rejoinder." The court will now hear the matter on March 28.

The plea by advocate Ashwini Upadhyay relies on the majority judgment of Supreme Court in the 2002 TMA Pai case, which lays down that for the purposes of Article 30, which deals with rights of minorities to establish and administer educational institutions, the religious and linguistic minorities have to be considered state-wise.

The petition contended that the Centre, in exercise of powers under Section 2(c) of National Commission for Minorities Act, 1992, has declared only Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains and Zoroastrians as minority. This, it said, has deprived groups such as Hindus, Baha'is and Jews of their legitimate rights.

It also challenged the constitutional validity of Section 2(c) of NCM Act, which empowers the Centre to declare a group as minority, and has sought minority tag for Hindus in six states and two Union Territories, based on the 2011 Census report.

Marital rape needs to become an offence, Delhi HC told

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 31

RIT FOUNDATION and All India Democratic Women's Association, which have petitioned Delhi High Court for criminalisation of marital rape, on Monday contended that such an act will continue to remain condoned until it is explicitly declared an offence under the law.

"Not only do consequences to a specifically labelled offence deter it, they elevate the consciousness of those who understand where the boundaries are. In our case, to where the conjugal rights to sex begins and where it ends: the bodily integrity of wives," argued advocate Karuna Nundy before the division bench of Justices Rajiv Shakdher and C Hari Shankar.

The court has been hearing the petitions challenging the Exception 2 in IPC Section 375 that protects men, who have forced non-consensual intercourse with their wives, from criminal prosecution under Section 376 IPC.

Nundy submitted that many well meaning men might have thought of sexual harassment as a compliment at workplace before the Vishaka judgment.

The case before the court is about the moral right of a married woman to refuse unwanted forcible sexual intercourse and it is about respecting the right of a wife to say no and recognising that marriage is no longer a universal licence to ignore consent, the petitioners argued before the court.

The arguments will continue on Tuesday. The court has asked Nundy to address the question on creation of a offence by the court. Opposing the petitions, the intervenors have argued that striking down the exception will amount to creation of a new offence.

"Even if it is the creation of a new offence, then what? Is the court going to stop short and say it creates a new offence and, therefore, we will not touch because it is the legislature's [job]. That is the other issue you need to answer," Justice Shakdher told Nundy.

Meanwhile, the court once again asked the Centre to be ready with arguments and clarify regarding its previous stand.

Tracking NCAP: Marginal dip in pollution levels, states not spending enough funds

ESHA ROY
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 31

THREE YEARS into the launch of India's National Clean Air Program (NCAP) in 2019, analysis of pollution data shows there has been a marginal decrease in pollution levels in targeted cities. It also shows insufficient expenditure of funds by the states to ensure air pollution reduction.

The NCAP was launched with an aim to reduce pollution by 20-30 % by 2024, particularly in 132 non-attainment cities. The analysis shows pollution – in terms of PM 2.5 and PM 10 levels – has actually gone up in some cities such as Mumbai over past few years.

Under the NCAP, Rs 375.44 crore was provided to 114 cities from 2018-19 to 2020-2021 and Rs 290 crore allocated to 82 cities for 2021-2022. The programme has an allocation of Rs 700 crore envisaged for 2021-2026.

Data presented at the NCAP's National Apex Committee recently, and analysed by the NCAP Tracker, shows that most states have underutilised the funds allotted. Only Bihar and Chandigarh used 76% and 81% of the funds received towards NCAP. Uttar Pradesh, which has many of India's most-polluted cities, used 16% of the allocated Rs 60 crore.

With 18 non-attainment cities — the most in a state — Maharashtra has used less than 8% of its Rs 51 crore. This despite the fact that, according to Continuous Ambient Air Quality Monitoring System data, Mumbai, Navi Mumbai and Nashik saw pollution levels increase from 2019 to 2021.

The 15th Finance Commission had allotted Rs 4,400 crore for the NCAP programme.

"We were stepping up activity on NCAP, but the work got stalled by the third Covid wave. The regional meetings, including meetings for the Delhi-NCR region by the Air Quality Management Commission, will resume next month," said a senior Environment Ministry official. "One thing that the Environment Ministry is looking at doing now is a convergence of all air pollution-related schemes on one platform, including schemes such as urban forests, which we believe will help reduce air pollution in cities. We will also take a re-look at vehicular pollution norms and industrial pollution norms."

The NCAP Tracker analysis shows that amongst the non-attainment cities, Varanasi, while continuing to be one of the most polluted cities, has recorded the highest reduction in air pollution. Its annual PM 2.5 levels reduced 52% from 91 ug/m3 in 2019 to 44 ug/m3 in 2021 and its PM 10 levels reduced 54% from 202 ug/m3 in 2019 to 93 ug/m3 last year.

The other cities that have already met reduction target of at least 20% were Hoogly in West Bengal where PM 2.5 and PM 10 reduced by 42% and 40%, respectively, and Talcher in Odisha, which saw a PM 2.5 reduction of 20% and PM 10 reduction of 53%.

Navi Mumbai's PM 2.5 levels increased from 39 ug/m3 to 53 ug/m3 and PM 10 levels increased from 96 ug/m3 to 122 ug/m3 from 2019 to 2021. Ghaziabad with annual PM 2.5 levels above 100 remained at the top of the table in the most-polluted cities except 2020 when Lucknow ranked first.

EXPLAINED

Target to bring down pollution by 2024

The NCAP was launched in 2019 to address air pollution in 102 cities, to which 30 more cities were added later. These 132 cities are called non-attainment cities as they did not meet the national ambient air quality standards for the 2011-15 under the National Air Quality Monitoring Program. The country's current annual safe limits for PM 2.5 and PM 10 are 40 micrograms/per cubic metre (ug/m3) and 60 micrograms/per cubic metre. The NCAP has set a target of reducing key air pollutants PM10 and PM2.5 (ultra-fine particulate matter) by 20-30% by 2024, taking the pollution levels in 2017 as the base year.

JDU: Nitish, RCP Singh to campaign in UP

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
PATNA, JANUARY 31

BIHAR CHIEF Minister Nitish Kumar and Union Minister Ramchandra Prasad Singh will campaign for Janata Dal (United), or JD (U) candidates in the coming Uttar Pradesh elections, the party said on Monday.

The initial list of star campaigners released by the JD(U) did not include the two leaders. Its revised list released on Monday names 15 star campaigners, including Nitish Kumar and RCP Singh.

Earlier, the "omission" of RCP Singh had raised questions about the JD(U)'s inability to strike an alliance with ally BJP in UP. Singh, the Union Minister for Steel, was responsible for talks with the BJP on a potential pre-poll alliance.

The JD(U) leads a coalition government in Bihar with the BJP and is member of the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) in the Centre.

It is fighting the UP election from at least 51 seats, according to the party.

Centre bars Kerala channel; HC stays order

SHAJU PHILIP & KRISHN KAUSHIK
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, JANUARY 31

HOURS AFTER the Centre barred the transmission of Malayalam news channel MediaOne TV citing "security reasons", a single-judge bench of Kerala High Court on Monday deferred the ministry order for two days.

Acting on a petition moved by MediaOne TV, Justice N Nagaresh stayed the implementation of the government directive until its next hearing on Wednesday and asked Additional Solicitor General S Manu to get instructions from the Union ministry on the matter.

The court also issued notice to Planetcast Media Services Limited, which provides broadcasting services to the channel.

Following the relief from the High Court, MediaOne TV announced that the channel would soon resume transmission, which was suspended around noon.

While there was no official word from I&B Ministry, sources in the ministry said the order was issued because the channel had not been granted security clearance by the Home Ministry.

MediaOne, owned by Madhyamam Broadcasting Ltd, is backed by Jamaat-e-Islami Hind.

The I&B Ministry order on Monday said, "The Ministry of Home Affairs has denied the security clearance to Madhyamam Broadcasting Limited for renewal of permission of uplinking and downlinking of news and current affairs channel MediaOne".

MediaOne TV editor Pramod Raman said in a statement earlier in the day, "The I&B Ministry has said the ban was due to security reasons, but the channel is yet to get details. The Government has not made the details about the ban available to MediaOne TV. We have started legal action against the ban. After completing the process, the channel will be back. We are suspending the broadcasting temporarily with the hope that justice will prevail."

An I&B Ministry official said the channel's "security clearance was denied" while its licence was being considered for renewal as a private sat channel in 'news' category. Ministry sources said the channel had applied for renewal on May 3 last year, months before its licence was to have expired in September that year.

As per the existing policy, the licence is granted for a period of 10 years. The ministry's list of permitted channels shows that Media One TV channel has had uplinking and downlinking permissions since September 2011.

As per I&B Ministry's licence policy, every channel needs to get a security clearance, issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs, to get a licence to broadcast in the country. The security clearance, both for the company and its directors, is valid for a period of 10 years.

Ministry sources also said that after the MHA declined the security clearance, the channel was sent a showcause notice on January 1, to which it responded on January 19 saying that is "unaware of the grounds for denial of security clearance".

This is the second time in recent years that MediaOneTV has been barred from transmission. In March 2020, the Centre had imposed a 48-hour ban on the channel, along with Malayalam news channel Asianet, on charges of violating provisions of Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1998 while reporting on the riots in northeast Delhi. However, the ban was revoked hours later.

"The channel's reporting on Delhi violence seems to be biased as it is deliberately focusing on the vandalism of CAA supporters," the ministry order on MediaOne had said. "It also questions RSS and alleges Delhi Police inaction. Channel seems to be critical towards Delhi Police and RSS."

On Monday, the transmission ban triggered protests in Kerala with the ruling CPI(M) and the Opposition Congress attacking the Centre over the move.

PM: Role of women expanding, women panels need to widen scope of work

EXPRESS NEW SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 31

NOTING THAT the role of women in the society is continuously expanding, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday said the women commissions will have to increase their scope of work and give a new direction to the women of their states.

Addressing the 30th National Commission for Women Foundation Day, Modi said that 185 women have received Padma awards since 2015 and that this year's awardees featured 34 women – a record. The event, attended by the Women and Child Development (WCD) minister Smriti Irani, NCW chairperson Rekha Sharma as well as state commissions and women's organisations, was held virtually.

Union ministers Smriti Irani, Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi and Congress MP Rahul Gandhi at Parliament House. *Anil Sharma*

"In the last seven years, the policies of the country have become more sensitive towards women. Today, India is among the countries with a provision for maximum maternity leave. The marriageable age for women is being raised to 21 years so that marriage does not become a hindrance in their education and career," the PM said. Modi further said that the role of women in India is clearly changing and this is visible in schemes such as Mudra Yojana where 70 per cent beneficiaries are women.

Panel directs case be registered under SC/ST Act in Wankhede matter

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 31

THE NATIONAL Commission for Scheduled Castes on Monday directed the Mumbai Police to file case under the The Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989, or the SC/ST Act, in the complaint filed by Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) officer Sameer Wankhede.

Wankhede has been fighting allegations made by Maharashtra minister Nawab Malik that the officer forged his caste certificate and other documents to secure a job as an IRS officer under the SC quota after clearing the Union Public Service Commission examination. Subsequently, the then Narcotics Control Bureau Mumbai's Zonal head, had complained to the Commission and in November last year, arrived in Delhi to meet with NCSC Chairperson Vijay Sampla to whom he had submitted documents in support of his scheduled caste status.

"...After hearing both sides (Wankhede and the Maharashtra government), the Commission has come to the decision that within the next seven days, the case be registered under the SC/ST Act, which the Mumbai police had not done before...," said NCSC member from Maharashtra Subhash Ramnath Pardhi.

Not the end yet but start living with smart surveillance, spot variants & take steps early

In this explained.Live session, Anurag Agrawal, Director, Institute of Genomics and Integrative Biology, CSIR talks about the pandemic's endgame, virus mutations and whether new vaccines can create an immunity shield

EXPRESS explained.Live
Associate Partner
YOJNA IAS

Anupam Agrawal in conversation with Amitabh Sinha, Resident Editor, Pune
The Indian Express

On whether the third wave has peaked and we are in the endgame of the pandemic

In metro cities like Delhi and Mumbai, it's getting over but in Tier 2 cities, it is still a problem. Some of them are yet to be affected. Of course, testing is not uniform across India, so the plateau may persist a bit before the decline.

This isn't the end of COVID-19. But if by endgame we mean it's time for schools to reopen, for us to get back to near-normal with relatively small and not very difficult precautions, that should have already started. Honestly, we shouldn't keep schools closed, at least in the big cities. The endgame has nothing to do with the end of COVID-19 as a pandemic, it has to do with the end of COVID-19 as a threatening disease that overwhelms healthcare systems.

On the emergence of a dangerous mutant

We confuse the virulence of a virus with our own immunity and a combination thereof. When the Spanish invaded South America, they carried many diseases and viruses which did not affect Europe but caused deaths there. Chicken pox killed many native Americans. In the beginning, none of us was immune to the virus. Delta turned aggressive because a large population was still not immune or vaccinated and no herd immunity can develop when the virus evolves. So, we should be counting how many susceptible people are left. We've seen that once you are infected, have got two doses of vaccines, the likelihood of dying reduces significantly.

By the time Omicron peaked, we had immunity from the big Delta wave and the vaccination of about 80 to 90 per cent adults. That protected us from death and destruction of the healthcare system. Post-Omicron, the number of people at high risk of dying from COVID-19 will get so small that healthcare systems will not get overwhelmed despite infections. The destruction will lessen with time unless the virus changes very significantly, which isn't an immediate possibility.

AUDIENCE QUESTIONS

On the necessity of booster shots

From the WHO point of view, it's a trade-off between global equity and further lowering the risk for a select few. The priority is always to get more people fully vaccinated. Some UK data has shown that the effectiveness of protection does go up to 70 to 80 per cent with a booster from 65 to 70 per cent but it doesn't block infection. So, in terms of the severity of the disease, the gain is smaller. If there is minimal benefit, there is no point in giving boosters to everybody, especially given the fact that all vaccines are not exactly the same. Therefore, precautionary doses for healthcare workers, the elderly and those at high risk make for a sensible approach. Most Indians are infected and vaccinated, so our immunity may already be equivalent to three vaccine doses in terms of Western data. How frequently India needs boosters cannot be decided without Indian studies about immunity.

On whether night curfews, lockdowns and school closure control transmission

Schools are high priority and when classrooms have big windows or when classes can be done outdoors, the risk is actually small. It is not surfaces but air that is the main source of transmissions. India is in a better place for staying open compared to many countries where everything is closed and air-conditioned.

On whether the virus can ever be eliminated

If I have to pick between this virus ending up like small pox or polio, which have been eliminated, and flu, where there is a continuing struggle, I will pick flu. COVID-19 is not going away. It will get less and less frequent, affecting only the immuno-suppressed, the unhealthy, those at severe high-risk, the very old and the very young. But the destruction and difficulty it causes will become much less, unless the virus changes very significantly, which is always a possibility but not an immediate high possibility. SARS-CoV-2 doesn't mutate a lot but it is an RNA virus, so it mutates more than many DNA viruses. And with a larger pool of hosts in human beings, the virus is getting a chance to optimise itself and mutate. Besides, to eradicate something, it is important that it does not have a host outside humans. SARS-CoV-2 has found animal reservoirs, where it can keep evolving further.

On why herd immunity is elusive

I would argue there have been multiple temporary herd immunity phases, just not a long lasting one. Why did Delta end in Delhi? Because in one of our studies we found that about 88 per cent of the cohort had been infected. At that level, you get herd immunity against that variant and its derivatives. That is why Delta-plus, which was very similar to Delta variant, did not make much headway. Now Omicron is a very heavily mutated derivative of the Beta variant from South Africa. It is just not like Delta at all. Therefore, any antibodies you have developed will not bind and neutralise it. On the other hand, the T-cells, those that have a memory of severe disease and kill infected cells, will still remain effective. So, severe diseases are prevented but not the infection itself. Herd immunity is an infection concept, not infection to severity. You need high quality studies with people you are sure have never been infected earlier to get a better answer.

On Omicron as a natural vaccine

I don't like that phrase at all. To call something a vaccine, the side effects must be very low, comparable to vaccines. With our current vaccines, we expect something to go wrong in one in a lakh or may be 50,000 cases. Now, look at the Infection Fatality Rate (IFR) of Delta and Omicron. Delta's was somewhere around two in a 1,000. Omicron is 60 to 70 per cent lower than that, in certain age groups it might be only 25-50 per cent lower. And you realise that is not a very safe prospect. In Delhi, there are roughly 40 people dying these days, of which half would be incidental. If you had a vaccine, which was seeing 20 people dying everyday, you would stop that vaccine, never use it. That is why calling Omicron a natural vaccine is not right.

SCAN THE CODE TO WATCH VIDEO

On the fear of a dangerous variant and surveillance

Fear is never a solution. Giving up school, work, businesses and staying indoors have their own complications. Given that the risk of death is low while most people are vaccinated and have some immunity, just get on with your lives. That has got nothing to do with the possibility of a worse variant as the virus will try to propagate itself and escape immunity. It will weaken with immuno pressure. Maintain high-quality surveillance, detect variants and take steps early.

India needs a smart, not brute surveillance. Look at South Africa. They don't sequence a lot but they were very effective in spotting Omicron and Beta before that. Their general epidemiology is very strong. We must not be obsessed with the daily number of genetic sequences. You want sequencing labs to have a rapid turnaround and rush all the data to common platforms, so that you can make sense of whether the new sequences are matching with something happening clinically. We now have an Integrated Health Information Portal (IHIP) to do that.

Also, an outbreak is the worst time to sequence as the causative variant is dominant. It is that part in the middle, during a trough, that you need to continue sequencing. We need to maintain a good stable level of sequencing, coupled with intelligence from the ground. As for the rest of us, be alert, follow advisories and don't panic. The Government must make sure the public messaging is right.

On learnings from the pandemic

Why did SARS-CoV-1 not spread? Because the mutant viruses were not that potent or fighting fit. If you look at the SARS-CoV-2 virus, one of the two initial strains could have died out. Had the D614G mutation not occurred, the pandemic would have taken a different track. That resulted in the virus sweeping across the globe. But then we weren't doing enough sequencing. Otherwise, we could have focussed more on masks and ventilation early on. Vaccine equity would have helped too. No country is safe till everyone is safe. And common sense measures are important despite advances in science.

On whether the next generation of vaccines will be more effective

An ideal vaccine prevents infection and blocks severe disease. An acceptable vaccine protects the individual against severe disease but then the target is universal vaccination of all people at risk. I would love to see better vaccines that protect us against all coronaviruses, vaccines that are not against a single ancestral sequence but against a multiplicity of possibilities.

MEANWHILE

AFGHANS' PHOTOS SHOW ALBANIA'S WELCOME

Afghan evacuees in Albania on Monday opened an exhibition on their impressions of the tiny Western Balkan country. The exhibit, 'Albania from my Eyes', opened at the Tirana Art Gallery with photos from some 20 Afghans who fled to Albania last fall. "This exhibition shows how another people see the beauty of Albania," said Madiha Talash, a 20-year-old Afghan in Albania.

TOP OF THE WORLD

The new military ruler of Burkina Faso, Lieutenant Colonel Paul-Henri Damiba

AFRICA

AU suspends Burkina Faso after coup

THE AFRICAN Union (AU) has suspended Burkina Faso from all its activities in response to last week's military coup, effective until constitutional order is restored, the AU said on Monday. Burkina Faso had already been suspended from the West African regional bloc, the Economic Community of West African States, though ECOWAS stopped short of imposing sanctions after the January 24 coup that ousted President Roch Kabore. An ECOWAS delegation along with a United Nations envoy were due to visit Burkina Faso on Monday to meet with the coup leaders before deciding on next steps. **REUTERS**

MYANMAR

UN chief presses junta for aid access

THE UN Secretary-General has urged Myanmar's ruling military to allow humanitarian aid access and address the "desperate needs" of its people, highlighting a year since a coup ended a decade of democracy and plunged the country into turmoil. The February 1 overthrow of an elected government triggered months of nationwide protests and a bloody crackdown by the military, whose use of heavy weapons and airstrikes against armed resistance in the countryside has reignited old conflicts and displaced tens of thousands of people. **REUTERS**

EUROPE

Ships collide off Dutch coast; crew evacuated

RESCUE HELICOPTERS evacuated all 18 crew members from a ship that was left drifting rudderless in a wind turbine park off the Dutch North Sea coast Monday after it collided with another ship and began taking on water during a powerful storm, emergency services said. The collision happened as Storm Corrie lashed parts of the northern Europe. It came after Storm Malik killed at least four people over the weekend, destroying houses, unleashing flooding and leaving thousands of households without electricity. **AP**

UN report: Taliban have killed scores of former Afghan officials, others

REUTERS
WASHINGTON, JANUARY 31

A UN report seen by Reuters says the Taliban and their allies are believed to have killed scores of former Afghan officials, security force members and people who worked with the international military contingent since the US-led pullout.

UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres' report to the UN Security Council paints a picture of worsening living conditions for Afghanistan's 39 million people despite an end of combat with the Taliban's takeover in August.

"An entire complex social and economic system is shutting down," Guterres said.

The report sounds the latest in a series of warnings the UN chief has issued in recent months about the humanitarian and economic crises that accelerated after the Taliban seized Kabul as the last US-led foreign troops left and international donors cut critical financial aid.

Guterres recommended the council approve a restructuring of the UN mission to deal with the situation, including the creation of a new human rights monitoring unit.

The UN mission "continues to receive credible allegations of killings, enforced disappearances and other violations" against former officials, security force members and people who worked for the US-led international military contingent despite a general amnesty announced by the Taliban, the report said.

The mission has determined as credible reports that more than 100 of those individuals have been killed — more than two-thirds of them allegedly by the Taliban or their affiliates — since August 15, it said.

There also are credible allegations of the extra-judicial killings of at least 50 people suspected of belonging to the local branch of the Islamic State militant group, according to the report. **REUTERS**

Afghanistan's public universities to reopen, no word on female students

Kabul: Afghanistan's public universities, closed since the Taliban seized power in August, will reopen in February, the Taliban acting higher education minister said on Sunday, without specifying whether female students would be able to return. Universities in warmer provinces will reopen from February 2, while those in colder areas would reopen on February 26, the minister, Shaikh Abdul Baqi Haqqani, told a news conference in Kabul. He did not say what arrangements if any would be made for female students. **REUTERS**

Justin Trudeau tests positive for Covid-19

ASSOCIATED PRESS
TORONTO, JANUARY 31

CANADIAN PRIME Minister Justin Trudeau said on Monday that he tested positive for Covid-19, but is "feeling fine" and will continue working remotely.

The announcement came in a tweet in which he urged everyone to "please get vaccinated and get boosted".

Justin Trudeau

Trudeau had said on Thursday he was going into isolation after finding out he was in contact with someone who had tested positive earlier.

The announcement followed a weekend of protests in Canada's capital, Ottawa, against vaccine mandates. Some demonstrators travelled in truck convoys and parked on the streets around Parliament Hill. A media report claimed that Trudeau was moved to an undisclosed secure location.

MUTED CELEBRATIONS FOR LUNAR NEW YEAR

At a market in Hong Kong on Monday. People across East and Southeast Asia prepared for muted Lunar New Year celebrations amid concerns over Covid-19, even as increasing vaccination rates raised hopes that the Year of the Tiger might bring life back closer to normal. The Lunar New Year is the most important annual holiday in China and falls on Tuesday. Each year is named after one of twelve signs of the Chinese zodiac in a repeating cycle. The Year of the Tiger follows the Year of the Ox. *AP*

Russian, US diplomats spar at UNSC amid standoff over Ukraine

RICK GLADSTONE & ANTON TROIANOVSKI
JANUARY 31

THE UNITED States and Russia engaged in a diplomatic brawl Monday at the UN Security Council over the Ukraine crisis, as the Americans accused the Russians of endangering peace by massing troops on Ukraine's borders while Kremlin diplomats dismissed what they called farcical theatrics and fearmongering.

The meeting of the 15-nation council, requested by the United States last week, represented the highest-profile arena for the two powers to sway world opinion over Ukraine.

The tensions surrounding the former Soviet republic have brought US-Russian relations to their lowest point since the Cold War. The meeting adjourned, as expected, with no action taken.

Almost immediately after the meeting of the council convened, the Russians lost a procedural challenge to even holding it. Ambassador Vasily Nebenzia of Russia accused the Americans of fomenting "unfounded accusations that we have refuted" and said no Russian troops were in Ukraine, questioning the basic premise of a meeting he described as "megaphone diplomacy".

The American ambassador, Linda Thomas-Greenfield, countered that many private diplomatic meetings had been held about Russia's military buildup and it was "now time to have a meeting in public". She asked other members how they would feel "if you had 100,000 troops sitting on your border".

"The situation we are facing in Europe is urgent and dangerous," Thomas-Greenfield said in her opening remarks. "Russia's actions strike at the very heart of the UN charter." **NYT**

Russian infantry vehicles during drills last week in the Rostov region of Russia. *Reuters*

US, allies prepare to sanction Russian elites in event of Ukraine invasion

STEVE HOLLAND
WASHINGTON, JANUARY 31

THE UNITED States and its allies have prepared a list of Russian elites in or near Russian President Vladimir Putin's inner circle to hit with economic sanctions should Russia invade Ukraine, a senior administration official said on Monday.

"The individuals we have identified are in or near the inner circles of the Kremlin and play a role in government decision making or are at a minimum complicit in the Kremlin's destabilising behavior," the official said, speaking on condition of anonymity.

The United States has developed specific sanctions packages for both Russian elites who meet the criteria and their family members, and these efforts are being pursued in coordination with US allies and partners, the official said.

Targeting Russian oligarchs is only one part of a plan by the United States and its allies to punish Putin should he launch an invasion of Ukraine after massing tens of thousands of troops on the Ukraine border. Russia denies that it plans to invade Ukraine.

President Joe Biden has not ruled out putting sanctions on Putin himself.

US officials have already detailed other penalties that include sanctions on Russian financial institutions and export control measures that could attempt to choke off broad swaths of industrial and consumer technologies to Russia.

The official would not provide names of Russian figures who could be sanctioned.

"There is a broad list of individuals we can pull from," the official said, noting that some will be from a classified list of Russian political figures and oligarchs outlined in Section 241 of the "Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act" in a report sent to the US Congress in 2018. **REUTERS**

UK's Johnson says sorry after report slams lockdown parties

JILL LAWLESS
LONDON, JANUARY 31

BRITAIN'S PRIME Minister Boris Johnson apologised on Monday after an inquiry found that Downing Street parties while Britain was in lockdown represented a "serious failure" to observe the standards expected of government or to heed the sacrifices made by millions of people during the pandemic.

But Johnson brushed off calls to quit over the "partygate" scandal, promising to reform the way his office is run and insisting his government can be trusted.

"I get it, and I will fix it," he said in Parliament after senior civil servant Sue Gray published interim findings on several gatherings in 2020 and 2021.

Gray found that "failures of leadership and judgment" allowed events to occur that "should not have been allowed to take place".

"The hardship under which citizens across the country worked, lived and sadly even died while observing the government's regulations and guidance rigorously are known only too well," Gray wrote.

"Against the backdrop of the pandemic, when the government was asking citizens to accept far-reaching restrictions on their lives, some of the behavior surrounding these gatherings is difficult to justify," she added.

Gray's glimpse inside a 10 Downing St. marked by excessive alcohol consumption and staff afraid to speak out about problems are a blow to Johnson.

Police last week launched a criminal investigation into the most serious alleged breaches of coronavirus rules.

Among the events under police investigation are a June 2020 birthday party for Johnson in Downing Street and two gatherings held on the eve of Prince Philip's funeral in April 2021 — a funeral at which Queen Elizabeth II had to sit alone. **AP**

More to come from probe report

EXPLAINED

THE PART of the probe report by senior civil servant Sue Gray that was made public include her conclusions on just four of the 16 incidents she investigated. The other 12 incidents include those that have been the subject of more serious allegations regarding breaches of Covid rules. Gray's findings regarding these incidents have not been released at the request of police, who are also investigating these allegations.

UK PM Boris Johnson

UAE blocks missile strike as Israeli President visits

MAHMOUD MOURAD & ALEXANDER CORNWELL
DUBAI, JANUARY 31

THE UNITED Arab Emirates said on Monday it intercepted a ballistic missile fired by Yemen's Iran-aligned Houthi movement as the UAE hosted Israeli President Isaac Herzog on his first visit to the Gulf business and tourism hub.

In the third such attack on the US-allied Gulf state in the last two weeks, the Houthis' military spokesman said they fired Zulfiqar missiles at Abu Dhabi and drones at Dubai.

He reiterated a warning to residents and firms to "stay away from vital headquarters and facilities" in the UAE, which prides itself as a safe business haven and global tourism destination.

The US condemned the assault — which followed a Jan 17 strike on a fuel depot in Abu Dhabi that killed three people — in an escalation of the Yemen war between the Houthis and a Saudi-led coalition, which includes the UAE.

The assaults have led to rare security jitters among some residents in a country where expatriates are a majority.

The attempted strike came as Israel's President was visiting Abu Dhabi where he discussed security and bilateral relations with Abu Dhabi Crown Prince Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan.

"While Israel's President is visiting the UAE to build bridges and promote stability across the region, the Houthis continue to launch attacks that threaten civilians," US State Department spokesman Ned Price said. **REUTERS**

Israeli President Isaac Herzog and UAE Foreign Minister Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan in Abu Dhabi. *Reuters*

Pakistani police widen manhunt day after killing of Christian priest

RIAZ KHAN
PESHAWAR, JANUARY 31

PAKISTANI POLICE said they widened their manhunt Monday, searching for two unidentified assailants who shot and killed a Christian priest and wounded another the previous day in the country's northwest.

Father William Siraj, 75, was killed while on his way home after attending Sunday Mass in the city of Peshawar, the capital of northwestern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province that borders Afghanistan. One of his travelling companions, Father Naeem Patrick, was wounded while a third priest was unharmed in the attack.

The attackers fled the scene. No group has so far claimed responsibility for the killing.

Police official Javed Khan said an investigation was underway, taking into account all possibilities. The provincial police chief, Moazzam Jah Ansari, ordered police investigators to utilise the latest technology and all available resources to ensure the arrest of the perpetrators.

Christians are a tiny minority in this predominantly Sunni Muslim country, where about half are members of the Church of Pakistan, a Protestant church. Militants in Pakistan have targeted Christians several times in recent years. **AP**

Pakistani media mogul acquitted of graft charges

MUBASHER BUKHARI
LAHORE, JANUARY 31

A PAKISTANI court on Monday acquitted the country's biggest media mogul of corruption charges over land acquisitions dating back three decades, a case that rights groups said was brought in an effort to curb press freedom.

After an almost two-year trial, the court in the eastern city of Lahore ordered the release of Mir Shakil-ur-Rehman for lack of evidence, his lawyer Amjad Pervaiz said.

"There is no supportive material with the prosecution to prove involvement of the accused," the court said in its ruling.

Arrested in March 2020 on charges of securing illegal property concessions from a previous government in 1986, Rehman was granted bail later in November that year.

Rehman is the owner and editor-in-chief of Jang media group, which publishes Urdu- and English-language newspapers and also runs the popular Geo News TV.

New York-based Community to Protect Journalists (CPJ) and other rights groups said the prosecution of Rehman amounted to an attack on press freedom.

"It is the price you pay for taking an independent stance," Geo TV Director News Rana Jawad said. He said Rehman was targeted to silence his group's critical reporting of the government. **REUTERS**

'INCIDENTS HAVE BOTH BEEN GROWING MORE FREQUENT AND MORE SIGNIFICANT'

Cyberattacks increasingly hobble pandemic-weary US schools

CEDAR ATTANASIO
ALBUQUERQUE, JANUARY 31

FOR TEACHERS at a middle school in New Mexico's largest city, the first inkling of a widespread tech problem came during an early morning staff call.

On the video, there were shout-outs for a new custodian for his hard work, and the typical announcements from administrators and the union rep. But in the chat, there were hints of a looming crisis. Nobody could open attendance records, and everyone was locked out of class rosters and grades.

Albuquerque administrators later confirmed the outage that blocked access to the district's student database — which also includes emergency contacts and lists of which adults are authorised to pick up which children — was due to a ransomware attack.

"I didn't realise how important it was until I couldn't use it," said Sarah Hager, a Cleveland Middle School art teacher.

Cyberattacks like the one that cancelled classes for two days in Albuquerque's biggest school district have become a growing threat to US schools, with several high-profile incidents reported since last year. And the coronavirus pandemic has compounded their effects: More money has been demanded, and more schools have had to shut down as they scramble to recover data or even manually wipe all laptops.

"Pretty much any way that you cut it, incidents have both been growing more frequent and more significant," said Doug Levin, director of the K12 Security Information Exchange, a Virginia-based nonprofit that helps schools defend against cybersecurity risk.

Precise data is hard to come by since most schools are not required to publicly report cyberattacks. But experts say public school systems — which often have limited budgets for cybersecurity expertise — have become an inviting target for ransomware gangs.

The pandemic also has forced schools to turn increasingly toward virtual learning, making them more dependent on technology and more vulnerable to cyber-extortion. School systems that have had instruction disrupted include those in Baltimore County and Miami-Dade County, along with districts in New Jersey, Wisconsin and elsewhere.

Levin's group has tracked well over 1,200 cyber security incidents since 2016 at public school districts across the country. They included 209 ransomware attacks, when hackers lock data up and charge to unlock it; 53 "denial of service" attacks, where attackers sabotage or slow a network by faking server requests; 156 "Zoombombing" incidents, where an unauthorised person intrudes on a video call; and more than 110 phishing attacks, where a deceptive message tricks a user to let a hacker into their network.

Recent attacks also come as schools grapple with multiple other challenges related to the pandemic. Teachers get sick, and there aren't substitutes to cover them. Where there are strict virus testing protocols, there aren't always tests or people to give them.

In New York City, an attack this month on third-party software vendor Illuminate Education didn't result in cancelled classes, but teachers across the city couldn't access grades. Local media reported the outage added to stress for educators already juggling instruction with enforcing Covid-19 protocols and covering for colleagues who were sick or in quarantine. **AP**

At Cleveland Middle School in Albuquerque, New Mexico. *AP*

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If there are questions of current or contemporary relevance that you would like explained, please write to **explained@indianexpress.com**

TRACKING INDIA'S COVID CURVE

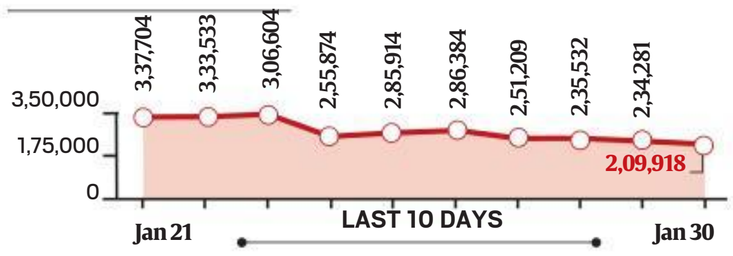
DASHBOARD, AS ON JAN 30

700 DAYS SINCE PANDEMIC BEGAN

New cases	Active cases	Deaths
2,09,918	1,831,268	959

Weekly CFR: 0.31% | Overall CFR: 1.32% | Total deaths: 4,95,050

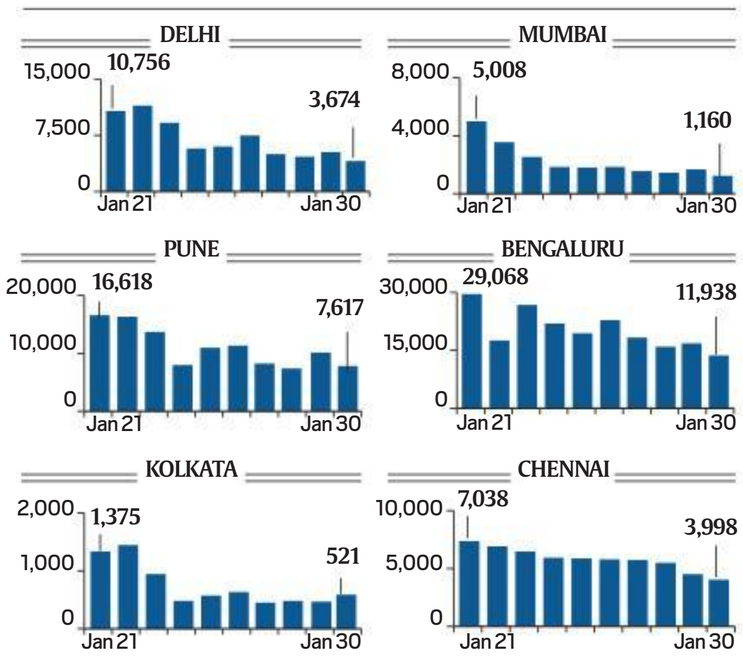
NEW CASES, DAILY



SURGE IN THE STATES

State	ON JANUARY 27			Weekly positivity
	New cases	Active cases	Deaths	
Kerala	51,570	3,55,314	475	51.60%
Karnataka	28,264	2,51,114	68	22.43%
Maharashtra	22,444	2,27,71	62	17.54%
Tamil Nadu	22,238	2,03,926	38	18.81%
Andhra Pradesh	10,310	1,16,031	12	30.11%

CASES IN THE CITIES, LAST 10 DAYS

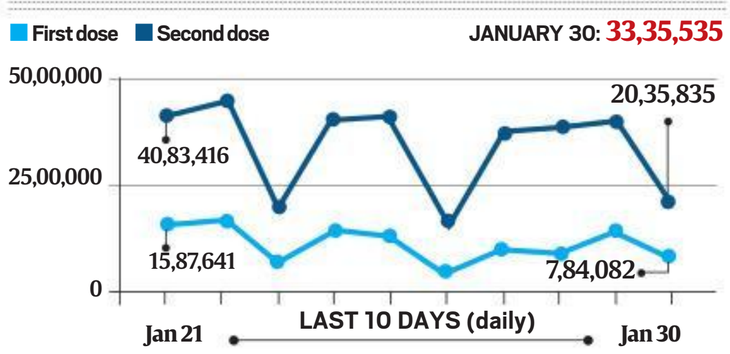


TOTAL TESTS 72,89,97,813

TESTS ON JAN 30	WEEKLY POSITIVITY	OVERALL POSITIVITY
16,07,115	14.66%	5.67%

INDIA TOTAL DOSES 166,03,96,227

(Adults 1st dose: 89,41,54,295; adults second dose: 70,83,84,203; 15-18 age group first dose: 4,59,99,539; precautionary doses: 1,18,58,190)



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SIMPLY PUT

What the Survey says

Economic Survey 2021-22 focuses on the post-pandemic recovery, noting the availability of fiscal space for the government, and analyses a range of aspects including inflation, energy prices and global uncertainties.

PRANAV MUKUL & SUNNY VERMA
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 31

PUTTING THE spotlight on the way forward after the pandemic, the Economic Survey of 2021-22 has analysed aspects such as inflation, global liquidity measures, and rising energy prices to detail the risks for the economy going ahead. It has also taken stock of growing revenues to indicate the availability of fiscal space, should the government see the need to provide additional support.

The Survey has noted that growth in 2022-23 will be supported by widespread vaccine coverage, gains from supply-side reforms and easing of regulations, robust export growth, and the availability of fiscal space to ramp up capital spending.

Fiscal space

The Survey notes that buoyant tax revenues and government policies have created "headroom for taking up additional fiscal policy interventions". Stressing the need to continue the focus on capital expenditure, it has indicated that the government is on course to achieve the fiscal deficit target of 6.8% of GDP for the current year. Revenue receipts of the Centre during April-November 2021 have gone up by 67.2% (YoY) as against an estimated growth of 9.6% in the 2021-22 Budget Estimates. The estimated tax collections provide the cushion to support growth next year.

The Survey also argues that the banking sector is well placed to support the economy, as it is now "well capitalised and the overhang of Non-Performing Assets seems to have structurally declined".

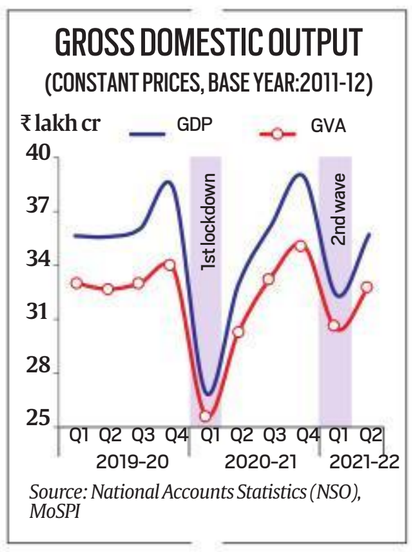
Vaccine economics

The Survey says the progress of vaccination should be seen not just as a health response indicator, but also as a buffer against economic disruptions caused by repeated pandemic waves. This is based in part on the assumption that private consumption "is poised to see stronger recovery with rapid coverage in vaccination and faster normalisation of economic activity", and the importance of vaccination in the re-opening of contact-intensive sectors.

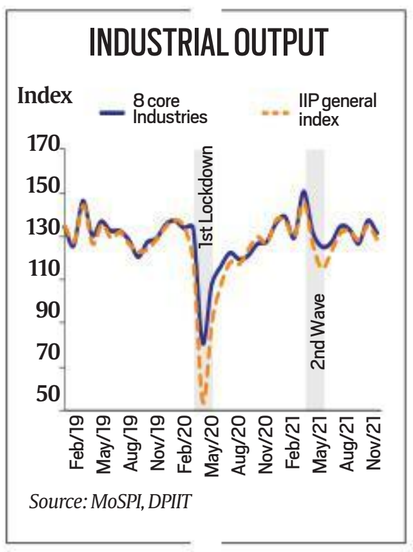
Inflation pressures

The Survey flags inflation as an issue. It has noted in particular that while India's CPI inflation — 5.2% in 2021-22 (April-December) — is within the targeted tolerance band, WPI inflation has been running in double digits. This is partly due to base effects; however, "India does need to be wary of imported inflation, especially from elevated global energy prices".

Elevated inflationary pressures could potentially lead to unwinding of liquidity measures by systemically important central banks, including the US Federal Reserve.



Source: National Accounts Statistics (NSO), MoSPI



Source: MoSPI, DPIIT

38 PAGES TO ALMOST 900; NOW DOWN TO 413

THE ECONOMIC SURVEY assesses the health and status of the economy, and sets the stage for the Union Budget. In his preface to this year's Survey, Principal Economic Adviser Sanjeev Sanyal has said the document presents the economic report card of the government, and suggestions on possible reforms.

FIRST PUBLISHED in 1950-51, the Survey was initially fewer than 50 pages long, and was part of Budget documents. It contained a brief outline of economic developments of the previous year. The Survey of 1957-58 had just 38 pages, and was primarily descriptive with not much analysis and policy prescriptions, Sanyal has said.

AN ANALYTICAL CHAPTER on the country's medium-term challenges and macro-economic prospects was added in 2008-09, following the global financial crisis of 2007-08. In 2013-14, the statistical appendix was published as a separate volume. In 2014-15 Survey was in two volumes: Vol 1 addressed topical policy concerns; Vol 2 was the traditional Survey along with the statistical appendix.

THE 2020-21 SURVEY "consisted of 335 pages in Volume 1, 368 pages in Volume 2 and a statistical appendix of 174 pages — a total of 877 pages!" Sanyal has written. It allowed space for new ideas and themes, but was also "unwieldy", he said. This year's Survey has been trimmed down to 413 pages.

PRANAV MUKUL & AANCHAL MAGAZINE

Global uncertainty

While the sizeable accretion of foreign exchange reserves — $633.6 billion as of December 31, 2021 — makes India's external sector resilient for the withdrawal of liquidity measures, the Survey points out that the overall balance of risks for global trade is tilted to the downside.

The biggest downside risk comes from the pandemic, it says, along with longer port delays, higher freight rates, and the shortage of shipping containers and inputs such as semiconductors. Supply-side disruptions, exacerbated by recovery in demand, pose significant risks for global trade.

Energy risks

The report calls for a "diversified mix of sources of energy of which fossil fuels are an important part", but simultaneously calls for focus on building storage for intermittent electricity generation from solar PV and wind farms to ensure on-demand energy supply.

It asks the government to focus on the pace of the shift from conventional fossil fuel-based sources; and encourage R&D to ensure an effortless switch to renewable sources of energy.

Supply side reforms

The Survey says the post-Covid economy will not merely be a "re-inflation" of the pre-Covid economy and, therefore, simply building it back with demand measures "is not a solution". It calls for emphasis on developing a supply-side strategy to deal with the long-term unpredictability of the post-Covid world, emanating mainly from factors such as changes in consumer behaviour, technological developments, geopolitics, climate change, and their potentially unpredictable interactions.

Industrial growth

The industrial sector, which suffered due to pandemic disruptions, is likely to record a growth of 11.8% in 2021-22, the Survey says. Although performance slowed during the year, the gradual unlocking of the economy and measures such as the PLI scheme for various sectors, along with policy initiatives such as the emergency credit line guarantee to micro, small, and medium enterprises will help aid the pace of recovery, the Survey noted.

"The pace of this recovery and further growth is likely to continue due to consistent efforts of the government to bring in various structural, fiscal and infrastructural reforms in addition to a slew of measures/schemes like the production linked incentive scheme (PLI) to support industries," it said.

Public spending

After a slowdown in the first half of the ongoing financial year, capital expenditure by the Centre revived during October-December, the Survey notes. The first-half slowdown was mainly on account of Covid-19-led restrictions. During April-November 2021, capital expenditure grew by 13.5% (YoY), with focus in infrastructure-intensive sectors like roads and highways, railways, and housing and urban affairs. This increase, the Survey says, was particularly substantial given the high YoY growth in capital expenditure registered during the corresponding period of the previous year as well.

Way forward

Basis the macro-economic stability indicators, the Survey believes that the Indian economy is "well placed" to take on the challenges of 2022-23. The government's strategy has been to not pre-commit to a "rigid response" while using safety nets for vulnerable sections, and responding iteratively based on Bayesian-updating of information.

The Survey proposes use of the Agile approach to policymaking with 80 high-frequency indicators in an environment of "extreme uncertainty". The approach, used in project management and technology development, assesses outcomes in short iterations while constantly making incremental adjustments. The suggestion is based on the availability of a "wealth of real-time data" to take feedback-based decisions, the Survey says.

'Maus' and the novel protest against a school ban

PAROMITA CHAKRABARTI
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 31

A UNANIMOUS decision by the McMinn County school board in Tennessee to pull Jewish American cartoonist Art Spiegelman's graphic novel *Maus* from its syllabus has seen a unique protest — on January 28, the Pulitzer Prize-winning book climbed to the top of Amazon's bestsellers list in fiction satire and comics and graphic novel. On Sunday, for all books, *The Complete Maus* held number three spot and the first volume, *Maus I: A Survivor's Tale: My Father Bleeds History*, number two.

Why the ban

On January 10, at a meeting of the school board, members found objectionable some depictions in the book based on the Holocaust experience of the author's Jewish Pole parents. The board cited eight swear words and a nude illustration. The move met with protests locally and worldwide. The board upheld the decision, stating that it was not a ban, but a replacement with a more suitable text for the intended age group.

Holocaust memories

Serialised from 1980-91 in *Raw*, an experimental magazine brought out by Spiegelman and his wife Françoise Mouly, *Maus* is based on a series of interviews Spiegelman took of his father Vladek, and brings alive the horrors of the Holocaust.

The book alternates between two timelines — 1930-45 when Vladek and his wife survived Auschwitz, and 1978-79, in Spiegelman's youth, before jumping to 1986 in the second instalment.

In a twist to the Nazi propaganda that characterised Jews as vermin, Spiegelman's hand-drawn illustrations depict people with animal characteristics — the Germans are shown as cats, the Poles as pigs, while Jews, in general, are depicted as mice.

Spiegelman's audacious experiment elevated a mass medium like comics to serious literature. The book has been translated into over 30 languages and won several awards, and is the only graphic novel to have won the Pulitzer Prize till date.

The protests

The protests are a reaction to a right-wing push for cultural conservatism in America and across the world, that is increasingly resulting in a censorship of academic and literary freedoms and free speech. Author Neil Gaiman tweeted, "There's only one kind of people who would vote to ban Maus, whatever they are calling themselves these days". Poet Maggie Smith tweeted, "We've lost our damn minds if we think that to keep kids safe in school, we need to ban books, not assault weapons".

In an interview to CNN, Spiegelman, 73, said of the school board decision: "It has the breadth of autocracy and fascism about it."

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Kerala's proposal to limit Lokayukta's powers, and laws in other states

APURVA VISHWANATH & SHYAMLAL YADAV
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 31

THE KERALA government proposes to amend the Kerala Lok Ayukta Act with an ordinance, a move that has drawn criticism from the opposition.

What change has been proposed?

The cabinet has recommended to the Governor that he promulgate the ordinance, which proposes to give the government powers to "either accept or reject the verdict of the Lokayukta, after giving an opportunity of being heard". Currently, under Section 14 of the Act, a public servant is required to vacate office if directed by the Lokayukta.

The stated reason for this is that the state's Advocate General K Gopalakrishna Kurup has given his opinion green-lighting the amendment. However, the move is widely seen as a fallout of the Supreme Court's refusal in October last year to stay the Lokayukta decision holding CPI(M) leader K T Jaleel guilty of nepotism. Jaleel, who was Higher Education Minister during Pinarayi Vijayan's first term as Chief Minister, had to resign after the Lokayukta decision. The Lokayukta is also currently investigating cases-one against Vijayan himself and Higher Education Minister R Bindu.

How was the Lokayukta Act originally envisaged?

The central Lokpal and Lokayuktas Act, 2013 was notified on January 1, 2014. The law was a result of demands of several decades for stronger anti-corruption laws.

The Act provides for establishing a Lokpal headed by a Chairperson, who is or has been a Chief Justice of India, or is or has been a judge of the Supreme Court, or an eminent person who fulfils eligibility criteria as specified. Of its other members, not exceeding eight, 50% are to be judicial members, provided that not less than 50% belong to the SCs, STs, OBCs, minorities, or are women. The Lokpal and Lokayukta are to deal with complaints against public servants, a definition that includes the Lokpal chairperson and members. The Lokpal was appointed in March 2019 and it started functioning since March 2020 when its rules were framed. The Lokpal is at present headed by former Supreme Court Justice Pinaki Chandra Ghose.

As per statistics on its official website, the Lokpal received 1,427 complaints in 2019-20, 110 in 2020-21, and 30 in 2021-22 up to July 2021. Due to a delay in framing rules, one of the judicial members, Justice (Retd) Dilip B Bhosale, has resigned.

How does it work in the states?

Lokayuktas are the state equivalents of the central Lokpal. Section 63 of the Lokpal and Lokayuktas Act, 2013 states: "Every state shall establish a body to be known as the Lokayukta for the State, if not so established, constituted or appointed, by a law made by the State Legislature, to deal with complaints relating to corruption against certain public functionaries, within a period of one year from the date of commencement of this Act."

Originally, the central legislation was envisaged to make a Lokayukta in each state mandatory. However, regional parties and the BJP, which was in opposition then, argued that this would be against the spirit of federalism. The law then created a mere framework, leaving it to the states to decide the specifics.

Which states have Lokayuktas?

When the 2013 Act was passed, Lokayuktas were already functioning in some states — including in Madhya Pradesh and Karnataka where they were very active. Following the Act and the intervention of the Supreme Court, most states have now set up a Lokayukta.

In 2018, the Supreme Court had expressed concern that Jammu & Kashmir, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Puducherry, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Tripura, West Bengal and Arunachal Pradesh had not appointed any Lokayukta or Up-Lokayukta. It asked the chief secretaries about the steps taken for these appointment, and "if so the stage thereof… The reasons for non-appointment of Lokayukta/Up-Lokayukta… be also laid before the court."

However, given that states have autonomy to frame their own laws, the Lokayukta's powers vary from state to state on various aspects, such as tenure, and need of sanction to prosecute officials. Examples of the laws in some states:

NAGALAND: On 3 August 2021, Nagaland passed a law allowing itself the power to keep the post of the state Lokayukta vacant for a year. It was also criticised for a political appointment: Up-Lokayukta Mangyang Lima is a member of the ruling National Democratic Progressive Party.

The new law came on the heels of the retirement of Lokayukta Justice (retd) Uma Nath Singh. Justice Singh was working from Delhi citing restrictions on travelling due to the pandemic. The state moved the Supreme Court, which observed in January last year: "We don't understand this. How can a person be a Lokayukta while sitting in Delhi just because this is pandemic times… You are demeaning your office." Subsequently, Justice Singh resigned.

GOA: Goa's Lokayukta does not have powers of prosecution. On his retirement in June 2020, Justice (Retd) Prafulla Kumar Misra said he had left office "disenchanted" with the state government that had not acted on even one of the 21 reports that he submitted against public functionaries during his nearly four-and-a-half-year tenure.

BIHAR: In March last year, Bihar passed a law that sought to punish people filing false cases before the Lokayukta. The offence would carry a jail-term of up to three years. The move was criticised on the ground that it could be misused against whistle-blowers.

UTTAR PRADESH: In 2012, Uttar Pradesh passed a law increasing the tenure of Lokayukta to 8 years. Then Lokayukta Justice (retd) N K Mehrotra, who was appointed on March 16, 2006, got a two-year extension with the amendment. The Supreme Court upheld the law in 2014.

In 2015, the state brought another amendment removing the High Court Chief Justice from the selection committee. This came in the wake of Justice D Y Chandrachud, then Chief Justice of the Allahabad HC, disagreeing with the proposal to appoint Justice (retd) Ravindra Singh as Lokayukta, citing his proximity to the Samajwadi Party that was in power then.

RajCOMP Info Services Limited (RISL)

C-Block, 1st Floor, Yojana Bhawan, Tilak Marg, C-Scheme, Jaipur.

RISL invites ebids from the eligible bidders for the following:

NIB No./ Date/ Unique bid no.	Particulars	Estimated Cost/EMD	Start of sale /Last date
6509/31.01.2022 (RIS2122WSOB 00078)	RFP for Interior Works for Establishment of PMU for IFMS-3 at LIC Building, Jaipur.	Rs. 2.95 Crores/ Rs. 5.90 Lacs	02.02.2022/ 23.02.2022

Details can be seen on the websites http://sppp.rajasthan.gov.in, http://risl.rajasthan.gov.in, http://www.doit.rajasthan.gov.in and http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in.

Raj.Samwad/C/21/11162 — Technical Director

SBI

Strategy & Digital Banking Department, Corporate Centre, Mumbai-400 021.

CORRIGENDUM

Please refer to RFP No. SBI/S & DB/2021-22/OSS/001 dated 05.01.2022 for Engagement of consultant for setting up an operations support subsidiary. Corrigendum dated 31.01.2022 can be accessed under Procurement news at Bank's website **https://www.sbi.co.in**.

Place: Mumbai — **General Manager (OSD)**
Date: 01.02.2022 — **Strategy & Digital Banking Department**

भारतीय प्रौद्योगिकी संस्थान इंदौर
INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY INDORE

खंडवा रोड, सिमरोल, इंदौर -453552
Khandwa Road, Simrol, Indore- 453 552
Ph: +91-731-6603369/3551/3480Email: mms@iiti.ac.in

ई-निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना /NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER

IIT इंदौर ऑनलाइन ई-निविदा आमंत्रित करता है **हाई स्पीड कैमरा एवं एसेसरीज की सप्लाई एवं स्थापना के लिए** E-Tenders are invited by IIT Indore for **Supply and Installation of High-Speed Camera with Accessories**

निविदा पूर्व बैठक और निविदा जमा करने की अंतिम तिथि सहित संपूर्ण विवरण के लिए, कृप्या IIT इंदौर की वेबसाइट और CPPP देखें।

For complete details including Pre-bid meeting and last date of bid submission, please visit IIT Indore website & CPPP: http://www.iiti.ac.in/tenders/tender mms , https://eprocure.gov.in/epublish/app

कुलसचिव/Registrar

कार्यालय कार्यपालन अभियंता
लोक स्वास्थ्य यांत्रिकी खण्ड, दन्तेवाड़ा

(फोन/फॅक्स नं. 07856-252362, ई-मेल- eedan-phe-cg@nic.in)

// ई-प्रोक्योरमेंट शुद्धिपत्र //

एकीकृत पंजीयन व्यवस्था प्रणाली अंतर्गत सक्षम श्रेणी में पंजीकृत ठेकेदारों से प्रपत्र ''ए'' प्रतिशत दर पर निम्नलिखित कार्य हेतु (Online) निविदा आमंत्रित की गयी थी। जिसमें किसी भी ठेकेदार द्वारा भाग नही लेने के कारण तथा एकल निविदाकार होने के कारण उक्त निविदा की तिथि आगे बढ़ाई जाती है।

कार्य का नामः- जल जीवन मिशन के अंतर्गत सिंगल विलेज का कार्य।

निविदा क्रमांक	शुद्धिपत्र क्रमांक	सिस्टम टेण्डर क्रमांक	ग्राम/ विकासखण्ड	अनुमानित लागत (लाख में)	रिमार्क
116/11.01.2022	01	90539	गुमलनार/गीदम	80.92	
117/11.01.2022	01	90540	मडसे/गीदम	122.15	
120/11.01.2022	01	90543	नेलगोड़ा/गीदम	48.36	
121/12.01.2022	01	90666	हिरोली/गीदम	48.72	
122/12.01.2022	01	90671	सालनार/गीदम	50.44	
123/12.01.2022	01	90675	तारलापाल/गीदम	66.92	
124/12.01.2022	01	90693	रेका/गीदम	51.00	
125/12.01.2022	01	90695	पेरपा/कुआकोण्डा	48.94	

निविदा की सामान्य शर्त अन्य जानकारी वेबसाईट पोर्टल **http://eproc.cgstate.gov.in** पर दर्शित है।

टीपः- निविदा डाउनलोड करने की अंतिम तिथि दिनांक 07.02.2022 है।

स्वा/-
कार्यपालन अभियंता
लोक स्वास्थ्य यांत्रिकी खंड
दंतेवाड़ा

67278

झारखण्ड सरकार
क्षेत्र सर्वेक्षण प्रमण्डल, अग्रिम योजना
पथ निर्माण विभाग, दुमका

अति-अल्पकालीन ई-प्रोक्योरमेंट सूचना

ई-निविदा प्रसंग सं0 :- RCD/FSD /AP/ DUM/24 /2021-22 दिनांकः 28.01.2022

1.	कार्य का नाम	विभागीय सूचीबद्ध परामर्शी से पथ प्रमण्डल दुमका अंतर्गत बेलझार ग्राम से कालीपाथर बराज स्थल तक का विस्तृत परियोजना प्रतिवेदन (डी0पी0आर0) सूत्रण कार्य।
2.	अनुमानित लंबाई	4 कि०मी०
3.	कार्य समाप्ति की अवधि	60 दिन
4.	वेबसाईट पर निविदा प्रकाशित होने की तिथि एवं समय	01.02.2022 05.00 बजे अपराह्न
5.	निविदा जमा करने की अंतिम तिथि एवं समय	10.02.2022 12.00 बजे अपराह्न तक
6.	निविदा खोलने की तिथि एवं समय	11.02.2022, 12.30 बजे अपराह्न
7.	निविदा आमंत्रित करने वाले का नाम एवं पता	कार्यपालक अभियंता का कार्यालय, क्षेत्र सर्वेक्षण प्रमण्डल अग्रिम योजना, पथ निर्माण विभाग, दुमका।
8.	प्रोक्योरमेंट पदाधिकारी का संपर्क नं0	94315-57521
9.	ई-प्रोक्योरमेंट सेल को हेल्पलाईन नं0	0651-2401010

अतिरिक्त जानकारी के लिए वेबसाईट पर देखें :- http://jharkhandtenders.gov.in

कार्यपालक अभियंता,
क्षेत्र सर्वेक्षण प्रमण्डल, अग्रिम योजना,
पथ निर्माण विभाग, दुमका

PR 262832 Road (21-22)_D

WESTERN RAILWAY - AHMEDABAD DIVISION

CONTRACT OF LEASING OUT SLR SPACES FOR A PERIOD OF 5 YEARS IN TRAIN COMPARTMENT

Tender No. DRM/Comml/59/2020-21
Tender Notice No. C78/1/117/Tender/SLR/04/2021-22 Dt : 24.01.2022

The Divisional Railway Manager (Commercial), Western Railway, Ahmedabad invites E-Tenders for the contract of leasing out 4 / 3.9 tonne SLR spaces for a period of 5 (Five) Years in following Trains from Registered Leaseholders (in category 'A' or 'B') over Ahmedabad Division of Western Railway detailed below **"Separately" for Compartment-wise and Train-wise.**

Sr. No.	Train No.	Station From	Station To	Days of Service or Days of Space Available	Space Available (In Tonne) FSLR Ist	FSLR IInd	RSLR Ist	Reserve Price per Trip per 04/ 3.9 Tonne (in ₹)
01	12902	Ahmedabad	Dadar	Daily	-	-	3.9	9,071/-
02	16335	Gandhidham	Nagercoil	Friday	-	-	4.0	17,298/-
03	12993	Gandhidham	Puri	Friday	-	-	3.9	12,999/-
04	18406	Ahmedabad	Puri	Friday	3.9	-	-	21,174/-
05	12917	Ahmedabad	Hazrat Nizamuddin	Monday	3.9	-	3.9	13,307/-
06	15560	Ahmedabad	Darbhanga	Friday	3.9	-	3.9	28,594/-
07	12473	Gandhidham	Katra	Saturday	3.9	-	3.9	28,735/-
08	12934	Ahmedabad	Mumbai Central	Daily	3.9	-	3.9	4,536/-
09	20939 (19403)	Ahmedabad	Sultanpur	Tuesday	3.9	-	3.9	24,258/-
10	20954 (19420)	Ahmedabad	Chennai Central	Monday	3.9	-	3.9	25,512/-
11	16501	Ahmedabad	Yesvantpur	Tuesday	-	-	3.9	19,688/-
12	19415	Ahmedabad	Katra	Sunday	3.9	-	3.9	17,337/-
			Total		08	00	11	—

Note: (a) To obtain information regarding Terms & Conditions of Tender, contact may please be made at the office of Divisional Railway Manager (Commercial)-Ahmedabad during all working days between 10:30 hrs to 17:30 hrs. **(b)** This is an Electronic Tender (E-Tender) and bids/offers shall be submitted online on IREPS Portal. Required information and documents are available on IREPS Portal (i.e. www.ireps.gov.in). Submission of manual bids/offers against E-Tender is not allowed, and any manual bids/offers received shall be summarily rejected. **(c) Cost of Tender Form Fee: ₹ 1,000/- per SLR/LWLRRM/LSLRD Compartment** should be paid online on through IREPS Portal and acknowledgment slip of payment must be attached with the offer / bid. **(d) EMD: ₹ 1,00,000/- per SLR/LWLRRM/LSLRD Compartment,** should be paid online on through IREPS Portal and acknowledgment slip of payment must be attached with the offer/bid. **(e) Date & Time of Closing & Opening of Tender: 22-02-2022 (Tuesday) at 15:00 Hrs & 22-02-2022 (Tuesday) at 15:30 Hrs. respectively.**

ADI-212

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KENDRIVA VIDYALAYA ANDREWS GANJ, NEW DELHI - 110024

Tender Notice

Kendriya Vidyalaya Andrews Ganj, New Delhi -110024 invites the tender for service conservancy, security, Gardening, Sub-Staff, Data entry operator on temporary and contractual basis. The interested firm may obtain the tender from Vidyalaya office on all working days from 12:00 noon to 01:30 pm by paying the tender document fee of Rs. 500/- (Five hundred) in form of demand draft in favour of VVN KV Andrews Ganj, New Delhi by 15.02.2022.

Principal

भाकृअनुप-केन्द्रीय गोवंश अनुसंधान संस्थान
ICAR- CENTRAL INSTITUTE FOR RESEARCH ON CATTLE

छाता फार्म रोड, मेरठ छावनी - २५०००१ (उ.प्र.) भारत
Gosis Farm Road, Meerut Cantt - 250001 (UP), India
Phone : 0121 - 2657133 (A.O.) 2657134 (Fax)
EPABX : 0121-2645595 (241) and 2656021 (241)
Website: http://www.circ.icar.gov.in

NOTICE FOR ONLINE INTERVIEW

A Virtual interview will be held for the post (01) of **'Junior Research Fellow (JRF)'** under SERB (DST, New Delhi) project, purely temporary on contract basis at ICAR-Central Institute for Research on Cattle, Meerut (U.P). The last date to apply is 18.02.2022 and the date of interview (online) will be communicated after screening of eligible candidates. For more details regarding qualification and age etc. please visit: http://www.circ.icar.gov.in.

Assistant Administrative Officer

SEARCH FOR MISSING

Dhiraj Kumar

General public is hereby informed that a boy namely **Dhiraj Kumar, S/o: Ram Baua, R/o: Rice Mill, Village-Hamidpur, Delhi has been reported missing since 16.12.2021 from the area of P.S. Alipur, Delhi. In this regard FIR No. 1113/21 U/s 363 IPC dated 17.12.2021 has been registered at P.S. Alipur, Delhi.** The description of missing boy is as under:

Name: Dhiraj Kumar, Age: 11 Years, Height: 4'6", Complexion: Swarthy, Face: Round, Built: Normal, Wearing: Brown Colour Sweater and Grey Colour Jeans.

If anyone have any information about this missing boy please inform P.S. Alipur, Delhi

Web: http://cbi.nic.in, Email: cic@cbi.gov.in
Ph.: 011-24368638/24368641, Fax: 011-24368639

SHO
Police Station Alipur, Delhi
Ph: 011-27202265, 7065036325

DP/1541/ON/2022

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY, PRAYAGRAJ

NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER — Agra Division

E-tender Notice No PAY AND USE-AGC-2022-01 Date: 31.01.2022

E-tender on prescribed forms are invited by Senior Divisional Commercial Manager, Divisional Railway Manager's Office, North Central Railway, Agra on behalf of The President of India for awarding of Normal Pay & Use Toilet at Agra Cantt, Railway Station on operation and maintenance (O&M) basis, North Central Railway for the period of Three years under "Single packet tendering system". The details or particulars are as follows:-

1	Tender No.	PAY AND USE-AGC-2022-01 Date: 31.01.22
2	Name of work	Normal Pay & Use Toilet at Agra Cantt, Railway Station on Operation and Maintenance (O&M) basis.
3	Duration of work	3 Years
4	Approx. Cost of the work	₹ 24,23,549/- (for 03 years)
5	Earnest Money Deposit	₹ 75,400/-
6	Cost of Tender form	₹ 3,540/-
7	Validity of offer	60 days from the date of tender opening.
8	E-Tender closing date & Time	21.02.2022 upto 11.30 Hours
9	E-Tender Opening date & Time	21.02.2022 upto 12.00 Hours

For full details and submission of bid, please see the Indian Railway Website www.ireps.gov.in. 1. Tender can be submitted only online on web portal www.ireps.gov.in 2. Earnest money and tender document cost shall only be submitted on web portal www.ireps.gov.in by net banking.

117/22 FA

North central railways www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in North Central Railway@CPRONCR

MINOR IRRIGATION DIVISION, BOKARO

e-Procurement Notice inviting Short Tender

Re Short Tender Reference No. WRD/MID/BOKARO/F_2-07/2021-22
Date :- 29-12-2022

1.	Name of the work	Restoration of Kalapathar Bada Bandh M. I. Scheme under Block Chas.
2.	Estimated Cost (Rs.)	Rs 14843287.00
3.	Time of Completion	335 Days (11 Month)
4.	Date of Publication of Tender on website	07.02.2022 12:30 P.M.
5.	Last date/Time for receipt of bids online	12.02.2022 Up to 5.00 P.M.
6.	Last date for receipt of bids Fee, Security and other documents	Upto 14.02.2022 5.00 P.M.
7.	Date of Opening of Tender on website	15.02.2022 01.00 P.M.
8.	Name & address of office Inviting tender	Executive Engineer, Minor Irrigation Division, Bokaro, Camp – II, Qr. No-D/1, B. S. City, Bokaro, Jharkhand, Pin no- 827001
9	(a) Contact no of e-Procurement officer (b) E-mail of e-Procurement officer	9431051471 eemidbok-cemr-jhr@nic.in
10	Helpline number of e-Procurement cell	6207014510 / 0651 – 2491232

Note :- Only e-Tenders will be accepted. The tender amount may be changed at time of publication on website.
Further details can be seen on website http://jharkhandtenders.gov.in

Executive Engineer,
Minor Irrigation Division,
Bokaro

PR 262801 Minor Irrigation (21-22).D

प्रतिभूति कागज कारखाना, होशंगाबाद-461005 (म.प्र.)

(भारत प्रतिभूति मुद्रण तथा मुद्रा निर्माण लिमिटेड की इकाई)
भारत सरकार के पूर्ण स्वामित्वाधीन
विनीरत्न श्रेणी-1 सी.पी.एस.ई एवं आई.एस.ओ. 9001: 2015 एवं आई.एस.ओ. 14001:2015 प्रमाणित

RIGHT TO INFORMATION

SECURITY PAPER MILL, HOSHANGABAD-461005 (M.P.)
(A Unit of Security Printing & Minting Corporation of India Limited)
Wholly Owned by Government of India
Miniratna Category-I CPSE & ISO 9001 : 2015 & ISO 14001 : 2015 Certified
Tel. No.: 07574-286847, 286776, Fax No. : 07574-255170,
Email : purchase.spm@spmcil.com, Website : http://spmhoshangabad.spmcil.com

Advt. No. 115 — **TENDER INVITING NOTICE** — **Dt. 01/02/2022**

The Chief General Manager, Security Paper Mill, Hoshangbad (M.P.) invites sealed tenders for supply of following material/work. Interested Manufactures/Tender For detailed tender specifications/terms and conditions may please visit/downolads on our website http://spmhoshagbad.spmcil.com or http://eprocure.gov.in. or http://gem.gov.in

Tender No.	Material Description	Qty.	Last date and time of receipt of Tenders
GeM/2021/ B/1788790	Hiring an agency to provide 92 unskilled labour for the period of 12 months (365 days) at SPM Hoshangabad(*)	As per tender enquiry	21.02.2022 Up to 03:00 P.M.
GeM/2022/ B/1868200	Poly Amide Resin (PAR)(*)		17.02.2022 Up to 11:00 A.M
6000017136 /PM5/PVA-Lv /22-23/1776 (Express Tender)	Poly Vinyl Alcohol (5CP/99%)		15.02.2022 Up to 11:00 A.M
GeM/2022/ B/1831626	Three core 33KV 400 Sqmm and 1.1 KV Cable(*)		18.02.2022 Up to 07:00 P.M

(*) Please visit GeM portal http://gem.gov.in for details & submission of bid. Any updates, Corrigendum, etc. against the above tenders shall be published on said website only. Those shall not be published in any other newspaper or media.

M (Material)
For Chief General Manager

DELHI JAL BOARD: GOVT. OF NCT OF DELHI
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (E&M) III

CHANDRAWAL WATER WORKS NO. I CIVIL LINES: DELHI-110054
OFFICE TELEPHONE NO. 011-23812660 E-mail: eechwwi@gmail.com

PRESS NIT No. 17 (2021-22)

S. No.	Name of Work	Estimated Cost	Earnest Money (Rs.)	Date of release of tender in e-procurement solution	Last date/Time receipt of Tender through e-procurement solution
1	Deployment of staff for Running, Operation & minor maintenance of Pump Sets & allied E & M equipments at 20MGD KBL BPS Okhla water works.	Item Rate	Rs. 74900/-	Tender Id: 2022_DJB_215554_1 Publish Date 28.01.2022 06:00 PM	11.02.2022 up to 03:15 PM

Sd/-
(Er. Krishan Kr. Rai)
Ex. Engineer (E&M) III

ISSUED BY P.R.O. (WATER)
Advt. No. J.S.V. 1062(2021-22)

"STOP CORONA: Wear Mask, Follow Physical Distancing, Maintain Hand Hygiene"

DELHI JAL BOARD: GOVT. OF NCT OF DELHI
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (T)M-6
D-BLOCK MOTI NAGAR, NEW DELHI- 110015

PRESS NIT NO: 65 EE (T)M-6 (2021-22)

S. NO.	Name of Work	Amount Put to Tender (Rs.)	Earnest Money (Rs.)	Tender fee Rs.	Last date/time of receipt of tender through e-procurement solution
01	Improvement of Sewerage System by P/L 500 mm dia sewer line by Trenchless technology along road no 41 in Pubjabi Bagh West Under EE (west)-II AC-26 (Reinvited). Tender ID:- 2022_DJB_215513_1	78,78,514.00	1,58,000.00	1000.00	10.02.2022 upto 3.00 PM

Further details in this regard can be seen at **https://delhi.govtprocurement.com**

Sd/- **(TRILOK CHAND)**
EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (T)M-6

ISSUED BY P.R.O. (WATER)
Advt. No. J.S.V. 1061(2021-22)

"STOP CORONA: Wear Mask, Follow Physical Distancing, Maintain Hand Hygiene"

Nehru Memorial Museum and Library
Teen Murti House, New Delhi 110011

An autonomous body under the Ministry of Culture, Nehru Memorial Museum and Library (NMML) is developing Pradhan Mantri Sangrahalaya (Museum on Prime Ministers) in the Teen Murti complex.

NMML invites E bids for the following:

RFP MoPM/RFP/2022/ 003V4 For Setting up and Operating a Sourvenir shop on Revenue sharing basis.

The last date for submission of e-bid is 14th February, 2022 up to 11 AM.

For more details please visit website **www.tenderwizard.com/ NMML** , **www.eprocure.gov.in** and **www.nehrumemorial.nic.in/e-tenders.html**

davp 09142/12/0026/2122

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION

General public is hereby informed that one male was found dead on infront of Near Town Hall Gate Footpath Chandni Chowk, Delhi. In this regard **DD No. 37A, u/s 174 CrPC, Dated 03.01.2022** has been lodged at **P.S. Kotwali, Delhi.** The description of the dead body is given as under: **Name:** Unknown, **S/o:** Unknown, **R/o:** Unknown, **Age:** Approx 60-65 Years **Height:** 5'3" feet **Face:** Long, **Complexion:** Shallow, **Built:** Thin, **Wearing:** Black Pant Only.

Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out the information about the dead male but no clue has come to light so far. If any one is having any information about this dead male please inform the undersigned.

S.H.O
P.S. Kotwali, Delhi
Ph.: 011-23977100, 23921740

DP/1930/N/2022

संचालनालय, आयुर्वेद योग एवं प्राकृतिक चिकित्सा, यूनानी सिद्ध एवं होम्योपैथी, (आयुष) छत्तीसगढ़
डी.के.एस. परिसर, रायपुर 492001

फोन नं. (0771) 2221640, फैक्स-2221641 ईमेल-cgayush@gmail.com
क्रमांक/1/स्था./राज./महा./प्रवेश/2021-22/289 रायपुर, दिनांक 29 जनवरी 2022

शैक्षणिक सत्र 2021-22 में राज्य कोटे के आयुष स्नातक पाठ्यक्रम में प्रवेश हेतु ऑनलाईन रजिस्ट्रेशन सूचना

शैक्षणिक सत्र 2021-22 के लिए शासकीय एवं निजी क्षेत्र के आयुष महाविद्यालयों में संचालित BAMS/BUMS/BHMS/BNYS पाठ्यक्रम में राज्य कोटे की सीटों पर प्रवेश के इच्छुक, राष्ट्रीय पात्रता सह प्रवेश परीक्षा NEET (UG) 2021 की प्रावीण्यता सूची के पात्र एवं ''छत्तीसगढ़ आयुष स्नातक पाठ्यक्रम प्रवेश नियम, 2019''की कंडिका 3 के अनुसार प्रवेश हेतु पात्रता रखने वाले छत्तीसगढ़ राज्य के स्थानिय निवासी एवं गैर स्थानीय निवासी दिनांक 30.01.2022 से 08.02.2022 तक निम्नानुसार cghealth portal में आयुष के वेबसाईट एवं आयुर्वेदिक कॉलेज के वेबसाईट्स पर आनलाईन रजिस्ट्रेशन कर सकते हैः-

1. www.cghealth.nic.in/ehealth/dishm/councellinginfo.html
2. www.gacraipurcg.in
3. www.gac.bilaspur.gov.in

रजिस्ट्रेशन फॉर्म में त्रुटि सुधार दिनांक 08.02.2022 को मध्य रात्रि 11:59 बजे तक किया जा सकता है। विस्तृत जानकारी उपरोक्त वेबसाईट पर देखी जा सकती है। प्रवेश एवं काउंसिलिंग से संबंधित अन्य निर्देश/सूचना की अद्यतन जानकारी हेतु नियमित रुप से उक्त वेबसाईट का अवलोकन करते रहें।

नोटः- सभी शासकीय एवं निजी आयुष महाविद्यालयों के आयुष स्नातक पाठ्यक्रमों की सभी सीटों का आबंटन संचालनालय आयुष, रायपुर द्वारा गठित समिति द्वारा किया जावेगा। अतः किसी व्यक्ति/संस्था/एजेंसी के प्रलोभन में न फंसे।

हस्ता/-
संयुक्त संचालक
आयुर्वेद, योग एवं प्राकृतिक चिकित्सा, यूनानी,
सिद्ध एवं होम्योपैथी (आयुष) छत्तीसगढ़

67306

Information and Public Relations Department Government of Jharkhand, Souchana Bhawan, Ranchi.

Very Short Tender Notice

Sealed tenders are invited for Financial Proposal from eligible reputed firms / companies for License Renewal of **SOPHOS XG210 (Serial No. C2307664VJFY92C)** device including **Xtrem Protection, E-mail Protection, Web Server protection**, and related enhanced support on 24 X 7 basis.

The following table provides an overview of some important information about this Tender:

Sl. No.	Particulars	Details
1	Tender Reference No.	168, Dated 31/01/2022
2	Tender issuing Authority	Director, Information and Public Relations Directorate, Government of Jharkhand, Suchana Bhawan, Ranchi.
4	Date of issue of tender document	31/01/2022
5	Last date and time of submission of tender document	04/02/2022 at 01 PM
6	Date of opening of Bids	04/02/2022 at 03 PM
7	License Renewal & relevant work Tenure	3 Years (Three Years)
7	Address of communication / submission of proposal	Director, Information and Public Relations Directorate, Government of Jharkhand, Suchana Bhawan, Ranchi. **0651-2282458**
8	Contact Person	Shri. Rashid Akhtar (Asst. Director)

Following documents need to be attached with the financial proposal:
a) Photo copy of Company/Proprietorship/Partnership Registration.
b) Name, Postal Address, e-Mail ID, Phone / Mobile Nos. of Office.
c) Photo copy of GST Certificate.
d) Photo copy of PAN / TAN Certificate.
e) Bank Account details.

Note: All payment will be released after submission of document establishing successfull renewal of the License for 3 years.

Director
I&PRD, GoJ

PR.NO.262892 IPRD(21-22):D

TRACO CABLE COMPANY LIMITED

(A Kerala Government Company)
Regd. Office, Irimpanam P.O, Kochi, Kerala - 682309, Tel: 9446003263, 9446003260
E mail: head.purchase@tracocable.com
www.tracocable.com

TENDER NOTICE

Tenders are invited through "e-tender system" for the supply of one set 66 kV CCV Line and Civil construction of the plant, at our Thiruvalla factory.

For more details, login to **www.etenders.kerala.gov.in** and our company website.

Kochi 27.01.2022 — Traco Cable Company Limited, Sd/- Managing Director

PARADIP PORT TRUST

e-TENDER CALL NOTICE

Name of the work "Hiring of 03 nos. heavy duty truck mounted mechanical Road Sweeping Machine to clean the roads of PPT for a period of three (03) years and extendable by two more years upon satisfactory performance." Estimated Cost: **Rs. 4,02,84,000/-.** Last date & time of submission of bid: **dt.27.02.2022 up to 17:15 Hrs.** Refer our website for details **https://eprocure.gov.in/eprocure/app.**

PPT/PR/145/21-22 — Date 31.01.2022
Executive Engineer,
Work shop division-II

BHARATIYA RESERVE BANK NOTE MUDRAN (P) LIMITED

(Wholly owned subsidiary of Reserve Bank of India)
P.O.: RBNML, Salboni - 721132, Paschim Medinipur, West Bengal.
Phone No.: 03227-280176 / 280317; Fax No.:03227-280744 / 280222

OPEN TENDER ENQUIRY (OTE)/NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING (NCB)

Tenders under Two Part bidding system are invited from experienced, resourceful, reputed and bonafide Suppliers/Service Providers/Agencies/Contractors (as applicable) for the following:-

1. **SUPPLY OF AUTOMATIC ROAD CLEANING MACHINE AT BRBNMPL, SALBONI, TENDER NO. 066/SAL/PUR/2021-22. [ESTIMATED COST – ₹ 60.00 LAKHS]**
2. **RENOVATION OF OLD CISF BARRACK AT BRBNMPL, SALBONI, TENDER NO. 019/SAL/MMD-CIVIL/2021-22. [ESTIMATED COST – ₹73.21 LAKHS]**
3. **CONSTRUCTION OF BOUNDARY WALLS AT BRBNMPL, SALBONI, TENDER NO. 020/SAL/MMD-CIVIL/2021-22. [ESTIMATED COST – ₹ 50.06 LAKHS]**

Last date of submission of all the above tenders is **04.03.2022** by **11:30 Hrs**. For downloading tender documents and other details, kindly visit our website **www.brbnmpl.co.in**. Further extension or amendment/s, if any will be uploaded on our website only.

General Manager

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY, PRAYAGRAJ

Open Tender Notice No. - DYCE-JHSW-38

E-TENDER NOTICE

E-tenders are invited from experienced or interested contractors on behalf of the President of India for the under mentioned work-

Name of work	Zone No. 3 C Annual Sectional Contract for repair & maintenance, white washing , colour washing, distempering, Painting, polishing, & varnishing of Rail Spring Karkhana ,SITHOULI and attached Railway Colony in the jurisdiction SSE/ Works/MLR under AXEN/Workshop/ Sithouli for the year 2021-22.
Cost of work	Rs. 4068430.00/- (Including GST)
Earnest money	Rs. 81,400
Time of completion	Twelve Months
Online tender closing date and time	18.02.2022 at 15:00 Hrs.

Detailed information about tender and tender format is available at website **www.ireps.gov.in**. **112/22 (SP)**

North central railways www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in @CPRONCR

INSTITUTE OF LIFE SCIENCES, BHUBANESWAR

(An autonomous research Institute of Department of Biotechnology, Govt. of India)

ADVERTISEMENT FOR SCIENTIST-B AND C POSITIONS
Advt. No. 01/2022

Institute of Life Sciences (ILS), invites applications from eligible Indian citizens only for **Scientist-B (02 nos., UR - unreserved category) and Scientist-C (02 nos: 01-OBC and 01-SC category).** Details of the advertisement and application form available at **www.ils.res.in** or **www.dbtindia.nic.in**

The last date of application is 28.02.2022

DIRECTOR

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON

See Section 82/83 Cr.P.C.

Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused person **Mohd. Firoz, S/o Mohd. Rahama Tullah, R/o: H. No. 7786/75, Ground Floor, Atma Ram, Chamelian Road, Bara Hindu Rao, Near Filmistan Cinema, Delhi** has committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence in case **CC No. 22508/2018 U/s 138 NI Act has been registered at P.S. Sadar Bazar, Delhi** and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said **Mohd. Firoz** cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said **Mohd. Firoz** has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant).

Proclamation is hereby made that the said **Mohd. Firoz** accused of **CC No. 22508/2018 U/s 138 NI Act has been registered at P.S. Sadar Bazar, Delhi** is required to appear before this Court to answer the said complaint on or before **03.03.2022.**

By Order
Sh. Apoorv Bhardwaj
Metropolitan Magistrate
Dwarka Court, Delhi

DP/1925/N/2022

SEARCH FOR MISSING GIRL

Meera

General public is hereby informed that one girl namely **Meera D/o Ashok Thakur** R/o H. No. 57, Gali No.14, Shahbad, Daulat Pur, Delhi. Age about 15 years, Height 4'8", Complexion Wheatish, Round Face, Thin Built, Wearing Pink Jacket, Black Pajami & Green Shoes in feet has been missing/ kidnapped since 17.01.2022 from the area of PS KNK Marg. Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out this girl, but no clue has come to light so far. In this regard a FIR No. 69/22 dated 18.01.2022 U/s 363 IPC has been registered at PS KNK Marg, Delhi.

Any person having any information or clue about this missing/kidnapped girl may kindly inform to the following

Website: http://cbi.nic.in
Email: cic@cbi.gov.in
Fax: 011-23011334
Ph: 011-23014046, 23015218

SHO
PS KNK Marg, Delhi
Ph. 011-27571171, 27571162

DP/1266/RD/2022

GOLD	RUPEE	OIL	SILVER
₹47,507	₹74.65	$88.83	₹60,914

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

SENSEX: 58,014.17 ▲ 813.94 (1.42%) **NIFTY:** 17,339.85 ▲ 237.90 (1.39%) **NIKKEI:** 27,001.98 ▲ 284.64 **HANG SENG:** 23,802.26 ▲ 252.18 **FTSE:** 7,466.40 ▲ 0.33 **DAX:** 15,358.36 ▲ 39.41

International market data till 1900 IST

ECONOMIC SURVEY 2021-22

'NEED TO INSTITUTIONALISE STANDARD CROSS BORDER INSOLVENCY PROCESS'

For ease of doing biz, focus set on 'process reforms', easing exit norms

AANCHAL MAGAZINE
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 31

THE ECONOMIC Survey 2021-22, which was tabled in Parliament on Monday, has incorporated the theme of 'process reforms' — defining it as "simplification and smoothening of the process for activities where the government's presence as a facilitator or regulator is necessary". The Survey has outlined the need for reforms, including simplification of voluntary liquidation process for corporates for ease of exit and for institutionalising a standard Cross Border Insolvency Process, along with the need for reforms in the patent application regime.

Voluntary liquidation

Liquidation can be involuntary as in the case of insolvency or bankruptcy; or voluntary, which could be due to personal reasons and subsidiaries being merged. A company may decide to voluntarily close its operation even when it's viable. "There is a case for simplifying the problem in the Voluntary Liquidation process, to improve ease of exit for business. Apart from simplifying the issues in the various steps in the processes, there is a need for the creation of a single window for the entire process. A portal that combines all the steps of the liquidation process altogether, starting from application by companies to processing by all departments will prove to be very useful," it said. As of September 2021, 1042 cases have been filed under voluntary liquidation, out of which, final reports have been received for 483 cases, and the final order of dissolution has been passed in 257 cases. Of the ongoing cases, nearly 32 per cent of the cases are pending over 2 years and 19 per cent for 1-2 years.

> **The Survey offers a succinct and a candid assessment of the economy and reiterates confidence in India's ability..."**
>
> **T V NARENDRAN**
> PRESIDENT, CII
>
> **Encouraging, need to be mindful that some assumptions ... could turn out to be more complex"**
>
> **SANJIV MEHTA**
> PRESIDENT, FICCI

Cross-border insolvency

Cross border insolvency involves circumstances in which an insolvent debtor has assets and/or creditors in more than one country. The Survey said the current provisions under IBC are ad-hoc in nature and are susceptible to delay. Entering into mutual (reciprocal) agreements requires individual long-drawn-out negotiations with each country. This leads to uncertainty of outcomes of claims for creditors, debtors and other stakeholders, the Survey mentioned. Therefore, there is a need for a standardised framework for cross-border insolvency, it said. Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, 2016 (IBC) provides for the domestic laws for the handling of an insolvent enterprise. At present, IBC has no standard instrument to restructure the firms involving cross border jurisdictions. Citing the report of the Insolvency Law Committee (October 2018), it said the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL) could be adopted with certain modifications to suit the Indian context.

Delays for granting patents

Highlighting India's low expenditure on Research and Development (R&D) activities as one of the key reasons for relatively low patents in India vis a vis the US, China, the Survey said the procedural delays and complexity of the process also result in low patents in India. "The average pendency for final decision in acquiring patents in India is 42 months as of 2020. This is much higher than 20.8, 20, 15.8 and 15 months respectively for the USA, China, Korea and Japan," it said. The average pendency for final decision in acquiring patents has reduced in India from 64 months in 2017 to 52 months in 2019 and further to 42 months in 2020.

Most of India's startups are in the IT/ knowledge-based sector. The time taken for the first step for a patent, i.e. publishing the application by the controller, is currently 18 months in India, compared to 15.4, 14.4, 11.1, 10.2 months, respectively, in the US, China, Korea and Japan. To reduce the time taken in the application process, prescribed limits for the first step may be reduced to 14-15 months.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman with newly appointed Chief Economic Adviser V Anantha Nageswaran, Finance Secretary TV Somanathan, and Revenue Secretary Tarun Bajaj, on the eve of FY23 Budget, in New Delhi, on Monday. *PTI*

Pre-Budget rally: Markets jump 1.4%

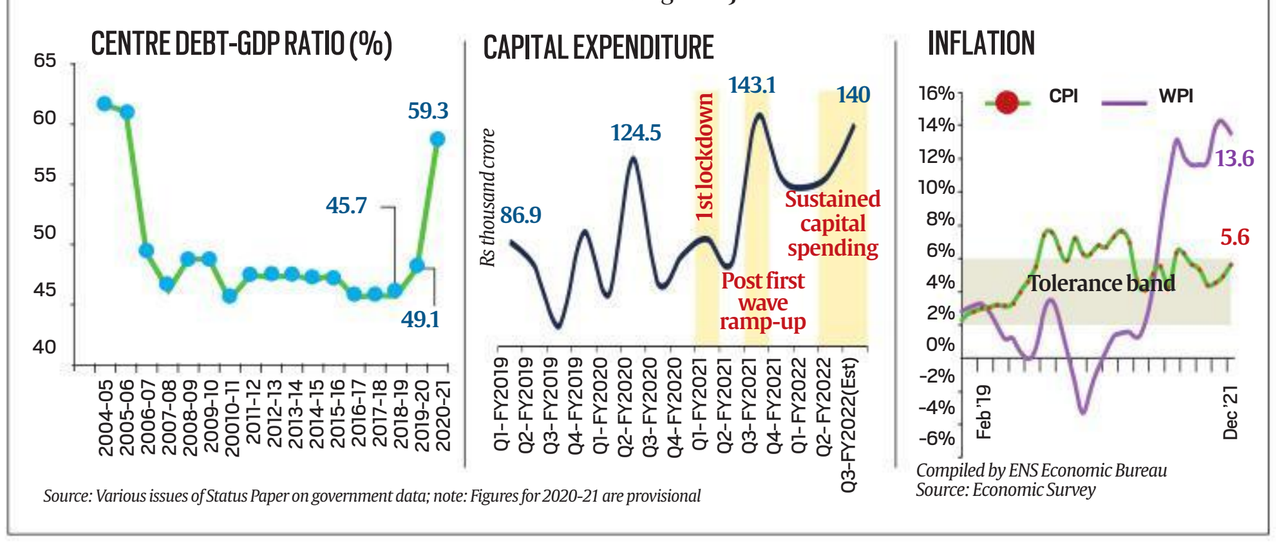
Mumbai: Volatile stock markets on Monday staged a 1.4 per cent rally ahead of the Union Budget, as investors cheered the positive macro-economic indicators projected in the Economic Survey and strong global markets.

The benchmark Sensex vaulted by 814 points and crossed the 58,000-level before closing at 58,014.17, and the NSE Nifty index rose 238 points to 17,339.85 on all-round buying support.

Strong cues from global markets and favourable takeaways from the Economic Survey report buoyed the sentiment ahead of the Budget with all major sectors in the green, analysts said. **ENS**

VACCINATIONS, REFORMS TO BE GROWTH BOOSTERS

The Economic Survey has projected that growth in 2022-23 will be supported by vaccine coverage, gains from supply-side reforms, easing of regulations, and availability of fiscal space to ramp up capital spending, with inflation concerns being a major headwind



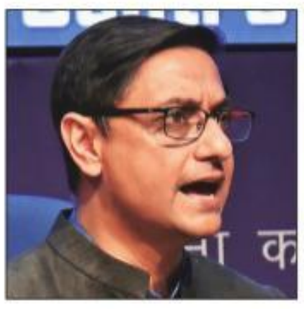
Source: Various issues of Status Paper on government data; note: Figures for 2020-21 are provisional

Compiled by ENS Economic Bureau
Source: Economic Survey

INTERVIEW WITH PRINCIPAL ECONOMIC ADVISER

'Seeing imported inflation as rest of the world is facing it'

SANJEEV SANYAL, Principal Economic Adviser in the Ministry of Finance, says if the rest of the world is having inflation, the government need to be obviously concerned about it and watch the space carefully. In an interview with AANCHAL MAGAZINE and SUNNY VERMA, he said the Budget will offer clarity on how additional fiscal space is being utilised to support economy.



Sanjeev Sanyal *PTI*

The Survey says fiscal space is available. Have you identified areas where it can be used or is it a kind of a buffer when uncertainty hits us?

I can't comment specifically because you'll find out in a few hours time what the Finance Minister is going to do. So I cannot comment. The most I can do is to say that the fiscal numbers available between April and November, which are publicly available, clearly show that revenues revived very, very strongly. Therefore, the fiscal deficits and other numbers are, in fact, better than they were even before the pandemic. So, obviously that allows you some fiscal space. What exactly will be done with it is not my prerogative, that is the prerogative of the Finance Minister and she will be obviously announcing the Budget tomorrow. So my lips are sealed on that.

The divergence between retail inflation (Consumer Price Index or CPI) and wholesale inflation (Wholesale Price Index or WPI) has been shown. Do you suspect a possibility of that feeding into retail inflation? Should we be very worried and should any action be required there?

Let me be very clear that the target range for the Monetary Policy Committee is only for CPI and not for WPI and it remains within the band. As far as WPI is concerned, it's in double digits, but do remember that last year, it went briefly into the negative territory. So some part of it is base effect. Not all of it. It is also some effect of the spike in oil prices. That's an issue that we need to think about. There is imported inflation generally because the rest of the world is seeing inflation. It will come through shortages of chips or shortages of containers. It can flow through in multiple ways. But the fact is if the rest of the world is having inflation we need to be obviously concerned about it and watch the space carefully. What we do about it will always be exactly about what happens. If it's coming from shortages of chips, etc, there's no point in tightening monetary policy, you have to ultimately create chip manufacturing capacity.

The Survey highlights that some of the services, especially trade, hospitality, are much below the pre-pandemic levels. Will those kinds of sectors require support?

What I've said there is absolutely no surprise to anyone. Even when you have a pandemic that is going on over the years that the poor fellows who are in contact-intensive sort of interaction, those services are going to be hit and doesn't just happen once, it happens repeatedly, waves coming and so on. We went through a milder version of Omicron. But still, nevertheless, it still caused a disruption. The fact that contact-intensive services like entertainment or tourism or travel, these do get impacted is absolutely no surprise. Now what do we need to do about it? Well, as I said, I can't talk about specific fiscal things for obvious reasons. But I will say that in the medium term, the single most important thing you need to do is to keep it open. So never lose track of that. That is the single most important thing. You can do whatever else you want on the side, ultimately, contact base services have to have contact of some sort. So you need to get a clear run on the health front, be able to keep them open. That is the most important. I would say the biggest support or policy issue is health policy. And therefore vaccination, which we have done a good job of, is the key strength of the Indian economy. It is not unfair to say we are in a position now that should another wave of some variant come, disruption to the economy will be reasonably, relatively small and we will be able to keep things running even in contact-based services perhaps. *Full interview on www.indianexpress.com*

FY22

Industrial growth pegged at 11.8%

AASHISH ARYAN
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 31

THE INDUSTRIAL sector, which was marred by disruptions due to the Covid-19 pandemic, is likely to record growth of 11.8 per cent in 2021-22, the Economic Survey has said. Though its performance slowed down during the year, it offers some prescriptions: a gradual unlocking of the economy and plans such as the production linked incentive (PLI) scheme for various sectors, along with other policy initiatives such as emergency credit line guarantee to micro, small, and medium enterprises will help aid the pace of recovery.

"The pace of this recovery and further growth is likely to continue due to consistent efforts of the government to bring in various structural, fiscal and infrastructural reforms in addition to a slew of measures/schemes like the production linked incentive scheme (PLI) to support industries," the survey noted.

"Buoyant FDI (foreign direct investment) inflows amid improvements in overall business sentiments, foretells a positive outlook for the industry," the Survey noted.

Manufacturing, which had an average share of 16.3 per cent in the nominal gross value addition over the last decade saw its share fall to 14.4 per cent. It is, however, expected to recover and reach 15.3 per cent by the end of this fiscal.

For the country to achieve a gross domestic product of $5 trillion by 2024-25, about $1.4 trillion will have to be spent just on infrastructure over these years. Though India invested $1.1 trillion between 2008 and 2017, the challenge is to "step up infrastructure investment substantially," the Survey noted.

'Diversified mix of energy sources' may be key amid rising fuel prices

KARUNJIT SINGH & PRANAV MUKUL
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 31

IN WHAT could signal a policy push in the Budget 2022-23, the Economic Survey for 2021-22 has flagged concerns with both clean energy sources and increasing prices of conventional fuel sources, calling for adoption of an approach having a "diversified mix of sources of energy of which fossil fuels are an important part".

On the policy front, specifically, it has highlighted three points that will be pertinent:

■ The pace at which shift from conventional fossil-fuel based sources is made. This pace will determine the extent and mix of investment in renewable sources of energy, it said.

■ It also pointed out the importance of avoiding the risk of being a late comer in the net-zero emission plans, given that developed countries are already frontrunners. This is pertinent because of the inelastic supply of minerals and metals critical for developing clean energy sources, which is causing the prices to shoot up, even more so in the future.

■ Lastly, it called for encouraging research and development to ensure effortless switch to renewable sources of energy. This may also include focus on developing technology that recycles, reuses and repurposes minerals, it said.

"The recent surge in prices of natural gas in Europe on account of higher energy demand coupled with cold spells across the region and slower winds to run wind turbines has resulted in lower electricity output. The energy crisis being experienced by Europe brings to the fore the need for having a diversified mix of sources of energy of which fossil fuels are an important part. Simultaneously, focus should be laid on building storage for intermittent electricity generation from solar PV and wind farms to ensure on-demand energy supply," the Survey noted.

Notably, the government has already started moving on setting up large battery storage system - something that has encouraged multi-million dollar deals in the energy storage technology.

Full report on www.indianexpress.com

Land Monetisation Corp established

New Delhi: The government has set up a National Land Monetisation Corporation to fast track monetisation of land and non-core assets of public sector entities, the Economic Survey said.

So far, CPSEs have referred 3,400 acres of land and other non-core assets for monetisation from CPSEs including MTNL, BSNL, BPCL, B&R, BEML, HMT Ltd, Instrumentation Ltd. **PTI**

BRIEFLY

Tata Motors Q3

New Delhi: Tata Motors' Q3 consolidated net loss eased to ₹1,451.05 crore, amid chip shortage on JLR. **PTI**

Sony, video game

Bengaluru: Sony Interactive Entertainment will acquire videogame developer Bungie in a deal valued at $3.6 billion, the companies said Monday, making this the third deal this month in a fast consolidating gaming sector. Bungie has worked on a number popular gaming titles including "Marathon", "Myth" and "Destiny." **REUTERS**

GST mop-up tops ₹1.38L cr

New Delhi: Goods and Services Tax (GST) collection in January was at over Rs 1.38 lakh crore in January, a rise of 15 per cent over the year-ago period, amid pick up in economic activity and anti-evasion measures, the Finance Ministry said on Monday. Total number of GSTR-3B returns filed up to January 30, 2022, is 1.05 crore that includes 36 lakh quarterly returns.

Meanwhile, output of eight infrastructure sectors expanded by 3.8 per cent in December 2021 against a 0.4 per cent contraction in the year-ago month on better show by coal, cement and refinery products, as per official data released Monday. **ENS, WITH PTI**

Tata Steel arm to buy Neelachal Ispat

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 31

THE GOVERNMENT on Monday approved the highest bid of Tata Steel Long Products Ltd, a Tata Steel subsidiary, for acquiring 93.71 per cent equity in Neelachal Ispat Nigam Ltd (NINL) at an enterprise value of Rs 12,100 crore. NINL has an integrated steel plant with a capacity of 1.1 MT, at Kalinganagar, Odisha.

The Centre does not hold any stake in NINL directly, which has accumulated losses and a negative net worth. NINL is a joint venture of four CPSEs — MMTC, NMDC, BHEL, MECON — and two Odisha government-owned companies OMC and IPICOL.

This is second large privatisation deal post sale of Air India to Tata Group. An alternative mechanism — comprising Transport Minister Nitin Gadkari, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, and Commerce & Industry Minister Piyush Goyal — has approved the bid, the Finance Ministry said.

Tata Steel Long Products was chosen as the highest bidder, beating JSW Steel and a consortium of Jindal Steel & Power Ltd and Nalwa Steel and Power Ltd.

FY21 GDP contraction revised to 6.6%

New Delhi: Indian economy contracted by 6.6 per cent in 2020-21 as against the earlier estimate of 7.3 per cent decline, showing that the Covid-19 pandemic hit economy did not perform as badly as was initially worked out.

As per the provisional estimates released in May 2021, the GDP had shrunk by 7.3 per cent in FY21 on account of the outbreak of Covid and nationwide lockdown to contain the pandemic. The National Statistical Office (NSO) has also revised downward the real GDP growth number for FY20 to 3.7 per cent as against the earlier estimate of 4 per cent. **PTI**

Bumps in road ahead: Inflation hit on capital flows, unemployment

KARUNJIT SINGH
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 31

DESPITE A projected 9.2 per cent growth in GDP in FY22 to above pre-Covid levels, India's economy continues to face a slew of structural challenges that existed prior to the pandemic and new challenges brought on by Covid-19.

Inflation is the strongest of these headwinds. The Economic Survey notes that supply chain disruptions and slow economic growth have contributed to an increase in inflation. Withdrawal of stimulus in developed economies in the upcoming fiscal is likely to affect capital flows into the nation.

EXPLAINED

New and old challenges

AMONG THE challenges noted in the Economic Survey are the rising inflation fuelled by high prices, and lagging job and labour force participating rates.

Retail inflation has moderated to 5.2 per cent during the April-December period of FY22 from 6.3 per cent in the previous fiscal. Wholesale inflation, which translates to higher retail inflation over time, has risen sharply to 12.5 per cent in the fiscal so far — up from 0 per cent last year and up significantly even from FY19 which was unaffected by Covid-19 and saw wholesale inflation of 4.3 per cent.

A lack of jobs continues to be among the primary concerns for the Indian economy, with unemployment levels and labour force participation rates remaining worse than pre-pandemic levels.

As per Periodic Labour Force Survey data, while unemployment rate and labour force participation rate have improved somewhat from the pandemic's start, they hadn't still recovered to pre-Covid levels by Q4FY21. *Full report on www.indianexpress.com*

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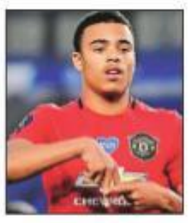
JOURNALISM OF COURAGE

Police get extra time to question Greenwood

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
JANUARY 31



MANCHESTER UNITED have dropped all **Mason Greenwood** merchandise from their online store after the club's star forward was arrested on rape and assault charges on Sunday. Greenwood remains in custody and police have been granted more time to question him.

The majority of Greenwood's team-mates, too, have unfollowed him on social media after United indefinitely suspended the 20-year-old on Sunday. The club reportedly has also decided not to provide any legal help to the player, with the latter arranging personal representation. A search for Greenwood's merchandise on the club's official website returned a message: "Sorry, your search Greenwood did not match any products."

On Monday, The Greater Manchester Police (GMP) confirmed through a statement that detectives have been granted additional time for questioning. "Detectives have been granted additional time to speak to a man in his 20s who is being held on suspicion of rape and assault of a woman," said the statement.

The arrest follows a post on Instagram, capturing pictures and videos of a young woman with several cuts and bruises and blood gushing out from a wound. The woman also shared an audio clip in which a man was heard threatening a woman for refusing to have sex with him. The posts have since been taken down.

United had initially said they did "not condone violence of any kind" but a second statement confirmed the player's suspension, which said: "Mason Greenwood will not return to training or play matches until further notice." Greenwood is on a £75,000-a-week wage and The Sun reported, quoting a source, that he would receive his salary while on suspension. But sportswear giant Nike have suspended their relationship with the footballer." Greenwood joined United at six years of age, rose through the ranks and became the youngest player for the club to play a Champions League fixture at the age 17, against PSG in 2019. So far, in 129 appearances for United, he has scored 35 goals. The 2019-20 season was when he rose to stardom, scoring 16 goals in all competitions. In the ongoing season, the wide-man, who can also play as a No. 9, has netted six times.

In between, Greenwood played for England, but was axed from the side, after he and Phil Foden sneaked girls into the team hotel in Iceland while on national team duty. Greenwood had issued an apology, promising to learn from his mistakes.

Kolkata maidans are once again excited by a Nassiri

Jamshid, East Bengal legend from 80s, hopes his son Kiyan plays for India

SHAMIK CHAKRABARTY
KOLKATA, JANUARY 31

ABOUT EIGHT YEARS ago, a fresh-faced teenager turned up at Mohun Bagan-CFC ground with his father. The young boy was filled with bubbliness that made him instantly lovable. His father Jamshid Nassiri's presence made the onlookers more curious about how young Kiyan performed on the pitch. Jamshid was an East Bengal legend, an important cog in the famed Majid (Bishkar)-Jamshid partnership in the 1980s. From the very beginning, Kiyan Nassiri carried a rich football legacy.

Across the divide, centre line to be precise, where the Bagan youth train cheek by jowl with their CFC counterparts, the trained eye of Amiya Ghosh, the green-and-maroon youth team coach, spotted promise in young Kiyan. "One day I walked up to Jamshid and told him to give his boy to us instead of him playing for CFC. He agreed. That's when the journey began," Ghosh tells The Indian Express.From U-13, Kiyan's progression to U-15 was seamless. In between, he had played for Bengal U-14s, carrying advice from his father. "Aspire to play for your country, India. I think that's the only advice I have given to Kiyan since he has started playing football. Otherwise, I usually don't speak to him about his game," Jamshid recalls.

After the derby delight, he has raised the bar a little higher. "Playing for India should be Kiyan's next target. And he must work harder and aim the higher Asian leagues or Europe three-four years down the line," Jamshid tells this paper.

Football transcends geographic boundaries. In 1979, Jamshid came to India from Iran to pursue his studies at the Aligarh University. A year later, with the club facing a mass exodus of players to Mohammedan Sporting, two East Bengal recruiters bumped into him and his close friends, Majid and Mahmood Khabaji, during an inter-university football tournament. A switch to Calcutta followed. Majid was the star of the pack, while Jamshid would always play second fiddle to his more gifted mate.

Till this day, Majid unarguably remains the finest overseas footballer ever to play in India. But his life lacked discipline, contributing to his quick decline and an inglorious return to Iran. Jamshid had a more successful and lengthy career because he embraced discipline. Gradually, he made India his adopted home and Kiyan was born here in November 2000, as an Indian citizen.

Nassiri Jr, 21, became the youngest player to score a hat-trick in ISL. *ISL*

'Willing to learn'

"Kiyan made my job easier, for he was always willing to learn. He would train alone, polishing his shooting and other aspects of his game, after our scheduled practice sessions were over. His father would wait outside the touchline until Kiyan was done. That was Jamshid's mental support to his son," Ghosh says. Circa 2019 was Kiyan's breakthrough year. He was the showstopper at a U-19 tournament organised by a TV channel. It took him to the Bagan senior team trial where he impressed then club coach Kibu Vicuna. Kiyan got a professional contract.

Jamshid thanks Vicuna for his son's development. He lauds ATK Mohun Bagan head coach Juan Ferrando to give Kiyan the opportunity to showcase his talent in the Indian Super League derby. Ferrando resisted the temptation to bring on a half-fit Roy Krishna and introduced the youngster instead, despite chasing the game against SC East Bengal. Before this, Kiyan's appearances had been restricted to much shorter cameos, just five-ten minutes on the pitch.

Given 30-odd minutes to prove his mettle, Kiyan emerged as a star, becoming the youngest player to score a hat-trick in the derby. The 21-year-old injected life into a derby that was seen as losing relevance. To start with, without crowd presence and the matches in Goa rather than Kolkata, derbies have become ghost games in the last two years. The current plight of SC East Bengal has made matters worse. While ATK Mohun Bagan are playing to win the title, their arch-rivals would have been in a relegation scrap if the ISL weren't a closed-shop league, without promotion and relegation. When the tournament, which has been punctuated with Covid-19 forced postponements, was becoming a drag due to average performances and even poorer refereeing, Kiyan arrived like a breath of fresh air, reminding us that all was not lost in Indian football yet.

Bhutia-like effervescence

He carried a Bhaichung Bhutia-like effervescence, not the Bhutia of the 1997 Federation Cup semifinal vintage, where he netted a hat-trick against Bagan, but a few years earlier, when he finished former India centre-half Tarun Dey's career in a derby, through his twists, turns and shoulder drops. Bhutia went on to play for Bury FC in England. For Kiyan, he has a long way to go to emulate the former Indian football team captain.

Little wonder then that he maintained equanimity. "There's nothing to celebrate. We returned to our hotel after the match, had my dinner and slept," Kiyan said via the club media. About his father, he said: "He never set a target for me. He just tells me to work hard."

The return-leg derby in the ISL saw the emergence of a star and the Indian football team coach Igor Stimac must have taken note. "Kiyan needs to add muscle mass to graduate to international football. He has a natural goal-scoring ability. His shooting and finishing are very good. He plays his football with his brain. But his ball control calls for imp rovement and most importantly, he has to be physically stronger," says Ghosh.

Eight months after cardiac arrest, Eriksen makes EPL return

AGENCIES
JANUARY 31

WITH A thumbs up to the camera, Christian Eriksen revealed his new team and planned return to playing — almost eight months after having a cardiac arrest on the field at the European Championship.

"I'm happy to announce that I've signed for Brentford Football Club," Eriksen said in Monday's social media video. "I can't wait to get started." It will be a remarkable playing comeback to the Premier League for the Denmark playmaker, who has said he was essentially dead for five minutes after collapsing in the opening Euro 2020 game against Finland. The uplifting signing was an early announcement on the final day of the January transfer window in the Premier League. Signing with Brentford until the end of the season, Eriksen is returning to England where he played with Tottenham until joining Inter Milan two years ago and winning the Serie A title. The west London club will feel like home. The 29-year-old Eriksen is being reunited with Thomas Frank, the Brentford manager who coached him when playing for Denmark's under-17s team. He will also be the ninth Dane in the club's squad.

"We have taken an unbelievable opportunity to bring a world class player to Brentford," Frank said. "He hasn't trained with a team for seven months but has done a lot of work on his own. He is fit but we will need to get him match fit and I am looking forward to seeing him work with the players and staff to get back towards his highest level."

Frank will be hoping Eriksen provides a further lift for a team impressing in its first-ever campaign in the Premier League, sitting eight points above the relegation zone with 15 games remaining. "At his best, Christian has the ability to dictate games of football," Frank said. "He can find the right passes and is a goal threat. He also has very, very good set piece delivery, both from corners and direct free kicks.

"He is a player you can find with the ball, and he will come up with a solution to the problem in front of him. Christian will also bring experience of top level football to the club." Eriksen's contract with Inter Milan was terminated by mutual agreement in December since Italian regulations prevented him playing with the implantable cardioverter-defibrillator that was fitted. He was recently training to regain fitness at Ajax, the Dutch club where he began his career.

Brentford said it would "respect Christian's medical confidentiality" by not divulging further information beyond saying he only recently received coronavirus vaccines that allow him to comply with entry rules to Britain.

The Denmark playmaker has said he was essentially dead for five minutes after collapsing in the opening Euro 2020 game against Finland. *AP*

Eriksen is set to fly into London this week but not immediately train with Brentford.

La Liga at war

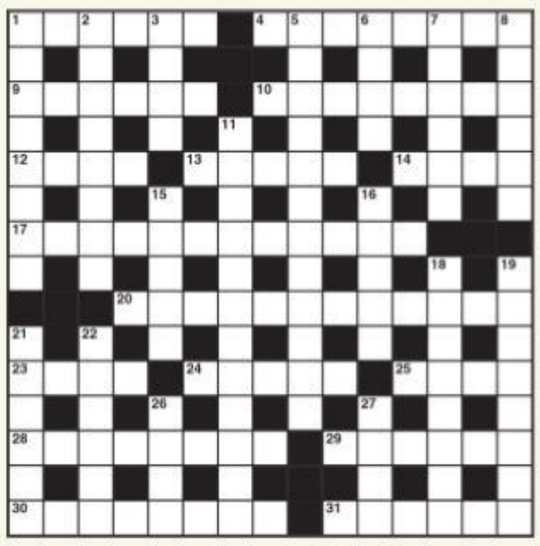
A civil lawsuit against LaLiga filed by Real Madrid, Barcelona and Athletic Bilbao over a 1.994 billion euro private equity deal agreed by the administrators of elite Spanish soccer has been admitted by a Madrid court, the court said on Monday. The judge investigating the case called the parties to a hearing of precautionary measures on Feb. 24, according to a report by El Confidencial.

All but five of the 42 clubs in the top two divisions signed up in December to the 1.994 billion euro ($2.24 billion) investment from CVC Capital Partners, the first of its kind in Europe. Four clubs, including the top-flight trio, opted out and one abstained before Real, Barca and Athletic decided to sue the league.

The deal was "an illegal transaction that causes irreparable damage to the entire Spanish football sector and flagrantly violates the most elementary principles of Spanish sports law and the LaLiga statutes," the three clubs said in a statement last month.

LaLiga told Reuters that it was going ahead with its plans.The agreement, dubbed "LaLiga Boost", buys CVC an 8.2% stake in a new company that will get broadcasting revenues and sponsorship rights for 50 years.It commits clubs to allocating 70% of funds for investments to new infrastructure and modernisation projects. Up to 15% can be used to sign players, with the remaining 15% for reducing debt.

CROSSWORD 4652



ACROSS
1 Makes a start in geology (6)
4 Dropouts deface bank site (8)
9 Stay outside or go (6)
10 Honest deal? (8)
12 Blue and white flower (4)
13 Gather a crowd we hear (5)
14 It's a mixed drink (4)
17 I get strained badly and go to pieces (12)
20 Shows what a discontented group does (12)
23 Elderly but managed without a valet (4)
24 Cash enclosure (5)
25 A stage joke turned fatuous with the passage of time (4)
28 Directions on a ship for finding the coast (8)
29 Mother has the first murderer brought back - a deranged person (6)
30 Letter providing you with accommodation (8)
31 Game in the form of a puzzle (6)

DOWN
1 Bars under a window (8)
2 Not still lacking support (8)
3 Hurried being about to start (4)
5 Bold break in using a crowbar (12)
6 Once popular means of riding a rising market (4)
7 Take in fun we hear (6)
8 Takes part in a show of feeling but doesn't stand out (4,2)
11 Got up and blushed pink (4-8)
15 Bury in virgin territory (5)
16 Navigational aids for a sailor on ship (5)
18 Taking offence (8)
19 Local ranch where Incas ate perhaps (8)
21 Holds back the Spanish girl (6)
22 Recover one's possession? (6)
26 One of the football team will keep it (4)
27 Animal enthusiast out West (4)

Solutions Crossword 4651: Across: 1 Reels, 4 Scratch, 8 Act, 9 Fair fight, 10 Hansard, 11 Notes, 13 Driver, 15 Brewed, 18 Panda, 19 Sidecar, 21 Stripling, 23 Ion, 24 Everest, 25 Spree. **Down:** 1 Reached, 2 Extension, 3 Sofia, 4 Shindy, 5 Refiner, 6 Tag, 7 Hates, 12 Town crier, 14 Example, 16 Derange, 17 Assist, 18 Posse, 20 Degas, 22 Rye.

OVER THE HEDGE by Michael Fry & T Lewis

CALVIN & HOBBES by Bill Watterson

MARVIN by Tom Armstrong

DAY TODAY

BY PETER VIDAL

ARIES (Mar 21 - Apr 20)
The Sun swaps its relationship with romantic Neptune for one with optimistic Jupiter. In effect this means that there will be little change in the dreamy, impractical nature of the times. You may as well face up to a week which favours poetic imagination rather than practical realities.

TAURUS (Apr 21 - May 21)
The lure of the strange is becoming stronger in your horoscope day by day and week by week. The question is, can you satisfy this aspect of your character or must you plan an overseas expedition? Are you ready for a voyage into the unknown.

GEMINI (May 22 - June 21)
You will be caught in the same unrealistic fantasies which affect so many people in your circle. This is no time for your famous clarity of thought, except in so far as you have minor domestic arrangements to complete. Let your imagination roam free, like a genie out of a bottle.

CANCER (June 22 - July 23)
You are usually a shrewd judge of character, yet your normal good sense has temporarily abandoned you. You are likely to judge other people by romantic criteria which have nothing to do with them and everything to do with your expectations.

LEO (July 24 - Aug 23)
You're free to make your own decisions, and don't forget it. Most of what happens will not influence you on a deeply personal level. Instead it will be external matters, work, savings and so on , which seem to be important. Plus, of course, you have a great deal more in the way of social skills than usual.

VIRGO (Aug 24 - Sep 23)
You may feel safe with Mercury once again in a secure location, meaning that you now have the strength to shape decisions, arrangements and proposals to your will. Waste no effort, for time is short, very short. The first step is to see that your finances are in order.

LIBRA (Sep 24 - Oct 23)
It is just your luck to be seized with a great deal of determined and practical energy when the general planetary situation is supporting your motivation, competence and skill. You'll overcome a personal challenge with your brilliance.

SCORPIO (Oct 24 - Nov 22)
You may be involved in secret or discreet discussions, yet while one part of you realises the importance of keeping the facts close to your chest, another will be urging you to blurt out everything you know. Wait a few days and your position should be stronger.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov 23 - Dec 22)
It would be a shame if your genuine nobility of spirit were now to be sacrificed on the altar of financial success. Instead, try to see that money is a resource to be used for the general good. A change of heart on your part will transform partners' feelings about you.

CAPRICORN (Dec 23 - Jan 20)
Your eyes may be bigger than your stomach at the moment, which is a colourful way of saying that your ambitions may be unrealistic considering your resources. Traditional entertainments suit your mood, so stick to old friends and familiar places, and be happy.

AQUARIUS (Jan 21 - Feb 19)
Given that the overwhelming mood of the times is philanthropic, charitable, confused, visionary, impractical and muddled, see to it that you are able to distinguish gullibility and exploitation from genuine service to others. Be a doormat no longer.

PISCES (Feb 20 - Mar 20)
It may be with a certain amount of relish that you observe so many other people behaving in a way which is out of character for them but perfectly natural to you. In other words, it's unrealistic and muddled, dreamy and romantic. At last, the whole world takes its cue from you.

JUMBLED WORDS

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

I think that when you invite people to your ___, you invite them to ___ - Oprah (4,,8)

ADEER
CPYLMU
EGOOS
ALSFHY

SOLUTION: EARED, GOOSE, CLUMPY, FLASHY
Answer: I think that when you invite people to your **home**, you invite them to **yourself** - Oprah

SUDOKU 4732

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

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

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

SOLUTION SUDOKU 4731

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

SALAH WINS IT FOR EGYPT

Mohamed Salah scored the equalizer and created the winner to inspire Egypt's comeback to beat Morocco 2-1 after extra time and reach the African Cup semifinals. Egypt hasn't won the African Cup since its record-extending seventh title in 2010. Salah made his debut for the national team the year after that triumph and is still searching for a first major title with his country. **AP**

The day a kid stopped dreaming

Medvedev says he would rather play at home than face a hostile crowd at Wimbledon and Roland Garros

ABHISHEK PUROHIT
JANUARY 31

AFTER BLOWING a two-set lead over Rafael Nadal across five hours and 24 minutes in the Australian Open final, Daniil Medvedev began his post-match press conference with a long monologue. "Story of a young kid who dreamed about big things in tennis," as he called it.

He talked about his journey in the game since he'd first picked up a racquet when he was six, about wanting to play in Grand Slams against the best, about the moments of self-doubt over the years. He concluded with a stunning declaration.

"From now on I'm playing for myself, for my family, to provide (for) my family, for people that trust in me, of course for all the Russians because I feel a lot of support there… if there is a tournament on hard courts in Moscow, before Roland Garros or Wimbledon, I'm going to go there even if I miss Wimbledon or Roland Garros or whatever. The kid stopped dreaming. The kid is going to play for himself. That's it. That's my story."

The 25-year old Russian has probably never even come close to being a crowd favourite, although he's had some moments of appreciation, even in Melbourne. But over the past fortnight at the Australian Open, his already volatile relationship with fans on court eventually came to acquire an edge so sharp, it moved him to declare that he'd skip Wimbledon to play in front of appreciative home fans. Following Medvedev's 'story,' the second question from a reporter was inevitably on whether the overwhelmingly partisan crowd at Rod Laver Arena had got to him. "I'm not going to answer questions about my story, sorry," he smiled.

The very next question was about the booing when Medvedev had walked onto court for the final. "I'm just going to give one small example. Before Rafa serves even in the fifth set, there would be somebody, and I would even be surprised, like one guy screaming, 'C'mon, Daniil.' A thousand people would be like, 'Tsss, tsss, tsss.' That sound. Before my serve, I didn't hear it. It's disappointing. It's disrespectful, it's disappointing. I'm not sure after 30 years I'm going to want to play tennis."

Unfriendly crowd

For years, one of the narratives in tennis has been whether the younger generation had the ability to consistently take on the 'Big Three' – Nadal, Roger Federer and Novak Djokovic – especially in the Grand Slams. Medvedev pointed out with some bitterness that when he had gone up against the trio on the big occasion, fans hadn't wanted him to beat the greats of the game.

"There were talks like people saying we really want young generation to go for it, to be better, to be stronger. I was like pumped up. Yeah, let's try to give them hard time and everything. Well, I guess these people were lying because, yeah, every time I stepped on the court in these big matches, I really didn't see much people who wanted me to win."

The strain of having a packed stadium ganged up against him had been building up for a while before Medvedev crumbled in the final. "It's cumulative. But tonight (Sunday) was like the top of the mountain."

An unfriendly crowd famously does not get to Djokovic. On the contrary, he often uses it to propel himself further. Medvedev, partly of a similar mould, seemed to be trying the same in the opening two sets, when he'd push the fans to boo him louder when he won a game. It was to be a steep fall from the top of that mountain -- a two-set lead and three break points at 3-2 and 0-40 in the third; Medvedev would be reduced to applauding his own double faults, clapping sarcastically with hands over his head and giving the crowd a thumbs-up.

That the crowd was booing him even between his first and second serves had got into Medvedev's head during his second-round win over home favourite Nick Kyrgios. Jim Courier had told him in the on-court interview that the crowd wasn't booing him but shouting 'Siu', Cristiano Ronaldo's signature celebration. Medvedev responded by telling the fans he could not hear Courier. "If you respect somebody, at least respect Jim Courier," Medvedev had said.

Later, he added that he wasn't expecting to be supported instead of Kyrgios, but the ones booing him "probably have a low IQ."

Surprisingly, his third-round victory over Botic van de Zandschulp came in a considerably friendlier atmosphere, albeit on the neighbouring Margaret Court Arena. So much so that Medvedev went on to claim that he was feeling at home.

"I like coming to Australia. I feel like people support me in general here. I want to even say feeling in a way is like home. So I do think it's much more ups than downs with Australian crowd," Medvedev had said after beating van de Zandschulp in straight sets.

The bonhomie was to be brief. Medvedev railed against Stefanos Tsitsipas, his father, the officials and the world at large in the semi-final, calling the umpire 'mad' and 'stupid' for letting his opponent get away with on-court coaching. Fortunately for him, he pulled himself together in time.

"To be honest, I don't think that emotions helped me too much," Medvedev said after the four-set win over Tsitsipas. "You lose concentration and too much energy. As soon as I did it, I (thought), 'That is a big mistake'. I am happy I (regained) concentration at the beginning of the third set."

Learning for Novak

It was during the third set when he started losing it in the final. As if battling Nadal in a Grand Slam final wasn't enough, he took on the crowd as well, and paid the price. Compatriot Aslan Karatsev, the world No. 15, said it wasn't wise of Medvedev to expect anything but a one-sided crowd when he was playing Nadal.

"Of course, all the fans want to support him (Nadal). Maybe he (Medvedev) felt it was extra pressure against him. But after some time, he will understand that if you play against Rafa or Roger, of course, everybody loves them. And especially when he was injured and coming back to play in the final," said Karatsev, who is in Pune for the Tata Open Maharashtra.

"It is not nice when someone is clapping between your first and second serves. I can understand because it has happened to me also. But you cannot tell the fans, 'come on, support me.' It does not make sense."

When he was match point down against Felix Auger Aliassime in the quarter-final, Medvedev asked himself, 'what would Novak do?' and came back to win from two sets down for only the second time at a Grand Slam.

Maybe once he recovers from the disappointment and starts dreaming big again, the kid will realise not to let another partisan crowd get to him. It is certainly what Novak would do.

Daniil Medvedev has never been a crowd favourite, although he's had some moments of appreciation in Melbourne. *AP*

Thoroughbred, not a one-trick pony

TUSHAR BHADURI
JANUARY 31

WHAT IS the most characteristic point one associates with Rafael Nadal?

The Spaniard haring along the baseline, and often six feet or more behind the paint, running around the backhand, finding improbable angles and lines, prompting awe among spectators and bewilderment in opponents.

This style of play has worked wonders on clay but to pigeonhole Nadal as a one-trick pony wouldn't be fair. He has won every Grand Slam at least twice, and judging by how he went about turning the tide against Daniil Medvedev in the Australian Open final, he has several arrows in his quiver. If one strategy isn't working, he is quick to use another one and often equally adept at it.

Tactical wizard

Going into Sunday's showdown, Nadal may have known that his Plan A – trading in long baseline exchanges, forcing the opponent into errors, and hitting pinpoint passing shots when one ventured forward – may not be sufficient against the Russian, who is akin to Novak Djokovic in his playing style with the added advantage of a bigger serve.

That's why the left-hander came to the net a lot more from the outset, even serving-and-volleying on many occasions. He also employed the slice many times. Some of his reflex volleys brought the crowd to its feet. It didn't work at the start of the match, as Medvedev's level of play was quite high and he put a lot of pressure on the Spaniard.

More variety

Nadal's level of play improved in the second set, and he found more ways to hurt the Russian. He began to move Medvedev around the court more expertly. One of the best shots, arguably of the whole tournament, was a drop shot on the way to a break of serve. Played from mid-court, the angular shot had such deception that the Russian, camping much behind the baseline, stumbled as he moved forward and was on all fours (all five, if one includes his racquet) for a moment.

Rafael Nadal with the Aus Open trophy. *AP*

But Medvedev refused to give up on the set. Nadal's below-average serve pushed matters into a tie-breaker which he edged.

The X-factor

Down two sets, Nadal had nothing to lose at this stage. He added the pace on his groundstrokes – by a staggering 20 kmph – to keep his opponent on the backfoot.

To Medvedev's credit, he withstood the barrage and earned three break points at 3-2, which would have almost felt like match points.

But here, maybe, World No.2's over-eagerness to finish things off worked against him. Nadal summoned all his trademark resilience, his X-factor, to repel the threat. The score was 4-4 and Nadal was barely holding on by his fingernails, when the Russian dumped a simple volley into the net.

With the Rod Laver Arena crowd almost totally in Nadal's corner, the Russian lost focus from the job at hand. Nadal got the opening he craved, broke serve and took the third set.

Drop and run

The complexion of the match had changed. Medvedev, understandably, tried to shorten the points. His first serve was still a big weapon but while he was coming up trumps in most of the baseline rallies earlier in the match, now he was a step slower to get to the ball and often had to go for the riskier options.

Nadal, on the other hand, now realised that his own tryst with destiny was a big probability. And as has often been the case with him, Djokovic and Roger Federer, he raised his game at the crucial stage, playing on adrenaline – almost negating his 35-year-old battle-scarred frame, as well as an opponent 10 years younger.

It was at this stage that the two players almost engaged in a contest within a contest. Drop shots became so frequent that they lost the surprise element. But while the Russian's attempts betrayed desperation to finish points early, Nadal used them to add to his opponent's pain and discomfort.

Looking for an opening

Medvedev was struggling physically and at the wrong end of the crowd's jibes, but to his credit, he hung on. His big serve kept him in the match, but Nadal was almost his vintage self. As the Russian was given the run around the court, he gamely fought on. Nadal got the break midway through the fifth set when he managed to stretch his opponent to a few rallies, but Medvedev never checked out of the match.

He even thwarted the Spaniard when he served for the match at 5-4. But Nadal was not going to be denied after all.

BRIEFLY

Entire India U19 squad fit for WC semis vs Australia

North Sound (Antigua): India U-19 cricketer Nishant Sindhu has recovered from COVID-19 and will be available for selection for the all-important semifinal against Australia in the U-19 World Cup on Wednesday. The development means that all squad members are available for the crucial game. Sindhu had led the side in two league games in the absence of Yash Dhull who had tested positive along with four team members before the game against Ireland. Sindhu tested positive after the final league against Uganda. "All are available for selection for the Australia game. Sindhu has tested negative," an ICC source said. Record four-time champions India had beaten Australia in the warm-up game ahead of their opener against South Africa.

Ogbeche brace leads Hyderabad to 5-0 win

Fatorda: Star striker Bartholomew Ogbeche scored a brace on either side of halftime to take him top of the charts in the Hero Indian Super League's all-time scorers' list and also ensure Hyderabad FC a 5-0 win over NorthEast United FC here on Monday. Ogbeche scored in the third and 60th minute to take his tally to 14 goals this season and overall number to 49, one more than Sunil Chhetri and Ferran Corominas. Obgeche achieved the feat in just three-and-half years in India's premier club competition.

Zaman takes Lahore to victory over Karachi

Karachi: Fakhar Zaman's first century in cricket's Pakistan Super League propelled Lahore Qalandars to a six-wicket win over Karachi Kings, and Islamabad United started its campaign by inflicting a crushing nine-wicket defeat on Peshawar Zalmi. Left-handed opener Fakhar made 106 off 60 balls and anchored Lahore to 174-4 with four balls to spare as Karachi had its third straight loss. Fakhar controlled Lahore's chase by hitting 12 boundaries and four sixes as Karachi's bowling looked ordinary in the absence of injured Mohammad Amir, who is yet to feature in the tournament due to side strain.

India women drub China 7-1

Bengaluru: Sushila Chanu scored a brace as the Indian women's hockey team made a grand debut at the FIH Pro League, hammering China 7-1 in the first game of the two-leg tie. Chanu (47th, 52nd minutes) converted two penalty strokes while Navneet Kaur (5th), Neha (12), Vandana Katariya (40th), Sharmila Devi (48th) and Gurjit Kaur (50th) netted one each to hand India a win. China's lone goal was scored by Xue Deng. With the win, the team moved to the third position in the FIH Pro League points table, with three points and a goal difference of plus six.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Can't force fans to support you, says Karatsev

SHIVANI NAIK
MUMBAI, JANUARY 31

Aslan Karatsev couldn't really spout a Dostoevsky or even summon a handy Meddyism, a la Daniil Medvedev, but he drew out the chuckles anyway. The World No 15 had just made the quarters of the 2021 Australian Open beating Felix Auger-Aliassime and was facing the press that was quizzing him intently on digging deep and other profundities. Russian tennis players are expected to lace ironies with dark humour, and humour with gravitas. The then 27-year-old, who made semis at Melbourne last year, though, would put a pin prick to the nice bubble.

Recalling the interaction while playing at the Tata Open Maharashtra on arrival, Karatsev peals off: "So the journalist asked me, 'What was your self-talk to yourself during the break at the toilet?' He was expecting some special answer. But I said, 'It was just the toilet.' And the answer came out everywhere on Instagram," he chortled. There's a wave of Russian challengers coming for the titles, but Karatsev reckons it's a randomly coincidental surge, and not some planned emergence.

Also, Safin and Medvedev might be a hack's delight with all that they spoke. But there are Russians, and then there are other Russians.

Top seed at Pune, the multi-lingual pro who speaks Russian, Hebrew and English, says "working very hard" might be the only common trait across the bunch that has signalled a resurgence after a lull. "Before, we had a big gap after Marat, Kafelnikov. There was nobody in Top 10, Top 5. There were players in Top 100. Not like now with 4 players in Top 30, maybe we are working harder than others. But I don't know, everyone works hard," he says matter-of-factly.

Top seed Aslan Karatsev made it to the 2021 Australian Open quarters. *Tata Open Maharashtra*

Karatsev moved to Israel where he started tennis early. "My sister played. So I started playing at 3 and half. Till age of 12 I was playing in Israel where my mother and sister were. There were financial problems from 13 to 16 years. Then I found a Russian sponsor and moved back," he recalls. Stints in Moscow for two years, then Germany, Spain, and Croatia followed. "Last two and half years I'm training in Minsk," he adds, of working with a Spanish coach.

For the widely-travelled pro, the first push had come from a Russian who had in fact won his earliest title at the Mumbai ATP in 2006 - Dmitry Tursunov, a hoot of a character. Inspiration in the lean years though came from the earlier generation.

"All of them were great players who showed we could compete at highest level for so many years and hence inspired kids. I watched Kafelnikov, Youzhny, Safin, Tursunov. Had some opportunity to play Youzhny before he retired and also doubles with Tursunov. He helped me greatly, playing doubles with me and guiding me, when I was 21," Karatsev says.

Yet, it's a fragmented burst of players. "There's some training in Nice, (Andrey) Rublev is at Barcelona, Karen Khachanov training with a Croatian... so it's not like all together. I don't know what he does, and he doesn't know what I do. We just work hard," he reiterates.

Karatsev counts among his scalps a certain Djokovic. "I like to face the big players. Feel really pumped. I don't like to go around big players. But it was especially heartening beating Djokovic in Belgrade which made it more special. Unbelievable match," he recalls.

Karatsev last came to Pune before the pandemic, playing here as an alternate in qualifiers, before his big break out at the Australian Open. "Same weather condition as Australia," he would say, landing here from the Slam. Very averse to getting experimental with food -- "Less spicy. Just chicken, rice and salad" -- he wouldn't have minded some hitting time in the early rounds. "To get into rhythm, cause not had much time to practice."

Senior to Medvedev by a few years, Karatsev reckons the emotional Russian finalist will eventually rationalise that the crowd was rooting for Nadal returning from injury mainly. Though he did empathise with Medvedev a tad. "Sometimes it's not nice when someone is clapping you between first and second serve. It happened to me also. But you cannot do anything or tell fans 'come on support me.' So doesn't make sense," said the sensible Russian.

Bhambri makes strong start

Pune: Yuki Bhambri, on a comeback trail, sprung a late charge on Slovakian Josef Kovalik to win 6-7 (10), 6-2, 7-5 in his Round 1 of the ATP250 at Balewadi stadium. A momentary lapse of focus early in the opening set was followed by the two 29-year-olds trading breaks, before the tiebreaker went the way of the Slovakian, ranked 148.

Bhambri would snatch the second putting his opponent under the pump early. However it was in the decider, with another exchange of breaks, that Bhambri stemmed one more drifting into a tie-break, piling on the pressure on Kovalik's serve at 30-30, leading 6-5. Showing class, the former No 83 ended all resistance, to move into Round 2 as he resumes his ascent from World No 863 after a spate of injuries.

Not captain any more, but will remain a leader: Kohli

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
JANUARY 31

Virat Kohli has said that he "doesn't need to be a captain to be a leader" and has a role as a batsman to "make the team win more" and that he will "take pride in that". He also talked about how he strived for a cultural change in the team during his captaincy tenure.

Kohli has chosen a podcast with Digit, a company in which he has invested in the past and now is the brand ambassador, to air his views on matters of captaincy and the cultural changes he sought to bring in the team during his time in charge.

"Everything has a tenure and time period," he replied to a question about giving up captaincy. "You obviously have to be aware of that. People might say 'what has this guy done?' but you know that when you think of moving forward and achieving more, you feel like you have done your job.

"Now as a batsman, you may have more things to contribute to the team. You can make the team win more. So, take pride in that. You don't need to be a captain to be a leader," he said.

Cultural change is one of the traits attributed to Kohli's captaincy. In MS Dhoni's time as a captain, India's Test record was mediocre overseas. A question popped up about his views on the business maxim that "culture trumps strategy".

"When I became captain, my focus was solely on culture change only. I knew that in terms of skills, there was no problem at all. But how to maximise that talent? In cricket, more or less, everyone has a general understanding of field positions (and on-field tactics). As a captain, my focus was more on leadership. That I have to change the mindset that anything is possible, that we can win from any situation. In executing the strategies, where is your belief? If you are bowling in the heat of the afternoon, you should have belief that you can take 2-3 wickets and win the match. Or as a batsman, you should have the belief that 'I can win the match from any situation'. Then your strategy can be more successful. Culture is more long-lasting and more impactful in any team environment… I didn't want to confine my vision; and to expand that vision, you need culture. Confined vision will give a six-months goal. But then what?"

Virat Kohli made the remark on a podcast. *PTI*

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